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NEWS REVIEW



The saying that good things come to those who wait is never more apt than for global restaurateurs Des Gunewardena and David Loewi.

The duo behind D&D London have opened venues in New York, Paris, London and Tokyo, while spending more than a decade searching for the right place to open their first luxury restaurant in Manchester.

Now open, 20 Stories, at the top of No.1 Spinningfields, is the city's highest restaurant and aims to capitalise on the Mancunian love of great food and good times.

In our main feature, Lucy Roue recalls the journey of 20 Stories.

We also have the second of our Women In Tech series. This time, Fiona Vlemmiks highlights how digitalisation has reinvented local businesses and celebrates the another 10 leading lights in the sector.

Although the chancellor's Spring Statement lacked any significant announcements, there was still plenty for the region's businesses to have their say on. We've included their reactions in a round-up of Tuesday's statement.

Finally, in the first of a new series on Stockport, Ben Rooth discovers how construction and engineering firms are forging sturdy foundations for the borough's future prosperity.

Stuart Greer, business reporter

New Arena owners hunt for sponsor

The new owners of Manchester Arena have hailed it as a 'world-class asset' as they start the hunt for a new sponsor.

Secure Income REIT Plc, a real estate investment trust, has snapped up the venue from Mansford LLP, as part of a portfolio deal worth £436m.

Nick Leslau, chairman of the company behind Secure Income REIT, said he was 'thrilled' by the deal and praised the resilience of the city and gig-goers who have returned to the venue following the terror attack that killed 22 people and injured 500 last May.

"We have a very strong affinity for Manchester and I am delighted to be back in the city centre," he said. "It is a unique asset sitting on top of a multi-million pound transport hub so we are thrilled at getting the chance to own it."

"As an investment fund we are focused on long-term income and this is perfect as it is a world class asset."

"I think Mancunians are tough and despite the horrendous tragedy that happened last year people are saying they will not be beaten."

"They want to go out and enjoy themselves and there is an amazing tenacity here."

"With the amount of concerts and events that have been well-attended the people have spoken and they will not be defeated or oppressed."

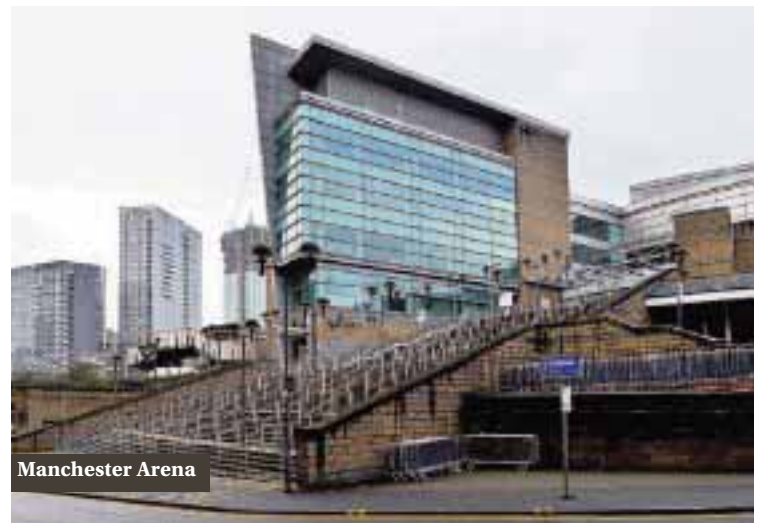
The arena makes an annual income of £5.75m from its one million visitors and is let for 27 years to venue management company SMG.

The venue has been without a sponsor since 2015, something Leslau said they would consider looking at.

He said: "Sponsorship is something that is current and it would be difficult to envisage a world class asset without a sponsor."

"We know quite a bit about stadium sponsorship but it is still early days."

Leslau said they don't plan any big



Manchester Arena

changes but admit that security, which has been bolstered at the venue since the attack, is an on-going priority.

"There is nothing physically that we are going to do with the arena unless SMG want to make it bigger and better, which we would support," he said.

Leslau said the arena fits with the group's expertise as a large-scale entertainment venue, as they also own Alton Towers.

Coincidentally, its non-executive chairman, Martin Moore, was also chief executive of M+G Real Estate who owned the Arndale Centre at the time of the IRA bomb in 1996.

Leslau said: "He was responsible alongside the likes of Sir Howard Bernstein for that catalyst period after the bomb of re-building parts of the city."

The £436m deal is split into two parts, a portfolio of leisure assets - including Manchester Arena - worth £224m, and a package of 59 Travelodge hotels worth £212m.

The arena - the biggest part of the portfolio - includes the 21,000 capacity venue, the 1,000 space multi-storey car park and 160,000 sq ft of office and leisure space, which has tenants including public services provider Serco, Manchester City Council, trade union Unison, advertising giant JCDcaux and go-karting operator Teamsport.

Other parts of the portfolio include The Brewery events space in London, 17 Travelodges and 18 pubs.

Mansford LLP, a real estate investment firm, bought the arena for £82m in 2013, while accumulating the rest of the portfolio for around £90m.

It means Mansford looks set to make around £52m from the sale.

Contracts have been exchanged and the deal is expected to complete in July.

Mansford LLP declined to comment but it is understood that the decision to sell was part of a planned invested strategy and nothing to do with the bombing.

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Prince Andrew pitches up at uni

The Duke of York visited the University of Manchester in a quest to find the next generation of entrepreneurs.

Pitch@Palace 9.0 gives companies the chance to showcase their ideas to industry experts as well as get support and mentoring.

The bootcamp in Manchester featured 40 companies that have developed innovative technologies to solve prevalent security issues that businesses and individuals are exposed to today.

Entrepreneurs are asked to pitch their business to a panel of judges, as well as senior business leaders, investors, and influencers from across the technology, investment and business communities.

The judges selected 12 winners for another event at St. James's Palace next month.

Health clubs see record turnover

Duncan Bannatyne's health clubs group has reported record turnover.

Bannatyne Group, which runs seven facilities in the North West including two in Manchester, has reached a turnover of £117.6m.

Profits were up to £14.3m for the year to 31 December 2017 from its portfolio of 71 gyms, 46 spas and four hotels.

Turnover increased from £112.2m and profit before tax before exceptional items up from £9.2m last year.

Membership is up 7.4 per cent to more than 211,000 and the group acquired four further gyms.

Over the past two years it has invested more than £28m, modernising premises, bringing in new technology and expanding the spa operations.

Bannatyne started the chain after a skiing accident prompted him to look for a new exercise regime.

He is also known for this long-term role on the Dragon's Den TV series.

Chief executive officer Justin Musgrove said: "We are delighted with the results - 57 per cent increase in profits year on year after a 15 per cent uplift in 2016



More than 250 delegates from 112 organisations from the city-region descended on Cannes in France for the annual MIPIM international property conference.

Despite a frantic search for a new venue after the Manchester pavilion was wrecked by storms, the four-day conference got underway with a host of big announcements.

Plans were revealed for a new 3D printing facility near Manchester Airport and funding was confirmed

for Manchester Science Partnerships' Citylabs development in Manchester.

The £800m vision to transform Salford Crescent into the Brooklyn of Greater Manchester was unveiled while Oldham revealed its £350m project to transform its town centre.

There have also been debates on tech-enabled cities and the collaboration of northern cities.

See next week's magazine for a full round-up of MIPIM.

and very strong cash generation is clear demonstration that our strategy is delivering and that the investment over the past two years is driving strong returns."

Mayor launches business charter

Andy Burnham, Mayor of Greater Manchester, is launching a consultation on the new Greater Manchester Good Employer Charter.

The charter will support employers to reach best practice, helping them to grow and provide good jobs.

The consultation, which runs until April 13, will be used to help create the

draft charter, published later in the year.

Mr Burnham said Greater Manchester's businesses are less productive than others in the UK, and even further behind London and the rest of the world, while public services and voluntary and community sectors face increasing complex challenges.

"Our aim is to make Greater Manchester the best place to live, work and invest," he said. "But that vision will not become a reality when people in our city-region are working week to week not knowing how many hours they'll get or in some cases not even knowing whether they'll have a job next week.

"The answer, for both employees and employers is clear. Good jobs with fair

pay, security and opportunities get the best out of people. A motivated workforce boosts productivity and this helps companies to grow.

"That's why we need every job in Greater Manchester to be a good job. By working together I know we can meet this challenge."

179 firms fined for pay breaches

The government has 'named and shamed' 179 employers who have been fined for failing to pay the minimum wage - and the list includes three very big high street names.

Wagamama and TGI Friday's, along with hotels giant Marriott top the list - along with football clubs Birmingham City, Yeovil Town and Premier League Stoke City and rugby clubs St Helens and London Irish.

Wagamama was said to have failed to pay £133,212 to 2,630 workers, the most of any of the companies named.

TGI Friday's, meanwhile, shortchanged 2,302 of its staff to the tune of £59,348.

Marriott failed to pay £71,723 to 279 workers, according to figures released by the Business Department.

A total of £1.1 million in back pay was identified for 9,200 workers, with retail, hairdressing and hospitality businesses the most prolific offenders.

The Government has also fined the employers a total of £1.3 million in penalties.

Business minister Andrew Griffiths said: "There are no excuses for shortchanging workers.

Reasons for underpayment included not including travel time between jobs, not paying overtime, and deducting money for uniforms.

Uniform firm in expansion plan

Uniform manufacturer Simon Jersey, which supplies Team GB's Olympic squad, has unveiled expansion plans which will see 40 jobs move from Hyndburn to Stockport, while expanding the Altham site by a further 50 jobs over the course of the year.

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OPINION

Want to join the debate? Have your say online by joining the M.E.N. Media Business Group on LinkedIn, or follow GMBusinessweek on Twitter. Email shelina.begum@men-news.co.uk with submissions for Viewpoint

Our whole community can be part of city's Town Hall revamp

Joanne Roney, Manchester City Council chief executive

When Manchester Town Hall closed earlier this year to usher in a huge project to safeguard, refurbish and partially restore this icon of the city, much was written about its remarkable history and architectural splendours.

As one of the nation's biggest heritage projects for generations - for context, only the long-mooted refurbishment of the Palace of Westminster when that eventually happens will be bigger - there was an understandable focus on the Grade I-listed building's illustrious past and the many memorable people and events associated with it over the decades.

But what I want to focus on here is the many opportunities which we are determined to capture for local businesses and people through the Our Town Hall programme.

Indeed, as with all council procurement, delivering economic and social value is a key driver for this project.

As well as supporting jobs, creating apprenticeships and nurturing skills we are aiming to take a 'Manchester First' approach to procurement to ensure local firms are

well placed to be part of the supply chain.

All bidders tendering for work will be assessed on how they can open up employment, training and growth opportunities for the people and businesses of Manchester.

More than 100 separate work packages will be available during the six-year life of the project, with firms needed to provide everything from conservation work on the building's many heritage features to more routine construction work, such as mechanical and electrical engineering, pointing or scaffolding, to landscaping and repairing Albert Square.

We will need specialist contractors from 2019 onwards.

While it is still structurally sound, many elements of the building are seriously showing their age and in need of urgent attention without which parts of it would slide into decay and disuse.

From a creaking heating system to crumbling stonework, tilting chimneys and bowing leaded windows, the years have taken their toll. The building was also not designed to modern access and safety standards. Without intervention, it will no longer be a living symbol of Mancunian pride. That's why, in an enormous

“
We hope some of you will be able to come and join us on this once-in-a-lifetime journey
”
Joanne Roney



undertaking, we have embarked on a project between now and 2024 to safeguard the building, and neighbouring Albert Square, for future generations.

We are also determined to make the building more accessible to the general public and put more of its countless civic treasures, which help tell the story of the city, on display.

Last week we held an event, attended by more than 100 people representing more than 80 different businesses, in the building's famous Great Hall, to help businesses gain a better understanding of the overall project and what it entails.

They also had the chance to meet potential management contractors and network with other suppliers, and organisations who provide support to SMEs in Greater Manchester.

This will be the first in an ongoing series of engagement sessions that the project team will hold with businesses over the life of the project.

There was, as you might imagine,

considerable enthusiasm about the possibility of being part of this challenging and, in more sense than one, landmark project.

When our Victorian forebears built the Town Hall, which officially opened in 1877, no expense was spared and they brought in the finest craftsmen to create a statement building which told the world Manchester had arrived.

While, of course, we are much more careful with the coffers these days, we are equally determined to get this enormous undertaking right and keep it infused with that distinctively Mancunian flavour.

And that means a legacy of jobs, skills and inspiration every bit as much as it means protecting and enhancing the fabric of the building itself.

We hope some of you will be able to come and join us on this once-in-a-lifetime journey.

Anyone who wants to find out more about the project can do so at www.manchester.gov.uk/ourtownhall

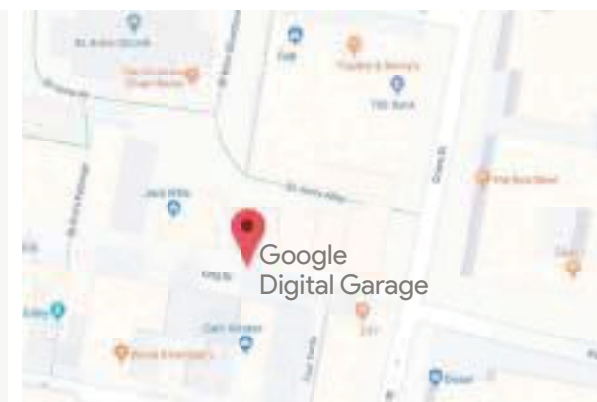
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FEATURE

Is there light at end of tunnel for business?

No one was expecting anything earth-shattering from the chancellor's Spring Statement, but there was still plenty of announcements that pricked up the ears of the city region's business leaders. Stuart Greer looks at what Greater Manchester businesses made of the 'mini-budget'

It is normally marked by a smiling chancellor holding up a red box outside the door of number 11, but, keen to downplay this Spring Statement, Philip Hammond made no such display.

More significantly, he made no big tax or spending announcements.

Instead, Mr Hammond upgraded his projection for growth and predicted falling inflation, debt and borrowing.

However, he did touch upon a few key areas which prompted reaction from the region's business leaders.

