



President's Foreword

According to the British Chamber of Commerce, the Q3 2012 results confirm that improvements in the UK's economic performance remain inadequate. Though most key Q3 balances are weaker than in Q2, the survey results could still signal a return to positive GDP growth in Q3, as weaker balances may not indicate a contraction in overall economic activity.

All the domestic balances worsened in Q3. For both manufacturing and services, the home deliveries balances are only slightly above zero, and the forward-looking home orders balances are in negative territory. All doom and gloom you could say, however on the brighter side, and it is difficult to find one, order balances are higher than they were in 2008-2009.

More locally, we are making progress and show promise. The Tesco.com site which runs parallel with Fleming way has taken shape with interviews for the 400 staff well underway. Wilkinsons has seamlessly opened in the town centre and Bar Med has closed in preparation for the Sussex House Supermarket and Hotel development. Town centre North now has a main contractor appointed and back on Manor Royal, some unsightly buildings previously occupied by OCS and Team Sport Karting have been knocked down in preparation for occupation by a Mercedes garage. All evidence that Crawley is not a 'sleepy town.'

On 20th September many Manor Royal businesses attended a presentation at The Base on Fleming Way. The subject matter was the potential B.I.D. (Business Improvement District) application being considered by the Manor Royal Business Group. Take a look at the web site for more information www.manorroyal.org. Nationally and europe wide, economies are stagnant or desperate and yet in Crawley, we continue to develop and prosper.

Steve Rham, President - Crawley & Gatwick Chamber of Commerce
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Young Start-up Talent team out to inspire and encourage 16-25 year olds

The Young Start-up Talent team is once again out and about visiting sixth form students in the area to inspire and encourage 16-25 year olds to have a 'can do' attitude towards business. The team has already visited Collyers College, Holy Trinity and The Weald to conduct workshops and assemblies with many more school and college visits planned over the next month across the County. Judges - Dean Orgil, Chairman of Mayo Wynne Baxter Solicitors, Lorraine Nugent of Media Word Waves, Matthew Tyson of Richard Place Dobson, Steve Rham of S4B and President of the Chamber, Melanie Martinez of Fastsigns, Rebecca Gattines of Basepoint and Andrew Hookway of extech IT Solutions visited The Weald, Holy Trinity, Hazelwick, Oriel, Imberhome and Sackville sixth forms to deliver the assembly to approximately 300 sixth form students at each school.

"It was a great pleasure to deliver our message out to so many students and a delight to see such a good take up with great quality entries already flooding in" commented Matthew Tyson of Richard Place Dobson.

The initiative is now in its third year in the area with heaps of success stories both from previous winners and finalists not only starting up their own businesses but also receiving work experience and full time

jobs for some. The initiative has proved such a success in the Gatwick Diamond region that it is soon to launch in the Brighton and Kent areas later this month. Recyclabook, the project's winners from 2010 are now selling approximately 30-40 books per day via their online shop www.recyclabook.co.uk.

They are also expanding rapidly and are currently looking to recruit a full-time employee. Toby Gillett of Sobiblio - an online e-book library and winner from earlier this year has been in discussions with Penguin Digital and started an internship with Penguin earlier this month. With presentations skills being a key aspect to the project, a new sponsor has joined the team - Dorothy Larios, Director of Nvision Coaching UK and former President of the Chamber is offering coaching, support and presenting skills to the candidates before they pitch their ideas to the judging panel. Dorothy is an experienced executive coach and facilitator with over 20 years' experience and will be great asset to the initiative.

If you would like to find out more about the initiative and interested in either getting involved or entering please visit

www.youngstartuptalent.co.uk

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Difficult decisions ahead

Mr Osborne faces some tough decisions in the run-up to the Pre-Budget Report statement on 5th December, is not in any doubt. While hard-pressed countries on the Eurozone’s periphery are going through enormous pain to get their deficits down, Britain has been taking things at a fairly relaxed pace. Having peaked at over £150 billion in the 2009/10 fiscal year, the shortfall was still around £120 billion in 2011/12. Moreover, hopes are now fading that it will get any smaller during the current fiscal year. With five months of data already in, the underlying position (ignoring the windfall of £28 billion from the sale of the assets of the Royal Mail pension fund) is some £8 billion worse than the same months of last year.

