

Purpose:

- Reaction to budget & Covid-19 measures
- Feedback on other BEIS related measures
- Feedback that twice weekly calls to get live feedback on individual measures / sectors – yes would be helpful

Budget measures feedback

- CBI – 2 budgets – positive about short term Covid-19 – concern about people helped with sick pay, action on business rates beyond what expected. Would like to see more for larger firms – strong watching brief for supply chains e.g. from China; Covid-19 regulatory change with joint task force suggestion. Infra and investment – W Yorkshire deal – want to see investment go in ASAP. Skills & apprenticeship levy noticed – needs more in the near future
 - Seen balance sheet moment – don't see budget as that's it – when circumstances change then could see more action
 - Joint task force idea will be taken forward
- National Care Association – good to hear measures for NHS funding; disappointed social care position hasn't received any support for looking after vulnerable; local authorities and NHS will need to support in worst case scenarios – seeing some challenging circumstances. Looking for how we can react with more agility – recognition of challenge social care will face; broader impact on NHS and LA budgets. Need containment moment on what steps will be in worst case scenario. PS to refer to NHS colleagues. NS watching brief on sectors which may come under pressure due to increases in exposure e.g. health / tourism / aviation will be reviewed separately for how support will change
- Aviation – airport operators – welcome longer term infra investment but aviation notable in its absence – significant drop in traffic (15%) and will get worse – disappointed – double impact from flybe and Covid-19. Investment shelved, no recruitment, asking staff to go part time or take leave – will impact on supply chain – feel largely ignored by measures – would be good to have some business support. PS – seen \$113bn hit to airline – most difficult situation across all markets – unprecedented that ignored in budget – will pass messages to DfT colleagues.
- UKH – would have been positive budget without Covid-19 threats. Hotel bookings & travel down, restaurants and bars down 30-50%; London restaurants running at 30% capacity. Estimate significant numbers will not benefit as above £51k thresholds
- IOD – overall welcome measures taken but about communication – 2 points – many of support measures available from 2020/21 so what happens in meantime; many members falling outside of support areas; need clarity around what will happen immediately – panic stirred up by communications – WHO pandemic announcement will cause more impacts
- UK Finance – Banks doing their best to come forward with statements of support - £12bn committed already – welcome loan scheme – looking for govt – loan scheme needs to be fast, non-bureaucratic, diligence required but encouragement required for “all hands on pump” that monies made available quickly – Italy example will require fast hard work to be made available
 - £3000 per business will be distributed same way as flood compensation
 - BEIS will work with local govt to make available quickly
- BCC – businesses already saying “how do we get, where do we apply” – requires clear communication and offered to work with communities to get communication. Covid-19 missing area – businesses working on public contracts who may not be able to access work

- sites – how do workers access wage bills. Medium term adaptation for trade across borders – how can we address prior to 31 December deadline
- FSB – good mix of activity supporting – more work needed on time to pay – need to get communication right – hardship fund, can we keep emphasis on self employed as they may continue working without the support. Rates, employment allowance
 - British Pharma – Welcome R&D spend – 2.4% target important for future of economy – R&D tax credit welcome and backing for new research institute smart move for UK and supported
 - Make UK – support innovation / further innovation, more work on apprentice levy required. £30bn complete package – Make UK hotline busy with requests for help from large manufacturers e.g. Italian supply chain issues – how to get help quickly – 2x weekly calls will help answer difficult detailed questions on sick pay / air freight costs, identifying body of tricky questions that need help to be resolved and increased comms will support this
 - PO will pick up issues separately and get questions sent straight in to PO to help with responses
 - Dedicated person in PO
 - BRC – communication and clarity of messaging will be useful to help answer questions from retail perspective – spent last 2 weeks trying to dampen down panic buying – need to help people stop stockpiling. Disappointed that budget focuses on smaller business; parts of business that employs most people is the larger businesses. Need for continued mitigating actions – curfews / driving hours limitations – may be requirement to suspend competition law to enable retailers to work with each other will be critical. Wider budget – next business rate review welcome identified main points that business rates burden needs to drop – welcome. Disappointed not in short term. Announcement about plastic tax missed opportunity.
 - Suggestions of relaxing rules and regulations would be welcome
 - Start feeding in ideas today – want to be nimble and get ahead of the curve
 - Need to operationalise what we have announced – mechanisms for daily email / helpline
 - Intel – sectors in distress – need help for evidence gathering
 - What else can be done to help business cope with Covid-19
 - Energy UK – concerns around uncoordinated action from different departments and trying to help. Specific policy issue questions coming from different teams. Funding for CCUF & electric and decarbonisation welcome, looking for new nuclear and energy efficiency measures (potentially in white paper)
 - BEIS – all information through PO
 - We need to co-ordinate someone from PO to join energy calls
 - CBI – co-ordination across Whitehall – COBRA for business to create thinking power and agility across issues
 - ABTA – insurance – seen lot of insurers pulling back from markets which may intensify problems and slow recovery from them – is there anything to be done to prevent
 - ABI – travel insurance market quite wide – cover still available and consumers should shop around – KIV insure against possibilities and not certainties – need to be realistic that heading into high rates of no-go areas will have impacts
 - Co-ordination very important – businesses looking 2-4 weeks ahead and not knowing what coming – how to manage high % of incapacitated or self-isolating staff. Public don't have that level of anxiety. How to communicate what happens when this reaches the public –

panic buying will increase as a result, this call giving sense of anxiety across spread of business

- PS – contacts in China – understanding how long this will last and as situation there develops then that can inform actions and potential impacts here
 - Understand concerns raised, govt response being dictated by what experts and scientists are telling us
- Clarity required around hand sanitiser availability as example – need open dialogue with correct communication
 - Feed back in writing following call to PO – understand inundated – will confirm how to streamline co-ordination
- Info on medicine good – how to manage supply chain – Brexit preparation has put us in good stead. If things get much worse then will be important to ensure channels of communication between governments to ensure responsible dialogue maintained
- BRC – consequential point – closing schools decision will have knock-on consequences need to be thought through as impacts across retail / hospitality working part-time with child-care responsibilities

Closing comments

- Thanks for feedback on budget
- Practical delivery on measures to deal with Covid-19
- 2 x weekly calls will be just around Covid-19 and its consequences