

STREETS

Ahead

STREETS
CHARTERED ACCOUNTANTSSTREETS
TAXSTREETS
FINANCIAL CONSULTING PLC

Issue 46

Survive and flourish

By Paul Tutin, Chairman and Managing Partner



Paul Tutin

Very often your accountant is your most trusted adviser and it is important that there is a close working relationship between us and our clients. Whilst increasingly routine compliance work, including year end accounts, audit and tax compliance need

to be completed in an expedient manner, more and more of our valued work with clients centres around helping them to attain a sustainable and thriving business. Many of our clients have been fortunate not to have previously faced conditions like those we face today. The question, however, is "How do we deal with this now?" Fortunately the longevity of Streets means we are better placed than many others to provide advice and support to our clients in these difficult times.

In this issue of 'Streets Ahead' we have set out to provide you with useful articles and advice aimed at supporting individuals and businesses to deal with the variety of challenges they now face. Our focus is centred on the issues underlying any business, including cash management, marketing, staffing and planning for the future.

We are aware it is increasingly difficult for clients to access funding whether it is working capital or capital expenditure and expansion. We cover this in two of our articles which highlight support available from the more traditional sources as well as government backed initiatives.

It is difficult for any of us to predict when things will start to improve; we see our role as focusing on what we can do for clients now and in particular providing advice on:

- Minimising your business and personal tax liabilities.

- Making the most of capital allowances.
- Tax efficient remuneration.
- The best way to extract profit from your business.
- Protecting capital and creating wealth tax efficiently.
- Strategic planning and business advice.
- Working with you and other professional advisers to help you achieve your goals.
- Helping you to look at cost control and improving profitability.
- Providing you with proactive advice and information to help you deal with issues and situations you face.

We believe that our approach will support our clients and they will be better placed to take advantage of the inevitable upturn. We trust our approach will truly earn us the enviable title of your 'Most Trusted Adviser'. ■

Venture UK is a picture of success



It has been more than a snapshot of success for Hull based Venture UK franchisee, Angie Baynes. Since taking on her first Venture UK lifestyle photography franchise in York in 2003, Angie has gone on to open a second franchise in Hull and has now earned the enviable title as National Franchisee of the Year 2008. ■

RICS Annual Dinner



Streets were headline sponsors of the Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors Lincolnshire Association Annual Dinner. Pictured (centre right) is the main speaker Marianne Suhr, a Chartered Building Surveyor who also co-presented BBC2's 'Restoration'. ■

Huntingdonshire Business Awards



Pictured above (third from right) is Streets' Chairman and Managing Partner, Paul Tutin, with the Streets' sponsored Business of the Year award winners from 'The George Hotel and Brassiere', Buckden. ■

In this issue...

Tax planning in a recession [page 2](#)Funding opportunities for businesses [page 3](#)Cash is king [page 3](#)Grant for East Midlands businesses [page 5](#)Marketing in an economic downturn [page 5](#)

Know your customer and beat the bad debt

By Amanda Legate, Director



Amanda Legate

It will not come as a surprise that a good percentage of small and medium sized businesses have reported an increase in the length of time their customers are taking to pay. In order to keep your business ahead of the game, it is essential you

operate an efficient and effective management of your customers from the very start of the relationship.

Know your customer

- Ensure you are clear about the exact name and legal status of your customer.
- Verify your customer through various identity checks including Companies House and headed paper.
- Use a credit-rating professional to provide further checks and details on the credit status.
- Ask suppliers for further references.

Terms

- Ensure it is clear from the outset what is expected of your customer.
- Always ensure your terms of payment are set out clearly from the start.
- Ensure customer orders do not include any amendment to the terms already laid down to them.

Invoicing

- Ensure goods and services have been provided prior to the raising of an invoice.
- Ensure invoicing is produced on a timely basis.
- Ensure invoicing is clear, concise and accurate (including addressee).
- A disputed invoice cannot be paid in full so it is important to address any issues arising promptly.

Payment

- Telephone before a substantial invoice is due for payment to confirm the business will be in a position to settle the debt.
- Make immediate contact with the customer if payment does not arrive on time.
- Be clear about what is expected and remind the customer of the terms of payment.
- Set out consequences for non-payment.
- Consider offering an incentive for prompt payment.
- Do what you say you are going to do, when you say you are going to do it.

Remember that incidents of late payment cost your company essential cash flow, waste valuable working hours and reduce profits. ■

Tax planning in a recession

By Richard Couchman, Tax Partner



Richard Couchman

It has been almost two decades since the UK last experienced a recession. As such, this is new territory for many new businesses and an unwelcome reminder of bad memories for those who have seen it all before. How deep and prolonged the recession will be is uncertain but opinion is generally becoming more pessimistic.

Many businesses are now considering what action should be taken to see them through these difficult times and some have already taken steps to improve or maintain business performance. Such recession planning should include consideration of tax issues and this article covers some of the more important issues for businesses and individuals.

Reviewing payments on account

For unincorporated businesses the next payment of income tax is due on 31 July 2009. If profits for the period ending in the year to 5 April 2009 are known to be, or are expected to be, less than the profits for the previous year then it is likely that this payment can be reduced and thereby assist with cash flow. It may also be possible to reclaim part of the tax already paid at the end of January.

Businesses struggling to pay agreed tax liabilities which cannot be reduced should contact the Business Payment Support Service on 0845 302 1435. Feedback from our clients who have already contacted this helpline has been positive.

As always it is better to contact the tax office if you are having problems paying your tax before they contact you.

Incorporation

Unincorporated businesses should also consider trading through a company. This can still save a substantial amount of tax and may also enable payments on account to be reduced.

Time to change accounting date?

Again this may be of interest to unincorporated businesses but this time limited to those who have year ends which are not 31 March or 5 April. By extending your accounting period you may be able to utilise valuable overlap relief that was created when your business first started trading. This may reduce your taxable profits. The advantages of this will depend on your level of profits now compared to the profitability when your overlap relief was generated.

Goodwill amortisation

If goodwill was acquired after April 2002 then a tax deduction may be available for the write down of this asset. In increasingly difficult times there may be a case for reviewing the rate of write down

which could accelerate the tax relief. The rules on the deduction of goodwill are complicated and advice should always be sought before claiming a deduction.

Worthless shares

Are shares owned which are now worthless or virtually worthless? For quoted shares a negligible value claim can be made to generate capital losses which can be used against capital gains. If the shares are in an unquoted trading company then an income tax loss may be available. 'Unquoted' includes shares quoted on the AIM stock market.

