

CONNECT. CHAMPION. SUPPORT.



2023 ANNUAL REPORT

POLICY AND PUBLIC IMPACT TEAM



Message from the Chair of the London Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Julia Onslow-Cole and the Chief Executive of the London Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Karim Fatehi MBE

We are delighted to present the London Chamber of Commerce and Industry's (LCCI) Policy and Public Impact Team's 2023 annual report.

Throughout 2023, the team demonstrated exceptional dedication and ingenuity in advancing London's global competitiveness. Through meticulous research, insightful analysis, and strategic engagement, we tackled the pressing issues facing the city's business community, influencing and advocating for policies and initiatives that bolster London's standing as the best city in the world for business.

Central to this mission was the unwavering support we provided to our members – businesses of all sizes and industries – which form the backbone of London's economy. Their success is London's success, and we remain committed to amplifying their voices, and providing them with the resources they need to thrive.

We want to take this opportunity to thank everyone - these members, the teams across the chamber, and our committed partners and stakeholders - who have worked alongside us, day in and day out, to enhance the capital's vital contribution as the engine room of the UK's economy. This collaboration remains critical, as we look ahead to a significant year of UK and global elections, set against an ever more challenging geopolitical and macroeconomic backdrop.

Building on the strong foundations laid to date, we are confident that we stand ready to navigate the risks and opportunities that lie ahead, working together to champion London's diverse ecosystem as the driving force of economic growth and prosperity nationwide.

London's global competitiveness is not only matter of civic pride; it is the foundation of our national economy. The capital contributes over 20% of UK GDP, which drives innovation, attracts investment, and creates opportunities for communities and enterprises in London and across the country.

While businesses across the city are essential to maintaining this high level of competitiveness, they face threats on numerous fronts. LCCI champions their interests of its members and engages with national and municipal policy makers to address the key issues they face. From a policy perspective, our role is to mitigate the impacts of economic challenges and help create a policy and regulatory environment conducive for sustainable growth.

In 2023, LCCI campaigned on a plethora of issues, and we were successful in several areas. Our achievements on behalf of members included:

- Changes in the Ultra Low Emissions Zone (ULEZ) to ensure small firms receive adequate support to retrofit or buy new vehicles when ULEZ was rolled out to outer London, and to ensure all businesses of all sizes had a grace period so they would not be fined if ULEZ compliant vehicles were not delivered in time for the start of the roll-out;
- Formal endorsement of our report calling for an end to the barriers facing ethnic minority owned businesses by London Mayor Sadiq Khan. In turn, changes were made to the Greater London Authority's procurement practices, opening up more opportunities for SMEs across the capital to win work;
- An amendment by the Government to the Procurement Act in response to LCCI's recommendation that the needs of SMEs are considered before any Government tenders are issued;
- Backing from the Secretary of State for Education and the London Assembly in support of LCCI's calls for workplace modular training to support all businesses and influence more flexible and agile training provision in the capital for 2024;
- Government intervention to address issues in the insurance market so that contractors can remove dangerous cladding from buildings, following LCCI representations;
- Agreement from the Greater London Authority to protect land for the logistics industry – critical for “just in time” deliveries across London to be maintained;

- The provision of entrepreneurship and careers advice for young Londoners following work by LCCI in partnership with the Greater London Authority;
- The launch of a new business support service for ethnic minority owned fashion start-ups by ASOS, influenced by LCCI's report on the barriers facing ethnic minority owned businesses;
- Commitment from the Greater London Authority to improve access to electric vehicle charging points across London
- Backing from a senior Labour Shadow Cabinet Minister for LCCI's proposals to put women entrepreneurs at the heart of future free trade agreement negotiations
- Backing from Conservative candidate for London Mayor, Susan Hall, for LCCI's calls for Government reform of the Apprenticeship Levy.

Looking ahead to 2024, there are several key issues facing London businesses that require further work and we are committed to engaging with stakeholders to drive improvements in these areas, including:

- The reinstatement of VAT free shopping for overseas visitors which is critical for securing jobs across London.
- Long-term funding for infrastructure projects including HS2 – despite a firm written commitment from the Government that the HS2 station at Euston would go ahead, by the end of the year, the funding package for this new station remained uncertain.
- Ensuring fit for purpose policy that supports financial and professional services, in conjunction with the British Chambers of Commerce (BCC).
- Reducing barriers to international trade, so that London continues to flourish in global markets.
- Continued support for Ukrainian businesses, particularly SMEs, to facilitate jobs and business growth in Ukraine and the UK.
- The need for business rate reform for London's businesses to remain competitive.

2024 is a critical year for London, and we anticipate responding to fast emerging and interlinked challenges and opportunities that will require innovative solutions and collaborative efforts. LCCI is well positioned to continue this vital work to shape policy and drive initiatives that secure London's global competitiveness in the immediate and longer term.



JULIA ONSLOW-COLE

Chair of the London Chamber of
Commerce and Industry



KARIM FATEHI MBE

Chief Executive of the London Chamber of
Commerce and Industry

January 2023

Demand for more action to tackle business crime

Then Home Secretary Suella Braverman was urged by the London Chamber of Commerce and Industry (LCCI) to end the funding crisis being faced by the Metropolitan Police and the City of London Police.

The demand was made in response to the Home Office consultation on the police grant for the new financial year. LCCI highlighted that business crime in the capital had gone up month on month since February 2020 with boroughs such as Westminster, Camden, Southwark, Newham, Lambeth and Islington, amongst others, being badly affected by offences such as theft and handling and violence against the person.

