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Ibrahim Dogus

Co-Chair of SME4Labour and 2017 GE candidate for the Cities of Westminster and London

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“Firstly, thank you for taking your time to have a look at what we do. We began the SME4Labour group because we firmly believe that small businesses play a crucial part in British society and have a lot to contribute to progressive politics. I am a small business owner and a proud Labour Party member. Despite what some people think, these two things go hand in hand.

I began my working life as a waiter. Over time, I worked my way up to become a manager and setting up my own restaurant in 2005. I now run five restaurants across London and employ 60 people. There seems to be an idea that the Labour Party is anti-business. In my opinion this could not be further from the truth. The Labour Party understands that SMEs are the lifeblood of our communities, as most small businesses create jobs and reinvest in their local areas. I have personally borne witness to how much Labour MPs place value in the businesses in their constituencies. However, we can't say the same about the Conservatives, who once in power tend to side with the bigger businesses, often to the neglect of local communities.

Labour speaks up for people who don't have a voice. So we are taking it upon ourselves to speak up for the companies that don't have big marketing budgets, that don't put their money in tax havens, that don't off-shore jobs and that don't believe in zero-hour contracts. We will support businesses that believe in Labour values. We need to get away from this anti-business view and start saying, as a party, how much we need SMEs, because we, as SME owners, need Labour. We are living under a government that does not respect small businesses or working people. The Labour Party is the party of workers, people who are up at the crack of dawn to see through a hard day's work. The previous Labour government was a friend to small businesses, and I strongly believe it is time we had a party like that in No. 10 once again.

Small firms account for 99.3 per cent of all private sector businesses in the UK. They provide nearly two thirds of all private sector jobs and nearly half of the private sector's turnover. Small and medium sized businesses employed 15.7 million people and had a combined turnover of £1.8 trillion last year. No political party which is serious about forming the next government can ignore small businesses.

At SME4Labour we will be supporting the Labour Party's endeavours, as well as small businesses, entrepreneurs and the self-employed who contribute so much to their communities, and who find themselves, far too often, in precarious situations. Whether that is because of complex tax systems and regulations, or competition from large businesses who can get away with breaking the rules, small businesses need our help.

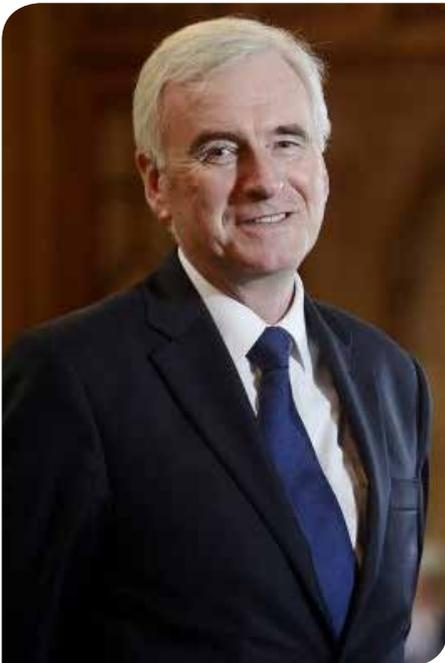
So, please, let us come together and invest in our communities, our innovators and our future prosperity.”

“The Labour Party understands that SMEs are the lifeblood of our communities, as most small businesses create jobs and reinvest in their local areas.”

**Jeremy Corbyn**

MP for Islington North and
Leader of the Labour Party

“SME4Labour provides small businesses with a way to have their voices heard, which are too often drowned out by larger companies and corporations. I’d like to thank and congratulate my colleagues in the SME4Labour team for their contribution to an economic policy that works for the many, not the few.”

**John McDonnell**

MP for Hayes & Harlington and
Shadow Chancellor

“I wish to thank SME4Labour for the major contribution the group has made to developing and campaigning so successfully for Labour’s policies. SME4Labour has really made its’ mark on our political direction.”

Messages of Support



Sonny Leong

Co-Chair of SME4Labour and Chair of Chinese for Labour

“Why do we need SME4Labour?”

99.9% of private sector businesses are SMEs, employing an estimated 15.7 million people, which is well over half the private sector workforce. It accounts for nearly half of private sector turnover at £1.8 trillion. SMEs are not only the source of many people’s livelihoods but also the dominant driver for growth and creativity in our economy. Every national business success – Amstrad, Virgin, Innocent, Ella’s Kitchen – began life as a small business, as a

glint of ambition in their founder’s eye.

Yet start-ups face huge challenges. 7 out of 10 don’t make it through their third year due to a lack of working capital, business planning and entrepreneurial skills. This is an area where an active government can use its powers to ensure that startups can fulfil their potential.

Likewise we need to follow Tom Watson’s example in doing more to support micro-businesses – those that consist of less than 10 people. More than 8 million people work in more than 5 million such companies in this country – an existence that can be a source of great innovation and creativity, but can also be a very insecure experience.

We were good on small businesses both in government and in opposition. Chuka Umunna as Shadow Business Secretary set up Small Business Saturday, which encourages people to buy ‘small’ one Saturday in December. Chuka’s bi-partisan initiative was a huge success, adding to the £460m spent in small businesses last December.

We need to continue and build on these efforts under Jeremy Corbyn’s leadership. To that end, we have set up SME4Labour: a group of Labour supporters from every part of the party to offer support, advice and policy suggestions to the Shadow Business team.

