



**6 April 2009**

**Book now for a place on the second 'executive forum'**

The Executive Forum for recently redundant local senior executives and managers was successfully launched in early March at the Old Albanian Sports Club. The Rugby Club on the Harpenden Road donated the use of their facilities for this weekly Forum which ran for six weeks – on Monday afternoons.

The second Executive Forum is scheduled **for Monday 20<sup>th</sup> April**. For further details, or to book a place, or go onto the waiting list, telephone 01727 899518 or email [marion.turner@oaklands.ac.uk](mailto:marion.turner@oaklands.ac.uk).

The Forum was set up by St Albans and District Local Strategic Partnership in response to the increased unemployment levels across the district – unemployment has increased by 130 % in the last year. At present there is no official funding for this type of senior level employment support – initially the Forum has been underwritten by Oaklands College, seeking funds on a piecemeal basis.

The second Forum session, which is now almost full, will commence on 20<sup>th</sup> April, and has been funded in part by the LSP.

Twenty experienced senior individuals from a variety of businesses attended this first Forum. Their employment background included construction, banking and financial services, manufacturing, retail, pharmaceuticals and property management.

The candidates have found the Executive Forum very valuable and immediately started a new networking group supported by Oaklands College using the Oaklearn web site. Other facilities from Oaklands College were also made available, including the learning resource centres and individual employment advice and guidance.

The weekly session addresses priorities raised by those attending the Forum, including information on access to unadvertised jobs, development and distribution of CV's to relevant employers, understanding how to set up franchises and new businesses, coping with financial and personal stress, reassessing life / work values, plus taking the opportunity to look at re-training.

Other benefits include exploring voluntary management roles with local charities. Volunteering keeps résumés live and interesting as well as providing opportunities to meet and network with well connected people. Local charities are keen to use the skills of professionals to build the capacity and professionalism of their organisations.

The Forum has received a lot of positive feedback for its good practices and others are hoping to replicate this in their areas. However funding continues to be an issue and may cause a premature end to this exiting initiative. Key partners in the LSP are urgently trying to identify resources that would enable this innovative project to continue whilst there is a need. Please contact St Albans City and District Council if your organisation can help in any way. Tel: 01727 836781.

One of the participants on the Forum said: "The Forum's sharing of ideas and best practice has assisted me enormously. My motivation has increased and with the support of all involved I have great hope of finding my next position. I would encourage anyone who is made redundant, to take advantage of this offering and would hope the funding bodies would continue to see the benefits of this leading edge work."

**Member contact:**

Cllr Melvyn Teare, portfolio holder for culture and heritage  
Tel: 01727 868086

**Contacts for the press:**

Davina Mansell, Information and Communication Officer  
St Albans City and District Council  
Tel: 01727 819316 E-mail: [davina.mansell@stalbans.gov.uk](mailto:davina.mansell@stalbans.gov.uk)  
[www.stalbans.gov.uk](http://www.stalbans.gov.uk)

Clare Schofield, Communications Officer,  
Oaklands College  
Tel: 01727 899694 E-mail: [Clare.schofield@oaklands.ac.uk](mailto:Clare.schofield@oaklands.ac.uk)  
[www.oaklands.ac.uk](http://www.oaklands.ac.uk)