

[Dieselgate: Greens welcome EU step in the right direction](#)



4 April 2017

Keith Taylor MEP: “Green MEPs were instrumental in securing an inquiry into the emissions fraud scandal on behalf of European citizens who have twice been the victims of Dieselgate”

Responding to the [vote on the findings of the Dieselgate inquiry](#), Keith Taylor, Green MEP for the South East and a member of both the European Parliament’s Environment and Transport committees, said:

“Greens were instrumental in securing an inquiry into the emissions fraud scandal on behalf of European citizens who have twice been the victims of Dieselgate; through their exposure to toxic fumes and the complete contempt for their consumer rights. Today’s vote is both a vindication and an important step forward in taking an EU-wide approach to ensuring that a similar scandal can never be allowed to happen again. It’s a reminder that Dieselgate was a problem of too little Europe, not too much.”

“The report adopted today by MEPs will help break the cosy relationship between national authorities, car manufacturers, and the technical bodies in charge of the testing. The legislation also contains welcome steps towards greater transparency, with the Commission required to make public when it questions the non-compliance of a vehicle, giving consumers a better understanding of emerging problems.”

“UK Conservative MEPs were the biggest opponents of the Dieselgate report and were responsible for watering down its findings, which excoriate their friends in the car industry. That and the UK Government’s promise of a bonfire of regulations offers British citizens an alarming insight into what kind of (lack of) protections we might look forward to outside of the EU.”

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[Press release: Twelve new Enterprise](#)

Zones go live

Announced in the Autumn Statement 2015, these new zones support businesses, helping budding entrepreneurs to start and established companies to grow. They offer business rates discounts and additional tax breaks, backed by a simplified local planning process.

In addition, 2 Enterprise Zones – the west of England LEP (Local Enterprise Partnership) and the New Anglia LEP – have expanded to benefit more places and communities.

These new Enterprise Zones bring the total to 48 in England. They will build on the success of current zones, which have attracted more than £2.6 billion of private investment and more than 700 new businesses. It means more than 29,000 jobs have been created across a range of key industries since their launch in 2012.

Local Growth Minister Andrew Percy said:

Our modern Industrial Strategy is about creating the right environment for businesses to grow – Enterprise Zones are making sure this happens across the country.

This is a key part of our [Plan for Britain](#), creating a stronger economy that works for everyone. These 12 new Enterprise Zones will help even more businesses to set up and grow. I'm confident they will build on the success we've already seen over the past 5 years.

Support for growing business

Enterprise Zones are central to the government's Industrial Strategy. They will help businesses up and down the country seize the opportunities presented by leaving the European Union.

Each Enterprise Zone is unique, building on the strengths of each area. They support some of the country's most vital industries including manufacturing, technology and renewable energy.

The zones going live include:

- M62 Corridor Leeds City Region: in a boost to the Northern Powerhouse, the Zone will capitalise on the area's strong manufacturing industry and focus on digital technology, automotive engineering, textiles and glass making
- North Kent Innovation Zone: with 3 sites covering Ebbsfleet Garden City, Kent Medical Campus and Rochester Airport Technology Park, the Zone will

focus on the life sciences sector

- Brierley Hill: a new tech office hub for the Black Country will support development of Britain's advanced manufacturing heartland in the Midlands Engine; it will have easy access to surrounding industrial sites as well as central Birmingham, national and international connections
- Cornwall Marine Hub: located over 3 sites at Hayle, Tolvaddon and Falmouth Docks, the Zone will establish Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly as a global centre for the marine renewable energy sector

Further information

The Enterprise Zones launching were announced at Autumn Statement 2015 and are:

Northern Powerhouse

- M62 Corridor (Leeds City Region LEP)
- North East Round 2 (North East LEP)
- York Central (York, North Yorkshire and East Riding LEP)

Midlands Engine

- Brierley Hill (Black Country LEP)
- Loughborough and Leicester (Leicester and Leicestershire LEP)

South West

- Cornwall MarineHub (Cornwall and Isles of Scilly LEP)
- Dorset (Dorset LEP)
- Heart of the South West (Heart of the South West LEP)
- An extension to the West of England LEP Enterprise Zone

South East and East

- Enterprise M3 (Enterprise M3 LEP)
- Enviro-Tech (Hertfordshire LEP)
- Newhaven (Coast to Capital LEP)
- North Kent Innovation Zone (South East LEP)
- An extension to the New Anglia LEP Enterprise Zone

Businesses basing themselves on Enterprise Zones can access a number of benefits:

- business rate discount worth up to £275,000 per business over a 5-year period
- generous enhanced capital allowances (tax relief) worth millions to businesses making large investments in plant and machinery

- 100% retention of business rate growth for the Local Enterprise Partnership, to enable them to fund development on the Enterprise Zone
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[News story: FinTech Week 2017 line-up confirmed](#)

Britain will host some of the biggest names in UK and international FinTech when the second UK Fintech Week takes place in London next week.

