

EXECUTIVE MEMBER CORPORATE PROJECTS (BUSINESS REPORT)

EXPORT INITIATIVE

THE IDEA

I recently brought to officers attention the idea of an event to accelerate the take up of services from local businesses regarding export support. There had been recent examples where the No Limits Programme had worked very successfully and where real added value had been experienced from participating local firms.

THE PARTNERS

Whilst the council might have historically been directly engaged in the delivery of such work, it is recognised that others are better placed to take on the organisation of such an event. The long-term collaboration with East Lancashire Chamber of Commerce has indicated a partnership approach would be most sensible. Discussion across partner providers has indicated the best arrangement would be for the event to become part of an already programmed range of diarised events.

THE BENEFITS TO THE BOROUGH

Recent statistical information of business performance across the North West has indicated that after Warrington, the local authority with the greatest number of 'gazelle' businesses (those able to leap over business barriers) is resident in Blackburn with Darwen. It is understood a number of these have achieved this by setting their sights on global rather than local, regional and national targets. Consequently, an event to celebrate success – perhaps with testimonial evidence – could have significant influence on businesses not yet experienced in international trade.

ACTION PLAN

Officers from Regeneration and Environment explored the possibility of an event during January, but the lead in time proved too complex. There would have been a high risk of poor attendance. As a result, new dates are being explored when Business Link North West, East Lancashire Chamber of Commerce and Community Business partners can collaborate and will be able to make significant contributions to the event. The event is likely to be a breakfast or twilight session at one of the three business centres run by the council during February.

The information is supported by the Resources and Regeneration & Environment portfolio holders.

