

Enterprise Adviser Service seeks business mentors

Press release

16th May 2016

A new programme, designed to encourage greater links between schools and local businesses, has launched a campaign to recruit business mentors.

The **Enterprise Adviser Service** is looking for volunteers from businesses to work closely with schools, to share their knowledge and to improve the careers advice and guidance available to young people.

Commissioned by the Heart of the South West Local Enterprise Partnership (HotSW LEP), in conjunction with the four upper tier local authorities, the Enterprise Adviser Service encourages employers and schools to work together to support young people in making informed choices about their future careers.

Schools will be matched with a volunteer employer for at least one year, who will work closely with the school on a strategic basis, to evaluate the existing activity relating to careers and enterprise.

The volunteer experts will help the school identify new ideas and a bespoke action plan will be put into place.

Steve Hindley, Chair of the Heart of the South West LEP, said: "The Enterprise Adviser Service is a great idea that will help young people make informed choices about their careers and qualifications.

"Many local businesses have fantastic opportunities in rewarding careers that they all too often need to recruit out of the area for, because local people haven't taken up the necessary qualifications and training.

"This scheme will help raise awareness about the wealth of jobs in a diverse range of sectors that there are here in the Heart of the South West; and it's as important to inform the schools themselves as well as the young people coming up through the education system, as they are the main influencers in career choices.

"I hope that many of the leading business experts in the HotSW area will devote some of their time and expertise to help deliver this important new service."

Stephen Criddle, Chair of the Enterprise Adviser Steering Group and Principal of South Devon College said: "We know that young people that experience contact with employers whilst at school are more likely to remain engaged and have better career prospects.

"Businesses that get involved in the programme will get the chance to directly support young people in the area and influence skills development for the future. We expect businesses to provide around eight hours of support each month, initially working with the senior leadership team to put together and implement an action plan."

Initially the project, which was launched in March 2016, will run in 36 schools across the Heart of the South West area, covering Devon, Plymouth, Somerset and Torbay. Schools have been selected according to a number of criteria, including exam results, the number of pupils receiving free school meals and the numbers of school leavers not in education, employment or training (NEETS).

The ultimate aim is to roll this out to all schools in the area as additional funding becomes available.

CSW Group is contracted to provide the service, which is being funded by the Careers and Enterprise Company, Devon County Council, Somerset County Council, Plymouth City Council and Torbay Development Agency.

Applications are now being accepted and will close on Friday 17th June: to find out more and to apply, please visit www.heartofswlep.co.uk/easapply

Notes to Editors

For media enquiries about the Enterprise Adviser Scheme, please contact Emma Parker Reynolds at Coast emma@coastmarcoms.co.uk / 07944 360631 or the Coast main office on 01579 352600.

For all other media enquiries about the Heart of the South West Local Enterprise Partnership, please contact Communications Manager, Helena Davison 07525 806333 helena.davison@heartofswlep.co.uk

About the Careers and Enterprise Service

The Heart of the South West Local Enterprise Partnership's (HotSW LEP) Enterprise Adviser Service is designed to encourage links between schools and business. The aim is to encourage businesses to work together with schools to support young people in making choices about their future career.

Initially the project will run in 36 schools across the Heart of the South area, covering Devon, Plymouth, Somerset and Torbay.

CSW Group is contracted to provide the service, which is being funded by the Careers and Enterprise Company, Devon County

Council, Somerset County Council, Plymouth City Council and Torbay Development Agency.

To find out more, please visit www.heartofswlep.co.uk/eas

About HotSW LEP

The Heart of the South West Local Enterprise Partnership (HotSW LEP) is a strong and dynamic business-led partnership between the private sector, local authorities, universities and further education colleges across Somerset, Devon, Plymouth and Torbay. HotSW LEP's purpose is to lead and influence economic growth, job creation and prosperity across the Heart of the South West. More information is available at www.heartofswlep.co.uk

About the CSW Group

CSW Group are transition management specialists. We offer information, guidance and support to people and organisations as they move through different stages of their lives. We are a not-for-profit social enterprise; we reinvest any operating surpluses into new products and services, organisational development, and community based projects across the country.

Over 20 years we've uncovered learning and work opportunities for hundreds of people. Motivated by the belief that support means more than just a shoulder to lean on; our 200-strong team gives every individual their unfaltering attention.

Owned collectively by Cornwall, Devon County, Plymouth City and Torbay councils, we also build connections with a wealth of organisations bringing our joined-up services to communities across the South West. Acting as a not-for-profit social enterprise with an independent board of directors, anything we make, we reinvest back into communities across the South West.

www.cswgroup.co.uk

About The Careers & Enterprise Company

The Careers & Enterprise Company is a government backed organisation launched to 'join the dots' in careers and enterprise provision across England. Its work is focused on research by Sir John Holman showing that for young people to have the best chance of successfully entering work, they should leave education having had: Encounters with employers, workplaces and higher and further education to inspire them about their future. Information to understand their options. Support to plan for a fulfilling and successful career. The Company partnered with LEPs to create the Enterprise Adviser network and connect senior business volunteers with schools and colleges. The network will allocate every school in England its own Enterprise Adviser who will galvanise local careers and enterprise programmes and employers, making it simpler for businesses to engage with schools. They in turn are supported by Enterprise Coordinators who work with clusters of 20 schools to help them access the best local employers and programmes such as inspirational speakers and CV workshops. For further information: www.careersandenterprise.co.uk