

PROVIDERS IN PARTNERSHIP



STRATEGIC PLAN

DECEMBER 2008-JULY 2009

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North Yorkshire context

York and North Yorkshire is one of four sub-regions within the Yorkshire and Humber region and occupies over 50% (3,000 sq miles) of the land area within the region. However, it has only 14.5% of the population ie 582,000 people. It is a mixture of rural and urban areas ranging from coastal resorts, national parks, tourist towns and moors and dales and is often viewed as a cosmopolitan area to live, boasting some very expensive areas of housing. However, it also has its disadvantages; while statistics show a relatively affluent economy, the average often masks remoteness, scarcity of population and low income in some areas. Within the sub-region, 76% of the population live within North Yorkshire and 24% within the city of York, the second largest city. Over 97% of the area is defined as sparse or very sparse and almost half of the population live in 3% of the land area. Its remoteness can be a huge disadvantage to young people in accessing education, training and employment as can seasonal work which is also a disadvantage of rural and tourist areas. A number of schools fall into the 'cool spot' category within Aimhigher/Higher Education ie they are widely acknowledged as having pupils who do not progress into employment readily and often appear on the register of Entry to Employment (e2e) providers.

The government's strategy to raise expectations and keep young people in education and training post-16 (among 17 year olds to 84% by 2009/10) is foremost in the planning of PiP's strategic plan, as is the drive to address the weakness in the UK skills base through Apprenticeships, Train to Gain and other training opportunities.

Statistics (LSC Partnership Team information, regional facts and figures, July 2008) show that between 2008-2012 the 16 year old cohort in Yorkshire and the Humber falls by 6.7%. Across the sub-regions this reduction is generally replicated, but there is some variation; North Yorkshire only falls by 4.8% whilst South Yorkshire sees a fall of 8.2%. Also, between 2008-2012, the regional 16-18 year old cohort fall is 6.5%.

School attainment rates of 5+ A*-C grades GCSEs compared to the national average, for the two Local Authorities supported in 2006 were:

North Yorkshire – 53.5% 5 x A*-C grades including English and Maths against the England average of 45.8%. Seventeen schools (34%) had scores below the LA average.

City of York – 48.8% 5 x A*-C grades including Maths and English, 3% above the national average but the figure masks a high level of local variation. The highest attaining schools achieve 96%, the lowest 19%. Five schools (35%) were below the LA average.

It is a time of major change and for this reason PiP will work very closely with all key partners to help reach national, regional and sub-regional targets

Employer skills needs and engagement

The National Employers Skills Survey (NESS) 2007, published May 2008, shows a steady upward trend in most areas of skills development, according to the views of 79,000 employers. The findings are positive with fewer employers reporting skills gaps. The report shows an increase in the proportion of employers providing training, holding a training plan and budget.

(National) Key findings indicate 67% of establishments having funded or arranged training in the last year with almost half of employers having a training plan and over a third having a training budget. There has been a reduction in the number of vacancies caused by a lack of skills (25% in 2005 compared to 21% in 2007).

In addition, research (Regional profiles of the workforce by ethnicity and migrant workers, Nov 2005, LSC/ A.Green/D.Owen and R.Wilson) presents the following key findings for Yorkshire and the Humber:

- Ethnic minorities accounted for around 5.5% of employment in Yorkshire and the Humber in 2004 which is about average for most regions other than London
- It has more than doubled since 1994
- The largest single ethnic group is people of Asian origin, accounting for over 3% of total employment in 2004
- In Yorkshire and the Humber ethnic minorities are over-represented at both ends of the skills continuum; in professional and technical occupations at one end, and in elementary occupations and sales and customer service occupations at the other end
- By contrast, they are under-represented in managerial occupations, admin and clerical occupations and skilled trades
- Ethnic minority groups are more concentrated in service industries than white people, especially in distribution, hotels and catering and health and social work
- Almost 6% of males and around 4% of females in employment were born outside the UK

The above information is important when considering and planning delivery in York and North Yorkshire. Also important is the research currently underway; 'Expanding Apprenticeships in the public sector', December 2009. The primary aim of the research is to provide an understanding of the constraints and barriers facing the public sector in its use of Apprenticeships and to identify ways to overcome these. The LSC will use the research to inform its strategy to increase the number of apprentices working in the public sector.