Parliament considers London Chamber demands for action on procurement

Wimbledon MP, Stephen Hammond, raised our report on the need to improve access for procurement contracts for ethnic minority owned firms in the House of Commons with the Business Minister, Kevin Hollinrake MP



Chelsea and Fulham MP, **Greg Hands** discussed our report with the Procurement Minister, **Alex Burghart MP**

Deputy Mayor debates green skills needs with members

The London Deputy Mayor for Skills, Jules Pipe, met London Chamber members where he heard the call from all businesses that training provision was urgently needed for the provision of green skills across the capital.

New voice for Square Mile businesses

London Chamber launched the City of London Chamber – championing all businesses operating in the Square Mile.

Alderman Prem Goyal, Founding Chair of the City of London Chamber Committee declared: *“The City of London Chamber will provide an important forum for the Square Mile’s businesses to collaborate and speak with one voice. Throughout my career in the City I’ve seen how difficult it is to tackle issues such as labour and skills shortages without businesses of all sectors and sizes uniting together. As Founding Chair of the Chamber’s Executive Committee, I look forward to working with the business community to champion the City of London and make the case for a City that is secure, competitive and flourishing.”*

Chris Hayward, Policy Chairman at the City of London Corporation, said: *“The launch of the City of London Chamber of Commerce is an important step on the road to recovery for the Square Mile. The City is a key driver of growth and employment in the Square Mile increased to a record high total in 2021. This economic contribution – which supports lives and livelihoods across the length and breadth of the country – is underpinned by City’s 22,000 businesses. We look forward to working with the new Chamber and those it represents to support our position as a world leading business hub.”*

Call to end inequality in the financial services industry

London Chamber of Commerce and Industry joined Progress Together – a City of London led organisation – to help ensure people from all backgrounds get the chance to achieve senior leadership positions in the financial services industry.

Research has shown that people from working class backgrounds in financial services progress 25% slower than people from middle and upper class backgrounds. Currently, only 11% of employees at a senior level in the financial sector come from a non-professional background, with ethnic minority women from working class backgrounds making up just 1% of leaders in the City.

London Assembly considers London Chamber’s call for action on ULEZ

Following a campaign by the London Chamber of Commerce and Industry (LCCI) calling on reforms to the scheme, ahead of the Ultra Low Emissions Zone (ULEZ) expansion in August 2023, the London Assembly passed an amendment to the Mayor’s budget, that could help Londoners during this cost of living crisis.

Within the Greater London Authority’s £125 million of unallocated reserves, it was announced that money will be used to increase the scale and the scope of the vehicle scrappage scheme which, until now, has not been fit for purpose.

During the Assembly debate, the London Chamber’s calls for reform to the scheme was highlighted by the London Assembly’s Economy Committee Chair, Hina Bokhari AM.

Kyiv deal to support SMEs in Ukraine

In a bid to strengthen trade ties and help drive Ukraine’s economic recovery, the London Chamber of Commerce and Industry signed a landmark agreement in Kyiv with the Ukrainian Chambers of Commerce and Industry. The new agreement aimed to build the economic relationships that will help London and the UK play a major role in driving the eventual and all-important reconstruction of Ukraine.

February 2023

Government asked to safeguard HS2 Euston station

The City of London Chamber called on the Government to urgently address concerns around the completion of the HS2 rail line to Euston. The project was expected to create thousands of jobs in Central London and enable faster transport connectivity that would have a positive impact on generations to come.

Time to end criminality from rogue pedicabs

The London Chamber of Commerce and Industry called on the Department for Transport to urgently regulate rogue pedicabs in London. Businesses, especially in central London, have expressed their disappointment with the criminality and theft associated with unregulated pedicabs. This affects the overall experience of visitors entering Central London and the image of the capital, as a safe place to do business.

Reports state that illegitimate pedicab drivers con customers with large sums of money for travelling walking distances in the capital. In one instance, a visitor was charged £500 to travel through just one mile. Unregulated pedicabs have costed London £17,375 in penalties and legal costs since November 2021.

By the end of 2023, the Government announced plans for Transport for London to regulate pedicabs.

Call for action for VAT free shopping to return to the capital

London Chamber of Commerce and Industry signed a joint letter with the Mayor of London, Sadiq Khan, urging the Government to reintroduce VAT-free shopping for international visitors to London as soon as possible.

Written on behalf of London businesses and business groups, the letter calls for the Government's support in encouraging the return of international tourists back to London by the reintroduction of the VAT Retail Export Scheme and airside tax-free shopping.

ULEZ campaign stepped up

London Chamber of Commerce and Industry urged London Mayor, Sadiq Khan, to take concrete actions to reform the Ultra-Low Emission Zone (ULEZ) vehicle scrappage scheme by providing support for all small businesses in London.

March 2023

Government changes the law to make it easier for SMEs to win procurement work

The Government made changes to the Procurement Bill, acknowledging barriers to accessing funds for Small and Medium Sized Enterprises (SMEs). This follows the publication of the London Chamber of Commerce and Industry (LCCI) Report titled '*Ethnic Diversity In Business: Removing Barriers*'. The paper highlighted the need to remove all barriers that impede business success.

The Cabinet Office has decided to make changes to its Procurement Bill to ensure a level-playing field for businesses of all sizes to compete for public sector work.

The Government will include a specific duty on contracting authorities to have regard to the particular barriers facing SMEs in the bill. This includes strengthening prompt payment with 30-day payment terms applying contractually throughout the public sector supply chain and reducing unnecessary costs on businesses. This will be ensured by preventing contracting authorities from requiring insurance relating to the performance of the contract to be in place prior to award.

