

BCC reaction to Conservative Party Manifesto 2017

Dr Adam Marshall, Director General of the British Chambers of Commerce, comments on the publication of the Conservative Party Manifesto for the 2017 General Election.

“A number of the headline commitments in the Conservative Party’s manifesto will be welcomed by business communities around the UK. If delivered, pledges to overhaul the broken business rates system, to deliver better digital and mobile connectivity, and to focus more systematically on unlocking the growth potential of cities, towns and counties around the UK would respond to some of the key concerns of the business communities we represent.

“However, the positive reception to some elements of the manifesto will be tempered by proposals that would increase up-front costs, regulatory obligations and uncertainty for businesses. The Conservatives’ proposed approach to immigration, at a time when many firms are already doing everything they can to train up and employ UK workers, will worry companies of every size, sector, region and nation. Some of the Conservative proposals for additional market intervention and new employment regulation will be questioned, even by firms that are not directly affected themselves, because of the signals they send.

“The Conservative manifesto recognises that the UK needs a strong economy, stable public finances, a strong domestic business environment and outward-looking trade policies to weather the Brexit transition and develop a new model for growth. However, the document includes few specifics on how these important goals will be achieved.

“Over the coming weeks, business communities will want to see much more detail on how the manifesto’s pro-enterprise elements would be implemented, and their concerns on its more interventionist elements clearly addressed.”

Ends

Notes to editors:

Many pledges in the Conservative Manifesto are a direct response to the BCC’s manifesto, [Brexit and Beyond](#), including:

- Radical reform of the UK’s broken business rates system
- Supporting apprenticeships in supply chains
- Ensuring that ‘place’ remains at the heart of the Industrial Strategy
- Make it easier for SMEs to bid for public sector procurement
- A commitment to the third runway at Heathrow
- Ensuring businesses across the country have access to world-class digital infrastructure

The British Chambers of Commerce (BCC) sits at the heart of a powerful network of 52 Accredited Chambers of Commerce across the UK, representing thousands of businesses of all sizes and within all sectors. Our Global Business Network connects exporters with nearly 40 markets around the world. For more information, visit: www.britishchambers.org.uk

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