

Ambition



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Inside the new Mansfield bus station

Shared service agreement for Ashfield and Mansfield

Ashfield and Mansfield District Councils are committed to working together to help grow and develop the local economy, which is a key priority for both Councils.

The development of a Regeneration Shared Service (RSS), hosted by Mansfield District Council, sees a five-year joint service commitment, which has increased overall capacity and resilience.

The newly integrated team came together on 1 May 2012 and spent initial time on planning key delivery actions for the already agreed Joint Economic Masterplan (JEM: 2011-2021). This resulted in a delivery plan which includes over 50 key interventions to help stimulate local growth, investment and create improved opportunities for local people.

The Ambition bulletin will keep you up-to-date with the RSS delivery progress across key work areas in Ashfield and Mansfield.

Mansfield bus station is £9 million times better

Mansfield's brand new bus station opened its doors for business on Easter Sunday (31 March), taking bus travel in the town well and truly into the 21st century.

Situated in the heart of the town, the new £9m station is just 180 metres (195 yards) from the market place and will be used by more than five million passengers a year.

The new station is much closer to Mansfield's railway station than the old one and is linked with a brand-new footbridge, helping to create a transport hub in the town, encouraging more people to travel by public transport and playing a crucial part in the regeneration and future prosperity of the town centre.

£7.2m of the funding for the project has come from the Government. The rest of the cost has been covered by Nottinghamshire County Council and Mansfield District Council and £125,000 from the East Midlands Development Agency's (emda's) Single Programme budget.

The new building is light, airy and safe, with extensive use of glass. It is fully enclosed and has a comfortable waiting area with plenty of seating, toilets, a baby changing area, shops and refreshments.

It also boasts a staffed travel information office, electronic timetable information, CCTV cameras

linked to the town centre system and automatic doors separating the waiting passengers from buses.

It has a high-tech video wall for use by local businesses and community groups which will help provide local information on a variety of subjects.

Bus operators using the new station have put their latest buses into service which are modern and comfortable.

The development of the new bus station has created an improved opportunity to regenerate the former bus station and the wider Stockwell Gate north area. The former bus station will be redeveloped into a temporary car park to offer improved parking facilities to support the town centre and retail businesses. Mansfield District Council is working on a strategy to identify alternative long-term retail investment plans for the site, as part of plans to enhance local retail opportunities and enhance Mansfield's position in the retail hierarchy.

inside this issue

Businesses reap the benefits of local placement schemes

2

Get expert advice from the Entrepreneurs' Forum

3

Careers events help set people on path to success

4

Regenerating Ashfield's town centres

Progress is being made on a number of key regeneration sites, in line with Ashfield District Council's priority to improve Ashfield's town centres.

Kirkby, Sutton and Hucknall town centre regeneration teams have been established to review masterplan options for future development and investment. As part of this process, key strategic investment objectives are being reviewed to help stimulate private sector investment and create improved opportunities for local people. Options appraisals are being developed for consideration by Ashfield District Council, partners and stakeholders. This is likely to result in specific consultation in due course.

Landmark building will be Mansfield's crown jewel

Work is well underway on a new £2.4million retail and office unit on the former Queen's Head pub site in Mansfield town centre.



Artist's impression of the new development

The landmark building will consist of two retail units on the ground floor and six high spec office units on the first and second floors.

It will incorporate green technologies such as solar panels, a green roof and energy efficient lighting. This will be the first office building in Mansfield town centre to achieve an excellent BRE Environmental Assessment Method (BREEAM) rating.

The building is expected to be completed by late September 2013. It will be owned and managed by Mansfield District Council and will be rented out to commercial and retail businesses.

The new site forms a vital gateway into the heart of the town centre from the new bus station.

To enquire about rental opportunities please call **01623 463 728** or email econdev@mansfield.gov.uk

Businesses reap the benefits of local placement schemes

Aim Higher

The Aim Higher scheme places talented local undergraduates with local businesses during the summer holiday period, to carry out a valuable project for the business.

