



VALE OF GLAMORGAN IMPROVING OPPORTUNITIES BOARD MEETING

11th March 2016

Present:

Kay Martin (Chair) (KM) – Cardiff and Vale College
 Marcus Goldsworthy (Chair) (MG) – Vale of Glamorgan Council
 Helen Moses (HM) - Vale of Glamorgan Council
 Clare Hughes (CH) – Department of Work and Pensions
 Paul Kift (PK) – Cardiff and Vale College

James Scorey (JS) – Cardiff and Vale College
 Ben Hughes (BH) – Cardiff Metropolitan University
 Paula Ham (PH) – Vale of Glamorgan Council
 Karen Higgins (KH) – WLGA
 Luke Tooze (LT) – Admiral
 Emma Clarke (EC) - Conduit

Apologies:

Jayne Tilley – Careers Wales

Nicola Campbell– Cardiff and Vale Community Learning Partnership

	Action
<p>1. <u>Welcome and introduction</u></p> <p>Members of the board were introduced.</p>	
<p>2. <u>Apologies for absence</u></p> <p>Apologies were given.</p>	
<p>3. <u>Minutes from last meeting and matters arising</u></p> <p>The minutes were agreed as accurate.</p> <p>HM advised that the progress report on the Community Strategy Delivery Plan had been reported to the LSB in December.</p> <p>PK advised that he had attended some very productive meetings with Aston Martin and would update later in the meeting.</p>	
<p>4. <u>Sector View: The skills needs of the Welsh Contact Centre Industry</u></p> <p>EC is the Senior Human Resources Director for the UK, Ireland and the Philippines for Conduit. EC advised that the skills needs for the contact centre sector are:</p>	



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technical skills • Communication skills • Attitudes and expectations <p>EC advised that employees need to be able to communicate in 'written' English as opposed to social media shorthand. They also need to be able to use technical platforms.</p> <p>Issues that are on the rise include high absence rates and attrition. There seems to be a growing lack of accountability and employees have to be trained in relevant regulatory frameworks and how to sell.</p> <p>Good communication skills provide a solid basis for many aspects of the role but these are increasingly of a low standard. This is coupled with unrealistic expectations in terms of how high the salary should be and the level of output required.</p> <p>The company have witnessed a change in the past two years and are rejecting more at application and training stages and there is still a high attrition rate.</p> <p>LT advised that Admiral have experienced an improvement in their attrition rate and this may largely be due to a change in the recruitment process which helps to manage expectations and give a taste of what the role will be.</p> <p>It was highlighted that literacy and numeracy levels have dropped in Cardiff and the Vale and this may be contributing to the employability of some candidates. KM advised that the results of a pilot project in Cardiff would be interesting where 100x14 year olds at risk of NEET have been provided with more vocational options but there is still an emphasis on English and Maths.</p> <p>PK asked EC to speak to the employability team at the College to see how they could assist each other.</p> <p>There was a discussion around the need to recognise the growth of the contact centre industry and the opportunities and to dispel some of the myths and stigma. It was recognised that work may need to be undertaken with potential employees and with parents who may discourage a career in the industry.</p> <p>EC continued that there are concerns around verbal reasoning, accountability and common sense. A lack of presentation skills was also highlighted.</p> <p>KM to work through the college's employability team to try and address some of these issues.</p> <p>It was also recommended that when employers visit schools and the</p>	<p>PK</p> <p>KM</p>
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<p>college they should give a realistic overview of the expectations of employees e.g. around attendance and attitude. It was suggested that some of this work should be with primary school children and not just at secondary school level. PH to feed back to the Education Management Team.</p> <p>BH to also revisit the University's approach when they talk to schools about aspirations and to put more emphasis on basic skills.</p>	<p>PH</p> <p>BH</p>
<p>5. <u>Company View: The skills needs of Admiral</u></p> <p>LT gave an overview of Admiral which employs 6,000 staff across Cardiff, Newport and Swansea and there are a large number of roles which are not on the frontline dealing with customer queries.</p> <p>LT advised that attributes they are looking for in call centre staff are enthusiasm and a willingness to learn. They also expect applicants to do some research and understand the role they are applying for.</p> <p>LT also highlighted the prevalence of text speak and abbreviations on applications and this resonated with other members of the group.</p> <p>LT described the recruitment process which includes a telephone interview, assessment and debate as well as an interview. The new approach has enabled candidates to learn more about the company and the role and Admiral have been able to determine the best candidates.</p> <p>LT gave an example of having attended careers fairs at schools where it was evident that parents were discouraging children from even going to the Admiral stand to find out more information.</p> <p>The group were interested in the issues raised by LT and EC which were similar to issues they have experienced in the recruitment process or when assisting people to find employment.</p> <p>LT advised that he had worked his way up within Admiral who promote internally so there are good opportunities for a rewarding career.</p> <p>The group suggested that more may need to be done to highlight some of these success stories to assist with recruitment and to tackle some of the misconceptions.</p> <p>It was also suggested that social media could also be used to highlight good stories so they are accessible to potential employees.</p> <p>Careers Wales are now targeting those at risk of becoming NEET and therefore there is a gap in the provision of advice and support</p>	



