



NEWS RELEASE

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Over 120 business leaders attended *Networking 2006* at Ellesmere Port Civic Hall

The Chester, Ellesmere Port & Neston Business Forum are pleased to announce that over 120 local business leaders attended *Networking 2006* at the Civic Hall in Ellesmere Port on 25 May.

Now in its 15th year the Business Forum has become established as a vital group supporting local businesses with advice, networking and building links with the education and governmental sectors and this annual Networking Event has grown in to one of the largest business events in the area.

The meeting was arranged with an informal buffet enabling local businesses to meet, exchange ideas and discover new local suppliers and potential customers before participating in the Creative Thinking seminar laid on to provide education in business development.

The speakers this year were Paul McKie and Nigel Newman from Hodson McKie Creative Consulting who deliver Creative Thinking seminars based on the tools and techniques developed by Dr. Edward de Bono.

Creative Thinking is a technique that is being adopted by businesses and education establishments worldwide. In Korea they have adopted it as core subject in secondary schools as the Government believes it will deliver students more able to innovate in business.

At this brief taster session attendees were introduced to the concept of the 'Six Thinking Hats', a parallel method to traditional thinking strategies. Each Hat represents a different mode of thinking and resolving problems and provides a structure for groups to evaluate and solve problems.

As an example attendees participated in an interactive 'Green Hat' session where the Green Hat indicates a creative attitude and all possibilities are encouraged and explored. Different Hats are then

used to develop the idea and check it out before final implementation.

Lesley George, The Chair of the CEPN Forum commented "This has been the best attended event we have held. The interactive Creative Seminar enabled everybody to both network and leave stimulated with new ways of helping to solve issues in the their businesses."

The meeting concluded with a charity raffle that raising over £300 for Claire House Hospice.

Images

High resolution images attached with email.



Image 1: Lesley George Chair of CEPN Forum (centre) with Paul McKie (left) and Nigel Newman (right) of Hodson McKie

Image 2: Nigel Newman presents to attendees on Creative Thinking

Background Information

Research shows that if new or growing businesses continue to take advice and support, there is a much greater chance of them surviving and reaching full potential.

CEPN Forum's mission is to facilitate networking and inter-trading opportunities among members and to promote good business practise. It also provides 'business inspiration' for business start-ups, small & medium sized enterprises and owner managers from a catchment area covering Cheshire, Wirral and North Wales.

The Forum has been running regular events in Chester for 15 years, designed to help local businesses grow. In January 2003 'Chester Business Club' expanded to become 'Chester, Ellesmere Port and Neston Business Forum'.

Meetings are held every second Thursday in the month from September to July inclusive at the County Officer's Club, Plas Newton Lane, Chester, the Ellesmere Port Civic Hall or the Neston Civic Hall. Previous topics have included marketing, finance, investment strategy and business crime.

Membership of CEPN Forum costs £60 (£30 for start-ups – trading for less than 12 months) and includes a monthly newsletter, business information, business information mailings and directory entry into the Forum's website. Guests are welcome to attend meetings with a view to membership. Event and Forum membership opportunities exist for companies who are not members and are looking to target new and growing businesses in the region.

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