The scheme had a very successful first year last summer, with 23 students being placed in 17 businesses.

Local student Scott Parker (pictured right), who was in his third year of a BSc (Hons) Information Technology degree course at the University of Derby, spent eight weeks working with ForSkills Limited to develop a new section for their website.

Myles Ponsonby, ForSkills Limited, said: "We have been impressed by Scott's capabilities. He has picked things up quickly and has achieved some very complex work. We are delighted to be able to offer him a longer placement thanks to the support from the Graduates into Enterprise scheme."



Carl Gibson, Myles Ponsonby and Scott Parker

Scott said: "Before taking part in the scheme I didn't think there were any jobs locally but the scheme has opened my eyes to the opportunities in the local area. I am even more delighted to have been offered the six-month placement through the Graduates into Enterprise scheme. The experience I have gained already has been invaluable."

Graduates into Enterprise

The Graduates into Enterprise scheme places local unemployed graduates with local businesses to carry out a valuable project for up to six months.

Two of the Graduates into Enterprise placements have resulted in permanent employment for the graduates involved. Scott Parker, featured in the Aim Higher item on the left, secured a job with Ashfield company ForSkills Ltd and Leisha Hankin has also been given a permanent position with Mansfield business eVenture. Another placement which has recently come to an end has resulted in a three-month fixed-term contract for the graduate concerned, to put the finishing touches to the project for SD Products – this may lead onto a permanent position. Three other placements are due to come to an end in the near future and we are hopeful that these will also result in permanent employment for the local graduates.

ERDF funding allows us to part-subsidise these schemes. If your business is interested in offering a placement for the Aim Higher or Graduates into Enterprise scheme, please contact us on **01623 463 327** for more information and an application form.



The Entrepreneurs' Forum

Get expert advice from the Entrepreneurs' Forum

New businesses and people thinking of starting a business are invited to attend FREE seminars aimed at addressing some of the challenges they may face.

The sessions are delivered by expert speakers and are funded by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF).

The first FREE workshop on generating new sales and customer retention took place in March and was attended by about 30 people. It was presented by Aidan Dye and Jonathan Nunn from Individual Team Performance Limited.

The next workshops are:

- **Powerful and persuasive copywriting for small businesses** presented by Catherine Simpson from WhichWay Marketing and small business owner and entrepreneur Alison Jerrom
Tuesday 14 May, 7.30am to 9.30am
- **Networking effectively** presented by Gary Gorman from Paradigm Training Ltd
Friday 19 July, 12noon to 2pm
- **Email marketing** presented by Jon Egly from the East Midlands eBusiness Club
Thursday 19 September, 7.30am to 9.30am
- **Cash collection techniques and overcoming reasons for non-payment** presented by Steve Savva from Credit Management Training Ltd
Thursday 7 November, 5.30pm to 7.30pm

Workshops take place at The Summit Centre, Pavilion Road, Kirkby in Ashfield, NG17 7LL. They all start with a 30-minute breakfast, lunch or buffet tea and are followed by a networking session.

The Entrepreneurs' Forum provides an opportunity for new businesses and people thinking of starting their own business to meet others in similar situations to share ideas and learn from each other, provide support and encourage inter-trading.

The forum also provides much-needed advice, support and information on a wide range of issues facing businesses as well as a one-to-one mentoring support programme.

The mentoring programme can provide support and motivation, help business owners to increase their business knowledge and experience, increase self-awareness, confidence and self-esteem, and provide the support necessary to deal with a wide range of business challenges.

To reserve your place, visit www.mansfield.gov.uk/entrepreneursforum or call the Ashfield and Mansfield Regeneration Shared Service on **01623 463 165** or email entrepreneursforum@mansfield.gov.uk

New grant schemes on offer for local businesses

Innovation grant

This is a targeted grant scheme to stimulate an innovative approach to improving the performance of small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) across the area.