The chancellor's statement was preceded with a bleak forecast by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) which claimed Britain is set to miss out on buoyant global economic growth over the next two years due to high inflation dampening consumer demand and Brexit uncertainty.

But Mr Hammond revealed the UK economy is growing at a slightly faster rate than he predicted in November, 1.5% this year with the forecast for 2019 and 2020 unchanged at 1.3%.

He also said borrowing - which is £45.2bn this year - was due to fall in every year of the forecast - and told the House of Commons debt will fall as a share of GDP from 2018-19.

Although the whirlwind 20 minutes statement was short on specifics, Mr Hammond unveiled a series of consultations on future policies.

For small businesses he is bringing forward the next business rates revaluation from 2022 to 2021, a review into how to help the least productive businesses catch up with the most, and new measures to end late payments.

Brian Berry, chief executive of the Federation of Master Builders (FMB), welcomed the move to tackle 'the scourge' of late payment.

"We should use this opportunity to bring about a spring clean of payment practices which negatively impact on small business," he said.

"Construction giant Carillion's collapse at the start of the year brought to light once again the need to eliminate poor payment practises that plague the construction sector particularly.

"Now is the time to move away from these unsustainable business models which threaten the existence of many firms and their supply chains."

In a bid to boost the UK's productivity, Mr Hammond announced £500m for T-levels and £50m to help employers roll out placements for T-level students, as well as £80m to support small businesses engaging apprenticeships.

Nicola Quayle, senior partner at professional service company KPMG in Manchester, said productivity must be top of the North West agenda.

"The shortest fiscal statement in history contained little in the way of detail, but it was still good to see Mr Hammond refer to Britain's productivity challenge in his response to the OBR's forecasts," said Quayle. "The issue is more relevant than

ever for the North West. The latest ONS figures showed the region is performing 7.4% below the UK average, with Manchester achieving productivity of 10.2% below.

"The government needs to support regional leadership if this is going to change.

"We need to invest in our young people to build a stronger workforce, encourage investment in technology to keep with a rapidly evolving economy and develop infrastructure to that connects businesses and general populations, particularly in rural and outlying areas.

"Sluggish productivity risks holding Manchester and the North West back, which is a similar conundrum facing many other cities and regions across the country. But, I know that our city has passion, ingenuity and willpower to continue its incredible growth story."

Jo Sellick, managing director of recruitment specialist, Sellick Partnership,

based in Manchester, credited the chancellor for the extra apprenticeship funding.

"The levy introduced last year has actually led to a decline in apprenticeships, but the positive impact of placing three million young adults in apprenticeship schemes by 2020 has the potential to be huge - enabling British businesses to fill skill gaps and develop home-grown talent,

Chancellor Philip Hammond leaves 11 Downing Street as he heads to the House of Commons to deliver his Spring Statement



Nicola Quayle



Jo Sellick

which must be a priority as we anticipate losing a lot of skilled and reliable European workers post-Brexit," he said.

Another key announcement was a new VAT collection mechanism for online sales aimed at big tech firms like Google, Facebook and Apple to ensure that the VAT consumers pay "actually reaches the Treasury".

It comes shortly after a government consultation closed on potential changes to taxation of the digital economy which aims to tackle long-standing fears that large internet businesses don't pay enough tax.

Reacting to the new measure,



needed in digital initiatives.

“Our mixed economy means that the North West remains resilient but businesses must be alive to the significant changes around digital and technology that we can expect to see across our national economy in the near future,” he said. “Our own



Bob Ward

research clearly shows that the more a region is exposed to ICT (information and communications technology) and professional and financial services, the faster the growth tends to be, as those sectors continue to drive the economy.

“So the Government’s commitment to investing more in digital initiatives, such as 5G test beds, is welcome but yet more is needed if this region and the country’s productivity growth is to be improved.”

Dr Gordon Fletcher, retail expert at the University of Salford Business School, said the chancellor’s recognition of the digital economy was ‘a positive signal’.

Claire Jolly, head of TMT at audit, consulting, tax, and advisory firm Deloitte, in the North West, said the new 5G technology testbeds ‘can only be good news for innovative tech companies in the region.’

“Harnessing the capabilities of next-

generation technologies such as robotics, the Internet of Things, artificial intelligence and big data has wide-reaching benefits for



Claire Jolly

every sector, and the introduction of the 5G testbeds marks an essential step in the movement towards the UK becoming a world-leader in digital innovation,” she said.

The chancellor invited cities like Manchester to bid for a share of £840m to deliver on “local transport priorities” and, on housing, said the Government was working with local authorities for a share of the £4.1 billion housing infrastructure fund.

Mike Blackburn, chair of the Institute of Directors, North West branch, said the group were pleased that the statement repeats the Government’s commitment to the region’s businesses through continued investment in key areas such as transport, infrastructure and the Northern Powerhouse.

Lawrence Jones, CEO of Manchester tech firm UKFast and a big critic of the government’s stance on tech tax, said the move towards a fairer tax system did not go far enough.



Lawrence Jones

“It’s encouraging to hear that there is going to be consultation on the issue of US tech giants’ tax affairs, but for me the government’s line still doesn’t feel

strong enough,” he said. “If all UK entrepreneurs took advantage of the tax rules that apply to these off-shore businesses, Britain would collapse.

“It’s the tax-paying SMEs that prop this country up and, at present, the UK taxpayer is being taken for a ride by the tax affairs of these companies. We need action on this issue as a matter of urgency.”

However, Jon Meeten, head of tax at KPMG based in Manchester, urged caution with the measures.

“This enthusiasm to embrace solutions is encouraging but a short-term fix could significantly impact the UK’s ability to attract investment and

risks sewing more confusion into a tax system already fraught with complexity,” he warned. “No matter how well intentioned those temporary fixes might be, the better answer is to tackle the digital economy in a collaborative way with international consensus.”

The chancellor also announced investment in the digital economy, reiterating the government’s commitment to 5G funding and full-fibre broadband.

Bob Ward, North West senior partner at professional services firm EY, based in Manchester, welcomed the 5G funding but said more investment is

FEATURE

The stories behind city's new luxury restaurant

For global restaurateurs Des Gunewardena and David Loewi, waiting more than a decade to open their first luxury Manchester restaurant, 20 Stories, was well worth it. The pair – owners of D&D London – tell Lucy Roue the story that shaped the creation of Manchester's highest restaurant

It's taken us over ten years to get 20 Stories to this point, but people are going to say 'wow' when they walk in." That's because Des Gunewardena and David Loewi believe the city of Manchester has never looked as beautiful as it does from inside the summit of No.1 Spinningfields.

And it's hard to argue with the owners of 20 Stories operator D&D London.

The launch evening, attended by more than 400 people and subsequent opening to the public has been met with gasps by those lucky enough to have experienced it.

"There's something magical about this venue," says Gunewardena as we talk over coffee just days before the 20 Stories launch.

His business partner agrees: "When you walk in, it takes your breath away. This place is something different and very special.

There are lots of rooftop restaurants and bars but there aren't so many with a huge garden outside."

20 Stories is D&D's 38th venue and follows high profile openings in cities such as New York, Paris, London and Tokyo.

Manchester and 20 Stories comes at an interesting time in D&D's journey.

"This city is a natural fit for us," says Gunewardena. "Firstly, people here love great food and having a good time.

"With 20 Stories, people will get the opportunity to experience just that – and more.

"We've got a fine dining restaurant, a bar and grill and a vast outdoor space with firepits, plants and trees, all complemented by incredible views.

"This opening in Manchester is huge for us. We know we are in a truly great city in the north of England.

"We know the city is home to the best football clubs in the world, some of the most amazing TV companies, stunning universities and some of the best restaurants.

"Why wouldn't we be here now as we continue to expand in the UK?"

But as the pair point out, 20 Stories has long been in the pipeline.

"It's taken us over a decade to find

“
 We know we are in a truly great city in the North of England
Des Gunewardena



this place," says Gunewardena.

"I've been talking to Mike Ingall of Allied London for more than a decade as he's always been interested in us coming to Spinningfields.

"Back then though, around the time of the economic downturn, it wasn't quite right for us.

"There weren't too many 'go to' restaurants in Manchester at the time. There was a few, like San Carlo and Restaurant Bar & Grill that were always full, but similar restaurants tended to be outside the city, in places like

Wilmslow and Hale. Then it all changed. And that was because of Mike Ingall.

"One of the main reasons we are here is because of him and what he and Tim Bacon of Living Ventures did in terms of creating a restaurant scene in Spinningfields.

"What they showed was if you create interesting restaurants like Australasia and Manchester House, you can change how people behave and where people go.

"The bottom line is we want to open



The view from inside 20 Stories - the new restaurant in No.1 Spinningfields. Right, its chef Aiden Byrne. Above right, restaurateurs Des Gunewardena and David Loewi



businesses here more than we want to open businesses overseas.

“There’s no doubt that we have come into an amazing space here in Manchester, which follows on nicely from the fantastic spaces we have opened in other great cities around the world. And 20 Stories is without the doubt the most exciting opening for us, physically, since New York. We have to make it work as a restaurant, but it does give you goosebumps when you walk in, especially at night.”

It’s clear that the height of the

building creates unrivalled views, with even director chef Aiden Byrne and his team being afforded a stunning outlook as they work in the kitchen.

Loewi says the appointment of Byrne was a significant moment for 20 Stories, which has more than 300 covers to fill.

“I met Aiden a few years ago and we have kept in touch ever since. Des and I both know he’s a very talented guy. It was about finding the right chef and Aiden is someone we like, respect and someone with great pedigree and a great name.”

Adding that the chef was looking for a new challenge after his time at Manchester House, he comments: “He was a natural fit as he was someone who was extremely excited about this restaurant and this space.

“We didn’t want to come here and open a beautiful and glamorous restaurant that was just about the bar, the vibrancy and the buzz.

“We made a very conscious decision to recruit one of the best chefs in the North of England to be in this restaurant. This restaurant is not just

about the firepits, beautiful trees and wonderful views, it’s about really good food and employing a chef who knows the city and local suppliers.

“We wanted the roots of the restaurant to be Manchester and Aiden is a big part of that.”

Loewi also remembers the empty shell at the top of No.1 Spinningfields resembling Terminal 5 at Heathrow.

“Watching people enjoy the environments we create gives us a great deal of pleasure, but we are also very

TURN TO PAGE 12

FEATURE

FROM PAGE 11

critical of ourselves. It's feedback and looking after people as you're only as good as yesterday.

"All the small things matter and I think we're good at that."

When asked the question on whether 20 Stories might unlock the door to more high-profile fine dining in Manchester, Gunewardena said:

"Whether the opening of 20 Stories will lead to more fine dining operators opening in Manchester is for others to say. What I will say is that Manchester is a wonderful city with world class universities and a fantastic music culture.

"Why can Manchester not have the best restaurants in Britain and indeed the world? It can."

However, mulling it over he adds: "I'm not certain that 20 Stories is about

Manchester's elusive Michelin star. This is about people having a great time and enjoying world class food.

"If 20 Stories is the success we want it to be we could do more in this city. We are not Londoners coming here to have a nice opening and leave. It's not how we work.

"We also don't see this as a London restaurant arriving in Manchester. This is a Manchester restaurant that will be run and operated by local people."

With Manchester pushing itself internationally as a mid-sized European city, the D&D pair believe food is essential to any city's tourism strategy and offer.

"When it comes to tourism, yes, there are many great events, music and sport which obviously drive tourists to Manchester. But having great restaurants and hotels is very important as they are a big draw.

"People go to cities not just for the museums and the events, they want to eat and drink, have a good time and be in nice places.

"Restaurants in London have played a big part in the city's success over the past 20 years.

"Before that, when we were starting out in restaurants, the view of the UK's restaurant scene from other countries of the world wasn't a particularly good one. But that's changed now."

But will 20 Stories and similar restaurants help bolster Manchester's international tourism ambitions?

"I remember speaking to the Mayor of Buenos Aires not too long ago and how he wanted the city to become the food capital of South America," says Gunewardena.

"He said the food culture had slipped behind Lima in Peru, which to me was fascinating,

as for so long it was the other way around. Lima is a city that is an example of food culture driving the economy and tourism at an international level.

"The Northern Powerhouse, given what is happening to the UK and its relationship with the EU, is something I believe in. And Manchester is at the forefront of that logic.

"There's an argument that you may see more of a renaissance in a city like Manchester compared with say London over the next ten years."

When it comes to the potential impact of Brexit on hospitality, David Loewi says: "There's uncertainty when it comes to staff and recruitment, but we believe it will sort itself out.

"We are a successful restaurant company and are by no means finding it more difficult to recruit chefs and waiters."

Manchester almost seems like it doesn't feel that it needs to compete with other cities - and we like that
Des Gunewardena

All photos, inside 20 Stories



He added: "What's important is having the right team. Yes, with 20 Stories we've given the team an amazing set for a theatrical production. But it's all about having the right team and the right person conducting the orchestra. People need to train, be nurtured and looked after and we are good at that."

With 20 Stories now open, D&D has plans to continue to expand in the UK and abroad.

Gunewardena said: "We are opening Bluebird Café, in White City, after this and a Bluebird in Time Warner

building in London. After that we are going to develop a completely new concept in the Hudson Yards development on the west side of Manhattan - a huge development at the end of the high line.

"We quite like going into parts of cities that are emerging.

"We also have another rooftop restaurant planned in London and would like to do more in the north of England and in Scotland also.

His business partner added: "An interesting part of D&D's story is that it has never closed a restaurant.

"We get asked that a lot. We've sold restaurants on so people seem to want to know what the secret is as we work in a sector where a lot of restaurants don't last.

"The real secret is day-to-day and looking after your customers. We, of course, don't always get it right. People who are great restaurateurs are ones who are prepared to keep evolving and learning."

On the lure of Manchester and its buildings the pair say the view at night is better than Tokyo.

Gunewardena finishes: "What I also like about Manchester is that it's a gritty city full of good buildings, interesting architecture, culture and history.

"Manchester almost seems like it doesn't feel that it needs to compete with other cities - and we like that."





Who are D&D London?

D&D London is a group of luxury restaurants, bars and hotels based principally in London, but also with venues in Paris, New York and Tokyo.

