

Industry experts and senior stakeholders meet to discuss taking APPG report forward

2 years ago



Key representatives from across the cleaning and hygiene and public health sectors came together for a high-level meeting to discuss the recent report from the All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) for the Cleaning and Hygiene Industry.

Twenty industry experts joined the roundtable meeting in London to discuss the findings of the inquiry, entitled Embedding Effective Hygiene for a Resilient UK, and how to respond to, and take forward, the recommendations.

British Cleaning Council (BCC) Chairman Jim Melvin and Deputy Chair Delia Cannings were joined by BCC colleagues, Royal Society for Public Health Director for Policy and Communications Dr Jyotsna Vohra and colleagues, International Scientific Forum on Home Hygiene (IFH) Chair Professor Sally Bloomfield and a representative of the Behavioural Insights Team along with senior colleagues from the Cleaning and Support Services Association, the British Institute of Cleaning Science, the British Toilet Association, the Cleaning and Hygiene Suppliers Association, the Federation of Window Cleaners, SC Johnson Professional UK, Reckitt and Wightman & Parrish amongst others.

APPG Chairman Nigel Mills MP provided a recorded introduction to the meeting in which he noted the huge role of the cleaning and hygiene industry during the pandemic, but said that the situation was drifting back to how it was before, with flu and Covid cases on the rise. We needed to build on the lessons of the pandemic, not forget them, he said.

Key points from the discussion will be fed back to the next APPG meeting, which has been pencilled in for

30 January at Westminster.

A full report is due to be written and published in February, summarising and featuring the roundtable's key recommendations.

Jim Melvin said: "This was a very important and productive meeting during which we had a wide-ranging, detailed debate on policy and strategy.

"I was delighted that such a wide group of industry experts and senior stakeholders were keen to lend their support to this event.

"For the voice of the industry to be heard, it is vital that we work together collectively and so seeing this high-powered group come together to discuss such an important topic was hugely encouraging.

"Among the key themes which emerged were the need for a major cultural and behavioural change nationwide, so hygienic practices are widely adopted as normal and daily behaviour.

"As a group, we were clear that cleaning and hygiene should be at the heart of the national agenda.

"I spoke about how cleaning staff need to be held in high esteem. The need for recognition for the vital work of cleaning staff in keeping people safe, healthy and well is a point I am always determined to make.

"The importance of training, education and development for staff was highlighted, on which I couldn't agree more.

"There were a number of other topics discussed as well. The upcoming report on this meeting will go into details as well as featuring concrete recommendations for taking our agenda forward."

The APPG inquiry took place in September and October last year and examined what had been both successful and unsuccessful from the national approach to cleaning and hygiene during the pandemic to ensure lessons would be learnt.

It made 11 recommendations designed to increase disease resilience to current common infections and help inform the UK's response to any similar future public health emergency.

The APPG for the Cleaning and Hygiene Industry was inaugurated in February 2021, with the support of a sizeable number of MPs from all the major political parties and members of The House of Lords.

The group exists to promote the critical importance of the cleaning and hygiene industry to the people of the United Kingdom.

The APPG is operated by the MPs and members of the House of Lords with the British Cleaning Council acting in the role of secretariat and organising a significant number of steering groups in seeking to carry out the industry's clear, focused and much needed strategic aims.

The BCC is a trade association with 21 member organisations from across the cleaning, hygiene and waste sector. Its research shows that the sector is a UK top ten industry, employing 1.47 million people and contributing nearly £59bn to the economy.