

Minutes of Meeting 7<sup>th</sup> February 2013  
 Cross Party Group on Skills

Date: 7<sup>th</sup> February 2013

Location: Holyrood, Committee Room 2

Present:

<b>A4E</b>	Vicky Wilson	<b>NHS Tayside</b>	Pat Millar
<b>Barnardos</b>	Asima Hussain	<b>Scottish Conservative Party</b>	Gavin Brown MSP
<b>Chartered Banker Institute</b>	Shona Matthews	<b>SECTT</b>	Anne Galbraith
<b>CMI</b>	Tony McCandless	<b>SELECT</b>	Newell McGuinness
<b>Employment Enterprise</b>	Jay Smith	<b>SHEEF</b>	Rosemary Allford
<b>Federation of Small Businesses</b>	Barry McCulloch	<b>Scottish Labour Party</b>	Margaret McCulloch MSP
<b>Institute of Physics</b>	Alison McLure	<b>Scottish Labour Party</b>	Rhoda Grant MSP
<b>IRISS</b>	Sarah Cockburn	<b>Scottish Liberal Democrats</b>	Liam McArthur MSP
<b>ITC</b>	Ian McCulloch	<b>SQA</b>	Joe Wilson /John Allan / Nicola Dunlop
<b>Investors in People</b>	Laura Peacock	<b>Skills Development Scotland</b>	Fiona Stewart/ Gail Gibson
<b>JHP Training</b>	Jim Murphy	<b>STUC /Close the Gap</b>	Suzanne Motherwell
<b>LifeSkills Centres</b>	John Brown/ Gerry Croall	<b>Scottish Training Federation</b>	Colin Dalrymple
<b>Loch Lomond &amp; Trossachs Community Partnership</b>	Kate Sankey	<b>The Open University</b>	Úna Bartley
<b>OPITO</b>	Darah Zahran	<b>Universities Scotland</b>	Daniel Wedgewood
<b>NHS Education for Scotland</b>	Simon Williams/ Rob Coward/ Karen Adams		

Apologies received:

<b>A4E</b>	Alison Nimmo	<b>NSCC &amp; Independent Roof Training Association</b>	John McKinney
<b>Association of Accounting Technicians</b>	Helen McGougan	<b>Pearson</b>	Bal Birdi
<b>Barnardos Scotland</b>	Helen Brown/Simon Warr	<b>Queen Margaret University</b>	Lande Wolsey
<b>British Retail Consortium</b>	David Martin	<b>SHEEF</b>	Prof. Stephen Olivier
<b>Chartered Banker Institute</b>	Simon Thompson	<b>Scottish Land and Estates</b>	Sarah-Jane Laing
<b>Chartered Management Institute</b>	Ian Andrew	<b>Scottish Whisky Association</b>	Julie Hesketh-Laird
<b>Construction Skills Scotland</b>	Graeme Ogilvy	<b>SEMTA</b>	Brian Humphrey
<b>COGENT Scotland</b>	Paul Coffey	<b>SQA</b>	George Brown
<b>Creative Scotland</b>	Helena Ward	<b>STUC</b>	Sylvia O'Grady
<b>Economic Development Association [Scotland]</b>	Irene Bell / Anne Meikle	<b>Universities Scotland</b>	Susannah Lane
<b>Institute of Scottish Motor Industry</b>	Sandy Burgess		

## **Agenda Items:**

### **1 Welcome:**

- 1.1** Gavin Brown MSP as Convenor [GB] opened the meeting and welcomed all those in attendance.

### **2 Election of New Office Bearer**

- 2.1** Following the last meeting of the CPG when it was announced that John Park MSP had stood down as Co-Convenor, it was necessary to elect a new office bearer to the CPG. GB invited nominations for the position of Co-Convenor.

Rhoda Grant MSP proposed Margaret McCulloch MSP of the Scottish Labour Party as the new Co-Convenor of the CPG on Skills. This was seconded by Liam McArthur MSP. As no other nominations were put forward GB was pleased to welcome Margaret McCulloch MSP as his new Co-Convenor. Members of the CPG showed their support with a round of applause.

### **3 Brief Statement from Lunch Sponsor**

- 3.1** GB thanked SQA on behalf of the Group for their sponsorship of the lunch and welcomed its representatives Joe Wilson and John Allan to say a few words. The Scottish Qualifications Authority [SQA] welcomed the opportunity to remind fellow members of the work SQA had achieved, not just as an awarding body and provided the group with a summary sheet [see Appendix 2]. This highlighted some of the other far reaching and ambitious work of SQA, including assisting bodies in other jurisdictions, both in the UK and overseas and encouraging awarding bodies to bring more qualifications forward for accreditation. SQA is also working on more specialist awards and services to increase recognition of employer training. GB thanked Joe and Allan for this informative overview.

