



# Improving Redundancy Support Through Partnership Working

---

A Scottish Government PACE conference on 7th October 2010  
Report by University of Glasgow

III  
Skills  
Development  
Scotland



# CONTENTS

|   |           |
|---|-----------|
| <b>1. Background to the PACE conference</b> | <b>3</b>  |
| <b>2. The operating context</b>             | <b>5</b>  |
| <b>3. PACE in practice</b>                  | <b>6</b>  |
| <b>4. Different perspectives on PACE</b>    | <b>9</b>  |
| <b>5. The workshops</b>                     | <b>11</b> |
| <b>6. Key messages from the conference</b>  | <b>17</b> |
| <b>Appendix: workshop write-ups</b>         | <b>19</b> |

# 1. BACKGROUND TO THE PACE CONFERENCE

## Introduction

---

Supporting individuals and businesses faced by significant hardships as a result of the challenges from the current economic situation has been a key component of the Scottish Government's Economic Recovery Plan. The national strategic framework, Partnership Action for Continuing Employment (PACE) has played a central role in providing this support. PACE teams across the country, through the national network of 21 local partnerships co-ordinated by Skills Development Scotland and overseen by the Scottish Government's Lifelong Learning Directorate, have worked to respond promptly to proposed and actual redundancies and provided invaluable support to individuals and businesses.

The PACE approach has cross-party engagement and support in the Scottish Parliament and has an important role in the Government's refreshed Skills Strategy with its focus on providing a flexible package of support for individuals and employers, and particularly supporting small employers and young people through a partnership approach. Skills are vital for Scotland's economic recovery and future growth, improving productivity and competitiveness. It is crucial that employers continue to invest in the valuable asset of their workforce and PACE has the potential to make a significant contribution.

In 2009, the PACE Partnership was established, which brought together the Scottish Government and a further 18 organisations to take forward a continuous improvement programme to enhance the operation of PACE. These partners signed a protocol, signalling their commitment to participate in PACE and seek to drive forward a programme of continuous improvement. This resulted in significant action being taken to make PACE more accessible to employers and individuals. These improvements have been wide ranging and include:

- The introduction of three new services to the PACE offer, which are financial advice from CFEB (Consumer Financial Education Body), literacy and numeracy support from the Big Plus and health and wellbeing support;
- The development of a PACE data recording system;
- Enhancements to the PACE helpline such as the call backs from a PACE Adviser/PACE Chair;
- Implementation of a marketing campaign in February/March 2010 in local and national newspapers and radio, including the production of a publicity leaflet about PACE;
- Audit of PACE Partnerships to assess structure and membership and inform future developments on delivery;
- Undertaking of research by IFF Research Ltd looking at the relevance, usefulness and influence of PACE services.

## The Conference

---

Partnership working is recognised as the key mechanism that underpins PACE and remains critical in addressing the economic challenges ahead. There is no doubt that Scotland is entering a period of significant challenge for the public sector, placing even more importance on the need for maximum value for money and demanding that all stakeholders seek to identify their potential contribution in terms of how they can safeguard jobs. The PACE Conference provided the opportunity for a wide range of partners and stakeholders to contribute directly to the shared agenda of helping individuals and businesses survive the economic downturn, through discussing the ways in which support for those facing redundancy can be further enhanced.

The Conference was chaired by John McClelland, CBE, Chair of Skills Development Scotland who introduced keynote speeches from Keith Brown, MSP, Minister for Skills and Lifelong Learning, Richard Murray, Economic Adviser Macroeconomic Analysis in the Office of the Chief Economic Adviser and Caroline Donaldson, Director of Kynesis and presentations from other PACE partners. These speeches and presentations provided the context for the day offering practical information, challenging perspectives and innovative partnership based solutions around redundancy in Scotland.

The Conference also provided a forum for listening, debate and discussion and participants attended workshops which provided an opportunity to discuss work with private sector outplacement providers; financial support in redundancy; and the future development of PACE.

## 2. THE OPERATING CONTEXT

### Economic Climate Update

---

In the last two years, Scotland has experienced the deepest, most synchronised economic downturn in modern times. The economy is currently recovering from this global recession, which began in the financial markets and had knock-on effects in the 'real' economy and the labour market.

Across the globe there have been differences in the pace, scale and timing of the recovery, with significant variations amongst economies. Recovery was initially driven by Japan and the US, although growth in these countries is now slowing, with emerging economies the quickest to bounce back. The UK and the rest of the EU were lagging behind but are now catching up. However, there remains concern that despite the evidence of improvement, the initial 'bounce back' has more to do with restocking for anticipated growth in demand, than growth itself, therefore does not represent a sustainable source of future growth. Although arguably too soon to talk of a 'double dip', it is certainly the case that recovery is slowing and is fragile in nature.

The UK moved out of recession in the last quarter of 2009 after five consecutive quarters, although we are currently in a position where levels of output remain way below those of pre-recession levels. The recovery in Scotland initially mirrored that of the UK as a whole – however, the latest available data for first quarter 2010 showed no growth in Scotland in this period. Notwithstanding real time information gathered through business surveys, such as the Bank of Scotland PMI Scotland Survey of Private Sector Output, which shows that growth overall is likely to be maintained, this underlines the fragility of the recovery in Scotland. Just as in the recession, where manufacturing remained relatively strong compared to services, different sectors will be differentially affected in the recovery. This can bring little comfort to an economy in which 75% of output is service related.

Despite some evidence of recovery in output, effects of the recession are still feeding through to the labour market, seen in the lagging indicator of unemployment which now stands at 9% with almost 240,000 unemployed. All age groups have been affected, but young people aged 16-24 have been hit the hardest, with unemployment rising from 17% to 22% and still rising in the second quarter of 2010. Conversely these latest statistics also show that there has been a rise in the employment rate, caused in the main by large numbers of individuals moving from inactivity into the labour market. However although a lot of people have moved into employment, many are still seeking work and concerns remain about rising unemployment.

For the business community, access to affordable finance remains a key issue, particularly for SMEs who typically rely more heavily on banks for finance. Lending still remains weak, with businesses paying back more than they are borrowing for investment, which is a key element in the recovery. However, it is not entirely clear whether this is due to a lack of supply or demand for finance.