It has aggregate revenues of more than £100m and employs around 2,000 staff.

The company was founded by Des Gunewardena and David Loewi in 2006, following a buy-out of Conran Restaurants, which itself was established back in 1991.

The company was already central to London's restaurant scene, owning some of the capital's most celebrated restaurants, such as Quaglino's, Le Pont de la Tour, Chelsea's famous Bluebird and city favourite Coq d'Argent.

The group also created and owned The Great Eastern Hotel (sold to Hyatt Hotels in 2006 and now rebranded as Andaz) Alcazar in Paris and Guastavino's in New York, among others.

Outside London the company opened Craffhouse and Angelica in Leeds, and international venues Bacino, Ebisu and Custom House Bar & Grill in Copenhagen (sold to a consortium in 2012), as well as Tokyo's Botanica and Iconic restaurants, operated under licence by Hiramatsu Inc.

In 2013, LDC, a UK private equity investor, became D&D's new financial partner, with Des Gunewardena, David Loewi and the management team retaining their existing investments.

This partnership has led to a period of further rapid expansion through new launches and refurbishment of existing restaurants, including Avenue and Quaglino's in 2014, Le Pont de la Tour and Sartoria in 2015, and the creation of 100 Wardour St in 2016.

New ventures include German Gymnasium in Kings Cross, which opened in 2015, two restaurants planned to open in Land Securities' Nova development in Victoria, a second restaurant and bar venue in Leeds, two restaurants set to open in Glasgow and a number of other projects both in the UK and overseas under active consideration.

In addition to the restaurants, D&D in 2015 unveiled a new outside event-creation business named Alexander & Björck in collaboration with Lena Björck.

Today D&D London owns and operates 38 restaurants, one with a Michelin Star, and a hotel.



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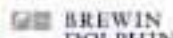
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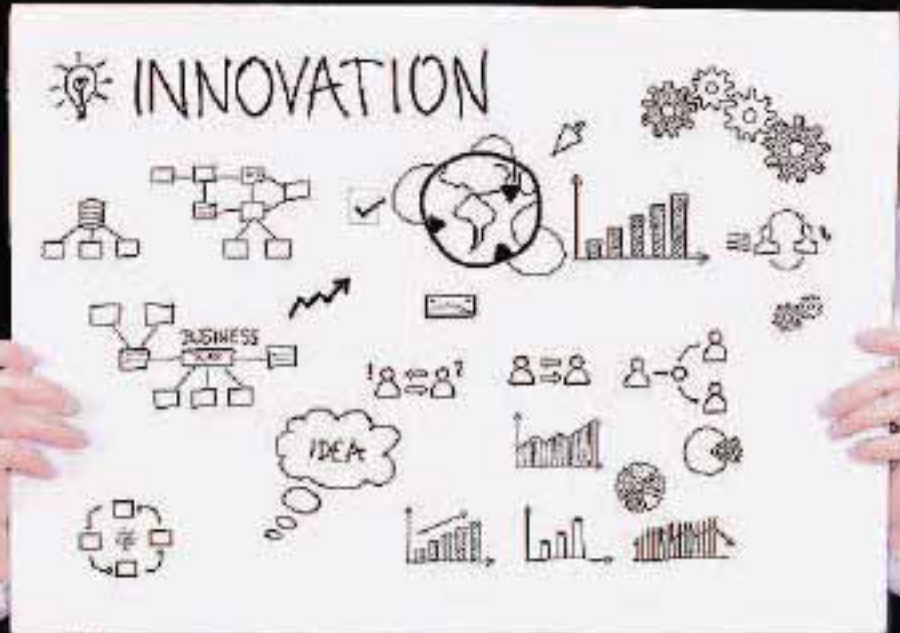
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How our leading firms are grasping change to succeed



In the second of our women in tech series – in partnership with Manchester-based executive search firm Laudale – Fiona Vlemmiks highlights how digitalisation has set local businesses on a journey of reinvention

Digitalisation has transformed our society. The ubiquitous use of mobile devices, the internet and social media has forever changed the way we live, shop and work.

In business, this has led tech start-ups to disrupt industry after industry, offering smarter and more agile alternatives to traditional models of working.

As many companies have been forced into digital transformation in order to compete, uncertainty and change has been inevitable – but the new digital landscape has also opened up masses of opportunity.

In the retail industry, for example, mobile technologies have made the shopping experience almost unrecognisable from five to 10 years ago.

Yet online sales grew 8% in 2017 and are forecast to grow a further 35% by 2022, comfortably outpacing offline demand growth despite challenging overall retail climates.

N Brown Group – which has a

159-year heritage in Manchester – is an example of a highly successful transition from a mail order catalogue to digital-first retailer.

In 2014, work commenced to move the company's systems to new platforms, enabling N Brown to offer relevant updates and a greater variety of customer experiences.

“The foundational platform work is complete and running well and we are now focused on driving very frequent incremental change into our technology stack and rolling out the technology across our brand portfolio,” explains Jennifer Mossop Scott, IT change director at N Brown Group.

“We've also hired new skills into the business and developed our people to embrace new ways of working and thinking.”

In Q3, the group reported that 74% of transactions were made digitally (77% of those on mobile devices), with total online sales up 9% year on year.

“During the last quarter, 77% of N Brown's traffic was from mobile devices, including tablets.”

“About 57% of all traffic is from smartphone and phone conversion rates are increasing.

“Businesses like ours are constantly striving to serve and delight customers. So, of course, when customer needs and behaviours change, we need to change with them – or even ahead of them.

“The vast majority of UK and international customers are comfortable with online shopping, including, increasingly, our older customers. Customers love to see new

products weekly, rather than seasonally and they respond to communication very differently than they used to.

“Equally, they talk about our brands and products differently on social media and other digital channels.”

Meanwhile, in the automotive industry, Auto Trader's game-changing move from a print magazine to a web-only business model is legendary.

Founded in 1977, the trade magazine enjoyed rapid success. Always in the driving seat, the company launched its website in 1996, followed by its first App in 2010. Aware of changing consumer behaviour, Auto Trader made the courageous move to concentrate solely on digital, printing the final issue in 2013.

Alison Ross, customer experience and operations director at Autotrader, says: “What we did, which other niche organisations didn't do, was disrupt ourselves. We didn't manage the decline of print, we actively encouraged it within our own organisation. It was quite a bold way to approach it.”

And it worked. Today, Auto Trader is the number one online marketplace for

Laudale

FEATURE

FROM PAGE 15

car buyers in the UK, with 55 million cross platform visits from engaged users who conduct more than 50 searches per second.

In fact, consumers conduct four times more automotive searches on Auto Trader than on Google and three quarters of all time spent on automotive classified sites is spent on Auto Trader, according to Ross.

Auto Trader also has extensive relationships with car manufacturers and dealerships nationwide. 80% of retailers advertise on Auto Trader, listing over 450,000 vehicles every day.

With eyes firmly focused on the future, Ross says Auto Trader is now considering the opportunity of another market shift - as the car purchasing journey inches closer to being a process that is made entirely online.

Elsewhere in Manchester, tech is shaking up the traditional recruitment sector with firms like Hiring Hub, which launched in 2010.

The online marketplace connects employers and recruitment agencies, allowing them to manage their recruitment activity all in one place,

accelerating and streamlining the process.

The average time-to-fill-a-job on Hiring Hub last year was 20 days, versus an industry average of 68 days - more than three times faster - according to a survey by Gartner.

"We can help companies broaden their candidate search in minutes, by pushing their vacancy to our nationwide community of independent recruitment agencies," says Anna Dick, chief technology officer at Hiring Hub.

"With hundreds of recruitment agencies in our network, we have greater reach than even the biggest recruitment brands.

"Online marketplaces by their nature tend to offer consumers greater choice and convenience by consolidating suppliers into one place. That's essentially all we're doing with Hiring

Hub. The result is that companies can post a job today at, say, 10am, and by 11am have four specialist recruitment agencies working on it, and by 5pm perhaps have the first candidates over for review.

"Offline, that process - finding agencies, negotiating fees and terms, and then starting the search - can take weeks, whereas on Hiring Hub's marketplace it sometimes takes minutes." Employers manage the recruitment process using Hiring Hub's free software and are provided with a dedicated account manager for a single point of contact.

As Hiring Hub expands, Dick says the focus is currently on stability, scalability and security.

"We are currently working on maturing our technical platform to

ensure we can continue to move fast as we grow. We are starting to get real feedback from our users and we can use this to better inform how we prioritise what we do next."

Dick reveals that Hiring Hub also plans to utilise artificial intelligence (AI) to further revolutionise the sector. "We are bringing AI into the Hiring Hub marketplace in a way that we believe will completely transform the industry," she says.

"Potentially, it could bring time-to-hire down to less than a week, even for highly technical roles, but I can't and don't want to say how we plan to do that because, well, for obvious reasons.

"AI is really exciting within recruitment but I will say that, fundamentally, recruitment is a people business and AI won't ever replace that.

"Hence, we're looking at ways we can use technology to facilitate better relationships, streamline process and share up-to-the-minute market intelligence with users, but we won't be looking at ways to circumnavigate recruitment agencies because, at our very core, we believe in their value."

“

We're looking at ways we can use technology to facilitate better relationships

Anna Dick

”



Naomi Daley

Naomi Daley is head of IT asset management at Talk Talk. Her role involves helping the business manage all their IT assets, both hardware and software, reducing cost and risk from audit exposure. Not from a traditional technology background, Daley has been with TalkTalk for six years starting as part of the team that launched the TV service.

The success of the project led to roles in technology introduction and colleague systems where Daley became the lead for TalkTalk's northern office.

She is passionate about getting involved and getting others involved in projects to encourage diversity in business.

Beckie Taylor

Beckie Taylor is a people professional with extensive experience of working with tech businesses to scale up through the importance of people.

An ambassador for tech and the co-founder of Women in Technology North, in 2017, Taylor launched Tech Returners a programme designed to break down the barriers for people returning to, or starting out in tech after a career break.

During 2018, Tech Returners will also be launching further courses focusing on continual development and an app themed around discovering and developing skills.



Alison Ross

Alison Ross is a member of the senior leadership team at Auto Trader Group plc,

With 20 years' experience in technology, Ross now shares responsibility for a cross functional team bringing together technology, operations, service and sales expertise.

She leads a progressive culture and environment at Auto Trader, ensuring the attraction, development and retention of a talented, engaged and diverse workforce.

Ross also serves as the chair of Manchester Digital, the independent trade association for digital business in the north west.



Lucie McLean

Lucie McLean joined the BBC on a three-month contract in 1996 and never left.

After nine years in TV and online journalism she became a product manager, working on the BBC's fledgling mobile website.

In the 12 years since then, she's led teams to launch some of the BBC's most successful apps and websites, including the London 2012 Olympics mobile website and app and the BBC Sport app – both of which were built in Salford. She has been head of product for Children's for three years and over that time has doubled the size of the team.

This year, her team will be launching several new apps and games for children of all ages.

Helen Ramkaran

Helen Ramkaran has been an influential leader in the tech industry for more than two decades, having held roles at Play, Morrisons, Shutl, Stagecoach and Missguided.

She has played a key part in the digital revolution and passionately believes that despite all the advances in technology, people are still at the heart of this success.

At Missguided, Ramkaran has created an in-house agile team who work hand-in-hand with the business to deliver fast-paced change enabling Missguided to meet consumer needs in the challenging fashion industry.

Most recently, her team have launched a new menswear website - and there is more to come.



Sadiya Ahmed

A former secondary school teacher, Sadiya Ahmed embarked upon a free fall into the world of coding.

With a first class mathematics degree and a pair of compasses to hand, she stumbled upon a role at MoneySavingExpert where she currently works as a Java Developer. Before joining MSE, Ahmed trained as a software engineer at the National Security Academy with BAE Systems where she developed a renewed passion for programming.

Throughout her time at MSE, she has undertaken exciting projects and has recently been involved in the 'Digital Festival 2018' in Manchester, helping to increase awareness of women in technology-related roles.



Elizabeth Vega

Elizabeth Vega founded Informed Solutions in 1992, building it into an award-winning company in digital transformation and big data solutions with offices across the UK and Australia.

A highly experienced board director, she campaigns for the need to close tech's gender and skills gap and strongly champions SMEs and the Northern Powerhouse.

Vega is a trusted advisor to UK and Australian government, serving on Cabinet Office's SME Panel since 2012.



FEATURE

Digital is king but human skills are not going away

The majority of organisations we work with now view themselves as heavily digitally enabled.

As 'digital' is such a broadly encompassing term, this enablement means different things to different businesses - improved customer channels, increased efficiencies through cloud infrastructure, a mobile-enabled workforce, etc.

Whatever the strategic objective, we frequently hear clients across all industries say something along the lines of "we aim to be a tech company first" or "we now resemble a platform business".

This 'new' reality impacts skills from entry to exec level. Whilst the technology leader's skill-set has always adapted with key trends, the sheer pace of modern business means there's been a more stark shift in the demands of the

role in recent times. Traditional IT operating models are transforming tech start-ups and corporates are creating innovative partnerships, 'other' functional leaders are more tech savvy than ever, and in many cases 'digital' is now revenue generating.

Furthermore, data and security are firmly on the board's agenda.

This means that relationship building, collaboration, influence, commercial skills, negotiation, and vendor management skills (for

example), are now core for the CIO, CDO and CTO.

Whilst these ingredients are hardly new, many have shifted from nice-to-have 'soft' skills to fundamental tools for the modern technology executive.

We greet this with optimism - against a backdrop of rising artificial intelligence and automation, the demand for 'human' skills is not going away.

Alec Laurie, managing director, Laudale



Alec Laurie



Anna Dick

With a passion for technical innovation and software delivery, Anna Dick's career began within the frenetic world of digital agencies before she went "corporate" in 2006, joining Moneysupermarket.

The pursuit of technical progress within a fast-growth environment suited Dick, who found similar homes at On The Beach and Hotels4u, where she did what she enjoys most: building tech teams.

In recent years, Dick has worked on large scale transformation projects for the BBC and Co-op, before being headhunted by Hiring Hub, thanks to her technical prowess and leadership skills.



