

November 2017 Policy E-zine

No More A14 Delays in Suffolk

Our Strategy Board for *No More A14 Delays in Suffolk*, chaired by Jo Churchill MP, is continuing to strengthen the campaign to secure Government investment at seven pinch points along the A14 in Suffolk. On 24 November will meet again with senior staff from Highways England (HE) at the stage where HE is due to submit its Strategic Road Network Initial Report (SRNI) to DfT.

The SRNI will include HE's recommendations to DfT for investment in the Government's second Roads Investment Strategy (RIS2) which will cover the period from 2020 to 2025. DfT will consider and then consult on the recommendations in early 2018.

The campaign has recently been boosted by receiving the full backing of six MEPs from the East of England. Patrick O'Flynn, Geoffrey Van Orden, Stuart Agnew, David Campbell-Bannerman, Alex Mayer and John Flack have all written to Suffolk Chamber of Commerce chief executive, John Dugmore, pledging their "collective support" for the *No More A14 Delays in Suffolk* campaign. The MEPS state in their letter that "considering ...the significance of the Port of Felixstowe to UK trade and exporting, we hope that this initiative will enjoy the support of Highways England and, ultimately of the Department for Transport. Of course it will also support the objectives and efforts of the Department for International Trade."

By way of a reminder: aside from alleviating the real costs of delays and congestion at the pinch points the c £850 million investment sought by Suffolk would contribute to a massive increase in key economic indicators, of real benefit to the local and national economy, including:

- 7000 new jobs
- £362m extra in Gross Value Added
- Average of 13 minutes a day saved in travel time

Companies and residents alike are asked to continue sharing their experiences in support of the campaign by going to: <https://twitter.com/NoA14DelaysSfk> or emailing: news@suffolkchamber.co.uk

A1307 campaign

Suffolk Chamber of Commerce in Haverhill and District continues to campaign strongly for an improved route from Haverhill to the A11 in view of congestion and safety issues on the current A1307 which have a negative impact on economic and business growth.

Matt Hancock MP chairs ours A1307 Strategy Board which on 17 November 2017 met and agreed a brief for an Options Appraisal Report of the provision of a dual carriageway between Haverhill and the A11.

The brief, which will take 6-9 months to complete, will support a high level assessment of both 'north' and 'south' dualled routes aligned to the current A1307 and also of other options such as a possible route from the easternmost roundabout at Linton to the M11 at Great Chesterford. It will also be sensitivity tested to capture the impact of new and

planned initiatives and developments on the options such as the new garden towns and the A11 high tech corridor.

Quarterly Economic Survey: quarter 4 2017

Over 140 local businesses have already filled in the latest Quarterly Economic Survey - but we need more to ensure that the views of the whole Suffolk business community are well represented.

You've got until 27 November and it only takes two minutes to [complete](#).

Suffolk Chamber of Commerce and the British Chambers of Commerce will use the data and insights from that data to better lobby central government, local councils and other bodies to make the changes needed for our county's businesses to thrive.

Funding settlement for policing in Suffolk

Suffolk Chamber of Commerce has written to Nick Hurd MP, Minister of State for Policing and the Fire Service, regarding Government's funding settlement for policing in Suffolk.

Our letter made clear our strong support for a future settlement that is increased so that it is at least comparable on a per capita basis with that for Norfolk (which has a similar demographic) and preferably is equal to the national average. We also asked that the costs of any future pay rise over 1% should be met by Government.

Suffolk Chamber's letter is at [To Nick Hurd MP - 13.11](#)

A new aviation strategy for the UK

Suffolk Chamber of Commerce has responded to the Department for Transport's current consultation seeking views on the proposed approach for developing a new aviation strategy for the UK.

We believe that a prosperous, global Britain needs a successful aviation industry capable of creating jobs, increasing productivity, supporting trade and attracting investment especially in the context of Brexit.

Suffolk Chamber of Commerce believes that Making Best Use (MBU) of existing capacity is critical and we therefore welcomed and strongly endorse the Government's proposal to support airports that want to make best use of their existing runways. In this regard our response was especially supportive of optimising the full potential at London Stansted.

