

RETAIL AND CONSUMER HUB

Another (Half) Year, another Budget...

As from last week, the Budget timetable has now moved from Spring to Autumn. So, what news did the Chancellor deliver for R&C in the second Budget of 2017?

Increases in the National Minimum Wage will increase the cost base, particularly for retail businesses, though this may be offset to some extent by the fact that this, along with the increase in the personal allowance could benefit consumer spending power. Still on the subject of labour costs, many R&C businesses will await with trepidation the Government's response to Matthew Taylor's review of employment practices, which was announced as forthcoming.

Online selling platforms will need to pay even closer attention to VAT compliance by their users as HMRC will be given new powers to hold online marketplaces jointly and severally liable for evaded VAT. Conversely, this could help UK-based retailers (both online and offline) by levelling the playing field.

Takeaway businesses and coffee shops should keep a close eye on the forthcoming call for evidence on single use plastics. It seems likely that the single use carrier bag regime will be extended to impose charges on their use.

There were several developments of interest to the automotive industry. The Chancellor has said he wants the UK to be leading in the development of driverless technology and regulations requiring an operator to be on board during testing are set to be relaxed. In addition, the Chancellor has announced that the Government will invest in £200m into boosting the charging infrastructure for electric vehicles and that this will be matched by £400m of private investment. A new VED diesel supplement for new diesel vehicles registered from 1 April 2018 which don't meet emissions limits in real driving conditions is clearly intended to be a stick to ensure manufacturers up their game on real world emissions.

Last but by no means least: business rates. Retailers, in particular, will welcome the acceleration of the switch from RPI to CPI increases by two years. The Treasury has estimated that this change alone will save British business £2.3bn over the next 5 years. In addition, the frequency of revaluations will be increased so they occur every 3, rather than 5, years, which should make the system fairer overall.



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[This month's articles...](#)

[Autumn Budget 2017 – Retail and Consumer](#)

For a further analysis of the key budget points of relevance to those operating in the Retail and Consumer sector, please see our article [here](#).

[Government Review of FOBTs](#)

The Government recently concluded its eagerly-anticipated review into fixed odds betting terminals, known as "FOBTs". This article from our Corporate Finance team discusses the uncertainty faced by bookmakers as to the precise effect of the proposals in terms of future revenue likely to be generated by FOBTs. To read this article please follow [this link](#).

Trends in Transport – Drones

Addleshaw Goddard invites you to read the second in a series of spotlight articles discussing emerging Trends in Transport and Future Infrastructure. This month we are discussing the challenges and legal issues relating to the deployment of drones, deployment and the challenges ahead. Please find the article [here](#).

Events...

Governance Forum

The forum will focus on the proposed reforms to the UK's corporate governance regime and, in particular, the consultation on changes to the UK Corporate Governance Code and associated guidance which will be launched by the Financial Reporting Council either in November or early December 2017.

12 December 2017, 8:30 – 10:30 - London

18 December 2017, 9:00 – 11:00 - Manchester

18 December 2017, 16:00 – 18:00 - Leeds

25 January 2018, 16:00 – 18:00 - Edinburgh

[RSVP – Sophie Jennings](#)

Mock Employment Tribunal, Leeds

We are running a Mock Employment Tribunal on Wednesday 31 January 2018 in Leeds. This is an event for in-house employment lawyers, HR professionals and line managers alike, offering the opportunity to gain the experience of an employment tribunal in a safe environment. Delegates will be given packs to take away including the pleadings, witness statements and the relevant documentation relied on by the parties. The cost of this event is £99 plus VAT, and we are offering an early bird discounted rate of £49 plus VAT for any reservations placed on or before 15 November 2017.

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