

WEEK IN WESTMINSTER

Week ending Friday 11 October

Government and the opposition reshuffle frontbench teams

Both government and the Labour Party have reshuffled their frontbench teams. Key moves for the sector include:

- Baroness Kramer replaces Norman Baker as Minister of State at the Department for Transport. Baroness Kramer's brief will cover future transport (including OLEV), localism, local connectivity, SMEs, the natural environment (including biofuels) and cities and urban renewal (including the Heseltine Review).
- Robert Goodwill replaces Simon Burns as Parliamentary Under Secretary of State at the Department for Transport. Mr Goodwill takes Stephen Hammond's old brief which will cover freight, motoring agencies, road safety and standards, Europe and strategic roads.
- Nicky Morgan replaces Sajid Javid as Economic Secretary to the Treasury. Ms Morgan's brief will cover taxation of transport and climate change and energy issues.
- Matt Hancock is promoted to Minister of State for Skills and Enterprise.
- Mary Creagh replaces Maria Eagle as Shadow Transport Secretary.
- Richard Burden becomes Shadow Transport Minister.

(Source: Gov.uk and Labour.org)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/ministers>

<http://www.labour.org.uk/labour-shadow-cabinet>

New Better Bus Areas announced

Local Transport Minister Baroness Kramer has announced £16.5 million funding for Better Bus Areas in York, Merseyside, Nottingham and the Bath and greater Bristol areas. Within Better Bus Areas, the Bus Service Operators Grant (BSOG) for services run commercially will gradually be devolved to local authorities and will be supplemented by a top up fund worth 20% of the BSOG claimed. The money is hoped

to enable local transport authorities to tackle the problems holding back local bus markets. Commenting on the scheme, Baroness Kramer stated: "Local bus services are the backbone of our transport system, providing a vital lifeline for communities. The Better Bus Area funding will help drive economic recovery in these areas by supporting effective bus networks."

(Source: DfT)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/better-buses-for-english-regions>



Plans for new out-of-hours delivery trials unveiled by TfL

Transport for London (TfL) has announced plans for new out-of-hours delivery trials as part of an initiative that aims to reduce congestion and make journeys safer, greener and more reliable. Unveiled at the London Freight Forum, the 'Delivering a road freight legacy' document outlines the successes delivered by TfL, key partners and the freight industry during the London 2012 Games, as well as a number of key actions that TfL will look to deliver in partnership with the industry during the next two years. The Mayor's Office and TfL will work with London boroughs and the freight industry on the trials which will explore how more deliveries could take place outside of the busiest times of the day. It is hoped this will reduce congestion and benefit other road users, as well as allowing for quicker and more efficient freight trips. The trials form part of this wider package of works, which look to change the way goods and services are delivered, and were a key recommendation of the Mayor's Roads Task Force. The trials will be used to determine the barriers that need to be overcome in

order to roll out these measures more widely. They will look to begin early in the New Year and TfL will work in partnership with the industry during the next two years to develop a wider, long term freight strategy in London.

(Source: TfL)

<http://www.tfl.gov.uk/corporate/media/newscentre/28651.aspx>

£186 million boost for technologies of the future

Science and Universities Minister David Willetts has announced a package of investment in the '8 great technologies of the future' that aims to accelerate high-tech progress from the lab to the marketplace and help drive UK economic growth. Key for the automotive sector is £10 million for the University of Southampton to build new engineering research facilities and infrastructure. Commenting on the announcement Mr Willetts stated: "We are one of the most efficient research nations, and we get the best returns on our investment. We are investing to help translate our excellent science into commercially successful technologies which in turn boosts our businesses, creates jobs and drives economic growth."

(Source: BIS)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/186-million-boost-for-technologies-of-the-future>

Smart Cities Forum launched

The Department for Business, Innovation and Skills has established a new Smart Cities Forum, chaired by Universities and Science Minister David Willetts and Cities Minister Greg Clark, and with representatives from cities, business, and scientists. The announcement comes as a new government report entitled 'Global Market Opportunities and UK Capabilities for future smart cities' published today values the smart cities industry at more than \$400 billion globally by 2020, with the UK expected to gain a 10% share (\$40 billion). Government has already supported investment in this sector through funding £95 million of research into smart cities, £50 million over 5 years earmarked for the new Future Cities Catapult centre being established by the Technology Strategy Board in London, and £33 million invested in future city demonstrators earlier this year.

(Source: BIS)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-initiative-to-support-40-billion-smart-cities-in-the-uk>

Government announces £25 million boost for innovative small businesses

Business Secretary Vince Cable has announced that a £25 million boost will be given to small but innovative UK businesses through Episode 1, the 14th Enterprise Capital Fund. Episode 1 will be led by Dr Simon Murdoch, and the fund has attracted £12.5 million of private investment, alongside the £25 million from the government, and will invest between £250,000 and £2 million into 20 to 30 early-stage technology companies.

(Source: BIS)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/business-secretary-announces-25-million-boost-for-innovative-small-businesses>



Week ahead

Commons Chamber

No relevant activity

Commons Committees

Wednesday 16 October

Science & Technology Committee (9:15am, Thatcher room) – Women in STEM careers

Westminster Hall

Tuesday 15 October

Driver and Vehicle Agency employment and services in Northern Ireland (Gregory Campbell, DUP, East Londonderry) – 9:30am – 11:00am

Tuesday 15 October

Use of greener road transport fuels (John Pugh, LD, Southport) – 2:30pm – 4:00pm

House of Lords

Tuesday 22 October

Transparency of Lobbying, Non-party Campaigning and Trade Union Administration Bill: Second reading