Suffolk Chamber's letter is at [Aviation Strategy jd response - 18.10.17](#)

A new economic strategy for Norfolk and Suffolk

Now that the new economic strategy for Norfolk and Suffolk has been signed off by all partners attention is turning to the implementation of the strategy through a suite of local

delivery plans and a high-level delivery plan that will be signed off by the New Anglia LEP Board in March 2018 with formal implementation taking place from April 2018.

The first part of this process is to capture the projects, programmes, investments, interventions and activities which are already taking place across Norfolk and Suffolk that are delivering against the ambitions within the strategy.

To help capture these New Anglia LEP has developed an online form which asks three questions relating to the activities your organisation is carrying out. It also seeks to capture your views on the key areas in the economic strategy which you feel should be given priority, both locally and across Norfolk and Suffolk in the first year of delivery.

Partners are invited to complete the [online form](#) by form by 8 December 2017.

During January and February New Anglia LEP will be holding a series of partner engagement sessions which will be focused on the development of the delivery plan.

The economic strategy, the executive summary of the economic strategy and the evidence document underpinning the economic strategy are [here](#)

International Transport - Leaders of the Future

The University of Suffolk, Associated British Ports and Suffolk Chamber of Commerce have developed a new leadership development programme for those working in International Transport.

The course will offer those moving into positions of leadership and management a chance to develop their skills in a series of workshops and seminars which focus upon a) the acquisition of key management skills and b) their application in logistics, ports management, freight handling and associated industries.

It will meet, over 6 days, the needs of a fast-moving and growing sector of the regional economy and has been designed to build confidence and offer participants the chance to discuss their concerns as they move into supervisory roles. Each day spotlights a different element of management and draws on both transferable skills and specialist insight from the industry.

There are full details and bookings arrangements [here](#).

Development of new healthy workplace standards

The Government's Work, Health and Disability Green Paper: Improving lives outlined the national vision for work and health (including the role of employers).

Public Health England (PHE) actively promotes the use of workplace accreditation programmes to support employer-led workplace health and wellbeing activity and have produced a range of resource materials links to which are included in a recent PHE letter which you can view at [Healthy Workplace standards ltr - Vers 1.2 \(3\)](#)

Chamber Network response to Migration Advisory Committee

Suffolk Chamber of Commerce was one of 20 Chambers which recently hosted a visit from the Migration Advisory Committee (MAC) and contributed views and case studies to inform the British Chambers of Commerce's response to the MAC's Call for Evidence. The final submission is [here](#).

2018 Civil Nuclear Showcase

Businesses interested in opportunities in Civil Nuclear may be interested in attending the 2018 Civil Nuclear Showcase which will take place on 27-28 February 2018 at Hilton Bankside, London.

Over the two days there will be a plenary programme, opportunities for one to one meetings and side events. Sponsorship and exhibiting packages are also available.

Further details and booking arrangements are [here](#).

National Cyber Security Centre

The National Cyber Security Centre has [issued guidance](#) to help small businesses protect themselves online from attacks.

Support for Small Businesses

Goldman Sachs 10,000 Small Businesses UK Programme is designed to provide high-quality, practical education and business support to leaders of high-growth small businesses and social enterprises. The programme is now recruiting for its Spring cohort. More information and application guidelines can be found [here](#). Applications are open until 15 December 2017.

Automatic enrolment messages for employers – November 2017

Are you planning to take on your first member of staff? Make sure you know what you need to do about their pension. It's the law.

If you are thinking of taking on your first member of staff then, as an employer, you'll have a number of responsibilities. As well as deciding what to pay them, you'll also need to assess them from the first day they start working for you to see if you need to put them into a workplace pension scheme. This is called automatic enrolment and is a legal duty.

You should start preparing early to work out what you'll need to do and when you'll need to declare your compliance. The Pensions Regulator has produced a short video in their '[James Explains](#)' series to help you.

Make sure you're ready for the minimum contribution levels increase in April 2018

Minimum pension contributions are required to increase over time on set dates. These increases are planned in two phases – 6 April 2018 and then again on 6 April 2019. You will need to work out how these changes will apply to you and your staff, and what you need to do to meet your legal duties.

The Pensions Regulator has [online information and guidance that will help you](#), including template letters to help you explain the increases to your staff.

Are you planning on employing seasonal staff for the Christmas period? Find out what you'll need to do

In the lead up to the Christmas period if you are planning on employing seasonal or temporary staff, automatic enrolment will still apply. This includes staff who work for you for a few days, a few weeks or several months.

