

Business Advisory Panel

Minutes BAP 22/08/19

Present: John Stenhouse (CPCA); Fiona McGonigle (CPCA); Alan Todd (FSB); Charlotte Horrobin (MAKE UK); Hannah Padfield (NFU); Stuart Gibbons (LeMARK); James Sloan (CBI)

Apologies: John Bridge (Chambers); Caroline Hyde (Allia); Simone Robinson (IOD);

Welcome to James Sloan representing the Confederation of British Industry on behalf of Richard Tunnicliffe.

1. Minutes of previous meeting tabled and agreed; matters arising covered in meeting.
2. Matters discussed and recommendations made;
 - 2.1.1. Support the retention and recruitment of EU workers at all skill levels with settled status documentation filing; upskilling; languages and incentives to stay and encourage others to join; in order to combat the outward flow of workers back to the EU and encourage those that stay to make more use of the qualifications and skills they bring with them as this could improve productivity.
 - 2.1.2. Encourage Local Authorities, District Councils, Unitary Authorities and the County Council to follow the CPCA example and make good use of the £2+ Billion EU Exit Funds allocated by Central Government for these purposes.
 - 2.1.3. Encourage the town twinning principles that would support better business and people collaboration across countries, that has been effective in other regions to promote cooperation and business growth.
 - 2.1.4. Note that banks are being more sector focussed on lending and are showing signs of restricting cash advances, taking a stronger conservative approach to risk over this challenging period. UK Export Finance is no longer available for sectors related to fossil fuels due to greening of products and social, environmental impacts, for example.
 - 2.1.5. Note that there is evidence that HMRC are delaying Tax Refunds and recent concessions on HMRC Import Duty deferral are causing cash flow issues with SME's instead of alleviating same, as banks are required to provide bonds as security which require cash deposits or other security to obtain.
 - 2.1.6. Note there is evidence that insurers are refusing to insure due to the Brexit uncertainties.
 - 2.1.7. Note requests for events on cyber-crime; fraud online; carbon neutral; high street IT skills training;
 - 2.1.8. Note concerns of rural businesses on water resources; carbon neutral by 2040; and the potential loss of EU funding due on the 1st December 2019.

3. **AOB;** concern on representation of SME's on the business board; sustainability; promotion of business board and skills board appointments; longevity of Industrial Strategy incl score card; Ox-Cam Arc.

4. Dates of next meetings:

24/10/19 09:30 – 11:30

19/12/19 09:30 – 11:30

20/02/20 14:30 – 16:30

23/04/20 09:30 – 11:30

Signed

Date

S Gibbons (Chair)