Similarly irrecoverable loans made to a company may generate a capital loss. If loans are still recoverable but trading conditions are likely to be tough for the company then it might be possible to take action to ensure that any future loss qualifies for an income tax deduction provided that this is considered at an early stage.

Shares standing at a loss

The great majority of individuals holding shares in quoted companies will have at least some of their holdings standing at a loss compared to the original cost, particularly those holding shares in banks, house builders or insurance companies. It may be worth selling those shares in order to crystallise the losses which can be offset against other gains made in the year or carried forward against future gains. Care should be taken to ensure that the losses do not simply reduce gains made in the current tax year that are already covered by the annual exemption (£9,600 for 2008/09) and of course any disposals should be made as part of an overall investment strategy.

Extraction of funds

Owner managed companies should consider how remuneration is paid or surplus funds extracted from the company. Salaries and bonuses can be tax efficient in some circumstances but often payment of dividends or loans from an Employee Benefit Trust can ensure more tax efficient extraction which can reduce the cost to the business of extracting the same net income.

Company cars

Second-hand car values have seen a sharp decline in recent months. This may enable owner managed companies to transfer cars into personal ownership to reduce income tax and national insurance payable on benefits in kind. However, there are many other factors to take into account when looking at this course of action. Consideration should also be given when acquiring new cars as to whether company or personal ownership is more tax efficient. Do not forget that those tempting discounts offered by dealers are ignored when working out the benefit in kind for a company car. ■

Cash is king

By Mark Bradshaw, Partner

At these times of recession it really is a time for owners and managers of small and medium sized businesses to review their cash management procedures. So what can a business do at this time to improve cashflow?



Mark Bradshaw

Talk to the bank before doomsday arrives – this is no time for 'burying your head in the sand'. Open a dialogue with your bank manager at an early stage and provide him with cashflow forecasts which indicate your borrowing requirements. This may result in an extension to your overdraft which could enable the company to deal with a short term cashflow shortfall.

Tighten up on debt collection – if business is quiet then use some of the spare capacity to communicate with your customers. Whilst they will probably be finding times tough as well, you can make sure you are at the top of the list when funds become available.

Prioritise your creditors – there will always be suppliers who must be paid on time e.g. landlords, but you may be able to defer others. Review your aged creditor list and consider which payments can be deferred.

Delay paying your tax – businesses could be faced with liabilities for quarterly VAT, PAYE year end, Class 1A NI and corporation tax during the next few months. This may be too much for working capital to finance so you should discuss these liabilities with the Revenue and agree a payment timetable. They are generally amenable to such arrangements so it makes sense to take advantage of this opportunity.

Reduce your drawings – now may be the time to consider the level of remuneration you draw from the company. If you have savings which you can access easily then perhaps this will be a better option than raiding the business bank account.

Organise your VAT affairs – is the business making the most of the schemes available to smaller businesses? For example businesses with a turnover of less than £150,000 could take advantage of the flat rate scheme for VAT accounting and those with a turnover of less than £1.35m could benefit from accounting for VAT on a cash basis which ensures VAT is only paid over once monies are paid or received.

Times are extremely tough out there with expectations that this will continue throughout 2009. As ever with economic downturns only the fittest will survive but the benefits of survival could be significant as competitors fall by the wayside. During this transitional period cash management will be crucial and could be the difference between success and failure. ■

Funding opportunities for businesses

By Robin Lee, Partner

The recession has undoubtedly meant there is less capital available for the banks to lend. This has compounded the problem in various ways, whether it is fewer sales or customers taking longer to pay or suppliers cutting back on credit limits.



Robin Lee

Reviewing the way you finance your business is vital

It is surprising how many businesses rely on only limited sources of finance, namely a bank overdraft or business loan together with their own capital.

There are, however, a number of alternative sources of finance that may be worth considering, including customer invoice financing and asset backed lending. These are both widely available from the High Street banks and can help provide additional funding and reduce the finance cost.

Government help

The government have recently launched a range of initiatives aimed at supporting businesses in these challenging times.

The Business Payment Support Service from HM Revenue and Customs (0845 302 1435) can reschedule VAT, PAYE and Corporation Tax debts falling due. This can prove vital in alleviating

immediate cash flow pressure while an extended long term plan is drawn up.

Secondly, the government have made £3billion of additional funds available to businesses through the SME Regional Funds with £250million additional lending made available to reach regions in England, Wales and Scotland. The fund has been developed to provide highly flexible facilities to suit the needs of business and is accessed through RBS/NatWest.

For many viable businesses, seeking funding in the absence of security can be a real problem. Recognising this, the government have made additional funding available under the Enterprise Finance Guarantee Scheme (EFG), a hybrid of the more widely know Small Firms Loan Guarantee Scheme, SFLG. Unlike the SFLG, the EFG can be used to refinance an existing loan to free up working capital and loans are available from £1,000 to £1million for most business sectors and activities including asset purchases, business expansion and acquisitions.

Take time to plan

To secure additional funding from any source, businesses will need to demonstrate clearly that they know exactly where they currently stand and have a sound sense of future direction. Consequently, it is very important to ensure you have good quality up to date financial information and that future plans are realistic and affordable. Well prepared forecasts are a prerequisite for the bank's consideration of new or additional finance. The involvement of your accountant can be invaluable, not only with the preparation but also structuring and negotiation of a successful deal.

This recession will eventually end (all do). Businesses which take time now to evaluate and plan their future finances should emerge in a very strong position to reap maximum reward from the market upturn. ■

A more dignified approach to divorce

By Linda Lord, Partner



Linda Lord

Divorce is a stressful experience for anyone but, for those of you with a business which provides the family with the main source of income, divorce has even more ramifications. Sound advice from your accountant at

the very outset could help you get through one of the most difficult stages of your life with as much dignity and retaining as much of your hard earned wealth as possible.

The chances are you have a marital home, some cash in the bank, perhaps a few investments to varying degrees, but your main asset is probably your business. If your divorce goes to court your business will very likely be valued by an independent valuer and be taken into account along with your other assets in deciding a settlement figure and future maintenance.

But should your business be taken into account in your divorce settlement at all? There are lots of factors that the court will take into account in this respect, including whether the business was in existence before the marriage, whose money has been used to fund the business and what input each party has had into the business.

This is an area where we can help you clarify your situation in order to furnish your solicitor with the facts at the outset which should help to shorten the process and ensure accurate disclosure to the opposite side.

Maintenance will always be payable for children until an agreed age and this will be partly dependent on whether they continue into further education. Most of us do not have an issue in providing adequately for our children and would expect to do so whether within a marriage or not, but good advice will help to ensure that maintenance is reasonable and not excessive.

