



Keeping London



Open for Business

A Programme for a Working Capital

Throughout this document, the following terms apply:

Self-employed	Single business owner with no employees
Micro-business	Fewer than 10 employees
Small business	Between 10 and 49 employees
Medium-sized business	Between 50 and 250 employees
Large business	Over 250 employees

MSB Micro- and small business (including the self employed with no employees)

We use the phrase MSBs rather than the more common SMEs (which includes enterprises with more than 50 employees) since the FSB believes that many of the issues facing medium sized and large firms are fundamentally different from those of smaller concerns.

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Further copies of this manifesto can be
obtained from:

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www.fsb.org.uk/london

In the autumn of 2007, the Federation of Small Businesses organised a series of workshops attended by a range of business owners to identify measures which the business community sees as important for their survival, success and future growth.

This document incorporates the views and priorities of those attending and has been adopted by the Federation of Small Businesses as a set of policies for London.

Those involved in taking the decisions which shape the political and economic climate in London can be confident that the views expressed and the policies proposed in this document are representative of London's small business communities.

We are confident that, if implemented, the policies outlined in this document would encourage entrepreneurship, and would help support and increase the role played by small businesses in delivering economic growth and prosperity for the benefit of London and its inhabitants.

Richard Morse
Chairman, London Policy Unit
Federation of Small Businesses
March 2008

Why the 2008 election matters

May's elections for the London Assembly and the Mayor are of great significance to everyone who lives or works in London.

The Mayor has executive power over almost every aspect of everyday life in London.

He chairs Transport for London which deals with buses and the tube, river services, some trains and trams, maintains the main roads and regulates taxis and minicabs. He also appoints its senior executives.

He appoints the majority of members of the Metropolitan Police Authority and the board of the London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority.

He appoints the board of the London Development Agency (LDA), which annually spends over £400m and is responsible for delivering the Mayor's Economic Development Strategy.

He chairs the London Skills and Employment Board (LSEB) with an annual budget of about £400m for adult skills. In addition, the LSEB has the ability to influence and direct the spending and priorities of other key agencies such as Jobcentre Plus and the LDA.

He is about to become the Chair of the London Homes and Communities Agency Board

He sets the annual budget for the Greater London Authority. (GLA)

He is joint-Chair of the 2012 Olympic Board and spokesman for London.



And if that were not enough, the Mayor also has a general power to do anything that he feels will promote economic and social development and environmental improvement in London.

He sets policy for transport, waste disposal, air quality, economic development and regeneration, planning and land use – all issues which impact on business.

Mayoral decisions will shape London's future for many years, and mayoral actions will determine the direction of economic development in London for the next few years.

As a global city in a global economy, London is subject to global forces and mayoral actions can make sure that the London economy has the best possible chance of withstanding them.

The Mayor can be a powerful driver for economic growth and the small business community is uniquely placed to deliver that growth.

But the Mayor can also propose policies which harm business and which jeopardise the ability of business to deliver growth and create new jobs.

His actions can determine whether London is open for business or whether businesses will shut up shop.

That is why the election for the Mayor matters for every business in London.

..and why small business issues are important

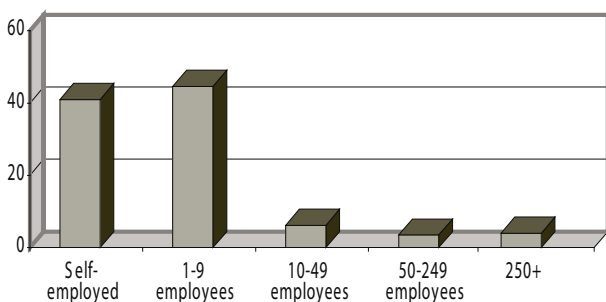
Nobody knows how many businesses there are in London.

According to the Government, there were 309,225 VAT-registered businesses at the start of 2007, but since nationally only 43% of UK enterprises were registered for VAT,¹ there could be as many as 720,000 businesses in London.

