

INDEPENDENT TRAINING SERVICES – BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Date: Tuesday 2 December 2025
Time: 12:00 – 13:30
Location: A325 – Old Mill Lane

Attendees

Carrie Sudbury (CS)
 David Akeroyd (DA)
 Tracey Johnson (TJ)
 Samantha Dixon (SD) *
 Stephen Hepworth (SH)
 Laila Lawton (LL)
 Jessica Melling (JM)

Apologies

Alasdair Parker (AP)

Absences

Nicola Adams (NA)

Mentions

Karen Church (KC)
 Dave Horner (DH)
 Amanda Nicholson (AN)

* Joined online

Role

ITS Board Chair
 ITS Board Member and Principal and CEO – Barnsley College
 ITS Board Member
 ITS Board Member
 ITS Managing Director ITS and Smartstyle
 Chief Financial Officer, Barnsley College
 Company Secretary

Role

ITS Board Member

ITS Board Member

Procedural Matters	
1. Quorum The meeting was quorate.	
2. Apologies and absences Apologies were noted from AP. Absence was noted for NA.	
3. Declaration of Interest There were no declarations of interest.	
4. Minutes of Meeting Held on 23 September 2025 The Board RESOLVED to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 23 rd September 2025 as a true and accurate reflection of the meeting.	
5. Rolling Action List SH explained that Action ITS25/027 would be added to the agenda for the next meeting and ITS25/043 is contained within the current agenda. The Board noted the rolling action list.	
6. Matters Arising from Last Meeting There were no matters arising.	
For Discussion/Information	
7. Managing Directors Report SH presented his report, highlighting the following points: ITS currently holds Adult Skills Fund contracts with SYMCA for 2025-26, including Adult Skills Fund and Courses for Jobs	

• Courses for Jobs funding is █████ against a full year committed value of █████. Recruitment on this programme will continue until March 2026. • Adult Skills has drawn down █████ YTD with a full year committed value of █████. Enrolments on this contract will start in January 2026. • Re-accreditation of Matrix for a further 2yrs has been achieved. This is likely the last time re-accreditation will be required as this will move under the Barnsley College banner in future years. • ITS freelance and agency staff have been transferred to variable hours contracts through Barnsley College. • Recruitment to full time posts is currently challenging, however one full time appointment has been made to the position of Childcare Trainer. It was noted the challenge is not unexpected and is dependent on the role being advertised. It was clarified that new recruits are being contracted through Barnsley College, not ITS. The Board noted the Managing Directors report. The Board RESOLVED to approve the staffing proposals.	
8. Management Accounts SH presented the management accounts highlighting the following points: • ITS is currently on track to achieve its EBITDA and Financial Health Grade targets, however the Income is behind target due to factors such as the loss of the Adult Learner Loan contract. • Non-pay and staffing are both on target. • Reforecasting has been completed, however it is expected ITS will need financial intervention from Barnsley College before the end of the current financial year. • ASF income is above target. • Commercial income is on target. The Board noted the management accounts.	
9. Financial Statements and going Concern LL presented the Annual Report and Financial Statements, highlighting the following points: • Prior to the Adult Learner Loan incident, ITS was on track to receive outstanding financial health. • ITS and Smartstyle face significant cash flow challenges due to the need to settle the █████ liability to the Student Loan Company. • Barnsley College reduced the service charge by █████, reflecting actual costs not budgeted costs. • On the basis of the budgets and cash flow forecasts, the group is a going concern. Barnsley College Board will consider the proposal to make payment to ITS at the Board in December 2025. The Department for Education (DfE) have given permission for this payment. It was highlighted that Smartstyle has required a payment every year, with ITS not requiring it for the first time last year. In relation to the audit, LL highlighted the following points:	Action: LL to proceed with requesting debt write-off for Smartstyle.

