

Business Briefing

News and information for Tameside businesses



"We made a promise to deliver a market - we did it," says Executive Leader Cllr Roy Oldham



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briefly...

A round up of news that could affect you and your business

Metrolink expansion

METROLINK extension Phase 3a began in October 2008. It will include a new line to Droylsden, Oldham, Rochdale, and Chorlton in South Manchester. The new lines will nearly double the size of the Metrolink network. It is anticipated that trams will start running to Droylsden by spring 2012.

Companies interested in working on the project should email mpactprocurement@mpact-thales.co.uk For information on job opportunities please see: www.careersinconstruction.com

In the zone

TAMESIDE Economic Development Zone, funded by the European Regional Development Fund drew to a close in December.

It has led to more than £400m of investment in Tameside and the creation of 1,760 additional jobs.

The programme has stimulated development at Droylsden with The Wharf; at Ashton Moss and St Petersfield in Ashton-under-Lyne and has made a significant contribution to the rebuilding of the Ashton Market Hall.

Healthy changes

A new acute building complete with theatres, outpatients, a day case suite and a new main entrance will be part of a £112m project at Tameside Hospital.

Other buildings include a new Older Persons Mental Health Unit,

Pathology Laboratories, Multi Disciplinary Education and Training Centre and replacement car parking.

Consort Healthcare is the Private Sector Company selected to work in collaboration on developing and constructing the new hospital buildings.

Construction is being carried out by a joint venture between Balfour Beatty Construction Ltd and Haden Building Management.

Building futures

TAMESIDE Council has selected 'inspiredspaces' as its partner to deliver design, construction, facilities management and information communications technology services in all secondary schools for the next 10 years. 'inspiredspaces' is looking for a wide range of skills, services and suppliers, including:

- Construction skills ~ including, brickwork, painting/decorating, carpentry and joinery, scaffolding, electrical and mechanical services, fencing, landscaping, groundworks, concreting, roofing, plastering/partitioning/dry lining, surveying, etc
- Business Management
- Facilities Management
- IT skills
- Supply of materials and fittings

If you missed the Meet the Buyer event held in October for the Tameside Business Family and 'inspiredspaces' and you want to keep up to date on this development please contact

**richard.nash@tameside.gov.uk
or see: <http://sites.google.com/site/tamesidebsf/meet-the-buyer-oct1-2008>**

Jobs Fair 2009

THE annual Tameside Jobs Fair will take place in early 2009 at Hyde Town Hall.

Now in its fourth year, the event attracts between 1,300 and 1,600 visitors and job-seekers. It creates an opportunity for employers and support agencies to promote hundreds of live vacancies, work placements and volunteering opportunities.

Employment and training support courses, advice and guidance and a varied programme of seminars throughout the day are also regular features.

- Stands are free of charge
- Preference will be given to organisations promoting at least five live vacancies
- The event will be publicised in the local press, on Tameside Radio and through Connexions and Jobcentre Plus
- There will free parking and refreshments

If you think your organisation should be at this event, please contact jackie.owens@tameside.gov.uk

A healthy investment in your business



A healthy workforce has major business benefits.

Research shows that healthy workplaces result in improved productivity, reduced absenteeism, lower recruitment costs and improved staff morale.

A programme in Tameside can help employers reap these benefits.

Wellbeing@work is a workplace health improvement project for employees in workplaces throughout Tameside. The project works with local businesses to inform employers and staff

about local services that they can access to improve their health and help implement strategies to encourage a healthy workforce.

These services include Connect 4 Life, Weight Matters, stop smoking services and physical activity sessions.

Find out how to improve the health of your workforce and your business. Contact Caroline Shockledge, Workplace Health Improvement Officer on 0161 342 3472 or email caroline.shockledge@tameside.gov.uk or visit www.wellbeingatworktameside.gov.uk

New network for business women



Stay positive especially when dealing with customers – Lynn Kerfoot, MD, Newland Engineering

TAMESIDE Business Family hosted a very successful launch of the new network for business women in Tameside. The event was designed to consult business women in the borough on the issues that are key to helping them develop their businesses from a women's perspective.

More than 50 people attended. In the morning there were sessions, with speakers Lynn Kerfoot of Newland Engineering, Jayne Lawton of Grobox Gardens and Helen Thomas of Meredith Thomas PR, all active in the borough and who have already achieved success, telling the inspiring stories of their climb.

