


POLICY BRIEF - OCTOBER 2022

Growth and Infrastructure Overview and Scrutiny Committee



The information within this Brief is correct at the time of approval for publication and contains relevant recent announcements made by Government and its departments and regulators.

GOVERNMENT POLICY, LEGISLATIVE ANNOUNCEMENTS AND NEWS

Date of publication	Growth and Infrastructure Overview and Scrutiny Committee	 GOV
26 September 2022	Department For Business Energy and Industrial Strategy – Government launches independent net zero review Former Energy Minister Chris Skidmore MP will lead a review of the Government’s approach to delivering its target to reach net zero by 2050.	Environment
23 September 2022	HM Treasury - Chancellor announces new Growth Plan 2022 The new Growth Plan sets out how the Government plans to achieve its target of 2.5 per cent growth. The Plan aims to tackle energy costs, bring down inflation, support businesses and help households. It has three priorities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reforming the supply side of the economy • Maintaining a responsible approach to public finances • Cutting taxes to boost growth Key announcements include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The introduction of Investment Zones across the UK. The Investment Zones will offer targeted and time limited tax cuts for businesses and liberalise planning rules to release more land for housing and commercial development. Plymouth City Council is one of 38 local and mayoral combined authority areas in early discussions with the Government on establishing Investment Zones. • The Government has stated that it remains committed to the progress of the Freeports programme and will work with local partners involved in current and prospective Freeports to consider whether and how the Investment Zones offer can help to support their objectives. • A Planning and Infrastructure Bill will be introduced to accelerate priority major infrastructure projects by reducing the burden of environmental assessments; making consultation requirements more proportionate; reforming habitats and species regulation and; increasing flexibility to make changes to a Development Consent Order once it has been submitted. • A list of infrastructure projects that will be prioritised for acceleration in sectors like transport, energy and telecoms has been published. • The Health and Social Care Levy will be cancelled but funding for health and social care services will be maintained at the same level as if the levy was in place. 	Business and industry

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Energy Bill Relief Scheme will be extended to public sector organisations such as schools, hospitals and care homes. From April 2023, there will be a single higher rate of income tax of 40 per cent and the basic rate reduced from 20 per cent to 19 per cent from April 2023. The nil rate band for Stamp Duty will increase from £125,000 to £250,000. <p>Cabinet Ministers will announce further supply side growth measures in October and early November, including changes to the planning system, business regulations, childcare, immigration, agricultural productivity, and digital infrastructure. On the 23 November, the Chancellor will set out the Medium-Term Fiscal Plan alongside the Office for Budget Responsibility's (OBR) forecast. The Chancellor also confirmed that there will be a Budget in the Spring with a further OBR forecast.</p>	
21 September 2022	<p>Department For Business Energy and Industrial Strategy - Government outlines plans to help cut energy bills for businesses</p> <p>Through a new Government Energy Bill Relief Scheme, the Government will provide a discount on wholesale gas and electricity prices for all non-domestic customers (including all UK businesses, the voluntary sector like charities and the public sector such as schools and hospitals). This support will be equivalent to the Energy Price Guarantee put in place for households.</p>	Business and industry
08 September 2022	<p>Department For Business Energy and Industrial Strategy - Government announces Energy Price Guarantee for families and businesses while urgently taking action to reform broken energy market</p> <p>A new 'Energy Price Guarantee' will supersede the existing energy price cap which limits the price suppliers can charge customers for units of gas. This will mean that a typical UK household will pay up to an average of £2,500 a year on their energy bill for the next two years from 01 October. This is in addition to the £400 energy bills discount for all households.</p>	Business and industry
05 September 2022	<p>Department for Transport - Transport update: £2 bus fare cap on a single bus ticket</p> <p>The Government is providing up to £60 million over 3 months to subsidise operator costs and incentivise greener travel for commuters.</p>	Transport
02 September 2022	<p>Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities - A Decent Homes Standard in the private rented sector: consultation</p> <p>This consultation seeks further views on how to apply and enforce the Decent Homes Standard in the private rented sector where it is not already being met. The consultation closes on 14 October 2022.</p>	Housing, local and community
26 August 2022	<p>Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs - New targets to reduce sewage spills for water companies</p>	Environment
26 August 2022	<p>Environment Agency - Sutton Harbour maintenance rescheduled for April 2023</p>	Environment
25 August 2022	<p>Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities and Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs - Better flood protections for new homes</p> <p>Planning guidance has been updated to help councils make sure developments in locations at risk of flooding meet strict criteria before they are approved.</p>	Housing, local and community
22 August 2022	<p>Department for Transport - Walking, wheeling and cycling to be offered on prescription in nationwide trial</p> <p>Eleven local authority areas in England, including Plymouth, will benefit from a share of £12.7 million in multi-year funding. Social prescriptions, including walking, wheeling and cycling, will be offered by GPs as part of a</p>	Transport