Building on the success of last year, the week-long event will bring together industry, government and regulators to discuss the issues affecting Britain's world leading FinTech sector, including investment, access to skills and business support to FinTech start-ups.

The centrepiece event of Fintech Week 2017 is the first [International FinTech Conference](#) organised by HM Treasury and the Department for International Trade on 12 April.

Hosted by the Chancellor and featuring the Governor of the Bank of England, Mark Carney and the Economic Secretary to the Treasury, Simon Kirby as well as other leading figures from FinTech, Venture Capital and Financial Services organisations including Taavet Hinrikus (TransferWise), Samir Desai (Funding Circle), Eileen Burbidge (HM Treasury Fintech Envoy), Xavier Rolet (LSE plc), Douglas Flint (HSBC), Alastair Lukies (Prime Minister's Business Ambassador – FinTech) and Andy Stewart (Motive Partners).

The conference, sponsored by EY, HSBC, Pinsent Masons and Motive Partners will include exhibition space for 100 of the UK's top FinTech firms. 10 of these firms have been selected to pitch their business to attending investors from the main stage. The event will be an opportunity to meet over 200 domestic and international investors who will learn more about the UK's world-leading FinTech sector.

Looking ahead to the event, Chancellor of the Exchequer, Philip Hammond said:

Britain is already the best place in the world to start and grow a FinTech company. These events are a great opportunity to show why. The first ever International FinTech conference will bring together dynamic UK firms with an exciting vision of the future, and global investors who can support their future growth.

We have a plan for Britain and a modern Industrial Strategy and I see FinTech as an essential sector as we forge new trading relationships within, and beyond, Europe.

Secretary of State for the Department for International Trade, Liam Fox, said:

FinTech makes a huge contribution to our economy, and our knowledge, skills and expertise strengthens the UK's position as a global leader. We have created the right environment for businesses to start and grow in this thriving sector, and with my department's support and events like this international FinTech conference, we will help even more UK-based FinTech companies to capitalise on the international opportunities and attract inward investment to our shores.

Economic Secretary, Simon Kirby said:

Growing our FinTech sector will deliver a radical change for consumers. It will revolutionise how we all bank and improve financial inclusion at home and abroad.

FinTech Week 2017 is an exciting opportunity for UK firms and investors and an important part of our plan to forge a truly Global Britain that remains a great place to do business.

Imran Gulamhuseinwala, EY's Global FinTech leader, said:

This conference really underlines UK FinTech's place as a global market leader. Our industry's potential for redefining the financial services landscape is huge and we're already seeing significant new digital solutions coming to market – and this pace of innovation is likely to quicken over the next few years. Investors will continue to recognise both the huge potential the UK represents as a hub and as an attractive destination to do business. It's vital that the UK continues to support FinTech in order to maintain our lead, which is the envy of many other countries.

Douglas Flint, Group Chairman, HSBC Holdings plc, said:

Digital technology is rapidly changing the world. At HSBC we're working alongside FinTech companies to harness the opportunities arising from new technology to offer a wider range of products while making banking simpler and more secure for our customers.

FinTechs complement HSBC's internal expertise, and at the same time we can help them to refine their products and expand to new international markets, propelling their growth.

HSBC is delighted to support the Government's FinTech conference.

The UK is one of the leading locations for FinTechs, attractive to the international entrepreneurial talent that propels the industry and is enhanced by a supportive regulatory regime, in particular the FCA's sandbox.

Luke Scanlon, Head of Fintech Propositions, Pinsent Masons:

Fintech is driving a rapid transformation in financial services, changing the way in which we think and talk about money, payments and finance. The UK has for some time now flourished as a hub for the sector, and one of the reasons why it has flourished is the level of open access that FinTech businesses have in engaging with investors, regulators, legal experts and others at forums such as the International Fintech Conference. There are however, many detailed legal and regulatory questions which remain around how existing and future products and services of FinTech businesses can be delivered and bring benefits to customers. These questions need to be answered at a pace at which these emerging businesses are innovating. Our expertise in Fintech means we are well placed to support these firms with these legal and regulatory challenges that face them.

Alastair Lukies CBE, Founding Partner, Motive Partners and Prime Minister's Business Ambassador – FinTech said:

The United Kingdom has established itself as a leading destination for financial technology innovation and has long been a global financial services hub. This event, at this time, marks the UK's intent to continue building on this progress and welcomes entrepreneurs and institutions from all over the world to work with the UK in building a more sustainable, socially responsible and efficient financial services ecosystem for everyone.

Monday 10th April – Tuesday 11th April

Innovate Finance Global Summit

The first day of Innovate Finance's conference for the financial technology industry will feature a series of keynotes and panel discussions on issues like Brexit, globalization, new technology, regulation and cybercrime. Speakers will include Rajesh Agrawal, Deputy Mayor of London for Business, David Sproul, Chief Executive of Deloitte UK, and Chris Woolard, Director of Strategy Competition at the FCA.

The second day's focus will be on 'Pitch360', in which start-ups will be given the opportunity to pitch their idea in front of the global FinTech community.