The London Annual Business Survey 2006 calculated there were 349,513 businesses excluding the self-employed,² and the ONS Annual Business Inquiry recorded 636,000 self-employed in London in 2006.³

It can be assumed that there might be at least 600,000 enterprises in London, including 250,000 self-employed people with no employees.

As the chart shows, micro-business and the self-employed form over 90% of these 600,000 enterprises in London. They provide jobs for nearly two million people (about 40% of business employment).



Percentage of enterprises in London according to staff numbers

¹House of Commons written answer 4.12.07

²London Annual Business Survey 2006 – page 26; London Development Agency

³ONS Annual Business Inquiry 2006; Office of National Statistics

The London Plan states that London's population is set to rise from 7.5 million people in 2005 to up to 8.7 million by 2025. During that period, London is projected to need to create an additional net 847,000 jobs.⁴

In recent years, new jobs have not been created in significant numbers by large companies locating to, or expanding in London.

They have not been created by the public sector, even though that has expanded.

In reality, from 2005-2007, a staggering 64% of new jobs have been created by self-employment.⁵

It is micro-businesses and the self-employed who will be the key to creating London's 847,000 new jobs.

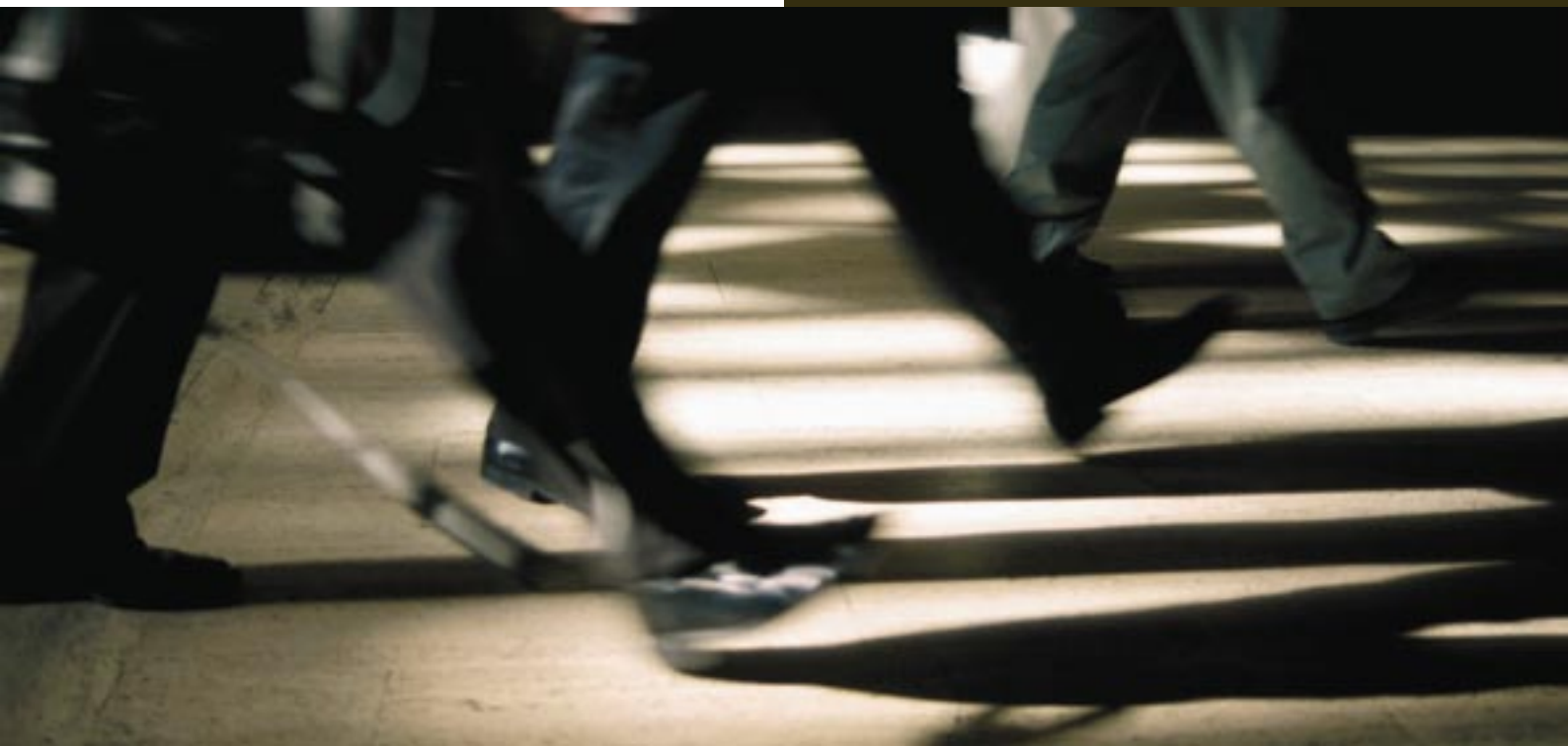
It is micro-businesses and the self-employed who will be the key to reducing social exclusion and to boosting economic well-being.