With a goal of a more fair and

sustainable economy, we will look to cover a range of areas, including:

- Recognising the importance of micro-business by pushing for a dedicated shadow minister and local council leader for this group.
- Catalysing start up growth through investment relief; using unused council property as start up hubs; reducing red tape and providing greater practical support; and enabling greater access to sectoral business mentors and advisers.
- Expanding the reach of small businesses by pushing the government to help SMEs access international markets too often dominated by bigger organisations.
- Deepening the partnership economy by developing the same links big business has built with educational institutions to connect SMEs with schools.

In all of these areas, the Labour values of partnership, internationalism and common endeavour are very much of benefit to business AND to working people of all backgrounds who want make the most of their talents and potential.

That, for me, is what Labour is all about – bringing each of us a life of success, by building a successful society, together. That’s what SME4Labour is about. It’s why I will continue to give my all to Labour under the leadership of Jeremy Corbyn.”

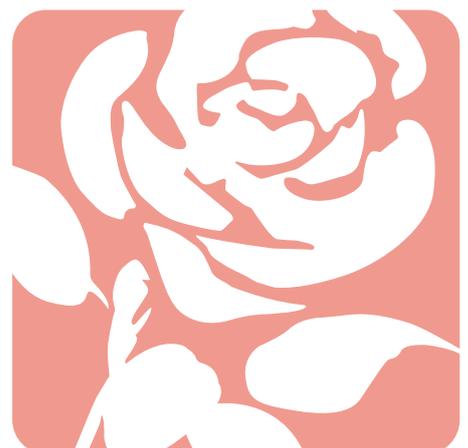


Tom Watson

MP for West Bromwich East and Deputy Leader of the Labour Party

“SME4Labour is a vital component of the conversation that the Labour Party will have with voters between now and the 2020 election. More than five million small and medium enterprises in Britain employ over 15 million people, and are the productive frontier of our future economy. Clear, strong and close relations between our party’s policy makers and SMEs are critical, and SME4Labour is playing a strong and innovative role in providing that platform.”*

*This message was received in 2016 in support of SME4Labour.





Debbie Abrahams

MP for Oldham East and Saddleworth and Shadow Work and Pensions Secretary

“Our small business sector is the power-house of the economy, contributing 47% of the UK’s income in the private sector and constituting over 99% of all businesses and the majority of private sector jobs. Small businesses are critical to boosting aggregate levels of productivity in the UK. For sustainable and healthy growth, we need to support and nurture our entrepreneurs and small businesses.

“But one of the issues facing SMEs and which has a direct impact on their productivity is late payments by large companies to their suppliers.

That’s why I have worked closely with SMEs in my campaign Be Fair – Pay on Time to tackle the scourge of late payments. I was delighted our recent manifesto “declared war on late payments” and promised to both use government procurement to ensure that anyone bidding for a government contract pays its own suppliers within 30 day and develop a version of the Australian system of binding arbitration and fines for persistent late-payers for the private and public sectors.”



Angela Rayner

MP for Ashton-under-Lyne and Shadow Secretary of State for Education

“Comprising over 99% of private sector businesses in the UK, small and medium enterprises are the backbone of the economy. I’m delighted that the Labour Party has such a close relationship with SMEs through SME4Labour. It is no secret that the Labour Party is the only party committed to a fair deal for working people and so this relationship is essential when 60% of all private sector employment in the UK is in small businesses.

Supporting small businesses to be successful is an essential part of Labour’s agenda for government. I believe that our policy of introducing a lower small profits rate of corporation tax for SMEs and scrapping

quarterly reporting for businesses with a turnover of less than £85,000 will go some way to reducing the financial and administrative burden that small businesses currently face under the Tories. In my own education brief I know that our plans for a National Education Service will ensure that people have the skills that they need to get on and that businesses have the highly trained workforce that they require to be successful.

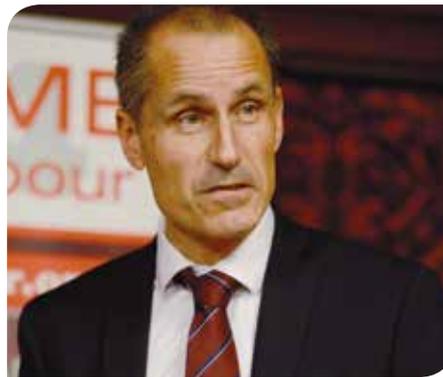
I am very pleased to be joining the SME4Labour gala and hope that this strong relationship with the Labour Party continues to develop in the coming years.”



Chi Onwurah

MP for Newcastle upon Tyne Central and Shadow Minister for Industrial Strategy, Science and Innovation

“Small businesses are the engine of our economy and the platform for our future growth. We need to invest in and nurture small businesses and encourage entrepreneurs from all backgrounds, if we are to build an economy that works for all.”



Bill Esterson

MP for Sefton Central and Shadow Minister for Business and International Trade

“SMEs are responsible for 60% of private sector jobs. Smaller businesses are often the source of the innovation and creativity which we need to unlock to boost our productivity and growth. Labour’s plans for a National Investment Bank, access to government contracts and making sure larger firms pay their suppliers promptly will

all help businesses start and grow. Our investment in infrastructure and growth are crucial to the success of businesses of all sizes. The next Labour government will put the economy first in negotiating Brexit and make sure we maintain membership of the single market and customs union during a transition period for as long as business economy needs. We want a deal which maximizes our access to our biggest market in the EU and minimizes disruption after that we leave. That includes guaranteeing the rights of EU citizens who make such a massive contribution to so many businesses in the UK. Business needs government to be its partner, along with our workforce. SMEs need a fair market and the chance to compete on an equal footing with larger businesses. The next Labour government will stand up for businesses, especially smaller businesses, which are at the heart of our communities and are the key to our future success.”



