

WEEK IN WESTMINSTER

Week ending Friday 19 August

TfL announce plan to tackle pollution levels using Clean Air Fund

Transport for London (TfL) has announced a package of measures to tackle pollution levels at the busiest roads in central London. These measures are to be financed from a £5 million Clean Air Fund from the Department for Transport, to be spent this financial year, and are anticipated to reduce local pollution levels of particulate matter (PM10) by between 10-20%, where applied. The Clean Air Fund will initially be used on 3 main initiatives; the expansion of the dust suppressant trial, that sticks particulate matter to the carriageway and prevents it from re-circulating in the air, a "No Engine Idling" campaign, to deter unnecessary engine running from all motor vehicles when stationary, and a greening infrastructure plan to trap pollution on Lower Thames Street, using green towers (six foot tall planters). Air quality modelling has shown that the vast majority of London already meets the European Commission limit value for annual average PM10, but there are some local hotspots identified as being 'at risk' of exceeding limits. The European Commission recently confirmed to the UK government that plans to reduce PM10 pollution by a third by 2015 - including the work of the Clean Air Fund - has lifted the threat of fines. Kulveer Ranger, the Mayor of London's Director of Environment and Digital London, stated: "Pollution is a serious health issue and the Mayor is determined to reduce its impact. A comprehensive package of clean up measures including innovative technology, is now being targeted where most needed in central London. In addition, action is being taken to deliver a permanent legacy of cleaner air right across the Capital. This includes the first ever age limit for black cabs, tighter standards for the Low Emission Zone, cleaner buses, including the New Bus for London, and an expanded bike hire scheme". (Source: TfL)

<http://www.tfl.gov.uk/corporate/projectsandschemes/19853.aspx>



11 new Enterprise Zones announced by government

The location of 11 new Enterprise Zones, designed to boost local growth and create over 30,000 new jobs by 2015, have been announced by Prime Minister, David Cameron, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, George Osborne, and the Communities Secretary, Eric Pickles, bringing the total number of Enterprise Zones across the UK to 22. A number of the 11 new Enterprise zones include automotive as a specific focus, namely the MIRA Technology Park in Hinckley, the Black Country Enterprise Zone and the Solent Enterprise Zone. Enterprise Zones are part of government's Plan for Growth, and will benefit from superfast broadband, lower taxes, and low levels of regulation and planning controls, in order to boost investment and exports. Prime Minister, David Cameron, stated: "We are determined to do everything we can to make Britain the best place in the world to start and grow a business. Enterprise Zones are a major step towards delivering this; cutting business taxes, easing planning restrictions and giving business the tools they need to invest and expand. These new Enterprise Zones will be trailblazers for growth, jobs and prosperity throughout the country". (Source: DCLG)

<http://www.communities.gov.uk/news/newsroom/1967595>

Vehicle manufacturing in July continues trend of positive growth

Figures announced by SMMT show UK car manufacturing rose by 1.3% in July, with a total of 98,094 cars being produced during the month. This follows the trend of positive growth this year, with car manufacturing figures for the year-to-date up 3.7% on 2010 figures. Commercial vehicle production figures are less positive, as output fell by 5.9% in July and was down 5.1% over the year-to-date; however total vehicle production for 2011 is still up 2.9% on 2010. UK engine production is also up on the year to date by 4.0%, despite a fall of 0.4% in July. Paul Everitt, Chief Executive of SMMT, stated: "Economic growth remains fragile but thanks to a strong export market, automotive manufacturing continues to outperform the broader economy. SMMT expects vehicle and engine production to continue to rise fuelled by demand in the fast growing BRIC economies, as well as mainland Europe and the US. The UK industry is globally recognised for its high quality, innovative design and exceptional reliability". (Source: SMMT)
<http://www.smmt.co.uk/2011/08/smmt-uk-automotive-manufacturing-july-2011/>



TfL announce bus NOx pilot to improve air quality

TfL has announced EminoX and HSJ as suppliers for a pilot scheme to improve air quality in London. The scheme will provide the installation of specialist pollution reducing equipment – Selective Catalytic Reduction (SCR), aimed at reducing NOx emissions on 18 London buses. The system reduces oxides of nitrogen (NOx) to harmless nitrogen and water. The Mayor's Air Quality Strategy proposes that, subject to Government support, by 2015 all buses in London will

meet the Euro IV standard for NOx. While the majority of the 8,500 buses in the Capital's fleet are already compliant it is estimated that around 2,700 buses will need to be retrofitted this way to meet this standard. Mike Weston, London Buses Operations Director, stated: "London continues to work hard to find ways to improve the emissions and environmental performance of the bus fleet. Already operating one of the cleanest fleets in Europe, London leads the way by trialling new technology, introducing more environmentally friendly hybrid and hydrogen buses to meet tough EU targets which will protect the health of Londoners". (Source: TfL)

<http://www.tfl.gov.uk/corporate/media/newscentre/20778.aspx>

Week ahead

House of Commons

The House of Commons is in recess. The House will next sit on Monday 5 September 2011.

House of Lords

The House of Lords is in recess. The House will next sit on Monday 5 September 2011.