

Edinburgh Chamber of Commerce want the new Prime Minister to act immediately to help business

Liz McAreavey, Chief Executive of Edinburgh Chamber of Commerce, has set out her response to the news that Liz Truss has become the new leader of the Conservative party and will become the third woman Prime Minister on Tuesday after meeting the Queen at Balmoral.

Ms McAreavey said: "We would like to congratulate Liz Truss on becoming the UK's new Prime Minister.

"She must now take immediate steps to support the economy. The last few months have been difficult for everyone, time is running out and urgent action is needed to deal with the cost of doing business crisis.

"We believe the country has already entered a recession and that inflation will hit at least 14% in the months ahead.

"In particular businesses have been telling us of unsustainable rises in their energy bills and how difficult it is to find new fixed term contracts to buffer against further price hikes.

“Unless the new Prime Minister addresses these problems head-on then the economy will drift further into dangerous waters and the outlook for both businesses and consumers will be enormously difficult.”

Edinburgh Chamber of Commerce is backing a five-point action plan to support businesses at produces by British Chamber of Commerce at the end of August.

Liz added: “The plan is not just about ensuring support for businesses. It is also about protecting jobs, securing livelihoods, and creating a vibrant and prosperous society.”

The BCC five-point plan to support businesses includes the following measures:

1. Ofgem to be given more power to strengthen regulation of the energy market for businesses
2. Temporary cut in VAT to 5% to reduce energy costs for businesses
3. Covid-style support by introducing Government Emergency Energy Grant for SMEs
4. Temporarily reverse NICs and put money back into the pockets of businesses and workers
5. Government to immediately review and reform the Shortage Occupation List (SOL) to help bring down wage pressures and fill staffing vacancies