

Chambers: Industrial Strategy must have clear mission and unlock potential of places

BCC comments on the BEIS Committee's Industrial Strategy report

3rd March 2017

Commenting on the BEIS Committee's report on Industrial Strategy published today (Friday), Dr Adam Marshall, Director General of the British Chambers of Commerce, said:

"A clear, ambitious mission – and the untapped potential of our towns, cities and counties – need to sit at the heart of the Industrial Strategy.

"We need to decide our top economic and social goals as a nation, and develop a strategy that allows us to deliver these missions. At the same time, we must galvanise business communities all across the UK, so every area can leverage its competitive strengths and make a strong contribution to economic growth and prosperity.

"I applaud the BEIS Committee for recognising that mission and place are crucial to the success of Industrial Strategy. Business communities across the UK will now wish to see government adopt many of these recommendations as it works to bring the industrial strategy to life."

On the Committee's recommendation of a fundamental review of Business Rates, where the BCC has been campaigning for radical change, Marshall added:

"Business rates hammer firms with significant, volatile, up-front costs before they turn over a single pound. They are a barrier to achieving an ambitious Industrial Strategy, because they stop many firms from investing in their own productivity and growth. The Committee's recommendation of a fundamental review of the business rates system is one we have made for years – and it's time for action."

Ends

Notes to editors:

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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[Global Crude oil price of Indian Basket was US\\$ 54.82 per bbl on 02.03.2017](#)

The international crude oil price of Indian Basket as computed/published today by Petroleum Planning and Analysis Cell (PPAC) under the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas was US\$ 54.82 per barrel (bbl) on 02.03.2017.

[Way Back When – exhibition opening](#)



From the Curator of Museum Services at the University of Dundee :

WAY BACK WHEN – STUDENT PHOTOGRAPHS 1968-73

The opening of a new exhibition of rarely seen photographs taken by a Dundee art student in the early 1970s – “Way Back When” – opens today – Friday 3rd March – from 5pm – 6.30pm in the Tower Foyer Gallery at the University of Dundee.

The photographs were all taken by Walter Simms, who studied at Duncan of Jordanstone College of Art from 1968-1973, specialising in Graphic Design and Photography. He went on to have a successful career in graphic design and museum exhibition design, retiring in 2012.

The exhibition has been assembled by Walter in association with one of his contemporaries, Gordon Robertson, a lecturer in Graphic Design at the college for many years.

The photographs include portraits of Walter’s fellow students at the Art College at work and at play, including at the Tav Bar and the famous Revels.

They also feature fascinating glimpses into a Dundee that has changed completely – the ruined remains of the old Hawkhill; workers at the docks and at NCR. It is a time capsule of a very different Dundee.

The exhibition runs until 6th May and is open Monday to Friday (9.30am to 7pm) and Saturday (1pm to 5pm).

Admission is free but if you would like to attend the preview, it would be helpful if you could book [here](#).

[Press release: Government commits to helping survivors of domestic abuse](#)

Chris Skidmore, Minister for the Constitution, has published a range of proposals that will make the anonymous registration scheme in England and Wales more accessible to those escaping domestic abuse, and ensure that survivors can participate in our democracy.

The anonymous registration scheme protects people whose safety would be at risk if their name and address appeared in the electoral register. For example, this might include victims of harassment or stalking, as well as some witnesses in criminal court cases.

The current system has come under criticism for lacking the flexibility and understanding of various scenarios which survivors of domestic abuse often find themselves in. This can include limiting police attestations to police officers at or above the rank of superintendent, and restricting social services attestations to directors of social services.

Among the measures announced today are plans to update the list of court and

other orders that are acceptable as evidence of the risk to an applicant, and lowering the seniority required for an attestor from the police or social services.

The minister has been working with domestic abuse charities over the past 6 months, including Women's Aid, to explore what could be done to ease the process for one of the most vulnerable groups in society. Women's Aid estimate that the proposals in the policy statement could help thousands of survivors of domestic abuse.

Mehala Osborne, survivor and founder of the Right to Vote campaign, said:

I was denied a vote whilst living in a refuge, and I never realised how much having a vote meant until it was taken away from me. I had already been through enough, and to be disempowered even more was so difficult. I am so proud to have started the campaign that has led to these proposed changes. Survivors in the future will not be denied their voice and democratic right to vote.

Dawn Morville, survivor of domestic abuse who lived in a refuge, said:

When I was living in a refuge, I could never register to vote as I was worried my ex would be able to hunt me down – and if he had been able to find my address, there is no doubt he would have come after me. This would have put not only me but the other women in the refuge at risk. And for years after I left the refuge, I could still not vote, because I knew that he would find me if he could, and seriously harm me and my children. So the proposed changes are great news. It will empower survivors, and give us back something that domestic abuse takes away: our right to have our say, and be heard, without being terrified that voting could mean our abuser comes after us.

Polly Neate, Chief Executive of Women's Aid, said:

Domestic abuse must not deny women their right to take part in democracy. So, we welcome the changes proposed today on anonymous registration, and we thank the government – particularly the Minister Chris Skidmore, for decisive action on this. The proposed new measures send out a clear message to all survivors of domestic abuse: that their voices matter, and their participation in politics matters.

Chris Skidmore, Minister for the Constitution, said:

This government is committed to removing any barriers that prevent

voters from exercising their democratic right. Having met survivors of domestic abuse over the past 6 months, it is clear that the existing system has often let down those affected by domestic abuse.

That is why today we are setting out proposals to reform the anonymous registration scheme in England and Wales to make it more accessible for those escaping domestic abuse. Protecting the safety of survivors by making it easier for them to register to vote without their name and address appearing on the electoral register is a key part of that change.

We are clear that those who have been constrained by their abusers must have full freedom to express themselves in the democratic process – part of this government’s determination to build a democracy that works for everyone.

The government is now welcoming feedback on proposals to expand the evidence to include new types of attester and new types of documentary evidence, along with other measures in the statement. To share your comments, please contact the Cabinet Office at anonymous-registration@cabinetoffice.gov.uk.

Under provisions of the Scotland Act 2016, the Scottish Parliament will shortly gain legislative competence for electoral registration in relation to Scottish Parliamentary and Local Government elections in Scotland. The Minister for the Constitution will be working with his counterpart in the Scottish government in order to together deliver reforms in respect of the UK Parliamentary electoral register and the local government electoral register in Scotland.

Under provisions of the Wales Act 2017, the National Assembly for Wales will in due course gain legislative competence for electoral registration in relation to elections to the National Assembly for Wales and Local Government elections in Wales. However, the changes proposed to anonymous registration will most likely come into force prior to commencement of these provisions.

[China’s top political advisory body starts annual session](#)



Yu Zhengsheng, chairman of the National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC), delivers a report on the work of the CPPCC National Committee's Standing Committee at the fifth session of the 12th CPPCC National Committee at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing, capital of China, March 3, 2017. The fifth session of the 12th CPPCC National Committee opened in Beijing on March 3. [Photo/Xinhua]

China's top political advisory body started its annual session Friday in Beijing, ushering in a political high season that will continue with the opening of the country's top legislature Sunday.

Yu Zhengsheng, chairman of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference National Committee, delivered a work report to more than 2,000 political advisors who gathered to discuss major political, economic and social issues in the world's most populous nation and second-largest economy.

Top Communist Party of China and state leaders Xi Jinping, Li Keqiang, Zhang Dejiang, Liu Yunshan, Wang Qishan and Zhang Gaoli attended the opening meeting at the Great Hall of the People.