There is still considerable uncertainty remaining over the strength of the global recovery, with economists divided on whether there will be a double dip recession. Economic forecasts suggest that a modest recovery is expected to continue – although it will be slow compared to previous recoveries and there are still a lot of issues to be resolved. Forecasts for Scotland suggest 1% growth in output during 2010 and closer to the normal long term growth level of 2% in 2011. However significant risks remain in the face of a weakening global recovery, with the impacts of the Comprehensive Spending Review still to play out in Scotland, the need for further adjustments in the financial sector and uncertainty around how well positioned Scotland would be to deal with any further shocks.

It is within this economic context, that PACE must operate and its role will be of heightened importance in the current difficult operating environment.

## 3. PACE IN PRACTICE

### Introduction

PACE seeks to minimise the amount of time that people made redundant spend out of work. Whilst it can be viewed as a 'virtual organisation', there are tangible results. Since the start of 2009, PACE has intervened with 500 firms, and supported 25,000 individuals either facing or having experienced redundancy. But what about the quality of provision? There is a strong evidence base which suggests that PACE is well received by clients. Research undertaken through the 'PACE Client Experience Survey' found that:

- PACE is perceived as having a positive influence on people's ability to find work.
- Almost two-thirds (63%) of individuals who had been made redundant before the survey took place had either secured new employment (51%) or undertaken some type of training or development (12%).
- Overall, feedback on the service has been very positive.

But how does PACE work in practice? This section showcases some of the approaches that are being used by partner organisations and outlines the:

- Future Plus Programme, Forth Valley College;
- Rapid Response Service, Jobcentre Plus;
- Support provided to Freescale, by South Lanarkshire College.

Although each of the approaches differs in terms of their component parts, each offers an innovative, successful, partnership based solution to addressing redundancy situations under the PACE banner. The key elements of success identified for each approach are highlighted.

### Futures Plus: Forth Valley College

#### Background and Aims

Forth Valley College provides a wide range of services for workless people, including those under the banner of the Futures Plus Programme. This programme has a number of different strands which are funded through PACE, Training for Work and/or a combination of funding. These services are branded as 'Futures Plus', placing emphasis on the positive opportunities available to unemployed and redundant participants who are seeking employment. The aims of the project are to:

- Deliver the skills to get redundant and unemployed individuals back into work;
- Track and measure the benefits of additional funds in terms of job outcomes;
- Provide best value for the public pound;
- Create real opportunities for employment through training, not just 'bums on seats'.

#### The Approach

FVC has a Service Level Agreement with Jobcentre Plus which ensures that referrals are dealt with quickly and efficiently, training is relevant to helping individuals get back to work and that there is a robust tracking system in place. Within the overall approach there are a number of different courses providing opportunities in different sectors. These include:

- Graduate Life Sciences in which nine unemployed science graduates were offered a nine week college skills programme followed up by an industry placement with BioReliance. Seven individuals gained employment one week after completion.

- Self Employment for the Creative Industries in partnership with Business Gateway, Local Authority, Co-operative Development Scotland and commercial self-employed mentors. This provides an intensive supported route to market, manufacturing and business support for individuals claiming benefits who want to become self-employed.
- OPITO Transitions which provided a 16 week offshore transitions programme to upskill unemployed engineers, funded through PACE, Scottish Funding Council and Training for Work, offering relevant industry skills, certificates and registration. Seven out of 10 secured employment through a guaranteed interview scheme.

All of the different sectoral strands of this programme have seen success. 68% of redundant clients have been helped back into work, including 106 of the 163 funded through PACE and all of those individuals at risk of redundancy are still in employment.

#### Key Elements of Success

- An innovative approach through Service Level Agreement with Jobcentre Plus.
- Range of tailored programmes to address the needs of growing sectors.
- A recognition that employers want graduates with work experience.
- A focus on being quick to respond, efficient and relevant.
- A robust tracking system that provides sound evidence of success to justify future funding.

## Case Study 2: Rapid Response Service: Jobcentre Plus

### Background and Aims

The Rapid Response Service (RRS) provided by Jobcentre Plus dovetails into PACE. The approach is managed by Jobcentre Plus and its key aim is to provide support to those who have been made redundant or who face the threat of redundancy.

### The Approach

In Scotland, the RRS is part of the overall PACE Offering. The service can be accessed by an individual who has been made redundant (up to 13 weeks after the event) or anyone facing redundancy irrespective of whether they are part of a large scale redundancy or who work in a small business. The key elements of the approach are:

- A Skills Transfer Analysis to assess individuals' transferable work skills and experience levels;
- Job focused training to provide individuals with the relevant skills to secure employment;
- An Action Fund to address individuals' specific barriers.

### Key Elements of Success

- As a national organisation, Jobcentre Plus can use its relationships with large, national employers to secure employment opportunities for workers facing redundancy.
- Awareness raising measures including presentations to partners undertaken by Skills Development Scotland and Jobcentre Plus help to ensure that PACE is identified as the main programme for redundancy support.
- This approach can support a wide range of customers from low key redundancy situations to major, high profile cases.

## Case Study 3: Freescale Support Programme South Lanarkshire College

### Background and Aims

The development of this approach was triggered by the announcement of the phased shut-down of the Freescale semiconductor plant in East Kilbride that would affect 800 employees and 200 sub-contractors.

### The Approach

In discussion with Skills Development Scotland and the local PACE team, a bespoke menu of opportunities was devised to provide tailored support to employees that both addressed their interests and would fit into their individual circumstances. This allowed many people to undertake retraining that markedly changed the direction of their career. The courses covered a wide range of sectors and included accounting, beauty therapy, business, computing, early education and childcare, food hygiene, hairdressing, health and social care, office administration and plumbing and gas. Over 550 people engaged initially with the college and of those 473 enrolled in one or more courses.

### Key Elements of Success

- The approach was not supplier led but provided a bespoke menu of opportunities for the individuals facing redundancy.
- The rapid response of the college which produced individualised opportunities in less than three weeks.
- Close involvement with the employer at the earliest opportunity to anticipate likely demand for support.
- Effective tracking of clients to allow for close monitoring of success.
- Commitment of additional funding by the college to complement the monies already committed to PACE.
- Willingness to act as one-stop-shop for individuals to help them find the right support through other training providers if nothing appropriate was available through the college.