Richard Burgon

MP for Leeds East, Shadow Secretary of State for Justice and Shadow Lord Chancellor

"Small and medium enterprises make a huge contribution to our shared prosperity, and provide an important number of jobs in Leeds East. That's why I'm pleased to support the fantastic work SME4Labour does working in partnership with these enterprises, trade unions and the Labour Party to develop Labour's plan for growth and a fairer society."



Peter Dowd

MP for Bootle and Shadow Chief Secretary to the Treasury

"SMEs are vital in growing a sustainable economy and SME4Labour pays a crucial role in that goal. Hearing what SME4Labour have to say on this is important in shaping Labour's economic position."



Baroness Hayter

Shadow Deputy Leader of the House of Lords

"Given the potential impact of Brexit on SMEs, it is vital Labour hears direct from them about their hopes and fears so that our policy responses reflect their needs. SME4Labour is the channel for this dialogue, and we look forward to working with them in the year ahead."



Lesley Laird

MP for Kirkcaldy & Cowdenbeath and Shadow Secretary of State for Scotland

"From Kirkcaldy to Kelty and Cowdenbeath to Crosshill, SMEs are the backbone and heartbeat of the Scottish economy. In Scotland, SMEs account for 99.4% of all businesses, 55% of private sector employment and 40% of private sector turnover. It is for this reason that I am delighted to see so many SMEs come together in support of Labour. We are proud to be the party of SMEs and we will always act in their best interests."



Liz McInnes

MP for Heywood and Middleton

"SMEs are absolutely vital to our local economy in Heywood and Middleton, and to the British economy as a whole. As we face the challenges and opportunities of Brexit, it is crucial they are given the support and certainty necessary to thrive. The work that SME4Labour does is very important in highlighting the significance of this and I am happy to give them my full support."



Jim Fitzpatrick

MP for Poplar and Limehouse

"Small and medium enterprises provide 60% of private sector jobs in the UK and are a vital part of local communities up and down the country - they need the support of the Government to thrive."

"Labour is the party of SMEs. Given the changes the UK economy is about to go through, we must ensure they're fully equipped and ready for the years ahead. Listening to groups like SME4Labour is now more important than ever."



Toby Perkins

MP for Chesterfield

"SME4Labour has a crucial role in ensuring that Labour's policies are informed by people with real experience in running and working in business. As a former SME owner myself, I have huge respect for those who are dedicating their time to SME4Labour, because they know that only under a Labour Government will small firms get the support to succeed and thrive."



Ian Lucas

MP for Wrexham

"I ran a small business and understand its challenges and rewards. As more people earn a living this way, it is essential Labour speaks to those people even more effectively."



David Drew

MP for Stroud

"SMEs are the lifeblood of our economy. That's true of Stroud as much as it is in the rest of the country. I work very closely with SMEs and I congratulate Labour's initiative in this area."



Virendra Sharma

MP for Ealing, Southall and Chair of the Indo-British APPG

"I would like to convey my support for the second SME4Labour gala. The gala and awards are important in recognising the key role that SMEs play in the economy and in driving growth. In my constituency SMEs are the lifeblood of the local economy, and raising awareness of SME issues within the Labour Party is an important mission."



Iain McNicol

General Secretary of the Labour Party

"SME4Labour provides a brilliant and worthwhile link between small businesses and the Labour Party. Small and medium-sized enterprises employ the vast majority of the working people we seek to represent, and the work SME4Labour does in advancing that cause is highly valued by us all."

"I'd like to congratulate the SME4Labour team on their outstanding work in hosting events the year round, and look forward to watching how they will continue to grow in the future."



Maria Eagle

MP for Garston and Halewood

"Whilst small businesses contribute to job creation and economic activity locally, they rarely have the time or space to get involved in formulating public policy – SME4Labour can enable a two way flow of information and understanding ensuring that Labour policy takes account of the needs of this vital sector and that small business understands how it can support and put into effect Labour values at a local level."

FIRST ANNUAL SME4LABOUR GALA AND LABOUR EXCELLENCE AWARDS

19th December 2016

SME4Labour held its first annual gala, sponsored by Galliard Homes with drinks provided by Cobra Beer and Bira London, and hosted by Councillor Abena Opong-Asare. The event was attended by over 400 guests including over two dozen MPs and a number of Labour's other elected politicians and peers. The gala, which took place at the Park Lane Sheraton Hotel in Piccadilly, also saw the launch of the first ever Labour Excellence Awards.

Winners of these prestigious awards, recognising for contributions to the party and to the country, included Yvette Cooper for 'MP of the Year', John McDonnell for 'Shadow Cabinet Member of the Year', Unite the Union for 'Trade Union of the Year', and Lord Dubs for 'Peer of the Year'. (For the winners of each category, please see below.)

As well as presenting an award, Jeremy Corbyn, the Leader of the Labour Party, delivered a speech praising SME4Labour's work, underlining the importance of SMEs to communities. Without SMEs, Mr. Corbyn said, our high streets would be bland clones of one another. He commended Ibrahim Dogus, co-chair of SME4Labour, on his efforts and thanked him for what he had achieved. Mr. Corbyn added that it was important that smalls firms be able to have access to government contracts. Other speakers, including Yvette Cooper MP and John McDonnell MP, also praised the organisation's work to raise the profile of entrepreneurs and the



self-employed in the party.

Cooper said that SMEs shake things up and this is what the Labour Party is all about. She commended Ibrahim Dogus and Sonny Leong, co-chairs of SME4Labour, on what they had done and said their energy and those working with them in SME4Labour exemplifies the energy and drive of small businesses. Mr. McDonnell said that Labour can protect people and communities by investing in skills and supporting risk-taking entrepreneurs, adding that no community should be left behind.

