

Events Industry Alliance End of Week Report

Friday 19th June

EIA update

Hi all,

As you will have likely seen, Andy Burnham has won the historic Makerfield by-election, using his victory speech to warn that Labour has “a final chance for change”. We expect Burnham to soon tell Starmer that he will not accept a role in Cabinet, whilst also urging the prime minister to set out a timetable for an orderly departure. If Starmer refuses to do so, our understanding is that Burnham and his allies are hoping to avoid a direct leadership challenge and instead want senior members of the Cabinet to urge the PM to agree a handover of power in the coming days. Should it go to a leadership election, Burnham will want that wrapped up before party conference in September.

Closer to home, we have been preparing for our upcoming meetings with MPs Saqib Bhatti and James Asser next week. We will use these to underscore the importance of venues in their areas (the NEC and Excel London respectively) serving as a stepping stone to discuss the event industry’s wider impact.

On the Industrial Strategy front, we are completing our interviews and compiling the case studies. Thank you to the AEO and ESSA members who are currently feeding in more information to enrich this and underline how all parts of the ecosystem contribute to supporting the IS-8 sectors.

Our ministerial attendance survey has now closed, with a big thank you to all who completed it. If any member has not yet had a chance to complete the survey and would like to feed into this, please get in touch. Alongside using this to put together evidence of how ministers can and should engage with events, we’re also going to be using MP and ministerial attendance to make the case for business events while they are at events.

Finally, one more thank you to the AEV board for having us last week. We really valued the feedback that board members gave on our strategy and are looking to address them when shaping our approach over the coming months. We’re looking forward to presenting to the AEO board on Wednesday!

Best,
Alexander

Government this week

Tuesday 16th June

- The Security Industry Authority [confirmed](#) that its consultation on the draft Section 12 statutory guidance for Martyn's Law has closed, having received nearly 200 detailed responses and engaged more than 1,800 people and organisations. The guidance sets out how the SIA will operate as the regulator, including its compliance, inspection and enforcement powers and financial penalties.

Final guidance and a full consultation report are expected in autumn 2026, with the Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Act 2025 due to come into force in spring 2027.

What happened in Parliament

Monday 15th June

- During Housing, Communities and Local Government OPQs, **Jayne Kirkham (Lab, Truro and Falmouth)** [asked](#) if Single Foundation Strategic Authorities (areas which are not Mayoral Authorities) would also be granted powers to raise visitor levies.
 - **Nesil Caliskan (Minister for Devolution, Faith and Communities)** said the Government are consulting on widening powers to SFSAs for the regional visitor levy.

Wednesday 17th June

- At Prime Minister's Questions, with Keir Starmer at the G7, **David Lammy (Deputy Prime Minister)** [deputised](#). Responding to **Daisy Cooper (LD, St Albans)** asking about potential closer EU ties, Lammy confirmed that the next UK-EU summit will take place on 22 July, with priorities including an SPS agreement, a youth experience scheme and cutting red tape for exporters.

Thursday 18th June

- At Culture, Media and Sport OPQs, **Aphra Brandreth (Con, Chester South and Eddisbury)** [pressed](#) the Secretary of State on the cumulative tax burden, from business rates and National Insurance, on the visitor economy.
 - **Stephanie Peacock (Minister for Tourism)** pointed to the Great British Summer Savings VAT cut and VisitBritain's "Starring GREAT Britain" campaign, and noted she had attended the Tourism Alliance's AGM that week and met VisitScotland.

Written Questions

Tuesday 16th June

- **James Cleverly (Con, Braintree)** [asked](#) when the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government intends to publish the Government response to the consultation on the overnight visitor levy.
 - **Alison McGovern (Minister for Local Government)** replied that the Government is considering all responses received and will publish its formal response to the consultation in due course.

Thursday 18th June

- **Mims Davies (Con, East Grinstead and Uckfield)** [asked](#) whether the Secretary of State for Wales has held discussions with the Welsh tourism industry over the impact of the tourism levy.
 - **Jo Stevens (Secretary of State for Wales)** said that she held regular discussion with the business community in Wales, and that the Welsh Government's Visitor Levy could raise up to £33 million a year to reinvest in local communities and support tourism.

Regional news

Belfast and Northern Ireland's bid for global events

Visit Belfast has expanded its Ambassador Network of over 1,400 leaders to attract more international conferences, building on a model that has already generated £489m for the regional economy. Business event visitor numbers reached around 125,000 in 2025, underscoring the sector's growth and importance.

The initiative supports a wider strategy to double Northern Ireland's tourism economy to £2bn by 2035, with conferences playing a key role in driving high-value, year-round economic activity.

Aberdeen South by-election swing to the Conservatives

Overnight, the Scottish National Party lost the previously safe Aberdeen South seat to the Scottish Conservatives in a surprise by-election result, with a large swing in votes. The Conservatives focused heavily on protecting North Sea oil and gas jobs, which became a central issue in the campaign and resonated with many voters. The result, influenced in large part by tactical voting and local factors, marks a small sign of Conservative recovery to the mainstream – with the party having thrown significant resources at the contest.

Week ahead

Tuesday 23rd June

- Treasury OPQs. **Henham to monitor.**
- The Lords Economic Affairs Committee will take evidence on fiscal devolution in England. Witnesses include **Susan Jarvis (Co-Director, Heseltine Institute for Public Policy, Practice and Place, University of Liverpool)** and **Professor Tony Travers CBE (Professor in Practice and Associate Dean, The LSE School of Public Policy)**

Wednesday 24th June

- PMQs. **Henham to monitor.**

Wednesday 24th - Thursday 25th June

- [The Meetings Show](#) returns to ExCeL London, the UK's flagship business-events trade show, expecting almost 6,000 professionals and 550+ exhibitors across 80 destinations and co-located with Business Travel Show Europe.

Media snapshot

UK could keep special pre-Brexit terms if it rejoined EU, Michel Barnier says

The EU's former chief Brexit negotiator, Michel Barnier, [has said](#) Britain could regain its special terms if it rejoined the EU and claimed it was becoming clearer every day to the British people that they would be stronger in Europe. The comments cast doubt on suggestions from other authoritative voices, including Poland's foreign minister, that the UK could be forced to accept more difficult terms on re-entering the bloc.

Olympia Events CEO: "The world's attention is returning to London"

Olympia Events CEO Andy O'Sullivan [said](#) high-profile attendance at London Tech Week signals growing recognition of the events sector's role in driving economic growth, innovation and international trade. He emphasised that face-to-face events remain critical for connecting investors, policymakers and businesses, while highlighting Olympia's £1.3bn transformation into a fully integrated destination. The redevelopment reflects rising demand for venues that support the entire visitor journey and reinforces confidence in London's position as a global hub for events and business.

AEO Excellence Awards 2026

The Association of Event Organisers [welcomed](#) more than 900 event professionals to Grosvenor House on 12 June for its annual Excellence Awards. ExCeL London was named Venue of the Year (over 20,000 sqm) while Roundhouse won Venue of the Year (under 20,000 sqm). Carina Bauer, chief executive officer of the IMEX Group., received the Outstanding Contribution to the Industry award.

If you have any questions regarding this update, please contact the Henham Strategy team

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