

Press release: Council of Local Enterprise Partnership Chairs meeting: 31 January 2019

This morning, the Prime Minister chaired the second meeting of the Council of Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) Chairs at Downing Street.

Alongside the LEP Chairs she was joined by Business Secretary Greg Clark and Communities Secretary James Brokenshire.

The Prime Minister began by thanking the Chairs for their work to help deliver the modern Industrial Strategy across the UK.

She emphasised the importance the government places on listening to business as we prepare to leave the European Union and reaffirmed her commitment to supporting the role of LEPs to make sure that communities across the country are best placed to thrive.

Discussion covered the different approaches which LEPs are taking to develop bespoke Local Industrial Strategies, as well as their engagement with SMEs.

The Chairs spoke about the ongoing partnerships between government, business and academia to drive productivity and tackle the Grand Challenges outlined in the Industrial Strategy.

Attendees recognised the need to reflect the specific strengths and potential of each area in their plans and they highlighted successes to date such as tailored programmes of support for local SMEs.

All agreed on the importance of making sure that Local Industrial Strategies deliver a meaningful difference to local growth and emphasised the opportunities ahead for greater collaboration and innovation.

News story: Cambridge company fuels the way forward for protecting the UK and Allies

The major milestone comes after the first cohort of RAF aircrew commenced their training for the programme earlier this month, marking the start of a vital enhancement of the UK's military capabilities in the maritime environment. The P-8A Poseidon is a new aircraft for the RAF designed to

operate for long durations over water in maritime patrol roles, in particular anti-submarine, anti-shipping and search and rescue.

The Minister made the announcement for the P-8A programme during a visit to local Cambridge firm, Marshall Aerospace and Defence, where the fuel tanks for the aircraft are being produced.

Marshall Aerospace and Defence, which trained over 20,000 pilots during World War Two, manufactures the fuel tanks for sub-hunters globally, including for the United States Navy and Royal Australian Air Force. Marshall has been producing tanks for P-8 aircraft since 2009, and is due to deliver the 700th to Boeing this month. The skill involved in the design of this specialist equipment helps keep our Armed Forces safe and provides global protection to NATO and Allies' submarines and warships, while sustaining 60 local jobs.

Minister for Defence Procurement Stuart Andrew said:

Local companies, like Marshall Aerospace and Defence, form the backbone of our economy. The MOD has invested £141m in Marshall and I am proud to recognise the vital role they play in shaping our world-leading defence industry. Our new submarine-hunters will be a potent deterrent to our adversaries and a dependable asset for the UK and our allies, and the innovative defence equipment built by Marshall will help us combat a range of intensifying threats.

Defence Minister Stuart Andrew at Marshall Aerospace and Defence. Crown copyright.

The Poseidon MPA aircraft is based on the Boeing 737, which is already supported by UK industry, providing several hundred direct UK jobs at companies including Boeing, Marshall's, Martin Baker and General Electric UK.

The innovative sub-hunting fleet, designed for future growth and adaptability, will enhance the UK's specialist airborne maritime patrol capability through advanced, state of the art anti-ship missiles, sonobuoys and torpedoes. The aircraft will also contribute to the protection of the UK's nuclear deterrent and the UK's new aircraft carriers, seek to locate and track hostile submarines and enhance maritime Search & Rescue (SAR) capability.

A total of nine submarine hunting aircraft will be delivered to RAF Lossiemouth in Scotland in Spring 2020, bringing future opportunities for high-tech employment to the region. The MOD and Boeing have invested £100m in the infrastructure that will house the aircraft at RAF Lossiemouth. When the fleet is fully operational, an additional 470 personnel will be based at RAF Lossiemouth. Further roles are also expected when the training and support services are established at the new facility.

Chief of Materiel (Air) for Defence Equipment and Support, Air Marshal Julian Young said:

The work carried out under the P-8A programme demonstrates how we work collaboratively with industry to deliver vital capability to our Armed Forces – a proven approach that is leading the way internationally. This battle-proven aircraft, already in service with our allies across the globe, will be crucial in the protection of our continuous-at-sea deterrent as well as our new aircraft carriers, helping to tackle the threats we face in the skies and at sea.

[News story: Pricing guidance review 2018: Consultation outcome](#)

SSRO

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During 2018 the SSRO reviewed three areas of its existing statutory guidance on Allowable Costs and adjustments to the baseline profit rate.

We engaged with stakeholders on these aspects of the guidance during summer 2018 and consulted publicly on proposed guidance changes from October to December 2018.

We received 13 responses to our consultation, which we have considered in finalising the changes to guidance and [the outcome of the consultation](#) is now available.

The revised guidance will apply to qualifying defence contracts and qualifying sub-contracts entered into on and after 1 April 2019, replacing the existing guidance in those areas.

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Press release: Boosting ceramics trade is a top priority, says Dr Liam Fox

The International Trade Secretary and President of the Board of Trade, The Rt Hon Dr. Liam Fox MP, joins ceramics producers in Derby today (Thursday 31st January) to discuss the industry's priorities and to update them on the UK's preparations for leaving the European Union. The ceramics industry is crucial to the health of the UK economy, with export sales of £550m every year and accounting for more than 22,000 jobs.

