

WEEK IN WESTMINSTER

Week ending Friday 31 January

Deputy Prime Minister announces £9 million funding for EV chargepoints

Deputy Prime Minister, Nick Clegg MP, has announced that government will invest more than £9 million to boost the number of charging points for electric cars. The announcement comes on the back of the launch of the Go Ultra Low campaign, an industry and government partnership aiming to debunk common myths and misconceptions that put drivers off switching to electric or hybrid cars, such as cost and how far the vehicles can travel before being recharged. The campaign is backed by BMW, Nissan, Renault, Toyota and Vauxhall and was launched at the iconic transport venue Ace Cafe, just off the North Circular in North West London. The £9 million funding will be used to create hundreds more charging points across the country, including 140 new rapid chargepoints which can charge an electric car in less than half an hour. This will cement the UK's position as one of the best for electric vehicle recharging networks in Europe. Commenting on the announcement, Nick Clegg stated: "Electric cars are one of the most promising of our green industries and we want to secure the UK's position as a global leader in both the production and adoption of these vehicles. This announcement (sic) means we can lower UK emissions and create high-tech engineering and manufacturing jobs to boost our economy".

(Source: DPM)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/nick-cleggs-drive-to-make-uk-world-leader-in-electric-cars>



Lorries without cycle safety equipment to be banned from London

The Mayor of London, Boris Johnson, has announced a proposed plan that will use a combination of powers held by TfL and London Councils to ban lorries without cycle safety equipment from London. TfL now proposes to make a Traffic Regulation Order to ban HGVs without cyclist safety equipment on its own roads, the busiest main roads which carry about 45% of all HGV traffic in London. London Councils' Transport and Environment Committee (TEC), on which all 32 boroughs, the Corporation of London and TfL sit, proposes at its March meeting to start the process of making a pan-London Traffic Regulation Order for borough roads. Subject to a formal consultation and legal procedures, the process could be completed as early as September, and by the end of the year at the latest. The proposed ban will require every vehicle in London over 3.5 tonnes to be fitted with sideguards and mirrors giving the driver a better view of cyclists and pedestrians around their vehicles. It will be enforced by CCTV cameras and on-street checks, subject to approval by the Department for Transport. Under national legislation, many HGVs must already be fitted with this equipment. However, construction lorries, tipper trucks, waste vehicles, cement mixers and certain other forms of HGV are exempt from these and other safety requirements.

(Source: Mayor of London)

<http://www.london.gov.uk/media/mayor-press-releases/2014/01/lorries-without-cycle-safety-equipment-to-be-banned-from-london>

Government announces successful providers of £2.6m Mentor Challenge Fund

Government has announced the successful providers of the £2.6 million Mentor Challenge Fund. Thirteen projects will share £1.27 million of government funding which has been more than matched by industry for a total investment of £2.69 million. It is expected this will

help to sustain and create over 200 jobs, increase skills levels in participating firms and generate increased sales in excess of £7 million. The projects cover 10 different sectors including creative industries, life sciences and manufacturing, and will provide mentors to ambitious company bosses in these industries. Launching the Mentor Challenge Fund in Gloucester, the Skills and Enterprise Minister Matthew Hancock stated: "Growing a business is hard work and we want to do everything we can to support ambitious entrepreneurs. The best source of advice for businesses comes from others in their field who have been through it and can offer practical, trusted advice. As well as ensuring these businesses receive sector specific mentoring, we hope this raises the profile of how valuable this kind of help can be." Successful projects include the Northamptonshire Enterprise Partnership and the National Composites Centre.

(Source: BIS)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/ambitious-small-businesses-given-tailored-expertise-to-grow>



New CBI indicator reveals fastest pace of growth in economic output since 2007

The CBI has launched its Growth Indicator a new monthly composite of the leading business organisation's economic surveys spanning manufacturing, retail and the services sector. It offers an early perspective on economic growth and covers close to 75% of the private sector economy. When compared with historic composite CBI economic data, the first Growth Indicator of 630 respondents, shows the fastest pace of growth in output volumes (+30%) since September 2007 (+30%). This reflects the recent strong performances seen across the business and professional services, consumer and distribution sectors, while the manufacturing sector posted decent growth. Companies also have a positive outlook with

an expectation of robust output growth (+28%) for the next quarter.

(Source: CBI)

<http://www.cbi.org.uk/media-centre/press-releases/2014/01/new-cbi-indicator-reveals-fastest-pace-of-growth-in-economic-output-since-2007/>

New EPSRC Chief Executive appointed

Universities and Science Minister, David Willetts, has announced the appointment of Professor Philip Nelson as chief executive and deputy chair of the Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council (EPSRC). Professor Nelson is Professor of Acoustics at the University of Southampton where he has served as Pro Vice-Chancellor for Research and Enterprise from 2005-2013, as Director of the University's Institute of Sound and Vibration Research (ISVR) from 2001 to 2005, and as the founder Director of the Rolls-Royce University Technology Centre in Gas Turbine Noise from 1999 to 2001. He also served as President of the International Commission for Acoustics from 2004 to 2007. The appointment is for 4 years and Professor Nelson will take up his post on 1 April 2014 as the permanent successor to Professor Dave Delpy.

(Source: BIS)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/professor-philip-nelson-appointed-as-chief-executive-and-deputy-chair-of-the-engineering-and-physical-sciences-research-council>

Week ahead

Commons Chamber

Thursday 6 February

9.30am: Transport questions

Commons Committees

Monday 3 February

Communities and Local Government Committee (4.15pm, Grimond room): Fiscal devolution to cities and city regions

House of Lords

No relevant activity