For the spouse, however, it can be very dangerous to agree maintenance indefinitely as you never

know where your life will take you and open ended maintenance agreements can lead to claims from ex-spouses on future increases in wealth.

It is definitely worth trying to agree a capital payment on divorce and having a "clean break" with no further future claim possible. If you think it's hard to part with a large capital sum at the point of divorce, consider how you would feel if you had to pay out some 20 years later when you have made a lot of money from your business and have a new spouse...believe me, it can happen if you don't get that "clean break" at the outset!

Again, this is an area where your accountant can help you by establishing affordability of maintenance and how best to meet any ongoing commitments or realise a lump sum in order to pay the spouse off.

The most important advice I can give is to surround yourself with good advice! Remember... Good advice is cheap, bad advice can cost you a fortune! ■

VAT Update

HMRC help is available during the credit crisis

By Alan Taylor, VAT Partner



Alan Taylor

It is often the tax or VAT bill that causes the biggest worry for businesses. HMRC is to be congratulated for setting up the Business Payment support service. Anyone who has dealt with the normal debt management unit in connection with a VAT debt

for instance will appreciate a more enlightened approach from the authorities.

Whilst default interest charges will continue to apply, the new dedicated unit appears to be more flexible in relation to arranging for arrears to be paid. If you are having problems in meeting your tax or VAT bill you should consider approaching this specialist unit in order to set up a payment timetable that is realistic and affordable.

The unit promises a more sympathetic approach than has traditionally been available to taxpayers as a response to the trying times that businesses face today. Details can be found on the HMRC website at <http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/pbr2008/business-payment.htm> ■

Reduced VAT rate and the Flat Rate Scheme

The lowering of the standard rate of VAT to 15% for a year or so appears to have had little impact on the business community as a whole. Whilst some have passed on the reduction to customers, incurring significant expense in the process, many retailers have continued with existing price levels and so increased their profit margin for a period of time.

HMRC announced the revised percentage rates applicable following the rate change for those persons using the flat rate scheme. The scheme greatly simplifies the completion of VAT returns and can even reduce the overall VAT bill but the full implications should be fully appreciated before anyone chooses to utilise the flat rate scheme.

Not only might VAT be due on income that did not attract VAT in the first instance, such as residential letting income, but people have been caught out where they trade outside of the UK and have found VAT to be due on sales to Europe and beyond. Additionally, HMRC has taken the opportunity to 're-assess' some of the applicable rates. Readers ought not to be surprised to realise that this is code for increasing the VAT that is now payable. Whilst it would have been impossible for the changes to be absolutely reflective of the impact of the

recent rate change there is no doubt that HMRC has taken advantage of this to increase the revenue take from the flat rate scheme. For instance, the amount payable by lawyers has decreased only marginally from 13% to 12% and some rates have not decreased at all such as public houses. If you are using the flat rate scheme, are you aware of the rate now applicable and is the scheme still advantageous? ■

On-line submission of VAT returns

All new businesses and all but the smallest of existing businesses will have to submit VAT returns on-line and pay their VAT liabilities the same way by April 2010. At present, only around 14% of VAT returns are filed on-line. HMRC withdrew business reply envelopes late last year and whilst this is thought to have persuaded a few more businesses to file on-line the switchover to on-line filing has been slower than expected. It is not all bad news, as filing and paying on-line can be convenient and payment on-line may also reduce the risk of incurring default surcharges. ■

Turnaround Grant for East Midlands businesses

Help for businesses experiencing difficult trading conditions, directly due to the current economic climate, is available through a special East Midlands Development Agency funded Turnaround Grant.

The Turnaround Grant programme, managed by Business Link in the East Midlands, is intended to wholly or partly fund the cost of specialist support to address financial, and/or legal and/or personnel issues and/or strategic issues identified by the business link diagnostic or by in depth analysis by a specialist.

The offer

The grant is offered in either one or two stages with an investment of £1,500 towards the cost of a business turnaround expert. The balance of £8,500 is available for a potential Business Transformation Project where further qualifying criteria are met.

The stage one grant is awarded at a 100% intervention level up to a maximum of £1,500 and may cover a number of days of turnaround specialists' time or HR experts or professionals such as solicitors and accountants acting as a team or called in by a lead specialist with the agreement of the client. This is included in the application process to facilitate the immediate turnaround up to the maximum grant limit. Combined with the initial Information Diagnostic and Brokerage (IDB)

diagnostic this investment may form the basis for further Business Transformation Grant (BTG) funding at stage two.

Stage two reverts back to normal BTG support conditions and intervention rates up to an overall limit of £10,000 - the cost of the turnaround stage one will be deducted from this amount.

Eligibility

The Turnaround Grant may be accessed by businesses experiencing one or more of the following financial indicators caused by changes in the market place, due to external factors such as the credit crunch or economic downturn.

- Loss of a major contract leading to a critical drop in turnover and threatening the short term liquidity of the business.
- A significant customer fails leaving a large bad debt threatening the short term liquidity of the business.
- Withdrawal of planned funding or an existing bank facility.
- Business turnover is on a falling trend or business is making losses on a consistent basis threatening

the short term liquidity of the business.

- Business is overtrading and has excessive borrowing or is under-financed.
- Business debtor days are increasing and cash collection is difficult.
- Business is slow or late in paying suppliers' invoices or is using delaying tactics.
- Business overdraft is steadily increasing or continually operating at the top end of the overdraft limit.
- Business is receiving an increasing number of final demands and writs from suppliers.
- Business has escalating VAT and PAYE arrears.
- Business has received a statutory demand for payment.

Streets is accredited by Business Link in the East Midlands to carry out work under the Turnaround Grant scheme and also other grant schemes on behalf of businesses and to provide business advice and consultancy.

For further information on the Turnaround Grant and the application process please complete the freepost response card. ■

Successful marketing in an economic downturn

By James Pinchbeck, Marketing Director



James Pinchbeck

Traditionally in times of economic downturn there has been a tendency for businesses to cut their marketing budget. Evidence, however, shows that those businesses that maintain and possibly even increase their marketing activity fare

much better overall and are, in many cases, better placed to prosper on the upturn.

The heart of any marketing plan must be based on understanding why your customers buy from you, in terms of products and service, and to deliver on this. By meeting and even exceeding customer expectations you are more likely to get repeat and referral business; the other key upside is you are more likely to be paid. Treat the easy but often fatal approach of price discounting with caution; maintaining margins and value is as important as ever. It is much better to look at reviewing your product offer to achieve cost reductions and safeguard margins than to reduce prices. Price discounting or discount offers should only

really be used as short term promotional initiatives aimed at achieving a specific marketing objective.