Dr. Fox will meet with the British Ceramics Confederation to outline measures the government is taking to ensure British ceramics are protected from dumping, which involves overseas firms selling their goods at below cost price to undermine the British market. Dumping is against World Trade Organization rules.

The UK will soon be responsible for delivering its own domestic trade remedies system through the new Trade Remedies Authority (TRA). The Department for International Trade has made significant progress to ensure the TRA will be ready for 29th March 2019, meaning that Government can continue providing a safety net to British industry.

The government is committed to ensuring that UK industry can continue to compete on a level playing field when we leave the EU, as well as helping them to realise opportunities to trade freely with new markets around the world.

The International Trade Secretary also joins local firms Denby Pottery, Royal Crown Derby and Paul Cummins to see first-hand the work they are doing to boost their exports around the world. His visit will see the arrival in Derby of the Export Hub, providing support and advice to businesses on their exporting journey.

International Trade Secretary, Dr Liam Fox MP said:

I am delighted to be here in Derby today at the invitation of the Prime Minister's Trade Envoy, Pauline Latham OBE MP, meeting with representatives of one of the UK's most treasured industries. It is one of my top priorities to ensure that fantastic ceramics producers like these are able to continue expanding into new and established markets as we open up our trade with the world, while remaining protected from unfair trading practices.

While ceramics is a vital industry in the East Midlands, exports on the whole have grown faster than any other region of the UK and my international economic department is working to translate this incredible success around the country.

Discussing the importance of free trade to their success, Sebastian Lazell, CEO of Denby said:

The main priority, not only for Denby and the ceramics industry but all UK exporters, will be Free Trade Agreements with key trading countries. Continued unimpeded trade, without substantial tariffs or non-tariff barriers, is essential for success.

Whilst Denby has been exporting for over 150 years, the seriousness and intensity of the International Trade agenda is now on a different level as the continued momentum of the business is highly dependent upon building a fast-growing International business to complement a healthy and vibrant UK core.

Christopher Oakes, Managing Director of Royal Crown Derby said:

Royal Crown Derby has been making luxury tableware in England since 1750 and whilst our first export was recorded in 1786, international sales have grown most rapidly in recent years and we now export to over 50 countries. This success is attributable to many factors including our diversification into the luxury hospitality sector, investment in product development and a growing demand for products which are still made entirely in Britain.

We're delighted to welcome the International Trade Secretary, the British Ceramics Confederation and the export hub to our factory and visitors centre and we look forward to discussing how best to further boost export business against the current political backdrop and the attendant commercial and operational challenges.

Exports from the East Midlands increased by 10.9% in the last year – the biggest jump in the UK. The Midlands economy alone is worth more than £200 billion and is larger than countries such as Ecuador, New Zealand and Croatia.

[News story: Nuclear employees WiN big at national diversity conference](#)

Phil Craig, former Managing Director of Dounreay, scooped the coveted 'Ally of the Year' title at the Women in Nuclear (WiN) UK conference yesterday, for being a leading male advocate of gender balance and diversity.

Phil said it was an honour to have been recognised for putting people at the

centre of the business:

I'm incredibly proud of all of the work that has been undertaken at Dounreay during my time there, specifically in relation to equality, diversity and inclusion.

All of this work, and the reason for this nomination, is because of the effort and commitment of the site staff, who are committed to delivering the mission but also to making a difference in the people agenda.

To have been part of that journey and to be recognised by them, is the most humbling part of all.

Gayle Rew, Chair of Magnox Women's Network, scooped the 'Mission Possible' award for her help in building vital networks. Gayle said:

I am absolutely thrilled to have won the award and to gain the recognition for the progress that we have made in Magnox with our Women's Network.

I am incredibly proud of what we have achieved since our first tentative steps two years ago, including hosting our own conference, raising awareness of the need for gender balance and growing our membership.

The WiN conference has been a great opportunity to meet with so many like-minded and inspirational people who are also working hard across our sector to improve gender balance and inclusion.

This year's conference, held in London, focused on conscious inclusion. It saw workshop sessions and panel discussions including one with Anne Jenkins, Head of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion at the NDA, and Nikos Adamidis from NDA, who picked up last year's inaugural 'Ally of the Year' prize.

Anne said:

WiN members have worked hard to help build a culture of inclusion within the industry and the awards are testament to the passion and commitment of everyone involved.

This year's conference theme of conscious inclusion highlights the importance of understanding that organisational culture plays a crucial part in attracting, developing and retaining talent.

Progress is being made, however, sustained culture change takes time and there's still a long way to go, but WiN have once again

shown their passion and energy to support the industry in its ambitions to be an inclusive place to work.

Currently only 22% of the UK's nuclear industry is female, and this number declines significantly at senior levels. There is strong evidence to suggest that an inclusive environment, with diverse teams, leads to better performance.

Employees from across the NDA group were shortlisted in the award categories including Sellafield's Stephen Bewsher and Radioactive Waste Management's (RWM) Liam Payne, for 'Ally of the Year', and Samantha King, of RWM, for 'Mission Possible'.

Prioritising diversity and inclusion issues has been a major focus within the NDA group over past year in a bid to future-proof the business by attracting and retaining the right people with the right skills.