<p>for many other young people.</p> <p>The group agreed their needed to be a collective effort to provide support and information to help people make informed choices, understand which skills are important and to manage expectations.</p>	<p>All</p>
<p>6. <u>The work of the Learning and Skills Partnership</u></p> <p>KH took the group through a presentation on the South East Wales Learning, Skills and Innovation Partnership (LSKIP), this included the regional strategic framework 'Delivering a Future with Prosperity'.</p> <p>The work of the partnership is aligned to Welsh Government priorities and there is an Employment and Skills Board (ESB), Core Working Group and EU Funding Through Regional Engagement Team and Priority Support Groups.</p> <p>KH highlighted the key findings in the recent Employment and Skills Report which will be circulated to the group and the need for an annual Employment and Skills Plan. One of the challenges for the region is the age of the workforce and the need for skills levels to match job vacancies. For every new growth job there are 8 vacancies in terms of replacement jobs so this is where there are the greatest opportunities in the region.</p> <p>There is a need to engage with more companies and it was suggested that the term 'employers' should be used rather than 'companies' to include the public sector.</p> <p>The need to consider employment opportunities and targeting of people with health conditions was also highlighted.</p> <p>The ESB has been keen to identify priorities not sectors which are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Responding to growth and opportunities • Adult skills development • Entrepreneurship • Skills utilisation and under-utilisation • STEAM • Employer engagement <p>The group discussed the need ensure people are informed about the opportunities and skills needed and to provide opportunities for people to develop the right skills for jobs in the region.</p> <p>The ESB are trying to move towards a Demand Led Skills System.</p> <p>KH would welcome the opportunity to come to a future meeting of the group.</p>	<p>HM</p>



<p>7. <u>LMI data for the Vale</u></p> <p>JS gave a presentation on Labour Market Information (LMI). He advised that there is a wealth of information to help inform evidence based decisions.</p> <p>He emphasised the need to engage more with employers to understand future needs and that the work the college undertakes includes future projections.</p> <p>JS also highlighted that the college is a Microsoft partner and is the first college in Wales to enter in to such a partnership.</p> <p>A copy of the report to be circulated with the minutes.</p> <p>HM highlighted how the information presented by KH and JS would be useful for the well-being assessment that needs to be undertaken for the Public Services Board.</p>	<p>HM</p>
<p>8. <u>Aston Martin (AM) – new factory and skills academy</u></p> <p>PK advised that they are working closely with Aston Martin regarding the new factory in the Vale but there are still a lot of unknowns.</p> <p>PK has discussed a skills plan with AM and is seeking further information regarding the different jobs and skills needed. One option being considered by AM is to recruit 100 workers over six months and re-locate them to their HQ for 3 years and then they can return fully trained in to senior jobs in the Vale. This could be viewed a similar to going away to university for three years.</p> <p>PK sees the IOB as having a significant role in helping to facilitate the recruitment of the workforce and there is an opportunity to develop some innovative models of working.</p> <p>PK will keep the Board updated and involve relevant members in particular meetings e.g. the DWP.</p> <p>PH to liaise with PK about including this on the agenda at a future Headteachers meeting.</p> <p>It was agreed that this should be a standing item on the IOB agenda.</p>	<p>PK</p> <p>PK/PH</p> <p>HM</p>
<p>9. <u>The Community Strategy Delivery Plan 2014-18</u></p> <p>HM advised that the new Public Services Board (PSB) would be established in April and would replace the LSB.</p> <p>The PSB is a requirement of the Well-being of Future Generations</p>	



<p>Act 2015 Act and will need to undertake a local well-being assessment by April 2017 and produce a well-being plan by April 2018.</p> <p>At the last LSB it had been agreed that they would recommend to the PSB (membership will be similar to the LSB) that until the new assessment and plan are in place that the PSB adopts the existing plans and sub-groups of the LSB. This means that the Improving Opportunities Board will continue and progress against its current action plan will need to be reported to the first meeting of the PSB in May as part of the Community Strategy Delivery Plan progress report.</p> <p>HM to circulate a template for members of the group to update with progress and next steps. HM also encouraged the group to consider if the actions needed to be reviewed in light of the issues discussed by the group.</p>	<p>All</p>
<p>10. <u>Any Other Business</u></p> <p>None</p>	
<p>11. <u>Date of Next Meeting.</u></p> <p>20th June 2016 14.30 – 16.30, Conference Room A, Civic Offices, Barry</p>	