Entrepreneurs and small businesses in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough celebrate the kick-start of a new local service, designed to enable people to start, protect and grow their business.

The new Centre in Peterborough will be a hub for entrepreneurs to come together to network, attend events and access a wealth of resources including business databases, market research reports, company data and information on patents, trademarks, designs and copyright. The Centre will harness the expertise of local public and private business experts, working with regional partners such as the Opportunity Peterborough, Chambers of Commerce and local business experts.

The launch, taking place on Wednesday 13 February, marks the beginning of a programme of activities, workshops and events for anyone thinking of starting up a business. The programme will include live streams of inspiring talks from the British Library. In the past, these have included speakers such as Julie Deane, the Business & IP Centre’s Entrepreneur in Residence and founder of the Cambridge Satchel Company, Mary Portas, ‘Queen of Shops’, and Lord (Karan) Bilimoria, founder of Cobra Beer.

Housed within Peterborough Central Library the new Business & IP (intellectual property) Centre will be the 11th Centre modelled on the British Library's successful Business & IP Centre, a walk-in service located in the heart of London offering free access to millions of pounds' worth of business and intellectual property information and events, workshops and one-to-one expertise.

Richard Hunt, Director of Culture for Vivacity said: "We are delighted to be bringing a Business and IP Centre to Peterborough. The building blocks of high-quality business and intellectual property information, knowledgeable and approachable staff, free and affordable events and networking opportunities are tried and tested in London and other major cities around the country and we are looking forward to bringing the expertise of the British Library and others to Peterborough.”

Last year, the British Library released new figures revealing that 52 people became entrepreneurs every single day between 2017-18 with the help of the Business & IP Centre and the National Network. Of these, 59% were women and 35% were from a black, asian and minority ethnic background, compared with 20% and 5% of business owners respectively. An independent report found that nine out of ten companies helped by the London Business & IP Centre succeed past three years, compared with only six out of ten across the UK.

Liz Jolly, Chief Librarian at the British Library said: “The success of the Business & IP Centre's National Network is living proof of the important role libraries play in harnessing expertise, strengthening networks and generating opportunities across local communities. We are delighted to celebrate the opening of our 11th Centre serving Cambridgeshire and Peterborough. We look forward to working with our colleagues in Cambridge and Peterborough to capitalise on the rich expertise and knowledge contained within the region for the benefit of budding entrepreneurs.”

Vivacity's Peterborough Central Library is now opening its doors to engage with the local business community and find out what they want from their local Business & IP Centre service across Cambridgeshire and Peterborough.

You can find out more about the services on offer from the Peterborough Business & IP Centre on the Vivacity website (https://vivacity.org/bipc).