



Jo Mackenzie Lee and Joanne Cast of JML Business Services.

Useful tips for those starting out in business

THE number of small and medium enterprise startups in West Surrey have increased in spite of the recession, according to the directors of an accountancy solutions firm.

Jo Mackenzie Lee and Joanne Cast from JML Business Services said it had witnessed a rise in business start-ups recently and is often called on to advise those looking to 'become their own boss'.

"The first thing we recommend is to ask yourself why you want to set up a business," Ms Lee said.

"Do you, for example, want to work to replace a lost salary

or create a more flexible working model. Or do you want to create and grow a business over time employing people along the way?"

She said the answers point to different legal business entities to establish limited company, sole trader, partnership, and what regulations the business owner will need to comply with.

Fellow director Joanne Cast, added: "Many start ups question what to invest in at the beginning. It's easy to fork out a lot of money when you start a business, but in truth you don't have to buy everything straight

away. People should try and invest on a 'need to use' basis, financing purchases as you grow that includes renting commercial property."

The business owner will also need to organise a business bank account.

"The good news is that different banks run different offers, so shop around," Miss Cast added.

"You'll also need to tell HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) within three months of going self employed and register for VAT if you're likely to go over the threshold (currently for annual turnovers over £68,000)

- in your first year. If you intend to pay yourself a salary through your limited company (involving PAYE), then you will need to register a payroll with HMRC. If you are unsure, ask your accountant or business adviser."

Ms Mackenzie Lee added: "Busy entrepreneurs often struggle to find time to periodically review their business strategy and performance.

"There are, however, many sources of help. Business Link, professional bodies, government agencies, business networking groups are some good examples."