

New jobs hope as firm taken over



By
**Chris
Taylor**

chris.taylor@worthingherald.co.uk

THE new bosses of a struggling Worthing office supplies company have said they want to offer jobs back to around 20 staff made redundant before Christmas.

Directors of PDQ, based in Dominion Way, told workers without warning on December 18 that it was ceasing trading and all staff were immediately being made redundant without pay.

But a whirlwind takeover deal with Essex-based office supplies company Winstonmead plc meant the company re-opened its doors on Christmas Eve with nine of the original staff team of around 30.

Winstonmead managing director Adrian Hensby, and other board members, have been travelling to the East Worthing office daily from Essex to answer phones and keep the business running.

Mr Hensby said he was anxiously trying to contact former staff to come back to work for PDQ and had "helped out" retained staff financially pending

the next stage of insolvency proceedings – a creditors' meeting in mid-January.

He said: "We've been actively trying to contact another 10 or 12 people and would actively welcome back as many as we can get hold of.

"Understandably, the others are extremely aggrieved at the way it all happened and everything else. I totally feel for them."

Mr Hensby said he recognised former staff members' animosity to their former boss, Ryan Flippance, who has been employed by Winstonmead as a regional general manager and will remain with PDQ.

But he said an "unrealistic picture" had been painted of Mr Flippance's role in PDQ's failure and blamed the company's problems on former senior staff members. He also said he would happily talk personally to all former employees and explain the circumstances that led to the company's closure.

Mr Hensby said senior directors were also "assessing legal advice" regarding the alleged diversion of PDQ's phone lines to another office supplies company shortly after its closure.

Winstonmead has also said it will honour a prize draw organised by PDQ before Christmas which resulted in St Andrew's High School winning a paper-shredder worth almost £500. The prize will be awarded to the school this week.



■ PDQ: Whirlwind takeover deal