• The audit recommends an adjustment to income for apprentices which have been picked up due to the value being above the proportionate materiality. • Missing accruals to the value of [REDACTED] have been identified. This is indicative of cut of issues. • The audit indicates there needs to be more robust and through review of year end finances by the budget holder. The Board RESOLVED to approve the Annual Report and Financial Statements for ITS and Smartstyle. It was noted that external advice had been sought and it is recommended that a request should be submitted for ITS to write the debt off between itself and Smartstyle to facilitate ITS to integrate into the College. Should permission be granted a proposal to proceed will be presented to the ITS Board and the Barnsley College Board for approval.	
10. Business Development SH presented the business development update, highlighting the following points: • Apprenticeship performance is strong, with 105 starts through the Barnsley College system. • Adult Skills Fund contracts are due to start in January 2026 • Commercial projects have generated [REDACTED] income YTD, with and additional [REDACTED] in confirmed bookings. The Board noted the Business Development Update.	
11. Quality Update SH presented the quality update highlighting the following points: • Current achievement for apprentices is 21.1%. ITS have had 57 withdrawals. • High-grade profile remains consistent with previous years at 63%. • There has been a 17% increase of distinction grades awarded. • Adult skills is currently showing 96% achievement. • Meetings with KC, DH and AN have taken place and will continue to facilitate the sharing of feedback. • An increase in West Yorkshire starts for Courses for Jobs has been seen. • Observations of teaching, learning and assessment started week commencing 1st December 2025. • Workforce development has been running since September across a range of teaching and learning subjects. • There have been 4 samples by Awarding Bodies, with no resulting actions required. The Board observed that the number of apprentices past planned end dates is higher than desired and need to be significantly reduced by the next period. It was noted that this is planned withing the P3 review. The Board noted the quality update.	Action: SH to report to the Board on action taken and change in number of apprentices past planned end dates (17 March 2026)
12. Risk plan SH presented the new risk plan, highlighting the following points:	

• A new risk, ‘<i>compliance against all funding contracts and regulatory requirements</i>’ had been added to the register. A number of additional controls are in place to effectively manage this risk. • In response to risk 6, a Business Development Manager position is being trialled. • In response to risk 7, agency costs have been removed. The Board discussed the provisions in place to provide reassurance that robust procurement procedures are in place. The Board noted the updated risk plan.	
13. Self Assessment Report, QIP and Presentation SH presented the Self-Assessment Report, QIP and Presentation highlighting the following points: • An overall effectiveness grade of ‘good’ has been recorded, with ‘exceptional’ being awarded for personal development. • Key areas for improvement include, addressing past planned end date apprentices, achievement rates on selected standards, increased employer involvement in training reviews and encouraging apprentices to undertake English and maths. It was clarified that ITS is subject to Ofsted inspection, however it was noted that should they be called upon, a business case can be put forward to propose alternate focus on inspection due to ITS being a reducing entity. It was confirmed that the Advanced Learner Loan error does not have implications for Ofsted. It was also noted that the self-assessment gradings have been completed under the previous Ofsted grading system, however future inspections will require a self-assessment against the new scorecard. The scale of this work was recognised by the Board. The Board RESOLVED to approve the Self-Assessment Report.	
14. Approvals SH talked to the report which sought approval for engaging third party suppliers to support learner and apprentice recruitment, drawing attention to each of the suppliers and their services. The Board RESOLVED to approve the proposed suppliers detailed in the Approvals paper.	
15. Adult Learner Loans LL highlighted the following points: • The Adult Learner Loan error resulted in a liability of £401k until 2024/25. • £150,584 of income has been received for learners in 2025/26. • The income will need to be re-paid to the Student Loans company. To support this, ITS will ask Barnsley College for a cash advance, which will require approval of the Barnsley College Board of Governors. Without this, the ITS accounts cannot be approved as a going concern. • As a result of the error the Adult Learner contracts will be handed back to the DfE.	Action: LL to complete serious incident reporting for Adult Learner Loans.

The Board discussed the criteria under which an incident would be deemed a Serious Incident by the Charity Commission. Whilst the issue did not meet all the conditions, the Board recognised the importance of transparency and RESOLVED to report the incident as a Serious Incident to the Charity Commission. It was noted that CS is attending the next Audit and Risk Committee meeting for the agenda item on ITS. The Board noted that lessons learnt exercise had been completed, with the findings and future safeguards being explored through discussion. Reassurance was provided that the issue is not systemic. It was clarified that any potential future legal action would be against the providers that claimed the funding which was not available.	
Annual General Meeting (AGM) The AGM commenced and it was noted that the meeting was quorate.	
16. Vacancies and Retirements AD retired from the Board. The Board extended their thanks to AD for the work done during their tenure. A discussion explored if additional recruitment would be needed. It was agreed that due to the reducing activity of ITS recruitment would not take place immediately, however attendance monitoring will be regularly reviewed.	Action: JM to circulate diary invite for the next ITS Board meetings.
17. Appointment of the Auditors LL outlined the proposal to appoint Menzies as the Auditors. The Board RESOLVED to appoint Menzies. It was noted that a letter of representation will be drafted and signed.	
18. AOB There was no business raised. The AGM was closed at 13:13.	
19. Date And Time of Future Meeting - Tuesday 17 March 2026 – 12:30-2 - Tuesday 9 June 2026 – 12:30-2	