

Press release: PM visits business leaders in Barry as part of UK tour

The Prime Minister met with businesses in Barry today to hear their views on what Brexit meant to them and to outline her determination to secure a deal that would benefit the whole of the UK.

On a day-long tour marking exactly one year from the UK's historic departure from the European Union, prominent Wales-based business leaders gathered at the Aston Martin factory in St Athan to talk to Theresa May about what they considered to be clear avenues for the country's economic growth, the potential for new jobs, and striking new trade deals across the world following Brexit.

The factory, which produces Aston Martin's new luxury car, DBX, has created 750 highly-skilled jobs and is expected to create a further 1,000 jobs with suppliers and local businesses by 2019.

Those attending the round table included Andy Sellars from CS Catapult; Anne Jessop from Royal Mint; Wayne Preece from Hydro Industries; Matthew Crummack from GoCompare; and Andy Palmer from Aston Martin.

The Prime Minister also set out how the action she was taking to benefit the whole UK would benefit Wales, from delivering a modern industrial strategy to deliver jobs and economic growth in every community, to pursuing an international trade policy which will open up new opportunities for goods exports – which have increased in Wales by 12.3% to £16.4 billion.

Prime Minister Theresa May said:

In exactly one year's time, the UK will leave the EU and begin to chart its new course in the world.

My aim today, as I visit all four nations of the Union, is to hear from people across our country about what Brexit means to them – and to reaffirm my commitment to strengthening the bonds which unite us.

I was privileged to hear the optimism from Wales' business community today as they discussed the many possibilities Brexit will bring – from growth and job opportunities to the freedom to strike new trade deals – and as we leave the EU, we should be optimistic and ambitious about what we can achieve together.

Wales, with its pioneering technology, construction and creative industries – which will further benefit from our £600 million investment in City Deals for Cardiff and Swansea as well as the abolishing of the Severn Crossing Tolls – is an integral part of our union, and I am committed to ensuring that it continues to

prosper.

Press release: Update on the infected blood inquiry

The Infected Blood Inquiry is a priority for this Government. The infected blood tragedy of the 1970s and 80s should never have happened. We are committed to making sure all those that have suffered so terribly can get the answers they have spent decades waiting for, and lessons can be learned so that a tragedy of this scale can never happen again.

We want to make sure that all those who need to contribute to the Inquiry can do so.

The Inquiry Chair will be able to make awards for legal representation once the Inquiry is formally established and he intends to make early provision for core participant designation and legal expenses awards.

Ministers have also decided that reasonable expenses for legal representation to respond to the consultation of the Terms of Reference of the Inquiry, will be met. Any claims will be handled by the solicitor to the Inquiry.

The Chair of the Inquiry has been actively consulting with those who have been affected about how to ensure the Inquiry delivers the answers they deserve, and the consultation on Terms of Reference has been designed to be as user-friendly as possible.

News story: Statutory redundancy payments increase

When a business goes insolvent, employees can submit a claim to the RPS for money they are owed, including:

- redundancy pay
- holiday pay
- arrears of pay
- statutory notice pay

At the moment, the RPS can pay up to £489 a week for each claim. For example,

if someone claims for redundancy pay and statutory notice pay they can get up to £489 a week for each one.

As of 06 April 2018, the amount the RPS can pay is increasing to £508 a week for each claim.

This means that if an individual is given notice of their redundancy on or after 06 April 2018, their weekly pay will be capped at £508. If they were given notice before 06 April 2018, their weekly pay may be lower.

News story: New Joint GES Heads of Profession – Sam Beckett (BEIS) and Clare Lombardelli (HMT)

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News story: Funding boost to improve and expand school buildings

Over £500 million has been announced today (Thursday 29 March) to improve and expand school buildings across the country and create more good school places.

The announcement builds on the 825,000 new school places created since 2010, with 1.9 million more children now in good or outstanding schools thanks to the hard work of teachers and the government's reforms.

The £514 million is being allocated as part of the Condition Improvement Fund. It will support 1,556 projects across almost 1,300 academies and sixth-form colleges in England to help improve the condition or expand their

facilities.

The announcement includes £38 million for projects supported by the Healthy Pupils Capital Fund, which is drawn from the Soft Drinks Industry Levy. This fund helps to improve children and young people's physical and mental health by enhancing the quality of, and access to, facilities such as changing rooms, playgrounds, kitchens and sports halls.

Minister for the School System, Lord Agnew, said:

All children deserve the best possible education and state of the art facilities are a big part of that. This funding will transform the condition of school buildings and help our best schools to expand, creating more good school places for families and raising standards for pupils. This will build on the hard work of teachers and our reforms, which have resulted in 1.9 million more children being taught in good or outstanding schools than in 2010.

The Condition Improvement Fund is an annual funding allocation that academies and sixth-form colleges are invited to bid for. In addition to improving the quality of school facilities, the fund also enables Good or Outstanding schools to expand where there is a need for them to do so.