Focus on existing customers. It is not uncommon for businesses to focus the greatest percentage of their marketing spend on winning new business as opposed to that of retaining or developing existing customers. The untapped sales and profit potential of an existing customer base can be significant, with costs invariably much cheaper and easier than that of attracting a new customer. Within the marketing profession it's claimed that the cost of generating a new customer is anywhere between seven and ten times the cost of generating more business from an existing one. In the current economic climate this figure is undoubtedly set to increase as the returns on new business generation activity diminish.

Review marketing spend but, if cash allows, be prepared to maintain the spend even if it is not on a marketing activity you've always done. Times are changing with advances in marketing techniques and developments in digital and internet marketing giving rise to a decline in spend on more traditional marketing activities. Marketers are more fortunate than ever in being able to target more effectively new business, an approach which means the days

of random lead generating activities and awareness campaigns are becoming less.

Consider your marketing message, the need for your services may still be relevant, but the customer's reasons for buying them may have changed and as a result you may need to look at the marketing messages you are sending out and their relevance. Don't alienate core business or run the threat of becoming something you are not and don't want to be seen as in the future.

Communicate your aims and activities. Stay in the market place and don't retrench. There is a very useful marketing phrase, 'share of voice leads to share of market'. Reducing your perceived or actual presence in your market place can be a dangerous thing, with a lack of presence giving rise to all sorts of gossip mongering and rumours and the risk of customers switching to competitors. It is also important for customers to feel reassured by your marketing activities to confirm in their minds that they have chosen the right provider.

In summary, the key is to focus more on the marketing activity than the budget, as a well thought-out and implemented marketing plan stands a better chance of providing good returns. ■

Management accounts - there has never been a more important time to have them

By Sarah Leonard, Sage Manager



Sarah Leonard

When a business is doing well with sales booming and borrowing is under control, you can be forgiven for thinking you don't need management accounts. However, in more turbulent times, keeping a tight rein on financial matters can be the difference between success and failure.

You can't manage your business if you don't know how your business is performing

Management accounts are not just important to those running the business but are often required by banks to support current loans or authorise new lending.

How frequently should you have management accounts?

The timing and frequency of management accounts depend on the nature of your business as well as its financial state. For a business with fluctuating levels of activity it would be prudent to have monthly information. Where there is little change on a month to month basis, quarterly accounts may be sufficient.

What should management accounts provide you with?

Management accounts provide you with:

- A detailed understanding as to how your profit/loss has come about.
- An analysis of where cash is coming from and where it is being used within the business.
- Guidance and information to assist you with

forecasting for both cash flow and profitability.

- A comparison with the previous year's results.
- Timely information and analysis to help you manage your business.

What are the options for producing management accounts?

There are three main options for businesses looking to produce management accounts:

1. You may opt for your accountant to produce the information for you. This can be the most preferred option if you need timely information coupled with professional advice. Banks often prefer the information to be produced by a third party rather than in house.
2. You may choose to produce the information in house. This will require your own time and discipline to produce the information as well as an understanding of accountancy to ensure their accuracy. Unfortunately, on occasion, external organisations may appear to be sceptical about information produced in house if it has not been independently verified.
3. Raw data can be processed in house using accountancy software, such as Sage, and then reviewed and validated by your external accountant.

Managing your accounts

For businesses looking to review their financial arrangements with the bank, accurate management accounts and forecasts can prove to be a real help with negotiating and raising funds. The information can ensure you are timely in your request for funding and clear as to how much you need to borrow, for how long and how you are going to make repayments. Management accounts can not only improve your chances of success but also the expediency with which the arrangement is agreed. ■

All you wanted to know about accountancy ratios but were too afraid to ask

By Amanda Legate, Director

Previously we have considered profitability and liquidity ratios. In this issue we are considering



Amanda Legate

gearing and interest ratios. It is ever more important given the current economic climate that thought is given to these critical ratios in a business. This will enable you to determine how dependent on external financing your business is, how well you can service this debt and how credit professionals are likely to view your business.

Ratios

Asset/Liability Ratio

$\frac{\text{Current Assets}}{\text{Current Liabilities}}$

Often a favourite with credit granting professionals it provides a guideline as to your business's immediate borrowing ability and current cash flow. Ideally this should be at least £2 assets for every £1 liability.

Gearing Ratio

$\frac{\text{Loan Capital}}{\text{Capital Employed}} \times 100$

The gearing ratio allows you to calculate in percentage terms the amount of the business capital that is borrowed. The higher the percentage from this calculation, the higher the reliance your business has on external borrowing.

Interest Cover Ratio

$\frac{\text{Operating Profit}}{\text{Interest Payable}}$

This ratio provides you with an indication of the amount of cover the business has for the payment of interest relating to the business borrowing. A ratio of 1 means you have to use all of your operating profit to pay your interest. A ratio of 2 means you have to use half of your operating profit to pay your interest. Therefore ratios of 2-3 are manageable but those below this marker are considered at risk. ■

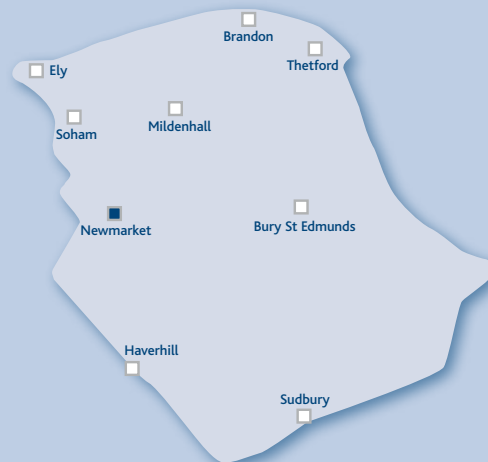
Sage - we're in the top 10!



In the latest Sage league tables, Streets has been ranked 5th in the Midlands region as one of the best performing Sage resellers, looking after the needs of small and medium sized businesses. The ranking is a significant upward move for the practice; the last six months have seen a marked increase in the promotion of SAGE products, including the latest version Sage 50 Accounts 2009. ■

Making a great impression in Newmarket and the Mid Anglia Region

Streets' Newmarket office and teams look after the needs of clients, both business and personal, throughout the Mid Anglia Region



Guests enjoying a VIP tour of The Jockey Club, Newmarket (Photograph kindly supplied by Cubiqdesign)



Streets' Partners left to right: Trevor Crowe, David Martin, John Tanner, Paul Tutin, Alan Blake, Paul Brophy and Simon Hodgkin (Photograph kindly supplied by Cubiqdesign)

The prestigious Jockey Club was the setting for a special Christmas event hosted by Streets Chartered Accountants to celebrate the firm's expansion of its Newmarket office. Guests, including clients, local professionals and the wider business community, along with Streets' partners and staff enjoyed the special evening which included VIP tours of the Club and seasonal hospitality.