Ibrahim Dogus said that the Labour Party and SMEs are perfect partners. Mr. Dogus noted social justice cannot happen unless there is a growing economy. He said that Labour must be the party for all of those who want to be better off, to see their families get on, and that SMEs are the perfect engine for this. Sonny Leong said



that we must never allow people to divide our country and that the Labour Party is the best way to make sure this does not happen. Mr. Leong said that SME4Labour is here to represent the views of small and micro businesses. Martin Howe, a member of SME4Labour's executive committee, said that aspiration is a Labour value.

Other guests and speakers included Dawn Butler MP, Clive Lewis MP, Baroness Angela Smith, Stephen Timms MP, Sharon Hodgson MP, Claude Moraes MEP, Jennette Arnold AM, and Rajesh Agrawal, the Deputy Mayor of London for Business.



LABOUR EXCELLENCE AWARD WINNERS 2016



Labour MEP of the Year
Claude Moraes MEP



Trade Union of the Year
Unite the Union



Labour MP of the Year
Yvette Cooper MP



Shadow Cabinet Member of the Year
John McDonnell MP



Labour Councillor of the Year
Cllr Ali Ozbek

Labour Councillor of the Year
Cllr Pat Cooper



Labour MSP of the Year
Daniel Johnson MSP



Labour Council of the Year
Cardiff Council



Labour Welsh Assembly Member of the Year
Baroness Eluned Morgan AM



Labour Mayor of the Year
Mayor of London Sadiq Khan



Labour CLP of the Year
Tooting CLP (received by Leonie Cooper AM)



Labour PPC of the Year
Andrew Pakes



Labour Parliamentary Assistant of the Year
Nicolette Petersen



Socialist Society of the Year
Chinese for Labour



Friends Group of the Year
Labour Friends of Bangladesh



Labour Peer of the Year
Baron Alf Dubs



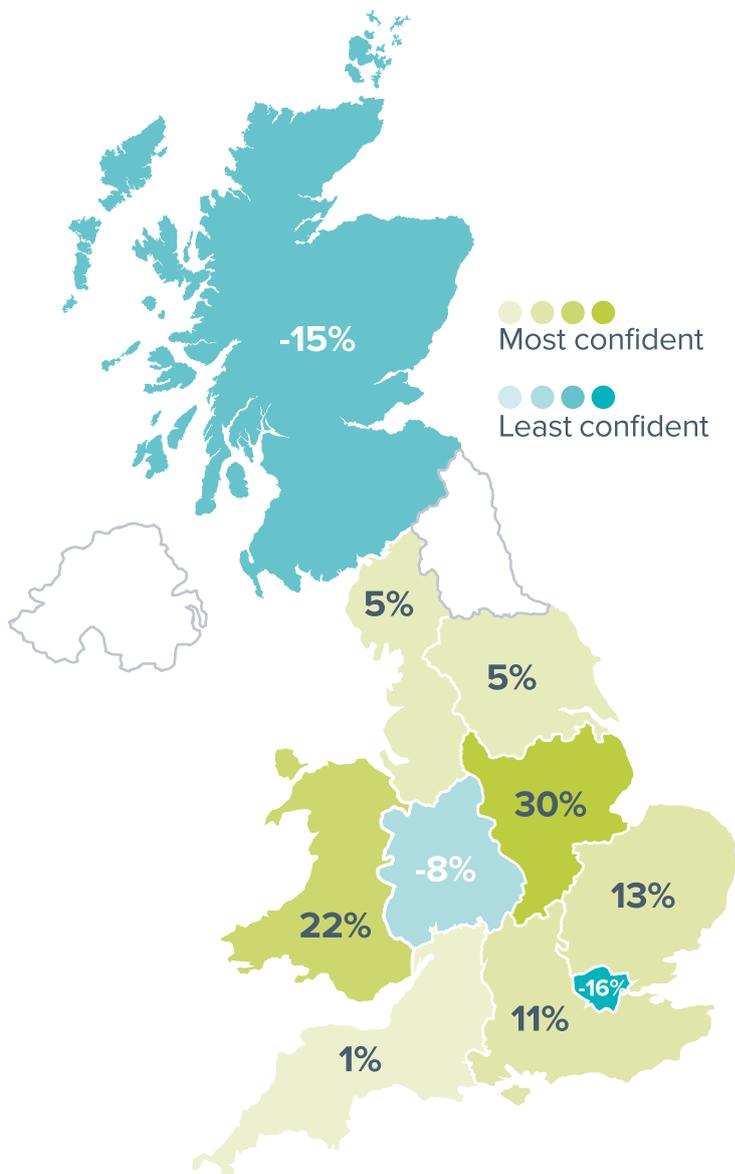
Labour Peer of the Year
Lord Roy Kennedy (right)



Labour London Assembly Member of the year
Jennette Arnold AM

“ **Small business confidence falls to lowest level since wake of EU referendum amid unprecedented uncertainty** ”

Small business confidence plummets



Record number expect activity to contract



13% Planning to **downsize, close** or **hand on** business

Sharp fall in successful credit applications



63% of applicants **secured** external finance

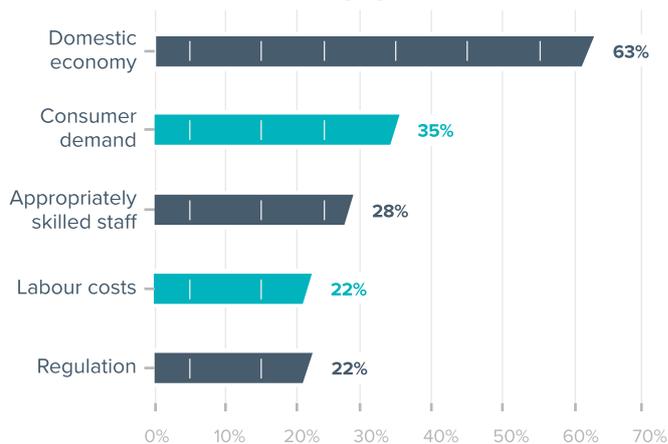
Investment intentions dip



73%

Not expecting to increase **capital investment**

Greatest barriers to achieving growth



OBJECTIVES

WHY SMALL & MEDIUM ENTERPRISES (SMEs) FOR LABOUR?

