

INDEPENDENT TRAINING SERVICES – BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Date: Tuesday 9 June 2026
Time: 12:30 – 14:00
Location: A325 – Old Mill Lane

Attendees

Carrie Sudbury (CS)
 David Akeroyd (DA)
 Samantha Dixon (SD)
 Carol Cooper-Smith (CCS)
 Stephen Hepworth (SH)
 Laila Lawton (LL)
 Jessica Melling (JM)

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

Apologies

Tracey Johnson (TJ)

Role

ITS Board Member

Procedural Matters	
1. Quorum	
The meeting was quorate.	
2. Apologies and Absence	
Apologies for TJ were noted.	
CS welcomed CCS to the ITS Board.	
3. Declaration of Interest	
There were no declarations of interest.	
4. Minutes of Meeting Held on 2 December 2025	
The Board RESOLVED to APPROVE the minutes of the meeting held on 17 March 2026 as a true and accurate reflection of the meeting.	
5. Matters Arising	
DA shared that following the decisions of both the ITS and the College Board to cease trading as ITS, there was a delay with progressing action due to the intercompany debt between ITS and Smartstyle. It was noted that DfE approval has now been gained to write off the intercompany debt, subject to assurance that it meets a series of criteria.	
LL will be developing a plan with the aim of ceasing trading by 1 August 2026.	
Despite the update, the Board agreed to continue with the meeting agenda.	

It was confirmed that staff are aware of the intention to cease trading and move all delivery into the College.	
6. Rolling Action List It was noted that all actions were complete or included in the agenda. The Board NOTED the rolling action list.	
7. Notification of Any Other Business No other business was shared in advance of the meeting.	
For Discussion/Information	
8. Managing Directors Report SH presented his report, highlighting the following points: • The current contracts are performing well. • ITS currently hold two Adult Skills Fund (ASF) contracts with the South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority (SYMCA) for the academic year 2025-26 (Adult Skills Fund and Courses for Jobs). • Adult Skills current year to date drawdown is £[REDACTED] with a full year committed value of £[REDACTED] including additional learning support against a contract allocation of £[REDACTED]. Conversations are ongoing with SYMCA regarding the payment of the additional £[REDACTED] above the contracted value. • Courses for jobs funding is £[REDACTED] with a full year committed value of £[REDACTED] against a contract of allocation of £[REDACTED]. There is also additional learning support funding. • The final EQA sample for the Hairdressing cohort has not yet been completed. A specialist IQA has been appointed to address this. ITS are confident the remedial action taken will allow progression of this cohort. • There has been one resignation since the last meeting. This role is not being replaced at present. • SYMCA are completing an audit on both of the contracts, with expected completion week commencing 15th June. • There is £40k carry in funding for 26-27 for ITS ASF courses for jobs SYMCA contract.	
The Board NOTED the Managing Directors report.	
9. Business Development SH presented the report highlighting the following points: • Year to date apprenticeships have generated £[REDACTED] against a budget of £[REDACTED]. • Year to date, adults have generated £[REDACTED] of income. No income was budgeted for this. • ITS are no longer recruiting apprentices. This has moved to the College. • An additional 50 apprenticeship starts have been generated, bringing the annual total to 228. • Recruitment is positive in childcare and health and social care. • To date ITS have enrolled 733 learners in 2025-26 across pre-employment programmes, level 2 short certificates and diplomas. Recruitment during January-March was noted as strong.	

• ITS have recruited a further 1748 enrolments in South and West Yorkshire for the college through (ASF) and Courses for Jobs provision. • Commercial income, although strong at the start of the year has slowed (Income: £■■■■, Booked activity: £■■■■). The final year projection was £■■■■, however this has been forecast down. • There are a number of commercial qualifications in the pipeline which are residential and are high value. • New provision is being introduced for next year. Discussion highlighted the range of new employers ITS has engaged with for apprenticeships. The Board noted the large number of these and the positive lack of reliance on a small number of employers. The Board NOTED the business development report.	
10. Quality Update SH presented the quality update, highlighting the following points: • Current apprentice achievement rate is 39.7%. To date there have been 48 withdrawals, affecting achievement rate. • 6 learners are awaiting processing which will raise the achievement rate for apprenticeships to 42%. • 50 apprentices are currently in gateway or processing through gateway sitting ready to sit there EPA. • The current high-grade profile has decreased 2% to 69%. Although a decrease was noted, the profile sitting at 69% was noted as positive. • Distinction high grade rate is 37%. • Since the last Board meeting a further 130 apprentices have attended My Skills Advantage sessions which are professional development workshops. The academic year total is 186 learners. This programme is not one size fits all, it is tailored to the level of study which someone is on. • As a company, ITS have enrolled 733 learners to date in 2025-2026, with an in-year retention rate of 96.4% and achievement rate of 90.3%. Overall achievement is predicted to be above 95%. Some level 3 diplomas due before end of academic year. • As a department ITS have enrolled 1748 learners across multiple learning aims to date in 2025-2026, with an in-year retention rate of 99.4% and achievement rate of 86.7%. This is predicted to continue to rise before end of academic year. • In the month of March 2026, the employability team achieved 63% job offers from all pre-employment programme start that were delivered. It was noted that the learners are often out of work for a significant period of time prior to the programme. • All ITS staff have had their teaching observed through both observations and learning walks. • 3 staff development sessions have been delivered. It was noted that these have been determined by themes which emerge from the learning walks and a focus on digital tools. • Samples have been completed by ILM, NCFE, City and HABC with no actions recorded.	

