Compass Accountants

Newsletter - April/May 2015

Helping you to shape your future… not just accounting for your past…

TaxAngles - For proactive tax planning

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Goodbye tax returns, hello digital accounts

In an effort to streamline and simplify the administration of the Self Assessment tax system, HMRC is planning to introduce digital accounts for fifty million taxpayers by 2020. When completed, taxpayers will no longer be required to submit Self Assessment tax returns to HMRC.

Instead, HMRC will gather information from employers, pension providers, banks and building societies, and automatically post data regarding salaries, benefits, pensions and investment income to the digital accounts.

It is still not clear how information regarding property income, capital gains, business profits and other chargeable income or gains will be gathered by HMRC, although it has been mooted that it will be possible to link business accounting software with the digital accounts by 2020.

This is a radical shift from the present "gathering and filing" processes that presently places the responsibility for the make-up and lodgement of Self Assessment data on the taxpayer. In some respects it harks back to the days prior to Self Assessment when HMRC used to issue assessments to taxpayers, who were then obliged to check the numbers.

Information published so far by HMRC indicates that:

- Taxpayers, and their agents, will be able to access their digital accounts to make real time changes to data and pay their tax.
- Fifteen million taxpayers will be set up with digital accounts as early as 2016 with the remainder given access to their digital accounts by 2020.

More details are needed in order to assess the impact of these changes and HMRC have advised they will publish this later this year.

It will be interesting to see how the change will impact associated issues such as late filing penalties. Hopefully, HMRC will abandon these charges for taxpayers where little or no tax is due.

The Government will also need to consider digital exclusion: how are they going to accommodate taxpayers who cannot easily access the internet for various reasons?

Quote of the month…

"Not all dreamers are winners, but all winners are dreamers. Your dream is the key to your future. The Bible says that, without a vision (dream), a people perish." You need a dream if your going to succeed in anything you do." - Mark Gorman - motivational speaker.

Savings boost

There were a number of changes to promote savings in the Budget. The main changes are set out below:

Help to Buy ISA

From autumn 2015, a new ISA is being launched that will enable first time buyers to save for their deposit. An initial deposit of £1,000 is allowed with additional monthly savings of up to £200.

The Government will top up these savings by 25% up to a maximum of £3,000 (when deposits by the saver reach £12,000).

The bonus can only be put towards a first time buy of up to £450,000 in London or £250,000 elsewhere.

ISA flexibility

From autumn 2015, ISA savers will be able to withdraw and replace money from their ISAs without using up their ISA subscription limit.

Personal savings allowance

From April 2016, basic rate taxpayers will not have to pay tax on the first £1,000 of interest received on savings, and higher rate (40%) taxpayers will not have to pay tax on the first £500 of interest received. The allowance will not be available to additional rate (45%) income taxpayers.

Premium Bonds investment limit

This limit is increased from £30,000 to £50,000 on 1 June 2015.

Significant increase in NMW from October 2015

The National Minimum Wage rates from 1 October 2015, as recommended by the Low Pay Commission (LPC) will be:

- a 20p (3%) increase in the adult rate (from £6.50 to £6.70 per hour)
- a 17p (3%) increase in the rate for 18 to 20 year olds (from £5.13 to £5.30 per hour)
- an 8p (2%) increase in the rate for 16 to 17 year olds (from £3.79 to £3.87 per hour)

The National Minimum Wage rate for apprentices will increase by 57p (20%) from £2.73 to £3.30 per hour. The LPC recommended an increase of 2.6% to £2.80 in the apprentice rate..

The Government is also putting employers in control of the funding for apprenticeships by introducing a new digital apprenticeship voucher. Vouchers can be used to reduce or eliminate training costs with appropriate providers.

Apprenticeship vouchers will further simplify things for employers and give them the purchasing power to fund apprenticeship training.

The employer would register their details on a system being developed by the Skills Funding Agency including their type of business, the details of the apprentice and the apprenticeship standard being signed up to. The discounted rate, which could be up to 100% for 16 to 18 year olds, at which employers can purchase training, would be calculated and the employer would be able to pass on the voucher code to the provider that is delivering the training. The provider would then reclaim the value of the voucher from the Skills Funding Agency.

