



WEEK IN WESTMINSTER



Week ending Friday 5 November 2010

- 1. Government indicates move on intra-company transfers**
- 2. Car registrations fall by 22.3% in October**
- 3. Government looks at future technology and innovation opportunities**
- 4. New all-age careers service to launch in England in 2012**
- 5. Changes to the membership of select committees**
- 6. Business and government work to boost apprenticeships**
- 7. Week ahead**

1. Government indicates move on intra-company transfers

Government has indicated that it intends to exclude intra-company transfers (ICTs) from permanent immigration limits. At Prime Minister's Questions in a response to Sir Robert Smith MP David Cameron said: "As we look through the last government's points system and immigration policy, we really do believe that it will not be difficult to achieve much better immigration control without disadvantaging business. For example, things such as inter-company transfers should not be included in what we are looking at." The Home Office is currently preparing its policy response in relation to the UK Border Agency consultation on how government should implement the coalition's policy objective of lowering non-EU immigration through a permanent cap. Home secretary Theresa May gave a speech at the think tank Policy Exchange outlining the priorities that have been heard through the consultation process. She said that government had listened carefully to advice from businesses who have said that ICTs should not be included under the cap. She said government wanted to give business certainty that highly skilled workers will be able to work in the UK. (Source: Hansard/SMMT)

www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201011/cmhansrd/cm101103/debtext/101103-0001.htm#10110358000010

2. Car registrations fall by 22.3% in October

SMMT has released vehicle registration figures for October 2010. There has been a sustained increase in commercial vehicle registrations for October, figures up 8.7% for the rolling year. However, overall bus and coach registrations fell for a seventh straight month in October, volumes fell by 38.2% in the month and 12.9% in year to date. In the new car market, registrations fell by 22.3% in October to 131,485 units. The market remains 4.8% up over the first ten months of the year, at 1,767,154 units. There are likely to be further declines for the remainder of the year, but the 2010 market will be up 1.5% on 2009. (Source: SMMT) www.smmt.co.uk/articles/article.cfm?articleid=22675

3. Government looks at future technology and innovation opportunities

A new report, published by Foresight, government's Futures think tank, highlights scientific and technological areas that could transform the UK economy over the next 20 years. 'Technology and Innovation Futures' examines possible technological developments that have the potential over the next 20 years to support economic growth in the UK. It concludes that there are strong opportunities for growth in the UK economy through the 2020s if businesses can harness scientific and industrial capabilities to take advantage of technology developments and identifies manufacturing, infrastructure and the internet as three potential areas of growth. The report argues that longer-term thinking, planning and support are vital for sustainable growth. Government should

continue to listen to businesses. Minister for universities and science David Willetts said: "It calls for more active cooperation between large companies, small and medium enterprises and researchers to plan ambitious strategies for the benefit of their sectors. Developments in this area will help strengthen our economy and enable us to lead the way for innovation." (Source: BIS)
nds.coi.gov.uk/content/Detail.aspx?ReleaseID=416372&NewsAreaID=2

4. New all-age careers service to launch in England in 2012

Skills minister John Hayes MP has set out plans for the first all-age careers service in England. Both young people aged 13-19 and adults will be able to begin accessing new arrangements for careers guidance from September 2011. The service will be fully operational by April 2012. It will build on Next Step and Connexions and provide a joined up service for all age groups for the first time. Options under consideration include introducing a new kite mark to recognise the best career guidance services or establishing a register of providers who meet the highest standards. John Hayes said: "The right guidance at the right time not only helps young people and adults to progress in learning, but also increases their confidence and motivation to succeed. Careers guidance is at the heart of increasing social mobility, and a vital part of the machinery of social justice." (Source: BIS)

nds.coi.gov.uk/content/Detail.aspx?ReleaseID=416365&NewsAreaID=2

5. Changes to the membership of select committees

Due to the recent shadow cabinet elections in the Labour Party, motions have been ordered to make changes to select committee membership. The Business, Innovation and Skills Committee have discharged Luciana Berger, Jack Dromey, Nicky Morgan, Chi Onwurah and Rachel Reeves and have added Paul Blomfield, Katy Clark, Simon Kirby, Gregg McClymont and Ian Murray. The Energy and Climate Change Committee have discharged Gemma Doyle and Tom Greatrex and have added Barry Gardiner and Ian Lavery. The Transport Committee has discharged Angie Bray, Lilian Greenwood and Angela Smith and have added Steve Baker, Julie Hilling and Gavin Shuker. (Source: Parliament)

www.parliament.uk/business/committees/committees-a-z/

6. Business and government work to boost apprenticeships

Business leaders and government are joining forces in a drive to urge employers to take on apprentices. Skills minister John Hayes, entrepreneur Peter Jones, the Federation of Small Businesses, the British Chambers of Commerce, and businesses including the BBC, BT and BAE Systems have highlighted the benefits of apprenticeships by putting their names to a letter of support. They are also launching a direct mail and radio marketing campaign aimed at employers. The campaign showcases the value of apprenticeships and shows how they can supply the skilled, talented workforce of the future. John Hayes said: "This government believes apprenticeships are a key component to up-skilling the workforce and are one of the best forms of work-based learning. We will be working closely with employers to help them play their part in improving the employment prospects of young people and creating the highly skilled workforce this country needs." (Source: Apprenticeships)

www.apprenticeships.org.uk/Employers/Employer-quotes/FT-Business-Leaders-Letter.aspx

7. Week ahead

Commons Chamber

Wednesday 10 November

Main business - Motion to approve an EU document of economic policy coordination

Thursday 11 November

10.30am: Energy and climate change questions (topical questions at 11.15am).

Main business - General debate on policy on growth

House of Lords

No relevant activity

Westminster Hall

Wednesday 10 November

11.00am – 11.30am: Local economic partnerships in the South West (Ben Bradshaw, Lab, Exeter)

2.30pm – 4.00pm Science Research (Nicola Blackwood, Con, Oxford West and Abingdon)

Commons Committees

Tuesday 9 November

10.15am Transport

Subject: The cost of motor insurance

Witness(es): Automobile Association, Confused.com, Institute and Faculty of Actuaries, Duncan Anderson, EMB Consultancy; and Association of British Insurers, British Insurance Brokers Association, Motor Accident Solicitors Society, Motor Insurers Bureau (at 11.15am)

10.45am Business, Innovation and Skills

Subject: Government Assistance to Industry

Witness(es): Philip Rutnam, Director General, Business Group, Jane Whewell, Deputy Director, Automotive Unit, and Emma Squire, Deputy Director, SME Finance, Enterprise Directorate, Department for Business, Innovation and Skills