Make sure you are prepared and know what you need to do www.tpr.gov.uk/seasonal

Employers, are you approaching re-enrolment? TPR has a new online tool to help you get to know your responsibilities

Every three years you must complete your re-enrolment duties. Whether or not you have staff to enrol, you will need to complete a re-declaration of compliance to tell The Pensions Regulator how you have met your duties.

The Pensions Regulator has published a [new online tool](#) to help you find your key dates for re-enrolment which will ultimately help you start planning for your re-enrolment duties.

HMRC mid-sized businesses forum

HMRC are hosting a regional event to talk to mid-sized businesses (MSBs) about their experiences of dealing with HMRC. The focus will be on developing insight into the challenges that MSBs face, and developing new ideas and testing approaches to address these challenges. The next forum is being held in Birmingham on 12 December 2017, from 11:00 to 12:30pm.

If any chambers or businesses are interested in taking part, please contact [Tarveen Singh](#) at HMRC by 30 November.

National Apprenticeships Service

The National Apprenticeships Service is launching a vacancies campaign with new higher and degree apprenticeship listings. It showcases thousands of quality vacancies from over 40 high profile employers. Over 3000 current and forthcoming higher and degree apprenticeships are featured from some of the UK's biggest and best employers, from the RAF to the BBC, Nestle to Rolls Royce, Santander to Siemens, and Royal Mail to Transport for London. The listings can be found on the [website](#).

Help for self-employed

On 2 December, HMRC is offering help and advice to self-employed workers – including start-ups and existing small businesses – with a series of free webinars.

These webinars will cover many of the key tax issues new and experienced businesses often ask HMRC about. Please find links below for businesses to book the different webinars:

- 10.00 [Record keeping for the self-employed](#)
- 12.00 [Self-employment Help & Support](#)
- 14.00 [Business expenses for the self-employed](#)
- 16.00 [How to complete your online tax return](#)

Report on authorised push payment scams

Last year, the consumer group Which? asked the Payment Systems Regulator to look into authorised push payment (APP) scams – where people are tricked into making payments to a fraudster. Last week they released that report, which can be found [here](#), and an [infographic](#) on stopping scammers.

Cheque Clearing Consultations

Following the introduction on 30 October 2017, the Government is consulting on two pieces of legislation to support cheque imaging. The first concerns the use of cheques as evidence of payment. The proposed legislation will ensure that customers continue to have this right under the new system. The second concerns compensation for a loss the customer may face. The [Government is consulting](#) on legislation as a back stop to ensure that a customer is compensated in the event that they incur a loss.

British Chambers of Commerce (BCC) Monthly Economic Review

The BCC Economic Review for November has been published, providing an easy-to-use commentary on the key domestic and international economic indicators for business.

This month's headlines:

- UK economic conditions remain subdued, despite GDP growth picking up slightly in Q3;
- BCC QES pointed to muted Q3 growth with the manufacturing boost failing to lift UK GDP growth; and
- Eurozone economy continues to outpace the UK as the US economy enjoys a strong Q3.

There is a link to the Monthly Economic Review on the BCC [website](#).

British Chambers of Commerce comments on MPC decision

Commenting on the recent interest rate decision by the Bank of England's Monetary Policy Committee, Mike Spicer, Director of Economics at the British Chambers of Commerce (BCC), said:

“Our preferred outcome was for a further period of monetary stability, with interest rates steady over the near term. Today's quarter point rise may have little effect on most companies, but many will view this as the first step in a longer policy movement – not as a simple reversal of last year's cut.

“These are challenging times for monetary policymakers. The MPC had the unenviable task of weighing future risks to inflation, from a tight – and tightening - labour market,

pass-through from a weaker pound and rising commodity prices. Against this, they needed to consider the future risks to under-shooting the inflation target from weak growth, fragile business confidence, and the effects of uncertainty.

“These are finely-balanced judgements: while interest rates will need to return to historic averages at some point, it should be done slowly and with reference to the ever-changing economic context.

“With the Bank of England’s latest forecasts of sluggish growth for the next few years, the government must use the upcoming Autumn Budget to boost business confidence and investment, and reduce the pressure on prices from policy decisions such as the forthcoming hike in business rates.”

To discuss these and other policy issues, contact:

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