Pension's flexibility a word of caution

The new flexibility, that certain pension pot holders can avail themselves from 6 April 2015, offers more opportunity regarding the funds they have saved. Once you reach minimum pension age, normally 55, you will be able to:

- Leave your pension fund invested, no change.
- Enter drawdown, thereby taking some of your money whilst leaving the rest where it is.
- Withdraw cash in one or a number of lump sums.
- Purchase an annuity.
- Go with a combination of all of the above.
- Or take your entire pension pot in one go.

Additionally, from April 2016, people who already have an annuity will be able to effectively sell it on, so that they too can benefit from the pension freedoms announced at last year's Budget.

Currently, people who have bought an annuity are unable to sell it without having to pay at least 55% tax on the proceeds of the sale. From April 2016, the tax rules will change so that people who already have income from an annuity can sell that when they choose and will pay their usual rate of tax they pay on income, instead of 55%.

With so many options to choose from, and a variety of tax traps to avoid, there has never been a more compelling time to seek professional advice BEFORE you make any decisions.

'Coffee Cup' chain celebrates another opening!

Staff and visitors of the 'Coffee Cup' Coffee House on Eastney Esplanade celebrated on March 8th as the doors to the premises were opened for the first time.

Crowds gathered at the opening of the Coffee House as Director's, Debbie and Steve Parsons cut the ribbon to mark the first day of trading at the new outlet.

Adam Parsons, Manager of the Coffee Cup chain said- "Coffee Cup began eight years ago, when we started with just a small kiosk, which, with a good quality offer and regular opening times come rain or shine, we quickly outgrew. We upgraded this space to a larger kiosk and in May 2009 we expanded even further to a large 30-seat coffee shop in Clarence Pier, Southsea -which is still thriving. Now, we have a kiosk in Guildhall Square, as well as another shop in Portchester. The opening of this - our latest Coffee House in Eastney Esplanade- will be our fourth outlet."

As a family run business, Adam is the son of the company's two Directors, Debbie and Steve Parsons - who officially opened the Eastney Coffee House, cutting the ribbon with the help of their grandchildren (Adam's son and niece). With many members of the family working in the business, family is a core element of the company's success- as well as the many hardworking staff members that have also joined the Coffee Cup team.

"We had always wanted to expand." Adam continued, "Our intentions are now to keep going and possibly to move further afield from Portsmouth."

Coffee Cup became a client of Compass Accountants in 2014, who are now on board to advise the company on further growth as well as manage payroll, and assist the business with all general accountancy support.

"Following the growth of Coffee Cup, we wanted to work with an accountancy firm capable of providing us with the necessary advice and expertise to support and enable our plans to further expand. Compass Accountants were recommended to us by our bank manager, and have so far already proven to be a great asset to our development."

www.coffeecupportsmouth.com

Tax Diary
April 2015/May 2015

1 April 2015 - Due date for Corporation Tax due for the year ended 30 June 2014.

19 April 2015 - PAYE and NIC deductions due for month ended 5 April 2015. (If you pay your tax electronically the due date is 22 April 2015.)

19 April 2015 - Filing deadline for the CIS300 monthly return for the month ended 5 April 2015.

19 April 2015 - CIS tax deducted for the month ended 5 April 2015 is payable by today.

1 May 2015 - Due date for Corporation Tax due for the year ended 31 July 2014.

19 May 2015 - PAYE and NIC deductions due for month ended 5 May 2015. (If you pay your tax electronically the due date is 22 May 2015.)

19 May 2015 - Filing deadline for the CIS300 monthly return for the month ended 5 May 2015.

19 May 2015 - CIS tax deducted for the month ended 5 May 2015 is payable by today.

31 May 2015 - Ensure all employees have been given their P60s for the 2014-15 tax year.

Contact us

For further information on any of the stories in this month's newsletter, or for any other matter that Compass Accountants can assist you with, please contact Jeff Walton on 01329 844145.

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