## 4. DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVES ON PACE

### Introduction

For PACE to be effective, there is a need for all partners to have strong relationships and to engage in and support the delivery of high quality activities. This chapter puts forward three different perspectives of the PACE initiative from the Federation of Small Businesses, Scottish Trades Union Congress and the Scottish Chambers of Commerce. These differing perspectives reflect the views of the speakers and raise a number of issues that need to be fed into the development of PACE moving forward.

### Perspective 1: Federation of Small Businesses (FSB)

FSB are enthusiastic, supportive members of the PACE Partnership willing to help shape policy in this important area. Throughout their involvement in PACE, there has been significant changes made to the support and activities that it provides. Prior to the economic downturn, PACE focused primarily on large, single employers, but has now widened its offer to smaller employers. However it is difficult for agencies to engage with SMEs and vice versa, which is critical given that 93% of Scotland's firms employ fewer than 10 employees. FSB has made a significant contribution to the marketing and engagement of small firms in PACE.

Amongst all businesses there is clearly a need to raise awareness of what PACE can offer, as PACE is very different to the majority of business support that is available which is focused on helping firms grow, rather than survive. All businesses need greater clarity on what is available so that options can be accessed before redundancies become inevitable. Although attempts are being made to ensure that small businesses know about the support available a lot more effort needs to go into this as people need to know firstly that the support is there, secondly that it is available for them and thirdly how to take

advantage of it. With increasing unemployment and likely public sector cuts, there is a need to prevent support being monopolised by large, single (and potentially public sector) employers.

Overall, the partnership approach that PACE is based on is seen as very positive and a model that could possibly be adopted in other areas of government. There is also a need (and an opportunity presented by this Conference) to find out what partners want from PACE and feed this back into the policy process.

### Perspective 2: Scottish Trades Union Congress (STUC)

The value of PACE was originally seen as its potential for early intervention to prevent redundancies. The STUC was one of the original partners, and welcomed an intervention that sought to attract local commitment to avoiding and/or minimising redundancies. The last year or so has clearly been very difficult, with rising unemployment across the board, although it is not clear whether PACE has delivered a corresponding rise in activity. This may relate to the characteristics of the recession, which have delivered a 'drip feed' of redundancies rather than large scale redundancies which are harder to handle.

Notwithstanding its successes to date, a decade on from its establishment, the STUC believes that there are a number of issues which remain to be addressed.

- Local Trade Union representatives sometimes find it difficult to contact local PACE team leads.
- Performance and provision are often patchy, with not enough done to share good practice. Where there has been poor performance, too often this has not been addressed.
- PACE has not always succeeded in avoiding redundancies, as it has often failed on early interventions. However it should be recognised that in the first instance this is the responsibility of employers and not the PACE team.

- There is a lack of adequate local labour market information, which has been exacerbated by the recent changes in the economic development infrastructure.
- There is some confusion about the role of PACE, which is not generally understood as a partnership in which events and support are delivered by members.

Although it is typically the case that it is the negatives that are reported back in providing feedback on a support or initiative, there are a number of issues that have been raised by Trade Union Representatives in their dealings with PACE.

- The lack of a central, national point of contact for PACE has led to a duplication of effort in some cases.
- PACE Advisers are very knowledgeable about the services and support on offer through their own organisations, but are often not as knowledgeable about services provided by other PACE partners.
- Some concern that support from PACE does not arrive until redundancies are inevitable.
- As there is a tendering process for the training that is delivered through PACE, employers often have the final say in what is delivered to employees rather than the individuals. They do not believe that employers that are making people redundant should have any say in the training that is provided to help them find new jobs.
- There is possibly scope for PACE to provide legal advice to those facing redundancy – particularly in non-unionised workplaces.

Notwithstanding the issues outlined above, overall the STUC believe that PACE has done a good job and must be continued, although the prolonged period of economic crisis and the immense challenge of bringing down unemployment given the likely cuts in the public sector and the corresponding significant public sector job losses requiring support, cannot be underestimated.

### Perspective 3: Scottish Chambers of Commerce (SCC)

The SCC share and endorse the key objectives of PACE, and in particular, if its partnership aspect is to work there is an obvious need for engagement and commitment from key agencies and the employing community. Business organisations provide the ideal opportunity to promote direct employer involvement at a local level, with PACE partners being seen as trusted intermediaries, and the SCC can play a key role in reaching out to SMEs.

There is evidence that the message about PACE is getting through to businesses, with an increase in calls to the helpline after the last advertising campaign. However, there is still a need to reach an even wider audience and ensure that all clients are engaged at the appropriate point when they need support.

There is concern that some partnerships have been more successful than others and there is a need for more systematic review to identify why this is the case, and perhaps more importantly to share the lessons from any evaluation.

There is no doubt that there are major impending cuts on the way in the public sector, which will also affect the private sector and therefore the economy as a whole. There needs to be mechanisms in place to deal with the fallout from these cuts, particularly in relation to more joint working between the public sector and private sector. The refreshed Skills Strategy launched on 5th October, 2010, underlines that economic development must be business led and recognise local needs, however to achieve this there still must be significant support for employers.

The SCC is committed to continued partnership working as a means to supporting employers and especially SMEs through difficult economic times.

# 5. THE WORKSHOPS

## Introduction

---

The three workshop sessions provided participants with an opportunity to hear about PACE developments and to make their own contributions on the steps that could be taken to further enhance the PACE Offer. The three workshop themes focused on:

- Public and Private Sector in Partnership;
- Planning Future Finance; and
- PACE Going Forward.

The key issues arising from each of the workshops are outlined in the body of the Conference report, with a detailed write-up included in the report appendix.

### Workshop 1: Public and Private Sector in Partnership

A range of private sector companies provide redundancy support services for organisations and individuals under threat of redundancy. This workshop provided examples of effective partnership working between PACE and the private sector in major redundancy situations.

