

Tourism support – are the recent changes to SWT and DMOs helping? Your comments please.

Help tell the Government how it is! Bad news sells papers, but is business really that bad? Please tell us yes, no and how so we can keep Government and others properly informed.

New rules for bringing in staff from outside the EU – information of particular interest to care homes and hospitality.

TPS – telephone preference service – thanks for the feedback and information as requested
Green issues – do they help or hinder your business staffing – tell a SW conference all about it

Passionate about green issues? Gain recognition for your work with an award

Looking for investment behind a ‘green’ idea? Maybe Shell Springboard can help

Tourism support – are the recent changes to SWT and DMOs helping? Your comments please.

Tourism is vital to the SW economy and over the last few years there have been a few changes in how it is run and promoted.

The SW Policy unit would be very interested in evidence from you on how things have changed and whether the changes have been for the better.

We are particularly interested in your feedback on how South West Tourism (SWT) and Destination Management Organisations (DMOs) are operating.

Comments as usual to Vivienne.rayner@fsb.org.uk

Help tell the Government how it is!

Once every three or four months, the FSB and other Business Organisations meet with senior SW Civil servants to discuss the economy and specific issues of concern. We would be grateful to hear about any of the following in relation to your own business:-

Consumer spending, Business investment decisions and projects
Imports/exports, Manufacturing, Construction and Housing, Services,
Staff – are you recruiting or making people redundant?

Are you working at full capacity or are there gaps in your order book?

Labour costs – National Minimum wage goes up to £5.73 from October 1st – will this affect you?

Do you have any thoughts about the figure for 2009? Note a 5% increase will take the top rate to just over £6 per hour.

What is happening with your other costs?

What is happening with your prices?

And anything else that is affecting you or your business.

Information to Peter Ashton, SW Policy Chairman please at peter.ashton@fsb.org.uk by October 1st at the latest.

New rules for bringing in staff from outside the EU

Members have been asking about new rules for employing staff from outside the EU.

Full details can be found at: - <http://www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk/employers/>

Under the points-based system, employers will need a sponsor licence to bring in skilled or temporary workers from outside the European Economic Area or Switzerland.

The new system starts in November, but you are recommended to apply for a sponsor licence by 1 October if you want to be ready to employ skilled and temporary workers as soon as it starts.

TPS – telephone preference service

Many thanks for all the e-mails about problems with TPS. It was very good to hear from people for whom it worked well – thanks for getting in touch.

Checking the TPS website, I found that companies need to register annually to maintain their TPS status. There was also useful stuff on pre recorded messages and on silent calls. Find it at <http://www.mpsonline.org.uk/tps/>

Meanwhile we will be working to see if anything can be done about the callers from abroad and the inevitable cowboys – many thanks

Green issues – impact on staff

Do you know of anyone who is passionate about 'green' issues or runs a business offering "green" products or has experience of trying to become "greener" in the locality?

A Devon member, Chris Reader is organising a conference for November 5th 2008 at the Eden Project, currently called: - The Environment and People Management

They are looking at sustainable development, "greening" the workplace and how such policies can affect recruitment and retention of staff. Our audience will primarily be Human Resource practitioners in the region.

If you can help, please get in touch at info@crhr.gb.com

Passionate about green issues? Gain recognition for your work with an award

If you think your business deserves recognition for its outstanding environmental excellence and leadership, why not enter the Business Commitment to the Environment (BCE) Environmental Leadership Awards.

These Awards are the most prestigious environmental awards in the UK. Led and sponsored by business, they are among the easiest to enter and the hardest to win.

To apply for the 2009 Awards visit the BCE website today to download an application form and apply via email. The closing date for applications is Friday 3 October 2008.

Application to the Awards is free of charge.

We wish you well with your application.

Tel 0870 190 6053

email bce.awards@aeat.co.uk

website www.bceawards.org

Looking for investment behind a 'green' idea? Maybe Shell Springboard can help

Each year a number of businesses are awarded between £20,000 and £40,000 to help develop their 'green business idea. The number of awards depends on the quality of the applications.

So if you see reducing greenhouse gases as a business opportunity, and have a good idea that just needs a financial boost, check out the Shell Springboard website at <http://www.shellspringboard.org/home/>

The closing date for applications is midnight on Friday 7th November 2008

Vivienne Rayner
18th September 2008