So before the Chancellor can even consider whether to row back on some of the public spending cuts that are in the pipeline he will have to deal with this year’s over-shoot. This will mean extending the timeframe for eliminating the cyclically-adjusted current deficit, on which the government’s ‘fiscal mandate’ is based, by another year, after having already extended it by two years in this March’s Budget.

Until now the UK has held on to its ‘AAA’ rating and its favoured status among investors on the basis not just of its monetary independence but a credible strategy for eliminating the deficit. Sterling has managed to fly below the radar of the financial markets, who have had much bigger things to worry about, principally the Eurozone’s debt crisis and increasingly in recent months the impending fiscal cliff and debt ceiling squabbles in the USA. But if these issues eventually become less worrisome, then the UK’s failure either to achieve meaningful economic recovery or to get a grip on the budget deficit could well become a fresh source of concern. Under such a scenario, British policymakers would have little defence against surging borrowing costs and a depreciating currency.

Ian C HARPER
HCBC

Festive Crawley

Snowglobe is coming to Queens Square in Crawley!

Saturday 8 to Sunday 9 December
Saturday 15 to Sunday 16 December

Featured on Dragon’s Den, Snowglobe is a fantastic, festive photo experience for small groups of all ages.

Have fun posing in the snow-filled globe with your family or friends then capture the memory with a keepsake photo taken alongside a wintry Christmas scene - all for just £4 for groups of up to five.

Make your experience even merrier by coming along in fancy dress and you’ll be in with a chance of winning £50 of Marks & Spencer gift vouchers – perfect to spend during the sales! The winner will be selected from entries posted online by Monday 24 December*.

There’s no other Snowglobe in the local area this Christmas, so make sure you don’t miss out and come and visit us in Crawley town centre.

*Please visit www.crawley.gov.uk/snowglobe for prize draw entry details and terms and conditions.

From the evening of 17 November the new Christmas lights and displays will make the town sparkle – a great opportunity to get into the festive spirit. Members please let me know if you would like to sponsor the lights for £200. Load up on Christmas goodies at the fresh fish, meat, fruit and vegetable general market in the High Street every Friday and Saturday.

With late night shopping, and a wide range of stores and dining options, Crawley will take the strain out of your Christmas preparations.

Various exciting events are being organised for this special time of year and already include:

From 17 November Bavarian Christmas Stalls – Experience the flavours and smells of freshly roasted chestnuts and Bavarian sausages and sweets.

18 November Santas on the Run - A sponsored fun-run in aid of Chestnut Tree House children’s hospice.

Join hundreds of people of all ages dressed as Father Christmas in a one or two mile route around the town centre from 10am, starting and finishing in the Memorial Gardens.

Registration costs just £12 per adult, £6 for children aged six to 16 years and £3 for those under six. Visit www.chestnut-tree-house.org.uk or call 01903 706354.

1 December Crafts Market – Local craftspeople set up their stalls in Queens Square to show off their handiwork and give you a chance to grab a unique gift.

Please let me know if you require any further information on any of the above.

Alfredo Mendes
Town Centre Manager

Entrepreneurial finalist receives full time apprenticeship at Crawley accountants!

Richard Place Dobson Chartered Accountants and Business Advisers have awarded a full time apprenticeship contract to student and Young Start-Up Talent finalist, George Fisher. George first came to the attention of Richard Place Dobson director and Young Start-Up Talent judge, Matthew Tyson when George, who was then 17, took part in a workshop at Reigate College as part of the Young Enterprise initiative. “George shone through as a leader with a good head for business right from the word go – I saw something of my younger self and thought he could go far in our practice” commented Matthew.

George spearheaded his team of five and took the group through to the final stages of the Young Start-up Talent initiative back in 2010 with the idea of a customised calendar. The team had to endure a demanding and grueling process to get to the final – having to firstly prove their idea, team spirit and entrepreneurial flair for business along with the arduous questioning from the panel of six judges and at the same time remaining composed in front of the camera crew filming the ‘Dragons Den’ style final. Since taking part in Young Start-up Talent George has shown a keen interest in a career in accountancy. George has received several weeks of work experience at Richard Place Dobson over the last eighteen months whilst also studying for his A levels. George proved himself as capable and intelligent and fitted in well with the charity specialist accountancy firm’s existing team.