Sarah Bevan Fisher, head of region for Make your Mark surprised everyone by dropping in to the event to wish everyone well and was very impressed with the warm welcome she received.

One attendee said 'As a woman in business for 10 years on my own it can get quite lonely as no one really likes the boss! I made some great new contacts, and found the speakers inspirational and informative. Well done!'

The aim of the network is to provide a woman friendly environment where all are welcome and to encourage as many potential women business start ups to take advantage of the support available through Tameside Business Family and the networks. Tameside Business Family is a free support service to existing and potential Tameside businesses. Check out the website on www.tamesidebusinessfamily.com

To join the Women's Network, please ring Dee Kearney on 0161 342 3641 or email on deena.kearney@tameside.gov.uk

Market opens

ASHTON'S historic market hall finally opened its doors to the public at the end of November for the first time in more than four years.

It was the culmination of a great deal of hard work to bring the Grade II listed building back to life following the blaze that destroyed it in May 2004.

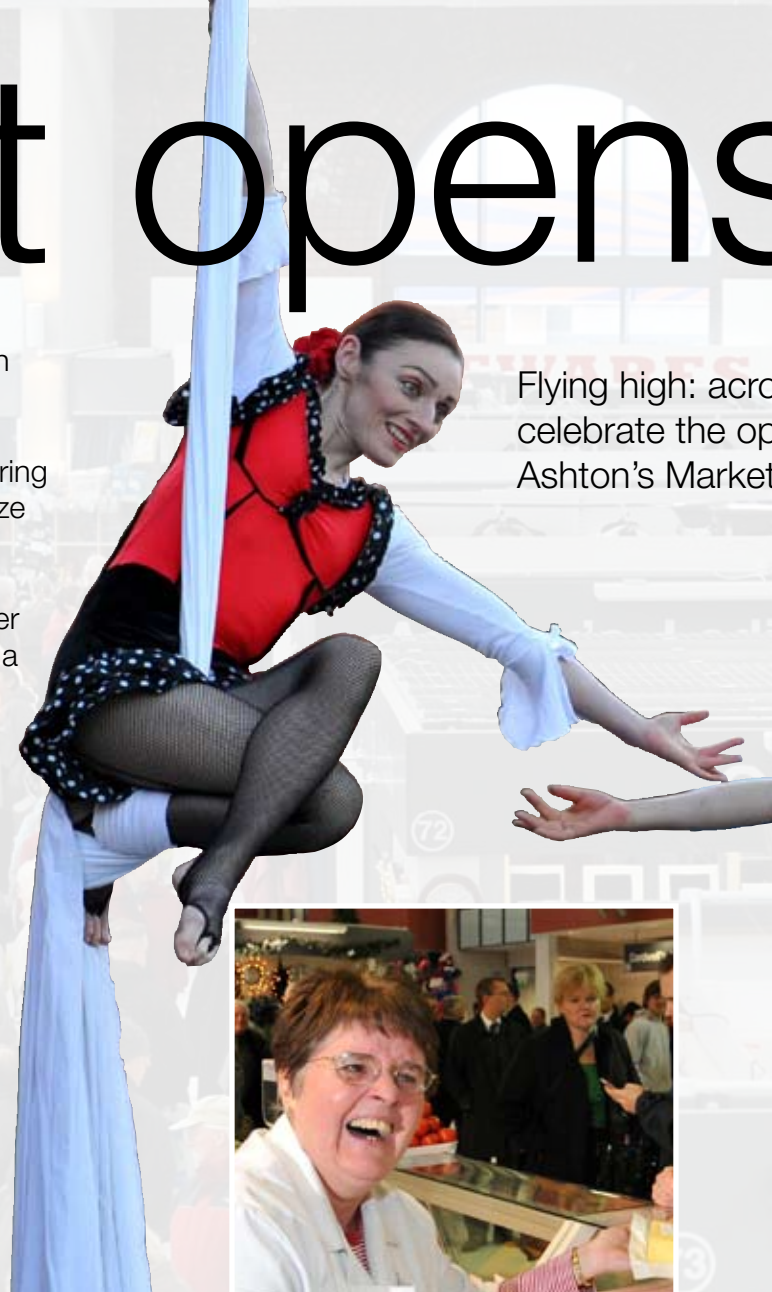
A number of key events took place as the hall got closer and closer to completion. They included the placing of a time capsule by local schoolchildren in one of the walls and the replacement of the clock in the iconic hall tower.