	new trial to improve mental and physical health and reduce disparities across the country.	
19 August 2022	Department for Transport - 130 million to protect bus services across the country as the Bus Recovery Grant is extended to the end of March 2023	Transport
18 August 2022	Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs and National Highways - Package of measures introduced to improve air quality Local councils will have a new strengthened framework to improve air quality, under new plans announced by Defra.	Environment
15 August 2022	Department for Transport, Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs, Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office, Home Office, Ministry of Defence - New 5 year maritime security strategy to target latest physical and cyber threats The Strategy sets out how the UK will enhance its capabilities in technology, innovation and cyber security. It will officially recognise environmental damage as a maritime security concern to address modern issues such as illegal fishing and polluting practices. It also seeks to improve the quantity and quality of seabed mapping data available to expand knowledge and help identify emerging threats.	Maritime and the environment
02 August 2022	Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy - Green upgrades for public buildings Up to £635 million of funding will be made available to public sector organisations so they can install low carbon heating, such as heat pumps, and energy efficiency measures including double glazing and loft insulation.	Energy efficiency
29 July 2022	Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities - New homes to be more accessible for older and disabled people All new homes will be required to have step-free access to all entrance level rooms and facilities.	Housing, local and community
22 July 2022	Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy - Licence update for businesses to serve food and drink on pavements and pedestrianised roads	Business and industry
21 July 2022	Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities - Letter to chief planning officers, nutrient neutrality and habitats regulations assessment	Environment
20 July 2022	Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport - Government response to the independent review of Destination Management Organisations in England	Tourism
05 July 2022	Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities - Residents and business owners to be given final say on proposed street name changes	Local government

CHANGES TO RELEVANT LEGISLATION GOING THROUGH PARLIAMENT

[Levelling-up and Regeneration Bill](#) (introduced 11.05.22) – **Committee Stage, next sitting**

13.10.22 HoC

The Bill lays the foundations for delivering the Government's levelling up agenda. The Levelling Up, Housing and Communities Committee [wrote](#) to the then Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities Greg Clark MP setting out the Committee's initial findings following scrutiny of the Bill.

[Energy Bill](#) (introduced 06.07.22) – **Committee Stage, 3rd day TBC HoL**

The Bill aims to increase energy reliability, while supporting the UK's climate change commitments and minimising consumer costs, by leveraging investment in clean technologies and maintaining the safety, security and resilience of energy systems.

[Procurement Bill](#) (introduced 11.05.22) - **Committee Stage, next sitting 24.10.22 HoL**

The Bill aims to simplify the procurement process and enshrine in law the objectives of public procurement including: delivering value for money, maximising public benefit, treating suppliers equally and without discrimination, and acting, and being seen to act, with integrity.

[Northern Ireland Protocol Bill](#) (introduced 13.06.22) - **2nd Reading, 11.10.22 HoL** (The Bill completed its HoC stages on 20 July)

The Bill aims to allow ministers to disapply parts of the Northern Ireland Protocol and relevant parts of the Withdrawal Agreement in UK law.

[The Seafarers' Wages Bill](#) (introduced 06.07.22) - **Committee Stage, next sitting 12.10.22 HoL**

The Bill aims to make provision in relation to the remuneration of seafarers who do not qualify for the national minimum wage.

[Financial Services and Markets Bill](#) (introduced 20.07.22) - **Committee Stage, TBC HoC**

The Bill aims to make provision about the regulation of financial services and markets and will implement the outcomes of the Future Regulatory Framework Review.

[UK Infrastructure Bank Bill](#) (introduced 11.05.22) - **2nd Reading, TBC HoC** (The Bill completed its HoL stages on 11 July)

The Bill includes establishing the UK Infrastructure Bank in law with clear objectives to support regional and local economic growth and deliver net zero. It also provides the Bank with the necessary powers to lend directly to local authorities and the Northern Ireland Executive, enabling the Bank to play a key role in delivering public sector infrastructure projects.

[Trade \(Australia and New Zealand Bill\)](#) (introduced 11.05.22) - **Committee Stage, next sitting 12.10.22 HoC**

The Bill is an important step in ratifying the negotiated Free Trade Agreements with Australia and New Zealand. The Bill will change the UK's rules on procurement which in turn will widen access for UK suppliers to procurement opportunities in Australia and New Zealand and allow their suppliers rights to access the benefits of the Agreements.

[Retained EU Law \(Revocation and Reform\) Bill](#) (introduced 22.09.22) **2nd Reading, TBC HoC**

The Bill will sunset the majority of retained EU law so that it expires on 31 December 2023. The Bill aims to enable the Government to create regulations tailor-made to the UK's own needs and support businesses to invest, stimulating economic growth across the UK economy.