

## **PRESS RELEASE**

**22<sup>nd</sup> June 2016**

### **SOMERSET BUSINESS MENTORS NEEDED FOR ENTERPRISE ADVISER NETWORK**

Somerset businesses are being urged to take part in a new project, designed to encourage greater links between schools and local businesses.

The Enterprise Adviser Network launched a campaign last month to recruit volunteer business mentors: so far the programme has recruited 24 volunteer business mentors from throughout Devon, Plymouth and Torbay, but still needs more businesses in Somerset to take part. In particular, the Network is looking for businesses in Frome, Glastonbury, Shepton Mallet, Wincanton, Yeovil, Bridgwater and Highbridge.

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, to share their knowledge and to improve the careers advice and guidance available to young people.

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

Stephen Criddle, Chair of the Enterprise Adviser Steering Group, Principal of South Devon College and HotSW LEP Board Member said: "We've had a fantastic start to the programme by recruiting 24 business advisers to date. However, we want to ensure that young people in Somerset don't miss out and would like to encourage Somerset businesses to get in touch.

"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."

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

"Many local businesses have exciting opportunities and 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.

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

### **Creating opportunities in Devon, Plymouth, Somerset and Torbay**

Heart of the South West LEP CIC, is a Community Interest Company Limited by Guarantee.  
Registered in England and Wales.  
No. 8880546, Registered Office, PO Box 805, Exeter, Devon, EX1 9UU

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.

To find out more and to apply, please visit [www.heartofswlep.co.uk/easapply](http://www.heartofswlep.co.uk/easapply)

## **ENDS**

### **Notes to Editors**

For media enquiries about the Enterprise Adviser Scheme, please contact Emma Parker Reynolds at Coast [emma@coastmarcoms.co.uk](mailto: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](mailto: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/ean](http://www.heartofswlep.co.uk/ean)

### **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](http://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.

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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](http://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](http://www.careersandenterprise.co.uk)

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