



NEWSLETTER

March 2009

innovative thinking
collaborative action

CFE NEWS

ANNOUNCEMENT OF NEW JOINT MANAGING DIRECTORS

CFE is pleased to announce the appointment of new Joint Managing Directors, James Kewin and Sarah Hakeney. James and Sarah take up the post following the departure of Michael Davis to the UK Commission for Employment and Skills.

James and Sarah were both previously Project Directors at CFE and successfully developed their respective teams of Skills and Innovation and Business and Enterprise.

James said: *"Sarah and I are really looking forward to building on the achievements that CFE has made over the past ten years and leading the organisation into the future."*

Sarah added: *"The Joint Managing Director arrangement will allow James and I to play to our respective strengths and really add value to the policy, research and project management services that we provide".*

The full press release can be found [here](#).

PROJECT SPOTLIGHTS

NATIONAL SKILLS ACADEMIES

CFE is continuing to work with the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) to provide ongoing support for the development and implementation of National Skills Academies (NSAs).

NSAs are a key instrument in the Government's agenda to create a more skilled and qualified UK workforce. As employer-led centres of excellence, NSAs deliver skills through specialised, responsive training and development services in order to raise productivity and competitiveness within their respective sector.

CFE provides a project management and delivery function across the whole NSA network and provides technical support and assistance to the LSC and NSAs prior to and throughout the three year development phase which takes place before a NSA becomes self-sustainable.

More information about CFE's work with NSAs can be found on our website [here](#).

LESSONS FROM HISTORY:

IMPLICATIONS FOR RAISING THE PARTICIPATION AGE

CFE is working with the Centre for British Teachers (CfBT) to identify lessons learned from historical government-funded 16-18 participation programmes. The project will inform current and future participation by 16-18 year olds in light of the Education and Skills Act and the proposed raising of the participation age to 17 in 2013 and 18 in 2015.

The project has involved the mapping, selection and review of government-funded participation programmes from the 1970s – 1990s to draw out lessons to inform the delivery of future participation programmes.

CFE recently hosted a Project Advisory Group at its offices in London bringing together representatives from DCSF, Rathbone and Barnardos. The group discussed the implications of raising the participation age and will continue to provide a strategic steer throughout the project, coming together again to discuss the final research findings.

More information about the project can be found [here](#) and the final research report will be published in April.

IN THIS ISSUE

Welcome to CFE's quarterly newsletter.

In this issue:

- Project Spotlight: National Skills Academies
- Project Spotlight: Lessons from history: implications of raising the participation age
- Policy Spotlight: Community Engagement
- New Projects
- CFE News & Comment
- Publications

ABOUT CFE

CFE is an independent, not for profit organisation dedicated to increasing social and economic prosperity across the UK.

We provide policy development, research and project management expertise to a wide range of government departments, agencies and providers responsible for delivering the skills agenda.

[> MORE](#)

NEW PROJECTS

CFE is currently working on a number of [projects](#) across our four policy areas of: business & enterprise; economic development; employment & work; and skills & innovation.

Driving Up Skills in Slough
Slough Borough Council

[> MORE](#)

Employment retention and progression in London

London Development Agency

[> MORE](#)

Establishing new Group Training Associations

Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills (DIUS)

[> MORE](#)

Exploring the future possibilities for awarding bodies

EDI

[> MORE](#)

POLICY SPOTLIGHT

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & EMPOWERMENT

The community engagement and empowerment agenda has been gathering momentum for the last ten years and there are clear signs that its entrenchment across all sectors of the public service is set to continue.

Support for local democracy and empowerment is currently being led by Communities and Local Government (CLG), the Local Government Association (LGA), The Improvement and Development Agency (I&DeA), rural networks, a range of third sector organisations and innovative local authorities.

The white paper, '[Communities in Control: Real people, real power](#)' (2008), states that the central aim of community empowerment is to pass power into the hands of local communities, generating vibrant democracy and giving control over local decisions and services to a wider pool of active citizens.

The government's commitment to the Empowerment Agenda and the potential scale of its impact is evidenced by the level of policy activity it has generated. The 'Communities in Control' white paper, and the (proposed) Local Democracy, Economic and Construction Bill outline a series of wide-ranging duties to be extended to Local Authorities, including:

- A 'duty to promote democracy' and an extension of the 'duty to involve' citizens (coming into effect in April 2009 and covering police, arts, sport, culture and the environment)
- A 'duty for councils to respond to petitions'
- The creation of more neighbourhood councils
- More citizen engagement on; service delivery, community service and planning

It is clear that the community empowerment agenda has wide reaching implications for local government partners, with the recognition that Comprehensive Area Assessments (CAAs) will ensure that local public services will, for the first time, be collectively held to account for their impact on local outcomes.

Seen by many as the key driver to deliver the empowerment agenda, CAA will assess the implementation of the Duty to Involve, provide an assessment that includes a consideration of how the organisation engages local communities in financial planning, and presents a clear challenge to 'managerialist' councils.

