

NEW WEST END COMPANY MEMBER BRIEFING: Government Changes and Impact on Key West End Policy Priorities

This week's various resignations from the Government have wider political implications which are likely to become clearer over the coming days and weeks. However, the replacement of the Chancellor who made the decision to end the **VAT RES and airline tax-free shopping** with Nadhim Zahawi is potentially good news for our campaign to restore tax-free shopping.

As MP for Stratford-upon-Avon, Zahawi actively supported tax-free shopping during the 2020 campaign to overturn the Treasury's decision.

However long his term as Chancellor lasts, we will attempt to raise this issue with him. At the very least, we will push for an independent assessment of the full impact of the decision as requested by the Tory Chairman of the Treasury Select Committee. Hopefully any review would continue under any future Chancellor.

Working with the **Association of International Retail**, we have a detailed plan in place to promote this position.

On **Sunday Trading reform**, there are two issues.

1. If there is a new Prime Minister, will he or she continue with the current legislative programme? It feels likely that, whatever happens, the Levelling-Up and Regeneration Bill will continue.
2. How will a new administration respond to our proposal to add to the list of exemptions in the 1994 Sunday Trading Act those stores in the two International Centres? On the one hand it is a good cost-free economic measure which generates an estimated net increase in sales of £350 million each year. On the other hand, it is a potentially controversial issue which may upset some Tory MPs at a time when a new PM would want to keep them happy.

Because of the order in which the Committee is considering this Bill, we have time before they reach the stage where our proposal could be introduced.

Clearly the politics of this week's events are far bigger than our particular issues. However, change provides new opportunities for us. Our proposals are low tax, revenue generating, cost free, growth promoting measures. The weekend will probably bring new developments. We will continue to monitor events and be prepared to move quickly on our proposals.