

3 March 2010

Freshwater CEO appointed to board of business network

Newport and Gwent Chamber of Commerce Enterprise and Industry (NGCCEI), trading as the South Wales Chamber of Commerce (SWCC) and Centre for Business (C4B) welcomes its newest Board Member, Steve Howell, Founder and Chief Executive of Freshwater.

Steve joins the NGCCEI Board to offer creative expertise and business experience resulting from his 13 years at the helm of one of the UK's most successful PR and marketing groups. Founded in Newport in 1997 and now headquartered in Cardiff, Freshwater has appeared in the *Wales Fast Growth 50* list for six consecutive years and is ranked as Britain's number one regional PR agency.

After a career in local government public relations, Steve worked on the South Wales Argus and at BBC Wales before launching his own communications consultancy. From small beginnings, Freshwater now has 90 staff in nine offices and is listed on the Alternative Investment Market of the London Stock Exchange in 2007.

Andrew Wilkinson, Chairman of the NGCCEI Board, said: "It is great to have Steve as part of the NGCCEI Board, he is highly regarded within his field and I know he will bring a lot of experience and advice with his new position.

"The purpose of the NCGGEI Board is to provide strategic direction to the executive management. Steve's specialist expertise and knowledge within this field will no doubt prove to be valuable for both the South Wales Chamber of Commerce and Centre for Business."

Steve Howell said: "As someone who started a business from scratch with no previous commercial experience, I know directly about the challenges facing

Chamber members. Building a company can be rewarding and enjoyable but it's often also a lonely and stressful role, especially in these tough times. Hopefully, I can contribute to developing strategy and contribute specialist expertise in areas such as funding growth, acquisitions and marketing.”