



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

The Rt Hon Lord Goldsmith
Minister of State
Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
Nobel House
17 Smith Square
London
SW1P 3JR

8 June 2020

Dear Minister,

I am writing ahead of the adjournment debate this Thursday to voice my support for calls to allow zoos to operate safely.

Having spoken to [REDACTED], a zoo based in my constituency I understand that there is limited support available for zoos despite the significant costs to ensure the welfare of their animals. As you will know zoos operate on a highly seasonal basis and derive the majority of their income during the summer, and it is therefore imperative that they should be able to operate as soon as it is safe to do so.

I understand that zoos across the country including [REDACTED] have said that they will be able to put in place extensive hygiene and social distancing measures. In addition to the strict hygiene rules laid out on the Zoo licence, [REDACTED] has said that it will be able to put in place multiple hot water wash stations, maintain a one-way system, limit entrance numbers, and I have no doubt that they will be working closely with local health authorities to ensure the safety of their visitors.

I have looked into the Coronavirus Zoos Support Fund, which I understand places a prerequisite for zoos to take on additional debt via the Coronavirus Bounce Back Loan or Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan. This may very well be a valid consideration for larger zoos across the UK that are in the position to diversify their income. But for [REDACTED], this will put them in a position to take on greater uncertainty whilst relying on next year's seasonal income. To my mind, the best way to proceed is by letting zoos operate safely once it is possible to do so.

I understand that the government will ultimately have to defer to the scientific advice on this matter. Equally, I share my constituent's anxiety when industries in similar circumstances, such as open-air market stalls, are able to operate.

Thank you for all your work to support our country. Please do not hesitate to get in touch with me or my constituent if there is anything else we can do to help on this matter. I wish you and your family good health and look forward to a response from you or a member of your team.

Yours sincerely,

Holly Mumby-Croft

Holly Mumby-Croft
Member of Parliament for Scunthorpe

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