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Weekly Monitoring
Friday 8th
September



EIA Update

This week, the EIA were part of a visit to meet Sir John Whittingdale OBE, Minister of State at the Department for Culture, Media and Sport, as part of a UKEVENTS meeting.

He was previously the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport in 2015 and 2016 when Business Events were included in a Business Events Growth Plan, which led to the creation of the Events Industry Board. We outlined our view that with a strategic plan and body for business events, the industry would not only help the Government achieve many of its policy objectives, but it would also fuel growth, and enhance the position of the UK to be the world's meeting place and hub for many key industries.

We drew parallels to other sectors (such as UK Sport, and the TV & Film Industry) where additional support has resulted in more success for those industries, and asked for his advice on how we could elevate and increase support for business events. He had a great understanding for the sector, and noted that whilst there are financial limitations, he and his team would try to help with any requests across Whitehall. Moving forward, he noted comparisons to other countries activities, and stated that detailed evidence would be helpful. Sir John is currently covering this role for Julia Lopez who is set to return from maternity leave next month.

Political Update

The Prime Minister is currently in India attending the G20 summit after a somewhat dramatic return from recess. Sir Keir Starmer performed an extensive reshuffling of his Shadow Cabinet, aligning it with the structure that Mr Sunak put in place earlier this year. The reshuffle represented a further shift for the Labour Party back to the centre with many key Labour figures on the left of the party being side-lined or demoted, with Angela Rayner replacing Lisa Nandy as Shadow Levelling Up Secretary and Shadow Environment Secretary, Jim McMahon resigning and being replaced by Steve Reed. Shabana Mahmood was appointed as Shadow Secretary of State for Justice, whilst Thangam Debbonaire was appointed as Shadow Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport. You can access a briefing note on Ms. Debbonaire by clicking the button below, and we will be requesting a meeting with her in the coming weeks to introduce her to the EIA, as we have not met with her previously. Meanwhile, the Government has seen extensive fallout following the RAAC scandal which caused the closure of schools around the country to ensure the safety of the students.

[Click here for a briefing on Thangam Debbonaire MP](#)

News

[Rishi Sunak rules out quick-fix trade deal with India ahead of G20 Summit](#)

According to the Guardian, Rishi Sunak has rejected the idea of an “*early harvest*” deal with India which would have dealt with issues such as lowering tariffs on goods such as whisky but leaving trickier items such as professional services. It’s looking increasingly unlikely that a deal with India will be reached before next year’s general election.

[Resolution Foundation publishes report on reforming labour market institutions to improve pay and conditions](#)

The Resolution Foundation, an independent think tank focused on improving living standards for those on low to middle incomes, have published a new report on reforming labour market institutions to improve pay and conditions. The report sets out policy recommendations including strengthening trade unions as well as ‘Good Work Agreements’ for problem sectors to help address poor-quality work in specific pockets of the economy. Further details on these recommendations can be viewed by clicking the link in the header.

Government announces date for Autumn Statement

The HM Treasury have announced that the Autumn Statement will take place on the 22nd of November 2023, and will be accompanied by an economic and fiscal forecast by the Office for Budget Responsibility.

Confirming the new budget date during Treasury Oral Questions this week, the Chancellor said:

"On Friday, the Office for National Statistics published an update to the UK's GDP growth figures which shows the UK economy was 0.6% larger than pre-pandemic levels by the fourth quarter of 2021.

"It means our economy had the fastest recovery from the pandemic of any large European economy, thanks to decisions such as furlough that protected millions of jobs.

"For that growth to continue we now need to halve inflation, which I am pleased to report is now nearly 40% below its 11% peak. I can also tell the House I will deliver the Autumn Statement on November 22."

Government sets out ambitions for AI Safety Conference

The UK Government has announced its five key objectives of the previously announced conference on AI Safety. which is taking place on the 1st and 2nd of November. The objectives are as follows:

- A shared understanding of the risks posed by frontier AI and the need for action.
- A forward process for international collaboration on frontier AI safety, including how best to support national and international frameworks.
- Appropriate measures which individual organisations should take to increase frontier AI safety.
- Areas for potential collaboration on AI safety research, including evaluating model capabilities and the development of new standards to support governance.
- Showcase how ensuring the safe development of AI will enable AI to be used for good globally.

This summit will bring together business, academia and the UK's key international partners to discuss these issues.

New Chair of VisitEngland Advisory Board Appointed

The Secretary of State for Culture, Media & Sport has appointed Victoria Borwick as the new Chair of the advisory board to VisitEngland, for a term running from the 4th of September 2023 until the 3rd September 2028. Ms. Borwick has experience as a Councillor and MP, as well as being involved in the delivery of the 2012 London Olympics.

UK and Japan hold first Strategic Economic Policy and Trade Dialogue

Secretary of State for Business and Trade, Kemi Badenoch MP met with Japan's Minister of Economy, Trade and Industry Nishimura Yasutoshi, at the first Japan-UK Strategic Economic Policy and Trade Dialogue in London, to discuss areas of mutual interest and cooperation. This discussion led to the agreement of future discussions on the following topics:

- Trade and Investment (in the context CTPP)
- Energy
- Innovation

Parliament

House of Commons Public Accounts Committee publishes report on Government losses due to COVID business support fraud

The House of Commons Public Accounts Committee has published a report on the lack of Government action on reclaiming fraudulent or misallocated COVID-19 business support. The report has found that £1.1 billion of Government support can be accredited to fraud or error, however, the Committee has admonished the Government for its slowness in taking action.

On the report, the Chair of the Public Accounts Committee, Dame Meg Hillier MP stated:

“The Government must not wait for the conclusions of the COVID inquiry to learn the lessons laid out in this report. Never again should a national emergency find policy being written as we go along, without firm planning and good local data, with local authorities not properly funded to work in partnership on the support required. The next emergency must find the Government rigorously prepared with an understanding of the optimal means to support businesses through difficult times.

"The lack of planning from Government also meant that a door was left wide open in these schemes to fraudsters who took shameful financial advantage of schemes that were designed with national solidarity in mind. It is simply not good enough to give up on recovering this money simply because it is difficult to do so. Public trust is harmed if the Government shrugs its shoulders at criminals lining their pockets with state support."

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



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