

**ACTION NOW:**

**GRAPHICS AND PRINT MEDIA INDUSTRY CALLS ON NEW PRIME MINISTER TO CAP INDUSTRIAL ENERGY COSTS, OR RISK MASS BUSINESS FAILURE**

The Graphics and Print Media Alliance (GPMA) is today calling on the new Prime Minister and Business Secretary to move rapidly to cap industrial energy costs. Without immediate action, say business leaders, viable businesses are at risk of being overwhelmed by unsustainable price rises and a breakdown of supply chain integrity. Saving businesses from the most vicious economic conditions in a generation must be a top priority in cabinet and Whitehall.

The sheer scale of recent cost increases cannot be overstated with some printing businesses seeing price rises of up to 600% in the last 12 months. Graphics and print media businesses have been left with a stark choice between seeking to increase prices for business customers and trying to absorb high levels of additional cost. It is clear that neither of these options is sustainable in the long-term, making it likely that costs passed onto consumers will both neutralise the impact of Government support for households and also result in business failures.

As recently recognised by the Confederation of British Industries (CBI), Energy Intensive Industries and SMEs – both of which are well-represented in the GPMA's membership – are particularly susceptible to the impacts of energy price rises. With printed products an integral part of many industries – from restaurant menus to pharmaceutical leaflets - and an important economic contributor in all regions, print is a key bellwether for the health of the UK economy.

Continued cost increases will inevitably result in substantial job losses and a sharp fall in business investment. It is time for the Government to acknowledge this reality take radical action to tackle a crisis which represents an existential threat for the UK's graphics and print media sector.

The GPMA looks forward to working with new Government ministers to rapidly implement a plan of action that will support the businesses most at risk. Measures we will look to discuss include:

- A cost containment mechanism to cap the cost of industrial gas and electricity, combined with urgent efforts to increase UK energy supplies for UK consumption.
- A long-term commitment to return UK industrial energy prices to the median of our EU competitors.

- The potential for sector-specific support to ensure that the good work done by the Government during the pandemic is not undone.
- The immediate announcement of a business rates freeze for 2023/24, reassuring businesses that they will not be hit with a further increase in rates that they can ill-afford.

In a joint statement, GPMA Chair and CEO of the British Printing Industries Federation, Charles Jarrold and Printing Industry Confederation CEO Bettine Pellant said:

“The Government’s primary concern is of course helping households most at risk. Yet an unavoidable consequence of unchecked cost increases for businesses will be ever-spiralling cost increases for consumers, potentially cancelling out the impact of Government support for individuals.

“It was hoped that 2022 would be the year that graphics and print media businesses could move forward and build back stronger: it is now clear that this will be impossible without urgent Government action to cap industrial energy costs. An unprecedented crisis demands unprecedented intervention.

“The new Prime Minister must move decisively to save jobs, save consumers money, and save our sector from an unsustainable blow. Inaction is no longer an option.”

## ENDS

*The Graphics and Print Media Alliance (GPMA) consists of trade associations representing companies operating in the graphics and print media industry supply chain. Between us, we represent an industry of over 7,500 companies, the majority of which are SMEs with an annual turnover of £14 billion which employs approximately 130,000 people. The objective of the GPMA is to represent the interests of companies operating in the printing industry supply chain.*

**Contact:** For any press or other inquiries, please contact Sebastian Cuttill, [sebastian.cuttill@ppa.co.uk](mailto:sebastian.cuttill@ppa.co.uk) or Carys Davis, [Carys.Davis@bpif.org.uk](mailto:Carys.Davis@bpif.org.uk)