

Many thanks for all of you who are replying to the monthly credit crunch survey – I am trying to respond to you all, but it is taking time. Your help in this is very much appreciated.

This month's newsletter is slightly shorter than usual – but includes information on rates, on tax, on funding for rural businesses and the next SW Study day.

Tax – Spread the Tax - Contact the support line for help NOT your local office.

Diary Date – Sunday, June 14th - how to get your local council to buy more locally

Rates, Revaluation, transitional relief and material change – what is going on

Funding for Rural Businesses – help available and how to get it

Tax – Spread the Tax - Contact the support line for help NOT your local office.

FSB members have been 100% happy when asking to spread their tax through the HMRC's Business Support line. However, we are starting to hear of members who have spoken to their local office instead. Sadly the local office has either given them a dusty reply or ignored their request.

We will be taking this up nationally and if you have been affected in this way, please let me know at Vivienne.rayner@fsb.org.uk

If you need to 'spread your tax' then see below.

The Tax man says:-

So if you're worried about being able to meet tax, National Insurance, VAT or other payments owed to HM Revenue & Customs, or you anticipate that payments coming due will cause you problems, you can call the Business Payment Support Line below seven days a week.

HMRC staff will review your circumstances and discuss temporary options tailored to your business needs, such as arranging for you to make payments over a longer period. They will not charge additional late payment surcharges on payments included in the arrangement, although interest will continue to be payable on those taxes where it applies.

Please note: The Business Payment Support Line is for new enquiries only.

Tel 0845 302 1435

Open Monday - Friday 8.00am to 8.00 pm, Saturday and Sunday 8.00 am – 4.00 pm.

<http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/pbr2008/business-payment.htm>

Diary Date – Sunday, June 14th - how to get your local council to buy more locally

Last year we started to organise 'Study Days'. As their name suggests, they are to help members find out more and improve their lobbying skills on particular issues.

On June 14th, we are holding a 'Study Day' to help members lobby their local councils on buying more from local businesses. This will include information of reasons why councils should buy more locally as well as how they can make it easier for local businesses to sell to them. We will also have some examples of how FSB members have already changed the way their local council operates.

The day will include practical exercises as well as speakers and discussions.

It will NOT be a training session on how to sell to local councils.

Each branch will be invited to send 2 delegates. Formal papers will go out direct to Branch Chairmen and Secretaries very shortly.

The date will be Sunday, June 14th at Kenn, on the outskirts of Exeter – why not let your other half take the family to the beach?

Rates, Revaluation, transitional relief and material change.

Some members will have been getting 'transitional relief' and will have noticed that this has finished from 1st April 2009 and in bills now being received. Every time business premises are revalued, the rateable value for some increases and for others it goes down, reflecting relative changes in rental values in the market. Transitional relief (TR) is a way of 'smoothing out' these changes. However transitional relief adjustments have stopped for 2009/2010 rates bills, as otherwise it would have caused difficulty to the new transitional relief scheme for the 2010 rateable value and rates payable from 1st April 2010.

Because of the number of comments we have been getting from members about the loss of transitional relief, the SW Policy Unit has asked that the FSB nationally debate it as a matter of urgency. Please send your comments and experiences to Vivienne.rayner@fsb.org.uk

I have written an information sheet on the whole subject – to read it, just go to the link below

<http://www.fsb.org.uk/policy/rpu/sw/assets/business%20rates,%20revaluation%20and%20material%20change.pdf>

Funding for Rural Businesses – help available and how to get it

The following businesses can get help from the Rural Development Programme for England (RDPE).

1. The agricultural sector - farmers (including horticulture), foresters and food businesses
2. Micro enterprises in rural areas – ie businesses employing 9 or less.
3. Social and community enterprises in rural areas

A Rural area is defined as small towns (up to 10,000 population), villages and their surrounding areas.

Help is available under the following headings:-
Skills development

Social enterprise
Business support
Supply chain and adding value
Resource management (soil, water, energy, waste)
Sustainable rural tourism
Biodiversity and landscape
Community-led development (i.e. Local Action)

The first step to accessing the Programme is to log an enquiry with Business Link by calling 0845 600 9966. You will then be asked to complete an outline proposal form to explain what you want to do.

The guidance notes will be updated as the Programme evolves and therefore you must ensure that you are using the most recent version of this document. The link below takes you to the guidance notes and other information.

<http://www.sw-ruralgateway.info/downloads/document.asp?lang=&documentid=2025&>

As ever your comments and feedback on this programmes and supporting information would b much appreciated – contact Vivienne.rayner@fsb.org.uk

As always, your comments and feedback on these or any other matters taht affect your business are very welcome – please email Vivienne.rayner@fsb.org.uk

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