The Board noted the positive results regarding retention of employment. The value of these opportunities was highlighted and it was suggested that the marketing of the placement opportunities should be an area of focus. The discussion highlighted the support provided to students during this process, including those who did not get a job at the first stage and those who do not sustain a job. Discussion explored the withdrawals and the reasons for this. It was noted that there is not concern regarding the withdrawals, and they are still tracking as less than the previous year. A discussion explored the current narrative regarding NEETS and funding provision from the government. It was noted that adult provision can only be funded through devolved authority funding, and at present there appears to be no changes to funding. Discussion highlighted the challenge caused by the lack of available jobs. It was noted that a number of apprenticeship standards are now including age ranges. The Board NOTED the quality update.	
11. Subsidiary MoU LL talked to the ITS MoU shared with the Board highlighting that the MOU with Barnsley College has been reviewed and there are no proposed changes from the previously approved version. It was noted that the MOU will also require approval from the Barnsley College Board. The Board APPROVED the ITS MoU.	
Finance and Risk	
12. Management Accounts SH noted the following updates: - Income, EBITDA and financial health grade objectives are on target. This is projected to be the same for year end. - Year-end figures have been reforecast to reflect the loss of the Advanced Learner Loan contract, the gaining of SYMCA ASF contracts and the forfeiting of the service charge payable to the College. - ITS did not have sufficient cash to pay its liability to the Student Loan Company (SLC). The College supported with a short-term intercompany loan of £90k which has now been repaid. - If there is no inter-company debt owed to the College at the year end, ITS will maintain outstanding financial health. - Income at the end of March is £■■■■ ahead of the phased profile. This is largely down to higher carry in apprenticeship income. - ITS has delivered £■■■■ of adult contracts that were unbudgeted this year and has not delivered £■■■■ of advanced learner loan income planned at this point in the year. - Staffing costs are in line with budget, but non-pay is currently £■■■■ averse to budget. The majority relate to learner find and freelancer costs. - ITS held a cash balance of £■■■■ at the end of March 2026. It was explained that this is £■■■■ worse than budget, however £■■■■ relates to the repayment of learner loan income to the SLC.	

The Board NOTED the management accounts.	
13. Risk Register SH updated that a risk relating to external cyber risks and the impact of these on delivery, quality of provision and income has been added. Discussion explored the impact of cyber attacks on third parties, including awarding bodies and the impact these have on the College. The importance of recovery from an attack was noted by the Board. It was highlighted that the College should ensure that any new third parties have thorough checks on their cyber protection and disaster recovery, prior to engagement. It was highlighted that although the College works with a number of awarding organisations, the employer decides which awarding organisation is used for end-point assessment. Discussion explored the work the College has done to ensure robust cyber protection and disaster recovery. It was noted that College's are not permitted to pay a ransomware payment as part of a cyber-attack. It was noted that the risk register would be updated in line with the proposed winding down of activities. The Board NOTED the risk register.	
14. ITS Financial Plan LL talked to the ITS financial plan, highlighting the following points: • The presented plan assumes the continuation of ITS. • The presented budget is a wind down plan. • The plan assumes transition of activity into the College during 2025/26 and 2026/27 and is therefore indicating a declining income during those years. • From the 2027/28 year, the plan contains only income and costs relating to Smartstyle. • ITS will be running adults through the College department, which is anticipated to attract income of circa [REDACTED]. • DfE approval was sought on 11 March 2026 to write off Smartstyle's intercompany debtor with ITS, with the further expectation that this would enable Smartstyle and ITS to liquidate in a managed basis with the brands and trade passing to the College. • The plan does not incorporate specific actions for Smartstyle to repay their debt to ITS. • Outstanding financial health is forecast through the plan. The Board APPROVED the financial plan. Discussion noted that based on the DfE approval to write off the debt, the plan would be revised, and updates would be shared with the board in due course. It was agreed that an action plan for closure would be shared with the Board. It was noted that Smartstyle would also be closed. It was noted that ITS are due an OFSTED inspection for adults and apprenticeships.	Action: LL to share ITS closure action plan with the Board.

Discussion explored the impact of the winding down of ITS on staff. It was noted that staff are aware and will TUPI transfer to the College, which will result in better terms and conditions of employment. It was also highlighted that work will be needed to transfer the existing employer contracts to the College.	
15. AOB There was no additional business raised. The meeting was closed at 13:22.	