



## **Industry Forum June Newsletter**

### **Getting the UK moving again**

The high-risk strategy of Brexit has failed economically and appears irreversible for the foreseeable future. Therefore, without successful trade and industrial strategies, the economic performance of the UK will remain a problem. The business members and friends of the Industry Forum are generally optimistic that the current challenges can be overcome. Many are, however, delaying major decisions, including investment decisions, until it is clear that they can trust the next UK administration to adopt a business-like approach to industrial strategy, government investment, industrial relations and trade relations.

The Labour party is aiming to provide up to £28 billion annually to implement its Green Prosperity plan for the transition to renewable energy. Such pump-priming could have a stimulative effect like the US Inflation Reduction Act. Equally important to cash incentives, however, is that a new administration has clear objectives and consistent regulatory, tax, and trade policies to support these objectives. This is essential to give companies the confidence to commit their own resources to long-term UK projects and investments. As is already happening in the US, such confidence will bring the UK the increase in business activity needed to get the economy moving again. This is, after all, the way entrepreneurial companies and states work, around the world.

Over the crucial period to the next election we will, therefore, be giving priority to policymakers with concrete plans for 'Getting the UK moving again'. Some of our meetings will focus on discussions with businesses who have products and strategies that can contribute to a fast start in tackling key issues such as recycling waste materials, adjusting to the changing nature of work, improving our physical and digital infrastructure, using central bank digital currencies, building a renewable energy infrastructure, and more.

Our next two events are as follows:

## ***Getting serious about saving energy in housing***



***12 September 2023***

***Speaker: Bill Esterson MP, Shadow Business and Industrial Strategy Minister***

The UK has some 28 million homes most of which are notoriously energy inefficient. This means that we waste money on increasingly expensive fossil fuels and add to carbon emissions unnecessarily. While we gradually transition to renewable energy, there is, thus, an urgent need to make all our homes, not just new-build homes, more energy efficient. This roundtable will focus on how policy measures can help make our legacy housing stock more efficient. It will be led by Bill Esterson MP, Shadow Business and Industrial Strategy Minister and will include industry experts on design, retrofitting, insulation, and new materials.

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## ***Industry Forum 30th Anniversary Reception***



***19 September 2023***

To celebrate our 30th Anniversary we are holding an evening reception at the House of Commons hosted by Bill Esterson MP, Shadow Minister for Business and Industry,

and sponsored by Workday. The Industry Forum was founded in 1993 and, ever since, has been bringing together leading progressive policy-makers with people from business, diplomacy, academia, and the unions. With the UK now facing unprecedented challenges, there has never been a greater need for business and government to work together, cooperatively, to provide the prosperity on which society depends.

Other meetings, currently in planning include:

- Policy priorities for the water sector
- Key issues in rail and road transport
- Delivering a circular economy for materials
- Implications of the changing nature of work for offices, transport, and pensions
- How corporate governance reform could help the economy grow
- Developing an integrated trade strategy
- The implications of a central bank digital currency
- Fixing problems in public procurement
- Improving the UK digital infrastructure
- Transforming the public sector for the 21st century
- Harnessing artificial intelligence without the hype
- Building a new positive relationship with Europe

These are all major topics which we hope to cover in some depth. We are also keen to talk to members interested in working with us to produce policy action reports. Please let us know if you would like to sponsor and work with us on these or other topics.

In addition to members, we invite diplomats, academics, union representatives, and business guests to participate in our meetings.

Our most recent Industry Forum meetings have focused on Labour policies for housing and defence procurement.

***Adjusting to new defence procurement priorities***



**14 June 2023**

***Speaker: Chris Evans MP, Shadow Minister for Defence Procurement***

Russia's invasion of Ukraine has completely changed the European defence landscape, and UK defence priorities. Providing weapons and munitions to Ukraine and strengthening UK capability in the European theatre will require budget increases and the increased speed and volume of new defence equipment availability. This means that defence equipment manufacturers will need to rapidly increase capacity to supply to Ukraine and countries who wish to increase stocks and modernise equipment. This, in turn, will put pressure on the procurement capabilities of the Ministry of Defence to make good value purchases of reliable equipment with appropriate interoperability and maintenance characteristics. Shadow Minister for Defence Procurement, Chris Evans MP led this Industry Forum roundtable on 'Adjusting to new defence procurement priorities.'

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### ***Real solutions to UK housing problems***



**12 June 2023**

***Speaker: Matthew Pennycook MP, Shadow Minister for Housing and Planning***

As the government focuses on its five core missions, it is clear that long-term problems remain in the provision of adequate housing in the UK. For example: First

time buyers find it hard to afford housing, particularly in the south east, rental costs and tenancy terms make long-term family renting difficult, and the provision of social housing has declined, but not the need. Together, these cause serious inequality and also impact UK economic performance. Matthew Pennycook MP, Shadow Minister for Housing and Planning, led an Industry Forum roundtable on 'Real solutions to UK housing problems'.

### *New members welcome*

The Industry Forum was established in 1993, and has held over 500 meetings with top policy-makers since then. It is one of the most experienced, and well-networked, business policy think tanks in the UK. If you're not already a member, and would like to help shape our agenda, host events, and receive invitations to all meetings, get in touch by email at [info@industry-forum.org](mailto:info@industry-forum.org), or give us a call to find out more on 0207 434 0090.



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