

WEEK IN WESTMINSTER

Week ending Friday 23 September

Vince Cable MP calls for “cars not casinos” in Lib Dem conference speech

In his keynote speech to the Liberal Democrat Party Conference, Business Minister, Rt Hon Vince Cable MP referenced the announcement of JLR’s £355m investment into the UK, stating that, “it is a massive boost for British manufacturing, and the region. That’s what I mean by a business recovery, cars not casinos”. The conference focused on reassuring the Liberal Democrat party faithful that they did the right thing in joining a coalition government with the Conservatives, with Deputy Prime Minister Nick Clegg repeating the mantra that the party had done “not what was easy, but right”. Key outcomes from the conference included the announcement of £50m investment in summer schools for disadvantaged children, tighter scrutiny on executive pay and tax evasion, a reassertion of the Lib Dem commitment to the Human Rights Act, and action promised on improving deals for consumers from energy companies. (Source: LibDems.org) <http://www.libdems.org.uk/home.aspx>

Jaguar Land Rover invests £355m in UK low-emission engine plant

Jaguar Land Rover (JLR) has confirmed it will invest £355 million in a new facility to manufacture all-new, advanced technology, low-emission engines in the UK. The announcement of the investment by JLR was marked by a visit to the company’s Solihull vehicle production plant by Rt Hon Nick Clegg MP, Deputy Prime Minister and Rt Hon Dr Vince Cable MP, Secretary of State for Business Innovation and Skills. The new advanced engine facility will be built within an “enterprise zone” at a business park near Wolverhampton in the UK’s Midlands. Commenting on the announcement SMMT Chief Executive, Paul Everitt stated: “Government now needs to build on this

momentum, working closely with the Automotive Council to help deliver growth in automotive manufacturing and the supply chain”. In further good news for the automotive industry, The Opel group has announced that 10 years after the first Vauxhall Vivaro rolled off Luton’s assembly line, over half a million have now been built at the plant. (Source: SMMT) <http://www.smmt.co.uk/2011/09/jaguar-land-rover-invests-355-million-in-uk-low-emission-engine-plant/>



SMMT host breakfast roundtable at Lib Dem Conference

SMMT hosted a breakfast event at the Liberal Democrat Party Conference in Birmingham to discuss the role of UK automotive in stimulating economic growth. SMMT and industry representatives met key Liberal Democrat MPs, MEPs and policy advisors, including Gordon Birtwistle MP, Parliamentary Private Secretary to Danny Alexander MP, Chief Secretary to the Treasury, and former Shadow Transport Minister John Pugh MP. Sir Graham Watson MEP, former leader of the Liberal Group in the European Parliament, opened the roundtable discussion by outlining the Liberal Democrats’ position on the automotive industry and welcomed recent investment announcements in the UK motor industry. Mr Watson emphasised the need to secure greater investment from outside the UK in order to stimulate further growth in the sector. SMMT Chief Executive Paul Everitt spoke on behalf of UK automotive, outlining

industry's full commitment to work collaboratively with political decision-makers to ensure long-term economic growth. A position paper entitled "Driving a low carbon UK economy" was also presented by SMMT at the breakfast. The paper details industry's stance on the transition to a low carbon economy, and was used to focus discussion on government-led policies to ensure continued investment in low carbon technologies and skills training, whilst raising consumer awareness of low carbon options. (Source: SMMT)

<http://www.smmt.co.uk/2011/09/smmt-meets-liberal-democrats-at-party-conference-in-birmingham/>

Automotive production growth picks up in August

Figures published by SMMT show total vehicle production rose by 10.6% in August, to 92,683 units, whilst total engine production also increased by 14.4% over the same period, up to 132,501 units. Car manufacturing rose by 10.7% and is up 4.4% over the first eight months of 2011, whilst CV output rose by 9.3%, but remains down 4.0% over the first eight months of 2011. Paul Everitt, SMMT Chief Executive, stated: "A manufacturing-led recovery is taking shape with August's automotive output up more than 10% and a recent wave of private investment securing long-term growth for the UK sector. We are on target to exceed 2010 production volumes this year, with more growth to come in 2012". Commenting on the positive production figures Business Minister Mark Prisk said: "Last week I visited the Frankfurt motor show where it was clear that more and more companies are planning long term investment here and that the UK car industry is undergoing a revival. With 75% of cars made in the UK being exported abroad the automotive industry will play a pivotal role in growing our economy". (Source: SMMT)

<http://www.smmt.co.uk/2011/09/smmt-uk-automotive-manufacturing-august-2011/>



Prime Minister David Cameron launches GREAT initiative

Prime Minister David Cameron has announced the launch of the GREAT campaign, a new initiative to promote Britain as a place to visit and do business. Government is aiming to ensure that the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games are not only a celebration of sport, but also deliver a lasting economic legacy for the whole country, boosting investment, jobs and growth. The campaign will centre on ten key areas of British excellence, including technology and innovation, entrepreneurship, creativity, knowledge, and green. Prime Minister Cameron also announced plans for a 'Global Investment Conference' for investors and business leaders to be held in London on the eve of the Games, as well as a programme of business summits including the 'British Business Embassy' highlighting key sectors for global growth and an on-line 'British Business Club'. Commenting on the announcement Business Secretary Vince Cable stated: "The Olympics is a tremendous opportunity to showcase the best of British. We want to demonstrate the great products we already offer the world, from Formula One racing cars to innovative aerospace technology and cutting edge fashion brands. And we want to highlight the opportunities for world-leading businesses with global ambition to invest and grow in Britain". (Source: BIS)

<http://www.bis.gov.uk/news/topstories/2011/Sep/great-britain>

Operators urged to take action to meet London Low Emission Zone standards

Operators have been urged to take action now, in order to meet tougher London Low Emission Zone (LEZ) standards, which come into force in less than three months time. The standards will require larger vans, minibuses and specialist vehicles to meet LEZ emissions standards for the first time, and operators not meeting the required standards will have to pay a daily charge or risk a fine. From 3 January 2012 vehicles that are already affected by the LEZ - HGVs, buses and coaches - will have to meet a Euro IV standard for particulate matter (PM) to drive within Greater London without paying a £200 daily charge. Kulveer Ranger, the Mayor of London's environment director, stated: "The Mayor is taking robust steps to

deliver cleaner air and improve Londoners' health. Changes to the Low Emission Zone in January are a key part of these plans". (Source: TFL)

<http://www.tfl.gov.uk/corporate/media/newscentre/21095.aspx>

Honda opens Hydrogen refuelling station in Swindon

The UK's first open access hydrogen vehicle refuelling station has been officially opened at Honda's manufacturing facility in Swindon. Based on the grounds of Honda's manufacturing facility in Swindon, the station aims to encourage the development of both hydrogen-powered vehicles – such as the Honda FCX Clarity fuel cell car – and the refuelling infrastructure to support them. It also creates a strategic link half way along the M4 between London and Swansea. (Source: SMMT)

<http://www.smmt.co.uk/2011/09/honda-opens-hydrogen-refuelling-station-in-swindon/>

Party Conferences

Labour

25 - 29 September, Liverpool

Conference venue: ACC, Liverpool, Kings Dock, Liverpool Waterfront

Conservatives

2 - 5 October, Manchester

Conference venue: Manchester Central, Manchester

Week ahead

House of Commons

The House of Commons is in recess. The House will next sit on Monday 10 October 2011.

House of Lords

The House of Lords is in recess. The House will next sit on Monday 10 October 2011.