Executive member for economic services, Cllr Kieran Quinn, who has overseen this project from its inception, said: "It makes me so proud that we are now in a position to once again deliver a first class market hall for the borough's residents.

"It has taken more than four years and plenty of hard work by the council and its partners to produce the impressive structure we can all now see.

"Ashton's market hall is not just one of Tameside's most iconic structures, it is also the life and soul of the town centre, so I'm not surprised at the level of public interest in its return. "

Flying high: acrobats celebrate the opening of Ashton's Market



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Shoppers and traders celebrate the opening of the Market

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THIS PROJECT IS BEING PART-FINANCED
BY THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY
European Regional Development Fund

Business Survey backs borough

EARLIER in the year and before the full effects of the credit crunch were being felt, the council conducted its Business Opinion Survey. The previous survey was carried out in early 2004. The results of the latest survey show that the opinions of Tameside's business community on a range of subjects have not changed substantially in that time. The telephone survey of 450 local businesses was carried out in March 2008 by independent company MRUK Research. It covered 374 employers with less than nine employees and 76 with 10 or more.

Results showed that:

- 73% of businesses have been in Tameside for more than six years (69% in last survey)
- 88% are not considering moving (82% in last survey)
- 74% felt turnover would grow or stay the same over two years (82% in last survey)
- 34% think it's easy to recruit unskilled workers in Tameside

(in last survey 32%)

- 61% have flexible working policies (in last survey 47%)

Crime

When asked whether they had been a victim of crime, around a third of respondents stated that their business had experienced burglary (34%), criminal damage (32%) and theft of property (31%). Nearly a quarter, (23%) were victims of vehicle crime. Only a small number stated crime against employees as an issue (5%), and fraud (10%). Almost half (45%) had not experienced any of the stated types of crime.

Environment

Businesses were asked if they felt that their business and its activities had an impact on the environment. A large percentage of respondents expressed concern over increasing utility and fuel bills, (at 73%), with 42% concerned over waste disposal. This is a fairly high percentage, given that in the

previous question there were over half of respondents who did not consider their business had any environmental impact.

A mini Stern report for Manchester: "Assessing the Economic Impact of EU and UK Climate Change Legislation on Manchester City Region and the North West," has been produced and can viewed at www.manchester-enterprises.com, clicking documents and then click Economic Impact of Climate Change.

Support for your business to address environmental concerns and rising costs can be found at: Groundwork Environmental Business Services (www.groundworkebs.co.uk/) and Enworks (www.enworks.com/).

For more information on the business survey contact: mark.stein@tameside.gov.uk or call 0161 342 3586.

Awards can be good for business



THAT'S the message from Tameside Council as it launches the latest e-Tameside Awards. The awards aim to recognise innovation and achievement in the use of technology in education and business. The prizewinners will receive their awards at a prestigious ceremony to be held at Dukinfield Town Hall on 12 March 2009.



Cybaman Technologies, last year's runner up in the Most Innovative use of ICT in a Local Business category



James Racz last year's New Starter of the Year

Here is a list of the award categories:

Best Business Website

The judges will be looking for a website that attracts customers to visit, browse and shop online. It will have an attractive look and feel, be easy to use and navigate and have relevant and up to date content.

Small Business of the Year

Judges will be looking for an existing small business which can demonstrate best practice and progress in:

- Investment in employees/people
- Corporate social responsibility
- Innovation and use of ICT
- Strategic direction and local impact
- Financial performance.

New Starter of the Year

This is an individual who during 2008 has arrived at your centre with little or no previous experience of ICT and e-learning and who has during the year achieved above and beyond what might have been expected of them.

Young Entrepreneur of the Year

Judges will be looking to give this award to an individual who has demonstrated enterprise, vision, innovation and entrepreneurial spirit either in setting up a successful new small business or successfully developing an existing small business or social enterprise.

Start Up Business of the Year

Judges will be looking for a small business that has shown vision and enterprise in starting up in its chosen market sector and, through a well-researched business plan and marketing performance, has met its targeted financial outputs and has identified future growth potential.

Most Innovative use of ICT in a Local Business

A scheme or project that has been run from within your organisation that has exploited ICT to deliver real and demonstrable benefits.

For full details on how to enter, visit Tameside Council's website on www.tameside.gov.uk and click on e-Tameside awards.

