

HERTFORD REGIONAL COLLEGE
Employer & Community Engagement Committee
12th February 2015.

Present: Ken Ayling (Chair)
Patsy Spears
Jan Wing
Andy Forbes
Warren Gordon

In Attendance:
Barbara Stone (Head of Employer Engagement)
Chris Harrison (Adult Education Development Manager)
Elaine Seculer (Marketing & Communications Manager)
John Fowl (Clerk to the Corporation)

183. To receive Apologies for Absence.

Apologies were received from Andrew Francis.

184. Declaration of Interests and to Notify Part 2 Agenda Items.

There were no declarations or Part 2 Items.

185. To Approve the Minutes of the Employer Engagement Committee Held on 4th June 2014.

The minutes were approved.

186. Matters Arising.

There were no matters arising.

187. To Receive a Report From the Marketing Team.

Elaine Secular presented a report on the recent Open Day held on Saturday 7th February. A total of 412 people attended Ware and 313 people at Broxbourne.

The messages being promoted to young people are;

- (i) Keep your options open.
- (ii) Widen your choices.
- (iii) Increase your employability.
- (iv) Learn your way.

Members were shown the changes made to the prospectus with the links to social media.

An Open Evening had been held in November 2014 and was attended by 28% more people than previous years.

The view was shared that the challenge now facing the college was to convert the applications received into enrolments. A discussion ensued as to how to achieve this given the 'open door' policy now adopted by some school 6th forms and academies.

Whilst emphasising the opportunities with apprenticeships the college was also keen to stress the routes for students wanting to progress to university.

The College has obtained a database of parent addresses where the household has a child of 15-16 years of age. A direct mailshot is planned to target these parents.

The Committee was told of the work undertaken regarding the 'Brand Check' to ensure the college appeals to different audiences. Kanga Marketing have been employed to undertake this work and to meet with the focus groups.

It was **Resolved** that the 'Brand Check' be supported and that governors should let the Clerk know if they wish to be involved.

188. To Receive a Report for Business Solutions and Apprenticeships.

The report set out the work of the Business Solutions team and the Apprenticeship contract.

Members were informed that employers were now favouring 19+Apprenticeships rather than 16-18 year olds. The numbers of students following an apprenticeship were noted and governors shared the concern at the drop in 16-18 year old numbers which had seen a reduction in the contract with SFA.

A discussion took place on the way certain subjects are taught and how this needs to be changed to gain the interest of the young person.

A Higher Apprenticeship is being developed for launch in May 2015.

The Committee noted the wide ranging initiatives in which Business Solutions Team were involved and the income generated by each.

The 'Trailblazers' initiative was seen to have a degree of risk attached to it as the funding is through employers rather than direct to the College, which could result in a delay in funding being received. It was noted however, that SME's do not see this as something they will support and so the Government is revisiting the matter.

It was **Resolved** that the Report be received.

189. To Receive a Report on Adult & Community Learning.

Chris Harrison advised the Committee that the team was concentrating on the Adult Skills Budget (ASB), provision for the unemployed and Full Cost Recovery courses which includes distance learning. Members were told of the sources of income from ASB and that the College was above the contract agreed with SFA. In view of this a bid has been submitted to SFA for the contract to be increased by a further £98k.

Details of the various sources of project funding were outlined and that full cost provision needed more attention. A Strategy was being developed to safeguard the college against the shifting of funding.

Supported by two Departments it was intended to start 'Saturday College'. If this is successful more will be offered on Saturdays.

The loss of Information & Guidance funding has placed a question mark over the Next Step Centres and their continued viability is currently being explored.

It was **Resolved** that the Report be Received and that the Committee supports the appointment of a Link Governors to this area of work.

190. Any Other Business.

There was no other business.

191. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held on the **28th May 2015.**

Signed.....
(Chairman)

Date.....