The Labour Party believes that small and medium-sized businesses are the backbone of the United Kingdom's economy. As of 2016, SMEs made up 99.3% of all private sector businesses in the UK, employing over 15.7 million people with an estimated combined annual turnover of £1.8 trillion, accounting for 47% of private sector turnover.

Through SME4Labour, we want to provide a forum whereby SMEs can work in partnership with the Labour Party and continue to inform the debate around our economic policies.

WHAT DO WE DO?

- SME4Labour seeks to strengthen the relationship between small, medium, micro, and family-owned businesses with the Labour Party
- We support constructive and informed discussion within the Labour movement on issues impacting SMEs
- We work closely with trade unions, employers' groups and individuals, encouraging strong partnerships and collaboration
- We organise meetings for Labour parliamentarians and others so that a greater understanding of the challenges faced by SMEs can be gained

JOIN US!

Standard membership: For invitations to our events and a say in how SME4Labour is run, £15/yr

Concessionary membership: For members of Young Labour (under 27), students and retirees who support our cause, with the full benefits of standard membership, £5/yr

CLP group membership: If your Constituency Labour Party can put together a group of 5+ party members who wish to join and form an SME4Labour CLP Campaign Team, you can pay together and we will knock off the price of one standard membership.

We rely on our members and the generous donations from our supporters to allow us to continue doing what we do. To join SME4Labour or to make a donation, please go to www.sme4labour.org. Alternatively, you can request an application form by emailing info@sme4labour.org.



In England, there are over **1.1 million** households on Local Authority waiting lists and there is a demand of **220,000** new homes each year

**FULLY-FUNDED
SOLUTION TO
ENGLAND'S
SOCIAL &
AFFORDABLE
HOUSING
CRISIS**

Cheviot will build **100%** affordable and social housing, in **circa fourteen weeks** at no capital cost and **without the need of the Local Authority to permanently dispose of the land**

FUNDING
£500 million with a further **£10 billion** is available

CAPACITY
5,000 homes will be delivered per year



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21st November 2017

BEATING THE TORIES ON BUSINESS

HOW LABOUR CAN WIN THE BATTLE FOR SME HEARTS AND MINDS AGAIN

SME4Labour held a roundtable discussion in Parliament about how the Labour Party can beat the Tories on business and re-establish itself as the party of - and for - small and medium-sized enterprise (SME) owners and workers. The session was kindly hosted by **Jack Dromey MP**, Shadow Minister for Labour. Shadow Secretary of State for Business **Bill Esterson MP** joined Mr. Dromey for the session. **Rehana Ameer**, councillor in the City of London and an SME owner, kindly chaired the event, and our panel of speakers featured **Hamish Sandison**, chair of Labour Business, **Simon Lydiard**, former civil servant, and **Emma Barnes**, owner of Wild Fawn jewellery.

Jack Dromey MP celebrated that business is now talking to Labour again after some period of distance, both because of the uncertainties around Brexit and Labour's impressive performance at the General Election, meaning Labour is perceived to be a government in waiting. He cautioned, though, that Labour needs to do more to win the business community's full support.

Bill Esterson MP spoke about how Labour is pro-business but against the type of "short-termist behaviour", such as in the City, that has blighted the UK's economy for too long. Mr. Esterson spoke about the challenges SME owners face – challenges such as late payments, business rates and lack of access to finance, and the injustice of the way banks treated SMEs in the wake of the financial crisis. He heralded the



2017 manifesto, developed in partnership with SMEs.

Hamish Sandison said that Labour needs to do three things: (1) bust the myth that the Tories are the party of business, (2) reposition Labour as the "natural party of business" (to paraphrase Harold Wilson), and (3) listen to business and go beyond traditional comfort zones on the doorstep. He said that businesses are frustrated with the Tories' inability to tackle the key issues facing them, such as the productivity gap and lack of investment, and noted that the Tories couldn't even produce their traditional letter from the 'captains' of industry at the 2017 general election. Labour, on the other hand, was able to do so.

Emma Barnes spoke about her eco jewellery business Wild Fawn, which consists of Emma herself plus two employees, and has been going for 3 years. She outlined a number of issues that her small business and the businesses of fellow jewellery makers face. These include the VAT threshold, which can deter some

businesses from expanding, and issues around competitiveness and the costs of imports.

Simon Lydiard, recently retired from the civil service, expressed concern that the big consultancy companies dominate Whitehall, locking out SMEs from key decision making. He said that the Coalition and Tory governments have had "no vision" to offer SMEs, just targets. Mr. Lydiard praised John McDonnell, saying he is one of Labour's best media performers in his role as Shadow Chancellor, arguing for an economy of sustainable investment and inclusive growth.

In the roundtable discussion after our panelists' speeches, we discussed how to talk to voters about business on the doorstep, how to challenge old prejudices about Labour being 'anti-business', how we should challenge the idea that small business and big business' interests always align, and why we should be championing good practice among businesses.