By occupying additional office space within The Railway Station in Newmarket, Streets has been able to accommodate a greater number of staff and widen the range of services it offers clients locally; these include specialist tax planning, personal financial advice as well as corporate finance.

Commenting on the firm's expansion of its Newmarket office, Streets' Chairman and Managing Partner, Paul Tutin, said:

"The development of our practice in Newmarket acknowledges the need for the business community to be able to access the support and services of a leading accountancy firm that can provide a proactive approach and a wide range of services. For many in the Mid Anglia region now serviced by our Newmarket office, they have increasingly had to venture much further afield previously to access these services.

"Being a part of the community is also at the heart of our business; our team in the area is being led by fellow Partner, John Tanner. John lives in Newmarket and takes an active interest in the business community.

"We see the development of our practice in the area as part of our overall strategic growth in the East of England. Our Newmarket office, along with our other offices and teams in Cambridge, St Neots and Peterborough, means we are well placed to support the needs of clients be they individuals or businesses." ■



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The Railway Station, Green Road, Newmarket, Suffolk CB8 9WT

Key changes to the Land Remediation Relief (LRR) legislation for companies

By Chris Connor, Corporate Tax Director



Chris Connor

Introduction

The Pre-Budget Report 2008 announced draft legislation (subject to consultation) to support the introduction of modifications to the brownfield incentives

regime. Some of these could have a significant impact on both the quantum of the relief and on the number of companies able to benefit. Some of the key points are summarised below:

Enhancements to the relief

Japanese Knotweed

HMRC have changed their view on the removal costs of Japanese Knotweed (JKW) and now consider such costs eligible for the relief. HMRC have indicated that they will settle any in date claims and open years on that basis which means that corporate developers and investors can now review historic costs and submit a claim for the relief. Property developers have six years after the year from when the expenditure became deductible for tax purposes to submit a claim.

Derelict land

The 150% tax relief is going to be extended to cover the costs of removing dereliction. Such relief will be available in respect of derelict sites that are purchased in a derelict state. The land must not have been in productive use since 1st April 1998 and must not be capable of being put into productive use without the removal of buildings or other structures.

The relief is expected to cover the removal of things like building and machinery foundations, concrete basements, below ground redundant services and reinforced concrete pile caps.

Restrictions to the existing relief

HMRC have also made a number of notable changes to the legislation which will apply from April 2009, as follows:

Focus on land contaminated by former industrial use

The Treasury has indicated that with the exception of costs associated with dealing with arsenic, radon and JKW no relief will be

available going forwards for costs incurred in dealing with natural substances that cause contamination such as naturally occurring high sulphate levels and certain types of damage caused by air and water. The focus going forward will be on contamination caused by previous industrial activity. For instance the costs of upgrading concrete specification to resist high sulphates in the ground are only likely to qualify if they are sulphates from an industrial activity, not naturally occurring substances.

Provide additional disincentives to discourage the removal of contaminated material to landfill

With effect from 1 April 2009, LRR will not be claimable on any landfill tax costs incurred. With landfill tax set to rise to £48/tonne, this will make the cost of 'dig and dump' strategies less attractive.

Interest in Land now required to be a 'major interest'

With effect from 1 April 2009 there will be a requirement to acquire a 'major interest' in the land such as a leasehold or freehold interest in order to benefit from the tax relief. It will no longer be possible to rely on a licence or other similar inferior interest to claim the relief.

Anti-avoidance rules to prevent polluters from benefiting from relief

New anti-avoidance provisions have been brought in to prevent sale and buy backs of land that allow polluters to benefit from the relief indirectly.

Intention to only allow costs of removing contamination

The draft legislation suggests an intention to only allow the cost to remove the contamination, and not the subsequent costs to reinstate the land or buildings to their former state. The potential impact of this is that only those costs directly linked to the remediation strategy will attract the relief, not the cost of any consequential works. An example of expenditure affected would be backfilling holes where contamination was removed unless the backfilling is part of the remediation strategy. This is a significant departure from the current scope of the relief. ■

A great time to outsource your payroll

Whether you employ only a handful of people or a large workforce, dealing with the payroll, ensuring you are compliant with employment legislation and avoiding possible fines, can be yet another burden and concern. It can also be a costly exercise for any organisation, in terms of time and money, especially if you have to employ and train someone in-house and buy specialist payroll software.

By using Streets' confidential payroll service you will be able to ensure pay is made in accordance with the appropriate legislation, allowing you to focus on running your business/organisation.

Streets' dedicated payroll team looks after the payroll for all sizes of businesses and organisations dealing with employees and Directors.

By working with our tax colleagues our Payroll team are able to advise clients on tax planning matters and tax efficient ways of paying staff. We are also able to compliment payroll work with advice on aspects such as the minimum wage, holiday entitlements and statutory payments.

The best time to start using an external payroll service is at the end of one tax year and the start of another. By looking to set up your payroll in the first month of the new tax year, means we are best placed to look after your interests and to set up procedures for pay to be calculated and managed over a complete tax year.

For further information on Streets' payroll services and for a quotation please complete the freepost response card. ■

Top 3 international association for Streets

The importance of being able to look after clients' needs on a global basis continues at a pace. Streets acknowledged this need three years ago when it became one of only five firms in the UK to become members of the Leading Edge Alliance, a global network of independent accounting firms. The success of the LEA has been outstanding. Only nine years since its inception the organisation has earned the enviable status as being the third largest international association of independent accounting firms for 2009. The LEA has more than 140 member firms, representing over 90 firms worldwide, with collective revenues exceeding 2 billion US dollars.

"When the concept of the LEA was first conceived, the plan was to introduce an independent association to help firms compete with the Big Four. This year's growth rate of the combined member firms of 29% is a testament to the respective individual firm's successes, their ability to compete and the appeal of an accomplished association," says Gary Shamis, LEA Chair, Emeritus.

Paul Tutin, Streets Chairman and Managing Partner, comments, "By utilising technology, developing special interest groups and connecting with international accountancy firms we have been able to extend our global reach to the benefit of our clients, and we are delighted and proud to be a part of the LEA". ■

Street(s) map to an MBO

By Chris Kirkland, Business Development Director



Chris Kirkland

In this second article on management buy-outs (MBOs) we look at what is involved in the process.

