**MP Letter template**

I am writing to you as one of your constituents who operates a pub locally, to ask for your commitment to back a reduction to the unfair tax burden pubs like ours face with a priority of reducing VAT. This investment will allow us to weather the storm of escalating costs, invest in our teams and diverse businesses and continue to be at the heart of our communities.

Pubs have continued to face the most extreme trading conditions that they have ever seen. Food and drink costs having risen by 40% over the last 24 months, energy costs for many are 2 to 3 times higher than pre-pandemic levels and wage costs have risen significantly to attract and retain staff. The National Living Wage (NLW) has been increased by 40% from 2020 when the newly announced levels came into force this April.

The recognition by Government of the value of pubs at the heart of communities and high streets through the extension in Business Rates Relief for a further year in 2024/25 was greatly welcomed. Whilst not increasing costs is greatly welcome, many of us that are still paying covid debts, tackling escalating costs whilst maintaining an affordable experience for our customers. These pressures cannot simply be passed through to customers as this will devastate levels of trade and drive further inflation.

Whilst sales for many are positive, this does not convert to profit and ultimately sustainable businesses. Recent data from a British Institute of Innkeeping (BII) member survey highlighted that whilst 3 out of 4 pubs are not currently profitable they continue to provide strong levels of taxation to the Treasury, but this is simply not sustainable without investment in pub businesses like ours.

I am asking you to raise the need for further investment in our fantastic local pubs with Treasury. We need a confirmation of the extension of the business rates relief for 25/26, a reduction in VAT for hospitality venues and a full reform of the outdated business rates system, ensuring they can thrive as the essential and unique venues in towns, high streets and villages across the UK.

Thank you in advance for your support - I would appreciate you taking time to come and visit our pub, to see first hand the impact and importance it has to our customers, teams and community and hear about the challenges we face that we need your support around.