31st October 2017

THE TAYLOR REVIEW AND ITS FALLOUT

WHAT ARE THE IMPLICATIONS FOR THE FLEXIBLE ECONOMY?

SME4Labour held a fascinating forum in Westminster on the Taylor Review into modern employment practices. Commissioned and endorsed by the Prime Minister, in July Matthew Taylor published his far-ranging review into modern work. Covering everything from zero-hours contracts to re-forming employment law, the report has provoked significant debate. The event was kindly hosted by Bill Esterson MP and chaired by Philip Ross of Labour Business. Speaking at the event were Jack Dromey MP; Simon McVicker, Director of Policy and External Affairs at the Association of Independent Professionals and the Self-Employed (IPSE); Hannah Reed, Senior Employment Rights Officer at the Trade Union Congress (TUC); and Mark Glover, Founder and Chief Executive of the communications consultancy firm Newington. Review author Matthew Taylor of the Royal Society for the Encouragement of Arts, Manufactures and Commerce (RSA) joined us in the second half of the session to discuss his report and to address some of the criticisms that have been levelled against it.

Chair Philip Ross asked how should Labour respond to the changing workplace landscape, highlighting the positive use of 'worker-tech' in the Taylor Review and its potential to assist in organising the self-employed. Host Bill Esterson MP briefly spoke about his background in small business and said that Taylor was asking the right questions, even if not everyone agreed with all of his solutions. MP and veteran trade unionist Jack Dromey said that the Labour Party is pro-worker and pro-employer and that there is "no contradiction" in that at all. He stated that SMEs are the "backbone" of the economy and



Matthew Taylor

that Labour's plans in its general election manifesto – scrapping quarterly reporting for SMEs, a national investment bank with regional arms and so on – would be "transformative" and would greatly strengthen that backbone. Simon McVicker welcomed the Taylor review in highlighting much neglected issues around precarious employment but said that some issues remained undealt with. He spoke about IPSE's work with the Community union on the vulnerable self-employed.

Hannah Reed of the TUC said that TUC analysis shows that insecurity in the workplace is primarily driven not by technological changes, as is often claimed, but rather by political decisions that hit the poorest and most vulnerable hardest. She agreed that Taylor had made a "timely" and much needed contribution to the discussion about workers' rights and 'good work', and said that SMEs, the self-employed and trade unions are all workers and allies, and that they need to work more closely together in partnership.

Event sponsor Mark Glover outlined his company Newington's work with

taxi drivers in their struggle against Uber. Echoing Reed, Mr. Glover said that companies like Uber were less about technological developments and more about old fashioned exploitation and bosses cutting corners. He stated that "flexibility is used as an excuse for poor pay", and highlighted issues such as tax and social

profits.

Matthew Taylor said that he aimed to "nudge rather than shove" – so, for example, the review recommends a higher minimum wage for non-contracted hours (a "nudge") rather than abolishing zero-hour contracts altogether (which would constitute a "shove"). This, he said, would stop bosses shifting risk onto vulnerable workers while maintaining flexibility and dynamism in the economy. He argued for the right to request a permanent or fixed contract and transparency around the labour supply chain and criticised certain industries, giving the example of road haulage companies, where workers are vulnerable and exploited with bogus self-employment.



26th September 2017

SME4LABOUR AT CONFERENCE: BUILDING A PRO-BUSINESS REPUTATION

SME4Labour in partnership with LabourList, hosted an event at Labour Party Conference in Brighton entitled 'Labour's links with SMEs: building a pro business reputation'. SME4Labour Co-Chair Ibrahim Dogus was joined by Stephen Kinnock MP, Bill Esterson MP, Lola McEvoy of the Living Wage Foundation, and Labour Business Chair Hamish Sandison.

Bill Esterson MP kicked off the event, making the case for Labour as the party of small business. He spoke of the real uncertainties around Brexit, but stated that Labour is leading the way while the Tories dither and divide on the issue. He argued that Labour's manifesto was clear in its support of SMEs.

SME4Labour Co-Chair Ibrahim Dogus followed, arguing that we need to invest in SMEs to boost the wider economy. He made the case for greater innovation and that this has been stifled by years of Tory economic neglect, arguing only Labour has the ambition to embrace changes in the economy in a progressive way.

Lola McEvoy argued that low pay creates insecure consumers who don't buy as many goods and services as they otherwise would, making the pro-business case for the real living wage. She spoke of how effective campaigning can make the real living wage a reality and that procurement levers, making it more likely a company will win contracts if it pays the real liv-



ing wage, should be fully utilised. Stephen Kinnock MP reaffirmed that Labour is the party of fair competition, helping the little compete with the large, and that SMEs need better access to finance – access that has dried up in recent sluggish years. He argued for the national investment bank with regional arms, a key part of Labour's election manifesto. He said that SMEs are the answer to question of how we rebalance our economy, spark a modern manufacturing revolution and build a new kind of inclusive growth.

Hamish Sandison closed, arguing that we have to bust the myth that the Tories are a pro-business party. He said that Labour's excellent policies on health and education are also attractive for businesses – businesses thrive with healthy, productive, well-educated workforces.



19th July 2017

BEYOND BREXIT: SMES AND THE FUTURE OF THE BRITISH ECONOMY

SME4Labour held a roundtable discussion in the House of Commons on the role of SMEs in the British economy after Brexit. The event was chaired by Simon McVicker, Director of Policy and External Affairs at the Association of Independent Professionals and the Self-Employed (IPSE), and featured keynote speakers Stephen Kinnock MP and Martin McTague, National Policy Director of the Federation of Small Businesses (FSB).

