

WEEK IN WESTMINSTER

Week ending Friday 28 April

CBI report calls for government to 'bolster the UK's attractiveness to investors'

The CBI has published a report looking at the attractiveness of the UK as a place to invest. The report 'Making the UK the best place to invest' makes the case for business investment in the UK, outlining strengths and opportunities for international investment. Particular drivers for investment included the UK's science base and R&D capabilities, with barriers to investment including the lack of a long-term predictability in business incentives, skills shortages in science, technology and maths and the impact of regulation. The report calls on government to implement recommendations to improve the case for investment, which include stimulating new market activity, using public procurement intelligently, supporting business-led academies and extending apprenticeships. John Cridland, CBI Director-General, said: "We want the UK to be the best place for companies to invest because this is how we will create growth and jobs. But it is worrying how many business leaders are telling us that the UK no longer holds the same attraction it once did and are questioning whether they need to be here at all. The Budget and Plan for Growth were a good start, but the Government now has to completely transform the investment landscape." (Source: CBI)

[http://www.cbi.org.uk/ndbs/press.nsf/0363c1f07c6ca12a8025671c00381cc7/3690f723e5fb1de180257873005bfa53/\\$FILE/Making%20the%20UK%20the%20best%20place%20to%20invest%20-%20CBI.pdf](http://www.cbi.org.uk/ndbs/press.nsf/0363c1f07c6ca12a8025671c00381cc7/3690f723e5fb1de180257873005bfa53/$FILE/Making%20the%20UK%20the%20best%20place%20to%20invest%20-%20CBI.pdf)

London bus trial launched to tackle air pollution

Transport for London (TfL) has launched a trial to improve air pollution caused by buses in the capital. 18 buses will be retrofitted with specialist equipment to reduce the amount of nitrous oxide (NOx) emissions. The Mayor's Air Quality Strategy for London looks to introduce Euro IV standards for all

buses by 2015. TfL estimates that 2,700 of the 8,500 buses in London's fleet will have to be retrofitted or replaced to meet the Euro IV standard. Boris Johnson, the Mayor of London said: "We are making huge strides in cleaning up the Capital's bus fleet, not least by developing the New Bus for London, which will pump out 40% less pollutants than a standard, traditional diesel bus. We are running the UK's only hydrogen bus route which emits only pure water and are now embarking on this bus trial, all of which form part of our continued efforts to improve London's air quality." The trial will be carried out on three different types of buses and will be carried out for a year. The tendering process for equipment manufacturers is open for bids. (Source: TfL)

<http://www.tfl.gov.uk/corporate/media/newscentre/19803.aspx>



Car output rises by 14.8% in March

The UK automotive figures for March 2011 have been published. Figures have shown that car output rose by 14.8% in March 2011 and was up 13.0% over the first quarter. CV output fell by 6.0% in March and was down 0.8% over the first three months of the year. UK engine production increased by 6.5% in March and by 9.4% over quarter one. Paul Everitt, SMMT Chief Executive, said: "The eighth consecutive monthly rise in car output and robust export demand indicate long-term strength and stability in the sector. However, recent announcements from UK-based manufacturers impacted by the Japanese earthquake are likely to see output drop in the short-term." (Source: SMMT)



UK records growth of 0.5% in the first quarter of 2011

Gross Domestic Product (GDP) increased by 0.5% in the first quarter of 2011, following a decrease of 0.5% in the fourth quarter of 2010. GDP is estimated now to have returned to the level in the third quarter of 2010. Total services output increased by 0.9% in the first quarter compared with a decrease of 0.6% in the previous quarter. Growth in this quarter was from business services and finance, with an increase of 1%, compared with a decline of 0.8% in the previous quarter. Total production output rose 0.4% in the first quarter of 2011, compared with an increase of 0.8% in the previous quarter. The largest contribution to the growth in this quarter was from manufacturing, with a 1.1% increase compared with a similar increase of 1.1% in the previous quarter. (Source: Office for National Statistics)

www.statistics.gov.uk/cci/nugget.asp?id=192