

PARTNERSHIP OF PUBLIC EMPLOYERS

NEWSLETTER – NOVEMBER 2010

This month we have three **feature articles**, by Graham Lane on *Youth on the Move*, Steve Newsome on *New Vision for European Transport* and Janet Beaumont our Director, on the *new PPE website*.

We report briefly on our **AGM** last month for those who were unable to join us and cover news from CEEP, including the most recent **Social Affairs Committee**. This included, among other issues, CEEP's responses to the Pensions Green Paper and to the Commission's equality strategy.

The Commission's **work programme** for next year and the new **disabilities strategy** are also covered.

Graham Lane (Institute of Education Business Excellence and UK representative on the European Lifelong Learning Commission) writes:

There is a desire amongst many UK Employers to support the ideas behind Youth on the Move, European experience for apprentices and work experience for young workers including those in FE Colleges. The difficulty is setting up the arrangements and discovering how and who to contact.

The small companies in particular need help to do this. Organisations like Institute of Business Excellence which were originally known as Education Business Partnerships are organised in local areas. They have the capacity to carry out this work working with organisations like the Specialised Schools Trusts and local FE Colleges. Some limited funding to them would be of assistance so printed material and basic organisation can be done at a sub regional level.

Larger companies would welcome some assistance too in setting up the arrangements as the world of Industry and Business often has few working links with the world of Education. FE Colleges too would welcome the opportunity to become involved especially as they do often teach some of the apprenticeships at their workshops.

There would be an advantage too involving the Trade Unions as appropriate. Language work can be offered by organisations like CILT.

Coordinating this is the main obstacle to progress as some sort of structure is needed. Once it is set up quick progress can be made and repeated arrangements established. This has already occurred with the introduction of the 14-19 Diplomas in a few areas of England.

The national agency ECOTEC can be helpful here but it will need getting different key organisations working together to make quick progress and result in the arrangements being sustainable.

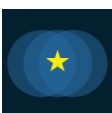
Willing to expand on this if needed. Each country may well have different traditions and practices.

One principle that needs help in order to be implemented is making sure that the poorer areas and less well off young people are involved in these opportunities.

The PPE AGM took place at York on 22 October. After a tough two-year tenure as President, Ian Fleetwood stepped down and Dave Allan was elected to take his place. Ian becomes a Vice-President, alongside Helen Fairfoul. Janet Beaumont was appointed as Director for the following year and Charles Nolda as Treasurer. Key decisions were taken on finance. Subscription levels will be held at current rates for the third year, with the multiplier for the NHS Confederation being reduced from 12 to 10 times the standard rate. The annual payment we make to CEEP headquarters will be reduced from the current 110,000 euros to 66,000. Shan Jones and Graham Lane from the Institute of Education Business Excellence were welcomed as new members, along with Gillian Fawcett representing ACCA as a new Associate Member.

Ralf Resch, CEEP General Secretary, addressed the meeting. He emphasised the role of CEEP in defending the position of public services and gave as an example of the tangible benefits of belonging to CEEP the recent outcome of the Late Payments Directive discussions; in the end unfair discrimination against public enterprises that had originally been envisaged by the Commission had been avoided because of successful lobbying by CEEP and its allies.

Henrik Schilder, from CEEP Denmark, spoke from the perspective of his long experience in Social Affairs, emphasising the case for being proactive at the European Court of Justice and registering opinions in advance of cases involving other countries being heard. The ECJ operates in a more political way than is sometimes realised and lobbying of this nature is accepted and even expected. **Tina Weber**, previously PPE's Director, gave a typically informative and thought-provoking presentation on current and future developments at EU level in relation to equality issues, especially gender equality. Both Ralf's and Tina's presentations and the draft minutes can be found at www.ppe.uk.com

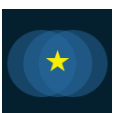


The Commission's work programme for 2011 has now been published and can be accessed at http://ec.europa.eu/atwork/programmes/index_en.htm. At only 12 pages it seems a slight document but is in fact packed with information and is well worth looking at. The overarching objectives of the Commission next year will be to support the recovery from the crisis, complete the work on financial regulation and embed the Europe 2020 strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth. So far, so predictable; it is in the details that the interest lies. Just to pick out a few of the areas of work next year, the Commission will make initiatives in relation to the modernisation of Higher Education; the formulation of a quality framework for Services of General Economic Interest, including updating the State aid rules; a legislative proposal to improve the operation of the Posting of Workers' Directive and updating the Working Time Directive to take account of "new realities"; encouraging the shift to a low carbon society; reviewing strategy on waste prevention and recycling; and enhancing the better regulation programme. In June next year the Commission will publish proposals for the EU budget to 2020, which will doubtless cause huge controversy here and in other member states.

CEEP's response to the Pensions Green Paper has been finalised. The result is satisfactory for the UK as there is a consensus within CEEP that pensions should continue to be regulated at national rather than European level. There is however a potential role for the EU in monitoring the sustainability of pension arrangements and in encouraging, through the Open Method of Co-ordination, the raising of pension ages and the incentivisation of longer working lives.

