

PM hosts automotive leaders at Downing Street

Prime Minister Theresa May outlined the government's commitment to the UK's automotive sector and called for the UK to stay at the forefront of the design and manufacturing of electric vehicles at a roundtable held at Downing Street today (Monday 15 July).

Speaking at the meeting attended by chief executives, senior leaders and experts in the car and energy industries, she emphasised that this can only be done through a strong partnership between the industry and government.

The meeting is part of wider action from government to support the automotive industry, and the Prime Minister confirmed today that Jaguar Land Rover will receive a £500 million loan guarantee from government export credit agency UK Export Finance. This will support the company's design and manufacture of the next generation of electric vehicles and its export activities.

The representatives discussed with the Prime Minister that as well as having long term consistent incentives and the right charging infrastructure in place to drive up demand for electric vehicles, the UK should build on its strengths in the development of next generation battery technology.

The UK has already made a major commitment to becoming a world leader in the industry through its £274 million investment in the Faraday Institute and earlier investments through the Automotive Propulsion Centre. Attendees spoke about how best to build on this and work more closely together to develop the next generation of battery technology, including by supporting small businesses in the electrified supply chain and the building of a Gigafactory – a large-scale battery technology factory for electric vehicles.

Attendees also agreed to establish a Green Mobility Transition Board which for the first time will formally bring together government, industry and environmental groups to coordinate efforts to speed up the adoption of ultra low emission vehicles while making progress on our ambitions to tackle climate change and further improve air quality. The Prime Minister's Industrial, Manufacturing and Infrastructure Business Council will work closely with representatives across the relevant sectors to scope out the exact terms of reference and members over the coming weeks.

The Prime Minister also set out a number of new commitments aimed at making electric vehicles more convenient than ever before to own, which were welcomed by attendees including:

- making England the first place in the world where every new-build home will be fitted with an electric car chargepoint, under a consultation launched today
- bringing forward plans to regulate chargepoints so that they use 'smart' technology which will send signals to electric vehicles to charge them

at different times of the day, encouraging off-peak charging to keep costs down for consumers and helping prepare the energy system for mass uptake of electric vehicles

- all new rapid and higher powered chargepoints to provide 'pay as you go' debit or credit card payment options by spring 2020 – ending the current wide variety of payment systems which is a source of frustration for drivers

The Prime Minister reaffirmed the government's ambition for better access to rapid chargepoints by 2030, following her recent announcement that the Office of Low Emission Vehicles will undertake a review to develop a vision for a core network of rapid chargepoints along England's key roadways. This would allow drivers to access them in a range of locations across the road network, including through and around cities.

Today's meeting builds on sessions attended by government and industry in recent weeks which saw representatives discuss how to increase demand and infrastructure for electric vehicles and capitalise on the UK's strengths in the development of battery, motor and power electronics technology.

Notes to editors

Alongside the Prime Minister Theresa May, Business Secretary Greg Clark and Transport Secretary Chris Grayling, attendees at today's roundtable included representatives from:

- AGM
- Advanced Propulsion Centre
- Aston Martin
- Bentley
- BMW
- BP
- BYD
- Ecotricity
- Ford
- Innovate UK
- Jaguar Land Rover
- McLaren
- National Grid
- Nissan
- Podpoint
- Shell
- SMMT
- Tesla
- Toyota
- UK Power Networks
- Vauxhall

A "Gigafactory" is a major manufacturing facility, producing 'cells' which are the basic building blocks of a battery. Carmakers will source cells from suppliers and assemble into battery packs. As an example, a car factory

making 200,000 electric vehicles, each with a 75kWh battery pack, would have a cell requirement of 15GWh.