That is why London needs a vibrant and healthy self-employed and MSB sector.

And the priority for the Mayor must be to help this sector grow and expand.

⁴Further alterations to the London Plan - 1.34 and 1.42:GLA 2006

⁵Labour market statistics first release, ONS April 2007



The FSB's top ten priorities for London



1. The provision of publicly-funded business support should be targeted to those Micro- and Small Businesses (MSBs) seeking to grow and to recruit new staff. This should be delivered by the LDA through Business Link and through an expanded mentoring service
2. The establishment of a central Business Information Bureau (BIB) based at an expanded Business and IP Centre at the British Library to provide a comprehensive information service covering all aspects of business ownership, including a database of available premises, advice services, funding streams, networking opportunities and business-related events
3. Businesses should be able to report non-violent crime by email, automatically receiving a crime reference number
4. MSBs based in, or operating in, the Congestion Charge zone should have residents' rights for up to five business vehicles
5. The creation of a London-wide organisation to promote environmental action, giving to London's businesses an integrated service providing information, practical assistance and access to appropriate funding sources

6. The GLA and its functional bodies should set and publish an annual target for goods and services procured from local and small businesses with a view to increasing this target on a year-by-year basis
7. The equivalent of 10% of the floor space of new commercial developments should be made available as low-cost accommodation for MSBs
8. Small Business Rate Relief should be automatically granted to eligible businesses where the billing address is the same as the property to which the bill relates
9. A requirement for S106 contributions from commercial developments ("planning gain") to be ring-fenced for the provision of affordable start-up and incubator premises for small businesses
10. Training should be made more accessible by offering short, affordable courses with modules in hours rather than days, in order to minimise the impact on small businesses

Business support



With a successful background in communications and marketing, Emma Courtney was named in the Observer/Courvoisier 2007 listing of “500 to Watch”. She set up her own business last year and is keen to expand.

“I’ve run someone else’s business but I’ve never been in the position of building my own from scratch and the minefield to tread around growth and expansion is daunting even to the most ambitious small business owner. But where to go for meaningful advice about these issues? What is needed by businesses with aspirations for growth is not another general fact sheet to download or workshop delivered by someone who’s never actually faced the cold hard reality of the issues discussed.

“We need credible and sage advice from people who have recently finished the journey we are embarking on and who can provide a practical helping hand and soundboard. With that sort of help, businesses like mine can really grow, creating both wealth and jobs in London.”

There are many successful micro-businesses which, having traded successfully for two or three years, look to make their first expansion.

Too many of these “teenage” businesses fail when they make their first significant increase in size, put in jeopardy by increased overheads for equipment or new premises, lack of management skills or problems arising from recruiting staff.

