

From: infoswc
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To: Rachel Nowell
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Dear Rachel,

Welcome to the first Policy Update eshot of the South Wales Chamber of Commerce. Here you will find details of the latest Research and Surveys on issues that affect your business.

If you have any comments or questions relating to quality issues, please email policy@southwaleschamber.co.uk.

Also in the eshot:

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Research

British Chambers of Commerce: April tax hikes will add pressure on business cash flow

Business rates and fuel duty increased on Wednesday 1st April, while a transitional relief for commercial premises will end threatening to triple payments for some businesses. The changes will add even more pressure on the finances of companies struggling during the recession. Commenting, Director General of the British Chambers of Commerce (BCC), David Frost, said:

"It's not an exaggeration to say that some companies could go bust under the strain of the increase in business rates, fuel duty and the ending of transitional rate relief.

"At a time when businesses are facing the harshest financial challenge in a generation, they are being hit with a possible tripling of payments. "This doesn't make any sense in an economic downturn. It will be business that drives the UK out of this recession so I would urge government to find a way of supporting firms with these extra costs."

Overcoming Barriers to Trade

A new information booklet for businesses 'Trading in the Global Marketplace - How BERR can help' has been published by the Europe,

International Trade and Development Directorate.

The booklet outlines the services BERR provides to UK firms to help them trade with other countries and information on where firms can access general advice as well as where they can obtain more specific assistance to overcome barriers to international trade.

[Download the booklet](#)

Crime Against Business - What Businesses Need to Know

The Home Office and BERR have published the following documents offering guidance to businesses and local Crime and Disorder Partnerships on how to engage with one other. The documents also offer useful case studies of effective partnership engagements between the two groups.

[What businesses need to do](#)

[What partnerships need to know](#)

Surveys

Legal and General - Barriers in Business

Ten ipods to give away - win one by taking part in this quick five minute survey!

This research has been commissioned by Legal & General, to gain insight into business owners awareness of protection as a means of safeguarding against the loss of a business owner and key employees. The results will be used by the insurance industry to help raise overall awareness of the need and importance of business protection, as part of a business's day to day planning.

[Complete the survey](#)

Business Issues

BT Business - Late Payment Charges

In the autumn of 2008 a new penalty charge policy was introduced by BT, levying a 'late payment' charge of £10 per account where settlement is not made by the date stated on the invoice. The 11 day payment period is not new, however the penalty charge policy was introduced without warning.

The penalty charge policy has had minimum impact on businesses that pay by Direct Debit however there are major problems for those businesses that pay by cheque or BACS, which already attracts an unfair levy of £4.50 per account per quarter. Over recent months one Chamber Member has proven that out of the 11 days given to pay an invoice (which takes no account of non-working days) up to 5 of these days can be lost by the postal service. It is therefore wholly unreasonable for any business to meet the remaining deadline for payment to reach BT and is clearly unfair and contrary to reasonable business practice.

The BT Complaints Review Service rejected the complaint on the grounds that the late payment charge was introduced to encourage payment of bills and reduce costs incurred by BT in managing debt. Albeit an adequate response in explaining the reason for introducing the penalty charge policy to customers, however BT has failed to respond effectively to the fact that customers are being penalized for delays in BTs own internal posting of payments which could take up to 3 weeks!



Next Events

Wednesday 15th April

Junior Chamber Networking Event at One Caspian Point, Cardiff: 5.30pm - 7.30pm

An opportunity for young professionals to network with one another.

Cost: Members £17, Non-Members £25

[Book Now](#)



Tuesday 21st April

b2b breakfast at the TwentyTen Clubhouse, Celtic Manor Resort, Newport: 7.45 - 10.00am

Start the day one step ahead of the rest!

Cost: Members £17, Non-Members £25

[Book Now](#)

Thursday 23rd April

Budget Lunch in association with ktsowenstomas at the Park House Club, Cardiff: 12.30 - 3.00pm

Join us for exclusive commentary, an opportunity to quiz the tax team plus an assessment of the impact on Welsh business the day after the official Budget announcement. We will also host a question and answer session with economy expert, Professor Dylan Jones-Evans.

Cost: £20

[Book Now](#)

Thursday 23rd April

Thirsty Thursdays! at the Hard Rock Cafe, Cardiff: 5.30 - 7.30pm

We know that early mornings aren't everyone's cup of tea, so quench your thirst for networking at this new addition to the Chambers' calendar. An opportunity to network in relaxed surroundings and have a drink on us!

Cost: Members £11.50 Non-Members £17.25

[Book Now](#)

Courses

Many courses are accredited by the Institute of Leadership & Management, plus Welsh Assembly Government funding may be available.

- 1 April - Moving Past Conflicts
- 6 April - Managing Change: People & Process
- 7 April - Introduction To The Carriage Of Dangerous Goods
- 9 April - Essential Marketing Sills
- 9 April - Assertiveness For Managers
- 14 April - Effective Communication Skills
- 15 April - Winning Telesales Techniques
- 16 April - Time Management
- 22 April - Negotiating For Business Success
- 23 April - Comprehensive Guide To Export Procedures & Practice (Day 1)
- 27 April - HR For Line Managers
- 28 April - Comprehensive Guide To Export Procedures & Practice (Day 2)

For further details, contact Jenna Blake on 01633 242736 or email:

jenna.blake@centreforbusiness.co.uk.



Member News: Teimlo



FREE Mobile Marketing for Chamber Members

This is an exclusive offer for fellow Chamber Members providing one month of mobile marketing free - if you are looking for a new way of getting your message across, contact Sally at Teimlo today on 0845 258 5165 or via email at sally.hillier@teimlo.com.

[More details](#)



Member News: Lamia Corporate Vehicle Management Ltd



Citroen Berlingo First 1.6 HDI 75bhp van - Only 6 available

Special offer for Chamber Members - contract hire just £138 + VAT per month for 24 months.

Contact Gary Lindon on 02920 663047 or 07799 778500, email gary@lamiafleet.co.uk.

[More details](#)



Member News: St Davids Foundation Hospice Care

St Davids logo

Hospice Heights Challenge - Saturday 16th May 2009

As well as a good team building exercise and a great personal challenge, supporting the Hospice Heights Challenge can make a difference to many of our patients, by providing much needed care and assistance. The funds raised last year went a long way, helping us continue providing this vital service.

I hope you will choose to join us and also encourage your friends and colleagues to come along and take part, we hope to make this year's event an even bigger success. And with spaces filling up I would advise you to contact us asap to avoid disappointment.

To enter a team, or for further information please contact the fundraising department on 01633 2713664 or email fundraising@stdavidsfoundation.co.uk.

Thanks again for your continued support and I look forward to seeing you on the day.

Regards

Jonathan Cryer
Community Fundraiser
Email: jon.cryer@stdavidsfoundation.co.uk
Phone: 01633 271364 / 270980

Don't forget if you would like to comment on any of the Policy matters above, email policy@southwaleschamber.co.uk.

To book places at the events, please use the links provided or email info@southwaleschamber.co.uk.

Best wishes,
The team at South Wales Chamber of Commerce

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