

News story: CMA accepts gyms merger undertakings

The CMA has accepted proposals by David Lloyd to resolve concerns over its proposed purchase of Virgin Active gyms in Brighton and Brentwood.

Last month, the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) [found competition concerns in these 2 locations](#) because the companies' gyms are situated close to each other and would face limited competition from other operators after the acquisition.

The CMA was concerned that the purchase could have resulted in higher prices or a worse deal for gym users in these areas. David Lloyd proposed not to purchase these gyms, which will instead remain under Virgin Active ownership.

David Lloyd originally proposed to purchase 16 Virgin Active gyms in total. The CMA has found no competition concerns in the other areas affected.

After consulting formally, the CMA believes the concerns have been addressed and has accepted these proposals.

All information relating to this investigation can be found on the [case page](#).

News story: PM's first meeting with new Cabinet: 13 June 2017

In the first Cabinet meeting since the election, ministers discussed the forthcoming Queen's Speech, including the legislative programme required to deliver the best possible Brexit deal for the whole United Kingdom.

Ministers also received an update on the appalling terrorist attacks in Manchester and London during the general election campaign. The Home Secretary and the Health Secretary praised the extraordinary response of the police and emergency services to both incidents.

Cabinet also discussed the ongoing talks with the DUP to secure a confidence and supply arrangement.

News story: Cutting-edge technology innovation: apply for business funding

Businesses can apply for a share of £15 million to support disruptive innovation in any technology area with potential to generate growth.

Innovate UK has up to £15 million for game-changing, cutting-edge or disruptive innovation projects that leads to new products, processes or services.

The open programme

This funding is part of a regular series of open competitions that support good ideas with market potential, no matter where they come from.

Projects can come from any technology, science, engineering or industrial area. They can fit in with any of Innovate UK's priority sectors – emerging and enabling technologies, health and life sciences, infrastructure systems, and manufacturing and materials – or be outside.

Funding is available for a wide range of projects, from feasibility studies to experimental development that is closer to market.

Priority will be given to proposals that are likely to lead to sustainable growth in productivity or develop products and services that will access new markets overseas. All projects should demonstrate the potential to generate commercial impact and economic growth.

Competition information

- the competition is open, and the deadline for registration is 9 August 2017
 - projects must be led by a business, either working alone or with partners
 - total project costs can range between £25,000 and £1 million, and projects can last between 6 and 36 months
 - businesses could attract up to 70% of their eligible costs, depending on their size and the type of project
 - only one project application may be submitted per applicant per competition round
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Press release: Foreign Secretary statement on settlement units in the West Bank

We condemn the announcement of yet further settlement units in the West Bank. Settlements are illegal under international law, and not conducive to peace. This spike in settlement activity makes a two state solution, with an Israel that is safe from terrorism and a Palestinian state that is viable and sovereign, harder to achieve.

Press release: Change of Her Majesty's Ambassador to Algeria

2016 – present FC0/Department for International Trade, Head, Trade Diplomacy Unit 2014 – 2016 FC0, Head, Economic Growth and Business Department 2010 – 2014 UK Trade and Investment (UKTI), Director for Trade and Investment, British High Commission, New Delhi 2008 – 2010 UKTI, Director Asia 2006 – 2008 FC0, Head, Engaging with Islamic World Group 2004 – 2006 Riyadh, Deputy Head of Mission and Consul-General 2003 – 2004 UKTI, Director Trade and Investment, Saudi Arabia 2001 – 2003 FC0, Deputy Head, Middle East Department 1997 – 2001 FC0, UK Mission New York, First Secretary (Finance) 1995 – 1997 FC0, Head, Iraq Section, Middle East Department 1993 – 1995 FC0, Head, Conventional Arms Exports, Non-Proliferation Department 1989 – 1993 Kuwait, Third then Second Secretary (Political) 1987 – 1989 Language training (Arabic) 1986 – 1987 FC0, Assistant Desk Officer, Middle East Peace Process, Near East and North Africa Department