The priority for London’s business support providers should be to help those MSBs which are seeking to expand and to recruit new staff.

The provision of an extensive mentoring and business advice service for these businesses is the best way of delivering an expanding small business sector and of delivering the employment targets in the London Plan.

Many are also interested in starting a business, but key to their potential success is the provision of a better initial learning process about what entrepreneurship means and what it involves. This will enable them to make the right decision about whether to stay employed, start a lifestyle business, or acquire the confidence to plan for a growth micro.





The FSB proposes:

The key priority for publicly-funded business support should be targeting those MSBs seeking to grow and to recruit new staff. This should be delivered by the LDA through Business Link and through an expanded mentoring service

On-line advice and regular free workshops for those considering starting a business, providing potential entrepreneurs with a “reality check” about the issues, obstacles and challenges faced by business owners, as well as the opportunities, benefits and rewards

An end to the postcoding of publicly-funded support services. The merits of an application for support should be more important than its location

The use of “soft” or low interest loans instead of grants, thereby reducing a culture of grant dependency and increasing the number of businesses who can be assisted since business wants a leg-up not a hand-out

All public sector intervention must be monitored and performance-judged over a period of time – recognising that it can take time for the results of business support to appear

Information & consultation



Turkish-born Sinem Ersever worked round the clock for a year to get her business going.

Sinem says

“I set up Advericom at a young age in a country where the language spoken wasn’t my first language. I had relatively little business experience when I started but I quickly learned that ambition and stubbornness will get you far in business! People who want to set up a business need to know that it won’t be easy. Everyone who has run a business for a time will always say that they wish they knew when they started what they know now. My advice to the budding young entrepreneurs out there is to ask questions and find answers. But there needs to be a really good source of information to get the right answers.”

FSB research consistently shows business owners suffer from a lack of information about regulatory requirements and about ways of accessing business advice and services to help grow their businesses.⁶

In part this is due to a confusing range of organisations claiming to offer business advice, but whose areas of expertise mean they cannot present a complete picture.

There is a clear need for a more co-ordinated approach to the promotion of services and information available to the self-employed and to micro- and small businesses.

The sense of detachment from the political system expressed by the public is also felt by the business community. This stems from a perception that consultation is frequently a sham, with loaded questions designed to obtain a pre-ordained result. Many recent GLA consultations only serve to reinforce that impression.

Furthermore, business owners feel that politicians ignore their views because they are seen as less important than other groups in society, yet small businesses and the self-employed are crucial to delivering economic growth and social inclusion.



⁶ “Lifting the Barriers to Growth in UK Small Businesses – London edition; FSB 2006 and previous

The FSB proposes:

The establishment of a central Business Information Bureau (BIB) based at an expanded Business and IP Centre at the British Library to provide a comprehensive information service covering all aspects of business ownership, including a database of available premises, advice services, funding streams, networking opportunities and business-related events

A web-based facility for businesses to post comments on the standard of advice and service they have received from publicly-funded advice services such as Business Link

An undertaking by the GLA and its functional bodies to ensure that its consultation exercises are conducted in such a way as to remove or minimise possible accusations of bias or of a cavalier disregard for the views expressed

Greater information for business owners about potential opportunities for collaborative working with other businesses and with colleges of Higher Education

The inclusion of the self-employed in the LDA's Annual Business Survey and the inclusion of a wider range of recognised business groups on the London Business Board to ensure that the views of all sections of London's business communities are considered by decision-makers



Crime



Alex Feigenbaum had his mobile phone stolen.

To claim on his insurance he needed to report it to the police. Busy running his own company in Mill Hill, he twice went to the local police station, but could not afford to take a numbered ticket and wait in a long queue. He eventually got up at 5.30am to report it.

“It would be so much easier to be able to report a crime like this by email and get an automatic crime reference number by reply. That sort of measure would give me more time with my grandson Aaron.”

