

## WEEK IN WESTMINSTER

Week ending Friday 27 September

### Labour Party asks JLR Executive Director to review manufacturing supply chain

Chuka Umunna MP, Shadow Secretary of Business, Innovation and Skills, has announced that a review will be undertaken of the UK manufacturing supply chain, to be led by Mike Wright, Executive Director of Jaguar Land Rover (JLR). Speaking at the Labour Party Conference, Mr Umunna said that he and Ed Balls had asked Mr Wright to carry out the review, calling JLR "a real British success story". Also at the conference, Iain Wright MP, Shadow Business Minister, outlined his ambitions for a favourable business environment to encourage investment into UK automotive, with a particular emphasis on skills. Speaking at an SMMT roundtable breakfast, Mr Wright called for a focus on addressing the skills needs of the supply chain, noting that this was critically important to achieve growth in the wider manufacturing sector. Mike Hawes, SMMT Chief Executive, opened the breakfast meeting by calling for cross-party commitment to the implantation of the automotive sector strategy, while parliamentarians and industry representatives also discussed the importance of the UK maintaining a strong voice in Europe. A number of key Labour figures took part in debate, including Cathy Jamieson MP, Shadow Treasury Minister; Richard Burden MP, Chair, All-Party Parliamentary Motor Group; and Ian Lucas MP, Shadow Foreign Minister.

(Source:SMMT)

<http://www.smmt.co.uk/2013/09/labour-party-asks-jlr-executive-director-to-review-manufacturing-supply-chain/>



### Ed Miliband delivers conference speech

Labour leader, Ed Miliband MP, has delivered his keynote speech to the Labour Party Conference. A number of policy proposals were included, including a reversal of the hike in small business rates due in April 2015 and a freezing the levy the following year. The Labour leader stated that this would be paid for by scrapping the coalition government's planned cut in corporation tax from 21% to 20%. Mr Miliband also revealed that Labour would freeze gas and electricity bills for every home and business in the UK for 20 months if it wins the 2015 general election, during which Labour would introduce new energy market reforms. The party would also support measures to give 16 and 17-year-olds votes in general elections. (Source: Labour)

<http://labourlist.org/2013/09/transcript-ed-milibands-2013-conference-speech/>

### First UK-India business centre opens to auto industry

The first UK-India Business Centre has officially opened in Gurgaon, near Delhi. The centre, which was opened by UK Trade and Investment Minister, Lord Green, is designed to be a home-away-from-home for UK SMEs seeking to enter or expand in India. Run by the UK-India Business Council (UKIBC), the centre will provide a range of affordable market-entry services to businesses in sectors such as automotive industry, including venue hire and market research. Commenting on the opening, Lord Green stated: "The UK-India Business Centre will help UK small- and medium-sized businesses work closer with more established British businesses in India, and provide them with the support needed to capitalise on the huge potential of the Indian market. The network of centres across India will also drive a step change in the number of UK companies doing business in India contributing to prosperity in both countries." UKIBC has also announced plans for a second centre in Bangalore, which will open in 2014. (Source: SMMT)

<http://www.smmt.co.uk/2013/09/first-uk-india-business-centre-opens-to-auto-industry/>

## Jaguar Land Rover reveals future plans for R&D in the UK

Jaguar Land Rover (JLR) has unveiled plans for a £100 million National Automotive Innovation Campus (NAIC) in Warwick that will employ 1,000 researchers and engineers. The company expects to more than double the size of its advanced research team to 500 people by the time the NAIC opens in 2016. The new facility will complement JLR's product creation centres in Gaydon and Whitley, to create a large-scale collaborative research environment. The NAIC will bring academics from the UK's leading universities together with researchers and engineers from JLR and the supply chain, in a single, multi-purpose, state-of-the-art research facility. Jaguar Land Rover is the lead partner in the project investing £50m, along with Tata Motors European Technical Centre (TMETC), WMG (Warwick Manufacturing Group) and the UK Government's Higher Education Funding Council England (HEFCE). Construction of the nearly £100m NAIC is scheduled to begin in September 2014 and will feature engineering workshops and laboratories, advanced powertrain facilities and the latest advanced design, visualisation and rapid prototyping technologies. As well as the skills and knowledge that will be developed within these research projects, NAIC will have a key role in developing the skills of school children and engineering students, who will be able to use NAIC's laboratories and a dedicated engineering education facility.

(Source: SMMT)

<http://www.smmt.co.uk/2013/09/jaguar-land-rover-reveals-future-plans-for-rd-in-the-uk/>

## Energy Saving Trust reports on electric van savings

Figures from the Energy Saving Trust (EST) show that combined savings of almost £200 million could be made if 10% of vans registered in London go electric. Additional savings include 100% capital allowances, the plug-in vehicle grant and no Congestion Charge in Central London. The EST estimates that Congestion Charge savings equate to around £2200 per year per van. Mayor of London Boris Johnson said: "It's clear that London's businesses can make big savings by converting their fleets to run on innovative electric technology. In turn, they will be helping to improve the capital's air quality, reduce carbon emissions and support jobs in this sector." There are now over 1,300 publicly accessible charge points in the Greater

London area as part of the Source London scheme. The EST has also been given additional funding from the Office for Low Emission Vehicles (OLEV) to establish the Plugged-in Fleets Initiative 100 (PIFI 100). The initiative offers 100 organisations in England the opportunity to receive free analysis and guidance on how plug-in vehicles could work for them. (Source: Energy Saving Trust)

<http://www.energysavingtrust.org.uk/Energy-Saving-Trust/Press/Press-releases/London-businesses-could-save-200-m-if-just-ten-per-cent-switched-to-electric-vans>

## CBI Distributive Trades Survey shows retail sales are on an upward trend

The CBI's latest monthly Distributive Trades Survey of 111 firms has shown that high-street sales continued to grow strongly in the year to September, at the fastest pace since June 2012. This was the third consecutive month of growth, which was broad-based across a number of sectors. Retail sales are expected to grow robustly again in October. Elsewhere, the pace of growth in wholesaling picked up markedly, whereas growth continued in the motor trade sector, but at a slower pace than in the previous two months. Key findings are:

- 64% of motor traders said sales volumes were up while 36% said they were down, giving a balance of +28%, a slower pace of growth than in the previous month (+93%).
- 46% of respondents reported that sales volumes were up on a year ago, while 12% said they were down, giving a balance of +34% - the strongest since June 2012 (+42%) and exceeding expectations (+26%)
- Retailers expect sales volumes to grow at a similarly strong pace next month (+31%)

(Source: CBI)

<http://www.cbi.org.uk/media-centre/press-releases/2013/09/high-street-sales-continue-to-accelerate/>

## Week ahead

**Conservative Party Conference:  
29 September – 2 October**

**The House of Commons is on recess until 8 October.**

**The House of Lords is on recess until 8 October.**