



Halton Chamber of Commerce & Enterprise

A united voice for Runcorn and Widnes businesses

NEWS RELEASE

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Halton businesses put on a brave face following EU Brexit vote

Halton businesses are putting on a brave face following the EU Brexit vote – despite an overwhelming majority voting to remain in the European Union.

72 local companies and organisations responded to a survey organised by Halton Chamber of Commerce and Enterprise. 42% predict the Brexit vote will be bad for business; 24% believe it will be a good move to leave the EU and 18% think it will make no difference at all.

Despite this, more businesses are positive (39%) about the future than negative (35%). This is in the face of only 13% believing they themselves will be better off. 41% of businesses believe life will remain the same for them and 24 % predict trading conditions are going to get worse.

The vast majority say Brexit will not affect local staffing levels. However 7% say they could soon be laying off staff compared with only 4% who predict extra recruitment as a result of Brexit – a net reduction of 3%.

Over half say their investment plans will not be altered, with only 6% predicting an increase and 14% expecting to decrease investment.

Just under a quarter of the respondents import and export to European Union countries and of those about a third expect problems after we leave the EU and 4% predict that all or part of their operations may have to move away from Halton.

Halton Chamber chief executive Paula Cain said: “Halton businesses are remaining positive about the UK’s momentous decision to leave the European Union, despite the obvious concerns about future trading conditions.

“The Merseyside area has had a huge injection of EU cash over the last few decades. Halton’s small and medium-sized businesses, along with other SMEs in the region, are currently benefiting from free expertise and business guidance thanks to the Liverpool City Region Integrated Business Support programme, funded by the EU.

“Projects like these are the hidden benefits of EU memberships. Like many organisations across the country, we will be lobbying Government hard to provide alternative sources of project funding once we leave the EU.”

All business owners and operators are invited to a special update on “Brexit – and the Future for British Business” at Halton Chamber’s popular 1st Tuesday breakfast networking event on Tuesday 6th September. Staged at the Hillcrest Hotel in Widnes, there will be a chance to hear about the survey results in more detail and the latest news on how Brexit is likely to affect local businesses.

The two hour 1st Tuesday event starts at 7.30am and is open to members and non-members. Tickets should be booked in advance by contacting Nicola Holland on 0333 358 3480 or email Nicola.holland@haltonchamber.co.uk.

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On behalf of Halton Chamber of Commerce and Enterprise