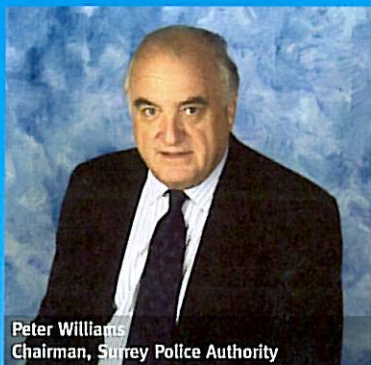




SURREY POLICE AUTHORITY COLUMN



Peter Williams
Chairman, Surrey Police Authority

I, LIKE MANY others, believe that politics must be kept out of policing. The police must serve everyone equally and should be overseen in an impartial way.

I was greatly concerned therefore to learn of proposals from the Leader of the County Council, Dr Andrew Povey, to do away with the independent Police Authority and bring Surrey Police under the party political control of the County Council. We had not been consulted about this plan, and I have made public my opposition to it.

Dr. Povey claims he can save £2m a year if his proposal was implemented. It is difficult to see how this could be achieved. To begin with, the Authority costs very much less than this. Its budget is spent on fulfilling necessary duties – such as audits and performance monitoring – that are fundamental to the effective running of any organisation, particularly one on the scale of a police force. Spending on these activities cannot simply be stopped as Dr. Povey's plan infers.

The Police Authority structure – nine county councillors and eight independent members of the public – means that the Authority has a balance of views and a range of skills. Essentially, it serves as a non-executive board of directors overseeing the Chief Operating Officer of Surrey Police, namely the Chief Constable.

The independence of the Authority has allowed us to stand against Government policy when it has been in Surrey's interest to do so. Moreover, the skills brought into policing from a range of sectors by the Authority's Members have helped modernise and streamline Surrey Police to an extent that would otherwise have been impossible. This has contributed substantially to Surrey's continued position as one of the best performing and most efficient police forces in the country.



Time is money

By Dawn O'Leary, Davis Burton Sellek Chartered Accountants

"All my possessions for a moment of time," said Queen Elizabeth 1, one of the many greats to recognise the importance of time. Whilst in the modern world we aspire to a healthy work life balance we seldom want to pay for it. In reality we end up spending long hours doing things because we think we can do them more effectively and cheaply. We believe our time is better spent doing it ourselves than delegating or outsourcing the work to an expert.

Sound familiar? Your passion was to set up your own business. You wanted to be your own boss, work the hours you wanted and make money for yourself? As the business grows though you suddenly become finance, HR, sales & marketing, business and admin manager rolled into one. Before you know it you become dragged into the minutiae of running your own business instead of enjoying it.

Like marketing, accountancy is often deemed as a necessary evil. Finance is the lifeblood of a business but paying an accountant tends to be seen as a cost rather than an investment. The problem is that burning the midnight oil to complete your VAT and Tax returns is a false economy and may end up costing the business in the long run. Compare the costs (including your time and the unnecessary stress) of potential penalties for incorrect or late returns with the cost savings if you were to outsource this type of work to business accountancy professionals. I know what I would rather do!



Dawn O'Leary

Have your say at:
www.davisburtonsellek.com/blog and
follow our tweets at:
<http://twitter.com/dbsellek>

New rules help resident workers

The UK Border Agency is to improve the chances of resident workers having the first chance at local jobs

RESPONDING TO PROPOSALS from the Migration Advisory Committee, the Home Secretary has agreed the following changes, to take effect in the new year:

The timescale for jobs to be advertised before companies can seek to employ individuals from outside Europe will extend from two weeks to four weeks

The minimum salary required to qualify as a skilled worker, and so eligible to work in the UK, will rise from £17,000 to £20,000

Overseas workers wishing to transfer to their company's UK base will need to be employed by that firm for at least a year, not six months as at present.

A range of other recommendations from the Migration Advisory Committee have also been accepted, demonstrating how the new Points Based System has given the authorities much greater ability to react swiftly where they deem it necessary.

"Resident workers have now been given every opportunity to fill vacancies before they are offered abroad," commented Karen Grant of Cheyney Goulding LLP.

"Controlling when skilled workers can take jobs in the UK under the points-based system is a positive move, ensuring resident workers have a better opportunity to obtain work in the UK before companies can try to recruit from abroad. This is a positive step in light of the current economic climate and high UK unemployment rate."