



GRANTS: Consultants join campaign to win defence and aerospace deals

Suppliers getting reinforcements

ONE of the leading manufacturing experts in the UK is adding its knowledge to Coventry and Warwickshire's push for billions of pounds of new business in the aerospace and defence sectors.

TPT Consultancy and Training is the latest organisation to be approved to deliver the region's 'World Class Supply Chains' programme, which is designed to help local suppliers improve competitiveness and work towards global SC21 recognition.

This appointment will mean

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that participants in the programme will have access to even greater levels of specialist expertise and understanding, which will ensure more than 100 firms will benefit between now and the middle of 2011.

Cliff Johnson, of Manufacturing Advisory Service-West Midlands, said: "We launched the £1.5 million 'World Class' Programme in January and the intention is to provide companies with in-depth

support in working towards industry standards that are going to prove so crucial in winning billions of pounds of new orders over the next five years.

"The package of expertise, which is available through individual grants of up to £20,000, looks at improving relationships, performance, reducing cost, encouraging innovation and securing the highest level of quality."

TPT joins Industry Forum and TEC Transnational as the third preferred provider.

The business was set up by Tom

Townsend in 1993 to provide solutions to manufacturing concerns in the automotive industry, but quickly grew to cover aerospace, defence and rail.

He said: "We have already helped one company to achieve the bronze (SC21) recognition so we know what it takes to be effective."

The £1.5 million World Class Supply Chain programme is being funded by regional development agency Advantage West Midlands and the European Regional Development Fund.

business briefing

Pathways training helps unemployed

THE long-term unemployed are being helped back into work-based training to improve their job prospects during the recession, thanks to community regeneration specialist Frank Haslam Milan West Midlands.

FHM is offering vital opportunities to people who have recently been made redundant, or have suffered the effects of long-term unemployment.

The Coleshill-based firm is mentoring people through the Pathways training centre which was established in 2005.

Canada target

ELEVEN hi-tech West Midlands companies are exploring new export opportunities in Canada next month.

UK Trade and Investment's Coventry and Warwickshire international trade team is leading a market visit to Toronto demonstrating the expertise of information and communications technology in the West Midlands from October 5 to October 9.

The companies will be aiming to gain new clients and develop partner relationships.

Work experience

EMPLOYERS in Coventry and Warwickshire are missing out on the business benefits of taking on a school leaver or graduate for work experience, according to new research published today. The Populus survey of 500 UK business leaders reveals that although almost nine in ten employers view work experience as good practice, over half feel it only benefits the individual.

Shake-up warning

THE clock is ticking for companies that have not prepared for a major legal shake-up which comes into effect on October 1. Under the new Companies Act, changes will affect the way information is filed at Companies House, and include a shortened time-frame for filing accounts, higher penalties for missed deadlines and a new online system.

Simply the best

COVENTRY Building Society has the best call centre in Europe of all medium or large organisations, according to the European Call Centre Awards.

The society was also highly commended for its unique Poppy Bond campaign which raised over £1.6 million for The Royal British Legion.

Sally Wrigglesworth, the building society's head of customer service, said: "We faced strong competition from some of Europe's best-known organisations and to take first place is a great achievement for the whole contact centre team."

The Coventry also achieved podium positions in two satisfaction surveys from consumer champion, Which?, that published views of its readers on the performance of the major UK savings and mortgage providers.

Coventry received five stars for customer service and value for money in a performance that saw the society rated third in Britain for customer satisfaction for savings and mortgages.



HOT SEAT... New Chamber president Doug Squires with out-going president Darren Jones

New president humbled by past

THE man behind a successful manufacturing firm in the region is the new president of the Coventry and Warwickshire Chamber of Commerce

Doug Squires, the managing director of Squires Gear & Engineering, based in Swan Lane, Coventry, has taken over the role held by Darren Jones.

Mr Squires hopes to serve for two years and is planning to make the most of the position.

He said: "It is an honour to be president of the chamber. There is a board in the chamber offices which lists the people that have previously held this position. When I looked down that list I was very humbled to be among

those names especially when I saw Colonel C.W Clark up there - he was chairman of Alfred Herbert Machine Tools when I served my apprenticeship.

"I am very much looking forward to this role. I intend to put everything I can into it to make sure I get the most out of it."