Chamber's links with the United States strengthened



The London Chamber's Finance Director and Company Secretary, **Neil Stansfield**, further strengthened our links in the United States when he met the DC Chamber CEO, **Angela Franco**, at the British Embassy in Washington DC

Planning reforms must not happen at the expense of business

The London Chamber of Commerce and Industry called on the Government to make amendments to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), to make sure businesses do not lose employment opportunities at the expense of achieving housing needs.

LCCL responded to the 'Levelling-up and Regeneration Bill reforms to national planning policy' consultation from the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC).

London businesses could be adversely affected if too much emphasis is placed on housing developments without adequate considerations for businesses, particularly in the logistics sector.

Women in Business group launched

London Chamber of Commerce and Industry launched its Women in Business Group, which aims to convene and empower professional businesswomen across the international Chamber network.

Currently, only one-fifth of businesses in the UK are led by women, and female-led businesses face specific and entrenched barriers to achieving their full economic potential.

Companies with higher female representation already outperform those with less, and it is estimated that the UK economy could generate an additional £250 billion if women had the means and access to start new businesses at the same rate as men.

Julia Onslow-Cole, Chair of London Chamber of Commerce and Industry, said: *"The newly created Women in Business group is a fantastic new initiative from LCCL that further cements its mission to ensure inclusivity across London's business community. I am excited about all that this group will accomplish as we work to support women entrepreneurs and women-owned businesses, providing mentorship, creating connections and an environment where women can secure success."*

Warning not to restrict bank lending to SMEs

The London Chamber of Commerce and Industry urged the Treasury Minister, Andrew Griffith MP, to intervene with the Prudential Regulatory Authority (PRA) to ensure bank capital rules do not hold back lending to small and medium sized businesses.

The final package of what is known as the Basel international banking standards – or Basel 3 – would limit lending to small businesses as it removes favourable treatment for SME loans.

This means that London businesses could have to face additional burdens in addition to dealing with rising energy bills and volatile markets.

Future of road user charging

The London Chamber of Commerce and Industry called for reform to the current road user charging scheme by developing a single, smart scheme instead. The call was made by LCCL in its submission to the London Assembly.

At present, there exists multiple separate schemes. Therefore, it is imperative that the Mayor combines them to develop a single scheme to ensure greater efficiency in addressing policy objectives.

Businesses which switch to low or zero-emissions vehicles also require electric charging infrastructure. For any type of battery-powered vehicle, there will be a need for charging points. Shifting to zero or low emission heavy goods vehicles will also be a significant challenge for the logistics industry.

April 2023

Eurovision event led to British and Ukrainian firms coming together

9



Delegates from Ukraine and the UK gathered for an historic business event in Liverpool to identify trade and collaboration opportunities between the two nations.

The Liverpool-Ukraine Business Summit was the first time that businesses from both countries have met face-to-face since 2018, and the first-ever bilateral meeting to have taken place in the UK outside London. It was held in recognition of the city's role as host of Eurovision later this year.

Representatives from 17 different Ukraine businesses travelled to Liverpool where they were joined by business and government delegates from the Liverpool City Region and across the UK for a series of presentations, panel discussion and networking lunch.

The summit was jointly organised by the Liverpool, London and Ukrainian Chambers of Commerce and the Department for Business and Trade.

Parliamentary group considers the future of London



*The All Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) on London as a Global City, chaired by **Gareth Bacon MP**, considered the implications of Brexit on the capital. The London Chamber provides the secretariat for the APPG.*

Minister takes action on dangerous cladding

After the Grenfell Tower tragedy, some members raised concerns that insurance cover remained an issue for contractors who want to remove dangerous cladding from buildings due to ambiguity in the regulatory regime as stipulated by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE).

The Chamber's Research and Policy Manager, Stephen Jones, asked the HSE as to their stance on this issue. The HSE did respond to Stephen and the answer was not clear.

We raised our concerns with Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) Ministers, which included the Kensington MP, Felicity Buchan, whose constituency is where the Grenfell Tower tragedy took place.

Local Government Minister, Lee Rowley MP responded positively to our call for action. In a letter to the London Chamber the Minister stated:

We have recently agreed a new PII clause with the International Underwriting Association (IUA) which insurers can use to provide fire safety cover for the Building Safety Fund (BSF). This clause will act as an endorsement to existing PII policies by creating specific cover for BSF works, enabling works to take place with sufficient PII cover in place. It will not remove restrictions or exclusions for wider fire safety work. The clause, which industry experts have said ought to lead to the insurance market increasing its cover for fire safety work more widely, should give insurers increased confidence in the risk management processes employed by the construction sector.

Research to end inequalities across London

The London Chamber of Commerce and Industry and Centre for London have partnered to develop a spatial economic analysis for London's 32 boroughs that would address the geographic inequalities of London.

The research looks at the economic characteristics of every London borough (except the City of London) in detail. Spatial disparity within London has been on the agenda of the Government and the Mayor of London. However, thin research exists on the economic diversity of London and opportunities available for business growth. The joint report intends to address this gap by focusing on specific aspects of every borough such as output and productivity, employment, population characteristics and distribution of earnings among employees.

London Assembly backs London Chamber's call for flexible training

The London Assembly has called on the Mayor of London, Sadiq Khan, to provide further modular training provision for Londoners following recommendations made by the London Chamber of Commerce and Industry on the Mayor's Adult Education Budget (AEB).