Stephen Kinnock MP opened by speaking of the increasingly symbiotic relationship between politics and business, and how changes in the political landscape with Brexit would impact upon SMEs. He remarked that the big FTSE100 companies had their voices heard during the referendum last June, but that SMEs – whose voices would have been more relatable to ordinary voters, and whose interests differ to those of big business – were side-lined during the debate.

Mr. Kinnock noted that “all that glitters is not gold” – that while the economy may look okay on the face of it with increasing levels of employment, beneath the headlines lie serious, challenging, long-term structural issues, such as regional inequalities, over-reliance on the financial sector and poor levels of productivity. He posited that following the German model, with strong ties between regional banks and SMEs, would be a possible solution to these issues, and



that the state should do more to facilitate SMEs and start-ups.

Martin McTague agreed that the interests of SMEs differ to those of large, highly mobile corporations, and that their interests should be heard more clearly – hence the FSB’s role in persuading government to pursue the most business-friendly Brexit possible. Mr. McTague also spoke about the geographical imbalances within the British economy and argued that one of the key issues for SMEs in a post-Brexit settlement would be access to structural funds to redress this. He also argued that while most SME owners are aware

of the need for good regulation, there was a widespread perception at the time of the referendum that EU regulations were poorly designed and poorly implemented.

In the Q&A, Mr. Kinnock speculated whether politics would trump economics in the EU’s thinking with regards to a deal with the UK. He also said that Labour’s General Election manifesto contained some great ideas for SMEs - in particular the £250 billion transformation fund - and that he is currently endeavouring to build a cross-party “coalition of common sense” around Brexit with MPs from other parties.



18th May 2017

GENERAL ELECTION SMALL BUSINESS DEBATE

SME4Labour Co-Chair Ibrahim Dogus took part in the General Election Small Business Debate, organised by Enterprise Nation. The debate was lively, with Mr. Dogus sharing his perspectives and hearing the questions and concerns of the audience.

Mr. Dogus was joined on the panel by Matt Hancock, former Digital and Culture Minister and Conservative member of parliament for West Suffolk; Lord Monroe Palmer, Lords Spokesperson for SMEs for the Liberal Democrats; Rachel Collinson, Green Party Spokesperson for Business; and Ernie Warrender, Spokesperson for Small Business for UKIP.

The event was hosted by the founder of Enterprise Nation, Emma Jones.



23rd January 2017

IPSE AND SME4LABOUR DINNER

SME4Labour hosted a dinner for members of the Labour Party at the House of Commons in partnership with the Association of Independent Professionals and the Self Employed (IPSE).

SME4Labour Co-Chairs Ibrahim Dogus and Sonny Leong attended the event along with the principal directors of IPSE including Simon McVicker, the Director of Policy and Public Affairs. The event was hosted by Nick Brown MP with the aim of giving leading Labour MPs an opportunity to engage with small businesses, enterprises, the self-employed and independent professionals by identifying the Labour Party's priorities and policies for the small business sector.

The event was a resounding success and a productive dialogue was had over the course of the meal.

Alongside Nick Brown MP, other MPs in attendance included Rebecca Long-Bailey MP, Seema Malhotra MP, Jim Dowd MP, Toby Perkins MP, Jess Philips MP, Sharon Hodgson MP, Ian Lucas MP and Catherine McKinley MP, attesting to just how crucial the meeting was.



14th December 2016

IMPACT OF BREXIT ON SMES

SME4Labour organised a roundtable meeting involving MPs Chuka Umunna and Bill Esterson, attended by an audience of small and medium business owners. It was hosted in Committee Room 19 of the House of Commons and chaired by Ibrahim Dogus.

Chuka Umunna MP opened by firmly restating Labour's commitment to being the party of small business, demonstrated under the last leadership. Chuka brought up his own family connection to the cause, his father having run a market stall, and related several times to the experiences of business owners on Streatham High Road in his constituency. He made a three-point analysis of Labour's relationship with SMEs. The first was that Labour, being the party of the working people, had to back the businesses that provide the majority of private sector work in the country. Secondly, SMEs provide high streets and communities with their unique character, so support for them is a fundamental part of Labour's communitarian values. Finally, he pointed out that setting up a business is an act of challenging the market establishment.

Turning to the topic of Brexit, Mr. Umunna spoke about the failure of the Conservatives to even prepare a plan for a leave scenario, much



less carry through on one. Their failure to do so has been directly in conflict with the interests of small traders: the 21% fall in the value of the pound has had massively adverse effects for traders on Streatham High Road, where 28% of the produce is sourced from the EU (to say nothing of the produce sourced outside of it).

Bill Esterson endorsed all of Chuka's comments and added his own family experience - his grandfather ran a corner shop, along with Bill's own background having spent 15 years running his own business. He noted that in the three years since Chuka and others founded Small Business Saturday, millions more

people work in SMEs, and millions more pounds are spent in them. He mentioned that the Treasury's own analysis say as much as 60% of our trade is at risk if we revert to World Trade Organisation rules. He criticised the way the government sought a deal with Nissan, pointing out that the future cannot be made on a business-by-business deal basis: whole sectors are reliant on the outcome of negotiations which he added are now predicted to take five to ten years. It is in this context that Mr. Esterson believes that Labour should aim "not just to be the party of small business, but of all business".



