

£2 million new funding allocated to support local airfields

- the airfield development fund will provide commercial expertise support to local airfields
- the funding will support airfields, help general aviation businesses to grow, and support science and engineering training to workforces
- launching in spring, applicants will have 4 weeks to apply for advice as part of the £2 million fund

Today (12 February 2020) Aviation Minister, Paul Maynard launched the Airfield Development Fund, which will increase support for airfield owners, operators, local councils and associated businesses, helping them upskill, thrive and grow.

Airfields are an integral part of the £3 billion general aviation sector and considered the grassroots of the entire aviation sector, however many have often struggled with business development and financial sustainability.

This new funding aims to ensure airfield businesses receive access to advisors, offering help on a range of legal and business-related topics to support their future development – which could include advice on science and engineering training, developing electric aircraft and preserving heritage aircraft.

Applicants are encouraged to apply for advice from the £2 million fund from spring by demonstrating how it could help them protect or expand their business. This includes applying for help on proposed developments, protecting airfields, or expanding training facilities and commercial opportunities.

Paul Maynard, Aviation Minister, said:

The UK government recognises the enormous contribution smaller airfields make to the UK economy, and to the people they serve, where many aviation careers take first flight.

We're committed to protecting our airfields and easing the challenges that many businesses face. This support will help airfields prosper, creating and securing more jobs, while inspiring the next generation of aviation and engineering enthusiasts.

Airfields eligible to apply for advice through the fund must be licensed (EASA, national regulations, GA national) or unlicensed and handling less than 200,000 terminal passengers per year.

The government recognises the significant contribution smaller airfields make

to the wider UK economy. The launch of this fund demonstrates the government's commitment to supporting the general aviation industry – as part of a wider pledge to level up the country – and aims to make the UK a world leader in general aviation.

[Deal between Google and Looker given the go-ahead](#)

Both firms supply business intelligence (BI) tools, which allow companies to analyse a broad range of business data including sales, finance and advertising data. While BI tools are the primary focus of Looker's business, Google offers this capability alongside various other software and internet-based products and services including web analytics, online search advertising and cloud-based data storage.

The Competition and Markets Authority's decision to clear the deal follows an extensive Phase 1 review, exploring the different ways in which the completed merger could adversely affect competition.

Firstly, the CMA considered whether the loss of direct competition between Google and Looker in the supply of BI tools could lead to increased prices or reductions in quality. The CMA found this was unlikely because Google and Looker are not considered close competitors by businesses using BI tools, who can still choose from other providers, including Microsoft, Oracle, Tableau, SAP and IBM.

Secondly, the CMA considered whether Google could leverage its market power in online advertising and web analytics to drive rival BI providers out of the market. The CMA found that although Google had the ability to make it difficult for rivals to access the Google-generated data they need from online advertising and web analytics services, there was no strong evidence they would have the incentive to do this.

As part of its assessment, the CMA examined a wide range of evidence including thousands of internal documents detailing the companies' strategic plans, and submissions from a large number of customers and competitors. To assist with its analysis, the CMA also made use of the expertise of a team of data scientists within its Data, Technology and Analytics unit. The use of this expertise allows the CMA to effectively scrutinise digital mergers, which is a key element of its [Digital Markets Strategy](#).

The deal was also investigated and cleared by the US Department of Justice and the Austrian Federal Competition Authority. The CMA cooperated closely with both authorities through the course of its investigation.

This case is the second merger investigation carried out by the CMA in the

business intelligence sector in a matter of months, following careful scrutiny of Salesforce's purchase of Tableau, which was also cleared.

For more information, including a summary of the CMA's decision, visit the [Google LLC / Looker Data Sciences, Inc merger inquiry page](#).

Media queries should be directed to press@cma.gov.uk, on 020 3738 6460.

New bill gives hospitals power to develop personalised treatment

NHS hospitals will be able to use innovative, personalised medicines for unique cancers and diseases, following the introduction of the Medicines and Medical Devices Bill today (Thursday 13 February).