Surveys show that crime against business makes up at least 20% of all recorded crime, even though over one-third of businesses do not report crime⁷ because they feel it would not achieve anything.

FSB research also shows that over 50% of businesses are the victims of crime each year.⁸

These figures are unacceptable. Both the police and the business community need to take action.

The FSB believes that businesses should report every crime. Equally we believe that the police need to give business crime the priority it deserves. They have a duty to take business crime seriously.

Crime against business is not a “victimless crime”. The impact of crime can often jeopardise the very survival of a business, to the detriment of business owner, the employees and the community it serves.

Furthermore, many criminals first offend against businesses and move on to crimes against residential premises and individuals. Tackling business crime therefore tackles all sorts of crime.



⁷ FSB: The Forgotten Fifth : 10 point plan to tackle business crime – p2: FSB 2007

⁸ FSB: Lifting the Barriers (London) p 41: FSB 2006



The FSB proposes:

Businesses should be able to report non-violent crime by email, automatically receiving a crime reference number

The Metropolitan Police should include business crime as one of its Key Performance Indicators, setting annual targets for its reduction

At least one manned police station should be open all day every day in each Parliamentary constituency

London's Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships and Neighbourhood Policing Units should all include tackling business crime in their strategies and priorities

Greater efforts should be made to advise businesses about crime prevention measures – particularly to combat fraud

Transport

The movement of goods and services is an essential feature of economic activity. Measures which hinder, penalise or prevent this movement - such as the congestion charge - do damage to London's economic performance.

Transport policy in London needs to recognise the difference between essential and non-essential journeys. Someone driving into central London because they chose not to use public transport is different from the repair man or service engineer for whom the use of a vehicle is fundamental to his business.

The GLA should encourage the take-up of public transport while not preventing the free movement of commercial goods and services.

An FSB survey showed that nearly half (48%) of business owners were dissatisfied with local transport planning⁹ and business owners believe that traffic management systems should aim to encourage traffic flow, accepting both the environmental damage which is done by constant stop-start traffic movement, and the impact that delays in the movement of goods has on economic productivity.



Orlando and Victoria Hamilton run a flower shop in West London. With traffic congestion and the C-charge having an impact on their former shop in the West End, they moved their business but are now hit by being in the Western Extension.

“Small businesses like ours cannot move goods and services by public transport. For us, the use of a car or a van is essential. We are now facing a possible bill of £10,000 a year. Politicians have to realise that their actions can easily drive small firms out of business or out of London.”





The FSB proposes:

MSBs based in, or operating in, the Congestion Charge zone should have residents' rights for up to five business vehicles

A common observation period of 15 minutes throughout London for deliveries and a recognition that an out-of-hours delivery policy does not suit the majority of micro- and small businesses or the 35% of London's businesses which are based in residential premises

Increased provision for bicycle and car parking near rail stations to encourage the use of public transport

An end to the policy of reducing available road space through bus lanes, pedestrian zones and "traffic calming" measures

The night bus service should be expanded and the underground's weekday operating hours extended to take account of changing working and social patterns for London's citizens

A Greener London



One of the Observer's Food Monthly Top 40 Eco Food Heroes, Catherine Conway owns Unpackaged, a London based independent organic grocery which encourages customers to bring their own containers to refill.

"At our current level of waste generation in Britain, we only have 6 years of landfill left. We must all do more to reduce the amount we throw away.

But whether it be in cutting waste, saving energy or protecting the environment, it is small businesses who are leading the way. What they need now is encouragement to do even more. This might require technical help, finance or just a helpful piece of advice. Providing it could make a huge difference."

Many environmentalists give the impression of regarding the whole business community with suspicion. This is misguided.

A recent FSB report¹⁰ showed that over 85% of small business owners were environmentally responsible. MSBs have a long and proud record of being committed to environmental action.

However, they frequently suffer from the fact that many measures designed to increase environmental improvement are based on the principle of preventing a certain course of action rather than on encouraging alternatives.

