

**Capital Reward Grant Presentations
Bicton, Petroc and South Devon Colleges
PS4D**

**Held on Monday 8 February 2010, 10am
County Hall, Exeter**

Present:

Name	Organisation
Andrew Lightfoot (Chair)	Devon Economic Partnership / Devon County Council
Craig Marshall	Devon and Cornwall Training Provider Network
Daniel Bailyes	Devon Economic Partnership
Julia Foster	Devon County Council
Sally Kittle	Job Centre Plus
Tony Skeel	Learning and Skills Council
Trevor Day	PS4D Consultant

Bicton College (presentation one)

Alex Chalkley
Chris Lorimer
David Henley
Jonathan Davis
Ross Cooper

Petroc (presentation two)

Colin Wright
David Dodd
Huw Davies
Jenny Sparling

South Devon College (presentation three)

Drew Tucker
Elizabeth Lawrence
Richard Stratford
Will Fitzgerald

1. Preamble and Introductions

Before each of the presentations Andrew introduced the purpose of the meeting, which was to evaluate each of the three proposals before recommending final decisions to a full meeting of PS4D on Friday 12 February.

The panel was introduced and those presenting also introduced themselves.

2. Bicton College Presentation (Slides and Handouts)

Chris

- The project is dedicated to training and education;

- The site is accessible from all parts of Devon and is in reach of the airport;
- It will include the full range of environmental and renewable technologies and will be working continuously with suppliers to remain right up to date;
- The retro-fitting element is key because 70% of housing stock in 2050 already exists
- The facility will be self-sustaining.

Ross

- The farm is used extensively by the college and the proposal fits in with other projects and facilities;
- The building is brick built and sound. It is ideal for many of the technologies being proposed;
- With the use of existing buildings, planning permission is not such a large hurdle and work can begin quickly;
- The top half of the building will be used for specialist training, while the bottom half will focus on demonstration;
- Each of the technologies will be accessible for first hand experience and use;
- It is also proposed that data be streamed into the building to provide real life data on the performance of the technology e.g. energy produced, money saved or even earned by exporting onto the national grid.

Chris

- Will be looking for a heavy weight steering group and an experienced project manager;
- Community engagement is key to the proposal – and as such there will also be a high profile launch event;
- There is plenty of interest in the scheme, and there is the hope of achieving at least £200k in multiplier effects.

Finance

- Professional fees have been increased, but others have been reduced. The wind turbine, for instance, could be introduced at a later stage with separate funding;
- Partnerships with business' on the renewable technologies could also bring costs down;
- The project is financially sustainable, with income derived from courses and from selling energy to the grid.

David

The learning Hub will support the following:

- The project will embed and enrich existing FE and HE courses. Renewability will be a thread throughout the existing curriculum;
- It will up-skill the existing workforce and therefore will be crucial in achieving our green targets;
- It will provide hands-on experience of the technology;
- The college receives 200+ 14-19 year olds visiting each week. With school heads supporting the project, and the full endorsement of the 14-19 partnership, there is a real foundation to build upon.

3. Bicton College Questions and Answers

How is this project different from the Genesis Project?

- The Genesis project demonstrates best practice, but it doesn't interact with students - Bicton, on the other hand, can provide hands on training.

Are Bicton looking elsewhere for funding?

- A significant proportion of funding will hopefully be derived from PS4D, but not expecting all the funding to come from here though. There is an expectation that grants could well be available for technology and costs will be kept as low as possible.
- David also pointed out that the federation with Exeter College provides a greater resource to access other sources of funding e.g. RDPE.

How accessible is the building?

- The site is a stone's throw away from the entrance to Bicton Gardens – it is therefore easy to access. Car parking is already available.

Planning permission issues?

- Many of the buildings are already in place and talks have already been initiated with the authorities. Karime Hassan from East Devon has already had a look and is generally supportive.

Is there the demand for this project?

- Based on examples from elsewhere, and the fact that Bicton would provide the only resource of this kind for quite some distance, demand looks to be high. Bearing in mind also that 70% of the 2050 housing stock already exists, there is considerable demand for re-fitting with renewable technology.

What would happen if funding from PS4D was not forthcoming?

- Without the funding the buildings would remain idle until funding from other sources could be acquired. However, alternative funding would be pursued until accomplished as the EARTH project is central to developments at the college. The project was not conceived simply in response to the possibility of benefiting from funding!

