

## **PZ Cussons invest £26 million in Northwest region**

### **Audio transcript – clip 1**

I think people do overlook the knowledge and skills of a workforce when making these decisions. They are hugely important because they not only run machines but they have integral knowledge as to all the pitfalls of running high speed manufacturing lines, of how it affects things, of what works well and what doesn't work well. I think people often overlook the fact that that's very important.

For us, keeping the manufacturing close to home, having the skilled work force, and creating the Northwest as our base for the group – or should I say, reinforcing the Northwest as our base for the group – was overall very important for us.

We do generally feel that the Northwest is a significant opportunity in terms of recruiting talent. A lot of investment has left the region or the UK – unfortunately - over the last few decades. But, there remains a significant amount of talent in the region. The age old worry about - whether it's the Northwest or the UK - is probably on the labour force side and worries about union impacts and the rising cost of labour in the UK.

Now, for us, we have worked through that in terms of we view our work force as part of the team and therefore the way that we are particularly set up in the facility is to involve the work force very significantly in the development of the business. There's a lot of flexible working where employees are involved in not just bit of the process but looking after a far wider element of the job remit that they have. Therefore, by involving them more in the business you don't get into conflict situations.

### **Audio transcript – clip 2**

There are more astronauts in the world than perfumers. There are about 500 perfumers in the world, but there are more astronauts than perfumers. We have two fully qualified perfumers at our site. I'd say that potential is one of the biggest areas going for them. The manufacturing side will automatically grow, because we're producing about one hundred and thirty million bottles a year from that site; Imperial Leather hand wash, shower gel, Carex hand wash. And from about now actually, we're beginning to produce Original Source – one of our other brands – at that site. There's a small impact straight away, but it'll happen over time because you've moved over production from one site to another which, from a cost per bottle perspective, is slightly better. Obviously once we get to putting 200 million bottles versus

# THIS IS *northwest* MANUFACTURING

130 say as the business grows, then the unit costs will decrease because your fixed base remains flat. So, you'll get the benefit of that over time.

I personally think the main benefits will come from the research and development on the perfumery side where this space – and you do need to see it really. Anyone in the region's welcome, whatever business line they're in, they're very welcome to come and have a look at what we have done. But, we've created a very light, airy, modern environment. It really does have a 'wow factor' when people walk in. You'll see a lot of innovation coming from the facility.

We've always been known as a very innovative business. We tend to launch about 40 to 50 new products a year. People forget that it's actually, if you think about it, it's actually reasonably easy to do business in this region. You have got good access to talent, you have good infrastructure, you've got a fantastic airport, and I think – as I said earlier – people take it for granted that you can up sticks and move to somewhere which a trend's developed, that somewhere else in the world has become more cost effective to do business. But, along with that cost effectiveness comes huge, huge challenges in terms of how you execute your business. I think if people look at the region here they will realise that the amount of support and infrastructure that there is here actually makes it very easy for you to do business here if you set it up in the right way.