Richard Place Dobson regularly take on trainees and George was keen to fulfill this role once he had finished his studies at Reigate College obtaining A levels in Business, Economics and History and excelled by obtaining A*, A and B. George was up against stiff competition from other applicants, including those having a degree and wishing to pursue a career in accountancy at the established firm. “It was George’s enthusiasm, drive and more importantly excellent interpersonal skills that gave him the edge” added Darren Harding, director at Richard Place Dobson.

“Young Start-up Talent and work experience at Richard Place Dobson gave me the drive and determination to achieve great results and gave an invaluable insight into business life beyond College. I am now hugely excited and grateful to be offered this opportunity and look forward to my career at Richard Place Dobson” commented George Fisher.

www.placedobson.co.uk



Health and safety inspections to be scrapped for ‘low risk’ businesses

Hundreds of thousands of businesses will no longer face health and safety inspections under plans announced by the Government. Only businesses deemed to be operating in ‘high risk areas’, such as construction sites and those with poor safety records, will have to continue with inspections, while shops, offices, pubs and clubs will be spared. It said the changes due to come into force from April 2013 will save companies millions of pounds and help spur economic growth and innovation in the UK.

Business secretary Vince Cable said: “In these tough times, businesses need to focus all their energies on creating jobs and growth, not being tied up in unnecessary red tape.” Up to 3,000 regulations will also be abandoned or overhauled in an attempt to put the ‘common sense’ back into health and safety, said business minister Michael Fallon.

Some 6,500 regulations are to be reviewed under the Red Tape Challenge process, with the aim of abolishing or simplifying 3,000 of these by December 2013. Changes to regulations next month also mean that businesses will only be liable for civil damages in health and safety cases if they are deemed to have acted negligently. The Government said the new legislation will protect businesses from ‘compensation culture’ claims. Welcoming the move to reduce the number of health and safety inspections, head of regulatory policy at the Institute of Directors (IoD) Alexander Ehmann said: “Removing the headache of health and safety inspections for low-risk businesses is a step change.”

“Scrapping unnecessary and unpredictable inspections is a valuable piece of deregulation and the Government are to be congratulated for taking such bold and decisive action on behalf of Britain’s businesses.”

Director of policy at the British Chambers of Commerce (BCC), Adam Marshall, also welcomed the move, saying: “These measures mean that law-abiding, low-risk businesses can live without the constant threat of time-consuming and costly inspections. It’s a sensible change whose time has come.”

However, various trade unions including the Trade Union Congress (TUC) voiced concern that the new rules will put millions of workers at risk. In a statement the TUC said that health and safety was not a ‘burden’ on businesses, but a ‘basic protection for workers.’

Philip Hayden
Director - Richard Place Dobson

Crawley Town Centre

The recent meeting of the Town Centre Partnership discussed amongst other issues the future development of the town centre. Stanhope Plc have been confirmed as the development partner working with Crawley Borough Council on the Town Centre North plan. Stanhope are very keen to get a preliminary plan completed within a few months with a view to getting a formal plan in front of the council in the early part of next year. Your chamber are fully involved in these discussions and if you would like to submit your views on the development of the town centre please let us know.

The Partnership also looked at the retail offering in the town centre specifically the uses available and the designation of areas as either Primary or Secondary retail frontages. There was some discussion around the upper floors which could be used for either retail or residential use. There is a separate policy for the High Street with the key consideration for the planning team being issues around amenity and disturbance and maintaining its character.

The partnership consists of councillors and local businesses and there is always a good debate around maximising the potential for Crawley Town Centre.

Young Enterprise doubles your chances of owning your own company

Running a business at school almost doubles your chances of self-employment later in life, according to independent research by Kingston University Business School for Young Enterprise.

It shows that teenagers who get the chance to set up and run a profit-making enterprise in the classroom are almost twice as likely (42%) to become company owners than those who have not (26%), according to the new report “Impact: 50 Years of Young Enterprise.”

To compile the research Dr Rosemary Athayde conducted a series of in-depth surveys and interviews with 371 ‘alumni’ who attended Young Enterprise programmes between 1962, when the charity was founded, and now. She compared the results with a control group of 202 people who had never been on a Young Enterprise programme, adjusting for the difference in sample size. The study also found that the companies that Young Enterprise alumni create tend to employ more people, turn over more money, be more innovative and high-tech, and are more resilient in surviving a recession than the companies set up by those who did not experience enterprise education at school.

