



**Minutes of the Employer & Skills Committee held on Thursday
18 June 2009 at 5.00pm in Room 3F099 York College**

Present: Alison Birkinshaw
Danny Morgan
Bill Woolley

In Attendance: Trevor Armer, Director of Finance
Richard Hinde, Clerk to the Governing Body
Louise Lawrence-Crockford, Assistant Principal Employer
Engagement
John Short, Chair of York College Governing Body

The meeting started at 5.10pm.

Action

09.20 Apologies for Absence / Declarations of Interest
Apologies were received from John Arundel, Gillian Cruddas, David Johnson, Shaun Watts, Kim Jones, Marcus Milner and Clare Wareing. No declarations of interest were made.

09.21 Minutes of Meeting held on 30 April 2009
The minutes of the meeting held on 30 April 2009 were approved as an accurate record and signed by the Chair.

09.22 Matters Arising
a) Action Summary Sheet
It was noted that all issues had either been actioned or were ongoing.

b) Any Other Matters
None.

(John Short joined the meeting at 5.15pm.)

09.23 Assistant Principal's Report – Including Learner Success and Recruitment: WBL; TtG
The Assistant Principal Employer Engagement presented the report providing an overview of activity and highlighting key issues relating to the current 2008/09 year.

It was reported that the re-structure of the Business Unit would be finalised by July 2009. The Business Development Manager and Employer Engagement Advisors were now in post. Recruitment of apprentices had not reached contracted numbers however funding utilisation was on target. Train to Gain recruitment was on target, and the LSC had increased in year allocation by £115,000.

The College's 2008/09 funding utilisation against target was presented and it was noted that performance to date against target was approximately 20% down in relation to 16-18 Apprentices; Adult Apprentices and Train to Gain. This was in line with expectations.

Overall success rates for Train to Gain and Apprentices to the end of period 9 were considered and it was reported that overall success rate predictions to the end of period 12 indicated a 2.5% rise on 2007/08 for Apprenticeships and a 7% rise on 2007/08 for Train to Gain. National data at period 9 showed York College 10% above the national average for Apprenticeship success. The national data for Train to Gain was still to be verified. A key success area to be noted was the Plumbing Apprenticeships with a 100% success rate. A key area of concern was the Children's Care Apprenticeship with success rates below the Minimum Level of Performance.

It was also reported that PriceWaterhouseCoopers had carried out a fourth audit on the College's Work Based Learning provision, the results of which had been very good and showed that a vast improvement had been made over the period since their first audit of this provision.

It was also noted that the College had serious concerns over the data held by the LSC on the College's Train to Gain success rates. The Assistant Principal Employer Engagement was liaising with the LSC to try and resolve this issue.

It was further reported that the Quality Training Standard application had been submitted with an expected assessment date in November or December 2009. The Employer Engagement Strategy Draft had also been finalised for approval by Governors. The provisional funding allocation for 2009/10 had been received reflecting a small increase on the 2008/09 allocation, however final allocations would not be received until 19 June 2009.

09.24 Self Assessment Report – Progress Update: Employer Engagement/TtG/WBL Extracts

The Assistant Principal Employer Engagement presented the report outlining the Employer Engagement sections of the current Self Assessment Report Quality Improvement Plan and updating on progress.

Discussion took place about stopping Focus Groups for Apprentices and it was explained that Apprentices did not have time to attend the Focus Groups (as they were only in College for one day a week) or simply weren't interested. It was noted that the College was looking at alternative ways of capturing their "learner voice".

09.25 Employer Engagement Sections of College's 2008/11 Strategic Plan – Progress Update

The Assistant Principal Employer Engagement presented the report outlining the sections of the College's current Strategic Plan relevant to Employer Engagement, together with an update on progress to date which was considered by Members.

Discussion took place about the College's membership of the Strategic Health Authority's Steering Group, and whether opportunities existed to provide combined external training to the three key health bodies in York, rather than them each providing their own internal training. It was explained that the College was already in discussions and was making them aware of the potential advantages to them in having the College as a training provider.

Discussion also took place about the College's pricing strategy, and it was explained that this included detailed analysis of the market and competitors' charges.

09.26 Employer Engagement Strategy including Employer Engagement Sections of College's 2009/12 Strategic Plan – Draft Proposals

The Assistant Principal Employer Engagement presented the report with the College's draft Employer Engagement Strategy and draft Employer Engagement sections of the College's 2009/12 Strategic Plan which was considered by the Committee.

Discussion took place about whether it would in future be possible to show how significant a particular College area was, showing the size of the College's share of that market and focusing on the Employer Engagement element of that provision. Further discussion also took place about the possibility of data sharing with the City of York Council, and it was **agreed** that the Assistant Principal Employer Engagement would explore this further. **LLC**

Members also requested that, for the sake of clarity, there should be greater synthesis between the wording of the recommendations in the Employer Engagement Strategy and the actions in the draft Strategic Plan sections. **LLC**

Members stressed the need to ascertain the actual number of employers within each category of the target sectors. It was felt that it was important to understand how relevant "umbrella" organisations organised their networking activities to ensure that College representatives were invited to such events.

In relation to competition, discussion took place about other employers' in-house training being in competition with the College. It was felt that further analysis in to this should be carried out. **LLC**

Action

Consideration was given to the College's future branding. It was also noted that little had been included on best practice in relation to securing fees from employers. It was **agreed** that this should be looked at further. It was also suggested that the new Business Development Manager should be invited to attend future Committee meetings.

LLC
Clerk

It was **agreed** that revised sections of the Employer Engagement Strategy would be produced to reflect Members' views for consideration at the next meeting. The Committee also **agreed** to recommend the Governing Body to approve the draft Employer Engagement sections of the Strategic Plan 2009/10, subject to final amendment.

LLC

(Bill Woolley left the meeting at 6.15pm.)

09.27 Any Other Business

It was noted that the College's Vocational Qualifications awards evening was being held this evening at the College.

09.28 Date of Next Meeting

To be confirmed.

The meeting ended at 6.25pm.

Signed (Chair):.....

Name:.....**Date:**.....