

Industry leader writes to PM to call for cleaning and hygiene to be made a national priority

2 years ago



With a new Covid-19 variant on the rise, the **British Cleaning Council (BCC)** has written to Prime Minister Rishi Sunak to call for cleaning and hygiene to be made a national priority.

In her letter, BCC Chair Delia Cannings called on the government to accept in full the 11 recommendations made in last year's report by the All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) for the cleaning and hygiene industry, entitled Embedding Effective Hygiene for a Resilient UK.

The measures would make the UK much more resilient to current common infections such as Covid variants or flu and also better prepared for future public health emergencies – like a future pandemic.

The call comes as cases of the new Covid variant Pirola seem to be spreading in the UK. Overall, cases of Covid infection have been increasing since July. The UK had seen 100,516 new cases of Covid as of 10 September, according to reports.

The BCC and other organisations from across the £59bn cleaning, hygiene and waste industry have been campaigning for the government to adopt the APPG report since February this year.

More than 500 industry members have now joined the campaign by writing letters to their MPs asking them to back the report.

Anyone from the sector can download a supporting letter from the BCC's website to adapt and send to their MP.

Ms Cannings said: “I call on the Prime Minister and government to put cleaning and hygiene at the heart of the national agenda going forward and to recognise the vital, frontline role the sector’s skilled and professional cleaning staff have in keeping people healthy, well and safe.

“The rise of a new Covid variant puts in sharp focus our campaign for cleaning and hygiene to be made a national priority and makes it more important than ever.

“These 11 measures, which were all recommended by experts in public health and cleaning and hygiene, will help protect the nation’s health and reduce the number of people who fall ill or die every year.

“Until the government learns the lessons of the last pandemic and adopts the measures recommended in the APPG report, they are gambling with people’s lives.”

Industry members can visit <https://britishcleaningcouncil.org/2023/02/06/download-letter-here> to find the letter, APPG report and details of their local MP.

The drive takes place under the umbrella of the BCC’s We Clean, We Care campaign, which reflects the pride that skilled and professional cleaning staff have in the vital, frontline role.

The Embedding Effective Hygiene for a Resilient UK made 11 key recommendations, summarised below:

- The establishment of a joint government-industry preparedness team to plan for public health emergencies.
- Minimum levels of cleaning materials and equipment to be agreed and made available in readiness.
- Thought to be given to how to increase production during a public health emergency.
- Key frontline worker status must be bestowed upon cleaning operatives and staff working in supply and manufacturing if a pandemic happens.
- Urgent consideration to be given to making cleaning staff eligible for the Skilled Worker Visa scheme.
- Minimum standards for hygiene infrastructure and cleaning in diverse venues to be agreed.
- A standard qualification for cleaning to be developed within the Apprenticeship Levy.
- Training budgets for cleaning operatives should be adequate.
- Government communications around hygiene in times of pandemic should be clear, consistent, sustained, timely, relevant and specific.
- The government should use behavioural science-based communication campaigns to promote hygienic behaviour to the public.
- The government should support the cleaning and hygiene industry in realigning perceptions of the industry.