

See Inside Manufacturing 2012 begins

Throughout June, around 30 UK automotive sites will open their doors to young people, as part of government's 'See Inside Manufacturing' initiative, aiming to challenge perceptions of the industry and encourage more students to consider a career in engineering. Companies across the UK will host a range of hands-on activities designed to highlight the breadth of career opportunities available within the automotive sector. Launched by government and supported through the Automotive Council, the motor industry pioneered the very first 'See Inside Manufacturing' initiative last year, providing students with a valuable insight to modern manufacturing. The initiative aims to challenge perceptions that the UK has an outdated manufacturing sector and encourage more young people to take up Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) subjects, in order to boost the UK's skills base. Students and teachers who responded to a survey of last year's automotive pilot were exceptionally positive leading Business Secretary, Vince Cable, to announce its return and expansion to the aerospace, defence, and food and drink sectors in 2012. Commenting on the launch of the initiative, Business Minister Mark Prisk stated: "See Inside Manufacturing is about changing perceptions of modern manufacturing and showing young people, teachers and careers advisers that the industry offers interesting and rewarding job opportunities. I'm delighted that SMMT and the automotive sector are once again pledging their support to the programme following the successful trial last year. It's encouraging to have iconic names like Allied Vehicles, Aston Martin, BMW, Honda and Jaguar Land Rover all signing up to take part. Last year thousands of people got to see just what exciting opportunities lie in the sector and wider supply chain, and I urge people to come along and see for themselves what modern manufacturing is all about". (Source: SMMT)

<http://www.smmt.co.uk/2012/06/uk-automotive-delivers-impressive-support-as-government%E2%80%99s-%E2%80%98see-inside-manufacturing%E2%80%99-initiative-returns/>

Private motor insurance market provisionally referred to Competition Commission

The Office of Fair Trading (OFT) has provisionally decided to refer the private motor insurance market to the Competition Commission after it found evidence that insurers compete in a dysfunctional way that may push up premiums for drivers by £225 million a year. OFT has stated that the market would work better if insurers competed primarily on the quality and value of the service each provides to insured drivers, rather than focusing on gaining the competitive edge through raising rival insurers' costs and increasing their own revenues. Interested parties wishing to respond to the consultation on the proposed market investigation reference can send written representations to the OFT before 6 July and the OFT expects to reach a final decision by October 2012. (Source: OFT)

<http://www.of.gov.uk/news-and-updates/press/2012/44-12>



Business Finance Partnership open for applications

Government has issued two Requests for Proposals to manage the remaining £500m available through the Business Finance Partnership (BFP). The BFP aims to ease the flow of credit to small and mid-sized businesses in the UK by diversifying their sources of finance and making them less reliant on bank lending. It is part of a wider £21 billion credit easing programme being taken forward by government to

open up new channels of finance for businesses. £100 million of the fund will be invested through non-traditional lending channels that lend directly to small businesses by the Department of Business, Innovation and Skills. The remaining £400 million will be invested by the Treasury through managed funds that lend directly to mid-sized businesses. The application process is open until midday on 20 July 2012, and the Requests for Proposals provide the necessary information to decide whether to submit a proposal to HM Treasury or BIS along with information to ensure that their response is in accordance with government's requirements. (Source: BIS) <http://www.bis.gov.uk/news/topstories/2012/May/Business%20Finance%20Partnerships>



Transport secretary speaks at LowCVP conference

Transport Secretary, Justine Greening MP, has pledged her support to the UK's low carbon vehicles industry, calling for the UK to 'seize the moment' and position itself for a leadership role in the sector. Speaking at the LowCVP's Annual Conference, Ms Greening predicted that the UK is moving rapidly along the low carbon vehicle adoption curve and that developments will "start to pick up speed over the next 12-24 months and gain real traction". Elaborating on her vision for the future, Ms Greening stated that technological developments in low carbon vehicles are now picking up pace and this is making them an increasingly reliable and viable choice for consumers in terms of their motoring needs today. She cited the example of Nissan, which predicts it will sell 1.5 million zero emission cars by 2016. Despite the recent focus on electric vehicles, the Transport Secretary said that government is determined to be technology neutral, stating "We should also remember that decarbonising road transport is not just about the cars and vans we drive. Nor indeed is it just about electric vehicles. It's also about the public transport, haulage,

and even the sustainability of the fuels we produce - and the DfT has been keen not to lose sight of these things". (Source: LowCVP) <http://www.lowcvp.org.uk/news/1820/transport-secretary-calls-for-uk-to-seize-the-moment-and-grab-a-share-of-green-growth-and-jobs-atlowcvp-conference/>

Week ahead

House of Commons

The House of Commons is on recess and will return on Monday 11 June

House of Lords

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