The MBO process

From start to finish an MBO is a time consuming and sometimes a frustrating process. It involves many different processes which need to be brought together to complete the deal, which include:

- Finding suitable funding
- Selecting financial advisers
- Feasibility study
- Business plan
- Assembling the management team
- Evaluating the price
- Due diligence

Obviously the process needs careful consideration and the above points should be added appropriately. A typical order may be:

- Assemble the management team
- Select financial advisers

- Feasibility study
- Evaluate the price
- Write the business plan
- Find suitable funders
- Due diligence
- Legals

Why should we engage an adviser?

It is a crucial role of the adviser to assess whether the MBO is viable and credible; the management team will have some idea but can be blinkered by rose-tinted glasses. In deciding whether the MBO is a good bet the adviser will need to assess such criteria as:

- The likelihood of financial support
- Maximum purchase price
- The returns available
- The structure of the deal
- Valuing the business
- Advising on the format of the business plan
- Project managing the entire transaction through to legal completion.

The whole process can be volatile and the management team will need to work closely with their adviser, often on a daily basis.

Will we need tax advice?

The short answer is 'Yes'. It is beneficial to ensure the management team are afforded the right protection in respect of any tax issues such as:

- Income tax relief on interest paid from personal borrowing
- Payment of stamp duty
- VAT registration for new company
- Structure of the transaction
- Opportunities to minimise Capital Gains Tax and Inheritance Tax.

Timescale and cost

From start to finish the whole process can easily take between 3 to 6 months and sometimes longer if the deal is particularly complex. The costs can also mount up and can typically be anywhere between 5% to 10% of the deal. However, a good adviser will try to ensure that the majority of the cost will be drawn down on completion of the MBO thus protecting the management team.

An important but sometimes forgotten requirement is the funding required to settle the arranged deal costs of the transaction as well as the trading for the new company.

In the next edition of 'Streets Ahead' we will look at life after the MBO. ■

Time to look overseas

By Simon Hodgkin, Partner



Simon Hodgkin

With the strength of the UK pound weak against other global currencies, UK manufacturers say that demand for their goods and services is still strong. This was highlighted recently at a presentation entitled 'Bridging the Gulf' held at Wyboston Lakes, Cambridgeshire and hosted by the Cambridgeshire Chamber of Commerce. Despite the economic downturn and a decline in oil prices since the peak of last summer, the Gulf remains

committed to substantial growth. As a result there are opportunities for businesses in areas such as Dubai, Bahrain, Qatar, Abu Dhabi and Saudi Arabia.

For some, these opportunities will be out of reach, possibly even inappropriate, but they do serve to illustrate in the present climate that for those businesses undertaking international trade, it might be an aspect of your business to focus on. Over recent years a strong pound has certainly suppressed and even curtailed the potential for many to develop in export markets.

Whilst it would be naive to think export markets can provide a quick fix or an easy route to increased sales, the time might be right for existing exporters to look to exploit wider opportunities, and for those looking to export, to explore international business including possible markets to enter and the way to approach them.

Commenting on international markets Chris Kubicki, Senior International Trade Adviser with East of England International, and a keynote speaker at the 'Bridging the Gulf' event, said, "Meaningful business opportunities exist for UK companies who provide products or services that can demonstrate a competitive advantage."

"Success for those UK companies looking to develop overseas markets centres around having and knowing what makes their offer unique and what constitutes their commercial advantage or attractiveness to customers. Just as much as in the home market, overseas customers are looking for their needs to be fulfilled by suppliers who differentiate themselves with a demonstrable competitive advantage or provide something not already available to them. For those businesses that feel they can tick these boxes then the international market could be for them and now could be the time to look at exploiting market opportunities."

Indeed, exporters and potential exporters may benefit from assistance from the UK Trade & Investment's Export Marketing Research Scheme which helps and encourages UK businesses to undertake marketing research prior to developing a strategy for market entry or further investment in an overseas market.

With international links through our membership of the Leading Edge Alliance and our already established work with clients trading overseas ranging from accountancy and tax to commercial advice, means Streets are well placed to support established export businesses or those looking to explore this market for the first time. ■

IoD Annual Lunch

Streets once again supported the Lincolnshire branch of the Institute of Directors' annual lunch. ■



Photo Left to Right: James Pinchbeck, Branch Chairman Lincolnshire IoD and Streets' Marketing Director, with associate sponsors David Thompson, Handelsbanken; Shane Booth, Innovation Lincolnshire; guest speaker David Hall; associate sponsors John Knight, Ringrose Law and James Boughton Thomas, Lexus Lincoln. ■

Staff News

Welcome to

Steven Da Silva, Senior Accountant, Peterborough.

Congratulations

Celebrations:

Hollie Tedman on her engagement to Liam Bath.

New arrivals:

James and Erika Pinchbeck on the birth of Annie Rose.

Vicky and Matt Prior on the birth of Neve Isabel.

Accounting for Success:

Mark Poppett for passing his final Chartered Accountants exams and qualifying as ACA.

Thitima Morris for completing her study and qualifying as ACCA.

Trevor Fletcher



Pictured left to right: Kevin Adams, Alan Taylor, Trevor Fletcher, Sylvia Mallott, Steve Franklin, John Major and Mary Woodward

It is with sad news that we announce the death of Trevor Fletcher. Trevor had worked for Streets Chartered Accountants since 1975 when Stephenson Smart & Co merged with Streets. During this time he worked in a senior capacity, primarily assisting partners, and during which time he co-authored two books on behalf of the Institute of Chartered Accountants.

Trevor was diagnosed with lymphoma in March 2007 and despite the valiant attempts of the chemotherapy team and consultants at the clinical haematology units at Nottingham City Hospital, Trevor passed away on 7 November 2008.

Trevor will be missed by his colleagues and the partners at Streets. ■

Charitable giving

Charities, like many organisations at present, are facing uncertainty and for some the situation could get worse with nearly a third reporting a fall in donations yet an increase in demand for their help and services.

Is there anything charities can do in the current crisis? Charities are constantly seeking to work harder to maximise donations by Gift Aid and to educate their supporters. However, it is estimated that charities are still losing out on an estimated £700 million a year in unclaimed tax from donations that could have been made under Gift Aid.

The Charities Aid Foundation (CAF) is a registered charity that works to create greater value for charities. They do this by transforming the way donations are made and the way charitable funds are managed.