Other matters considered at the **Social Affairs Committee** on 19 October and the **Social Dialogue Committee** the next day included:

- **Working Time Directive** – the second stage consultation paper on reviewing the directive will be published by the Commission in December or January. The CEEP secretariat have asked members to provide specific information about how the Directive causes problems on the ground: this is a request that PPE would like members to follow up so please contact mbrodie@nereio.gov.uk if you can help.
- CEEP will be preparing an Opinion in response to the **Commission's strategy for equality between men and women 2010-2015**. Janet Beaumont is the PPE representative on the group that is undertaking this task. A draft response has been circulated within the UK for comments and to the CEEP Social Affairs expert group with a view to consideration by the Social affairs meeting scheduled for 14 December. The draft can be found at www.ppe.uk.com. Key issues include means



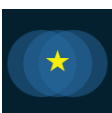
to encourage culture change in family responsibilities (consideration of leave and childcare provision), potential for quotas in recruitment (not just male/female) and transparency of pay. A CEEP meeting held on 20 October was attended by Ms Daniel Bankier, Head of Equality between men and women unit of DG Employment who stressed these points. She is keen to see the social partners renewing their framework of Action and welcomed the development of the equalities expert group as a key contact in CEEP. The ongoing Commission study of paternity leave taking place in Member states will be published in Spring 2011.

- The position in relation to the **Pregnant Workers' Directive** remains that a clash between the European Council and the European Parliament is likely since a number of powerful member states have signalled their opposition to the Parliament's vote to increase fully paid maternity leave to 20 weeks and paternity leave to 2 weeks. This conflict joins another more far-reaching one on the EU's budget for 2011.
- The Commission has proposed a working group with the European social partners to conduct a so-called **fitness check on the Information and Consultation Directive**. This is likely to start work early next year.

Steve Newsome of Transport for London provides information on the New Vision for European Transport

The European Commission will set the direction of EU transport policy over the next ten years with the formal adoption of its new Transport White Paper expected in February 2011. The White Paper will cover all modes of transport from walking and cycling to sea and air transport. It is certain to include proposals on funding with a possible restructuring of resources, perhaps freeing funds for urban mobility. The likely to focus will be on "decarbonising transport" and on the themes of cleaner vehicles, energy efficiency and demand management. Although there may be few legislative initiatives detailed in the White Paper itself, it is a framework from which they will be hung in the future.

In meetings with Commission officials Transport for London has argued the White Paper should be fully integrated with EU strategies for combating climate change and promoting growth and jobs. It should also take into account the role of cities, given that over 60% of people now live in urban areas and that urban traffic is responsible for 40% of CO₂ emissions and 70% of emissions of other pollutants arising from road transport. Cities also need the freedom and flexibility to develop policies which meet their unique challenges, the European Commission can play a useful role in sharing best practice and guidance.



Janet Beaumont explains the potential of PPE's new website and how to use it:

The new site has been available to view for a while now, but has been formally launched this week (www.ppe.uk.com). The site has a number of new facilities including a Members' only area and as long as you register on-line you will receive automatic alerts for new items of interest as soon as they are uploaded to the site.

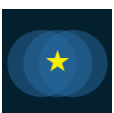
A number of you have alerted us to difficulties accessing the main CEEP site in Brussels for meeting papers. In view of this we are now downloading key documents which can be accessed via the Members' only area of the PPE site. We hope that this facility will help when preparing for meetings.

The events section is a facility for PPE to alert you to meetings, conferences and seminars both in the UK and in Brussels. We are happy to promote our partners' events. Please forward any information to Brenda Conlon at bconlon@nereo.gov.uk and she will be happy to upload information for you to market your activities.

Please take time to browse the site which is improving our ability to communicate effectively with you. Resources and consultation documents are added as we receive them to keep you abreast of CEEP and PPE developments. Over time we hope that more of our partners will be able to contribute quickly and easily to the developing agenda in Europe through this interactive site.

I should take a moment to acknowledge Michael Douglas and Mark Benjamin of EventGenie who have developed the site for us at their own cost. For those of you involved in organising events, EventGenie offers web tools and mobile phone apps for visitors and you can find out more at www.eventgenie.com. I am sure their patience has been stretched to the limit by my requests. I would also like to acknowledge the excellent efforts of Brenda Conlon who has already gone beyond expectations in her administrative support for me.

***Please help us to keep you informed by registering for the members' area. Please also share useful links and articles whenever you come across them so that we can further develop the partnership approach (bconlon@nereo.gov.uk)*



The European Disability Strategy for 2010-2020 was published on 15 November in the form of a Communication (COM (2010) 636 final) to the Parliament and the Council. It aims to remove barriers to the full integration of those with disabilities in society and the economy. Eight areas have been identified for action: Accessibility, Participation, Equality, Employment, Education and Training, Social Protection, Health and External Action. The strategy will be featured at greater length in the December newsletter.

Forthcoming meetings (Brussels)

CEMR Employers' Platform – 9 December

Sectoral Social Dialogue Committee – 10 December

CEEP Social Affairs Committee - 14 December

CEEP Board of Directors - 14 December

CEEP General Assembly and related meetings - 15 December

PPE meetings - 2011

Executive Committee – 3 February

Executive Committee – 15 March

Executive Committee – 17 June

Annual General Meeting – 21 October

A full list of events can be found at <http://ppe.uk.com/events/>