In evidence presented to the London Assembly's Economy Committee, LCCI argued that reforms needed to be focused on a tailor-made approach that would make modular training more widely available to London businesses. Module-based training provision can make it easier for learners to fit training around work and other responsibilities, as well as being more responsive to employers' needs.

Backing for the redevelopment of Liverpool Street Station

The City of London Chamber of Commerce decided to back the redevelopment of Liverpool Street Station. The proposal is in line with the needs of a contemporary global city which needs high-quality connectivity to key business destinations.

The Chamber announced its support in a letter to Sellar, developer of the station alongside train operator MTR and Network Rail. The redevelopment proposal will transform the station into a world-class transport hub and will have a direct and positive impact on London's business growth.

The City of London Chamber proposes significant improvement to signage around the London Underground entrances of the station. The direction from Broadgate is inadequate and frequently leads to confusion amongst passengers trying to locate access to the London Underground network.

Refugees need better support

The London Chamber of Commerce and Industry called for a stronger relationship and enhanced cooperation between regional and central governments to address the refugee housing crisis in London.

In evidence presented to the independent Commission for the Integration of Refugees, chaired by Lord Carlisle, LCCI stated that there was not a joined-up approach between the Government, the Mayor of London and local councils on housing, health and business support. Therefore, robust collaboration was imperative for effective integration of refugees in communities.

In its submission, the Chamber stated:

“London is a global city that welcomes people from across the world who are forced to flee war and persecution. From the Huguenots of the 16th century to the Ukrainian refugees in the 2020s, London has always been a welcoming city for people to start their lives anew after traumatic and tragic circumstances. Refugees have made significant contributions to what London is today and that includes its thriving business community”.

May 2023

Need to support young Londoners

Civil Society Minister, Stuart Andrew MP, was challenged by the London Chamber of Commerce and Industry as to why young Londoners were left out of the latest Youth Investment Funding allocations.

LCCI appealed to the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Sport, Gambling and Civil Society to address this issue as this would affect London's young people as well as its businesses.

During the double whammy of COVID-19 pandemic and the cost-of-living crisis, too many of London's young people suffered poverty of income as household rents shot up and access to food became difficult.

According to the Greater London Authority, over 600,000 of London's children live in poverty. Lack of youth centres in the capital means that young adults may not have access to the life-changing opportunities necessary to career growth that young adults elsewhere in the UK can receive. This in turn, will exacerbate the issue of damaging skills shortages that stunt London business growth.

Need for more action on electric vehicle charging points

London Chamber of Commerce and Industry urged the London Deputy Mayor for Transport, Seb Dance and the London Assembly's Transport Committee to address the need for the provision of Electric Vehicle (EV) charging points for commercial vehicles across London.

In letters to Seb Dance and the Chair and Vice Chair of the London Assembly's Transport Committee, Nick Rogers AM and Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM, LCCI called for closer cooperation between the Government and the Greater London Authority (GLA) to strengthen the EV infrastructure in the run up to the 2030 net-zero target for London. With an uptick in industry demand to transition from fossil fuel vehicles to electric fleets, London needs a far greater number of EV charging points for commercial vehicles than currently envisaged.

Industrial land needs to be protected for jobs

London Chamber of Commerce and Industry (LCCI) urged Jules Pipe, Deputy Mayor of London for Planning, Regeneration and Skills, for greater provision of industrial and employment land in London.

In a letter to the Deputy Mayor, LCCI communicates feedback it has received from its members that the lack of available logistics land, particularly within the North Circular, has forced logistics firms to move further out of London which has contributed to unacceptable levels of pollution and exacerbated congestion on London's roads. While LCCI supports the need for residential development in Central London, the letter emphasises the importance of securing land for businesses, such as those in freight, which are so vital to powering London's economy and on which so many have come to rely on for deliveries for purchases made online.

The letter makes clear that these lengthened, polluting journeys risk undermining the London Mayor, Sadiq Khan's ambitions for the capital to be net zero by 2030. It also highlights that Electric Vehicle charging points are often centred around industrial sites, meaning that firms are making long and fuel-dependent trips without the necessary infrastructure to support the transition to more sustainable forms of transport.

Capital's firms open to employing refugees

A report published by the London Chamber of Commerce and Industry – in partnership with the Refugee Investment Network – revealed that only 3% of London businesses employed a refugee in their organisation. However, this figure rose to 14% for Small and Medium Sized Enterprises (SMEs) and 27% for large businesses.

The key highlights from the survey are:

- 31% of firms said they would hire a refugee in the future, compared to 41% who said it was unlikely and 26% who did not know.
- Depending on the size of the organisation, 77% of large businesses said it was likely they would hire refugees in the future, compared to just 32% of micro firms.
- Arts, entertainment, recreation, information and communication, and the public sector industries reported the highest rate of refugee employment at 6%. While professional, scientific, and technical industries reported the lowest rate of refugee employment at 1%.
- 65% of London business who employed refugees said their main motivation behind hiring refugees were to provide support followed by 47% of businesses who believed that refugees are hardworking employees. 40% of London businesses believed that refugees brought unique skills to their businesses and encouraged diversity in the team.

Former International Development Secretary calls for action to tackle global poverty



The former International Development Secretary, **Rory Stewart OBE**, called for firms to do more to tackle global poverty at an event sponsored by the London Chamber

British Chambers of Commerce conference



The London Chamber had a stand at the British Chambers of Commerce (BCC) conference in London that was led by the BCC Director General, Shevaun Haviland.