#### Objectives

The objectives of the workshop were to enable participants to gain an:

- Overview of the private sector outplacement market;
- Insight into a private sector outplacement service;
- Insight into a partnership approach between a private sector outplacement service and PACE.

## Key Issues Arising from the Workshop

- **Drivers of PACE.** As a public service organisation, PACE is driven by quality and efficiency and has the potential to make a contribution to future economic growth. This is in contrast to private outplacement businesses, which in addition are driven by margins and the imperative to operate at a profit.
- **Shared Agenda.** PACE is a partnership framework in terms of its structure and operation. The role of the private sector as a partner is central to its success and PACE works closely with the private sector for the benefit of those facing redundancy. Consideration should be given to a 'shared agenda protocol' which clearly outlines the delivery of services. This would ensure clarity around the delivery of services, would avoid overlap amongst organisations and prevent customers from becoming confused about the offer. There is a need to remove both client and adviser uncertainty over 'who does what'.
- **Good Communication.** The key to good working relationships is effective communication. This needs to be a 'real connection', not for example just sending an email, but actually connecting with like-minded people sharing an agenda. Communication needs to be clear, regular and ongoing to ensure success.
- **Single Point of Contact.** Identifying a single point of contact helps to facilitate the smooth operation of services in an organisation.
- **Recognition of Potential Scope for More Joint working.** There is scope for a significant amount of joint-working.
- **Rolling out the Model.** There is potential for the PACE model to be rolled out across the UK, piggy-backing on the reach of private outplacement firms and provide a service that could help to bolster the economy.

- **Recognising Contributions.** There is a need for a recognition that both private outplacement and PACE partners each have their own specialist expertise to draw on.
- **Learning from the Private Sector.** Given the additional resources that can typically be accessed by the private sector approaches to support employees facing redundancy cannot necessarily be easily replicated, however there may be some potentially transferable elements, for example, the use of more sophisticated website support for jobseekers including interactive activities and videos.
- **Getting Employers on Board.** The employer involved in the redundancy scenario must be fully on board as a partner.
- **Shared Recording Mechanism.** For the partnership to work effectively it is important that there is a shared recording mechanism for client outcomes to enable both public and private sector to get credit for outcomes achieved.
- **Getting the Timing Right.** In supporting clients and co-ordinating activities, the importance of getting the timing right should not be underestimated.
- **Committing to Partnership Working.** For the partnership to be successful, there is a need for collaboration, a willingness to be adaptive, innovative and above all to trust in the partnership.

### Workshop 2: Planning Your Future Finance

Financial Planning is recognised as one of the most challenging aspects of redundancy. This workshop outlined the services provided by PACE partners to advise employers and individuals about the financial options available to them. The workshop presented three examples of services provided by PACE partners the Consumer Financial Education Body (CFEB), HMRC and Jobcentre Plus (JCP) which help individuals and employers with the financial issues around redundancy.

### Objectives

The objective of the workshop was to enable participants to hear about the financial support available through PACE for individuals and employers in a redundancy situation.

### Key Issues Arising from the Workshop

#### CFEB Approach

- **Financial Issues Key.** When faced with a redundancy situation, it is financial issues which are at the forefront of people's minds. Individuals tend to seek face-to-face advice on a confidential setting.
- **Lack of Employer Support.** Evidence from England has shown that there is often of a lack of support from employer to staff facing redundancy. Scotland is in a stronger position to respond to this need through the PACE network.
- **Disseminating Information.** Thought needs to be put into how information is distributed.
  - Formal presentations are not always appropriate for smaller businesses, which may respond better to one-to-ones.
  - The PACE Partnership represents a good channel for disseminating information about financial issues.
  - Increasing numbers are comfortable accessing information online, but may want to supplement this with one-to-one discussions and support.
  - It would be useful if all PACE presentations given by partners contained information about the services available through the Consumer Financial Education Body (CFEB).

### HMRC Approach

- **Specialist Support.** Some client groups such as the pre-retirement group require specialist support and need to be signposted to appropriate help.
- **Interaction of Partners.** It is the practical interaction between partners that provides the strength in the partnerships. It is critically important that partners share information as early as possible.
- **Flexible Support.** Willingness for HMRC to provide support and flexibility for firms is a positive development that has potential knock on effects to the economy as a whole.
- **Positive Outcomes.** Overall the HMRC approach has been successful in keeping firms afloat and preventing redundancies.
- **HMRC Focus.** Some concern was raised the emphasis could shift back towards taking in revenue given the state of the public finances, although there is no indication at the moment that this will be the case.

### Jobcentre Plus Approach

- **Approach for Large scale Redundancies.** For large scale redundancies, JCP can arrange to have staff 'on-site' to provide information.
- **Effective Partnership.** The 'partnership' aspect of PACE is critical, with a clear need for all partners to share information, raise awareness of what is on offer and ensure that services are joined up.
- **Early Intervention Potentially Hampered by Employer Reluctance.** Although it is often possible to secure early PACE intervention with a business, there is often unwillingness on the part of the employer to engage, given the commercial sensitivities. This issue needs to be tackled.

### Workshop 3: PACE Going Forward

The National PACE Partnership has been overseeing a continuous improvement programme to enhance the operation of PACE. This workshop provided an opportunity for participants to contribute their views on the future development of PACE.

#### Objectives

The objectives of the workshop were to enable participants to:

- Hear about the development of PACE as part of the continuous improvement process;
- Have the opportunity to contribute their views on the future development of PACE.

Four questions were posed in the workshops to help participants to focus the discussion on key issues in moving PACE forward.

1. A key ongoing task is to raise awareness of PACE amongst organisations in the private sector. How can this be achieved?
2. Are there any other services which should be added to the PACE mix to further enhance the support offered to people under threat of redundancy?
3. In a time of expected public sector spending cuts, how should PACE maintain and strengthen its partnership focus and ability to provide a service for people under threat of redundancy.
4. Are there any other ways in which we can strengthen and develop PACE?

This workshop was facilitated four times at the conference, and the key issues arising from the discussions are detailed below.

## Key Issues Arising from the Workshop

A key ongoing task is to raise awareness of PACE amongst organisations in the private sector. How can this be achieved?