Recession buster

Business Briefing offers tips on how to get on the upswing of the downturn

Business Link NW Offers:

- **Check your business health** - A business health check tool can help identify areas that could help improve performance and your chances of survival. You can also book a free appointment with an adviser. It is also important to think about managing risk in order to prevent crises that can be foreseen.
- **Manage your efficiency** - Making your business more efficient can help you save money, which is especially important at a time when capital is increasingly tight. Specifically improving your business' environmental efficiency can help you reduce costs in a number of areas. Use their tool to identify where you can save money by going green.
- **Manage your cash flow** - Business Link's quick checklists and top tips could make the difference when it comes to managing your cash flow. Developed by the Institute of Credit Management and endorsed by just about all the leading business representatives, they guide you through the essentials of knowing your customer, payment terms, what to do when cash runs short, credit insurance, invoicing and factoring and finance options.

The government has also introduced more measures in the November pre-budget report. More details on these, including changes to VAT; business payment support service, corporation tax and others can be found on the National Business Link website at: www.businesslink.gov.uk

Join the Tameside Business Family

For businesses in Tameside, please contact Tameside Business Family 0161 342 2058 or see www.tamesidebusinessfamily.com

You can get general advice or just someone to talk to from Tameside's business community, the council and the Chamber of Commerce. Sign up for our regular e-bulletin by sending your email to: info@tamesidebusinessfamily.com - subject 'sign me up'

Plan ahead

An event is being planned to help businesses adapt and develop strategies to meet the changing economic climate. It takes place in the New Year and if you are interested in attending, please email: richard.nash@tameside.gov.uk

For more information see businesslinknw.co.uk

[The Tameside Economic Masterplan](#) is published in the New Year. It focuses on four key priority areas, to attract investment and increase enterprise, employment and skills. For more information please click on to the link: www.tameside-strategic-partnership.org.uk/partnerships/econlearn-partnership.htm

Helping business to do business



“The council is keen to help local businesses at this time and is currently exploring ways in which it can provide assistance”.
Cllr Kieran Quinn, Executive Member for Economic Services.

Small Business Rate Relief

One area where assistance has been provided is the promotion of Small Business Rate Relief. A number of take-up campaigns have already been undertaken within the borough and almost 2,500 small businesses have claimed the relief to which they are entitled.

Work is underway to consider a further mail-shot for those who have not yet made a claim. The Small Business Rate Relief Scheme provides discounts to small businesses occupying property with a rateable value of less than £15,000. Phone 0161 342 2045.

Cut your property costs

If you need to re-locate within Tameside to reduce your property costs – contact the economic development unit on 0161 342 2885 for a property search.

Reduction of payment terms

The reduction of payment terms for companies working with the council is currently being considered.

A number of local businesses undertaking work for the council do already have favourable payment terms. A significant proportion of invoices are already paid within 10 working days.

It is the Council's intention to endeavour to pay invoices to local businesses in as short a time as possible.

Removing procurement barriers

Tameside is also looking at procurement processes to try and remove as many barriers as possible, within the legislative framework – that inhibit small businesses from supplying the council.

A new online procurement opportunities database is being developed with other AGMA (Greater Manchester) councils known as the 'Chest' at www.thechest.nwce.gov.uk

All stages of procurement, including sourcing, tendering, contract award, placing orders and receiving invoices are increasingly dealt with through 'online' procedures.



Buy with Confidence

THE 'Buy With Confidence' scheme, launched by trading standards last June, is going from strength to strength. The initiative, which supports legitimate businesses and protects residents from rogue traders, provides consumers with a list of reputable traders. It has continued to grow and now stands at 36 members and is expected to develop into a comprehensive directory.

This is designed so the public can use it knowing the firms involved are committed to high standards of trading and are prepared to comply with both the letter and the spirit of the law, helping to give customers peace of mind, particularly older and vulnerable residents. Before being accepted on the scheme a trader must provide seven references, along with other checks that are made to prove that they meet the council's high standards of trading.

Over 1,000 directories have gone out to the public as a result of radio and newspaper articles, through partner agencies such as Meals on Wheels, Age Concern and social groups etc. and via the council's website www.tameside.gov.uk

Being a member of the scheme could prove beneficial to most traders. It gives them independent recognition of their business standards, publicity and proof of membership. By displaying the logo they should have increased customer confidence and they will be a named contact in the Trading Standards service. It should also improve relationships with regulators and keep traders informed of any new legislation.

If you are interested in joining the scheme or for more information please contact Gwen Kay on 342 3671 or by email gwen.kay@tameside.gov.uk