



STILL BAY BUSINESS/BESIGHEIDSFORUM



NETWORK TOWARDS SUCCESS/ NETWERK NA SUKSES

## **Annexure A: Business Value Summary 2024/25**

*This annexure offers a business-focused view of the 2024/25 reporting period, highlighting the tangible benefits that local enterprises experienced as a result of the Forum's work.*

*While the main Annual Report outlines strategic initiatives and organisational developments, this summary captures how businesses experienced practical support, improved visibility, and stronger participation in the local economy.*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

This document provides a focused view of what Forum activities meant for local businesses in practical terms. Through multiple surveys and ongoing engagement, businesses shared their main challenges - including rising costs, limited visibility, seasonal demand, and difficulty in finding and retaining qualified workers. They also expressed clear expectations of the Forum: stronger policy and infrastructure support, increased exposure for business and tourism, access to relevant data, and opportunities to connect with peers.

The areas of support outlined respond directly to those expectations, focusing not on what the Forum did, but on what you gained: access to practical help and guidance, stronger visibility in the market, meaningful platforms for participation, and a collective voice in local economic matters.

## 2. BENEFITS TO BUSINESS

### 2.1. Voice in Local Policy and Planning

Businesses benefited from strong and consistent representation in key community and municipal platforms. Priorities and challenges were voiced across 11 Ward Committee meetings and actively carried into the Community Policing Forum (CPF), Security Network (SSN), Community Forum and Stilbaai Tourism. These engagements helped surface business-related issues early, build mutual understanding, and influence decision-making that directly affects the business operating environment.

Business concerns were also formally submitted through all the municipal public participation processes, including the Integrated Development Plan (IDP), budget consultations, the Spatial Development Framework (SDF), and informal discussions on trading and tariff policies. This ensured that issues such as rising municipal tariffs, limited commercial space, and infrastructure backlogs were considered in the development planning process. This level of engagement meant your realities were acknowledged, and your voice actively shaped local economic priorities.

***When businesses gain access, visibility, and a voice, they do more than survive. They grow, adapt, and lead.***

### 2.2. Business Visibility, Infrastructure, and Digital Reach

More than 60 advertising boards and branded public structures across Stilbaai offered affordable exposure in high-traffic areas. Their consistent presence helped local businesses gain recognition among both residents and visitors, particularly during peak seasons when visibility directly translated into increased customer footfall.

In addition to physical infrastructure, the Forum promoted local services and business updates through its Facebook page and website. These channels featured business news,

event promotions, and urgent vacancy listings, enabling member businesses to reach a wider audience quickly and effectively.

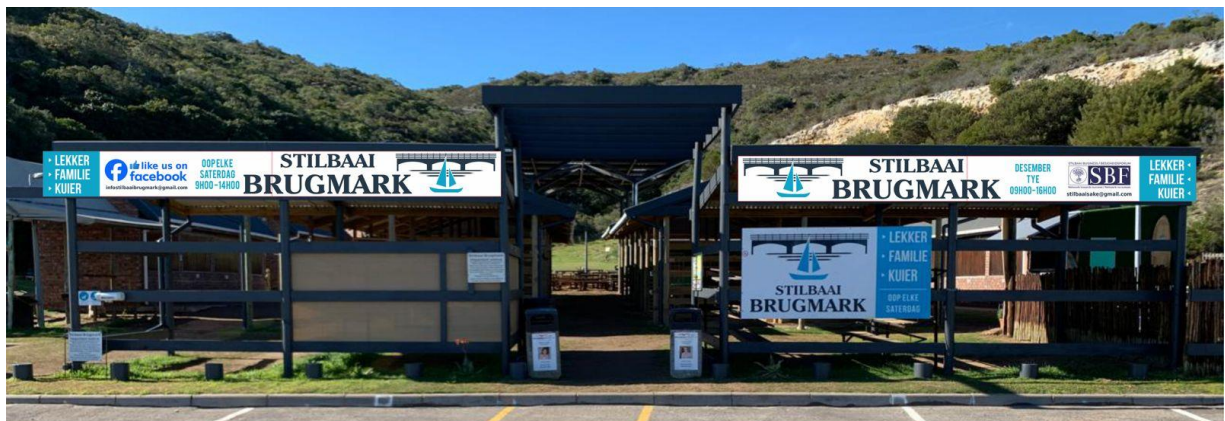
Online, the Forum's Facebook page reached over 413,000 people and generated nearly 16,000 interactions - a performance benchmarked as significantly above average compared to similar local business platforms.

### 2.3. Stimulating Inclusive Local Economic Activity

The Brugmark remained a crucial platform for informal entrepreneurs to develop early-stage business skills, test products, and earn income within a well-organized environment. In 2024/25, over 60 traders took part, with most trading regularly every Saturday, driven by steady customer demand, financial sustainability, and confidence in the Forum's operational model.

Beyond individual earnings, the Brugmark boosted broader economic activity in Stilbaai. Many traders sourced packaging, printing, ingredients, and materials from local businesses, strengthening connections between the formal and informal sectors and reinforcing the town's role as a regional hub for inclusive enterprise.

Ongoing infrastructure improvements added extra value. The installation of 36 shaded stalls, along with the finished atrium, kiosks, and upgraded security measures, created a more comfortable and professional trading environment, leading to increased foot traffic and better conditions for entrepreneurs and visitors alike.



### 2.4. Access to Support, Resources, and Advice

Throughout the year, businesses received regular access to essential compliance information, legal and operational guidance, and funding opportunities. This included updates on licensing requirements, changes to municipal bylaws, available tenders, training programs, job listings, and details on small business grants.

Through the Forum's Pro Bono Business Network, many new and small businesses received direct help with business registration, compliance issues, municipal procedures,

HR policies, and basic financial modeling. This hands-on support helped them overcome early-stage challenges without incurring consulting fees—a crucial boost for enterprises with limited resources.

## 2.5. Networking and Learning Events

The popularity of forum-hosted events, with an average attendance of 150 business owners and entrepreneurs per session, reflects the strong desire for meaningful interaction. These sessions offer more than just networking; they build trust, foster collaboration, and introduce members to new ideas and practical insights. Two themed learning sessions were especially well received: one on effective business networking and the other on using artificial intelligence tools to address small business challenges. Both sessions prompted follow-up engagement, with selected businesses receiving free one-on-one consultations tailored to their specific needs.



Additionally, the forum hosted a Women's Day gathering for previous Prestige Award winners - a dedicated space for reflection, recognition, and renewed connections among women business leaders.

## 3. CONCLUSION

This document reinforces the message of the Annual Report: that the Forum's true value lies not only in strategy and advocacy, but in how those efforts translate into practical support for businesses - from access and visibility to confidence and collective momentum.