

MINUTES - LIVE DMA MEMBERS MEETING – 02/12/2020

Participated: Beverley (Music Venue Trust), Gaianè (KeepOn Live), Anders (NKA), Jenna (LiveFin), Marc (Clubcircuit), Mark Adam (Vilnius Night Alliance), Juliette and Elisa (Live DMA)

Focus of the meeting: How do association discuss and foresee the reopening of live music venues with their members? How do they organize the dialogue with members about the post-covid19 challenges? What are the main trends of these discussions?

Beverley (Music Venue Trust)

MVT is currently working on a set of resources called *Revive live* – a kite mark to recognize venues who follow the agreed health & safety guidelines. Music Alliance members will have to sign an agreement that they will use these guidelines exclusively in their venues.

Revive live includes moving away from HAND (washing hands) – FACE (wear face masks) – SPACE (social distancing) towards TEST (rapid testing) – CLEAN (ventilation, antibacterial surfaces) – PREVENT (masks with coating that neutralizes the virus). MVT is working on the government on this and this new model should allow to return to full capacity audiences and with a guarantee of less than 0.01 % risk of infection. *Revive live* also include graphic tools that the venues can use to communicate to the audience & artists that they are a *Revive live* labelled venue. It is very important that audiences & artists feel that these venues are safe spaces.

MVT is currently working with the government from England to set up a pilot, but it is still difficult to come towards an agreement. They hope to set up a pilot in December with around 12 venues.

British government wants cultural activities to come back and they need solutions so that they do not need to subsidize the venues. MVT's argument is that small venues are the most manageable spaces, in terms of costs and control of a new protocol.

Mark Adam Harold (Vilnius Night Alliance)

Mark shared the initiative they developed a few months ago to kitemark Vilnius clubs as safe places (regarding contagion): www.naktis.org

Marc Steens (Clubcircuit)

Communicating to the audiences so that they become confident again to go to a gig will be a very important task. Clubcircuit noticed during the last weeks before the lockdown that around 30% of people who had a ticket did not show up

In Belgium, national security council extended the lockdown light until January 15. Shops are open, public transport runs as usual, bars & restaurants are closed, venues decided to stay closed until 31st of December, most venues will extend this period until the end of January on their own decision (January is usually a quiet period). The safety protocol is currently in code black state (severest protocols). When the protocol goes back to code red, venues will be able to reopen again under conditions.

Tomorrow they have a meeting with their members to plan a music week to focus on Belgian musicians, as well as what venues and record shops are doing for musicians. These activities will replace an award project that takes usually time at this time of the year. They expect a lot of media attention, usually the awards are covered by national broadcast organisations. The Belgian music week will take place from 8th of February to 14th of February.

Anders (NKA)

Venues can be open since May. No national lockdown in Norway, but local lockdowns in Oslo & Bergen right now. Anders thinks that lockdown in Oslo will last a long while. Government wants to wait until infection rates get really low. So no concerts there, but in the rest of the country activities can take place. Capacity restriction is 200 if you have seats that are fixed to the ground. If you have loose seats, it's 50 capacity. NKA feel that this is an absurd obligation and is working on it.

Their focus for the future: secure financial support for the members. They also worked a lot on infection control and set up a protocol for venues. They have done this together with the government and other organisations. It is a standard protocol for any cultural activity.

They are currently discussing also the upcoming festival summer: how can we open up more and increase the capacities? Fast testing is been talked about a lot. But there is no clear protocol yet.

Financial support has been good for 2020, but next year will be difficult. NKA is concerned on how members can get back on 100% activity after so much difficulties.

Jenna (LiveFIN)

In Finland, all venues closed today. The national safety protocol is organised in three phases: normal covid phase, speed phase, spreading phase (the most difficult situation). Now the spreading phase is all over the country, venues are closed, but bars are weirdly still open. LiveFIN's concern is that this is not an equal treatment and that this puts the event industry down. They try to be very vocal about this. They understand the restriction, but do not understand why there is no equal treatment of operators.

Beverley (MVT)

Beverley agrees on the fact that regulations can be absurd. Reverse situation in the UK. England is starting to open up after 4 weeks of lockdown. When the government announced what could open again, they said bars can serve drinks if they serve a full meal, however venues can open for ticketed events but are not allowed to sell drinks. They finally came to an agreement that venues can sell drinks on ticketed shows. Now the bars who are not serving meals are shouting that this is not fair. In Wales, the restriction is going to be that bars & venues can open until 6pm but without selling alcohol.

Gaianè (KeepON Live)

KeepON is waiting for new announcements tomorrow. Gaianè does not think that they will see an opening for their members yet. Good news is that calls are going out from Minister of Culture to sustain the clubs. KeepOn is monitoring this right now.

They work a lot with their members. They set up new operative groups to involve their members directly in the work of the association. They are working on awareness campaigns to bring light on what the sector is dealing with.

Elisa asks if members or members' members anticipate the spring season:

>> Marc Steens (Clubcircuit): venues do not book new bands, unless for autumn 2021. He sees that the agenda for autumn 2021 is being filled with the concerts that have been postponed. Venues start to think to organise more outside activities starting in May, but only for a limited capacity. Some venues experiment with streaming, in Ghent venues joined forces to create "live from Ghent". Some of them invest in cameras & streaming equipment. Some even hired a professional to organise these streaming sessions. Most of the venues are aware that going back to normal might only be in summer 2021. Marc feels that it's a bit like in the 90s when you can book a band only 4-6 weeks in advance, and not 6 months in advance. This can be good & bad: more flexibility, but also more uncertainty with the audience.

>> Anders (NKA): They had a festival meeting last week. Most festivals have just moved their 2020 programme to 2021. Most festivals book Norwegian acts as they expect that there will be little travelling across Europe Bigger festivals (Live Nation, Scorpio) are talking about artistic mobility and are trying to create a protocol so that artists can tour without going in quarantine (a sort of touring where the artists stays in their bubble). There is still too much uncertainty on fast testing (will it be accepted by the government? How much will it cost?). Festivals are planning for normal and adapt bit by bit on government's announcements. Anders notices that there will be a lot of competition between venues for autumn 2021 on booking.

>> Beverley (MVT): It is quite mixed in the UK, some venues work only on very short term, others look already ahead for spring. At all levels, we have seen shows move from spring 2020 to autumn 2020 to spring 2021 to autumn 2021... Beverley shares her thoughts on the artistic perspective: an artist and their project can change a lot in two year. She feels confident that it is quite likely that ways will be found for artists to travel for international tours. The bigger festival representatives have said to the government that they will need to know in January 2021 if festivals can go ahead planning or not (this is Glastonbury for example). General feeling that people do still not feel confident to plan ahead.

Jenna asks how others anticipate with the their governments the upcoming year, do they ask for timelines?

>> Anders (NKA): We have not discussed this in depths, but for the festival summer 2020, they need at least 3 months time span (this is when production usually starts). But the booking of international artists is already done.

About travelling...

>> Beverley (MVT): The idea of artists travelling across countries will be difficult. In the UK, they have also to deal with Brexit...

>> Anders (NKA): We need a protocol on this on EU level that countries can agree on. Maybe Live Nation can do it ☺

From the fast testing front...

>> Anders (NKA): It seems that Live Nation is really working on this. Some of NKA members are involved. There are 3-7 sec tests, but this will be quite expensive.

>> Beverley (MVT): Live Nation will do a pilot in Estonia that Live Nation with Festival Republic. They are waiting for the government to approve it. Probably in January 2021. Set up will be 1000 capacity, no social distancing, fast testing.