



# PRESS RELEASE

For immediate release

**17 May 2010**

## SWCC National Recovery Conference

The South Wales Chamber of Commerce (SWCC) will be hosting its National Recovery Conference for Wales May 26<sup>th</sup> at UWIC and Paul Ragan - Channel 4's Secret Millionaire - will be chairing this key event.

Paul Ragan, also part of the Task and Finish Group, will be chairing the event to drive the National Recovery Plan for Wales (NRP) forward. The NRP looks at the key challenges facing Wales and what the private sector can do to aid in the economic recovery for Wales: rising unemployment, business competition, new manufacturing, growing business, supplier development and a falling economy.

The Task and Finish Group is driven by influential private sector businesses from a variety of industries within Wales, and accompanied by business support organisations with a strong influence on policy. The National Recovery for Wales Conference aims to discuss the key priorities, set out by the Task and Finish Group, with a number of representatives from a variety of industries.

Amongst the Task and Finish Group are Guy Jones, Director of Banking for RBS and Tim Williams, Chief Executive of Welsh Automotive Forum, Terry Hicks Managing Director of Hicks Logistics Ltd, Paul Ragan Director of Collateral Thinking, Matthew Prosser Commercial Director of Severnside Recycling, Richard Matthews Managing Director of Freshbaked, Professor Brian Morgan

Professor at Cardiff School and Management and Stuart Taylor Vice President of SWCC and Head of External Relations, Wales for Royal Mail Group Ltd.

During a series of meetings with the Task and Finish Group, they have outlined the following key priorities to discuss at the conference:

- Business Champion
- Finance and funding
- Business advice
- Regulation and red tape
- Infrastructure
- International trade
- Procurement
- Knowledge and skills

Once the Task and Finish Group have gathered further findings surrounding the key priorities from the different industries at the National Recovery Conference for Wales, a final Private Sector response will be produced and presented to WAG.

David Russ, Managing Director of the South Wales Chamber of Commerce, said: “Current private sector consultations to the WAG are so fragmented the message is often diluted, the aim of the conference is to bring the private sector together to collectively voice views and hammer home the knowledge and experience within the private sector that could contribute to many of the current economic problems we have in Wales.

“The conference will be an opportunity for members from different private sector industries to contribute to the plan and aim to make a real influence to the ‘decision makers’. Now is the time when we need to really concentrate on

developing the relationships between the public and private sector – it will after all be the private sector leading the way to recovering the economy.”

Paul Ragan, who will be chairing the National Recovery Conference for Wales, said: "This is a truly difficult time for Welsh commerce, and if ever a time existed in which private and public sector has to significantly improve its working relationship its now.

“There are many joint initiatives ongoing between these two sectors, yet we continue to under perform against the majority of other major towns and cities throughout the UK.

“The private sector as a whole is fed up with the bureaucratic and ineffective support for business growth in Wales, which is why we really do have to make a difference this time in agreeing a way forward. Failure to encourage growth of an entrepreneurial culture throughout Wales will simply mean a bleak outlook with less jobs leading to less wealth for Wales as a whole.

“This conference is aimed at consolidating the views of Welsh companies enabling us to recommend a strong plan to public sector on how we encourage budding entrepreneurs and businesses throughout Wales to become more successful. An achievement necessary rather than the current support mechanisms which often lack knowledge and dampen spirits therefore stifling growth rather than encouraging it - the league tables speak for themselves!"

**Ends**

### **Notes for editors**

Photo caption from left to right, back to front: Stuart Taylor, Tim Williams, Guy Jones, Professor Brian Morgan, Terry Hicks, Matthew Prosser and Matthew Richards.

The National Recovery Plan for Wales can be viewed via the South Wales Chamber of Commerce website [www.southwaleschamber.co.uk](http://www.southwaleschamber.co.uk).

The South Wales Chamber of Commerce is the ultimate business network in South Wales and now incorporates the West Wales Chamber of Commerce. The chamber exists to provide a regional voice and offer support to businesses pan South Wales.

Since merging with the West Wales Chamber of Commerce, the South Wales Chamber of Commerce now represents over 1000 businesses and 100,000 employees.

For more press information please contact Laurian Corner at the South Wales Chamber on 01633 242715 or [laurian.corner@southwaleschamber.co.uk](mailto:laurian.corner@southwaleschamber.co.uk)