

Press release: £2.3 billion investment in infrastructure for new housing

A £2.3 billion fund which could unlock 100,000 new homes in areas of high demand has been launched today (4 July 2017) by the Communities Secretary, Sajid Javid.

Speaking in Birmingham at the LGA Conference today, the Communities Secretary will say that the investment will help to fund vital physical infrastructure projects like the building of roads, bridges, energy networks and other utilities, the absence of which continues to hold housebuilding back.

The new investment through the [Housing Infrastructure Fund](#) (HIF) aims to solve this problem and today opens for bids for local authorities across England to come forward with proposals to help get homes built faster.

Funding will also be available to help build new schools, healthcare centres and digital infrastructure to accommodate growing communities and alleviate pressure on public services.

Once proposals have been approved, it is expected that local authorities would begin building the necessary infrastructure immediately and for the homes to follow quickly afterwards.

HIF is part of the government's wider £23 billion National Productivity Investment Fund, which targets spending on areas critical to boosting productivity, including on housing, transport and digital communications.

Communities Secretary, Sajid Javid, said:

To build the homes this country needs, we need to deliver the right infrastructure in the right place at the right time.

By investing in local infrastructure, we can help unlock building thousands of new homes in the areas where they are needed most.

The Housing Infrastructure Fund will also make sure we have better public services in place for local communities.

Exchequer Secretary to the Treasury, Andrew Jones said:

Where we live plays a huge part in our lives; from the distance of our commute to the local facilities available. By ensuring we have enough housing in areas where it is needed the most, we can boost productivity and support new communities to grow and thrive.

This money is part of our £23 billion National Productivity and

Investment Fund, which will ensure Britain is match fit for the future.

LGA Chairman, Lord Porter said:

We're pleased that the government has followed through on its commitment to invest in infrastructure linked to housing and that this to be led by councils, as we outlined on our preliminary Housing Commission findings last year.

Going forward, what's crucial is that the arrangements to access this fund are flexible, especially around different housing tenures, and that all councils can access funds to deliver housing for their communities.

Councils know their communities, and the places in them, best and so it's right that approaches to invest in local infrastructure are led by local authorities.

Home Builders Federation Planning Director Andrew Whitaker said:

Funding necessary infrastructure will give local authorities the opportunity to remove barriers to developments being delivered.

Direct support for critical infrastructure will not only unlock more housing, it should also help to accelerate planned developments.

Local authorities that plan for growth should be supported and that will, in turn, allow house builders to get on and deliver the homes our communities so desperately need.

HIF is an important demonstration of the government's commitment to housing, following on from the [housing white paper](#), which sets out a strategy to fix the nation's dysfunctional housing market.

The fund will support councils to step up their plans for growth, release more land for housing and get attractive, well designed homes that people want to live in built at pace and scale.

£2.3 billion of capital grant funding will be allocated to local authorities on a competitive basis. The funding will be available from 2017-18 to 2020-21.

DCLG will work closely with other departments in the assessment of local authority bids.

HIF forms part of the new £23 billion National Productivity Investment Fund, as announced at the Autumn Statement 2016.

News story: Miniature pump for failing heart to be trialled with 50 patients

[Calon Cardio-Technology](#) is preparing the UK's first artificial heart pump for a 50-patient clinical trial in 2018.

The pioneering medical technology spin-out from [Swansea University](#), based in the [Institute of Life Science 2](#), has developed a miniaturised ventricular assist device (VAD) to be implanted directly into the left ventricle of a failing heart. This follows support from Finance Wales and Innovate UK.

Dramatic impact on the quality of life

Up to 60,000 new cases of advanced chronic heart failure are diagnosed every year in the UK, and 40% of those diagnosed die within 12 months.

Calon Cardio's MiniVAD assists the weakened heart rather than replacing it. It could have a dramatic impact on quality of life for a significant number of patients.

It can slow or stall heart failure progression and prolong the life of patients waiting for a heart transplant. The MiniVAD is driven by an embedded electric motor and is powered by a battery pack worn by the user.

Smaller, lighter and more cost-effective

Existing VADs on the market are expensive, require extensive surgery for implantation and have been known to cause complications by damaging proteins and cells in the blood.

The MiniVAD addresses these problems with a smaller, lighter pump that requires less invasive surgery and causes less damage to the blood by allowing it to flow more gently. This also means it is more cost effective.

