



News Release

Talking about the West Midlands European Regional Development Fund Programme

Friday 4th January 2013

For immediate release

£2.9 million support programme set to transform and create Worcestershire businesses

Businesses based within the Worcestershire Local Enterprise Partnership area are being given a helping hand to embark on a fresh business venture or grow and transform through a new support programme.

For people looking to set up a business for the first time, the programme can offer support, coaching and finance, and all the fundamental tools necessary to get it up and running. There is also something on offer to established local businesses. Bespoke specialist advice, guidance and financial support is available to businesses with the potential to grow and develop, helping to take forward and put into action their plans for expansion.

The support available through Enterprising Worcester is provided through £1.4 million from the European Regional Development Fund, which is managed by the Department for Communities and Local Government and match funded by Worcestershire County Council and the areas District Councils, with expertise input from the Chamber of Commerce and Federation of Small Businesses.

Communities Minister Baroness Hanham CBE said:

"I am delighted that we have been able to offer our support with funding to such a vital project. Helping individuals turn simple ideas into a profitable business venture or providing opportunities for existing businesses to develop is a priority for the country's economic revival."

Councillor Simon Geraghty, Worcestershire County Council's Cabinet member with responsibility for economy and infrastructure said:

"Enterprising Worcestershire offers excellent opportunities for businesses, whether starting up or looking to grow and develop. We are delighted to be working with Worcestershire Economic Partnership colleagues, including the district councils and the University of Worcester. A particular benefit of this scheme is local targeted support across the whole County - for example, access to facilities at the Hive – Europe's first joint University and public library - will be of particular benefit for those establishing and growing their



businesses, and business advisors will have specialist knowledge so that services to businesses can be tailored to specific needs."

Peter Pawsey Executive Chair of the Worcestershire Local Enterprise Partnership said,

"We welcome the Enterprise Worcestershire programme which will support new businesses to start up and encourage existing businesses to expand and create jobs. This package of financial support and business advice will encourage those thinking of either starting or investing in their business in Worcestershire to take the plunge."

To find out more about the innovative support on offer, contact Steve Brain at Worcestershire County Council on 01905 766925 or e-mail sbrain@worcestershire.gov.uk.

Editor's Notes:

The Department for Communities and Local Government is the managing authority for the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) Programme which runs from 2007 to 2013. This is one of the funds established by the European Commission to help local areas stimulate their economic development.

The West Midlands European Regional Development Fund Programme has been allocated 400 million euros to invest in projects which will support local businesses and create jobs.

In the West Midlands the priority areas and themes are:

- **Innovation and Research & Development**
Increasing investment in research and development through helping businesses take forward new innovation, sharing of knowledge and developing and demonstrating new technology
- **Enterprise Development**
Increasing business performance through supporting high growth businesses, improving resource efficiency, providing access to finance and developing a strong entrepreneurial culture
- **Sustainable Urban Development**
Improving the performance of key urban areas through regenerating local areas, encouraging investment and new businesses, creating job opportunities and helping communities most in need
- **Inter-Regional Activity**
Working with European partners to learn and improve, share and apply best practice and solve problems

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