

## Listening to local businesses and starting to make things happen locally to help the local economy — this Autumn!

Having contacted about 60 businesses by letter and then by phone calls, the following priorities were identified with more opportunity for local networking being the strongest message:

- A) Quarterly lunchtime meetings with a business related speaker at, say, The Plough and Horses. Invitations would be issued to all businesses with a RSVP being necessary on the basis of '1st replied - 1st served'
- B) An annual networking early evening (wine and nibbles), once again on the basis of a general invite to all 400 businesses but requiring a RSVP
- C) Specific market sector 'meetings' to progress and pursue special interests/agendas. These could be self selected and based upon Retail; Light Industry; Services; Commerce; those who work from Home. Each specific group would organise themselves
- D) Business 'bacon butty and coffee' breakfast meeting with no formal agenda, say, on the last Thursday of each calendar month. No invitations would be sent; it would be a case of just 'turn up' at 7.30am and leave no later than 8.30am. This could be at Sherlock's Coffee Shop for those nearer the town centre; another 'breakfast meeting' could be held at Coppards in Jarvis Brook for any businesses in that area

Other identified priorities included: the need for a Web Site facility for local businesses for use by businesses and local residents; a paper version Business Directory; Business Support Agency input / events. There will be a business web page on a new [www.Crowborough.info](http://www.Crowborough.info) web site and businesses can register their interest direct to [paul@beacon.e-sussex.sch.uk](mailto:paul@beacon.e-sussex.sch.uk) at any time; the paper version of a Business Directory will take a lower priority. However, working with and developing stronger links with Business Support Agencies will be progressed and further information about how that will evolve will be notified to everyone in due course

Many businesses thought that an early evening meeting (wine and nibbles provided) to 'kick start' some activity was the best way forward. All 400 businesses will receive an invitation with SAE/ RSVP to help assess catering needs. The purpose is to discuss the A) B) C) D) options listed above, to identify numbers of interested parties and their preferences, to identify 'specific market sector' groups' and to confirm what is going to happen. Tony Slack would take responsibility for organising A) B) and D) to start with; however, the 'specific sector groups' - option C) - would need to organise their own events/meetings.

This 'kick start' evening would start by arrival at 5.30pm with the more formal part of meeting at 6pm but to finish no later than 7pm. Naturally, it would be good if the majority of businesses were represented but everyone's preferences still need to be received irrespective whether or not they attend the September meeting. A Newsletter will be distributed to the usual 400 businesses ASAP after the meeting with the intention of developing an Autumn / Winter programme of events.

Your business's invitation is enclosed so  
please complete and return it before 1st Sept.