### **4 Minutes of the last meeting and matters arising**

- 4.1** The Minutes of the meeting of the meeting of 6<sup>th</sup> December 2012 were approved. Matters arising included:

**4.1.1** Invitation to hear from the lunch sponsor of that meeting – Lifeskills. GB invited John Brown to say a few words now on the work of Lifeskills. This national provider of employability skills has over 28 sites in the UK – located where other support is not. An organisation specialised in working in rural areas, the programme Lifeskills offers provides an integrated approach. The aim is to have a centre in every local authority by 2014. Lifeskills prides itself on bringing together the differing elements that are need to create a one stop shop for developing employability skills and to help individuals move into sustained employment.

**4.1.2** Joint Meeting with the CPG for Colleges and Universities: still being investigated.

**4.1.3** Discussion on Funding Issues: an ongoing workplan agenda item.

**4.1.4** The Richard Review: Graeme Ogilvy of Construction Skills Scotland who had raised this point for discussion was unable to attend the meeting. It was agreed to defer the matter until the next meeting.

## **5 Presentation - Measuring the Return on Investment – NHS Education**

**5.1** GB welcomed the team from NHS Education; Karen Adams, Rob Coward, Pat Millar, and Simon Williams and invited them to take the floor.

**5.2** [Presentations paper provided in Appendix 3]. Simon Williams opened by explaining his excitement about evaluation, a passion shared by his colleagues whom he then introduced. Showing how public money was being used was of utmost importance to them; if it cannot be justified, it gets cut! However, showing the benefits of training, learning and development can be hard, particularly at a time of flux; how can skills acquisition be measured?

Different methods can be use, but the focus on a return on investment helps focus on the impact or the chain of impact. Simon stressed that this is not just about the money; there are monetised and non monetised benefits and the latter is often the more important.

There are five levels of evaluation [slide 4, Appendix 3]. The team assess what are the needs in the workplace, commence a plan linking change engagement with learning and aim to bring about a change in behaviour. If used consistently, this can allow a like for like comparison to be made. The team is as represented at the meeting. Therefore they are working to build capacity and to support other healthboards.

Evaluation is also built into the procurement process, partners and potential partners are made fully aware of how the evaluation will be used.

Simon handed over to his colleague Pat Millar to talk about the work with the Tayside healthboard. Pat explained that there is a lot of training activity but the difficulty was in showing how this was making a difference to patients. She outlined a number of strategic drivers [See Appendix 4] including public reforms and the 'Communities in Control' initiative. The RoI methodology can help measure the impact and performance of a wide range of projects and programmes. It is particularly useful for projects/programmes which have a long life cycle, are linked to key organisational goals and objectives, are resource intensive, have high internal/external visibility, address large target audiences across a range of multi-agencies, and health and social care integration projects. A very current example of projects addressing high visibility issues are those focused on infection control and care of the elderly.

Pat's presentation noted some other examples of RoI application. The team had engaged with a broad range of colleagues in the sector to create a network of 45 'critical friends' with a broad skills base to share their experiences in application and to learn from each other. This network would also help to continue testing the methodology and its impact.

**5.3** GB thanked Simon, Pat and the team for an excellent presentation. He asked to what extent they were getting buy in. Had this been easy and what kind of resistance had they encountered. Pat

referred to the staff governance principles which show the commitment to ensuring staff are appropriately trained for their role. Simon added that across Scotland use of the methodology was not mandatory. There is only a small team which receives many requests from health boards for support. Time and resource was the limiting factor.

- 5.4** Gerry Croall of Lifeskills was interested to understand how the RoI methodology was used with training providers. Karen Adams of NES advised that all parties are involved with the methodology from the outset; evaluations are built into the project plan and therefore there is a strong buy in to the process.
- 5.5** Joe Wilson of SQA asked, noting work done on the outside to develop qualifications, if the work was opening up career pathways? Karen Adams provided a case study of a project to pilot new SVQ in Facilities Management. There are 20,000 working in estates and facilities, many of whom have no work-related qualifications. A looming skills gap has been identified, caused to some extent by retirements at mid-management. The SVQ pilot looked at the potential for this qualification to act as a springboard for staff with no qualifications and demonstrated success as regards career movement and/or progression to higher level study.
- 5.6** Colin Dalrymple of the Scottish Training Federation asked about the links to the recruitment process. NHS is a significant employer and with so many young people unemployed how is it working with the modern apprenticeship programmes. Pat Millar outlined the work of the Healthcare Academy which operates a variety of models and links to modern apprenticeships. Those coming through the academy are guaranteed an interview and there is evidence of good progress through that process to employment.

