

THURROCK COUNCIL AND PORT OF TILBURY PASS ON THE SKILLS PLEDGE BATON TO BOOST WORKPLACE LEARNING IN ESSEX

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Thurrock Council and the Port of Tilbury were among five Essex organisations that passed the Skills Pledge baton onto other local businesses at an event on Friday 11 July at Channels Golf Club. It was all part of a bid to spread the message that workplace learning can have huge benefits for employees and the success of local business.

Thurrock Council and the Port of Tilbury both signed up to the Skills Pledge, a Learning and Skills Council (LSC) initiative which encourages businesses to make a public commitment to workplace learning and skills development for their staff.

At Friday's event, Thurrock Council and the Port of Tilbury passed the baton on to businesses yet to sign up, in a bid to spread the message that staff development and encouraging learning at work can have a huge impact on the success of the business and local economy. All five businesses received certificates in recognition of the investment made to help employees gain new skills and qualifications to do their jobs and meet the needs of local business.

Now one year old, the Skills Pledge was launched in 2007 by the Learning and Skills Council to encourage employers to make a public and voluntary commitment to actively support employees in learning and developing their skills.

Janice Logie, Area Director for the Learning and Skills Council Essex welcomed the employers and thanked them for making the Skills Pledge which was their public commitment to actively supporting further the developments of skills for their employees.

She challenged them as business leaders to pass on the message about the Skills Pledge and said: "I'd like to ask you all to encourage other businesses to make the same commitment to their staff and the wider business community, as we continue to raise skills and competitiveness across the county."

Cllr Barry Johnson, Thurrock Council's cabinet member for Central Services, said: "Thurrock Council is very proud of its Developing Together programme and works hard to provide the widest possible range of training to the largest possible number of employees.

"Even in these days when the public purse is tightly held the council recognises that by providing development opportunities for staff not only helps them grow, it also helps us provide a better and more informed service for our residents. Training is value for money."

Tracey Dillway, Port Relations Officer said; "The Port of Tilbury London Ltd operates in a very competitive business. Without a skilled and qualified workforce, the Port would not be able to maintain its success as a business or indeed remain competitive. The Skills Pledge shows the Port of Tilbury's huge and on-going commitment to supporting and enabling our employees to develop their skills from the basics to at least Level 2 NVQ and beyond. It also acts as a signal of this commitment and the strong partnership between management and employees to develop skills across the board in support of the Ports continued success.

"This commitment to skills development helps our staff to make a fuller and even more valuable contribution to the success of our business and helps them to develop their careers. This promotes employee motivation, individual growth and growth of our company."

The race is now on for other organisations in Essex to make this commitment and release the potential within their business as The Skills Pledge baton continues to make its way around the region. One Essex-based business who has already decided to sign-up to the Pledge is FedEx, part the world's largest express transportation company. On July 22 they will be inviting Bill Rammel, Minister of State for Lifelong Learning, Further and Higher Education to its Stansted Hub to mark their commitment to workforce training and skill development.