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Dear Licensee

I'm writing to reassure you that we will continue to support you and your business in the coming months, as you face into the new government restrictions announced by the Prime Minister on Tuesday. These restrictions include asking office workers to work from home over the winter, a daily 10pm close for all hospitality businesses, mandatory table service and the wearing of face masks by staff and customers when not seated at a table. These restrictions, as well as the 'Rule of 6' and Track & Trace, will be backed up by law and failure to comply will result in fines for individuals as well as businesses.

None of this is good news for the hospitality sector and in my view, it is unjustified and unlikely to stop the transmission of COVID-19. The data released by Public Health England shows that less than 5% of transmissions are linked to pubs, with most transmission occurring in private homes, schools & colleges, and care homes/hospitals. We are lobbying the government at every level, to show that pubs are highly regulated, safe places to socialise and key supporters of their communities. Pubs need to be supported, not made the scapegoat for inadequate government responses to the pandemic.

We have made three requests of the government, to support licensees and their businesses:

1. A 25% reduction in beer duty (on draught beer only, to support pubs).
2. An extension to the business rates holiday to at least April 2022.
3. Further cash grants for licensee's to help rebuild their businesses, especially if they are impacted by local lockdowns and/or national restrictions.

Whilst the EOTH scheme and the VAT cut were welcomed by the hospitality sector, they did nothing for the majority of pubs, which are wet led.

It is not all gloom and doom. Trading across Admiral Taverns since reopening in July has been robust, although not every pub has benefitted. The latest directive to work from home if you can over the winter, will mean that local community pubs will be the best opportunity to get out of the office/home for a break. The major part of most local's trade is pre 10pm and there is evidence that the trade has already moved to earlier in the evening. Xmas trading in local pubs may also be boosted by smaller groups wanting to celebrate nearer to where they live, rather than going into city centres for big events. Clearly the recent rise in transmission will make some consumers nervous again, but we have seen how resilient both licensees and community pubs really are! And we saw how much people love their local over the summer.

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Admiral Taverns will continue to support you as we navigate through this latest set of government requirements. Please stay safe and continue to support your communities with COVID Secure ways of working and the vital Track & Trace recording. Your BDM and others in Admiral Taverns are on hand to help you with any queries you may have. I look forward to visiting you and your pub at some point in the future.

Best wishes



Chris Jowsey
Chief Executive Officer