Streets is a trading style of Streets LLP, Streets Whitmarsh Sterland LLP, Streets Northern LLP, Streets Southern LLP, Streets Tax LLP and Streets Audit LLP. Registered Office: Tower House, Lucy Tower Street, Lincoln LN1 1XW. A list of members is open to inspection at the registered office. Streets Audit LLP is registered by the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales to carry out company audit work. The facts contained in this newsletter are believed to be correct as at April 2009 but there may be errors or omissions for which the Streets organisation cannot be responsible.

Employment Corner

By Andrew Macdonald, HR Manager

Managing Redundancy



Andrew Macdonald

The current climate will inevitably result in employers having to make redundancies. This is not easy for either the employer or the employee and quite naturally will impact on morale, motivation, productivity, etc.

It is essential that employers follow the legislative processes; otherwise they could find themselves before an Employment Tribunal where the awards can be substantial. Providing the proper processes are followed, employers need not be hesitant in making redundancies providing there are sound business reasons for doing so.

A genuine redundancy only arises when either there has been or is going to be:

- A cessation of business.
- A cessation of business at the employee's site.
- A reduction or cessation of work.

Irrespective of whether employers have procedures currently in place to address redundancy situations, consideration must be given to the following:

- The need to plan.
- Examine preventive measures.
- The seeking of volunteers.
- To enter into consultation with trade unions and employees both collectively and individually – to provide information.
- The need to identify those employees at risk.
- If more than 20 employees are to be declared redundant, notification has to be made to the Department for Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform (BERR) (formerly DTI).
- The agreeing and use of objective selection criteria.

- Ensuring compliance with all three stages of the statutory dismissal procedures.
- Provide advance notice of individual consultation meetings.
- Permitting a colleague to be present at consultation meetings.
- The facility to appeal.
- To identify any suitable alternative employment.
- The providing of statutory or other redundancy payments.
- Helping redundant employees obtain training or alternative employment.

The Employment Rights (Increase of Limits) Order 2008

From 1 February 2009, the maximum compensation in an unfair dismissal case was increased to £66,200. The maximum weekly pay to be taken into account when calculating statutory redundancy payments, and the basic award in unfair dismissal claims, was increased to £350.

Statutory annual leave entitlement

From 1 April 2009 statutory annual leave entitlement will increase from 4.8 weeks to 5.6 weeks.

Statutory maternity, paternity, adoption pay

From 1 April 2009, the flat rates for SMP, SPP and SAP will increase to £123.06 per week (or 90% of average weekly earnings if less), subject to parliamentary approval.

Statutory sick pay (SSP)

From 1 April 2009, the flat rate for SSP will increase to £79.15 per week, subject to parliamentary approval.

The right to request flexible working

From April 2009 this will be extended to parents of children aged 16 years and under.

Streets Human Resources are able to provide clients with the expertise and guidance needed in managing redundancy and other HR matters. ■

If you are a UK taxpayer, you can open a CAF Charity Account which gives you more to donate to charity. With Gift Aid, CAF reclaim basic rate tax on all the money you put into the account and add it to the balance. As CAF is a charity, they make no profit (they do charge a small fee to cover costs). You end up with 23p more to give for every pound you put in your account.

Only genuine charitable organisations can redeem 'charity cheques' from a CAF Charity Account, so you'll be certain that your money is going to a bona fide organisation.

For further information contact the CAF customer service team on 01732 520055 or visit www.cafonline.org ■

Don't lose your age allowance

By Ken Smith, Financial Planning Manager



Ken Smith

When the Chancellor removed the 10% starting rate of income tax in his 2007 Budget and reduced the basic rate to 20%, he realised that this would hurt the over 65-year olds. So he increased the income tax personal allowances

by considerably more than the rate of inflation to compensate. Consequently, those in this age group can now receive more income before they pay tax.

In the tax year 2007/8, the personal allowance for those aged between 65 and 74 was £7,550 and this has been increased by £1,480 to £9,030 in 2008/9. For those aged 75 or over, the figure was £7,690 in 2007/8 and is £9,180 in 2008/9.

When the income of those aged 65 or over exceeds a certain figure, which for 2008/9 has been set at £21,800, the allowance is reduced by £1 for every £2 of the excess. This results in the effective rate of income tax increasing from 20% to 30%. This is what is known as the "age allowance trap".

Clients in this position may wish to consider transferring income-producing investments into an Investment Bond which, being an insurance policy, produces no income but permits capital to be extracted at up to 5% p.a. with no immediate tax consequences and no effect on the age allowance.

If the bond is encashed, the overall gain might well impact the age allowances, but this would affect a single year's allowances whereas the benefit would have been enjoyed every year that the bond had been held. The risk of the gains from the bond crystallising by reason of the death of the investor could be avoided by writing the bond in the names

of both the investor and selected family members.

A further advantage of using investment bonds for people in this age group is that investment bonds are currently disregarded by the Local Authority when they are assessing whether an individual has to pay towards their own long term care costs. This will, however, depend on the timing and purpose of the original investment.

Investment bonds also make excellent investment vehicles for many trusts as they do not distribute any natural income and therefore help to reduce the need for an annual tax return and keep administration costs to a minimum, while still offering access to a wide range of investment funds.

Investment bonds are not suitable for every investor and this is where your Streets adviser can help you consider what investment type would be most appropriate for you after fully assessing your objectives and personal circumstances. ■

Investment strategy

By Nick Bunch, Financial Planning Manager



Nick Bunch

Asset allocation – that is to say, the technique of spreading investments among different types of asset, including equities, bonds, property, commodities – has for long been regarded as the key to reducing risk. However, the dire markets of 2008

have led some people to question the established assumptions and to suggest that the only distinction to be made is between risky assets and (relatively) risk-free assets.

It used to be assumed that cash was a risk-free asset but many savers were disillusioned of this assumption when Northern Rock hit the buffers. Government bonds were regarded as the ultimate safe asset, but the futures market has suggested that with massive borrowings even this assumption might be questioned.

During the last century Governments – including UK Governments – effectively reneged on their obligations by printing money and letting the resulting penal levels of inflation reduce their debt burden.

War Loan, the Government borrowing which was designed to appeal to people's patriotism as a means of funding the cost of the First World War, was the classic case in point. Its capital value declined to pitiful levels as a result of inflation, causing commentators to refer to this stock as a Guilt-edged security.

Although inflation is inimical to paper assets, it does favour investment in physical assets, classically bricks and mortar, though the downside in values can be as impressive as the upside when the pendulum swings.