- **Events and Presentations.** Partners and stakeholders have a critical role to play in raising awareness amongst private sector employers, particularly SMEs. Sharing Successful Experiences. Businesses relate best to the experiences of other businesses, particularly as many are reticent in seeking support from 'the government'.
- **Exploiting Social Media.** The rise of social media offers a new and powerful mechanism for engaging with individuals and businesses through Facebook and other similar networking sites.
- **Flyers and Leaflets.** Promotional material such as flyers and leaflets would be useful to have available to partners to hand out to private sector employers with whom they engage.
- **A Local Response.** A tailored local response is likely to have the greatest success.
- **Organisation Remains Central.** When it comes to assisting companies, it is the organisation itself that is central and will ultimately decide when they are in trouble and need help.
- **Tailoring to Business Needs.** To be useful to businesses it is vital that PACE is clear about the type and intensity of support that is needed by businesses.
- **Easily Accessible Materials.** Web-based materials offer an easily accessible and relatively cheap resource for employers.
- **Keeping Bureaucracy and Paperwork to a Minimum.** SMEs, but micro-businesses in particular are often reticent to engage in initiatives as they fear the amount of bureaucracy and paperwork that they perceive they entail.

- **Focus on Micro-businesses.** In local PACE meetings some partners report that the very smallest companies fall through the net, but nonetheless may have a great impact on the local area, particularly in rural areas.
- **Utilising Key Influencers.** There is a need to get committed national organisations such as the Chambers of Commerce to persuade members locally to engage.

Are there any other services which should be added to the PACE mix to further enhance the support offered to people under threat of redundancy?

Participants struggled to come up with a wide range of additional services, with the view raised in one workshop that it is 'better to do a few things well'.

- **'Help Pack' for SMEs.** There is a need for a more effective mechanism to engage with SMEs, as they are often reached too late to be of real assistance.
- **Support for Apprentices.** Specific support for apprentices that have been unable to complete their apprenticeship due to redundancy.
- **PACE as Part of Business Culture.** PACE could potentially be integrated into the operational side of business rather than it just existing as a point in time response to redundancy.
- **Health and Wellbeing.** The Health and Wellbeing of individuals facing redundancy should be a key consideration and partners need to be better informed and engaged with partners such as the Scottish Centre for Healthy Working Lives.
- **Migrant Workers.** PACE should be in a position to support migrant workers effectively by opening up access to tailored support.

In a time of expected public sector spending cuts, how should PACE maintain and strengthen its partnership focus and ability to provide a service for people under threat of redundancy?

- **Retaining a Consistent National Framework with Flexible Local Delivery.** A consistent national framework but designing and delivering context specific local responses.
- **Addressing the Needs of the Public Sector.** PACE must be recognised as integral to the process of responding to the challenges as they arise.
- **Greater Engagement with Key Public Sector Bodies.** There is a need for more dialogue with COSLA and CEOs of government agencies.
- **Voluntary Versus Mandatory Engagement.** Mandatory engagement could potentially turn some organisations off engaging.
- **Ensure All Partners Across All Levels in Organisations Clear on PACE Offer.** To date there has been a significant focus on informing customer facing staff, but in reality there needs to be a greater awareness amongst all staff.
- **Appropriate Local Response.** Partner organisations must make PACE work for themselves and should not be too prescriptive about what is on offer.
- **Honesty with Partners.** It is critically important that all partners are frank and honest about the value of the services that they can bring to the table.
- **Complementary Role.** The role of PACE is to bring together partners which complement each other in terms of skill sets and activities.
- **Getting the Message Out.** There is a need to get the message out clearly about what is on offer to support clients and from whom, as many partners remain unaware of what has been done or what can be done and by which organisations.

- **Eliminating Duplication.** Partnership working should be driven to the fore to avoid duplication and offer better value for money.
- **Maximising College Contribution.** Colleges offer huge potential in supporting and developing PACE, although the full extent of what they can offer is not fully understood.

Are there any other ways in which we can strengthen and develop PACE?

- **A Quick Response.** The ability to respond immediately is critical to maximise the value of PACE services.
- **A More Proactive Response.** There is also a need to ensure that there is assistance available to support individuals and employers, prior to the redundancy situation.
- **Being Creative.** PACE partners need to be prepared to be creative in the design and delivery of services to support clients.
- **Clarity of Service.** Not all businesses are clear about what is on offer, so clarification is important to ensure that they know where to go for tailored support.
- **Measuring Success and Systematic Evaluation.** Given that it is now critical that all support and services can demonstrate value for money, it is important that the success of the PACE approach is measured.
- **Capacity Building.** In times where there are limited funds available for rolling out services, there is a need to build capacity within private and public sector organisations to provide self-help in redundancy situations.
- **Clearly Accessible to Employees.** Sometimes employers do not think that they need help, but employees do not feel the same way.
- **Focus on Available Opportunities.** There needs to be a clear focus on the labour market.

- **Strengthening the Brand Further.** PACE has a strong brand, but need to ensure that the perception that employers and individuals have about the brand is accurate.
- **Sensitive Support.** There is a need for all dealings with employers facing redundancy situations to be handled sensitively.
- **Dissemination of Workstream Papers and Action Plan.** There is a need to disseminate information from the work that has been done under the various workstreams.
- **Recognition of the Range of Individuals/Employers Needing Support.** Redundancies will hit employers and individuals across all sectors and at all levels of organisations.

### Additional Issues

- **Rationing Support.** If the cuts are to be as deep as predicted, it may be that PACE will be unable to deal with all of the redundancies across the public and private sector and will need to consider new approaches.
- **Service Cuts and Succession Planning.** Without a dedicated budget, is there not a concern that the level of support and number of services that have been put into place to date will not be sustainable?
- **'Promoting Redundancies'.** There is a need to ensure that the PACE initiative does not 'promote' redundancies through not capitalising enough on the success stories.
- **Post Scottish Elections.** The forthcoming Scottish Elections may affect the shape of the PACE Partnership, but PACE still needs to be clear about what the longer term offer should look like.
- **Flow of Redundancies.** There needs to be recognition that it is more difficult to provide effective services to smaller businesses when individuals are leaving in ones and twos, in comparison with timetables, large scale redundancies.