London Chamber told the media that the Coronation of King Charles III and Queen Camilla was good for business



June 2022

Over 1000 Ukrainian refugees seek work at jobs fair

The Department for Work and Pensions and the London Chamber organised a jobs fair where over 1000 Ukrainian refugees came to the event to seek work. Many did find jobs as a direct consequence.



The event was opened by the London Deputy Mayor for Business, Rajesh Agrawal

Major conference held on Ukraine's recovery

The London Chamber and the Ukrainian Government organised a major conference as to how Ukraine can economically recover from the war caused by Russian military forces invading the country.

During the event, the London Chamber agreed to form a Business Council with the Ukrainian Chambers of Commerce and Industry to help support SMEs in the country.

The Chamber also took part in a special ceremony at the London Stock Exchange to mark the growing business links between Ukraine and the United Kingdom which featured the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Jeremy Hunt MP and the First Vice Prime Minister of Ukraine, Yulia Svyrydenko.

The Chamber also hosted a special event on the future energy needs of Ukraine.

ASOS launch scheme to back ethnic minority owned firms

ASOS launched a new programme to support ethnic minority owned fashion firms after reading the London Chamber's report on barriers faced by too many ethnic minority owned businesses.

Chamber backs call for the National Windrush Museum following the 75th Windrush anniversary

Manchester's call for new HS2 station backed by the London Chamber

London Chamber of Commerce and Industry added its voice to call for the best form of HS2 with a new underground through station at Manchester Piccadilly.

At a meeting between LCCI and Manchester City Council Leader Cllr Bev Craig, the council leader also reiterated the importance of ensuring that HS2 goes all the way to Euston and does not stop short at Old Oak Common.



London Chamber backed the successful bid for Wembley and Tottenham Hotspur stadia to host games for the 2028 European football championships



Nickie Aiken MP discussed the future of the Square Mile with the City of London Chamber

July 2023

Chamber becomes London Living Wage employer

London Chamber of Commerce and Industry is now officially accredited as a London Living Wage Employer. The Living Wage commitment will ensure that everyone working at LCCI receives a minimum hourly wage of £11.95, significantly higher than the Government minimum for those over the age of 23, which currently stands at £10.42 per hour.

Campaign to protect industrial land steps up

The London Chamber of Commerce and Industry urged Michael Gove, Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, to work with the Mayor of London to ensure businesses retain all important access to land for industrial and employment use in London. In the Secretary of State's speech that month, it was intimated that the Government could change the Mayor's planning policy to meet affordable housing targets – which could impact land needed for jobs.

New campaign to champion London's arts and creative organisations

The London Chamber of Commerce and Industry (LCCI) launched a campaign to stop further arts funding cuts in London.

According to the Greater London Authority, the creative economy is estimated to provide one in six jobs in London and the creative industries generate around £47 billion for the London economy. Moreover, it is estimated that by 2030 there will be ten million people living in London which will only increase demand for the arts.

The unexpected announcement by the Arts Council in November 2022 of £50 million worth of cuts to the sector was the latest in a series of funding withdrawals that have already deeply affected the arts scene across Greater London.

LCCI wrote to the Arts Council London Director, Tonya Nelson, Arts Minister, Lord Parkinson of Whitley Bay, and Shadow Arts Minister, Jeff Smith MP, to highlight the damaging effects of cuts on London's creative industry and the wider business community.

Uxbridge and South Ruislip by election

Following the resignation of Boris Johnson as an MP, the London Chamber and its affiliate member, the Hillingdon Chamber, held a hustings at Brunel University for the Uxbridge and South Ruislip by election chaired by Sky News' Rob Powell. The hustings gained huge media coverage and the election was won by the Conservative candidate, Cllr Steve Tuckwell.