Regionally, data is available which shows:

- there are currently 11,000 apprenticeship starts amongst young people – this is 3% below the national average for 16-17 year olds
- the needs of young people with complex/deep rooted barriers to learning (inc NEET and LLDD) needs addressing
- Improved achievement at age 19 of Level 2 needs increasing to 70% and at Level 3 to 43%
- there are high levels of worklessness
- there is a high number of adults without any qualifications

PiP members are kept informed on the national, regional and sub-regional trends via the LSC, PiP and other key strategic networks and groups. This is essential when planning future delivery which meets the needs of the current economic climate. This is extremely important in light of the current climate. The LSC has strongly requested that news of any potential Apprenticeship redundancies be relayed to the LSC without hesitation.

Economic and Social context

The latest national unemployment figures up to the end of August 2008 reveal:

There has been a fall in both the number of people in employment and the employment rate

The number of unemployed people, the unemployment rate and the claimant count have all increased

The number of inactive people of working age has increased but the inactivity rate is unchanged

The number of vacancies has fallen and growth in average earnings, both including and excluding bonuses, has decreased

Additional data which summarises the latest UK unemployment figures (quarter ending August 2008) shows the age of newly unemployed people against the previous quarter. WBL providers, schools and other key partner organisations will be especially interested to know that the data shows:

16-174,000 (+ 2.1%)	against previous quarter
18-2456,000 (+11.2%)	" "

This shows an increase of 60,000 newly unemployed people in the combined age group 16-24 year olds (in the UK)

York and North Yorkshire is very unique; as previously stated, it is a mixture of rural and urban areas ranging from coastal resorts, national parks, tourist towns and moors and dales. It has some hugely expensive and far-reaching cosmopolitan areas of economy but is also has disadvantages; remoteness, scarcity of population and low income in some areas.

Clearly, all partner organisations including schools and WBL providers have a role to play, not just in ensuring all young people have full information in order to make informed choices about their future but that up to date and correct information is given.

The rural challenge includes:

- 28% of jobs in rural areas often pay a 'low wage'
- Low aspirations and lack of choice amongst young people
- High levels of economic inactivity and worklessness
- Low levels of collaboration between business and HE
- Less capital investment, lower funding

Profile of Providers in Partnership (PiP)

Providers in Partnership (PiP) is a Limited Company established and registered in 2005. During 2006 it became public and the first Work-Based learning providers became members.

The consortium was formed by a collaborative arrangement of Work-Based learning (WBL) providers in York and North Yorkshire and with the support of the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) North Yorkshire.

PiP is a membership based organisation operating at a strategic level across the sub-region of North Yorkshire. It acts as the representative body for its members with all key decision makers and external partner organisations.

The overall aim of PiP is to support the strategic planning process of the LSC and other key stakeholders and partnerships in York and North Yorkshire.

PiP is governed by a board of directors. The board comprises of WBL provider representatives who chair local PiP network groups, an LSC Partnership Manager and an Integrated Youth Support manager. The PiP Executive Director also attends board meetings, and presents a report at every meeting.

Initially all WBL providers operating in York and North Yorkshire and having an LSC contract to deliver WBL provision were strongly invited to join PiP. Initially 16 WBL providers joined PiP; within 12 months membership became 23 which included all FE colleges in York and North Yorkshire.

The success and wide acknowledgement of PiP has resulted in the board reviewing its original membership policy and at the December 2008 board meeting agreed to widen its membership to 'include any provider who delivers directly or on a sub-contract basis. In addition, due to the 14-19 agenda becoming forever essential schools in York and North Yorkshire are invited to join PiP in addition to other key stakeholder partner organisations. Additional members representing schools will mean that PiP offers a well-rounded, comprehensive perspective and insight on matters relating to our remit.