The bill will also:

- increase the range of professions able to prescribe medicines in low-risk circumstances, reducing unnecessary GP appointments
- introduce new regulations on medical devices, such as pacemakers, breast implants and ultrasound imagers, to ensure patient safety

The new bill means hospitals can use patient tissue and DNA samples to tailor treatments to individual patients when other medicines have failed, or to develop drugs that have a shelf-life of minutes and would otherwise be unavailable to them. This has the potential to streamline access to treatments for patients with rare cancers and brain tumours.

The bill also allows the sector to increase the range of professions able to prescribe medicines in low-risk circumstances, as midwives and paramedics do now with pain relief and physiotherapists with anti-inflammatories. This means the NHS can make the best use of its highly skilled workforce, saving patients' time and reducing unnecessary GP appointments.

There will be safeguards and limits on what medications are eligible. The government will work with the NHS and stakeholders to determine what medicines could be eligible and in what circumstances.

The bill will also allow the government to ensure medical devices are subject to the highest standards of regulation, further boosting patient safety and ensuring the UK leads the way in developing pioneering health technology. With a faster, more flexible system in place, regulators will be able to respond to changes in technology or patient safety concerns as soon as possible.

Companies will need to register medical devices with the Medicines and

Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA), ensuring suppliers follow strict safety checks and enabling tough enforcement action if something goes wrong.

The Health and Social Care Secretary will be given the power to disclose specific information about devices to members of the public and the healthcare system, subject to appropriate safeguards, when there are serious patient safety concerns.

Health Minister Baroness Blackwood said:

I am determined to help everyone who uses our world-leading NHS to access pioneering, cutting-edge treatments as soon as possible.

The new bill will give our most treasured institution further freedom to innovate to improve the lives of countless people and protect patient safety to the highest standards.

It will slash red tape, support uptake of treatments for people with rare diseases and empower those in the NHS who know what's best for their patients to deliver the best quality care.

[Plans to remove funding for courses with low student numbers](#)

More than 5,000 qualifications which are not being taken by anyone or are being studied by less than 100 students each year may lose government funding, under plans announced by Education Secretary Gavin Williamson.

The proposals set out [today](#) (Thursday 13 February), will make it easier for students to choose the qualifications that are in demand and help them to land great jobs.

The current system is confusing with around 12,000 qualifications on offer to young people at Level 3 and below – including A Level and GCSEs – often with multiple qualifications in the same subject area.

This action is a key part of the government's ambitious plans to transform further education and training, including introducing new T Level qualifications. Alongside world-class A Levels, new T Levels will be the gold standard technical course of choice for young people from 2020.

Education Secretary Gavin Williamson said

Trying to decide what course will put you on the path to a great career is hard enough, but with over 12,000 qualifications available and many in the same subject – it can feel like a needle in a haystack.

Removing funding for qualifications that have no or low numbers of enrolments will help make sure students have a clearer choice of the qualifications on offer, and ensure they get the skills they need to progress.

David Hughes, Chief Executive of The Association of Colleges said:

Making the qualification landscape easier to navigate for students and employers is crucial for the success of technical education. This will help that, but at the same time I am pleased at the approach being taken which should protect highly-valued but low enrolment qualifications which provide crucial skills, often in smaller sectors of the economy. We also welcome the opportunity for colleges to feed into the process alongside the awarding bodies they work with.

Qualifications including ProQual Level 1 Certificate in Business Administration, OCNLR Level 2 Award in Interior Design and Focus Awards Level 3 Certificate In Personal Training are being considered. These qualifications have no one taking them and other options exist that are more in demand.

This move is the latest step in the [Government's wider review of Post-16 qualifications at Level 3 and below](#), which aims to ensure all qualifications on offer are high-quality, necessary, and support students to progress into employment or further study.

The review builds on work already underway to help level up skills and opportunities across the country, including the introduction of new T Levels, working with employers to create more high-quality apprenticeship opportunities and establishing a network of Institutes of Technology.

The government is seeking views from the education sector on whether any of the 5,000 qualifications on the list should continue to attract public funding from August 2021.

[Gülnek and Cape Mathilde report](#)

published



Damage to port bow of Gülnak

Our accident investigation report into the bulk carrier Gülnak colliding with a moored bulk carrier on the River Tees on 18 April 2019, is now published.

The report contains details of what happened, the subsequent actions taken and recommendation made: [read more](#).

Damage to port side of Cape Mathilde

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