This could be the development of a new product, process, service or the enhancement of existing ones.

Grants range from £1,000 to £5,000 and are provided on a 50/50 match funded basis.

The type of activity involved could be around research and development e.g. development of prototypes, pilot testing or tailored market research in respect of new markets and marketing such as website and social media activity.

A RSS officer will work with local businesses to develop a funding proposal which will then be considered by an independent panel.

The panel recently had its first meeting and agreed to support an Ashfield manufacturing business which is making adjustments to its factory premises to enable it to develop products for new markets. Grant support has also been given to a Mansfield marketing consultancy for the development of a franchise model and online marketing management training service.

Business crime reduction grant

The business crime reduction grant offers a 50% match funded capital grant to assist local SMEs to reduce their chances of being a victim of criminal activity. It will also assist in improving the attractiveness of the area to inward investors.

Grants are available from £1,000 to £5,000.

We are supported by the Nottinghamshire Police Business Crime Reduction team which carries out joint visits to applicant's business premises to produce a report on the most effective measures to reduce criminal activity. This then informs the items that can be funded. These can be installation or upgrading of CCTV and alarm systems, along with general building security and environmental improvements. So far eight businesses have been assessed and three applications have been received and approved.

For more information and to apply for the innovation grant or the business crime reduction grant, please call **01623 463 165**.

Careers events help set people on path to success

In autumn 2012 more than 300 people attended career and advice days held in Mansfield and Sutton in Ashfield.

Career and advice event



Mansfield and Ashfield District Councils, West Notts College and Job Centre Plus joined forces to organise the days, which were held at the Mansfield Library and Sutton Centre Community College.

Ten people were offered immediate employment with Sports Direct at Shirebrook and started work on either the same day, or the day after. A further ten recruits were registered to start at a later date.

The career and advice days gave people the opportunity to find out about:

- apprenticeship opportunities
- new career pathways
- starting a new business
- volunteering opportunities
- retraining, and
- interview skills, CV guidance and job applications.

Similar events are planned to take place during 2013.

Invest Ashfield & Mansfield helps nurture business

The enterprise and investment theme of the Joint Economic Masterplan is about supporting businesses, creating a positive environment for growth, investment and promotion, both by helping to nurture local businesses and promoting the area to new prospective investors.



This is being delivered under the brand name of Invest Ashfield & Mansfield.

The RSS team has been working with a local design company to develop the overall brand for the promotional materials, which will support a wide campaign of action. A new website will anchor this key area of work, which will be delivered in partnership with the business community. Social media will be used to help maximise the awareness of local investment opportunities, as well as

traditional forms of communication.

There will be an on-going programme of events and initiatives that are topical and relevant to local businesses. In April 2013 the theme will be around starting a business, whilst in May it will be looking to launch an Ambassadors' programme, as well as the new Invest Ashfield & Mansfield website.

It is important that we support our local businesses and continue to celebrate their success to help generate new investment.

Bespoke business support service offers a helping hand

The RSS team offer a bespoke enquiry handling service for both existing businesses and prospective new investors. We can search for available property and land, across the two Districts, which meets your business needs. All enquiries are handled in a confidential and efficient way.

There are some positive signs that enquiries are beginning to pick up and we are on hand to make your investment plans go as smoothly as possible, linking investment needs with local support opportunities available.

ERDF funding set to drive investment and growth



The RSS has secured European funding of just over £1 million to deliver a range of measures, designed to help drive investment and growth for the benefit of local businesses and residents.

This project, called Ambition for Ashfield and Mansfield, is being used to support a number of the activities detailed within the RSS delivery plan.

Get in touch

If you have any questions about any of the projects mentioned within this bulletin, or have a general enquiry for the Regeneration Shared Service team, then please get in touch.

Tel: **01623 463 165**

Email: regeneration@mansfield.gov.uk