Wednesday 12th April

International Fintech Conference

HM Government will host the International FinTech Conference in London on 12 April 2017. The Conference will bring together domestic and international investors and UK FinTech firms for an exciting one-day programme that aims to attract more investment into the UK's world-leading FinTech sector.

Speakers include:

- Philip Hammond, Chancellor of the Exchequer
- Mark Carney, Governor, Bank of England
- Simon Kirby MP, Economic Secretary to the Treasury
- Eileen Burbidge, HM Treasury's Special Envoy for FinTech
- Alastair Lukies, Founding Partner, Motive Partners and Prime Minister's Business Ambassador – FinTech
- Taavet Hinrikus, CEO, TransferWise
- Samir Desai, CEO, Funding Circle
- Imran Gulamhuseinwala, Global Head of FinTech, EY
- Douglas Flint, Chairman, HSBC
- Andy Stewart, Managing Partner, Motive Partners
- Elizabeth Corley, Vice Chair, AllianzGI
- Antony Jenkins, CEO, 10x
- Constantin Cotzias, Director, Bloomberg Europe
- Keith Morgan, CEO, British Business Bank
- Xavier Rolet, CEO, London Stock Exchange Group
- Ron Kalifa, CEO, Worldpay
- William Russell, Chair of FinTech Network Action Group, City of London
- Chris Woolard, Executive Director for Strategy and Competition, FCA
- Adrienne Harris, Former Special Assistant to the (US) President for Economic Policy
- Richard Wazacz, CEO, Octopus Labs
- Tim Bunting, Partner, Balderton Capital
- Samantha Ghiotti, Partner, Anthemis
- Jan Hammer, Partner, Index Ventures
- Dr Chris Sier, HM Treasury's Northern Powerhouse Envoy for FinTech
- Miles Celic, CEO, TheCityUK
- Darren Westlake, CEO, Crowdcube
- Edward Twiddy, CIO, Atom Bank
- James Varga, CEO, the ID Company
- Oli Barrett, Director, Start Up Britain

Wednesday 12th April – Thursday 13th April

Pensions Dashboard TechSprint

Simon Kirby, the Economic Secretary to the Treasury will publically launch the Pensions Dashboard Prototype and challenge teams of developers from over 20 technology firms to build potential applications in a 24 hour TechSprint. The ABI event will also be attended by policy and consumer experts to discuss how dashboards can best help consumers understand and make decisions about

their pensions.

Mission possible for Welsh tech companies to supply the space sector

Sponsored by Welsh Government and supported by ESTnet (the network for the Welsh technology sector), the event at Cardiff City Stadium is open to all technology companies in Wales, especially those working in software technologies including big data, analytics, internet of things and cyber-security.

The key message to Welsh tech companies is that many of the tools, services, technologies and products they develop can be utilised by the space industry which is actively looking to other sectors for the development of products and technologies to support growth.

The event is backed by a number of high profile organisations with speakers from both the UK and European Space Agencies, The Satellite Applications Catapult, Airbus, Seraphim Capital and Thales Alenia Space.

Opportunities for Welsh businesses to benefit from the wider space industry will also be highlighted later this month (Wednesday 26 April) at an event organised by Aberystwyth University entitled **Space and Earth Monitoring: identifying business growth opportunities.**

It is aimed at businesses interested in developing their knowledge and involvement with the space sector and will provide information on possible funding and collaborative opportunities and on skills development.

It is targeted at a range of companies from environmental consultancies to UAV specialists and from software developers to satellite developers and specialists in robotics and photonics.

Economy Secretary Ken Skates said:

“These events illustrate the growing prospects that the space industry offers Welsh businesses and present a great opportunity to learn more about the sector.

“The key message is that there are opportunities for savvy SMEs in the tech sector to play an important part in supporting the growth of the space sector and that this presents a very real next market opportunity for Welsh Tech companies.”

There will be a mix of presentations to inform and introduce businesses to

current and future opportunities within the space industries as well as the support available through Innovate UK, the KTN, academic institutions and the Catapults.

Avril Lewis, managing director of the ESTnet, said:

“The development of the UK space industry presents enormous potential for the Welsh technology sector.

“As the network for the Wales’ fast-growing technology industry, we know the valuable contribution our members can make to drive the development of the UK’s space efforts. It is essential that we ensure our members are given every chance to explore such opportunities and pursue valuable partnerships with organisations and companies working within the UK space industry.”

[Relationship support will not replace social security support stripped from struggling families – Cunningham](#)

Alex Cunningham MP, Shadow Work and Pensions Minister, commented on the Government’s plan to fund relationship support for unemployed families, said:

“Stronger relationships can help families to escape poverty, but the support announced today is a tiny response to funding the work that needs to be done to tackle rising inequality, child and pensioner poverty figures.

“All the evidence suggests that income is a central factor in poverty and inequality.

“Relationship support will not replace the social security support stripped from struggling families under seven years of failed Tory austerity.”

Ends