4. Petroc Presentation (Slides and Handouts)

David

Petroc's vision is to become 'an outstanding college at the heart of an outstanding learning community, economically, culturally and socially.'

Huw

Provided a summary of Petroc's current position, before moving onto the proposal to create a 'Centre for the Creative Industries' at the Brannam's site. The aim would be to create a sustainable arts facility recognised regionally for providing opportunities to:

- Be the best
- Develop skills and nurture talent
- Join in
- Show off talent
- Make a living

The Centre would provide a state of the art theatre, performance facility, gallery, dance studio, recording studio, art studio, innovation centre and managed work space.

The Centre would be targeting its core business (14-19s), industry, HE, apprenticeships, informal learners and vulnerable groups. It would also benefit the local community and help in the development of the local economy.

The Brannam's site its-self is large with plenty of potential and easy to access.

5. Petroc College Questions and Answers

What are the financial / funding arrangements?

- The bulk of the funding will be derived from college funds. There is a small amount of funding that has yet to be secured, but that affects mainly the managed workspaces, which has little direct effect on the project.

Could the Petroc team elaborate on any partnerships they're involved in?

- Not aware of some of the projects mentioned, but have extensive contacts in art and design. They are involved extensively with community groups.

How will the scheme be implemented?

- It will be managed by an in-house team.

6. South Devon College Presentation (Slides)

Liz

Liz introduced the need for the refurbishment of Pearl Assurance House (with the NEET problem in the area) and outlined the basic thrust of the proposal, which was to engage more people in the town centre, especially single mothers with the provision of a crèche. It would provide practical hands-on training while emphasising transferable vocational skills.

Will

Will provided a partner's perspective, arguing that the project would attract the hardest to reach, would be up and running quickly and would enhance the facility disproportionately to the funds given.

Richard

In more detail, the proposal would:

- Create a flexible beauty salon outfitted with a range of wheeled work stations;
- Provide an independent living / catering classroom by refitting the current simple kitchen with a fully fitted kitchen and utility room;
- Partition off a largely un-used open area to create a number of room mock-ups for painting and decorating space.

The project would support 180 NEET learners per annum. Capital costs requested would be matched by the college's input to revenue, who would also fund any additional capital costs above the sum requested.

7. South Devon College Questions and Answers

How does the project fit into the plans for a new skills centre in Newton Abbot?

- It is hoped that that Pearl Assurance House would feed into the skills centre.
- Pearl Assurance House would also teach life skills e.g. cookery and independent living.

8. Recommendations to PS4D

Following the departure of the last group, the panel discussed their thoughts and concerns regarding each of the presentations and the allocation of the remaining £606k.

On the whole the quality of the presentations were slightly lacking, some more than others.

Bicton College

The panel were very impressed with the concept. It was seen as a real opportunity, though maybe not the catalyst it was promoted as being. Its accessibility was also questioned, but it remains the nearest and therefore most accessible facility of its kind.

The panel was also impressed by the passion demonstrated by the team, its strong leadership and connections with Exeter College.

Petroc

The panel was impressed that the college had placed £700k of its own money on the table. However, a number of concerns were raised. Conditions would need to be placed on any funding – particularly relating to partnership working.

South Devon College

The panel were disappointed that the new skills centre in Newton Abbot had not been referred to and tackled in the actual presentation. Moreover, due to the lack of support from the 14-19 partnership, it was decided that this proposal would not be allocated funds.

Final Recommendation

It was decided that:

- £400k be allocated to Bicton College; and
- £200k to be allocated to Petroc.

Conditions would also be attached to the funding. For instance, both projects would need to produce progress reports for PS4D along with space for PS4D representatives at relevant meetings. Steve Pitcher and Mike Coulton (?) were put forward as potential representatives for Petroc.

Action (Andrew): Follow up the agreed plan above.

Feedback would also be given to South Devon College, along with the possibility of funding from the revenue stream. Closer collaboration with the 14-19 partnership would be stressed.

At a meeting of the panel on Friday 15 January 2010 it was decided that the following would also be allocated funds from the capital reward grant money:

- Devon and Cornwall Training Provider Network;
- Torridge Training Services Ltd.

9. Backing Young Devon

Andrew reported on the discussions held regarding the £154k unallocated from this theme. It was agreed to retain this as a means of responding to a range of initiatives, particularly promoting partnership working and novel approaches. The panel agreed to continue to serve as the means of vetting proposals. Where possible, loans would be made rather than grants.