The focus of PiP's work will remain on work-based learning. Wider membership is likely to help increase the number of Apprenticeships and Train to Gain opportunities in York and North Yorkshire.

The profile of PiP has been reviewed to accommodate all potential members.

The board is strongly committed to the vision and mission of PiP and its principles of promoting and demonstrating accountability, openness and trust in their dialogue with all stakeholders and partnerships.

Providers in Partnership – the vision

The vision of Providers in Partnership (PiP) is to work in close partnership with key partner organisations and in doing so address key priorities of all agencies. It will continue to offer a well-rounded and comprehensive perspective and insight on all matters relating to our remit.

The key objectives of PiP being met during the period of December 2008 – July 2009 will result in the vision being met. PiP will achieve the following objectives:

- Be recognised by key partner organisations as the organisation for consultation and discussion on all aspects of vocational and work-based learning issues
- Have credible representation on all relevant vocational learning related forum at local, regional and national level
- To actively communicate and represent work-based learning providers within the 14-19 agenda. In doing so raise awareness amongst external partner organisations and ensure the work-based learning perception is included in all decision making activities
- Capitalise funding from various sources to be a sustainable organisations with the ability to deliver its aims and mission to respond to key partner organisations and partnerships
- To effectively engage and increase knowledge of work-based learning provision in schools across York and North Yorkshire
- To engage employers across York and North Yorkshire in the investment of skills by ensuring work-based learning provision is responsive to the needs of employers and to the learner
- To assist in the positive promotion of work-based learning to potential learners from the age of 14

PiP Mission statement (2006)

'Providers in Partnership (PiP) will bring together all those Work-based learning providers within York and North Yorkshire who wish to work collaboratively to transform provision, increase strategic engagement, and overall raise the quality of learning in York and North Yorkshire. In doing so, the consortium will enhance the capacity of providers to respond to the demand for higher skills and priorities. The consortium will keep abreast of changes and new opportunities to ensure the WBL network can continue to develop. By linking to initiatives for broader employer engagement, such as Train to Gain. The network will increase its capacity, meet local employer needs and link to the LSC national, regional and sub-regional priorities.'

Marketing Strategy

Providers in Partnership (PiP) has a marketing strategy to contribute to the achievement of its overall aims and mission statement.

One of the first objectives of the marketing strategy was to raise the image, awareness and understanding of Work-based learning across York and North Yorkshire. In doing so would encourage wider participation in a vocational pathway and ensure that the WBL route has parity of esteem with other learning choices in a variety of settings. The image and profile of PiP has indeed been raised and positive feedback confirms this.

Initially, the marketing strategy focussed widely on promoting PiP as a new network. It is without doubt acknowledged widely that PiP does indeed promote and represent WBL providers and in doing so has raised the profile of WBL provision.

The marketing strategy has since been revisited and agreement with board members has resulted in the membership being reviewed. Associate membership is now being extended to include key stakeholder organisations including NYBEP, Aimhigher and ACVO – strategic objectives page 10.

Additionally, membership has been extended to schools (11-18), this will have a huge impact on the delivery of the 14-19 agenda particularly at this time of massive change within the 'Management of Change' agenda and as funding transfers from the Learning and Skills Councils to the Local Authorities.

Consultation with PiP members and learners resulted in the production of generic marketing material which focuses on Apprenticeship providers and opportunities within York and North Yorkshire. A wider membership will enable a fuller understanding and complete partnership working to identify and take forward additional marketing materials to meet the needs of all members in partnership.

A PiP monthly news update was designed during the first few months of PiP being formed. Since its conception the news update has progressed greatly. It is widely circulated not just to members but also to a number of key partner organisations. It is also available on the PiP website – www.providersinpartnership.org.uk which has developed greatly since the beginning. Feedback has shown how very useful the news update and website are to readers.