## 6. KEY MESSAGES FROM THE CONFERENCE

### Introduction

---

PACE has now been operating for nine years and has not faded away, which is testament to the commitment of its partners and stakeholders. The Conference offered a good opportunity for partners to build on the strong foundation that exists and to reflect on the progress of PACE, and what needs to be done to strengthen it further.

### Key Messages from the Conference

Drawing on the presentations and discussions throughout the Conference the examples of PACE in practice, the perspectives of key partners and perhaps most importantly the contributions of participants, a number of key messages have emerged that can help to shape PACE over the coming months and years.

### Key Elements of Success

PACE has been most successful where the approach has been driven by effective partnership working drawing on the individual strengths of partners, has been tailored to the needs of employers and individuals and has been quick to respond. These successful experiences need to be shared more effectively with partners and especially to businesses to provide hard evidence of what can be done in a redundancy situation.

### Retaining a Consistent National Framework with Flexible Local Delivery

The main benefit of PACE identified by many participants is the 21 local partnerships which operate within a consistent national framework, whilst at the same time having the scope and flexibility to offer tailored local responses. Partner organisations can make PACE work for themselves through offering a menu of support on a case by case basis.

### More Partnership Working

There is scope for more partnership working between the public and private sector. This is important to keep PACE moving forward, building on its successes and to deliver a seamless service for individuals. The PACE Partnership needs to build on its existing strengths and identify the practical ways in which it can come together more effectively. The public sector need to recognise the specialist contributions that the private sector can bring and where possible learn from its experience.

### Engaging Effectively with Business, Business Representatives and Trade Unions

The importance of engaging effectively and regularly with businesses, business representatives and Trade Unions must be recognised, giving them the opportunity to influence and advise on developments to products, services and processes.

### Retaining Focus on SMEs

In the face of increased levels of likely activity, given the pace and scale of budget cuts feeding through into the labour market, PACE must ensure that SMEs are not neglected in favour of larger employers, including those within the public sector.

### Good Marketing and Communication

Good marketing and communication is required at all levels within the partnership, to ensure that employers and individuals alike are aware of the range and intensity of support available.

### Responding Appropriately to Need

Demands are placed on PACE to respond to all those in need, although this may require careful review of the type and levels of activity given the likely additional demands for support in the coming months and years.

## Next Steps

The PACE Partnership needs to take on board the issues that have been raised at the PACE Conference and build these in to the development and enhancement of services and support moving forward. To do this effectively there are a number of steps that would help to support this process.

### A Clear Understanding of the Operating Context

Any changes made to the PACE Offer need to be in keeping with a comprehensive understanding of the operating context, both in terms of changes to economic circumstances and the level of resources available to partners to commit to the Partnership. Proposed changes need to be tested with key partners to determine their likely success and sustainability over the longer term.

### Review of Activity

In the face of significant budget cuts, concerns were raised by many partners that the current levels of service may not be sustainable across all client groups. PACE needs to consider various scenarios in response to this in terms of the differential responses that could be offered to clients depending on their individual situations. For example supporting employers downsizing to save costs versus those struggling to survive or individuals taking voluntary severance versus those forced in to redundancy. Coupled with this could be a consideration of a client's ability to pay, with PACE standing back when employers are willing and able to bring in private sector support.

### Identifying and Addressing Weaker Aspects of PACE

Whilst recognising that there is often a time lag between addressing issues raised by partners and clients and a recognition that these have been dealt with, it is critical that PACE retains its commitment to continuous improvement and seeks to identify and deal with any weaker aspects of PACE as they arise. This may require a more systematic review of the experiences of partners and clients across the 21 local partnerships to address the perceived differences in experience reported through the workshops.

### Early Intervention Strategy

Where PACE has successfully engaged early with employers, it has had significant success. A clearly articulated early intervention strategy would help to provide a clear mechanism for achieving this.

### Reviewing Partner Capacity

In a time of limited funding, the potential of building up capacity within private and public sector organisations to provide self-help in redundancy situations should be considered. There is likely to be significant scope for organisations such as the NHS, the Police, local government etc. to draw on the expertise of their HR functions to build capacity in other organisations. This would require a review of partner capacity.

### Concluding Thoughts

Following a successful and informative day, the Chair laid down the challenge for partners in taking PACE forward, "As good as it is, we can always improve". The contributions made by partners and participants throughout the Conference, will provide the basis for future developments.

# APPENDIX: WORKSHOP WRITE-UPS

## Workshop 1: Public and Private Sector in Partnership

A range of private sector companies provide redundancy support services for organisations and individuals under threat of redundancy. This workshop provided examples of effective partnership working between PACE and the private sector in major redundancy situations.

### Objectives

The objectives of the workshop were to enable participants to gain an:

- Overview of the private sector outplacement market;
- Insight into a private sector outplacement service;
- Insight into a partnership approach between a private sector outplacement service and PACE.

### PACE and the Private Sector

PACE has a Scottish focus, in comparison with private sector outplacement companies which in the main have an international presence. In addition to which the scope of private sector support is often much broader than just redundancy and covers wider aspects of HR support including recruitment, selection, employee development and talent management. Private sector companies often have existing contracts with businesses which cover more than redundancy, and this existing link may be a key reason why they are successful in getting redundancy business.

### Overlap of Some Aspects of Service Delivery

Historically there has been rivalry and a tendency to work separately, but there is some overlap in aspects of service delivery which offer the potential for good practice working, specifically around:

- Employability, e.g. CVs, application forms, job search and networking.
- Guidance, e.g. provision of initial diagnostic guidance interviews.

PACE provides a specialist service which can enhance and supplement the private sector offering around:

- Provision of specialist career planning services;
- Advice about and access to government funded training, e.g. TfW, Rapid Response and SFC PACE Fund;
- Provision of specialist business start-up advice through Business Gateway;
- Benefits advice from Jobcentre Plus;
- Basic financial advice from the Consumer Financial Education Body;
- Literacy and numeracy support through the Big Plus.

PACE has made a commitment to working with the private sector and there are a number of instances in which ongoing discussions are underway between PACE and private outplacement firms about the nature of support services on offer to employees under the threat of redundancy. In the last year PACE has worked closely with several outplacement organisations including Right Management and Penna.