All too often, public policy discourages small businesses from engaging in the environmental agenda. Furthermore, the regulatory application of a 'one-size fits all' approach often presents barriers for small businesses as they seek effective environmental solutions.





The FSB proposes:

The creation of a London-wide organisation to promote environmental action, giving London's businesses an integrated service providing information, practical assistance and access to appropriate funding sources

Greater information about waste and recycling provision and a standardised system for recycling domestic and business waste and existing segregated household collections to small non-domestic premises on a cost-recovery basis

Soft loans for creating Green Roofs on commercial premises

Financial assistance for businesses wishing to invest in new environmental technology and for the insulation of business premises

The introduction of a ban on disposable plastic bags which does not discriminate against small businesses

Procurement

Small businesses have a proven record of delivering contracts efficiently and economically, yet FSB research shows that MSBs in London have a lower level of penetration into local public-sector markets than in any other UK region.¹¹

The Mayor and the GLA should take a lead in ensuring that small businesses have every opportunity to compete for – and win – tendering opportunities.

Procuring with MSBs makes good economic sense, good business sense, and fits with regeneration objectives.

Small businesses employ local people. Small businesses owners are often local people. Local money going back into the local economy makes good economic sense. This has been outlined by the New Economics Foundation, and the economic tool that they have developed is well respected by the Government.¹²



Jeremy Hall is an award-winning expert in the training industry.

“I find no difficulty doing business with large multi-nationals around the world. Yet as a one-man concern, to do business with London’s public sector I am required to jump through so many hoops it’s not worth my while. I am required to have Health and Safety policies and a diversity policy. I have no staff and do not intend to hire any, so how can they be relevant? In my line of business, I am seen as a world authority (with exports accounting for 75% of my business). By having irrelevant hurdles I make no attempt to sell to the public sector. I imagine the real losers are London’s public sector.”



¹¹FSB: Lifting the Barriers (National report) – p36: FSB 2006

¹²The Money Trail (Justin Sacks) – New Economic Foundation 200

The FSB proposes:

The GLA and its functional bodies should set and publish an annual target for goods and services procured from local and small businesses with a view to increasing this target on a year-by-year basis

The competefor.com website and supply2.gov should be combined to start to create a definitive website for MSBs to access procurement opportunities

The GLA should require all its first-tier contractors to demonstrate a clear commitment to creating a supply chain which uses local and small sub-contractors

The GLA should aim to foster the participation of small businesses as prime contractors, subcontractors and suppliers by avoiding the unnecessary and unjustified bundling of contract requirements to preclude small business participation

The total value of a contract should be compared to the projected total revenue of a potential supplier over a corresponding period of time, to enable small businesses to compete to win contracts lasting a period of years



Access to premises

FSB surveys have shown that at least a third of London's 600,000 businesses are based in residential premises. This may be because they do not at present need commercial premises, but for many, the challenge of growing their business will require their moving location.¹³

Many of these businesses are single-person enterprises and do not, therefore, feature in the research undertaken by the LDA in producing the London Annual Business Survey. The FSB fears that their needs are, therefore, not fully appreciated by the GLA.

It is clear that there is, however, a serious shortage of the sort of flexible, affordable premises needed by nascent companies and those making their first significant expansion.

At a time when new technology and changing trading patterns can make the physical location of a business less important, a supply of affordable accommodation is essential to prevent an increase in the migration of businesses to other parts of the UK when a move to newer premises is required.



Robert Bowles used to run a business from this building in Hornchurch.

“Like other businesses in this street, my trade was badly affected by the lack of short-stay parking and a new parking inspection regime which meant customers went elsewhere. I had to move my business – I’ve taken it out of London, forced to do so because politicians do not take account of small businesses in many of their decisions. It’s time people realised that if they don’t help small businesses – or if they make life difficult – the small business may not stay around and may move or close.”



