

Liberal Democrats pass policy motion on green transport

The Liberal Democrats have passed a policy motion at their annual party conference event on their Transition to a Zero Carbon Britain policy paper. This paper contains a section on decarbonising the transport sector with a particular focus on taking action to reduce private vehicle emissions. These proposals include:

- Supporting ambitious EU emissions targets for cars, of around 70g CO₂ /km, to take effect in 2025.
- Supporting tighter EU emissions targets for vans.
- Developing a Vehicle Emissions Duty (VED) escalator linked to the EU targets with a subsidy for the cleanest vehicles, paid for by higher VED on the highest emission vehicles.
- Preparing for the introduction of a revenue-neutral system of road pricing and supporting local authorities introducing road pricing in congested areas.
- Specifying that, by 2040, only ultra-low carbon vehicles will be permitted on UK roads for non-freight purposes.

(Source: Liberal Democrats)

<http://www.libdems.org.uk/siteFiles/resources/Autumn%20Conf%202013/Aut13%20Agenda%20for%20web2.pdf>

SMMT hosts Liberal Democrat breakfast roundtable event

Rt Hon Dr Vince Cable MP, Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills has praised the UK automotive industry at an SMMT breakfast event held at the Liberal Democrat Party Conference in Glasgow. His acknowledgement of the sector's performance came as he opened round table discussions addressing the implementation of government's industrial strategy for UK automotive. Vince Cable also reflected on the success of the Automotive Council noting that the automotive industry is proving

to be a good model for growth. Commenting on the industrial strategy, the Business Secretary said that industry and government needed to have a long-term framework for collaboration. He also spoke of the importance of the UK's role in Europe and giving priority to the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership. Liberal Democrat MPs, MEPs and policy advisors, including Simon Wright MP and Dr John Pugh MP joined the debate with SMMT representatives and SMMT Chief Executive Mike Hawes. Mr Hawes spoke on behalf of the industry, outlining the recent investments and reflecting that strength is rooted in the sector's diversity and dynamism.

(Source: SMMT)

<http://www.smmt.co.uk/2013/09/vince-cable-highlights-automotive-industry-success-at-lib-dem-party-conference/>

UK car manufacturing grows 16.2% in August

Figures released by SMMT shows that UK car manufacturing grew 16.2% in August with 91,282 cars built, up 12,705 units on 2012. This is the third successive monthly gain and pushes year-to-date volumes up 3.1% to 984,545 units. Commenting on the announcement Mike Hawes, SMMT Chief Executive, stated: "UK car manufacturing is continuing to grow with global automotive brands building on UK-based design, R&D and engineering expertise to produce some of the world's most dynamic, dependable and desirable vehicles. Despite August typically being one of the year's quietest months due to summer breaks, the past 12 months has been the most productive since late 2008." Whilst car manufacturing continues to rise UK commercial vehicle output declined in August, down 51.1% to 3,694 units. Year-to-date output is also down, 16.6% in the first eight months of 2013 to 60,646 units, and output is expected to remain subdued throughout 2013. This fall in demand can be attributed to the UK commercial vehicle market's reliance on the European market, which has been impacted by ongoing uncertainty in Eurozone countries, as well as model changes and restructuring of some domestic operations. UK engine manufacturing also fell in

August, down 16.4% to 124,614 units, however the year-to-date figures remain stable up 0.3%.

(Source: SMMT)

<http://www.smmmt.co.uk/2013/09/uk-car-manufacturing-grows-16-2-in-august/>

EEF publishes analysis of industrial strategy

EEF, the manufacturers' organisation, has published an analysis of government's industrial strategy one year on. The document states that the outlook for growth has improved but there is still a long way to go to create a more sustainable recovery with EEF calling for government to be clearer about its economic priorities and to get every part of government behind achieving them, if it is to translate the latest round of positive data into long-term growth and improved living standards. The report notes that although the government has taken a number of positive steps to encourage investment in new equipment and research and development and to support exporters, there is only limited progress in creating a more balanced growth. In response, EEF has made the following recommendations for government priorities:

1. Get competition in business banking going and get more businesses engaging with banks by measures to improve full account portability, increase incentives to switch accounts and reduce barriers to entry for Challenger banks.
2. Develop a more strategic approach to Infrastructure investment by accepting the Armit Review recommendations for a National Infrastructure Commission
3. Take action to improve the competitiveness of electricity prices paid by business through tight control of support for low carbon investment, making a long-term commitment to support for energy intensive industries and, addressing unilateral costs imposed by Carbon Price Floor
4. Speed up progress on deregulation, particularly in the areas of employment and climate and environment
5. Develop plans to secure greater commitment across the EU for reduced regulation and for implementing EU regulation in a lighter touch way
6. Build consensus to reform public funding of skills investment to put money in the hands of the customer.

(Source: EEF)

<http://www.eef.org.uk/releases/uk/2011/Industrial-Strategy-%E2%80%93-Growth-engine-now-running-but-need-clarity-on-where-we-are-driving---EEF.htm>

Visiting Fellowship scheme launched by EPSRC

A new visiting Fellowship scheme, that aims to strengthen the relationship between academics and the manufacturing sector and accelerate the transition of research from the laboratory to adoption by industry, has been launched at the second annual EPSRC Manufacturing the Future conference taking place at Cranfield University. The first group of fellows, funded by the Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council (EPSRC), will spend time carrying out research at one or more of the seven Centres of Excellence that collectively form the Technology Strategy Board's (TSB) High Value Manufacturing (HVM) Catapult. The aims of the scheme are to increase academic involvement in the HVM Catapult and accelerate the impact of EPSRC-funded research.

(Source: EPSRC)

<http://www.epsrc.ac.uk/newsevents/news/2013/Pages/manufacturingfellowships.aspx>

CBI: Manufacturing recovery continues to strengthen

The latest CBI Industrial Trends Survey has shown that growth in the UK's manufacturing sector is continuing to pick up, with orders at their highest level since the start of the financial crisis. The survey of nearly 400 manufacturers found that total orders rose for the fifth consecutive month, while exports orders also grew strongly. Meanwhile, output growth for the three months to September rose to its highest rate since August 2011. Output is expected to rise strongly again over the next three months. With demand building across the UK and globally, stocks have fallen to their lowest level since last November. But inflationary pressures remain muted, with average prices expected to remain relatively steady over the next three months.

(Source: CBI)

<http://www.cbi.org.uk/media-centre/press-releases/2013/09/manufacturing-recovery-continues-to-strengthen-cbi-survey/>

Week ahead

Labour Party Conference:
22 – 25 September

The House of Commons is on recess until 8 October.

The House of Lords is on recess until 8 October.