

Suffolk businesses pass on the Skills Pledge baton to boost workplace learning in the East

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Two Suffolk businesses passed the Skills Pledge baton onto other local businesses at an event on Wednesday 23 July at the Learning & Skills Council in Ipswich. 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.

Pilot Drilling Control, a Lowestoft based company that provides drilling tools to the oil and gas offshore industry, and Suffolk County Council recently 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 Wednesday's event, Pilot Drilling Control and Suffolk County Council agreed to pass the baton on to other 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. They also received a certificate 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.

Judith Mobbs, Area Director for the Learning and Skills Council Suffolk thanked the employers for making the Skills Pledge, a public commitment to actively supporting employees in gaining valuable skills. And explained: “Our ambition is for Suffolk to be a Skills Pledge county. If our economy is to grow and prosper we need every business to invest in skills. The Skills Pledge baton is about passing the message on to others about the importance of making a commitment to training staff. I would strongly encourage other businesses and organisations to make the same commitment to their staff and through making the pledge raise the profile of the urgent need for higher level skills across Suffolk.”

George Swietlik, Managing Director of Pilot Drilling Control said; “The Skills Pledge endorses the values embedded in the company from its inception. Training opportunities, equality and respect go hand in hand and the Skills Pledge recognises the efforts made by Pilot Drilling Control to engage its employees and the community in raising aspirations and opportunities in engineering in the local area.”

Councillor Jeremy Pembroke, Leader of Suffolk County Council, endorsed the signing of the Pledge, saying “We must help adults develop their skills to encourage investment into Suffolk, and to get our economy growing.”

The race is now on for other organisations in Suffolk to make this commitment and release the potential within their business as the Skills Pledge baton continues to make its way around the region.

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For more media information please call Dawn Humphreys or Hannah White at Tribe on 01603 417722 or email hannah@tribepr.com

Notes to editors

Learning and Skills Council:

The LSC exists to make England better skilled and more competitive. We are responsible for ensuring the availability of high-quality education and training for everyone. We have a single goal: to improve the skills of England's young people and adults to world class standards. Our vision is that young people and adults in England have knowledge and skills matching the best in the world and are part of a truly competitive workforce. We work nationally, regionally and locally to deliver this ambition on behalf of learners and employers.

The Skills Pledge:

The Skills Pledge is a voluntary, public commitment by the leadership of a company or organisation to support all its employees to develop their basic skills, including literacy and numeracy, and work towards relevant, valuable qualifications to at least Level 2 (equivalent to 5 good GCSEs). The purpose is to ensure that all staff are skilled, competent and able to make a full contribution to the success of the company/organisation.

The Pledge can be given by the Chief Executive, Chief Operating Officer, owner/manager or other Board member, on behalf of the organisation. It is a corporate commitment covering the whole company/organisation. For those employees who do not already have full Level 2 qualification, the Government will provide funding to help them gain basic literacy and numeracy skills as well as their first full Level 2 qualification.

The Skills Pledge is open to all employers of all sizes in the private, public and voluntary sectors.

To find out more go to www.traintogain.gov.uk