Some storm-tossed investors have considered following the French tradition of keeping cash under the mattress, and the boom in sales of home safes suggests that this is a risk some people are prepared to take.

"Moderation in all things" was the maxim of one of Galsworthy's characters, and this should be investors' guiding principle. All risk is relative, and in relative terms the current extreme financial climate clearly favours a balance which is weighted towards cash and fixed interest securities.

However, growth opportunities will inevitably become available, the likes of which, according to one fund manager reported in the 'Financial Times', "we've never seen before". Commentators are suggesting that following the surge of the gilt market in the second half of 2008 as investors sought a safe haven, the next sector to recover will be the corporate bond market; and it must be a positive sign that the particular sector of the bond market currently receiving attention is convertible bonds, which offer both a fixed rate of interest and the option to convert to equities at a future date.

For most investors, however, the sensible way to access the fixed interest market is through strategic bond funds, which enable the manager to switch between sectors as conditions change.

Pension limits

The Government, in its pre-Budget report, has stated its intention to reduce the sums which can be invested in pensions with the benefit of tax relief. The reduction applies both to annual contributions and to total values.

It had been anticipated that in both cases the limits would increase in line with inflation, but they are now to be frozen from 2011 to 2016. The limit for annual contributions will be 100% of salary, capped at £255,000, and the limit on total value will be

frozen at £1.8m. In a final salary scheme this would equate to an annual pension of £90,000 p.a.

Those who had pension funds worth more than the "lifetime allowance" on 5 April 2006, when the limits were introduced, are able to apply to HM Revenue & Customs for the excess to be "protected", but must do so before 6 April 2009.

Taxation on trusts

Another announcement in the pre-Budget report related to the taxation of trusts. With effect from 2011, tax on savings income received by trusts is to be increased from 40% to 45%; and tax on dividend income is to be increased from 32.5% to 37.5%.

The increase will add to the attraction of holding trust investments in an Investment Bond tax-wrapper. When income is accumulated within a Bond it suffers tax at 20% or less, and if segments of the Bond are assigned to beneficiaries the gains are taxed at their personal rates – which clearly favours those paying tax at the basic rate or less.

Personal dis-allowance

In pursuance of the declared objective of ensuring that the better-off play their part in helping the Government out of its problems, the Chancellor also announced that from 2010/11 the availability of the basic personal allowance will be reduced by £1 for every £2 of annual income over £100,000; and for those with income over £140,000 p.a. the allowance will be further reduced until it is extinguished.

In addition, from 2011/12 income above £150,000 will be liable to income tax at 45% (the same rate as will apply to trusts). ■

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Streets Financial Consulting plc is the independent financial planning arm of Streets Chartered Accountants

Pension reforms to affect all businesses

By Tina Pepper, Financial Planning Manager



Tina Pepper

To help address the pension pot shortfall the Government has announced plans to introduce 'Personal Accounts'. Put simply, Personal Accounts are pensions for employees who do not currently participate in, or have access to, an

employer-funded pension scheme.

With effect from 2012 all employers will be required to automatically enrol employees into a Personal Account or enrol them into your Company Scheme as long as it meets certain criteria.

Employees eligible for Personal Accounts are as follows:

- Those who do not have a private pension.
- Those aged between 22 and State Pension Age and earn over £5,035 a year (increased with earnings inflation from 2007).

Employees can opt out; those choosing to remain opted in will result in your company having to contribute 3% of their eligible earnings (basic salary plus commissions, bonuses and overtime between

£5,035 and £33,540 a year). Employees then are to add 4% of their own contributions which, when allowing for an additional 1% tax relief, boosts this up to the minimum contribution target of 8% overall.

The compulsory employer contributions will be phased in, starting at 1% in 2012 rising to 3% over three years.

There will be new strict compliance requirements to ensure employees' rights are safeguarded with requirements to register how you will meet your enrolment duties for each of the PAYE schemes you run. Failure to register will be detected by comparing records with HMRC and compliance with new statutory employment rights and monitoring of pension payments by the pension scheme trustees who will report failures to the Pensions Regulator.

This will place additional costs on your business in terms of administration costs, etc.

What do employers need to be considering now?

Whilst the proposed scheme is new to the UK, Personal Accounts are well established in Australia and experience shows that most employers opt to run their own scheme as opposed to the Government one. As a result, it is expected there will

be an increase in the number of businesses offering and operating Group Personal Pension Plans.

Those with existing Group Personal Pension Plans

If you already have a Group Personal Pension Plan in place you may wish to review this and the membership levels to avoid any sudden increase in costs due to auto-enrolment and compulsory contributions and also to help reduce the administrative burden on your business. It also provides a greater degree of choice in terms of investment choices and contribution levels.

Those without existing Group Personal Pension Plans

If you do not have any scheme in place, apart from the designation of a stakeholder pension, now may be an opportune time to consider whether a Group Personal Pension Scheme would better meet the needs of your business going forward.

We will be looking to run seminars on Personal Accounts so please register your interest on the response card enclosed, or in the meantime if you require advice please do contact one of our financial advisers. ■

Protecting businesses

By Paul Nolan, Financial Planning Manager



Paul Nolan

Building up a successful business takes a lot of time and effort. Recruiting and retaining people is key to its on-going success and profitability.

It is important to ensure that should the worst

happen the business can continue. Many businesses automatically arrange insurance in the event of fire, flood, theft, etc. but equally important is protecting your most valuable asset – yourself and your key employees.

Some thought-provoking facts:

- 2.2 million people of working age are unable to

work for at least 6 months at any one time due to an extended period of sickness.

- There are 4.3 million businesses in the UK of which 24% are Limited Companies, 1% Limited Liability Partnerships, 13% Partnerships and 62% Sole Traders.
- 1 in 3 UK citizens develops cancer and 1 in 4 dies from it.
- 1 in 9 women will suffer from breast cancer during her lifetime.
- 1 in 5 men and 1 in 6 women suffer from heart disease.
- 1.51 million men and 1.16 million women have or have had chronic heart disease.
- A person in the UK suffers a heart attack every 2 minutes.

- A person in the UK suffers from a stroke every 5 minutes.

From looking at these statistics, it is possible that many individuals and businesses will suffer from financial hardship as a result of illness, critical illness or death. A key element of ensuring business continuity is to protect the contribution to the business of vital employees in the event of their death or critical illness. This will help avoid loss of profits and allow the business to continue trading.

Streets Financial Consulting are equipped to give you and your business the peace of mind in knowing that should the worst happen, the business could continue and also ensure that your family would receive their share of your business assets quickly in the event of your death. ■