

Events Industry Alliance End of Week Report

Friday 24th July

EIA update

Hi all,

This week was, of course, dominated by Burnham's first days in office – and the subsequent cabinet appointments he made. The ministerial changes are, for the most part, encouraging to see, particularly the return of Jonathan Reynolds to the Business Department, now merged with Innovation, Science and Technology. Reynolds was instrumental to the creation of the original Industrial Strategy, and so we have strong reason to believe that the Industrial Strategy will survive the change of leadership. This means our aim to align the events sector along with the IS8 will remain important, albeit with further emphasis needed on place-based messaging.

Alongside Reynolds at the new Department for Business, Innovation, Science, and Technology, Lisa Nandy was re-appointed as Secretary of State at the Department for Digital, Culture, Media, and Sport. With these announcements, we have begun coordinating outreach to these secretaries of state (and the new Prime Minister) including pressing Nandy on the CMS report findings.

Although Burnham was unable to attend the Farnborough International Airshow (he instead sent a video message), it was great to see [host Wes Streeting](#) there in his first outing as Defence Secretary. Streeting used the event to make several prominent announcements including the UK's sovereign Collaborative Combat Aircraft programme, StormFighter, and a contract extension with BAE technologies. The Times [reported that](#) the event as a whole generated an estimate £13 billion for the UK economy. No clearer proof of the importance of business events!

Away from the new cabinet and following the CEO Summit and ESSA AGM, we have developed a targeted MP outreach campaign on behalf of ESSA members. ESSA members will be provided with pre-written letters to send to their MPs, as well as tools to identify their MPs if needed. This will spotlight the role of suppliers within the events industry while reinforcing the key findings of the CMS report. The campaign will focus on MPs representing ESSA members' local constituencies, building on an approach that has already proven effective in engaging Parliament.

We are also planning further engagement with MPs with whom we have established relationships, including organising a visit for James Asser to the Excel London's Formula E Grand Finale, and arranging for Saqib Bhatti to visit the NEC during its anniversary celebrations.

Finally, as we have now entered Parliamentary recess, we are beginning to plan how upcoming moments, particularly party conference season, can be leveraged to further elevate the sector's profile and reinforce its contribution to the wider economy.

Best,
Alexander

Monday 20th July

- Andy Burnham took office as Prime Minister, following Keir Starmer's resignation and Burnham's election as Labour leader, unopposed, on Friday. A new Cabinet was appointed the same day, with John Healey replacing Rachel Reeves as Chancellor. A full list of ministerial appointments can be found [here](#).

Tuesday 21st July

- **Baroness Smith (Lord Privy Seal)** laid a [Written Ministerial Statement](#) on behalf of the Prime Minister setting out Machinery of Government changes. It explained that the Department for Business and Trade has become the Department for Business, Innovation, Science and Trade, and is positioned around reindustrialisation and end-to-end support from research to scale-up. DCMS is also expanded to take on telecoms, digital modernisation, online safety, and digital identity policy. A new No.10 North will take on local economic growth and devolution strategy from MHCLG and the Treasury.

Wednesday 22nd July

- **Jonathan Reynolds (Business Secretary)** used Farnborough International Airshow, on his third day in post, to [set out](#) the new department's growth agenda, announcing a £600m package to back British aerospace innovation. This demonstrates, yet again, the power of events as a platform for government policy announcements – and driving the UK's growth agenda.

Thursday 23rd July

- The Prime Minister and Chancellor [announced](#) a 20% cut to business rates bills for pubs, social clubs and live music venues from April 2027, on top of the 15% relief already in place for 2026/27. Around 32,000 premises are covered, with a typical pub saving an estimated £1,100 a year. The largest live music venues are excluded, with further detail to follow at the Budget. The announcement also trailed wider reform to the business rates system at the Budget.

What happened in Parliament

Wednesday 22nd July

- In a debate on securing better access to the EU for performing artists and musicians, **Lord Berkeley (CB)** [asked what progress](#) the Government had made on securing better access to the EU for performing artists and musicians.
 - **Baroness Twycross (Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, DCMS)** said better EU access for the creative and cultural sectors "is a priority for this Government" and that UK and EU teams should work towards a summit "later this year."

Written Questions

- There were no relevant Written Questions.

Regional news

Monday 20th - Friday 24th July

- Farnborough International Airshow ran across the full week and was the largest edition to date, [with a record 1,636 exhibitors](#), up 15% on 2024. Almost two-thirds of exhibitors were from overseas, and a quarter were first-time exhibitors.

Friday 24th July

- Edinburgh's visitor levy has [come into force](#), the first city-wide levy to go live anywhere in the UK. The charge is 5% of the cost of paid overnight accommodation, applied to the first five consecutive nights and could well set the precedent against which English designs will be introduced.

Week ahead

Both Houses have now risen for Summer Parliamentary Recess; they will return on 1st September.

Thursday 30th July

- The Greater Manchester mayoral by-election will take place, triggered by Andy Burnham's departure. Bev Craig, the incumbent Labour Leader of Manchester City Council, is currently polling to beat Sian Astley, the Reform candidate.

Media snapshot

MIA presses new Government on business events

The Meetings Industry Association [has called on](#) Andy Burnham's Government to place business events at the centre of its growth agenda, highlighting the sector's £33.6bn contribution to the UK economy and role in regional growth. The MIA reiterated calls for a national business events strategy, stronger government engagement and support for employers facing rising labour costs to unlock the sector's potential as a driver of investment, jobs and productivity.

UKHospitality react to business rates cut

UKHospitality's Chief Executive Allen Simpson [welcomed the Government's announcement](#) of business rates cuts for certain hospitality venues as a positive first step but called for wider business rates reform to support the entire hospitality sector. The trade body warned that restaurants, hotels and other hospitality businesses continue to face rising costs, urging further action to protect jobs, investment and growth ahead of the Budget.

UKinbound reports rising twelve-month confidence

UKinbound's latest Business Barometer [signals renewed confidence](#) for the UK's business events sector, with 29% of businesses expecting bookings, visitor numbers or customer orders to grow over the summer and 50% confident about the year ahead. Stronger group travel demand and rising international visitor activity are expected to support growth across conferences, exhibitions and other events reliant on overseas delegates.

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

Get in touch

If you would like to unsubscribe from these updates, please email alexander.edwards@henhamstrategy.co.uk