

EU referendum update

PM Speech

Prime Minister, David Cameron, delivered a speech setting out the economic arguments why Britain should remain in the EU in a visit to Vauxhall on Thursday 10 March. Mr Cameron stated that people want the facts and arguments about the EU presented in a "calm and rational way". He said Leave campaigners' assurances that Britain could quickly strike favourable trade deals with the EU after exit were based on "guess work, at a time when we need facts". One fact, he suggested, was that "it takes years to strike trade deals". Mr Cameron also criticised opponents who he claims are willing to sacrifice economic prosperity for wider political goals. "For those who advocate leaving, lost jobs and a dented economy might be collateral damage, or a price worth paying. For me, they're not. They never are." (Source: [Number 10](#))

Mark Carney (Bank of England) statement

Bank of England governor, Mark Carney, told the Treasury Committee that an exit vote could create economic uncertainty, although he added that remaining in the EU also carried risks. Mr Carney emphasised the Bank was not taking sides in the EU referendum. But Conservative MP Jacob Rees-Mogg accused him of making "pro-EU" comments. The governor told the committee that an exit posed the biggest "domestic" risk in part because there could be uncertainty over such things as investment, household spending, and the impact on sterling. Mr Carney said: "It is the biggest domestic risk to financial stability. I would say that in my judgement the global risks, including from China, are bigger than the domestic risks." However, he told the committee that continued EU membership brought risks as well. "The principal risk - risks, I should say, because there are more than one - are associated with the unfinished business of European Monetary Union," Mr Carney said. Separately, in a letter sent to Treasury Committee chairman Andrew Tyrie, Mr Carney said that Britain's membership of the EU had reinforced the "dynamism of the UK economy", and that the relationship had helped the UK to grow. The governor also said in his letter that Prime Minister David Cameron's EU renegotiation deal, which comes into effect only if the UK votes to remain in the EU, "delivers a number of

protections and additional tools that will help safeguard the Bank's ability to continue to achieve its statutory objectives". (Source: [Parliament.uk](#))



Further Apprenticeship Levy details to be announced post-Budget

In a statement to parliament on the Apprenticeships Levy, Nick Boles, Minister for Skills, assured businesses that more than 12 months' notice will be given to everyone regarding the details of how the Levy will work. Mr Boles went on to state that if all questions on the Levy are not fully answered in April, he will be severely disappointed. The Minister also sought to clarify how SMEs outside of the Levy scope will continue to be funded by stating "We expect them (SMEs) to carry on receiving Government money for apprenticeships in the same way as they do now. We do not expect all companies that pay the levy to use up all the money in their digital accounts, and there will be a great deal more money to go around, so we are absolutely determined that the level of apprenticeships provided by SMEs will continue as now." The Minister also noted that the Institute for Apprenticeships will come into being in shadow form this spring, after which it will have 12 months to start taking over its responsibilities before formally taking over in April 2017. The Minister provided his statement ahead of National Apprenticeships Week, which begins on 14 March.

(Source: [Parliament.uk](#))

Shadow CEO of Institute for Apprenticeships appointed

Rachel Sandby-Thomas CB has been appointed to the role of shadow CEO of the Institute for Apprenticeships. The Institute for Apprenticeships (IfA) will be operational from April 2017. It will support the delivery of a world-class apprenticeship programme for England, giving employers control and decision-making over content and quality of apprenticeship standards. The IfA will be employer-led; an independent chair will lead the work of a small board made up primarily of employers, business leaders and their representatives, to ensure employers continue to drive apprenticeship quality to the highest level. A shadow Chair will be appointed later this Spring, and the board members will be appointed through a public appointments process by the end of 2016. Rachel will take up the new role from the 4 April 2016 and Jae Samant will be temporarily promoted to the role of Director General for Skills, Deregulation and Local Growth. (Source: [BIS](#))

Northern transport strategy spring report published

The Northern transport strategy spring 2016 report has been launched by Transport for the North and the Department for Transport. The report sets out plans for transformative projects such as Northern Powerhouse rail and Smart North – a system to help passengers switch easily between buses, trains and trams across the region while ensuring value for money. Initial reports on 2 studies have been published that look at dramatically improving the 'strategic road network' in the north; one study is looking at improving east-west road connections across the northern Pennines and another considering how improvements to the transport network around Manchester can alleviate congestion on the M60, supporting growth in the region. TfN now represents all local enterprise partnerships and all combined authorities and local transport authorities in the north and, with £50 million confirmed funding over this Parliament, TfN is continuing to grow its capability and capacity towards statutory status by early 2017. (Source: [DfT](#))

2016 Queen's Speech date announced

The Leader of the House of Commons Chris Grayling has announced that the date of State Opening of Parliament will be Wednesday 18 May. This is a reversal of the decision taken last week when Ministers were told that the government's legislative programme would be put off until after the June vote to clear the decks to allow a full campaign on the case for remaining in the EU. Commentators have speculated that the reversal is due to Mr Cameron growing increasingly disconcerted at the ferocity of the EU debate. (Source: [Parliament.uk](#))

Week ahead

Commons Committees

Monday 14 March

- **Transport Committee: Vehicle Type Approval – Mike Hawes (4:05pm, Wilson room)**

Tuesday 8 March

- BIS Committee (9:30am, room 8) – Exports and the role of UKTI

Wednesday 16 March

- ECC Committee (9:30am, room 8) – Setting the fifth carbon budget

Commons Chamber

Tuesday 15 March

- BIS questions

Wednesday 16 March

- **Budget statement**

Westminster Hall debate

Tuesday 15 March

- Engineering skills and design and technology education (Michelle Donelan, Con) – 9:30am-11:00am