Childcare needs reform

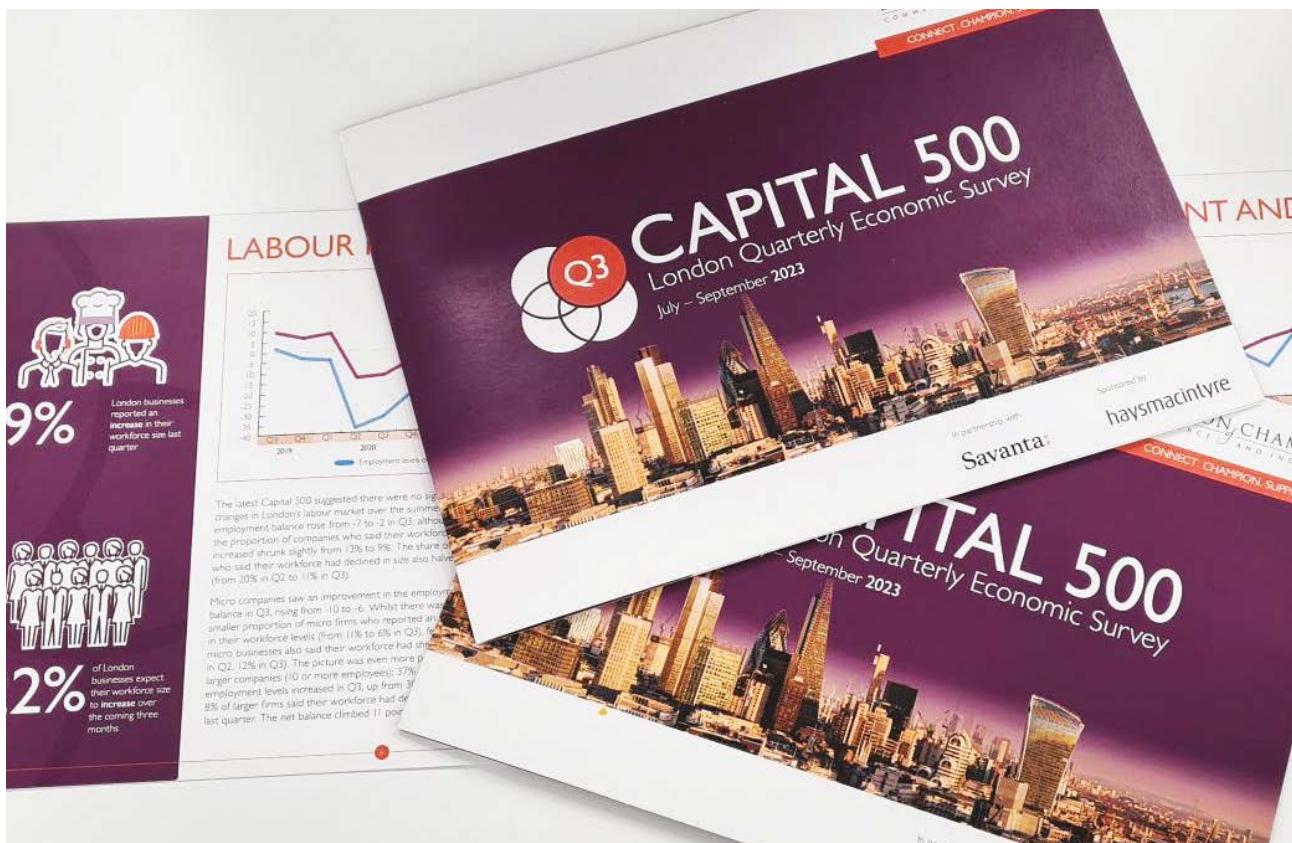


The London Chamber featured in a BBC London interview where we called for easier and more affordable access for childcare in the capital.

London Chamber joined with Indonesian decision makers to consider how Jakarta can become a global city



London Chamber's Capital 500 report showed London was recovering from a series of economic shocks



August 2023

UK and UAE firms join together to support Ukraine

Businesses from Dubai and London will work together to support Ukraine following the signing of a seminal agreement in Kyiv. The London Chamber of Commerce and Industry signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the UAE - Ukraine Business Council UAE in Kyiv.

With Ukraine being seen as a high-risk investment market, this collaboration is a unique opportunity for businesses in London, Dubai and Kyiv to address common challenges and develop new opportunities. The cooperation aims to engage and disseminate information pertaining to business proposals in the fields of foreign trade, industrial, commercial and technological cooperation.

Skills road map launched

The London Chamber joined Business LDN, CBI and the FSB in a skills roadmap called the Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP). It was approved by the Education Secretary, Gillian Keegan MP, and it should lead to demand led training provision across London.

Local shops need support

London Chamber of Commerce and Industry called for the viability of local owned shops to be considered in the Government's plans to reduce food prices.

LCCI is supportive of the Government's plans to reduce food prices, and the Chamber has been active in supporting the Government's *Help for Households* campaign to ensure businesses and the Government can work together to support households during the cost of living crisis. However, in a letter to the Chancellor of The Exchequer, Jeremy Hunt MP, LCCI expressed concerns that agreements reached between the Government and large-scale retailers, such as supermarkets, could bypass locally-owned shops, who are critical in bringing communities together and often lack the finances necessary to weather high supply chain costs.

September 2023

Sustainable aviation will be key to London's success

London Chamber of Commerce and Industry called on the Government to accelerate and prioritise the transition to clean jet fuels to remain globally competitive. Its report titled '*Green Skies*' highlights the urgency to expedite the plans for developing Sustainable Aviation Fuel (SAF) plants in the UK. This includes working with aviation industry experts and public bodies to rapidly upscale domestic production of SAF to avoid becoming a net importer of SAF fuels. London's global status relies on a significant flow of visitors who add immense value to the capital's cultural and economic prosperity. The number of inbound tourists to the UK totalled 21.6 million in the first three quarters of 2022.

London Mayor thanks London Chamber on ULEZ

The Mayor of London, Sadiq Khan, who told the media that he changed the ULEZ vehicle scrappage scheme after talking to the London Chamber, thanked the London Chamber for its work:



As Mayor, I have made tackling air pollution a major part of my personal commitment to improving the health of Londoners and it was incredibly moving to hear your personal experiences and views on why all Londoners need cleaner air.

As you are aware, air quality is a social justice issue, hitting the poorest communities and Black, Asian and minority ethnic communities the hardest, further exacerbating existing health inequalities. The ULEZ expansion is expected to remove tens of thousands of the most polluting vehicles from London's roads, unlocking vital environmental, social, and economic benefits. All Londoners deserve to breathe cleaner air.

Again, thank you for your advocacy and ongoing work to raise awareness of the need to tackle our city's toxic air. I look forward to continuing to work with you on this important endeavour.

Yours sincerely,

Sadiq Khan
Mayor of London



Need to improve access to finance for SMEs

LCCL made a submission to the House of Commons Treasury Select Committee's inquiry into SME finance with several recommendations to support women and ethnic-minority-led businesses, to create equal opportunities for all types of micro and small businesses. One of the key recommendations by LCCL is to create a *Strategic Growth Fund* that will help address the funding problems ethnic minority founders and business leaders face.

Helping businesses win procurement work

The City of London Chamber hosted with the City of London Corporation an event to help SMEs within public procurement work and establish meaningful connections with influential buyers.

