

WEEK IN WESTMINSTER

Week ending Friday 12 August

Government publishes green economy roadmap

The government has published a green economy roadmap, entitled “Enabling the Transition to a Green Economy: Government and business working together”. The report, which was developed collaboratively by Defra, BIS and DECC, aims to clarify what government means by a “green economy”, the policies being put in place to achieve this, and how they come together. The report maps out planned government action across areas including climate change, resource efficiency, waste prevention, carbon capture and storage, offshore wind generation, and the Green Deal, and will form part of a continuing dialogue between government, business and communities on how to tackle the issue of moving to a green economy. The transition to a green economy is seen as a key element of government’s Plan for Growth, which is aimed at developing strong sustainable and balanced growth that is evenly shared across the country and between industries. In the report government states that opportunities for growth will not only come from conventional ‘green’ sectors but from other areas of the economy, with the automotive industry highlighted as a specific opportunity for future green growth. (Source: BIS) <http://www.bis.gov.uk/news/topstories/2011/Aug/encouraging-green-growth>

Transport Committee publishes “Bus Services after the Spending Review” report

The House of Commons Transport Select Committee has published its “Bus Services after the Spending Review” report, which anticipates deep cuts in bus services in 2012–13, as local authorities struggle to deal with budgetary reductions. The Committee has called on the Department for Transport to monitor the extent of service cutbacks made this year and to review service provision again after BSOG (Bus Service Operator Grant) grant cuts take effect in 2012

– 13 so that it can analyse and draw conclusions about the wider costs and benefits of its policy changes to the country as a whole. The report highlights that 70% of the 88 local authorities in England are making cutbacks to buses, with a fifth (20%) cutting over £1 million from their bus budgets and four scrapping funding for socially necessary bus services all together. Louise Ellman MP, chair of the Committee, stated: “The Government claims it wants to see better bus services with many more smartcard-enabled journeys. Yet, following the Government’s Spending Review, we have seen a significant number of bus services withdrawn around the country and there is every indication that fares are set to rise well above the rate of inflation in some areas”. (Source: Parliament.uk)

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201012/cmselect/cmtran/750/75002.htm>



ONS Index of Production falls 0.3% in June

The Office of National Statistics (ONS) has published its monthly Index of Production report for June. The seasonally adjusted index of production fell by 0.3% in June 2011 compared to June 2010, whilst the seasonally adjusted index of manufacturing rose by 2.1% in June 2011 compared to June 2010. Between May 2011 and June 2011 overall production remained flat, with manufacturing falling by 0.4%. The quarter on quarter comparison, saw manufacturing output fall by 0.5% in the second quarter of 2011 compared to the first quarter of 2011. This was the largest quarter

on quarter fall since the third quarter of 2009. The main downward driver for the second quarter was the transport and equipment sub sector which fell by 4.5%. Ms Lee Hopley, Chief Economist at EEF, the manufacturers' organisation, stated: "These figures failed to deliver much positive news despite some sectors bucking the downward trend. While production is still firmly up on a year ago, we are picking up some clear signs that confidence is quickly ebbing away, given growing concerns over debt and the prospect of a slowdown in global growth. From hereon in the government will need to underpin its fiscal plans with a relentless focus on shoring up growth and competitiveness.". (Source: ONS)

<http://www.statistics.gov.uk/pdfdir/iop0811.pdf>



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.