The FSB proposes:

The equivalent of 10% of the floor space of new commercial developments should be made available as low-cost accommodation for MSBs

Developers of large-scale sites should be required to make provision for child-care facilities for the proposed workforce in the development

The LDA should set and publish an annual target for increasing the total of start-up units

Working with the Business Information Bureau at the British Library, the LDA should maintain a comprehensive on-line listing of all available commercial premises

Access to business premises for customers and deliveries should not be jeopardised by planning or parking policy. In particular, a short period of free parking should be provided on all parking bays in retail / commercial areas



Access to finance



Sue Terpilowski owns PR and Marketing agency employing eight people.

“I can confirm from personal experience that women and minority groups are discriminated against by the high street banks. The Mayor and the London Development Agency should intervene to tackle this market failure, assist in opening new funding streams for micro- and small businesses and provide an alternative to conventional bank lending, recognising that a business owner’s home should not be regarded as the principle source of collateral. Doing so discriminates against a large section of entrepreneurs.”

The FSB research shows that micro- and small businesses have difficulty in securing institutional finance for their businesses.¹⁴

The problem is particularly acute in London where 24% of survey respondents said they had financed their business through personal credit cards (cf 21% nationally) and 40% had used retained profits (cf 36% nationally). Fewer businesses in London (25%) secured bank loans than nationally (30%).

The London Annual Business Survey also shows significant differences in the ability of MSBs to secure bank funding according to racial profile, with white business owners more than twice as likely as black entrepreneurs to gain bank funding. There has been a notable decline in the success rates of black business owners in winning bank loans since the 2005 survey.¹⁵

The FSB believes that many MSBs are also unaware of all potential sources of finance and action is needed to tackle discrimination and to promote alternatives to bank lending.



¹⁴FSB: Lifting the Barriers to Growth in UK small businesses – National report 2006

¹⁵LABS Op cit. P126



The FSB proposes:

Small Business Rate Relief should be automatically granted to eligible businesses where the billing address is the same as the property to which the bill relates

The LDA should give support to the banks to extend the availability of the Small Business Loan Guarantee Fund by undertaking to increase the level underwritten to 90% of the loan

The LDA should offer low-interest loans to help businesses meet the cost of legislative compliance

Working through the Business Information Bureau at the British Library, the LDA should maintain a comprehensive on-line listing of all available sources of business finance, with the provision for feedback from those who have approached the various sources

The Mayor should ensure that all money given through the Local Authority Business Growth Incentive scheme is spent on supporting further business growth

Planning

It is not enough merely to claim that London is a World City. We should aspire to being a world-class city, and that means always seeking examples of best practice from other cities and parts of the world.

There is a need to reverse the London Plan assumption that business can operate in an increasingly small area and to end the redesignation of industrial or brownfield land for residential use.

London needs to ensure that its planning regime helps encourage and retain the city's diverse business communities.

It also needs to recognise the differing planning needs of the varying types of commercial development. Workshops, offices, distribution centres and retail premises all have different planning, transport and other requirements.



Nigel Crawford has been involved in economic development and planning for 25 years.

“With a range of changes to the land use planning system currently under consideration, it is essential that the needs of small businesses are not overlooked. Economic development and planning go hand-in-hand and there are good examples of other cities using the planning system as a driver for economic growth. London needs to develop a planning framework which meets the needs of high-growth start-ups and micro businesses. A healthy future for them means a healthy future for London. Ignoring their needs will see them move elsewhere.”