Phillipa Winter

Phillipa Winter is chief informatics officer for Bolton NHS Foundation Trust. She qualified in 1994 as an occupational therapist, having many roles in a variety of settings in the NHS culminating clinically to therapy manager in 2012. In 2013, she became a CIO and in 2015 made the transition to CIO.

Winter is passionate about driving professionalism in informatics, multi-agency partnerships, sharing best practice and innovation.

By empowering clinical-led engagement and delivery in IT programmes, she aims to secure adoption and engagement of stakeholders, ultimately enhancing better patient care and user experience.

Jen Mossop Scott

Despite an academic background in neuroscience, Jen Mossop Scott's career for the past 15 years has focused on changing retail businesses through technology.

After several years in software and change consultancy at Accenture, Mossop Scott moved into in-house roles in applications development and technology change delivery at WM Morrisons and now the N Brown Group.

In her current role she is focused on driving technology delivery to transform the business from its catalogue-based heritage into a digital and international leader in plus-size fashion.



ROBERT WALTERS MEN BUSINESS OF THE YEAR AWARDS

Robert Walters is proud to be a sponsor of the 2018 Manchester Evening News Business of the Year Awards for the sixth year. Last year's awards highlighted a number of outstanding businesses in the region and we look forward to identifying the significant talent and successes there are within Greater Manchester during this year's awards.

Our continued sponsorship of the Manchester Evening News Business Awards is further evidence of our support of the local business community. Over the last 17 years, we have built outstanding relationships with both clients and candidates across the Manchester region and continue to provide them with industry leading professional recruitment solutions in the following industries; accounting & finance, financial

services, IT, HR, manufacturing & engineering, logistics, legal, secretarial & support, interim management, senior appointments and procurement & supply chain.

As part of a global recruitment consultancy we are able to provide businesses with a tailored local service that is backed by over 30 years of experience and a global network of candidates.



ROBERT WALTERS

SPECIALIST PROFESSIONAL RECRUITMENT

FEATURE

'Shout up for what you have achieved'

Google Digital Garage hosted an inspiring event last week, encouraging women to celebrate their success in business. Holly O'Rourke reports...

The #IamRemarkable workshop brought more than 60 women together to celebrate International Women's Day on Wednesday, March 8.

Launched by Google UK, the movement supports women and under-represented minorities, and challenges the social perceptions around self-promotion at work.

The interactive session was hosted by Google team leader, Aisha Haq, who wants more women to applaud their own achievements.

Speaking at the event, she said: "We don't talk enough about our own success because we are afraid of what people might say.

"We don't want people to think we are bragging - but what you must remember is that if it's based on fact, it's not bragging, it's stating fact.

"We say 'we' instead of 'I' because we feel safer in a team.

"I want you to be brave - I want you to say 'I'."

She also revealed some recent findings from Google that companies in the UK with more female board directors outperform their competitors by 53%.

"Women are remarkable - we're just too afraid to admit it," she enthuses.

Alongside the workshop, the Garage held a Q&A panel session, made up of

three female business leaders from Manchester.

Angela Burnett, the founder of online delivery service Speedy Couriers, sat on the panel describing how difficult she found it to start a business with no digital skills.

"I left school at 16 because I was desperate to earn money but I soon became bored with working for someone else and wanted more from life," she said.

"After surviving the first year of running the business I had such a sense of achievement but with that came a lot of pressure.

"I had given up a regular income to pursue something I knew very little about and people questioned whether it was the right thing to do and sometimes I even doubted myself."

After attending sessions at the Digital Garage, Burnett gained the skills and confidence needed to grow her business.

She now has 2,000 subcontractor drivers working for the company, delivering packages and parcels across the whole of the UK.

Salford City Council's director of service reform and development Debbie Brown and Katie Peate, head of digital at the Business Growth Hub, also sat on the panel.

Among the attendees was 46-year-old Maria Mander.

She attended the event after recently



quitting her job as a personal assistant to launch a wellbeing business, aimed at relieving stress for people in the workplace.

She uses techniques such as Reiki to help people stay calm when under pressure at work.

"After spending the best part of my life working in an assistant's role, I knew it was going to be a huge change for me to step up and become my own boss."

She has been a regular visitor at Google Digital Garage, taking on a variety of courses to help her business grow.

"Launching the business was a big step," she said.

"Suddenly, I was faced with all of these challenges, the first being how to best promote myself and my services online.

"I have struggled in the past with online skills, but I knew that I needed to get my head around the basics of digital if I was serious about making my business work."

Haq said it's really rewarding to see people like Mander come into the Google Digital Garage and thrive after picking up new online skills.

"Whether you are a total novice like Maria, or already have some digital skills under your belt, the Google Digital Garage is here to guide you and help you get all the skills that you need to grow your career, grow your business or simply grow your confidence," she said.

The #IamRemarkable event was well received by those who attended.

Kay Ashton, 27, from Salford, is in the process of launching her own events company.



She said: "I attend the Google Garage quite often, but this event was particularly important to me. It's been great and it's so nice to see women supporting one another under one roof."

The Google Digital Garage offers free workshops and face-to-face coaching, ranging from beginner to intermediate levels, meaning anyone can come and take part.

Topics covered include: taking your first steps online, how to build your digital CV and personal brand online, and social media strategy.

For those wishing to attend the Google Digital Garage in Manchester city centre, the address is 39-43 King St, Manchester M2 7AT.

The #Iamremarkable workshop and, right, Maria Mander

Helping our communities to go digital

Greater Manchester Business Week has teamed up with Google to help our communities to become more digitally aware and to keep up-to-speed with online innovation and advances. We feel that everyone, from young to old, should feel part of society as it becomes more and more digitally focused. Our aim is to give everyone the confidence and expertise to fully utilise the technology at our fingertips.

DIGITAL, MEDIA, AND CREATIVE

Email: lucy.roue@trinitymirror.com

New tech hub in Sync with the city

A new technology experience has arrived in Manchester with the launch of a purpose built space for people and businesses to shop, learn, share, create and collaborate.

Sync, which is being touted as 'the ultimate technology hub', will be the home of all things Apple, located in the heart of Manchester city centre on Deansgate.

The technology retail store is the first consumer offering by GBM who have been working with Apple for more than 20 years.

As well as in-store support services

such as walk-in and pre-booked repairs, they also offer training and mentoring programmes to schools, and help businesses integrate Apple technology to increase productivity

Chris Costello, director of GBM, said: "As GBM, we have been working with small businesses, multinationals, schools and creatives to provide great Apple solutions and services for over 25 years.

"We felt it was time to build on our foundations to bring our technology expertise to consumers, giving them access to the latest technology, underpinned by experts who genuinely know their stuff.

"Sync isn't just another tech shop. It's



New tech hub Sync

where technology meets collaboration.

"We work with customers to help them use tech to make their personal and professional lives better, as well as providing them with a space to work, network and learn.

"Whether you're looking for advice about the latest iPad or want to upgrade your MacBook, our team are there to help."

Sync is powered by GBM Digital Technologies, the largest Apple service provider in the North.

The opening follows a launch last week where guests were treated to an exclusive audience with Manchester United legend and entrepreneur, Gary Neville.

On the night, he shared his vision for the tech sector in Manchester and answered questions from the audience on his thoughts on the future of technology in Manchester.

The new store is located at Barton Arcade, Deansgate, and opened for business on March 12.

THE VIEW FROM THE MPA

Samantha Bell, client director, theEword

OVER the past decade, social media has come to play an increasingly intrinsic role in our working and personal lives. But could its prevalence be doing us more harm than good?

Deloitte recently reported that more than a third of UK adults look at their smartphones within five minutes of waking, while smartphone use disrupts half of all UK meal times. Meanwhile, over 40% of people think their partner spends too much time on their phone.

Not only are we 'always on', but viewing the world through Insta-filtered lenses is having a profound effect on our mental health: a recent Royal Society for Public Health study suggested that social media is more addictive than cigarettes and alcohol and is linked to increased rates of anxiety, loneliness and poor sleep.

So, smartphones and social media might be doing us more harm than good: a stark thought against a backdrop of rising mental health



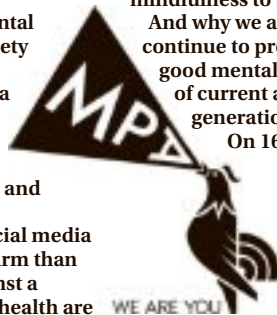
issues at work (up to 15% of people now affected, say the Mental Health Foundation).

That's why people are increasingly setting parameters around usage, embracing techniques such as mindfulness to build up resilience.

And why we as a community must continue to promote and support good mental health, for the benefit of current and future generations.

On 16 May, the MPA will be running Thrive, a conference about health, mindfulness and wellbeing.

Find out more by visiting: mpathrive.co.uk.



Freelance event on gender pay gap

To mark International Women's Day 30 small business owners and freelancers attended an event at Ziferblat in MediaCityUK.

The event, which was organised by the Northern Creative Collective and Ziferblat, included a panel discussion around the gender pay gap between male and female self-employed workers.

Katy Carlisle from the Wheel Exists and Freelance Folk, Sara Benaissa from Fraiche Ink, Helen Bryce from Guilty Mothers Club, and business and life coach Ruth Bigger spoke about their experiences and thoughts around the

gender pay gap.

There are approximately two million freelancers in the UK - 41% of whom are women, according to IPSE.

Claire Gamble, MD of Unhooked Communications and founder of The Northern Creative Collective, said: "It's no surprise that women - and in particular working mums - make up the fastest growing demographic of freelancers.

"But what is surprising is that female freelancers are still dealing with the gender pay gap - even when they're supposedly able to set their own rates and be in charge of their own careers."



IN ASSOCIATION WITH

NEWS

Creative experts from some of Manchester's most successful agencies have revealed what they look for when interviewing young professionals.

Leaders from advertising agencies TWBA, I-COM and Seventy7 spoke to students at the Future Talent in the Creative Industries event held at Manchester Metropolitan University.

Gary Fawcett, executive creative director at TBWA said: "I work with a tenacious set of nuisances - and I love it.

"You have to be persistent if you want to progress.

"Make it hard for people to tell you to leave."

He added: "I look for people with ideas. Ideas are everything and you need a lot of them. Ideas get you talked about. Ideas make you famous."

John Whalley, director of brand strategy at Seventy7, looks for people with passion.

He said: "Human spirit is a fantastic thing to have and I'd rather have that than a long list of qualifications - you can't buy human spirit and people are more important than algorithms."

Kelly Byrne, head of marketing at Boohoo.com and Lynne Makinson-Walsh, director of people and culture at app development agency, Dreamr were also at the event, sharing their personal journeys to success.

They advised students to get as much life experience and as much work experience as they can.

Byrne, who took time out to travel the world before joining Boohoo.com, said: "Life experience is invaluable and you should embrace everyone you meet.

"You never know when they will be



able to help you in the future.

"Work experience is vital and although studying will give you the foundation to a great career, it's those practical skills you need in the workplace."

Makinson-Walsh added: "We understand that young people don't always have the right technical skills straight away, but as long as they have the right attitude and are willing to learn, we are willing to teach."

The event also saw PR student, Joseph Cullen, ask the panel to name one stand out skill they want employees to have.

Fawcett answered: "It's the ability to tell a story and really touch people.

"If you can create emotion in your work - you're going to go far."

I-COM pulls in the wins with £2m aim

Manchester-based digital brand marketing agency I-COM has secured four new contracts, including with an international client.

Checkmark IT, a multinational IT business with offices in Denmark and the UK, will utilise I-COM's expertise with the agency creating a completely new website that will be the hub of all SEO and brand marketing activity.

The appointment highlights international confidence in Manchester's digital and creative industries, giving promise that the city's reputation within these sectors will withstand the uncertainty of Brexit.

I-COM's other new clients, Move Home Faster, The Urban Botanist and Transpartz Group, are all based in the North West.

The announcement comes after I-COM reported it was on course to exceed £2m turnover for the first time in its 13-year history, after re-focusing its business to become a specialist brand development agency.

Mike Blackburn, managing director, said: "Re-focusing our business has proven to be hugely successful - since doing so, more businesses have come to us looking to utilise a wider range of the services and expertise we offer."

In brief

- TickX, the Manchester-based search engine platform for events and attractions tickets, has partnered with music brand NME. The partnership means that, with TickX's integrated ticketing system, visitors to NME.COM can discover and buy tickets for gigs and festival. The partnership follows an announcement that TickX has raised £3 million in a funding round led by BGF Ventures, one year after the founders turned down offers of £75,000 on BBC's Dragons' Den. Steve Pearce, CEO, TickX said: "We're extremely proud to be partnering with one of the most iconic brands in entertainment to bring NME's millions of loyal readers the chance to discover and buy the best available tickets for their favourite artists. 2018 has started off with a bang at TickX HQ and we're looking forward to announcing more exciting new developments in the near future." Keith Walker, digital director of NME, said "The partnership between NME and TickX is a natural fit as we aim to provide our visitors with the best value and choice when buying tickets. NME fans are passionate about live entertainment and with TickX powering our ticketing, our audience will now find the best priced tickets available for the artists they love."

- Bring Digital has appointed Stacey Wynn, formerly AO.com, to head up the affiliate marketing programme. The new programme will kick off with a seminar and networking event in Manchester on March 28 with speakers from Bring Digital and their affiliate technology partner, Performance Horizon. The event is suitable for ecommerce marketing managers and directors who want to learn about increasing the volume and profitability of their affiliates channel. Wynn said: "Affiliate marketing is a powerful acquisition channel that drives sales, whilst helping you stay in full control of costs. We've partnered with Performance Horizon to allow us to provide our clients with industry-leading technology and reporting, and our growth strategies will allow our brands to access new customers and territories without any commercial risk."

- Successful women in radio will

take centre stage at the 24th Nations and Regions Media Conference next month. Three female presenters - Anna Foster, Trish Adudu and Chelsea Norris - will take part in a special session entitled Sisters Are Doing It For Themselves: Successful Women in Radio at the University of Salford event. All three women have presenting roles on radio stations outside of London, and have inspiring stories to tell of how they've succeeded in the industry. The session will be chaired Former GMG-Radio boss, John Simons. Beth Hewitt, director of the Nations and Regions Media Conference, said: "There are so many women doing great things in this industry both in front of and behind the mic. It will be fascinating and fabulous to hear Anna, Trish and Chelsea talk about their careers so far."

