



**Aberdeen &  
Grampian  
Chamber of  
Commerce**

22 January 2021

Fiona Hyslop MSP  
Cabinet Secretary for Economy, Fair Work and Culture  
The Scottish Government

**Sent by email**

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## **Emergency COVID-19 funding for culture**

Dear Cabinet Secretary,

On 8 December 2020, I wrote to you, alongside my colleague Stewart Nicol at Inverness Chamber of Commerce, supporting the call made by Aberdeen Performing Arts and Eden Court Highlands for additional funding.

We were therefore heartened to see that on 17 January, the Scottish Government announced that Aberdeen Performing Arts will receive £1.4M in additional COVID-19 funding support, alongside a further £800,000 for Eden Court Highlands. This brings the total in emergency COVID-19 funding received by Aberdeen Performing Arts from the Scottish Government to £2.38M.

As was clearly recognised by Jane Spiers, Chief Executive at Aberdeen Performing Arts, this financial support from the Scottish Government, alongside support from the local authority and donations from the wider community, has been absolutely crucial to ensuring the organisation's survival as the culture sector continues to operate under stringent COVID-19 restrictions.

This is great and vital news but as restrictions continue, Aberdeen Performing Arts and the many other organisations that make up our arts, culture and live events community are not out of the woods yet. We are encouraging local stakeholders to pull together to ensure the cultural sector in the North-east makes it through the other side of this crisis.

The business community in the North-east is keenly aware of the significant role that the culture and live events sector will play in spearheading our economic recovery, supporting the revival of our city centres, driving footfall to our hospitality and retail firms, and in reconnecting and re-energising communities across our region.

The Scottish Government's decision to provide this vital funding has the support of the business community across the North of Scotland. As we look towards the rays of hope offered by the vaccine, I would continue to urge you to bring together government, business and the third sector to develop a refreshed routemap for our path out of the pandemic, to ensure that all parts of our economy are able to drive our recovery when we can meaningfully ease COVID-19 restrictions in the future.

Yours sincerely,

Russell Borthwick  
**Chief Executive**  
**Aberdeen & Grampian Chamber of Commerce**



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