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Weekly Monitoring
Friday 7th July



Political Update

This week saw Labour setting forth their stall on education policy, with their leader Sir Keir Starmer announcing details of his final fifth mission to 'Break down the barriers to opportunity at every stage'. In a speech on Thursday he pledged to smash the 'class ceiling' and achieve a goal of half a million more children reaching their early learning targets by 2030. He further pledged skills reforms to offer more chances for young people to engage in vocational learning and for adults to retrain in new areas, as well as ensure every child has a specialist teacher in their classroom.

Prior to this, Shadow Secretary for Education, Bridget Phillipson promised a £2,400 bonus for newly qualified teachers who stay in their post for two years as a way to remedy the retention crisis. Additionally, Ms. Phillipson pledged to reduce payments to teaching agencies to fill vacancies as new analysis by the Labour Party has found that since 2010 state schools in England have paid recruitment agencies more than £8 billion.

News

International Trade Minister visits India and Bangladesh to grow green trade

Minister for International Trade Nigel Huddleston kicked off a three-day visit to Kolkata in India and Dhaka in Bangladesh focused on unlocking more opportunities for British companies to grow trade and win business. He will

announce a package of partnerships on electric mobility and green construction at a joint session with Government of West Bengal.

New UK investment zones announced to grow the economy in Scotland

The UK and Scottish Governments have agreed that Glasgow City Region and North East of Scotland will be Scotland's Investment Zones. Investment Zones are a crucial part of levelling up, and are designed to deliver economic growth, more high skill jobs, investment, and future opportunities for local people. The two Scottish Regional Economic Partnerships areas, made up of a number of different local authorities, will each benefit from an overall funding envelope of £80 million over a five-year period, while making the most of both reserved and devolved policies as is the case with Green Freeports.

Parliament

House of Commons

Migration Advisory Committee seek views on Seasonal Worker visas

The Migration Advisory Committee is exploring views on the Seasonal Worker visa, and how well it meets the needs of:

- Employers
- Employees
- Other organisations and people affected

They are interested in views on anything to do with the Seasonal Worker visa. For example:

- The economic impact of the visa
- How well it works for employers
- How well it protects the welfare of migrants
- How it's organised
- Anything that could be improved

You can:

- [Respond as an employer of seasonal workers](#)
- [Respond as a representative organisation](#) - for example, research organisations, academics and associated businesses such as supermarkets

- [Respond in a personal capacity](#)

The call for evidence will be open until 19th September 2023.

Transport Committee announces inquiry into the financing of small and medium-sized enterprises

The Treasury Committee has launched a new inquiry into the quality of small business access to finance, and small and medium-sized enterprise (SME) lending. The Committee will analyse the key challenges SMEs face when seeking finance, the regulation of small business lending, and the role the Government can play in enhancing lending to small businesses.

Commenting on the new inquiry, Harriett Baldwin MP, Chair of the Treasury Committee, said:

"Small businesses are the lifeblood of local communities, powering economic growth and fostering innovation and an entrepreneurial spirit. As a Committee, we'll be examining whether small businesses are able to access the finance they need to grow and develop, whether there is adequate regulation of the sector, and if Government can take a more active role to support business growth.

"We look forward to receiving written evidence on this important topic and taking oral evidence later in the year."

Stakeholders can submit evidence to the Committee by clicking [here](#), with submissions closing at 5pm on Sunday 13 August 2023.

Oral Questions to the Secretary of State for Wales lead to discussions on Tourism

During a Wales' Office Oral Questions session in the House of Commons, Dr Luke Evans MP asked the The Secretary of State for Wales:

"What discussions he has had with the Welsh Government on promoting the UK as an international tourist destination?"

The Secretary of State for Wales, David T.C. Davies MP responded:

"Wales is a great tourist destination and only recently I spent a long weekend in Llandudno. I believe my hon. Friend was there. He has seen for himself what a

wonderful place it is. We have some of the best beaches in the United Kingdom and some of the best mountain biking in the United Kingdom. It is a shame that as a result of the Welsh Labour Government's decision to impose a tourism tax on overnight visitors, fewer people see it."

In response, Dr Luke Evans MP asked:

"My right hon. Friend is indeed right. I went to Conwy Castle with my two whippets and saw the delight that Wales has to offer. I encourage everyone to go and see it. Tourism accounts for about £127 billion of UK industry and almost 4 million jobs. What conversations is he having with the Welsh Labour Government to ensure that there is a UK-wide approach to both domestic and international tourism?"

David T.C. Davies MP responded:

"It is deeply disappointing not only that visitors will face a tourism tax, but that those offering accommodation will face extra regulations and that those coming to Wales will be forced to drive at around 20 mph on roads that currently have a 30 mph limit. Therefore, people will have to pay more to come to Wales and spend longer getting here as a result of the Welsh Labour Government's policies. I encourage all tourism operators to speak to their Welsh Labour Government Minister about this."

Written questions to the Cabinet Office

Viscount Waverley asked His Majesty's Government, "what policy amendments they anticipate to ensure that the UK Single Trade Window complies with prevailing regulations; and when trade bodies will have an opportunity to engage with them on this matter."

Minister of State, Baroness Neville-Rolfe responded:

"The Government recognises that for the Single Trade Window to be successful it must meet users' different needs and the importance of engagement with stakeholders from across the wider border industry, including trade bodies. Significant consultation, user research and engagement have already taken place and will continue as policy design and delivery progress."

"We have engaged with trade representatives, industry and border experts, intermediaries and businesses of all sizes including SMEs, via a 2021

discussion paper detailing key STW policy and design choices, a 2022 public consultation on STW features and the draft Border Target Operating Model, published in April 2023. In addition to receiving numerous detailed written responses, we have conducted extensive follow-ups including the commissioning of independent qualitative research via interviews with small businesses and hosting multiple stakeholder events attended by key industry participants."

"We will provide further detail on the Single Trade Window, including plans for future engagement with stakeholders, in the final version of the Border Target Operating Model, which we hope to publish soon. We will continue to use the feedback we receive from our ongoing industry engagement and detailed user design activity to ensure that the Single Trade Window complies with all prevailing regulations and balances the needs of all stakeholders."

House of Lords

House of Lords discharges the Workers (Predictable Terms and Conditions) Bill past Committee stage

The House of Lords have discharged the Workers (Predictable Terms and Conditions) Bill during a session. This means that the Bill, which gives workers and agency workers the right to request more predictable terms and conditions of work, will skip the Lords Committee stage due to no amendments being proposed by the Chamber.

**For any queries regarding this round-up
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Get in touch



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