Innovate UK awarded Calon Cardio and Swansea University a Biomedical Catalyst grant of £1.66 million in 2013, to gather the necessary performance and safety data before applying to begin human clinical studies.

Substantial benefits to patients

Stuart McConchie, Chief Executive of Calon Cardio, said it was the most-advanced pump of its kind, adding:

This is for a very sick group of people and there are millions of them in the world, and hundreds of thousands in the UK.

It is the first British pump to be built for this purpose: to treat blood which is flowing through the pump extremely gently and to minimise damage to the blood.

Patients don't have return to hospital for correction of adverse events related to blood handing, so the absolute cost benefit becomes substantial.

Speech: Chancellor at the CBI President's dinner

Good evening.

I'm delighted to be here this evening

Tonight I want to talk about my plan for the British economy and for backing British business and British jobs.

Because let me be clear.

Backing business is not about some cosy arrangement between government and industry as some like to imply, or even about abstract economic policy.

It is about getting behind those who create the jobs and the opportunities for individuals and families up and down this country, so they can go on doing so.

Because it is businesses and your hard-working employees who have helped turn this country around since we came into government in 2010.

Back then, the British economy was reeling from the financial crash and the ensuing Great Recession.

And we put into place a plan of action.

A plan to address the regulatory and governance failures in our banking sector;

A plan to tackle the crisis in our public finances;

A plan to cut taxes and boost investment;

A plan that took the necessary long term decisions to ensure a lasting private sector recovery.

Back then the enemies of that plan were relentless.

We were told the only way out was a return to higher spending and higher borrowing.

But the British business community was unfailing in its faith in the plan.

For you understood it had to be a recovery led by the private sector.

That you cannot tackle excessive fiscal deficit and public debt by increasing borrowing;

You understood that in order to cut taxes to boost investment and private consumption and save jobs, it would be necessary to curb current public spending.

That to demonstrate commitment to restoring the public finances to maintain our credibility with markets and international investors, we would have to take the difficult long term decisions for our country.

And with the hard working people of this country we have made great progress.

For the last two years, Britain has been the second fastest growing G7 economy.

Far from losing 1.2 million jobs – you have created 3.4 million new private sector jobs.

Our employment rate is now the highest on record.

Unemployment rate is at a 40 year low.

And from a post-war high in 2009...

...we have reduced the deficit by three-quarters as a share of GDP.

And this hasn't just been about London and the South East.

Right up and down this country people have felt the benefits.

Wages are rising fastest in the West Midlands...

...productivity is growing fastest in Northern Ireland...

...and unemployment is falling fastest in Scotland.

We should be proud of these achievements.

And I thank you – the job creators, the innovators, the wealth-makers – for that achievement.

Challenge Ahead

That is the record of the last seven years.

But now we face new challenges – even before we have completed the task of

dealing with the financial crisis.

The deficit is down...

...but total debt is still too high and leaves us vulnerable to another shock of any kind.

Employment is at a record high...

...but there is frustration over the stagnation in real pay growth...

...driven by the current spike in inflation which itself is due mostly to currency depreciation.

As I said in the Commons on Thursday:

Our policy on public sector pay has always been designed to strike the right balance between being fair to our public servants, and fair to those who pay for them.

That approach has not changed; and we continually assess that balance.

But we do, of course, recognise that the British people are weary after seven years hard slog repairing the damage of the Great Recession.

They have travelled a long way...

...but still the sunlit uplands seem stubbornly to remain one further ridge away.

And once again, some are questioning whether we should abandon the economic plan that has brought us so far...

...and take a different path.

A path of higher taxes on business and wealth creators, higher spending, nationalisation, and higher borrowing.

(Indeed, some are questioning the economic model itself).

And it is up to all of us...

...in business and in government...

...to make the case, all over again, for a market economy, for sound money, and for a tax system that incentivises enterprise and innovation.

So that we can ensure that the fruits of the British people's hard work over the last seven years are not wasted...

...and that they are shared by all.

You may think we had won that argument.

But it seems we have to win it all over again.

And while I understand that publicly quoted businesses cannot engage in party-political debate...

...I believe it is incumbent upon business collectively to make the argument for a market economy, free trade, and sound money...

...and as the need for that argument asserts itself again, I expect business to step up to that challenge.