There were no further questions for the NES team – the Convenors again thanked them for sharing their work with their fellow members of the CPG.

## **6 Curriculum for Excellence – Update from SQA**

- 6.1** GB invited Joe Wilson and his colleague John Allan to take the floor to provide the group with an update on the Curriculum for Excellence. The group was reminded that Scotland was one of the first to develop a national qualification framework. SQA offers qualifications on this framework at all levels. Its flagship qualifications are the national qualifications; higher, standard grades etc. As part of the work to develop the Curriculum for Excellence, over 250 courses were revised, and this work has included some name changes e.g. the name 'Standard Grade' will go at the end of this year and new names shall come into play from summer 2014.

The work on Skills for Work and National Certificates has now been done. They have been developed to be fit for purpose and to assess in a valid way the skills wanted. This is different to other parts of the UK. John provided the example that for drama, the best assessment is through performance. Other forms of assessment are question papers, assignments and case study work and the balance used can differ, for example in Science, assessment comes 30% assignment work and 70% from question papers; Maths is assessed by question paper only and PE is 100% performance.

With regard to the question of standards, all qualifications retain a credit value across the world. Advanced higher has a higher UCAS tariff than some equivalents in the UK. These credit values operate like a currency.

The Curriculum for Excellence has also built in development of the following attitudes; care, confidence, equality, and mindfulness. Skills development does require a focus on knowledge based learning but also of how to apply this. John provide an example: which is more important to know; the date Aristotle was born or his views on citizenship. Literacy and numeracy have been build in not just because of their own importance skills in their own right but the fact they help unlock the development of skills in other subjects. The Curriculum will also teach skills for health and well being, employability and enterprise, thinking [metacognition, higher order and critical thinking], all of which will give Scots and Scotland a competitive and economic advantage.

- 6.2** Barry McCulloch of the FSB asked about the extent of employer buy in to the new Curriculum. John Allan replied that representatives of universities, schools and business had been on the committees, providing input to the design teams. Business had interest in developing the curriculum for the application of skills and knowledge.
- 6.3** Colin Dalrymple applauded the emphasis on building skills in education; without the skills to apply it, learning is valueless.
- 6.4** Gerry Croall noted that initially there had been some resistance from subject teachers. Was SQA now confident teachers and students were now ready for the change. John and Joe highlighted the number of Government run subject events, attended by over 7,000 teachers. The focus has changed, the qualification levels are the same. Modernising in this way should ensure no pupil is disadvantaged. Another 145 events will bring the total teacher attendance to 20,000.
- 6.5** John Brown of Lifeskills felt that a campaign was needed to update employers; many of whom will still look for O-grades. John Allan pointed to SCQF which provides a ready-reckoner to help show these new qualifications alongside more familiar titles. He agreed it was a big job to share this with employers and needs done locally and nationally.
- 6.6** Kate Sankey of Loch Lomond and Trossachs Partnership asked whether there was provision for, and not simply of, recognition of prior learning within the new curriculum. Joe Wilson felt we had super systems in Scotland to support this but more work is needed to help avoid things being done twice. John Allan added that outcomes and experiences do tend to cross over and more work is needed at the junction between school and college or the workplace to avoid the repetition of something taken earlier in one's career. Noting that work on the Curriculum had commenced back in 2006 the SQA team also wondered whether employers were ready for questioning employees, or universities; were future students going to be willing to attend a lecture with 200 fellow students.

GB thanked everyone for their contributions to the discussion and the SQA team for their update.

**7.1** The Secretary had been asked to note the forthcoming Commission on Developing Scotland's Young Workforce - an initiative to be headed by Sir Ian Wood. There was no timescale or work programme for this yet but may be of interest to Group members.

## **8 Close**

**8.1** As there was no other competent business to discuss, GB formally closed the meeting, thanking all members and contributors for their input.

**8.2** The next meeting takes place on 23<sup>rd</sup> May at 12.45 pm unless otherwise advised and will incorporate the AGM.