8th November 2016

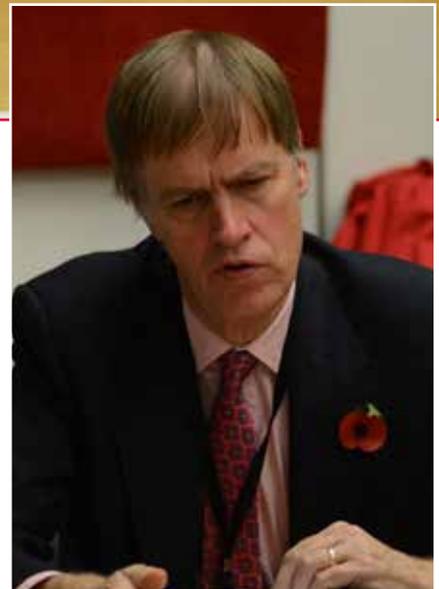
THE NEXT GENERATION OF ENTREPRENEURS

Stephen Timms MP hosted a roundtable discussion on how the Labour Party can create and win the support of the next generation of entrepreneurs. The event was chaired by Martin Howe of the SME4Labour Executive Committee, with keynote speakers Stephen Timms and Bill Esterson MP at Portcullis House.

Stephen Timms MP began by applauding the work of SME4Labour. He stated that the current government set-up doesn't seem to support SMEs in the way that it should, and that is a political opportunity for Labour. He argued that the tax system needs to reflect more and more the needs of people who set up businesses for themselves and that this was an agenda Labour needs to get right. Bill Esterson MP agreed that SMEs provide opportunities for criticism of government policy, and argued that on the topic of Brexit, business confidence is essential for success. He said that the loss of long-term foreign investment into the country will cause increasing problems over time and added that the result with Nissan is vaunt-



ed, but that it is a success with one company in one part of the country and definitely is not a plan. He argued that the target of 3 million apprenticeships is dangerous and that a rush will mean that there will be a loss of quality. He also stated that projections suggest there will be a deficit of 0.5 million jobs in intermediate and advanced-skilled areas including the construction sector.



16th May 2016

SME4LABOUR POLICY ROUNDTABLE



Labour members and politicians met to discuss the development of

Labour's policy on small and medium-sized enterprises.

27th April 2016

MEETING BETWEEN EMILY THORBERRY AND SME OWNERS



SME4Labour organised a meeting in Islington between SME owners and Emily Thornberry MP. There were SME owners from various backgrounds who raised their concerns and other issues while also advocating for the Labour Party to become the natural home of small businesses, and that it should do more to engage with them. The key issues raised were lending to small business, immigration issues for the workforce, high rents and



12th November 2015



NETWORKING LAUNCH IN PARLIAMENT

The first networking reception for SME4Labour, preceded the group’s widely anticipated official launch in Parliament the following January. Hosted by Bill Esterson MP, the event was well attended by 50 MPs and Councillors. The event started with an opening speech from the co-founder

of SME4Labour, Ibrahim Dogus, who highlighted what the group stands for. This was reinforced with a speech from the leader of the Labour Party, Jeremy Corbyn where he stated “the formation of this group, within the Labour party, is a very important step forward” and that SMEs “need to have equal ac-

cess to all the benefits of the welfare state and business system.” Angela Eagle MP expressed that a healthy relationship between the Labour Party and SMEs is essential because they can help to “craft our policies so that we can build a prosperous economy for the 21st century”.

12nd October 2015

BOOK LAUNCH WITH PETER HAIN



SME4Labour, along with Stephen Kinnock MP, held a discussion with Lord Hain about life in British politics and his book ‘Back to the Future of Socialism’. The book highlights what the future holds for the Labour Party and its members –

putting forward a profound alternative to the neo-liberal economic agenda. Lord Hain is best-known for being a prominent activist in the anti-apartheid campaign in South Africa during the 1970s and for his later role in the Northern Ireland

peace process. Having served the Labour Party for 50 years and been a cabinet member under both Tony Blair and Gordon Brown, Lord Hain is a true advocate for carrying through the policies brought in by the Labour Party.

WHAT DOES LABOUR'S MANIFESTO SAY ABOUT SMEs?

Our SMEs are the backbone of our economy, providing 60 per cent of private-sector jobs. Technological changes, like the spread of digital manufacturing and rapid communication, mean smaller, faster businesses will be the future of our economy.

Yet this Conservative Government has taken small businesses for granted. Labour is the party of small businesses. We understand the challenges our smaller businesses face. In order to provide the support many small businesses need, a Labour government will:

- Mandate the new National Investment Bank, and regional development banks in every region, to identify where other lenders fail to meet the needs of SMEs and prioritise lending to improve the funding gap.
- Reinstating the lower small-business corporation tax rate.
- Introduce a package of reforms to business rates – including switching from RPI to CPI indexation, exempting new investment in plant and machinery from valuations, and ensuring that businesses have access to a proper appeals process – while reviewing the entire business rates system in the longer run.
- Scrap quarterly reporting for businesses with a turnover of under £85,000.
- Declare war on late payments by:
 - Using government procurement to ensure that anyone bidding for a government contract pays its own suppliers within 30 days.
 - Developing a version of the Australian system of binding arbitration and fines for persistent late-payers for the private and public sectors.



Labour

We will also bring forward legislation to create a proper legal definition for co-operative ownership. The National Investment Bank and regional development banks will be charged with helping support our co-operative sector. Labour will aim to double the size of the co-operative sector in the UK, putting it on a par with those in leading economies like Germany or the US.

(For more, please read Labour's 2017 Manifesto, 'For the Many, Not the Few': <https://labour.org.uk/manifesto/>)



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CREATIVE ARTS INDUSTRY RECEPTION WITH TOM WATSON MP



LABOUR BUSINESS AND SME4LABOUR EVENT WITH YVETTE COOPER MP AND BILL ESTERSON MP



STEPHEN KINNOCK MP FUNDRAISER DINNER



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