Ukrainian refugees supported in London

London Chamber's Ukraine Project Manager, Igor Bartkiv, led a business support session alongside HSBC as to how Ukrainian refugees in London could set up their own businesses.

London Chamber responds to Prime Minister's net zero announcement



London Chamber's Head of Policy and Public Impact, **James Watkins**, expressed the Chamber's disappointment that the Prime Minister had watered down the Government's ambitious net zero plans in an interview with BBC London

London Chamber joins Czech Deputy Prime Minister



Czechia Deputy Prime Minister, **Ivan Bartoš** and the London Chamber worked together to consider how to improve Czech – UK trade relations

Former Climate Change Envoy urges business to do more for the environment

Sir Alok Sharma MP, who led the Government's climate change work, urged businesses at the City of London Chamber reception to do more to tackle climate change. The event brought together key stakeholders from across the Square Mile.

October 2023

Senior Labour Shadow Cabinet Minister backs London Chamber's stance on free trade agreements

The Shadow Cabinet Office Minister, Nick Thomas-Symonds MP, endorsed the London Chamber of Commerce and Industry (LCCI)'s policy proposal on the inclusion of women in trade deals at a joint LCCI and Chatham House fringe event at the Labour Party conference in Liverpool on Monday 9 October.

Shadow Cabinet Office Minister stated that women will be included in all future trade deals that could be negotiated by a future Labour Government - "On gender equality, I recommend the London Chamber of Commerce proposal to include women in the negotiations of free trade agreements... [It] is an excellent document from the London Chamber and I will study the proposals within".

Call for action to support ethnic minority owned businesses

London Chamber's Parliamentary and Regulatory Affairs Manager, Esenam Agubretu, spoke alongside Shadow Minister for Equalities and Labour Party Chair, Anneliese Dodds MP at an event held at the Labour Party conference. Esenam called for a future Labour Government to support ethnic minority owned businesses telling the Shadow Minister and Labour delegates "Labour cannot reach its mission of Britain leading in the G7 if people from ethnic minorities are excluded".



Interim London Chamber CEO, **Karim Fatehi MBE** met the Leader of the Opposition, **Sir Keir Starmer MP**, at the Labour Party conference



London Chamber Chair, **Julia Onslow-Cole**, met Prime Minister **Rishi Sunak** at the Conservative Party conference

The London Chamber raised the capital's business issues with key decision makers at the Liberal Democrat conference which included talks with Richmond MP and Business spokesperson, Sarah Olney MP, Treasury spokesperson, Lord Fox, Cabinet Office spokesperson, Lord Wallace and London Assembly members, Hina Bokhari AM and Caroline Pidgeon AM.



LCCI's Parliamentary and Regulatory Affairs Manager, **Esenam Agubretu**, spoke at the Labour Party conference as to the work of the Chamber to tackle the barriers faced by many ethnic minority owned businesses



The London Chamber's Parliamentary and Research Manager, **Stephen Jones**, led a debate on the future of the London economy

Conservative candidate for London Mayor backs calls for change to the Apprenticeship Levy

The Conservative candidate for London Mayor, Susan Hall, met London Chamber members where she backed our call that the Government should reform the Apprenticeship Levy which is leading to hundreds of millions of pounds lying idle in an HM Treasury bank account. The statement was made whilst Susan outlined her vision for the capital to London Chamber members.

November 2023

Top politicians urged to work with business to meet net zero



London Chamber members met the Energy Minister, **Graham Stuart MP**, to discuss the need for Government to work with business in the vital need to meet net zero targets.

London Chamber at keynote event with US Vice President

The London Chamber's Head of Policy and Public Impact, James Watkins, was invited by the US Embassy to be attend the keynote speech of the US Vice President, Kamala Harris. Vice President Harris spoke of the need for the global regulation of Artificial Intelligence.

Talks with Business Ministers to enhance trade links

The London Chamber held intensive talks with the Secretary of State for Business and Trade, The Rt Hon Kemi Badenoch MP, and other Ministers in the Department for Business and Trade, Kevin Hollinrake MP, Earl of Offord and the Earl of Minto to ensure SMEs get the support they need to export and diversify their business operations.



Business Minister visited the London Chamber – from left to right: City of London Chamber Chair, **Alderman Prem Goyal OBE**, UPS Senior Director of Public Affairs, West Europe and India, **Richard Currie**, then Business Minister, the **Earl of Minto**, LCCI Chief Executive, **Karim Fatehi MBE**

London's firms open to Armenia

The London Chamber's Head of Policy and Public Impact, James Watkins and the Parliamentary and Regulatory Affairs Manager, Esenam Agubretu, met with the Economy Minister of Armenia, Vahan Kerobyan, to discuss how London and Armenian firms can work together in the time ahead.

Lord Mayor's Show

The war in Ukraine is featuring in the City of London Lord Mayor's Show.

To design the float, LCCI collaborated with Big City Lab and Bickerstaff, two prominent agencies from Kyiv, and enlisted the expertise of Opcyon Design Company from London for construction.

The float's design incorporates the bright colours of the Ukrainian flag, a mirror reflecting the City of London as a powerful statement of the established relationship between London and Kyiv, and the Arch of Freedom of the Ukrainian People with a golden crack. In the Arch of Freedom in Kyiv, the crack symbolises the tensions between Russia and Ukraine, whilst the golden crack in the arch on the float represents the strong support between the people of the United Kingdom and Ukraine. Ukrainian refugees were on the float and walking beside the float.



