

UKH2 Mobility Phase 1 report published

The full report for Phase 1 of the UKH2 Mobility project has been published by the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills. The project - which brings together businesses from the automotive, energy, infrastructure and retail sectors with government - produced the report to provide a 'roadmap' for the introduction of vehicles and hydrogen refuelling infrastructure in the UK. The report provides further details and background to the findings published in the interim report on 4 February 2013 and predicts over one and a half million hydrogen powered vehicles could be on UK roads by 2030. Building on the roadmap developed in Phase 1, the second phase of UKH2 Mobility will:

- Develop a detailed business case and an overarching framework to enable all entities involved to commit to specific actions
- Identify instruments and mechanisms necessary to overcome the barriers to achieving the roadmap. As identified in Phase 1, the key points to address are:
 - The commercial model for the construction of the initial network of hydrogen refuelling stations
 - Options for improving the early consumer proposition, and
 - The means to establish a clear pathway, with controls, to the production of low carbon hydrogen with the right purity for fuel cell electric vehicles

Commenting on the report, Business Minister, Michael Fallon MP, stated: "Securing new economic opportunities for the UK, diversifying our national energy supply and driving down carbon emissions go to the heart of my job in government. The findings of the report demonstrate hydrogen fuel cell electric vehicles can have a real impact on all three."

(Source: BIS)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/michael-fallon-welcomes-publication-of-hydrogen-cars-report>

Car output falls in Q1 but growth still expected in 2013

Figures published by SMMT show that UK car manufacturing fell 6.3% in March to 126,909 units,

with volumes during Q1 also declining, down 2% to 393,416 units. However, UK car manufacturing is still expected to grow overall in 2013 and beyond, fuelled by significant investment by global automotive companies. UK commercial vehicle and engine manufacturing also declined in March, down 18.8% and 6 % respectively. (Source: SMMT)

<http://www.smmt.co.uk/2013/04/car-output-falls-in-q1-but-growth-expected-in-full-year/>



UK targets Brazilian market for automotive sector growth

The Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, Dr Vince Cable MP, has confirmed the opening of a new Vehicle Certification Agency (VCA) office in Sao Paulo. The Sao Paulo office will be the first to be opened in Latin America, and will allow manufacturers in the auto sector to export more easily to emerging markets. VCA offices support the automotive industry by verifying that cars and parts imported into local markets from the UK and elsewhere, comply with EU Directives and Regulations, as well as UN environmental and safety standards. The VCA office in Brazil will also allow manufacturers based locally to export from Brazil to the wider region, opening up new markets and further benefiting the UK economy. Commenting on the announcement, Dr Cable stated: "UK manufacturers are planning to more than double their sales in Brazil in the coming years. By opening a VCA office in Sao Paulo we can make sure exports are not being held up unnecessarily."

(Source: BIS)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/uk-targets-brazilian-market-for-automotive-sector-growth>

TfL confirms detail for new Congestion Charge discount

The Mayor of London, Boris Johnson, has confirmed his decision to introduce a new Ultra Low Emission Discount (ULED) for the Congestion Charge scheme. Changes to the scheme include a newly defined emissions level of 75g/km CO₂ (and Euro 5) to qualify for the ULED, with vans also eligible for the discount. The ULED will be introduced on 1 July 2013. Those who are already registered under the existing Greener Vehicle Discount regime will continue to receive the discount for three years until 24 June 2016, with the Greener Vehicle Discount and Electric Vehicle Discount to be closed to new registrations on 28 June 2013. Further detail includes:

- Plug-in hybrid cars must additionally have a minimum range of 10 miles in 'electric' mode and have a maximum speed of at least 60 mph. Transport for London (TfL) will publish a list of eligible vehicles
- Plug-in hybrid vans must additionally have a minimum range of 10 miles in 'electric' mode and a maximum speed of at least 50 mph. TfL will publish a list of eligible vehicles
- Pure electric cars, commercial vehicles and quadricycles and plug-in hybrid electric cars that are currently eligible for the Electric Vehicle Discount would all qualify for the new Ultra Low Emission Discount

(Source: TfL)

<http://www.tfl.gov.uk/corporate/media/newscentre/27798.aspx>

Westminster Hall debate on Plug-in vehicles

A Westminster Hall debate on Plug-in Vehicles was held on Thursday 25 April. Called by Louise Ellman MP, Chair of the Transport Select Committee, the debate was based around the Committee's report on 'Plug-in Vehicles, Plugged-in Policy' on government's policy on the promotion of low carbon vehicles. Ms Ellman discussed the importance of reducing emissions from cars in order to meet carbon reduction targets. Ms Ellman noted government's focus on creating incentives for industry to develop the technologies that reduce emissions and create a market for plug-in vehicles, highlighting the Plug-In Car Grant as 'the most eye-catching aspect of government policy'. However, Ms Ellman stated that the Committee had received evidence that there was a lack of consumer awareness about the Plug-In Car Grant and noted her belief that government targets for

take-up were unlikely to be met. Ms Ellman also noted issues around charging infrastructure, such as the lack of a national network. Norman Baker, Parliamentary-Under Secretary of State for Transport stated that government remained fully behind the drive towards low-carbon vehicles "because it is environmentally sensible and because it represents a significant opportunity for British industry and British jobs to get ahead." Mr Baker highlighted that creating growth and cutting carbon were "two sides of the same coin" and that the 2011 Carbon Plan laid out government's intentions to tackle greenhouse gas emissions. Mr Baker noted that government was determined to create the right conditions and infrastructure for the development of an early market for ultra-low emission vehicles and highlighted the investment that government had committed to encourage consumer uptake. (Source: Transport Select Committee)

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/committees/committees-a-z/commons-select/transport-committee/>

BIS Committee publishes LEP report

The Business, Innovation and Skills Select Committee has published a report on Local Enterprise Partnerships. The report states that LEPs are key drivers of strong regional economic growth, and welcomes government's commitment to providing core funding for LEPs for the next two financial years. However, the report argues that the timescale is too short to allow LEPs to make long-term investments and urges government to provide the certainty and security that LEPs need to drive long-term growth by setting the levels of their core funding for the five years from 2015 now. The Report also recommends that government appoints a single Minister with responsibility and accountability for LEPs, and that the Minister should be based in the BIS Department as should all LEP contact officers. The report also focuses on the skills remit of LEPs, recommending that they be required to demonstrate their levels of engagement with local education, in particular with skills and apprenticeship providers, FE colleges and schools. (Source: BIS Select Committee)

<http://www.parliament.uk/business/committees/committees-a-z/commons-select/business-innovation-and-skills/news/publ-leps-report/>

Week ahead

The House of Commons and House of Lords are prorogued until May 8.