The Plan

They say that doing is more powerful than saying...

...and the best way to make the case for a market economy is to demonstrate that it delivers.

We, in government will do our part...

...delivering the three key elements of our plan.

First, we must retain a credible path for the public finances – one that will underpin a strong and growing economy.

Because without strong economic growth, we cannot support the improvements to public services that people want to see.

That does not mean we can't have a debate in Britain about the level of funding of public services. But it does mean that it has to be a grown-up debate...

...where we acknowledge that borrowing to fund consumption is merely passing the bill to the next generation...

...and reject the fallacy that the burden of additional taxation can always fall on someone else.

Then, hopefully, we can build a consensus that the only sustainable solution is to increase the trend rate of growth.

Second, we need to get the right Brexit outcome.

One that puts jobs and prosperity first.

How do we achieve that?

We focus relentlessly on getting the key components right:

A comprehensive free trade deal in goods and services...

...that allows the complex value chains that crisscross our continent to continue to operate smoothly.

A customs arrangement that minimises friction at the border...

...with a transition that prioritises protection of the free-flow of trade across our borders until the agreed long-term arrangements can be put fully in place.

A future relationship that acknowledges our need to manage migration...

...but allows British businesses and public services to continue to recruit the labour they need to deliver both economic growth and our social objectives.

And acknowledges, too, the legitimate concerns among our EU colleagues about regulation and supervision of cross-border financial markets...

...and commits to agreeing a cooperative supervisory structure to address those concerns, based on international best practice.

We seek a shared understanding on what the future relationship looks like as early as possible...

...and an agreement with our EU partners that it will be in our mutual interest that there will be a smooth and orderly path to the new arrangements, rather than a disruptive and dangerous cliff edge.

Because what Businesses and citizens crave more than anything, is clarity about the future.

I spoke to an audience of over a thousand business leaders in Germany last week...

...setting out the clear benefits of close collaboration around a Free Trade deal and an orderly and predictable transition to it – not just for businesses in the UK – but for businesses across the continent too...

...and when they thought about it, I think they agreed with me...

...but I was struck once again during that visit by the “asymmetry of attention” to this issue: for us, Brexit is the dominant focus; for many of our continental partners, it is just one among many challenges vying for attention.

We need to remember that fact as we seek their attention to make these arguments.

And it is incumbent on all of us, in business and in government alike, to go on making the case for a Brexit outcome that protects jobs and prosperity...

...and a transition that takes us to it smoothly.

To go on emphasising to contacts and supply-chain partners in Europe that this is a shared challenge, that has to have a shared solution.

One that allows businesses to go on trading, go on investing, go on creating jobs and driving prosperity up and down this country – and across the

continent of Europe.

And that brings me to the third part of our plan: a productive and dynamic economy.

Some journalist wrote recently that I could talk about productivity with "room-emptying enthusiasm".

I wear that as a badge of pride!

So if anyone wants to leave now, please do.

Because it is only by making sustained increases to our productivity performance that we can deliver the higher wages that drive higher living standards and higher tax receipts to fund improvements in our public services.

There is no other way to do it.

And driving productivity has to be a collaborative effort:

Government must invest in skills and infrastructure and ensure that incentives for private investment in productivity enhancement are right.

Businesses must invest in raising the productivity of their employees and in developing the innovations that will drive wider productivity gain across the economy.

A key element of our plan is the £23 billion of additional investment in infrastructure and innovation that I announced at Autumn Statement last year...

...which means over the next five years we have committed nearly half a trillion pounds in public investment.

That's more as a proportion of our GDP than over the thirteen years of the previous government.

As well as investing in hard infrastructure, we are investing in our young people.

And at the Spring Budget we launched an overhaul of our technical education system...

...replacing the current confusion of 13,000 technical qualifications with 15 clearly-focused 'T Levels' and increasing hours of training by more than 50%, so that students emerge work-ready.

Because it is only by investing in our young people and equipping them with the skills they need for the jobs of tomorrow that we can ensure they will have real economic security.

The productivity challenge can only be addressed with a combination of public and private investment.

So we also have to tackle the long-standing weakness in the UK economy of poor levels of access to longer-term investment capital for growth businesses.

We have made some progress in seed and early stage capital...

...and new institutions such as the Business Growth Fund, funded by five of the UK's largest banks, have started to make a difference.