Providers in Partnership - achievements to 2008

- Established forums and representation –researched relevant and existing forums to understand the purpose of each group, its membership and activities. Thus making a decision of which forums PiP should be involved in/become a member of
- Established a process for representation within selected forums and promoted the role of PiP, its members and work-based learning
- As a result of current and/or new developments established new groups as needed
- Developed effective working relationships with all key contacts and partners
- Developed a successful communication strategy that provides effective two-way communication between PiP and its members and encourages active involvement
- Identified a successful method to ensure that PiP members are able to source up to date and accurate information directly from PiP eg email updates, website and monthly newsletter
- Developed a strong marketing strategy for PiP in order to achieve a clear identity and promote a clear identity with all partner organisations
- Identified key influencers on the reputation and image of work-based learning and in doing so identified the barriers that currently exist to promote work-based learning as a credible option
- Proposed and implemented strategies to target key influencers and helped change perception where needed
- Developed generic marketing and promotional material for use as needed eg via PiP members, external organisations, schools, skills events
- Identified key areas for quality improvement projects and worked closely with PiP members to raise their quality of provision. This has helped individual provider members achieve a very successful grade at Ofsted inspection
- Developed effective protocols (individual feedback and evaluation etc) of project management and evaluation that ensure effective use of resources and measurable outcomes
- Identified funding sources to finance activities to raise quality of provision
- Developed an effective mechanism for effectively identifying and disseminating good practice across the provider network
- Provided an interface with local schools across York and North Yorkshire and in doing so promoted all post-16 options to pupils, teachers, parents (and other key partner organisations) via the media of drama

Strategic Objectives December 2008-July 2009

The following are priorities for PiP in future months. However, they are not exhaustive and are an indication of support to its members which will be reviewed and built upon during the period, December 2008-July 2009.

- To sustain an open and effective dialogue with all PiP members and key strategic partner organisations via local network groups (updating and informing via all key organisations, sharing good practice etc)
 - PiP to promote and facilitate network meetings, 2 or 3 monthly meetings
 - PiP to review current structure of network groups with members
- To review the current membership of PiP, this will enable a wider plethora of membership to deliver the 14-19 agenda across York and North Yorkshire
 - Membership to be offered to all schools (11-18) in York and North Yorkshire
 - Associate membership to be offered to key stakeholder organisations including; NYBEP, Aimhigher, ACVO, Danesgate Skills Centre, Henshaws College (Harrogate, LLDD provider)
- To promote quality throughout the 14-19 agenda through continuous improvement initiatives and to support the development and capacity of network members and in doing so help reduce the NEET figures in York and North Yorkshire
 - PiP to facilitate 2 provider capacity building days, Dec 2008 – July 2009
 - PiP to work with regional provider networks to deliver a regional capacity building day/ sharing of good practice
- Support PiP members to review and update internal quality systems and provision thereby ensuring a robust and effective programme of delivery (internal quality systems, self-assessment process (WBL), self-evaluation process (schools))
 - PiP to offer quality support to individual members at a subsidised consultancy rate
- To support PiP members by keeping them informed and updated of current developments, especially within the ever-changing period of 'Management of change'
 - Producing a regular monthly news update and an up to date website: www.providersinpartnership.org.uk and other development and capacity building exercises as deemed necessary
- To continue to be a recognised and valued key strategic partner with stakeholders and to work in collaboration and partnership with other partners in the post-16 sector and 14-19 agenda (sub-regionally, regionally and where necessary nationally)
- To further develop relationships with colleagues in Further and Higher Education and in doing so be a representative voice for WBL providers. Including, identifying financial sources to fund information, advice and guidance projects post-16
- To promote and support economic development and social environment strategies and their partnerships in York and North Yorkshire

- To support WBL providers in their delivery of all LSC funded programmes including Apprenticeships, Train to Gain and Entry to Employment (e2e)

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