London Chamber float at the City of London's Lord Mayor's Show

Parliamentarians back calls for support for the arts and exhibitions

The All Party Parliamentary Group on London as a Global City launched its report calling for action from all decision makers to support the capital's arts, business and consumer events.

The report, entitled *Global London: Enhancing the role of business and consumer events for London and the United Kingdom*, states that London's business and consumer events and arts are key to the success of the country:

From trade shows to Taylor Swift, the events and music venues sectors are critical for providing jobs and economic growth across the capital. This in turn levers in income for the United Kingdom via increased tax revenue and visitor numbers – with London being the gateway to the UK.

However, the All-Party Parliamentary Group on London as a Global City has found that despite London's international success – such as being the most googled city anywhere in the world – there are emerging challenges which must be addressed to ensure that London not only retains its number one status but can grow and help with the levelling up of the country as a whole.

The report was launched at the House of Commons thanks to support of ExCel London.



London Chamber Chair, **Julia Onslow-Cole** speaking at the Parliamentary launch of the arts and exhibitions report

December 2023

Cabinet Office Minister, Baroness Neville-Rolfe, announced the Government would make it easier for exporters by cutting red tape. The Minister decided to make this announcement at the offices of the London Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

The Minister said:

Today, I'm also happy to detail the next phase of the Ecosystem of Trust project.

We are delivering a series of what are called 'Border Trade Demonstrators'...

...which are specific projects focused on overcoming the problems we have identified together, such as the complexity and time taken when integrating industry and government systems.

They will be data-focused, allowing for simple exchanges of information between border agents and industry...

...leading to an easier, quicker and safer experience at the border.

Let me give you one example.

In June this year we saw a three-hundred-million-pound increase in exports of machinery...

...partially thanks to a large increase in these goods heading to Turkey...

...but what was in those shipping containers that travelled over the Mediterranean?

When these goods are shipped, the company sending them has to fill out paperwork explaining what's in the crate...

...there's a lot of information required, relating to the goods themselves, their value, and the route by which they will be transported...

...Some traders are scrupulous in their description. And some are vague.

But in all likelihood, a trader could have described a shipment of steel nuts as, simply, 'nuts'.

Now, put yourself in the shoes of someone working at the UK border...

...does that description mean nuts and bolts, or cashew nuts?

Whatever your record, that opaque description means that the crate is going to get searched...

...and that one vague text box means an unnecessary delay.

Multiplied thousands of times a year...

...this will hit business efficiency and growth...

...and put undue pressure on our Border personnel.

One of the examples we're trialling is a new piece of software...

...which will allow border agents to receive accurate information from the supply chain earlier in the process...

...including commodity codes which tell you what is actually inside a container.

It's a simple change...

...one so simple that it's amazing it hasn't been thought of before...

...but one which could have huge benefits.

Survey shows positive news on apprenticeships

The London Chamber of Commerce and Industry (LCCI) and London Councils' London Business 1000 showed that businesses in the capital think the next Government should prioritise tackling climate change and increasing affordable housebuilding (joint at 29%), followed by improving public transport (27%) and easing international trade restrictions (26%). The 2023 survey found that London business leaders remained strongly supportive of devolution of powers to local councils. Over 70% of business leaders reported that they were in favour of councils having increased powers to build new homes and local infrastructure, as well as over community safety, policing and employment, and training services.

Encouragingly for skills and youth employment, the survey found that there has been a marked increase in the proportion of small and micro businesses that employ apprentices over the past two years, rising from 7% in the 2021 London Business 1000 to 20% in 2023. For large businesses the figure has remained relatively constant, at 45% in 2023 compared with 42% in 2021.

The survey was launched with the keynote speaker – the Mayor of Croydon, Jason Perry.

Support for small retailers



LCCI CEO, **Karim Fatehi MBE** joined Shadow Work Minister, **Vicky Foxcroft MP** and the President of the South East London Chamber of Commerce, **Helen McIntosh** to champion local retailers in a visit to Deptford market.

Step forward for Black Cabs

Following a campaign by the City of London Chamber of Commerce for black cabs to be allowed to have access to Bank Junction – at the heart of the Square Mile – the Corporation of the City of London announced that a proposal for this to happen would be presented in June 2024.

Capital 500 surveys

The Capital 500: Quarterly Economic Survey (QES) is London's biggest and most representative business survey.

For over a decade LCCI has conducted a QES of London businesses to gauge business performance and general confidence levels across the capital. This is part of the biggest and longest running national private business survey, conducted by regional chambers of commerce across the UK every quarter.

Since 2014 we have partnered with leading polling agency, Savanta, to poll over 500 London businesses. The data is weighted to be representative of all London businesses by company size and broad industry sector. The survey provides crucial insight into what's happening in London's business community.

The survey results are fed into HM Treasury, the Mayor of London, the Bank of England and many other influential policymakers.

LONDON CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY'S POLICY AND PUBLIC IMPACT TEAM DURING 2023

James Watkins

Head of Policy and Public Impact

jwatkins@londonchamber.co.uk

Esenam Agubretu

Parliamentary and Regulatory Affairs Manager

eagubretu@londonchamber.co.uk

Stephen Jones

Research and Policy Manager

sjones@londonchamber.co.uk

Igor Bartkiv

Ukraine Project Manager

ibartkiv@londonchamber.co.uk

Kriti Gupta

Media Officer

Vittoria Zerbini

Media Assistant

vzerbini@londonchamber.co.uk

Harry Poil

Policy Assistant

