To Whom It May Concern,

Following the UK Government’s announcement, on 27 November, which outlined the introduction of additional temporary restrictions on international travel following the discovery of the Omicron variant, [OPTIONAL: and further to my submission for funding for [insert business name] through [insert council]’s Additional Restrictions Grant scheme], I am writing to provide evidence in support of my application for financial support.

These new restrictions will undoubtedly impact consumer demand and hold back the travel industry’s recovery. [OPTIONAL: This latest blow will be particularly challenging for SME travel businesses, as we are less able to access quickly alternative sources of funding.] It is important that [insert council name] continues to use Additional Restrictions Grant (ARG) funding primarily for the purpose it was originally intended, which is to support businesses facing challenges as a direct result of COVID-19.

Official government guidance from BEIS in relation to the ARG scheme does in fact encourage local authorities to focus their support on “those sectors that remain closed or are severely impacted by the extended restrictions, even if those businesses have already been in receipt of Restart Grants. There is no restriction on the number of grants a business may receive. This may include but is not limited to the travel and tourism sector, including group travel, travel agents and tour operators…”.

[OPTIONAL: In particular, minsters have made it clear that travel agents should be able to continue to benefit from the ARG fund, as the Financial Secretary for the Treasury pointed out a ministerial response to a question on 16 November that:*“travel agents can continue to apply for the Additional Restrictions Grant (ARG) scheme through their local authority, which is open until March 2022.”*]

I note having looked at the Government data, that [insert Council name] had [£…..] in unspent funding dedicated to ARG as of 29 August. As I understand it, [Insert Council name] should therefore still be able to allocate, if funds permit, grants for travel businesses that have been impacted by COVID-19 restrictions in recent weeks.

[Consider stressing your personal financial circumstances and trading levels here]

Whilst the changes to international travel on the 4 October were welcome, they arrived too late to save the summer 2021 season, and on their own will not be enough to undo 20 months of damage to my business, especially in light of the return of restrictions as we approach the peak bookings season.

Other councils, such as those in Oldham and Harrogate, have already independently introduced local grants scheme specifically for impacted travel businesses. I have been given assurances that my trade association, ABTA, would be happy to work directly with council officials, if you were also willing to consider the merits of introducing a similar initiative locally.

I hope that this letter provides suitable evidence to demonstrate the impact of COVID-19 restrictions of my business’s ability to operate, and will result in favourable consideration of additional grant support. I would be happy to provide further information if required.

Yours sincerely,