

## **Beacon Trailblazers celebrate leadership and future success at 2010 Summit**

**Beacon Summit 2010 - Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> October,  
Somerset County Cricket Club, Taunton**

Fears of a double-dip recession were allayed for over 170 of the region's business leaders at the biennial Beacon Summit last week. Joining a speaker line up which included ex-SAS officer and leadership expert Floyd Woodrow and British Lions coach Sir Ian McGeechan, HSBC's chief economist Dennis Turner stated that the "economy is through the worst" and "is on its way" to recovery.

His insight into the current economy and financial markets was echoed in live voting poll results from the day - **over half (54%) of delegates stated that their profits are up on previous quarter (and previous year), and 82 per cent are feeling very confident or confident about the future of their business.**

Celebrating business leadership in the region and looking to further skills needed to affect a full economic recovery for the South West, the day began with a welcome from Beacon South West project director, Sue Baker who acknowledged the success of Beacon firms despite the tough trading conditions of the past two years. Dennis Turner, the first speaker to address the Summit, provided an insightful overview of the current and future economic landscape for the UK.

He cited the importance of interest rates remaining at such a low level, currently at their lowest for 300 years, as a powerful aid to the recovery. He also recognised that the weak Pound is increasing export volumes particularly in the manufacturing sector – an industry which is key to the recovery. He noted that for many businesses in the lead up to the Government Spending Review on 20<sup>th</sup> October, it is "easy to be frightened by the publicity" surrounding public sector cuts, and that they would be a "downward pressure" on businesses, but the economy was through the worst of times.

With effective leadership the theme of the day, Floyd Woodrow – one of the UK's youngest soldiers to be selected for the SAS at 22 years old and now an international leadership coach, revealed his leadership beliefs, how to understand and implement leadership strategies, and realise and maximise your own leadership potential.

John McMahon, director of business development consultancy Forum 21, took the Summit through his model for effective leadership and went on to apply his techniques for assessing competitive capability to Beacon company SuperGroup PLC's business with its Chief Operating Officer, Diane Savory. Coming to the end of a phenomenal trading year for the

business as the highest riser in the FTSE 250 since its listing in March of this year, Diane explained the operations model for the business and shared some of the brand's secrets of its success with the delegates. From another Beacon company, Ceuta Healthcare, director of human resources Mike Simpkins gave an overview of the company's success as a market leader, and its own internal leadership operations which ensure that the company has seen extensive growth.

Closing the Summit, Sir Ian McGeechan conveyed his experience of being a leader on a world-wide stage with global media watching on as he coached the 1997 and 2009 British Lions, most recently on tour in South Africa. Citing "world class basics" as the key to a team's success, he played videos of his key leadership speeches whilst on the tour, and gave tips on how to compete at such a pressurised level where as Sir Ian put it, without trying "you'll never know what you might achieve".

Sue Baker said of the Summit, "What an inspiring line up of internationally renowned speakers. Leaders in their field, they captured the spirit of Beacon perfectly – Beacon firms are enterprising, purveyors of best practice and as leaders, nurture cultures of success and innovation. Despite the challenging climate of the recession, Beacon companies have a level of confidence which is born from their success, and show that this region has a thriving business community, with leaders who are willing to give their time through Beacon to support others in the South West as they strive for a winning performance."

In recognition of their involvement with Beacon South West (support-in-kind from Beacon leaders in 2009 was valued at over £350,000 worth of consultancy), the following leaders were recognised and thanked for their support with an award presented by Sir Ian McGeechan:

- Aurora Care Limited
- Bandvulc Group
- BIBIC
- BPE
- Brightside Group plc
- Concorde Copiers
- CT Producton
- Expolink Europe Ltd
- Fudges
- Huber Technology Ltd
- IVC
- MattBlack Systems Ltd
- Omega Resource Group plc
- On- Direct Business Services Ltd
- Parallel Blue Ltd
- SACO
- Somar International Ltd
- Tamar Foods
- TDSi
- TJ International Limited
- Vortok International Limited

**Photograph below**

- **ENDS** -

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**Trailblazers' - leaders of Beacon Companies were recognized at the Beacon Summit**

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**Date of issue: 12<sup>th</sup> October 2010**

**Note to editors:**

Speakers on the day included:

- The Economy – the major trends - **Dennis Turner**, chief economist at HSBC
- Beacon case study – **Mike Simpkins**, director of Human Resources at Beacon company Ceuta Healthcare
- Creating a vision; robust and flexible decision making  
– **Floyd Woodrow MBE DCM LL.B**
- Forum 21 model – **John McMahon**, director of Forum 21
- Beacon case study – **Diane Savory**, chief operating officer at SuperGroup PLC
- Coaching for performance – **Sir Ian McGeechan**

**Beacon South West** brings together some of the South West's most forward thinking and ambitious companies to promote success and spearhead the growth of the region. A key business initiative of the South West of England Regional Development Agency, Beacon South West is an award given to those companies who can demonstrate outstanding achievement across a range of criteria, including significant improvements in productivity and performance, profitability, work culture and innovation. Beacon South West members play an important role in cultivating enterprise excellence in the region.

**[www.beaconsw.org](http://www.beaconsw.org)**