- Leading digital user experience (UX) agency, Sigma, has appointed a new board chair to help oversee growth following a series of new client wins. Lars Kry takes up the position as part of a strategic governance restructure to replace previous chair Thomas Hallberg. Currently, Kry is CEO for Sigma's Swedish parent company, Sigma IT Consulting, and will retain this role whilst also advising the UK team on ways to maintain growth. Sigma UK is on track for continued growth throughout 2018, with expected sales of £4million. Now a 30-strong team, with offices in Macclesfield and Cambridge, the company has recently secured a number of new client wins - notably a major new contract with the British Safety Council (BSC). Hilary Stephenson, managing director of Sigma UK, said: "We have started the year on a high, with some great new people joining the team, a re-focus of our collaboration strategy with the wider Sigma group and a series of major new client relationships."

- Manchester-headquartered Northcoders, the coding bootcamp for the North, has received funding for four scholarships from global technology consultancy ThoughtWorks that aims to encourage more women to pursue a career in tech. Each scholarship for the full time 12-week coding course is valued at £6,000 plus an extra £2,000 bursary is available to help with living costs.



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24 May 2018 | The Principal Hotel, Manchester



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A COFFEE WITH...

The marketing boss who passed up comedy offer

Stephen O'Malley, head of Fast Web Media, a Manchester-based digital marketing firm

What is your business motto?

It's an often-repeated phrase, but I believe a very important one - treat others how you want to be treated. It's a core value instilled in every employee at Fast Web Media.

How do you make contacts which are useful in business?

If you stay in the same industry you'll earn yourself a decent network by hard work and - hopefully - reputation. By surrounding yourself with a first-class team you'll get potential customers or partners knocking on your door. Oh, and if you know your way around LinkedIn you can take a few shortcuts, but I suppose that's a benefit of being an experienced digital marketer.

What makes your firm different?

It's difficult for an agency to stand out from the others, and some agencies try too hard, so that's not what we want to do. I believe Fast Web Media's difference is a team of people all pulling together to make each and every working day an enjoyable one, whether that be challenging each other to be better or helping each other overcome problems.

What individual has inspired you most in business and why?

I was lucky enough to work with Simon Gulliford, who's a renowned strategist in marketing and business development. A couple of years ago he helped me and the Fast Web Media team formulate our business strategy, and in doing so unlocked the potential and filled me full of optimism for the future.

Do you dress up or down for business?

My wife is a stylist, so does her best to help me avoid the jeans and jacket look, but I'll dress down normally. However, I'll always wear a nice shirt and ensure my shoes are clean. I do welcome the opportunity to wear a suit though, as it's such a rare requirement these days.

What do you always have with you?

As with most people, it's got to be my phone, but it's unusual if I'm more than a few feet away from my laptop, as it's



Stephen O'Malley

easier if I need to get things done efficiently with that. I'm always on 'stand-by' mode due to the nature of digital marketing.

What is your proudest achievement in business?

In February 1995, I was the first (part-time) employee of the business that is now Fast Web Media. To end up running the business 20 years later makes me smile. However, seeing more than 50 young Mancunians start their career in digital and seeing some go on to great success really makes me proud.

What is your firm's greatest asset?

From the early days of the company everyone strived to innovate in digital, and the leadership team here encourage everyone to collaborate on any notions or ideas they have - and it's that spirit of innovation and collaboration that keeps the company relevant, which is a prerequisite in digital marketing.

Do you use social media and, if so, with what success?

The social channel I use most now is LinkedIn, because it assists Fast Web Media in our mission to grow the business, although I still check Facebook and Twitter once or twice a day.

If you hadn't gone down your chosen

career path, what would you do instead?

When I was looking at 'the internet' as a career option in 1995, I had a strange encounter with the agent of a few comedians in my family's pub, The Apsley Cottage (next to the stage door of the Manchester Apollo). After witnessing my 'show' while pulling a few pints behind the bar, he told me he would train me as a stand-up comedian, and wanted me to tour as support to Stuart Lee and Richard Herring. I had a tough decision to make, but I chose the internet and don't regret the decision, although it does make me wonder, 'what if' now and again.

What is at tip for business success?

Trust in your team to do the job you pay them for. Let them make decisions, and ensure you celebrate their successes with everyone in the team.

At what time of day are you most inspired or creative?

It varies, and it usually depends on a deadline, I am one of the people who works best under pressure, but I find I am most imaginative and productive at nighttime when I have the space to work without distraction. In fact, I love a late night in the office on my own fuelled by a slight sense of panic.

How do you relax outside of work?

At my age, it's important to look after yourself and get as much exercise as possible, so I hang around with my energetic seven-year-old daughter (trying not to embarrass her of course). She likes roller skating and scooting, so I try to run alongside her. I have also done a meditation and mindfulness course recently which has done wonders for my stress levels.

Where do you take your coffee break?

I get into work early and really enjoy a coffee at around 7.30am in the kitchen, as I get to chat to the team as they arrive into work, before everyone's too busy with their actual day to day.

Who would you most like to have a coffee with?

Stephen, 48, left the world of insurance marketing to join an internet start-up in 1995, as he wanted to turn his football writing hobby in to a career.

His knowledge of computers and the - then very much in its infancy - internet led him to becoming the editor of the first Premier League website.

That company quickly morphed into Fast Web Media and he has been there since in various senior roles, culminating with being head of the agency.

Stephen is married with one daughter. He and his family are about to open their house to a dog or a guinea pig, once his daughter decides her preference.

At the moment, I suppose it would be José Mourinho. I'd love to know what he really thinks of United, the corporation behind it, and what needs to happen for them to compete at the top level for the next few years. I'm sure he could give me a few tips in effective management and strategy too.

Americano, latte, cappuccino - what's your coffee break favourite?

I'm weaning myself off lattes and am back on the Americanos. I'm even considering switching to almond milk, which, writing it down, I realise is probably a step too far.



Stephen and his daughter

ENTERPRISE

Networking group reels in membership with a love of cinema

Scott Hadden launched FoodnFilm last year. A novel kind of networking group for professionals in Manchester it allows members to bond over a meal before settling down to the latest blockbusting movie. He tells Stuart Greer about the concept and his plans

A new networking event which brings together professionals through their love of cinema has celebrated its first year. FoodnFilm offers

movie-lovers a night for a meal before heading into the cinema to watch one of the latest blockbusters.

Scott Hadden, who came up with the idea, was out with friends when he spotted that the group was made up of professionals from various industries

across Manchester.

He saw that they were able to chat over their mutual interest in film and recognising the opportunity to form an unconventional but affective networking group, FoodnFilm was launched.

Hadden, who is also group marketing officer at Periscope Wealth, said: "Networking in its traditional format is certainly evolving from when I first started in my career.

"People are put off by the idea of being forced to attend an event where

Hair and make-up app launches

An enterprising duo have launched a hair and beauty app.

Artiste offers on-demand hair and make-up artists to travel to doors across Greater Manchester, Cheshire and the wider region.

It is the brainchild of Manchester-based Kunal Trehan, 34, and Thomas Hope, 30, the duo behind the interior design brand Touched Interiors.

With a tap of a button clients can book an appointment at their home, office, event space or hotel.

The partners felt there was a gap in the market for high quality products, stylists and artists to be available for men and women who want a bit of glamour.

Trehan said: "Myself and Thomas have a wealth of experience working

within the hair, make up and interior design industries alongside international celebrities, VIPs and influencers.

"Having seen and perfected the treatment and service these personalities receive, we wanted to replicate this to make it accessible to everyone whilst still using the crème de la crème in stylists and products."

The business is backed by Armand Beasley, celebrity make-up artist and beauty guru, who has agreed to be Artiste's brand ambassador.

Beasley collaborated with Trehan and Hope on the app and is available for bookings and will host masterclasses for Artiste's professionals.

Hope is thrilled to have Armand on

board. He said: "Armand shares our work ethic, passion and exceptional standards so he was the perfect choice to become Artiste's brand ambassador.

"At Artiste, we encourage individuality and empowerment within both sexes and enable our clients to embrace themselves and be who they want, when they want. We are redefining on-demand beauty."

When booking through the Artiste app or website, www.artiste.co.uk, both male and female clients will have a choice of 'looks' ranging from femme fatale to fearlessly flawless, the executive touch to au naturel.

Hair and make-up bookings can be available to both men and women, couples or groups.



Kunal Trehan, right, and Thomas Hope

Will the government's 'Northern Powerhouse' proposal provide the right infrastructure to support current and future business? How can investment be spread evenly throughout the region? What does the future hold for northern business?

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Scott Hadden

they don't really want to go, talk to people they don't know and about subjects they might have no interest in.

"Yet no one will deny the importance of having an engaged personal network.

"So, by joining people together who have a common interest in film - it eases them into the idea of attending a networking event.

In January 2017, Hadden met with the Odeon's business development manager, Rob Ellis, to secure the venue. Ellis said: "When Scott approached us with his idea for FoodnFilm, we instantly knew this was a concept we wanted to partner with.

"It's fantastic that some of Manchester's leading business professionals who attend FnF are real film buffs and have such an enthusiasm for the big screen.

"The networking at FoodnFilm is rarely dull as there is not only business opportunities to discuss but usually discussion and debate about film as well.

"We have really enjoyed hosting FoodnFilm and congratulate them on a fantastic first year of events."

Daniel Varney and Steve Kuncewicz, now both partners at BLM LLP came on board as the group's first sponsors and FoodnFilm was launched.

Kuncewicz said: "Manchester's

networking scene is prolific - you can be out breakfast, dinner and tea every day of the week.

"FoodnFilm offers something different and provides a setting where you almost forget you are there to network.

"It's friendly and fun with a guarantee that you will meet someone

with the same interest as you - film.

"This approach really makes the group stand out and is the reason why we are so pleased to support it"

So far 309 people have signed up to the network group.

Hadden said over the year the numbers of attendees has steadily increased as more and more people are

hearing about the group.

"What's impressed me ever more is the standard of business introductions that have taken place that has led to new working relationships which is the epitome of success for a networking group," he said.

Entering into its second year, Hadden is looking to evolve the format to offer themed events which start with an informal round table discussion with the topic of the discussion then linked to the subsequent movie's plot.

The first one took place at the beginning of February, where a group of people discussed the concept of leadership and then watched Darkest Hour, the movie that charts Churchill and the early months of World War Two.

Hadden explained: "I want to build a highly engaged and supportive community of business professionals that also have a passion for film.

"The new format combined with the launch of FnF flexi which enables guests to attend a movie of their choice rather than our topped billed one should help to ensure there is something for everyone."

Tickets for each event cost £25 and cover the cost of the food, cinema ticket and popcorn, and can be bought via foodnfilm.co.uk



The FoodnFilm networking group



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BUSINESS OF THE YEAR

Visionairies scoop awards

In the 26th year of the MEN Business of the Year awards, Business Week celebrates by looking back at some last year's winners

Behind every successful business you will likely find one or two key visionaries putting everything they have literally and figuratively into it.

That is no more true than for three winners at last year's awards.

Zen Internet, led by its founder Richard Tang, has been taking huge strides to become a leading independent telecoms provider and take on so-called 'big four'.

The Rochdale-based internet service provider, which provides a full range of data, voice and cloud services to business and residential customers across the UK, saw revenues climb to £57.2m in 2017, an achievement which saw it win the Robert Walters Turnover £50m-£100m category.

Since winning the award, Zen has grown further with revenues increasing to £63m, a rebrand, its first TV advert and a new board with former Sage executive Paul Stobart at the helm and a shared goal of making it a £100m business by 2020.

Martin O'Donnell, managing director for Zen's corporate and mid-market division, said: "Nearly all of Zen's staff work in its Rochdale headquarters, so winning the North West's premier business award has been widely celebrated.

"We are a company with national reach but many of our customers are in the North West, so the award also provided excellent PR opportunities.

"Perhaps more than anything, to win an award after such a thorough selection procedure reinforced our belief that we are going about business in the right way, and that our 'people-first' approach works. That people-first approach prioritises the happiness of staff, customers and suppliers, and has just resulted in us being placed at 44 in the Sunday Times 100 Best Places to Work list.

"Richard has recently reiterated his commitment to that approach, to the



Zen Internet win their award last year

continuing independence of Zen, and to a kinder, more responsible vision of capitalism. The MEN award was a welcome confirmation of our progress and principles."

Chris Poole, managing director of Robert Walters Manchester, which returns as sponsor, said: "We are always impressed by the quality and innovation of the entrants in the Turnover £50m-£100m category.

"Many of the companies we met in previous years have achieved significant expansion and development, illustrating Manchester's position as one of the country's leading regions for business growth.

"Given the city's growing reputation as a vibrant commercial hub, we look forward to seeing companies from Manchester bring fresh ideas, original products and vital business solutions to market across a range of industries."

To the south of Manchester, Carrs Foods International enjoyed huge success after finally breaking the American market.

The Wythenshawe-based bakery business, which supplies European bakery products into the UK, Ireland and worldwide export markets, saw US

turnover reach £18m of the company's total of £49m, thanks to the determination of owners Jeremy Gilboay and Paul Baker. Next year, with the launch of four more products in the US, it could reach £28m.

It was this export success that saw Carrs win the Hill Dickinson turnover between £25m and £50m category.

Gilboay said: "Winning Business of the Year was a highlight for us at Carrs Foods. Since then, the business has continued to go from strength to strength.

"We have embarked upon the evolution of the Baker Street brand with a complete new look and feel, which will be rolled out across the whole range in the coming months.

"We are also very excited to have had our first listing for Baker Street within the multiples, with the part-baked baguettes and petits pains launching in Waitrose earlier this month. We have lots more exciting plans for 2018."

Hill Dickinson will once again sponsor the category this year.

Geraldine Ryan, head of Manchester office and Commercial Litigation, said: "The £25m-£50m category was well contested last year with businesses

from three diverse sectors making the final shortlist. Carrs Foods was a worthy winner of the award.

"The judges were impressed by this expansion into international markets showcasing Carrs Foods International as a Manchester business with a truly global reach.

