



## Mar-Apr 2016

Two co-owners with whom we are working offer an insight into the confusion in the mind of normally decisive owners. They were ready to sell at the beginning of the year and have now, owing largely to the uncertainty (as they see it) surrounding our future in Europe have decided to put off a final decision until July. They are not alone; yet another firm with strong ties to Europe employing a large number of operatives also decided to put their sale plans on the back burner despite the ages of the owners. Uncertainty is bad for business although in this case there is little reason to worry; there is only one viable and reasonable vote.

This Newsletter is published rather later than usual and is able to reveal that an informal poll taken at a Referendum meeting held in mid-March by a prominent local accountancy firm the vote was a comfortable 60/40 in favour of staying. We were fortunate to have a rather sensible MP who explained the pros and cons quite clearly and really the only people who, as far as the writer of this Newsletter could tell, voted to leave were the more elderly frustrated attendees who recall a Golden Epoch that probably did not really exist!

Meanwhile therefore business is disappointingly slow. The mismatch of which we have spoken as between aspirations and reality remains stubbornly big. This is a disappointing feature that most people who are prepared to discuss their business activity admit. Large investors consider themselves lucky to close one or two deals in a twelve-month period. This is a period in which the temptation to normalise statistics runs very high. Some people are advised or encouraged to process their figures to give better headline results. The problem with this sort of approach is the potential for a culture shock when the buyer uncovers that reporting rules have been changed without any logic other than the polishing up of results. It is a dangerous path to follow and one we discourage. This last is akin to suggestions we have heard regarding the astronomically huge sums of money that will (in fact only read could possibly) be saved once we remove the European yoke. Lies, damned lies and politically influenced statistics...

If you are seriously considering the sale of your business it is important you speak to an experienced and knowledgeable broker; companies are not sold on a push-button basis, so talk to Chesham because you only sell your business once!