CFE recognise that the key to making empowerment work will be the adoption of a 'cultural shift' in our thinking. To do this we have to recognise that with the right focus, capacity and skills, civil society is ideally placed to help support priorities and maximise opportunities for the shaping of genuinely sustainable communities.

CFE is working in consultation with the Participatory Budgeting Unit (PBU), the Beacon Network of Empowering Communities and the Federation for Community Development Learning (FCDL) to promote and refine approaches to community consultation and empowerment.

CFE is currently applying their expertise in the fields of social capital, community consultation and participatory budgeting. This includes the development of the FC DL's National Occupational Standards for Community Development Workers and the Beacon Network's Benchmarks for Community Led Planning.

For more information about our work in this area, please contact Kris Ambler on 0116 229 3300.

Identifying the contribution of Further Education providers to local priorities, partners and places

Learning and Skills Improvement Service (LSIS)

[> MORE](#)

Improvement planning for libraries & museums in LAAs

Museums, Libraries and Archives Council (MLA)

[> MORE](#)

2012 Games Employment and Skills Legacy Plan

Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills (DIUS)

[> MORE](#)

Third Sector engagement with the Apprenticeship Programme

Learning and Skills Council, South East

[> MORE](#)

MORE CFE NEWS & COMMENT

CFE informs 'Re-skilling for recovery: After Leitch, implementing skills and training policies' report

CFE's submission to the Innovation, Universities, Science and Skills Committee was referenced in the final report; in particular, our work around Employment and Skills Boards and research into the employer demand for higher level skills, Known Unknowns.

[> MORE](#)

CFE comment on Apprenticeship Week

CFE took a look at the activities during the week and highlighted the work we are involved with to expand Apprenticeships into new sectors.

[> MORE](#)

CFE research informs British Chamber of Commerce's recession response

January saw the launch of the British Chamber of Commerce (BCC) report – 'Back to Business: Local Solutions'. The report recognised the impact of the recession and placed support for business firmly at the forefront of any economic recovery strategy.

[> MORE](#)

PUBLICATIONS

Child poverty in the East Midlands - Identifying what works

CFE was commissioned by Government Office for the East Midlands (GOEM), East Midlands Regional Assembly (EMRA), and Intelligence East Midlands (IEM) to identify and present evidence of effective practice and lessons learned in tackling child poverty within the East Midlands. The research helps to understand how local activity in tackling child poverty is being delivered, its effectiveness at reaching target client groups, and the impact of this activity on the target communities and families.

The full report summarises findings from the exploratory research and provides an overview of current activity. A case study booklet accompanies the full report and contains seven case studies of effective practice from the region.

[> MORE](#)

Highfields Multi Access Centre Review

CFE was commissioned to undertake a review of the Highfields Multi Access Centre (HMAC) by Leicester City Council. The centre provides general advice including employment and learning support, lifelong learning opportunities and community development services.

The review involved both quantitative and qualitative research in the form of data analysis and depth interviews carried out with Leicester City Council, members of the HMAC team and other stakeholders.

[> MORE](#)

Beyond Known Unknowns: a further exploration of the demand for higher level skills from businesses

The research report, 'Beyond Unknowns', builds on previous research from CFE, 'Known Unknowns', that found universities deliver more higher level skills training to businesses than training providers in the private sector.

The follow on report suggests that some universities must do more to penetrate the vocational and professional training markets if government is to fulfil its ambition for four in ten adults to have experienced some form of higher education by 2020. The research included consultation with a cross-section of 76 businesses and revealed a lack of awareness of the diversity that exists within the higher education sector.

[> MORE](#)

CFE congratulates the 100th organisation to achieve the Training Quality Standard

In February, Milton Keynes College became the 100th organisation to achieve the Training Quality Standard (TQS).

[> MORE](#)

CFE look at the demand and supply of higher level skills in the midst of the recession

CFE highlighted the need to understand both the supply and demand of higher level skills if the higher education sector is to be successfully mobilised to help employers during the recession.

[> MORE](#)

CFE WEBSITE

Take a look at the CFE website for more information about our [work](#), our [people](#) and [case studies](#) from past projects and a regularly updated [news](#) area.

The website can be found [here](#).

GET IN TOUCH!

Phoenix Yard
Upper Brown Street
Leicester
LE1 5TE

Medius House
2 Sheraton Street
Soho
London
W1F 8BH

Tel: 0116 229 3300

Email: info@cfе.org.uk

Web: www.cfе.org.uk

THE SMALL PRINT

You have received this newsletter because you are on our distribution list. This may be because you have signed up for one of our events or requested more information on our work.

FORWARD TO A FRIEND / SUBSCRIBE

Please feel free to forward this newsletter to a friend or colleague who you think may be interested.

If this email has been forwarded to you and you would like to subscribe to future newsletters please click [here](#).

UNSUBSCRIBE

If you would like to be removed from the distribution list please reply to this email with the subject line 'Unsubscribe' or click [here](#).