



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

**Present:** Jon Arundel  
Alison Birkinshaw  
David Johnson  
Danny Morgan

**In Attendance:** Richard Hinde, Clerk to the Governing Body  
Louise Lawrence-Crockford, Assistant Principal Employer  
Engagement  
John Short, Chair of York College Governing Body  
David Tabron, Business Development Manager

The meeting started at 5.05pm.

**Action**

**09.29 Apologies for Absence / Declarations of Interest**  
Apologies were received from Gillian Cruddas, Shaun Watts and Bill Woolley. David Johnson had been delayed. In the absence of Mr Johnson, Alison Birkinshaw agreed to act as Chair of the meeting. No declarations of interest were made. David Tabron was introduced and welcomed to the meeting.

**09.30 Minutes of Meeting held on 18 June 2009**  
The minutes of the meeting held on 18 June 2009 were approved as an accurate record and signed by the Chair.

**09.31 Matters Arising**  
a) Action Summary Sheet  
It was noted that all issues had either been actioned or were ongoing. A verbal update was provided on the College's analysis on other employers' in-house training provision, and it was **agreed** that a further summary report updating on progress should be presented at the next meeting of the Committee. The importance of liaising with managers at these employers rather than with the trainers themselves was stressed and acknowledged, as the views canvassed could be very different. It was also **agreed** that at its next meeting the Search & Governance Committee should give consideration to a further appointment to the Employer & Skills Committee.

LLC

Clerk

b) Any Other Matters  
None.

**09.32 Committee Terms of Reference and Schedule of Business 2009/10**

The Clerk presented the report with the Terms of Reference for the Employer & Skills Committee which had previously been revised and presented in a new format as requested by the Search & Governance Committee. The Committee's proposed schedule of business for 2009/10 was also considered. Members put forward a number of revisions to the schedule of business and **agreed to approve** the schedule of business for 2009/10 subject to inclusion of these agreed amendments. The Committee further **agreed to recommend** the Governing Body to approve the Employer & Skills Committee's Terms of Reference without further amendment.

Clerk

**09.33 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 2008/09 year end position and the current 2009/10 year.

It was reported that the restructure of the Business Unit had been finalised in July 2009, and the Business Development Manager and the QA Manager were now in post.

Recruitment of apprentices had not reached contracted numbers, but funding targets had been achieved with additional funding allocated during 2008/09. The Apprenticeship success rates had been very good in 2008/09 resulting in an 11% rise in overall success rates and a 14.5% increase in timely achievements. These results were above national averages. Achievements on the Construction Skills Contract were said to have been excellent, and this had resulted in bonus payments being received for the first time. Consideration was given to the Health, Public Services & Care area and the problems being faced by that area. Discussion took place about whether the LSC would withdraw certain of its provision in this area and it was **agreed** that it could be beneficial for the College to try to pre-empt this and speak with the LSC in this regard.

LLC

Train to Gain recruitment had achieved target numbers and delivered over the contract value. The LSC was now reviewing funding usage across the region to identify any additional monies that could be allocated to those providers that had over-delivered.

The closure of PBS Limited had been completed smoothly, and there hadn't been any impact on training enquiries since the removal of the company.

It was also reported that consultancy support had been provided from the World Class Skills/Good to Great Programme through KPMG which had assisted in the preparation for the Training Quality Standard, and supporting the new unit during the restructure. It was

noted that this was a specific agenda item later.

With regard to 2009/10, it was reported that the College's initial funding allocation had been received in April 2009, but that no further communication had been received as to whether or not this would be varied. Initial Apprenticeship funding was above initial 2009/10 budget planning, but Train to Gain was 12% below.

Current recruitment to Apprenticeships was as anticipated with 115 starts against a target of 200. It was explained that there were still young people securing jobs and converting to Apprenticeships. It was also anticipated that the College could employ around seven Apprentices, and the Hospital Trust around fifteen Apprentices in January 2010. It was queried whether it would be worthwhile the College looking at the establishment of a cycling Apprenticeship, as York was a city with a high population of cyclists.

LLC

Train to Gain was still heavily in demand although funds were no longer available to support this. Other avenues of funding were currently being explored to assist employers meet their training needs. Discussion took place about the method and timing of Train to Gain funding and the fact that much of the difficulty arose as the funding was issued in line with the financial year, rather than in line with the academic year.

The College's Quality Training Standard application would be submitted within the next ten days, with an anticipated assessment date before the end of the year. The College was also enjoying a much better relationship with Job Centre Plus with more referrals being put through. A successful bid had also been made to the Enhancement Fund for higher level funded training, which was secured in September 2009. It was queried whether this could be used to further train the College's own staff.

It was *noted* that future reports by the Assistant Principal Employer Engagement would also include financial elements on funding and levels of income.

LLC

**09.34 Employer Engagement Sections of College's 2009/12 Strategic Plan – Progress Update**

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

Key successes included the smooth transition away from PBS Limited, without affecting enquiry levels. It was noted that PBS Limited had gift-aided approximately £65,000 to the College in its final year, which was above target. The fact that the College had hit or exceeded its success rate targets; the production of the Employer

Engagement Strategy; and the implementation of the new structure, were also cited as key successes. Areas requiring further work included finalisation of the Training Quality Standard application, and arrangements relating to the College's Assessors.

Future reports on this item were to include a summary of key points on the report coversheet.

LLC

**09.35 Employer Engagement Strategy**

The Assistant Principal Employer Engagement presented the report with the College's final Employer Engagement Strategy which was noted with approval by the Committee.

It was **agreed** that the document should be dated or that the date of the latest revision should be stated. Discussion also took place about how consideration of this item could be dealt with at future meetings (as a standing item on the business schedule), and it was **agreed** that these regular reports should include progress reports against strategic objectives and any ongoing editing to ensure that the Strategy document remained current.

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(David Johnson joined the meeting at 6.05pm.)

**09.36 York College Journey Pack**

The Assistant Principal Employer Engagement and Business Development Manager presented the report on the Good to Great Programme by KPMG. It was noted that "Good to Great" was a tailored programme of consultancy support to assist a select group of eighteen high performing providers in Yorkshire and the Humber to more effectively develop, manage and deliver Train to Gain provision. It was noted that a limited number of recommendations had been made and these were considered by the Committee.

It was explained that the College had found this consultancy support very positive in relation to the restructure of the department; the "mystery shopper" exercise; connecting the College's "front of house" with the Business Development Unit; and staff training.

The College had also managed to secure a very good deal for updating its CRM (Client Records Management) system. Discussion took place about the CRM and the systems that were currently being developed. Further attention was focussed on particular issues including data protection, data cleansing and the Business Development Unit's relationship with other areas within the College.

**09.37 Any Other Business**

None.

**09.38 Date of Next Meeting**  
Thursday 21 January 2009 at 5.00pm.

The meeting ended at 6.30pm.

**Signed (Chair):**.....

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