### Supplementing and Enhancing the Private Sector Offer

Working collaboratively PACE can supplement the work of private sector companies and vice versa to plug any gaps in service and to enhance delivery. However, PACE is not seeking to replace the private sector offer, but to complement it, as the intention is not to deliver services that private companies have been paid for. At the present time PACE is working with three outplacement organisations and a number of companies and individuals. This approach seeks to deliver a shared agenda of excellent customer service and facilitate positive outcomes for clients.

## Some Good Practice Examples

Two good practice examples were presented at the workshops, indicating the nature and scope of joint working and the potential benefits to clients.

### PENNA and DC Thomson

PACE is currently working with PENNA at DC Thomson in Dundee, where there are 350 people being made redundant. There have been clear benefits to working together, as PENNA are capable of providing a high level of staffing, 5-7 people on-site every day, which the PACE team would not be able to fund. Overall, the level of resources available to support staff facing redundancy is a demonstration of commitment that the employer (DC Thomson in this case) has to their staff, and the private sector provider is measured on the outcomes that it can deliver for them. On the other hand, however, PENNA only has access to clients for a short space of time and would not be able to provide the longer term support that can be given through the public sector.

At an early stage there was a clear cut agreement about what the private firm should focus on and where PACE was stronger. PENNA is providing dedicated client assessment and job search services, while PACE is responsible for providing and signposting to further training. While in this case there is no formalised agreement (for example in terms of a contract), there is a good understanding between the two organisations about the role of each. Good communication is also crucial for building good working relationships – for example, having one named contact.

### Right Management and Diageo

Diageo announced in 2009 that they intended to close their factories in Port Dundas and Kilmarnock. The company appointed an in-house change team to help manage the process and Right Management services were contracted. As a company they supported over 43,000 people in the UK last year and work across industry sectors at all levels. The strengths of Right Management are in its:

- Unparalleled scope and scale of capabilities and contributions;
- Depth of relationships through its trusted advisors;
- The size and success of its parent company, Manpower;
- Staff development and accredited training;
- Strong quality systems of ISO and matrix management;
- 99% client satisfaction rating globally.

PACE has worked closely with Right Management, which has the number one market share in outplacement services. As a company they are able to offer a wide range of supports including initial meetings, workshop attendance, follow-up meetings, access to a job resource consultant and a range of online tools.

PACE responded to the announcement of the Diageo closure and met with Jobcentre Plus and Skills Development Scotland to plan their initial priorities. They gave a joint presentation to the employees in December 2009. Monthly site meetings were held with Diageo, Right Management and PACE to agree their respective roles and responsibilities. A shared recording mechanism was created by PACE to monitor progress and managed by the Diageo change team.

From March 2010 through to September 2010 a range of services and support were offered to employees including Right Management diagnostic interviews and workshops, PACE career guidance interviews to identify what services the employees needed, workshops with HMRC, Jobcentre Plus and Business Gateway and a College Open Day. In addition various kinds of training were delivered to address the skills gaps identified including college courses run through the Scottish Funding Council and Training for Work. Ongoing requests for support were met by both PACE and Right Management.

### Key Issues Arising from the Workshop

- **Drivers of PACE.** As a public service organisation, PACE is driven by quality and efficiency and has the potential to make a contribution to future economic growth. This is in contrast to private outplacement businesses, which in addition are driven by margins and the imperative to operate at a profit.
- **Shared Agenda.** PACE is a partnership framework in terms of its structure and operation. The role of the private sector as a partner is central to its success and PACE works closely with the private sector for the benefit of those facing redundancy. Consideration should be given to a 'shared agenda protocol' which clearly outlines the delivery of services. This would ensure clarity around the delivery of services, would avoid overlap amongst organisations and prevent customers from becoming confused about the offer. There is a need to remove both client and adviser uncertainty over 'who does what'.
- **Good Communication.** The key to good working relationships is effective communication. This needs to be a 'real connection', not for example just sending an email, but actually connecting with like-minded people sharing an agenda. Communication needs to be clear, regular and ongoing to ensure success.
- **Single Point of Contact.** Identifying a single point of contact helps to facilitate the smooth operation of services in an organisation.
- **Recognition of Potential Scope for More Joint working.** There is scope for a significant amount of joint-working.
- **Rolling out the Model.** There is potential for the PACE model to be rolled out across the UK, piggy-backing on the reach of private outplacement firms and provide a service that could help to bolster the economy.
- **Recognising Contributions.** There is a need for a recognition that both private outplacement and PACE partners each have their own specialist expertise to draw on.
- **Learning from the Private Sector.** Given the additional resources that can typically be accessed by the private sector approaches to support employees facing redundancy cannot necessarily be easily replicated, however there may be some potentially transferable elements, for example, the use of more sophisticated website support for jobseekers including interactive activities and videos.
- **Getting Employers on Board.** The employer involved in the redundancy scenario must be fully on board as a partner.
- **Shared Recording Mechanism.** For the partnership to work effectively it is important that there is a shared recording mechanism for client outcomes to enable both public and private sector to get credit for outcomes achieved.
- **Getting the Timing Right.** In supporting clients and co-ordinating activities, the importance of getting the timing right should not be underestimated.
- **Committing to Partnership Working.** For the partnership to be successful, there is a need for collaboration, a willingness to be adaptive, innovative and above all to trust in the partnership.

## Workshop 2: Planning Your Future Finance

Financial Planning is recognised as one of the most challenging aspects of redundancy. This workshop outlined the services provided by PACE partners to advise employers and individuals about the financial options available to them. The workshop presented three examples of services provided by PACE partners to help individuals and employers with the financial issues around redundancy.

### Objectives

The objective of the workshop was to enable participants to hear about the financial support available through PACE for individuals and employers in a redundancy situation.