The FSB proposes:

A requirement for S106 contributions from commercial developments to be ring-fenced for the provision of affordable start-up and incubator premises for small businesses

Measures to enable planners to refuse any green or brownfield applications which draw business activity away from London's town centres, and to resist change of use from retail to other commercial use in town centres and shopping streets

A clear commitment by the GLA to implement Planning Policy Statement 4, particularly with regard to the needs of small businesses and start-ups

The GLA should lead resistance to planning applications designed to replace affordable business premises with newer and more expensive offices or to change use to residential

A requirement for supermarket developments to provide affordable premises for independent retailers on the supermarket site equivalent to 10% of the supermarket's shopfloor area

Skills and training



Ian Mackay has been running training courses for employees for more than 20 years. *“If small businesses in London are to compete, it is imperative that they have a skilled and trained workforce. This means making sure that training is delivered with an approach that suits the way a small business works. It also means recognising the value of the training which is provided informally in the workplace. Although small businesses do the best they can to provide workbased training, they feel strongly that they should not have to pay for making good the shortcomings of the education system. The need for a demand-led approach to training cannot be overemphasised. Without change, London will continue to fail employers and employees alike and risk its economy and its competitiveness.”*

Business owners report that the availability of suitably skilled labour is the greatest problem to successfully running a business in London, with the shortage of skilled labour higher in London than in any other region of the UK.¹⁶

FSB research also showed that over 25% of businesses encountered one or more skills barriers when trying to recruit new staff, with an even higher number (31%) reporting skills shortages among current staff. Again, the problem was worse in London than in any other UK region.¹⁷

Training frameworks need to accept and adapt to the nature of MSBs which are the mainstay of the economy, and businesses state that they find the key market shortages are for potential recruits skilled to a post-graduate level (particularly in the IT sector) and those skilled in basic numeracy and literacy. Business owners also comment on the lack of basic “people skills” among younger job-seekers.

Small businesses would undertake more formal staff training if funding was more accessible. But training will only be successful when courses are appropriate to the business and delivered in a way that meets the needs of small employers.



¹⁶FSB Lifting the Barriers (National report) p 48: FSB 2006

¹⁷Ibid

The FSB proposes:

Training should be made more accessible by offering short, affordable courses with modules in hours rather than days, in order to minimise the impact on small businesses

Greater representation for smaller businesses on the London Skills and Employment Board

“Soft skills” as well as basic numeracy and literacy should be given greater prominence in London’s schools to equip young people with the attributes they will need in the workplace

An expansion of apprenticeship schemes which are responsive to employer demands

Enhanced funding for private learning providers that deliver the bespoke, work-based packages that small businesses need





The FSB is the largest campaigning pressure group promoting and protecting the interests of the self-employed and owners of small firms. Formed in 1974, it now has over 210,000 members across the UK.

Its lobbying arm - led by the Westminster Press and Parliamentary Office - applies pressure on MPs, Government and Whitehall, lobbies politicians in their constituencies and puts the FSB viewpoint over to the media.

The London Policy Unit seeks to further FSB influence at the regional level and works with the FSB's branches to promote the views of the small business sector to London's local authorities, the Greater London Authority, the Mayor's office and the Government Office for London.

On the member benefits side, the FSB offers assistance and support to the self-employed and the small business owner or manager, with one of the major benefits of membership being the FSB's legal helpline which operates 24 hours a day. Last year, the helpline received over 100,000 calls.

The FSB is in an ideal position to influence policy with its direct access to politicians and civil servants in all levels of government in London and the UK. In addition the FSB has access to the European Commission through our office in Brussels.

For more information about the benefits of membership of the FSB, visit www.fsb.org.uk

Small firms statistics

- There are 4.3 million small businesses in the UK
- 97% of firms employ less than 20 people
- 95% employ less than 5 people
- Over 500,000 people start up their own business every year
- Small firms employ more than 58 per cent of the private sector workforce
- 13 million people work in small firms
- Small firms contribute more than 50 per cent of the UK turnover - about £1,200 billion
- 64 per cent of commercial innovations come from small firms
- Small firms collect and pay Tax, NICs, VAT and other dues which help pay for public services

When you vote, remember -

64%

of new jobs are
created by
small businesses

LONDONERS NEED SMALL BUSINESSES

Federation of Small Businesses

www.fsb.org.uk/london



Please display this in your car or window