"We are looking forward to meeting with the region's entrepreneurs as part of the judging process this year, who continue to demonstrate why Manchester is a leading region for business growth."

Travel expert Inspire was started by Keith Herman and Peter Pantelides in a small office in Altrincham.

It now has 90 employees, including 65 at its base in Bramhall, 20 working across the UK and 10 in Brazil and South East Asia and Honk Kong.

An extensive rebrand and global expansion helped Inspire, which specialises in loyalty and sales promotion, record its best every financial results in 2017 and helped it win the Manchester Evening News Turnover £10m-£25m category.

Keith Herman, managing director of Inspire, said: "Since winning last year not only have we invested in the launch of a new luxury travel brand called Hidden Retreats but we've also recently expanded the business into the Far East following a high demand for our services from companies in the region.

"Scooping the big prize definitely brought the Inspire name into the spotlight.

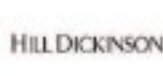
"We were approached by a global travel company that saw the news and now they sell their product into our expanding client base. If it weren't for our win, it's unlikely they'd know who we were.

"We're delighted that the award win has had such a positive impact on business and look forward to further growth in 2018."

The MEN Business of The Year Awards 2018 is now open for entries. Deadline for entries is Friday, April 6.

To enter, visit www.menbusinessoftheyearawards.co.uk

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PROPERTY NEWS

McAlpine steps in to finish Carillion-hit apartments

Developers have drafted in replacements for two major projects following the Carillion collapse.

In Salford, Select Property Group has brought in Sir Robert MALpine to complete its Affinity Living apartments scheme on New Bailey Street.

The riverside scheme, which includes 37 and 17 story buildings, was given planning permission in July 2016 and Carillion was working on the project until it went bust in January.

When complete, Affinity Living will comprise 505 apartments, as well as shared lounge areas, co-working spaces, 'supersized' gyms and private entertaining spaces.

Mark Oakes, chief commercial officer at Select, said: "Thanks to the proactive approach of our team, we have been able to expedite what can ordinarily be a lengthy process.

"We are delighted to have the Sir Robert MALpine team on board to complete the scheme and we look forward to updating the industry in the coming months."

Simon Trevor, Sir Robert MALpine's managing director for Central, Wales and the West, added: "The Riverside and Riverview schemes are significant projects in Manchester and it's a pleasure to be starting work with the Select Property Group team."

Meanwhile, Robertson North West has replaced Carillion as main contractor on the £37m Vision Tameside project.

The scheme includes a 7,000 m² Advanced Skills Centre for Tameside College, a new Joint Public Service Centre for Tameside Council and its partners and retail space for Wilko's.

It is based on Wellington Street, Ashton-under-Lyne, on the former site of the Tameside Council administration building.

All Carillion employees that had worked on the project and were still looking for employment have been given roles by Robertson.

Coun Brenda Warrington, executive leader of Tameside Council, said: "Getting a new sub-contractor in place has been our top council priority after Carillion went into liquidation.

"One of our main aims has been to protect the job security of hard-working staff operating on former Carillion contracts.

"Vision Tameside is a key initiative in

Select Property Group has brought in Sir Robert MALpine to complete its £247m Affinity Living apartments scheme on New Bailey Street



the area and one we know will provide considerable jobs and growth when it's completed.

"As a result, we are delighted that Robertson Construction has started work to complete these exciting developments in Tameside."

Dirk Pittaway, managing director of Robertson North West, said: "We know that the project is a high priority for Tameside, and we are proud to be able to play our part in ensuring it is successfully delivered.

"We also welcome our new colleagues into the Robertson family.

"When entering into the Early Works Agreement it was a key priority that we were able to offer employment to all those that previously worked on the project"

Great Northern revamp

Multi-million pound plans to transform the listed Great Northern Warehouse and the next-door square have been approved.

Last redeveloped in the 1990s, the sunken amphitheatre at the centre of the plaza will be paved over to create a refreshed public space, including an extra cafe. At the corner of Peter Street the 'spire' structure that advertises attractions in the warehouse will be demolished.

A new pedestrianised 'mews-style' street will be created along the back of Deansgate, while the multi-storey car park contained within the listed warehouse will be replaced with

apartments. Inside, a new three-floor atrium will be opened up as shared community space for residents.

The cinema, casino and bowling alley will all remain, although their entrances will be altered.

Meanwhile, futuristic designs for a new £18m 'tower of light' outside the old GMEX also got the go-ahead.

The steel landmark will form part of the council's plans for a sustainable heat network powering civic buildings via a network of pipes.

Central Library, the town hall Manchester Art Gallery, the Midland hotel and the Bridgewater Hall will all be powered via the tower.

PROFESSIONALS

email: stuart.greer@men-news.co.uk

Employment law teams bolstered by trio's appointment

Manchester-based HRC Law has announced a trio of appointments to its employment team.

Jo Handler, Siobhan Howard-Palmer and Heena Kapadi join as the firm ahead of its fifth birthday.

An employment specialist, Handler joins the team as an associate having spent 11 years with Eversheds followed by a period at Almond Solicitors.

She said: "HRC Law's positioning within the market offered a unique and exciting opportunity. I liked its approach: excellent client service, in-depth knowledge and sector expertise. It also has a great approach to flexible working which works well for me and the team generally."

Howard-Palmer joins the firm from an in-house role with a Fortune 500 worldwide supplier to the oil and gas industry.

She trained and qualified at Halliwells, then moved to Clyde and Co, before taking a career break which saw her travel through South and Central America.

Howard-Palmer said: "HRC Law's employment team has earned a strong reputation," she said. "As the firm has expanded it has retained a truly client-focused approach, while



L to R: Heena Kapadi, Siobhan Howard-Palmer and Jo Handler

successfully competing with much larger counterparts. I'm looking forward to playing a part in working with clients to grow and enhance their businesses."

Kapadi joins as a solicitor from Slater Heelis where she qualified, and will be advising clients on a wide range of employment law matters ranging from TUPE transfers to tribunal claims and director/partnership disputes.

Kapadi said: "HRC Law has seen impressive growth in recent years and is a firm I have always admired; I look forward to working with some of the industry's most talented employment specialists."

Simon Whitehead, partner of HRC Law, said: "We need a team of people who are technically excellent, who will retain our unique culture and help our clients succeed."



Opinion: growing your company

If a company wants to grow, at some point the profits will need to be reinvested.

In the early days spare cash will likely be taken as salary and cover running expenses. But at some point decisions need to be made. Being frugal means saving money but investing could stimulate growth and help diversify assets.

But what should your profits be spent on? Staff, new premises, stock, marketing and advertising?

These are all likely to be long-term commitments that increase running costs.

The first thing we would do with any business is find out what the shareholders' or directors' exit strategy is.

From there, we can help you plan for the short-term, medium-term and long-term, both for the business and personal needs.

We recommend that a business needs in the bank for three to six months of fixed costs plus 20%.

For the short-term - 12 months to three years - we might consider investment in low-risk assets with instant access.

For three to five years more risk might be appropriate, depending on your circumstances. But for five years plus, investing in commercial property is a solid option and can be done via a small company self-administered scheme (SSAS).

If a company is looking to expand and needs bigger premises, then the SSAS can buy the property, with the rent being paid back into the pension scheme free from corporation tax and income tax.

There would also be no capital gains tax when the property is sold.

A further advantage to owner-directors is rent can be paid into your pension as opposed to a landlord.

Stuart Carswell, director, Pareto Financial Planning

Boost to public sector practice

Law firm Browne Jacobson has expanded its public sector practice with the appointment of partner Michael Mousdale to its Manchester office.

Mousdale, who joins from DWF where he was a partner and head of the local government team, is recognised as one of the leading public procurement advisers in the country.

He is highly acknowledged by Legal 500 and brings with him almost 30 years' experience in the sector covering contracts and agreements, EU and competition law, outsourcing, joint ventures and partnerships.

As a procurement specialist, Mousdale has advised on a number of

landmark deals including the first private finance initiative (PFI) in local government, two of the first schools PFIs, the largest Blue Light PFI Scheme for Greater Manchester Police and the Greater Manchester Waste PFI Project - the largest project of its type in Europe.

At Browne Jacobson, Mousdale will be responsible for leading our public sector commercial practice in the North West.

Peter Ware, head of local government and infrastructure at Browne Jacobson, said: "This is a key strategic hire for our public sector team and underlines our commitment to creating a top-tier practice in Manchester."



Michael Mousdale

BEEVER
AND
STRUTHERS

IN ASSOCIATION WITH

SOLICITORS
AND
CONVEYANCERS

Will specialist comes home with job move

Specialist solicitor Patrick Swanney has joined Greater Manchester law firm Woodcocks Haworth and Nuttall Solicitors (WHN).

Swanney, 32, specialises in estate and tax planning, will preparation, and Court of Protection work and estate administration.

He will work alongside WHN's head of wills and probate Stephen Parr.

Swanney joined WHN after a year as a solicitor at Smith Sutcliffe in Padiham.

Previously, he worked for eight years at Watson Ramsbottom Solicitors, including two years as a partner/

director and six as a solicitor.

Swanney also completed his solicitor training contract at Watson Ramsbottom after undertaking a LLB law degree in at Sheffield Hallam University and his Legal Practice Course at The University of Sheffield.

Originally from the Accrington and Great Harwood area, Swanney moved to Weir in Rossendale four years ago.

He is a member of Blackburn with Darwen, Hyndburn and Burnley Dementia Action Alliance, and a Dementia Friends Champion, as well as a volunteer for the Alzheimer's Society.



Patrick Swanney

In addition, Swanney is a member of Solicitors for the Elderly (SFE) which enables him to give expert advice to older clients in relation to issues such as long term care funding.

Commenting on his appointment, he said: "I am delighted to be working in a great team of professionals at WHN. They are a widely respected firm with a forward-looking approach and are

continually expanding their people, skills and areas of expertise."

Stephen Parr, head of Wills and probate at WHN, said: "Having Patrick on board enables us to strengthen and deepen our specialist offer to older clients. He brings considerable technical knowledge, enthusiasm, and commitment and I am confident his career will continue to flourish."

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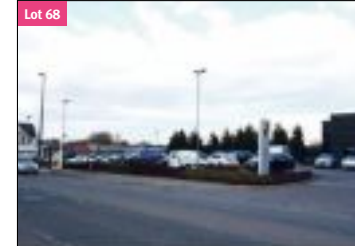
Lot 34



Lot 46



Lot 48



Lot 68

INDUSTRIAL INVESTMENTS

Castle Industrial Estate, Failsworth, Manchester, M35 0HD
Lot 34: Large and prominent multi let industrial property currently producing £125,640pa.

Land & Buildings, Windsor Street, Oldham, OL1 4AQ
Lot 48: Industrial unit, land and yard let at £87,987.50pa in total.

SHOP INVESTMENT

45-51 Great Underbank, & 68-72 (even) High Street, Stockport, SK1 1NW
Lot 46: Town centre shop with 2 floors of offices above. Total Rent £36,000pa.

LEISURE INVESTMENT

9-11 Old Market Place, Altrincham, WA14 4NP
Lot 140: Town centre restaurant let at £37,000pa (rising). Reversion 2024.

GROUND RENT INVESTMENT

Land on the West and East sides of, Whoolden Street, Farnworth, Bolton, BL4 7EP
Lot 67: Site let at £15,095pa on a lease expiring 2121.

Land on the North East of, Manchester Road, Bolton, BL3 2RJ
Lot 68: Site let at £9,750pa on a lease expiring 2111.

Land on the North East side of, Weston Street, Bolton, BL3 2AW
Lot 69: Site let at £6,150pa on a lease expiring 2118.

Land and buildings on the South West side of, New Brunswick Street, Horwich, Bolton, BL6 7PQ
Lot 70: Site let at £5,000pa on a lease expiring 2135.

Land on the South side of, Boundary Street, Bolton, BL1 3TZ
Lot 71: Site let at £8,750pa on a lease expiring 2126.

Site at, Hacken Lane & Belper Street, Bolton, BL3 1SD
Lot 72: Site let at £7,875pa on a lease expiring 2112.

21 Vernon Street, Bolton, BL1 2QB
Lot 73: Site let at £6,300pa on a lease expiring 2108.

Land on the West Side of, Vernon Street, Bolton, BL1 2QB
Lot 74: Site let at £2,250pa on a lease expiry 2083.

Land on the South West side of, Swan Lane, Bolton, BL3 6TL
Lot 75: Site let at £2,715pa on a lease expiring 2088.

Land and buildings on the North Side of, Gladstone Place, Farnworth, Bolton, BL4 7ER
Lot 76: Site let at £4,450pa on a lease expiring 2072.

Land and buildings on the North West side of, Mill Street, Bolton, BL2 2BL

Lot 77: Site let at £4,000pa on a lease expiring 2073.

Advantage House, Eagle Street, Bolton, BL2 2BU
Lot 78: Site let at £1,500pa on a lease expiring 2075.

Land at, Duke Street North, Bolton, BL1 2NP
Lot 79: Site let at £3,500pa on a lease expiring 2119.

Ashburton Road West, Manchester, M17 1SX
Lot 146: Five separate pieces of land, majority let to Alliance Real Estate LLP on a lease expiring 2133 with RPI linked reviews. £13,751.78pa.

Thursday 22nd March 2018

The Berkeley, Wilton Place, Knightsbridge, London SW1X 7RL

Full property details are available online:

www.allsop.co.uk

COMMERCIAL PROPERTY

by David Thame

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LEGAL, MARKETING & FINANCE

Digital firm is set to expand by taking on city centre hub

Software house AND Digital is opening its first Manchester office with plans to double in size in the next twelve months.

The London-headquartered digital business arrives as Manchester's tech property sector undergoes a co-working and serviced office revolution to meet the flexible needs of new arrivals.

AND Digital has launched a Manchester team, taking up space in Headspace Group's 15,000 sq ft work and events hub at Mount Street. The digital transformation specialist has taken a 40-person space, with plans to grow to 80 over the next year.

AND Digital helps businesses accelerate their digital capability by helping them design, setup and improve their digital function.

With a workforce of over 300 in the UK and three offices in London, the business has ambitious growth plans for the North of England, with a Leeds office already in the pipeline.

