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## New Investor Concierge Plan Aims to Rescue the UK's Global Financial Standing

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The Labour-led government is preparing to launch a “concierge service” aimed at making it easier for international firms to invest in the United Kingdom (UK). The initiative, designed to offer a single point of contact for navigating regulation, visas, and regional integration, comes as foreign direct investment (FDI) in the UK continues to slide compared to global competitors.

Chancellor Rachel Reeves is expected to formally announce the service in her upcoming Mansion House speech, describing it as a “single front door” for investors. The scheme, which will involve collaboration between the Office for Investment, the Bank of England, and regulators such as the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) and the Prudential Regulation Authority (PRA), aims to streamline engagement and encourage investment into financial services and regional economic centres. Yet many in the business community remain cautious, wary of another government promise without adequate follow-through.

According to the City of London Corporation, the UK’s share of international financial and professional services investment has declined by 4 per cent between 2017 and 2024. Reeves’ plan appears to take inspiration from investment-friendly jurisdictions like Singapore, where public-private coordination has boosted international confidence and attracted sustained economic inflows.

Alongside the concierge service, the Chancellor is expected to propose further modernisation of the UK’s capital markets, including scrapping paper-based share certificates in favour of a centralised electronic register. Sir Douglas Flint, chairman of investment firm Abrdn, is understood to support the digital overhaul, which aims to improve efficiency and global competitiveness.

Despite the headline-grabbing announcement, scepticism remains. Business leaders have voiced frustration over rising employer costs, including increases in National Insurance contributions, coupled with ongoing regulatory uncertainty. The British Chambers of Commerce has warned that confidence among small and medium enterprises (SMEs) is

waning, with many unconvinced the government will deliver meaningful reform beyond speeches and pilot schemes.

From a centre-right perspective, the concierge concept is sound in principle. Attracting investment requires more than gestures; it demands a stable tax environment, light-touch regulation, and a pro-growth agenda that's consistent across departments. While Labour may claim this move signals Britain is "open for business", it will ring hollow unless accompanied by real structural reform.

The UK cannot afford to fall further behind in the global race for capital. Without swift action to match words with outcomes, the city risks losing its edge, not through lack of potential, but through lack of political courage to see meaningful reforms through.