

Prime Minister and Chancellor launch new Build Back Better Council

January 19, 2021



The Prime Minister has chaired the first meeting of a new Business Council established to work with government to fuel COVID-19 economic recovery and future growth plans.

The Build Back Better Council brings together a broad range of business leaders from across the whole British economy to work in partnership with the government to unlock investment, boost job creation, promote Global Britain and level up the whole of the UK.

The Build Back Better Council is comprised of 30 members representing industries from retail and hospitality, to finance, science and technology. It is co-chaired by the Prime Minister and Chancellor, with the Business Secretary as a standing member, and other Cabinet Ministers attending as required – the Trade Secretary joined the first meeting.

At the first meeting, which took place virtually, the Prime Minister updated leaders on the current COVID-19 situation, including the vaccine roll-out, as well as plans to rebuild the economy after the crisis has passed. Council members shared their views on the economy, provide a commercial perspective on policy and highlight obstacles and solutions to economic recovery.

Whilst recognising that the short term will be difficult, the Prime Minister and the Chancellor say they are committed to making sure that we will be ready to kickstart our economy as soon as we can, so vital work continues across government on supporting job creation, improving skills, opening up new investment, cementing the UK's position as a science superpower, delivering a once in a generation investment programme in infrastructure, launching a green industrial revolution and enabling our entrepreneurs to scale their businesses.

The government says it will take this opportunity as a truly independent country to forge our own economic and global path and we will explore how the opportunities outside the EU can help aid our recovery.

Speaking ahead of the meeting, Prime Minister Boris Johnson said: "We know the best way to rebuild our economy is to beat COVID which is why we have invested billions in new vaccines and a national testing operation so that we can reopen the economy safely as soon as possible in the future.

"But despite this we – like many other countries – face a huge economic challenge. And as we recover from this crisis it won't be enough to just go back to normal – our promise will be to Build Back Better and level up opportunity for people and businesses across the UK.

"This Build Back Better Council will ensure that government and businesses continue to work closely together. It will provide an important forum for frank feedback on our recovery plans and will help ensure the steps we are taking are the right ones."

The Business Council will meet quarterly, but with further meetings agreed with the Prime Minister and Chancellor if required. Each member is appointed to the Council for a term of 12 months.

It will complement the wide range of engagement with businesses, business representative groups and trades unions across the whole of Government.

Speaking ahead of the meeting, Bernard Looney, CEO of BP said: "I am a big believer in British business and the Prime Minister's push to create a cleaner, greener, more inclusive economy. I am also an advocate for UK companies working with government to build back better from the pandemic. I feel honoured to be part of the Business Council and hugely optimistic that together we can help create a stronger, fairer economy where everyone wins – and where Britain is even more competitive in the global market.

Dame Sharon White, Chair of the John Lewis Partnership said: "I am delighted that the Prime Minister and Chancellor have established a new Business Council. We are facing some of our greatest ever challenges as a country and we are much better placed to tackle them with Government and business working side by side."

List of Council members

- Isabel Dedring, Arup
- Leo Quinn, Balfour Beatty
- Stephen Welton, BGF
- Rachel Lord, Blackrock
- Bernard Looney, BP
- Sean Doyle, British Airways
- Philip Jansen, BT
- Poppy Gustafsson, Darktrace
- Penny James, Direct Line
- Ronan Harris, Google
- Emma Walmsley, GSK
- Lord Deighton, Heathrow
- Mark Tucker, HSBC
- Dame Carolyn McCall, ITV
- Thierry Bolloré, Jaguar Land Rover
- Dame Sharon White, John Lewis Partnership
- Robert MacLeod, Johnson Matthey
- Cressida Hogg, Landsec
- Nigel Wilson, Legal & General
- Vivian Hunt, McKinsey & the CBI
- Ron Kalifa, Network International
- Karen Jones, Prezzo
- Laxman Narasimhan, Reckitt Benckiser
- Liv Garfield, Severn Trent
- Carl Ennis, Siemens
- Martin Murphy, Syncona
- Ken Murphy, Tesco
- Alan Jope, Unilever
- Charlotte Hogg, Visa
- Sir Ian Wood, Wood

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