It is the latest member to join Headspace Manchester, which launched a year ago and has since built up a diverse community of businesses ranging from PLCs to app developers and fashion start-ups.



Malcolm Seagrave, managing director for the North at AND Digital commented: "Not only is Manchester a hugely vibrant city, but it represents a major opportunity for AND Digital, specifically in terms of demand for what we are doing. It was the obvious place from which to launch our

Northern expansion strategy.

"The space itself is fantastic; it's in a great location, with heaps of character and it's a bit different, which is very much in line with the way that we like to approach things. Headspace has created a really vibrant community and it's much more than just a workspace."

Delph snap up £6m tower deal

Delph Property Group has acquired a site with planning for a 16-storey residential tower after a £6m deal.

JLL's Manchester brokerage, working on behalf of a private client, sold One Lord Street in the Green Quarter for around £6 million.

One Lord Street is a 0.57 acre site with planning for 192 apartments and 67 parking spaces.

The development includes 16 three-beds, 128 two-beds, 47 one-beds and a four-bed unit.

Nick Belkin, head of acquisitions at Delph Property Group, said: "Decades of inward investment and regeneration projects have made the city a real destination for young professionals,

and demand for high-quality city centre apartments is at an all-time high.

"Because of the success we are experiencing at our scheme next door that we are currently selling, the Hallmark, we know Manchester's Green Quarter is an especially popular location due to its wide selection of amenities and great transport links.

"We are confident there will be similar interest in One Lord Street."

Fortis Developments will deliver the scheme.

Robert Hogarth from JLL said: "The sale of One Lord Street highlights the continued competitiveness of the Manchester land market."



Briefs

■ **Mechanical and electrical building services business**
Vaughan Engineering is opening an office at 26 Regent Road, Altrincham, to service its contract on the former town's hospital site. Suite 3 comprising 221 sq ft has been taken on a 12 month lease at an all-inclusive rent. Daniel Lee, director at Regional Property Solutions, acted for the landlord LMO Property.

■ **Manchester-based retail marketing specialist**
Shoppertainment Management has won four competitive pitches for the exclusive marketing and commercialisation of four shopping centres across the country within the first months of 2018. Shoppertainment was appointed in to manage marketing for St George's Shopping Centre and Charter Walk Shopping Centre and to manage commercialisation for Eden Shopping Centre and Harpur Centre. The team won 15 new centres during 2017 and they are aiming to double this figure in 2018.

■ **Damian Flood's development business Cole Waterhouse and international property investment firm IP Global are launching their £68m mixed-use apartment development, No. 1 Old Trafford, to investors across the globe.** Cole Waterhouse, which has offices in Manchester and London, received planning for the 354-apartment development in summer 2017. The team is now working together with IP Global – who have underwritten the development – to promote the sales of the 173 apartments in the 18-storey tower to global investors and local residents.

■ **A concrete eyesore that has blighted the inner ring-road for over a decade could finally be demolished after planning permission for a new student block was agreed.** The half-built shell of a car park, on River Street near Hulme, has been standing derelict since 2005. At a planning meeting, approval was given for a 32-storey block of student accommodation, with Liverpool-based applicant Downing Students also promising improved pedestrian links and public space.

FEATURE

Construction work underway at the Redrock development in Stockport town centre



Engineering a bright future

In our series examining the future of business in Stockport, Ben Rooth discovers how construction and engineering firms are truly forging the sturdiest foundations for the borough's ongoing prosperity

CONSTRUCTION and engineering have long been of fundamental importance to Stockport's economic well-being. But not only are these sectors driving the borough's financial regeneration, they're also transforming its visual appearance in myriad different ways.

Take construction. According to Stockport Council, there are 1,245 businesses operating in this area across the borough which equates to 9.6% of all businesses.

The sector employs 5,500 people - or 4.4% of the total workforce, which is higher than the Greater Manchester average of 4.2%.

In short, the importance of the

construction sector to Stockport's ongoing prosperity speaks for itself.

And the council has calculated that when this sector is combined with engineering and manufacturing, their value to "Stockport plc" becomes even more significant.

Coun Kate Butler, cabinet member for economy and regeneration at Stockport Council, explained: "With almost 16,000 people employed in the construction, engineering and manufacturing sector in Stockport, it's clear that this is an area which is thriving for Stockport.

"Companies such as MAN Diesel and Turbo, Sella Controls and Baumuller to name just a few have chosen to make Stockport their home, with new names from across the sector frequently choosing to move to the town as well.



Coun Kate Butler

"Many of Stockport's engineering businesses are at the cutting edge of innovation in their fields, leading the way for others.

"The skilled and dedicated workforce they find in Stockport, along with the town's excellent connectivity, make it easy for them to trade nationally and internationally as they look to grow their businesses."

Indeed, engineering companies like MAN Diesel and Turbo UK have played a pivotal role in the borough's growth and evolution.

It is now more than 100 years since its original incarnation was established in Hazel Grove. Since then, thousands of Stockport-made engines have been sent all over the world.

At its height, the company boasted its

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FEATURE

FROM PAGE 33

own social activities for workers, including an onsite golf course, football, cricket and rugby grounds, as well as its own social club and brass band.

It underwent several changes in ownership until, in 2000, it became part of the German industrial giant MAN, before finally production ceased in Hazel Grove in 2006.

Now, the factory is engaged in servicing 'heritage' engines still in use around the world and it teach the next generation of engineers at its PrimeServ Academy.

The academy offers a comprehensive range of training programmes on its extensive range of engine types and all courses are a combination of lecture room theory presentations and workshop practical exercises.

Separately, systems integration specialist Sella Controls continues to flourish.

Earlier this year, it announced it had won a major contract from international chemical company INEOS Nitriles (UK).

Carl Toft, head of Sella Controls' technical support group, commented: "It's great to add Ineos to our growing list of clients in providing around-the-clock support throughout the system lifecycle.

"It's very important to work closely with our customers and provide them with the engineering support they need."

But while Stockport's engineering sector remains of fundamental importance to the town's ongoing economic success, it's the construction sector that's possibly the most visible.

The main reason for this is the ongoing transformation of Stockport's skyline.

Helen White, from Marketing Stockport, explained: "It has been well documented for some time that over £1bn is being invested in Stockport to create a town centre with a great future, for everyone.

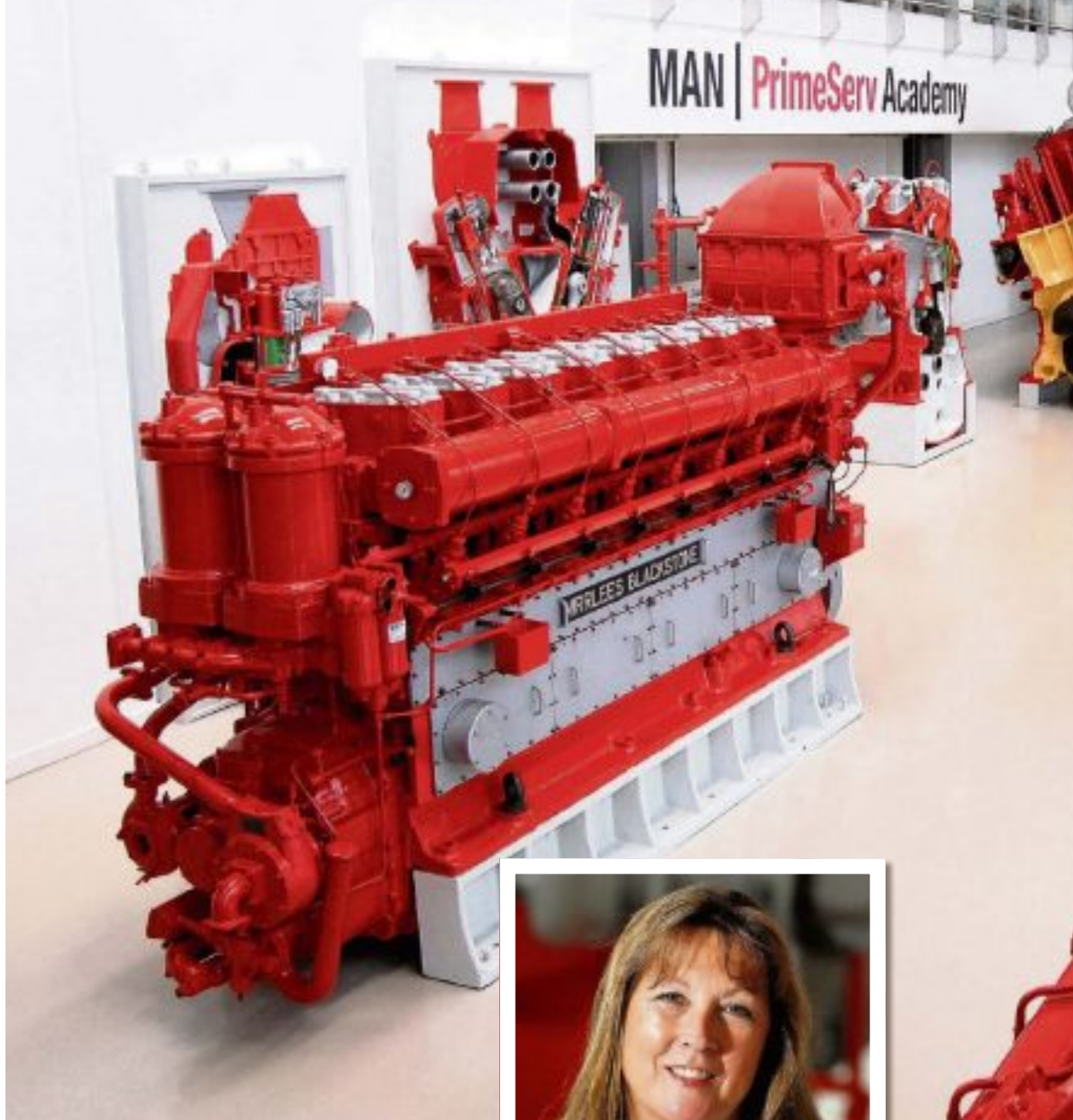
"Many businesses have themselves invested in Stockport and located their businesses here but in order for them to be sustainable, we need to bring more people into town, more often by giving them more choice.

"The Redrock development is definitely attracting a new audience and beginning to generate a regular evening economy while Pizza Express, Zizzi and the Loungers Bar have introduced a new, middle-range food and drink offering to a completely new area of the town.

"A couple of generations ago, many more people lived in town centres where communities thrived, as did the local businesses.

"In Stockport, the success of our outlying villages in replacing these

MAN Diesel & Turbo's PrimeServ Academy in Stockport. Below, Marketing Stockport's Helen White



communities - Bramhall, the Heaton, Cheadle - has attributed, along with the new technologies, to the challenges for our town centre.

"But, as with many things in life, it is going full circle and town centre living is sitting high on the agenda for Stockport and attracting new developers who share the vision for Stockport's future.

"Housing Capital Trust has plans to turn the former Royal Mail sorting office into quality accommodation for younger, mobile, working people with facilities more in keeping with their

lifestyles.

"Plans have been submitted to create 117 apartments above a basement car park and lower floor mixed commercial units.

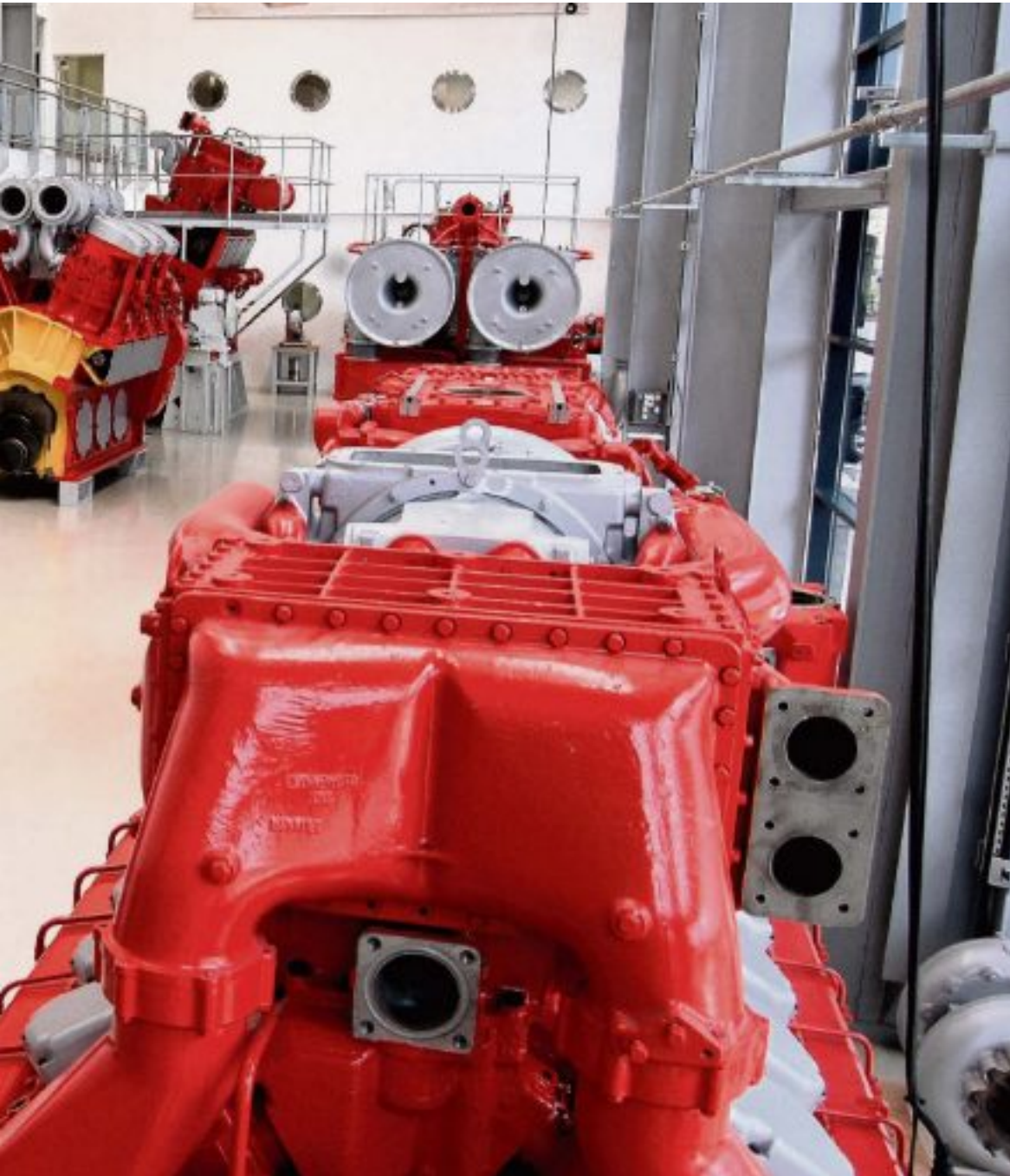
"With many more residential areas being developed, such as at Covent Garden, Stockport is set to recreate itself as a thriving town with a 'real

community."