But it is a frustration to me that, despite having the world's number one financial centre...

...with £7 trillion of assets under management...

...there continues to be a gap in longer term development capital for growing innovative businesses.

That is why we launched the Patient Capital review last Autumn...

...supported by an Expert Panel chaired by Sir Damon Buffini.

Later this month, the Treasury will launch the Patient Capital Consultation...

...and we will welcome input from all stakeholders as we seek ideas to address this critical issue...

...including consideration of the case, post-Brexit, for a new national investment fund to channel long-term capital via private-sector managed funds, into high growth, innovative businesses, to continue and extend the work that the European Investment Fund has begun.

Call to business

That is the government's plan.

A bold programme to build a strong economy, invest in our infrastructure and our people...

...clear that open markets, free trade, and sound money are the cornerstones of an economic model that can provide opportunity and prosperity for all.

But let me say again...

...Government cannot act alone.

It is private business that creates jobs...

...and drives economic growth.

We need you to play your role and to make your voice heard.

We need you to invest in your companies and seek out new opportunities for business around the world.

We need you to grow your employees' skills, so that they are prepared for the fast changing economy that we live in.

And we need you to make your voice heard, if you believe in competitive tax rates, market economics, free trade, and sound money.

And I look forward to listening to what you have to say in our new EU exit Business Advisory Group which I am establishing with David Davis and Greg Clark....

Because we know that the only way of delivering for ordinary people in this country is by providing you – business – with the confidence in the future that you need to invest...

...with the skills base you need to grow...

...and with the competitive environment that will make a success of Global Britain.

Conclusion

Let me finish by thanking the CBI leadership and business leaders here tonight for your enduring support.

And let me leave you with this thought:

After seven long and tough years, the high wage, high growth economy for which we strive is tantalisingly close to being within our grasp.

It would be easy to take our foot off the pedal.

But instead we must hold our nerve...

...and maintain our focus resolutely on the prizes that are so nearly within reach.

With the right Brexit deal agreed in the months ahead...

...a steady determination to restore our public finances to balance by 2025...

...and a relentless focus on transforming Britain's productivity performance;

With the many exciting, new technology and business opportunities this country faces...

...and the huge potential for our services industries as the economies of the emerging markets transform...

...we can at last look forward to being able to begin delivering to the British people the prizes for which they have worked so hard...

...and which they so richly deserve.

Press release: PM call with Turkish President Erdogan: 3 July 2017

The Prime Minister spoke to Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan by telephone earlier this evening.

The Prime Minister offered her condolences following the killings of the President's party colleagues in the south-east of Turkey this weekend. They agreed this kind of brutality only strengthens our resolve to work together to tackle terrorism, and noted countering extremism would be a key topic for discussion at this week's G20 summit in Hamburg.

They discussed the ongoing Cyprus talks in Geneva, with the Prime Minister noting we now have a unique opportunity to reach a settlement. The Prime Minister said we know that to reach a final outcome there will have to be flexibility on all sides, but with continued commitment and political will, a historic agreement is within reach. The Prime Minister confirmed the UK fully supports the process and stands ready to play its part.

They looked forward to seeing each other at the G20 summit later this week.

Press release: PM call with HRH Prince Mohammed bin Salman of Saudi Arabia

The Prime Minister spoke to His Royal Highness Prince Mohammed bin Salman of Saudi Arabia this afternoon.

She began by congratulating him on his recent appointment as Crown Prince and Deputy Prime Minister. She said she looked forward to deepening our close bilateral ties – building on their productive meetings during her recent visit to Saudi Arabia.

They agreed that the UK and Saudi Arabia have a strong and historic partnership, and will continue to work together on areas such as trade, investment and security, in support of Saudi Arabia's ambitious reform agenda 'Vision 2030'.

The Prime Minister raised the issue of the ongoing isolation of Qatar in the region. She reiterated the need for all sides take urgent steps to de-escalate the situation and restore Gulf Cooperation Council unity.

She welcomed the extension of the deadline for Qatar to respond to the concerns raised by Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain and Egypt, and noted that this demonstrated the willingness of all parties to make progress towards a solution. She said the UK remains committed to supporting this process.

The Prime Minister was also clear that Qatar should continue to work with its Gulf allies to tackle the threat of extremism and terrorism in the region.

They ended the call by looking forward to meeting in London at the earliest opportunity.