

WEEK IN WESTMINSTER

Week ending Friday 4 December

SMMT New Car Registrations

Following October's decline – the first in 44 months – registrations of new cars in the UK returned to growth in November, according to figures released today by The Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders (SMMT). 178,876 cars were registered in the month, an increase of 3.8% over November 2014, while the overall market in the first 11 months of 2015 has seen 6.2% growth to 2,453,426 units. Demand for both petrol and diesel models remains robust with respective gains of 3.8% and 3.6%, while the popularity of alternatively fuelled vehicles continues to grow with 8.6% uplift. Registrations to fleet buyers (up 8.7%) increased ahead of those to private customers (up 2%), continuing a trend that has been evident for several months. (Source: [SMMT](#))

Van and Truck Registrations

The commercial vehicle market returned to strong growth in November following a dip in the previous month, according to figures released today by The Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders (SMMT). 33,303 CVs were registered in the month, an increase of 13.9%. Van registrations posted a 9.6% rise in the month, continuing the general trend seen over the past few years with businesses having grown in confidence and online deliveries surging in popularity. Truck registrations saw a huge 55.8% jump, although this was to be expected given the large fall in November 2014 which followed changes to Type Approval legislation. (Source: [SMMT](#))

UK government pledges ambition for electric cars

At the international climate conference in Paris (COP21), the UK government reaffirmed its commitment for almost all cars and vans to be zero emission by 2050. The UK was one of 13 international members of the Zero Emission Vehicle (ZEV) Alliance to sign a [commitment to promote cleaner motoring and cut transport emissions](#), alongside Germany, the Netherlands, Norway and California. It includes an agreement to make all passenger vehicle sales zero emission vehicles by 2050. The ZEV Alliance formed

in September this year with the ambition to increase the global uptake of greener vehicles through international co-operation. As well as the UK, members include Germany, the Netherlands and Norway in Europe; California, Connecticut, Maryland, Massachusetts, New York, Oregon, Rhode Island and Vermont in the United States; and Quebec in Canada. (Source: [DfT](#))

Chancellor announces over £16m research funding

Nearly 200 highly skilled engineering and manufacturing jobs could be created in the Midlands thanks to a £16.6 million boost to research and development funding, the Chancellor has announced. On a visit to Jaguar Land Rover's engine manufacturing facility in Wolverhampton, the Chancellor confirmed that a research consortium, led by Jaguar Land Rover, would receive a £16.6 million grant to develop a more efficient transmission system for potential use in future models of their cars. This grant will be matched by private funding, bringing the total project funding to over £33 million. The £16.6 million government grant is being awarded through the Advanced Propulsion Centre (APC) and is matched by funding from the automotive industry. The APC is a 10-year £1 billion partnership between government and the automotive industry to bring innovators and producers of low carbon propulsion systems together. This will help transform Britain into a world leader for low carbon development and production. As set out in the Spending Review, the government has protected funding for the APC and committed to supporting automotive technologies for the next decade. (Source: [HM Treasury](#))



Cutting carbon in London - 2015 Update

To coincide with the start of COP21, the 2015 Paris Climate Change Conference, the London Assembly Environment Committee has published its latest assessment of the Mayor's carbon reduction targets, '[Cutting Carbon in London – 2015 Update](#)'. The main findings of the digital report are:

- The Mayor pledged to reduce carbon emissions by 60% by 2025 but the latest data shows that he is behind schedule on his targets.
- From 2006 to 2013, London put into the atmosphere nearly 15 million tonnes more CO₂ than if emissions levels had been on target.
- Workplaces are London's biggest-emitting sector and where the most significant changes are needed. London's homes fall second.
- Retrofit needs to accelerate and we need cleaner electricity from the National Grid.

In 2014, the Committee reported in more detail on Mayoral efforts to reduce carbon emissions. In May 2016, a new Mayor will be elected who should take forward an invigorated carbon reduction strategy in the crucial four years that follow.

(Source: [London Assembly](#))

Chancellor launches plan for firms

Government continues its commitment to cut red tape, opening up markets to new and innovative businesses. The Chancellor and the Secretary for Business, Sajid Javid will launch action to increase competition in Britain's economy. A 25 page blueprint called 'A better deal: Boosting competition to bring down bills for families and firms' will set out concrete steps the government is taking to secure rising living standards and create competitive business conditions for firms. Focusing on fostering competition in the UK, the Better Deal delivers on the government's long term drive to increase productivity that was first set out in 'Fixing the foundations: Creating a more prosperous nation' in July.

(Source: [HM Treasury](#))

By-election victory for Labour

Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn has hailed a "vote of confidence" in his party after it comfortably held the Oldham West and Royton seat in a by-election. Its candidate Jim McMahon secured a 10,722-vote majority from UKIP's John Bickley, and a 62% vote share that was higher than at the general election. UKIP leader Nigel Farage is to make a formal complaint about the vote, claiming there was electoral fraud. The by-election was triggered by the death of long-serving Labour MP Michael Meacher, who won the seat at May's general election with a 14,738 majority.



Week ahead

Commons Chamber

Tuesday 8 December

- European Referendum Bill: Consideration of Lords amendments

Commons Committees

Tuesday 8 December

- Treasury Committee (10:00am, Thatcher room) Comprehensive Spending Review and Autumn Statement 2015

Wednesday 9 December

- Treasury Committee (2:15pm, Wilson room) Comprehensive Spending Review and Autumn Statement 2015
- Environment, Food and Rural Affairs Committee (2:30pm, room 16) – Air Quality

Lords Committees

Tuesday 8 December

- European Union Committee (4:00pm, room4) – Visions of EU reform