Last month, a planning application for the next phase of development at Stockport Exchange was also given approval by

Stockport Council's Planning and Highway Committee.

Construction company Muse is delivering the £145m award-winning,



mixed-use regeneration scheme in partnership with Stockport Council.

The next phase will see 2 Stockport Exchange, a new 60,000 sq ft, six-storey office building, developed next to the existing 50,000 sq ft office created during the previous phase of works, which was completed in December 2016.

The ground floor retail space is also fully let, with a Sainsbury's Local and coffee shop Cafelito open and proving very popular in the new business district.

Phase Two also delivered a 115-bed

Holiday Inn Express, which frequently achieves over 90% occupancy, and is trading ahead of forecasts.

The new pedestrianised public space outside Stockport Railway Station has also created a new attractive gateway to the town centre.

Wes Erlam, development director at Muse, said: "Securing planning approval was great news and means we can progress our plans for delivering a second office building at Stockport Exchange, which will build on the success of the first two phases.

"Given the shortage of Grade A office

space in Stockport and South Manchester, this development means we can provide an unrivalled offer to occupiers, bringing even more businesses and jobs into Stockport town centre."

Coun Kate Butler concluded: "Planning approval for the next stage of Stockport Exchange is another great step forward in continuing the transformation already underway in Stockport.

"It's going to bring even more new jobs and opportunities to our town."

Building up hope in the town's future

The growth of the construction sector in the North West brings benefits to Stockport both with the re-development of the town centre and also from an employment point of view.

With the council's planned £1bn transformation currently underway, with major developments completed including Redrock and Stockport Exchange, there is a constant buzz from people I meet.

The start of the Stockport Exchange Two development, which gets underway in the Summer leading on the success of Stockport Exchange One, can only be a good thing.

Stockport is ranked amongst the top 3% of retail centres within the UK, but the Council is not complacent about that with the planned future redevelopment of the Merseyway Shopping Centre.

Council investment attracts investment from the private sector with other developments, which is a proven formula for regenerating town centres.

With a healthy 4.4% of the workforce employed in construction within the region (higher than the national average), this is great news for employment in Stockport.

There is, however, a skill shortage within the construction sector, with many firms reporting a lack of skilled workers in the trade. This has created a strong demand for Stockport's skilled construction trades and businesses.

As Stockport is investing heavily to provide an attractive town centre to live and work in, and with growing demand for skilled workers in the region, there is a bright future for Stockport.

ROGER ALLSUP, partner and head of construction and engineering at SAS Daniels LLP, pictured





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TECHNOLOGY

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Tech teamwork is supporting sector

Greater Manchester tech scene's success owes much to the 'spirit of collaboration' between organisations, Ben Rooth discovers

FOR nearly two decades, Greater Manchester's tech support groups have consistently worked to supercharge the sector. From providing networking opportunities to raising awareness about the severe skills shortages that exist in some areas, these organisations are a lifeline for many members.

The first group to have been established was Manchester Digital, the independent trade association for digital business in the North West of England.

It was founded in 2001 to bring together organisations and individuals from all parts of the industry - from creative to technical, from software to media, from telecommunications to marketing.

Today, Manchester Digital offers a range of services that are targeted at both individuals and companies throughout their journey.

For example, it helps start-ups find appropriate workspace, funding and appropriate mentors.

For those businesses experiencing more rapid growth, it ensures that appropriate HR support and planning is available, among other services.

Shaun Fensom, one of Digital Manchester's founders, is unequivocal about the importance of Greater Manchester's tech sector.

He explained: "I have argued for some years that Manchester easily comes second in the UK for digital and tech. What has been apparent in recent years is how much more diverse the sector has become - there's no longer the focus that there used to be on digital marketing and media.

"We now have a thriving tech scene - and so we should give Manchester's pioneering history in computing.

"Our e-commerce sector is very strong and - as has been the case for years - we have a concentration of digital infrastructure that exceeds any other city outside London.

"The problems facing the UK digital industry - skills, poor connectivity and fears surrounding Brexit - continue to

Shaun Fensom



face us here. Overall, though the sector is doing very well."

Fensom singles out the willingness of digital companies across Manchester to "collaborate" as a fundamental reason why the sector continues to flourish.

He added: "Look at almost any other city in the UK and you'll see less willingness to collaborate - that certainly applies to London, but also other major cities.

"Add to that Manchester's famous determination to punch above its weight and you have a recipe for success in the digital-tech world.

"It would be a real shame if we lost that distinctive edge."

So, does Fensom believe that the city's support groups provide this "edge"? He explained: "I have never thought that business support makes the difference between a successful sector and an unsuccessful one.

"I believe in self help and what we can do by working together.

"That's the simple logic behind

Manchester Digital. It may sound utopian but a large part of the digital revolution is built on collaboration. The internet wouldn't function without it.

"If Manchester succeeds in its ambition to become a major global digital city - now rightly a focus for Andy Burnham - then it will be because that collaboration continues to succeed."

While Manchester Digital is the longest established digital support group operating in the city region, Greater Connected is one of the newest initiatives.

Launched in 2016 by the Business Growth Hub, it is an programme for digital, creative and technology SMEs in Greater Manchester.

The programme aims to enable those at the helm of companies to learn from industry experts and practitioners.

It also offers a host of creative and engaging workshops, networking opportunities and access to specialist support services.

Making city number one for tech

How can Manchester be the number one tech city in Europe?

Easy, community. There are an extraordinary number of support groups to help with everything from mentoring and networking, to connecting businesses and schools. Business Growth Hub helps with business strategy and funding - like the Manchester Loan Fund or the GM Loan Fund, as well as Northern Powerhouse Investment Funds. Natwest's Espark Programme offers free desk space and mentoring.

Tech North, which will soon become Tech Nation, covers everything from business awards, media and speaker training and a peer-to-peer network for early- and mid-stage tech founders.

Tech North Advocates and Volker Hirsch are a private sector-led coalition of experts from the tech sector who champion the North's potential as a world-class hub for tech and digital businesses. Then there's Manchester Digital, Cisco Mi-Edge and Manchester Tech Trust.

This is only a small selection of what is out there making a difference to businesses.

There are also plenty of groups and networks focussing on the wider community - upskilling and bridging the skills gap.

Tech Returners is an example - with a free course to get people back into business after career breaks, while FDisruptors is focussed on inspiring young girls into tech. STEAMED.Schools runs a virtual club for 10-14 year olds and GM Mayor Andy Burnham has launched GM Bridge connecting employers and schools.

With a community like this, why can't Manchester be the number one tech city in Europe, if not the world?

Lawrence Jones, CEO, UKFast



AGENDA

Is there an event you think should be included on this page? Let us know by sending details to eventsdiary@men-news.co.uk or speak to our business reporter Emma Curry on 0161 211 2476. Please include the name of the event, a brief description, the time and date, the venue, and the contact information.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 21

Robotics and Work

The second seminar in the Work and Equalities seminar series, this will focus on strategies for flexibility in a disconnected world.

The speaker is Professor Caroline Lloyd from Cardiff University.

Tea and coffee will be available from 3.15pm in the foyer outside the seminar room.

- Time: 3.30pm - 5pm
- Location: Alliance Manchester Business School East room B4, Booth Street East, Manchester M13 9SS
- Further information: www.mbs.ac.uk/events

TUESDAY, MARCH 20

Attracting the Best Student and Graduate Talent

The University of Manchester's employer engagement team is holding one-to-one appointments for people to discuss their recruitment needs.

The university offers a free recruitment service programme called Manchester Graduate Talent (MGT) which includes advice on writing graduate-friendly job adverts, graduate labour market tips, and information on attracting the best early years talent and onboarding graduates within a business.

There will also be advice on establishing a graduate scheme (SMEs focus) and recruitment of internships, placement students and graduates. There will also be advice on CV collection, first sift, interview set up and candidate feedback.

All appointments last 20 minutes and are free to attend.

- Time: 8.15am - noon
- Location: Pro-manchester, Floor 9, 18-22 Bridge Street, Manchester
- Further information: claire.turnbull@pro-manchester.co.uk

THURSDAY, MAY 24

FT UK Business Conference: Opportunities for future growth in the north

In a country that has a London centric viewpoint on business, other areas of the UK are not



Free courses in digital skills at Google Digital Garage 39-43 King Street, Manchester

Choose from 16 courses, ranging from step-by-step support for people new to digital, through to CV-building, interview techniques, small business workshops and intro to coding. Register for courses or book a 1:1 mentoring session at g.co/ManchesterGarage

Thursday, March 15

- 10.30am - 11.30am: Build a CV
- 11.30am - 12.30pm: Write a Cover Letter
- 11am - 1pm: Intro to Coding - Module 4
- 1pm - 2.30pm: Presentations for Work
- 2.30pm - 4.30pm: Start Your Own Business - Module 4
- 3.30pm - 5pm: Writing for Social Media

Friday, March 16

- Noon - 1pm: Build a CV
- 1pm - 2pm: First Steps Online
- 1pm - 2pm: Write a Cover Letter
- 2.30pm - 3.30pm: Stay Safe Online
- 3pm - 2.40pm: Spreadsheets for Beginners

Saturday, March 17

- 10.30am - Noon: Building a Digital Marketing Plan
- 12.30pm - 2.30pm: Intro to Coding - Module 1
- 3.30pm - 5.30pm: Start Your Own Business - Module 1

Sunday, March 18

- 11.30am - 1pm: Social Media Strategy
- 1.30pm - 3pm: Writing for Social Media

Monday, March 19

- 10.30am - Noon: Build a Digital Marketing Plan
- 12.30pm - 2pm: Writing for Social Media
- 12.30pm - 2pm: Build a Simple Website
- 2.30pm - 4pm: Social Media Strategy
- 4pm - 5.30pm: Answer Questions with Data

Tuesday, March 20

- 10.30am - Noon: Writing for Social Media
- 10.30am - Noon: Spreadsheets for Beginners
- 12.30pm - 2pm: Social Media Strategy
- 2.30pm - 3.30pm: Email for Work
- 2.30pm - 4pm: Presentations for Work

Wednesday, March 21

- 10.30am - Noon: Build a Simple Website
- 12.30pm - 2pm: An Introduction to Digital Advertising
- 2.30pm - 4pm: Answer Questions with Data
- 4pm - 5.30pm: Get Visible on Google
- 4pm - 5.30pm: Build a Digital Marketing Plan

always in the spotlight. However, the North of England has a booming business sector and due to

the cost and infrastructure pressures in the capital and the South East, there are benefits of looking elsewhere.

Will the government's Northern Powerhouse proposal provide the right infrastructure to support current and future business? Financial Times presents the FT UK Business Conference which will bring together leading executives from UK business, government and think tanks to explore the opportunities and challenges facing British business throughout the North of England in a post-Brexit environment. This event will highlight successful strategies and obstacles within innovation, talent, trade, growth, technology and how to maintain and grow a business and what the triggering of Article 50 and the UK leaving the EU could mean. Speakers include Professor Juergen Maier from Siemens and Jake Berry, the minister for the Northern Powerhouse. For a 15% discount on tickets please use the code GMBW15.

- Time: 8am - 4.30pm
- Location: Principal Hotel, Manchester, Oxford Street, Manchester, M60 7HA
- Further information: 020 7873 4033 / caolan.howe@ft.com

MONDAY, JUNE 18

A Greater Manchester Symposium

Manchester Society of Architects (MSA) is hosting a Future Manchester Symposium at which senior figures in the building design community will hear from speakers including Eamonn Boylan, chief executive of the Greater Manchester Combined Authority, and Joanne Roney, chief executive of Manchester City Council.

The free annual symposium's scope has been widened from the city centre focus of last year, to cover all of Greater Manchester.

President of the MSA and BDP principal Ged Couser said: "The symposium will discuss the important issues by showcasing some of the significant developments being built across Greater Manchester today. "We will be extending our sights to the town centres in the boroughs outside the city core. We will engage with the

issues relating to how the current boom within the city is affecting or is being influenced by development opportunities in Salford and in the towns that surround Manchester.

"We are very excited about the symposium and again expect a capacity audience to take part in a topical design-driven debate about our region and the contribution that Manchester architects, along with the wider construction industry, can make towards the making of 'A Greater Manchester'."

The programme will include a panel discussion chaired by Stephen Hodder OBE, from Hodder + Partners, featuring Eamonn Boylan and Joanne Roney, as well as Shelagh McNerney, the head of development at Salford City Council.

David Rudlin, chair of the Academy of Urbanism and honorary professor at Manchester University, will discuss Greater Manchester's growth and the methodology for that to happen in a sustainable and design-focused context.

Andrew Bamford & Robert Evans, the partners in the Altrincham-based practice, Project 3 Architects, will talk about their role working there and how regeneration in the town is being driven by design quality.

Then Jon Matthews, director of 5Plus, will talk about the practice's work in Salford, both at the university and in the city, which is focused upon high quality, appropriate development rather than that driven by value.

Last year's event attracted more than 250 people to see presentations on issues relating to transport, living, working and culture within the City, thanks to representatives from BDP, Hodder + Partners, 5Plus, SimpsonHaugh and OMA.

The event will feature an awards exhibition of the work of Manchester architects. Tickets are free (once released). A complimentary bar and food will be provided.

- Time: 5.30pm - 9pm
- Location: 53Two, close to the Bridgewater Hall in Manchester
- Further information: the-msa.co.uk/news

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Google Digital Garage
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