

11th October 2010

INVESTMENT FUND OPEN FOR BUSINESS

Businesses are being encouraged to remain bullish as venture capital companies are continuing to look to invest.

The head of specialist venture capital company Midven has said that the £18.4m Exceed fund will continue to support businesses in the West Midlands. His comments follow the reduction of £1.15m in Advantage West Midlands' investment in Midven's Growth Equity Fund, known as The Exceed Partnership. However, the fund's recent success in securing LDC as an investor in the Fund has attracted additional support from the European Regional Development Fund meaning that the fund has been unaffected by the reduction in AWM's contribution.

The Exceed fund, which is managed by Midven and supported by LDC, will continue to invest in high-growth businesses in the West Midlands region requiring between £250,000 and £750,000 of investment. The fund, which became operational in March 2010 following LDC's investment being committed, has already committed more than £500,000 to small and medium sized enterprises, allowing them to realise their growth potential.

With recent news stories announcing severe cuts to government-backed investment projects, businesses are being encouraged to remain optimistic as many funds are still looking to invest. Tony Stott, chief executive of Midven, said businesses need to know where to look for finance in a competitive, and sometimes unstable, environment.

"Midven's funds have been unaffected by government cuts, and in fact recently scooping Midlands Business Insider's Fund Manager of the Year award is testament to our established and secure investment portfolio of 50 companies.

"Businesses are finding it increasingly hard to raise finance, but many investors are still keen to, and still able to, invest in the right company," he said.

The Exceed fund is one of five investment funds managed by Midven. Companies which have received investment from Midven operate across a wide range of sectors including healthcare, biotechnology, software and services.

ENDS

About Midven Limited/Exceed - Midlands Advantage Fund

Midven Limited is a privately owned commercial fund manager with a successful track record of investing in small and medium-sized enterprises in the Midlands. Midven manages five funds representing £61m under management. The funds have invested in a wide variety of sectors, including

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software, biotechnology, healthcare, engineering, manufacturing and distribution.

The £18.4m Exceed Fund was established in December 2009 to invest in high growth businesses in the West Midlands. It became operational in March 2010 when LDC became an investor in the Fund. The Exceed Fund can invest up to £750,000 in a range of sectors to support expansion and development. Managed By Midven, its investors include Lloyds Development Capital, Advantage West Midlands and the European Regional Development Fund.

About LDC

1. LDC (Lloyds TSB Development Capital) is part of the Lloyds Banking Group and is authorised and regulated by the Financial Services Authority.
2. LDC has, since 1981, completed over 400 investments, has ongoing interests in over 60 businesses across the UK.
3. LDC back ambitious management teams from UK-based companies seeking between £2m and £100m of equity for management buy-outs, institutional buy-outs or development capital transactions.
4. LDC invests in a broad range of sectors and has particular experience in financial services, healthcare, industrials, IT & software, leisure & media, retail & consumer, and support services.
5. LDC is the leading private equity company in the UK mid-market. Recent transactions include investments with Eveden Group, CMG, Emprise, Kimberly Access, The Pallet Network, VSG, Omega Red, Cranswick Pet & Aquatics, Evander Group, Nuclear Engineering Services and Orion Media plus exits from Electrium, Aqualux, Cardsave, Paragon Holding Ltd, Steelite International, Avery Weigh-Tronix and Britton Group.
6. LDC has fourteen offices - Aberdeen, Amsterdam, Birmingham, Bristol, Edinburgh, Hong Kong, Leeds, Liverpool, London, Manchester, Newcastle, Nottingham, Reading and Southampton.
7. For further information, call Martin Draper 0121 237 6500 or visit www.ldc.co.uk.

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