The key findings were:

- Young Enterprise alumni are more likely to end up running their own businesses: 42% of the alumni surveyed set up firms compared to 26% in the control group of non-alumni.

- Alumni firms have a larger turnover: 12% of the alumni firms are turning over 500,000 pounds a year compared 3% of the control group’s firms. In fact some 3% of alumni firms turn over more than 1 million pounds, compared to none among the non-alumni.

- Alumni companies employ more people: 11% have 51-99 employees compared 9% of the control group. Two per cent of the alumni have 100-249 employees compared to none in the control group.

- Alumni firms are more innovative: 21.2% of alumni firms were digital and ‘cloud’-based firms compared to 3% in control group.

- Alumni firms are more diverse: Alumni firms ranged from internet sales to advanced engineering, corrosion control and “retro” tourism. Control group firms were concentrated in fewer sectors, particularly health care and education.

- Alumni firms are more likely to be resilient: 49.6% of alumni firms said boosting sales was top priority in the downturn while only 5% opted for internal cuts.

Dr Athayde said: “The evidence presented in this report demonstrates that Young Enterprise alumni are more likely than average to run their own business; be serial entrepreneurs and show resilience in developing strategies to cope with difficult times. The businesses they run are more likely to be innovative, limited companies, employ others and have a larger turnover than the typical small firm in the UK.”

Dates for your diary



Next Chamber meeting

13th November – 5.30 Bowling - Crawley Bowling

28th November – 8.00am members breakfast and AGM – Laserhub

14th December – Chamber Christmas lunch – Ramada Plaza - £25pp members and £30 non members

30th January - members breakfast - Motorline

27th February - members breakfast - Crown Plaza

27th March - members breakfast - Premier Inn

Please let contact jose@crawleychamber.co.uk to book and/or for more details on any of the above.

Chamber executive portfolio holders:

Steve Rham - President steve@s4b-shredding.co.uk

Lorraine Nugent - Publicity lorraine@mediawordwaves.com

Ian Harper - Economic issues ianharper@hsbc.com

Madeleine Mills - Education madeleine.mills@young-enterprise.org.uk

Paul Roe - Transport - Gatwick paul.roe@reeves.co

Philip Hayden - Treasurer philip@placedobson.co.uk

Francis Pole - Transport francis.pole@virgin.net

Geoff Williamson - Community, Business and Environment geoff@ituk.biz

Mendes, Alfredo - Town Centre - alfredo.mendes@crawley.gov.uk

Publicity



Lorraine Nugent of Media Word Waves and editor of the Chamber monthly newsletter

If you, as a member, have news that you would like to share with other members of the Chamber in the next newsletter please let me know. If you require more information with regards to the publicity of the Chamber please speak to Lorraine or email Lorraine@mediawordwaves.com

Chestnut Tree House launches 10th Anniversary Business Awards

Around 100 supporters of a different sort gathered at Crawley Town Football Club on Thursday 18th October when Sussex children's hospice, Chestnut Tree House, launched its inaugural business awards. Part of its tenth anniversary celebrations, the charity wants to reward and recognize not only the many Sussex businesses which have supported them but also the sterling efforts of employees of those companies.

Said Sarah Arnold, Corporate Fundraising Manager for Chestnut Tree House, "Hundreds of businesses have raised thousands of pounds to help us run the only children's hospice in the county over the past ten years and we want to thank them and give something back.

"We are inviting businesses to nominate themselves or name individuals in their organisations who have put in extraordinary effort to raise funds to help us. It costs a staggering £6,850 per day to provide all our care services – both at the hospice and out in the community across Sussex – for children with life-limiting illnesses and their families. "We are caring for more children than ever before and care costs are increasing, yet we only receive 8% of our funding from central government and so are almost entirely dependent on the generosity of local businesses and individuals across Sussex to support us and help cover our costs".

Chief executive of Crawley Town Football Club, Alan Williams, then took to the stage to talk about the club's involvement with Chestnut Tree House and urged businesses and their staff who have supported the charity to put themselves forward for the 10th Anniversary Business Awards.

There will be seven awards categories and judged by an expert panel – please go to the website to find out more

www.chestnut-tree-house.org.uk



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