

Forum of Private Business calls on the Chancellor for clarity, support and encouragement for small businesses

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

12 MARCH 2018 - The Forum of Private Business is asking the Chancellor to give some clarity, support and encouragement to the small and micro business sector in his Spring update.

Ian Cass, Managing Director of the Forum comments, "Trading is very tough at the moment. Many small businesses are operating on increasingly smaller margins and in those circumstances are more likely to be affected by cash flow and other business pressures, including late payment and pressure from larger customers to reduce their prices."

"We continue to feel the Chancellor needs to provide more specific help for small business. He failed to do so in the November budget and our wish list remains a consistent one:-

1. Bring in legislation to ensure an equitable amount of tax is collected from the large multinationals and technology companies who currently avoid paying it and make that the priority rather than continuously squeezing small business.
2. Remove the uncertainty around EU nationals already here in the UK and confirm they are safe and secure to stay. Small businesses need these workers, and it's the right thing to do.
3. Having reduced the dividend allowance, something that affected small businesses, and in particular those operating on short term contracts in tight supply chains, introduce additional means of rewarding entrepreneurs and business builders.
4. Look at the issues faced by high street businesses and produce a proper plan to deal with them alongside the vexed issue of Business Rates. We want to see a varied and vibrant high street and the Government needs to get involved in the same way as they did with the banks.
5. Listen to small and micro businesses more, rather than those larger businesses with the deeper pockets and the largest lobbying resources. Publish a clear plan as to how the small business sector will be given an equal voice.
6. Continue to build infrastructure in the north, and move some government departments like BEIS, Digital Culture, Media and Sport and Environment, Food and Rural Affairs out of London to other cities across the UK.
7. Start consulting now on ways, once Brexit is achieved, that will make it easier to do business in the UK and on a level playing field. Look at incentivising SMEs to train and up-skill workforces to drive up productivity and counter any post Brexit impact. Teaching creativity and innovation, something the UK used to excel at, in schools would be a great start.

"The Demands of the Forum reflect the views of our members. They are consistent and have the singular objective of making doing business easier and more productive. The Government has yet to prove that it truly understands the value of the sector to the UK economy and we are looking to the Chancellor now to demonstrate his commitment to business" says Ian Cass.