#### Example 1: Consumer Financial Education Body

CFEB was previously part of the Financial Services Authority, but was made independent by the Financial Services Act. It has responsibility for helping individuals to manage their money better. There tends to be little support available to employees facing redundancy from their employers, so CFEB offers a range of services, which are provided free of charge and can be delivered as part of PACE. These include:

- An hour long seminar for people facing redundancy, looking at the financial impact, the support available and advice around benefits, tax etc.
- A redundancy handbook, which CFEB is keen to distribute through the PACE network.
- A 'Money Made Clear' service, available over the phone and through a website, with a face to face advisory service being introduced next year.

CFEB has carried out research on how redundancy impacts on people, which helps inform the services that are provided:

- Some people 'bury their heads in the sand' and ignore the financial implications.
- There is a need for information and advice on how to deal with the financial issues arising from being made redundant.
- There is often an emotional impact linked to money issues – often confusion and a fear of 'what happens next'.

### Key Issues

- **Financial Issues Key.** When faced with a redundancy situation, it is financial issues which are at the forefront of people's minds. Individuals tend to seek face-to-face advice on a confidential setting.
- **Lack of Employer Support.** Evidence from England has shown that there is often of a lack of support from employer to staff facing redundancy. Scotland is in a stronger position to respond to this need through the PACE network.
- **Disseminating Information.** Thought needs to be put into how information is distributed.
  - Formal presentations are not always appropriate for smaller businesses, which may respond better to one-to-ones.
  - The PACE Partnership represents a good channel for disseminating information about financial issues, and specifically the CFEB's 'Redundancy Handbook'.
  - Increasing numbers are comfortable accessing information online, but may want to supplement this with one-to-one discussions and support.
  - It would be useful if all PACE presentations given by partners contained information about the services available through the CFEB.

- **Specialist Support.** Some client groups such as the pre-retirement group require specialist support and need to be signposted to appropriate help. As an organisation CEFB can only provide advice that is not regulated.
- **Interaction of Partners.** It is the practical interaction between partners that provides the strength in the partnerships. It is critically important that partners share information as early as possible. Support is available from other sources, such as Councils, CAB etc. and CEFB is not aiming to replace local provision, but can offer a more comprehensive service.

### Example 2: HMRC

There is a perception that HMRC is only interested in collecting taxes and while this may have been the case in the past, there is now a range of support on offer for businesses. There are three elements to the support on offer from HMRC:

- The Business Payments Support Service, for firms 'on the brink', which gives businesses who are struggling to pay in full and on time an opportunity to pay their tax bill over a longer period, with flexibility, for example for firms themselves awaiting payment. This can be arranged with a phone call and aims not to be bureaucratic.
- The Regional Employer National Insurance Contributions Holiday to encourage new firms to take on employees, which offers temporary reductions in employers' NI contributions in certain designated areas (of which Scotland is one). This can provide savings for new businesses of up to £5,000 for up to the first 10 employees, although is for a limited period and subject to meeting certain conditions.
- The Business Education and Support Team which provides workshops and presentations on tax issues, aimed at new and small firms. The team also works in partnership with agencies such as the Business Gateway, colleges and the Prince's Trust. Issues covered include becoming self-employed, guidance around expenses, record keeping, NI contributions and completing tax returns.

### Key Issues

- **Flexible Support.** One of the key roles of HMRC is to look after the long term health of a business and HMRC's willingness to provide support and flexibility for firms is a positive development as this has potential knock on effects to the economy as a whole.
- **Positive Outcomes.** Overall the approach has been successful in keeping firms afloat and preventing redundancies.
- **HMRC Focus.** Some concern was raised the emphasis could shift back towards taking in revenue given the state of the public finances, although there is no indication at the moment that this will be the case.

### Example 3: Jobcentre Plus

Jobcentre Plus provides information and guidance to PACE clients on the benefits available and eligibility. Most people when made redundant go on to claim Job Seekers Allowance, but information is also provided on a range of other benefits, including Employment and Support Allowance, income support and pension credits, and other associated benefits linked to the initial claim, such as housing benefit. It is recommended that clients make their benefit claims as soon as possible, ideally on the first day of unemployment. Claims can be made via the website or contact centre. A Work focused interview can then be arranged for clients with a JCP Adviser and a Financial Assessor Interview is subsequently carried out. Information is then forwarded to the Benefit Delivery Centre for Processing. Clients are then directed to local vacancies and supported in line with their individual needs.

## Key Issues

- **Approach for Large Scale Redundancies.** For large scale redundancies, JCP can arrange to have staff 'on-site' to provide information.
- **Effective Partnership.** The 'partnership' aspect of PACE is critical, with a clear need for all partners to share information, raise awareness of what is on offer and ensure that services are joined up.
- **Early Intervention Potentially Hampered by Employer Reluctance.** Although it is often possible to secure early PACE intervention with a business, there is often an unwillingness on the part of the employer to engage, given the commercial sensitivities. This issue needs to be tackled.

## Workshop 3: PACE Going Forward

The National PACE Partnership has been overseeing a continuous improvement programme to enhance the operation of PACE. This workshop provided an opportunity for participants to contribute their views on the future development of PACE.

## Objectives

The objectives of the workshop were to enable participants to:

- Hear about the development of PACE as part of the continuous improvement process;
- Have the opportunity to contribute their views on the future development of PACE.

Four questions were posed in the workshops to help participants to focus the discussion on key issues in moving PACE forward.

1. A key ongoing task is to raise awareness of PACE amongst organisations in the private sector. How can this be achieved?
2. Are there any other services which should be added to the PACE mix to further enhance the support offered to people under threat of redundancy?

3. In a time of expected public sector spending cuts, how should PACE maintain and strengthen its partnership focus and ability to provide a service for people under threat of redundancy.
4. Are there any other ways in which we can strengthen and develop PACE?

This workshop was facilitated four times at the conference, and the key issues arising from the discussions are detailed below.

## Key Issues Arising from the Workshop

A key ongoing task is to raise awareness of PACE amongst organisations in the private sector. How can this be achieved?

- **Events and Presentations.** Partners and stakeholders have a critical role to play in raising awareness amongst private sector employers, particularly SMEs. This could be through events and presentations organised by key partners such as Chambers of Commerce, Federation of Small Businesses and Scottish Enterprise. In Borders PACE events have been run effectively by placing adverts in local papers and taking a room in a local college. This approach is very effective in small, tight knit communities.
- **Sharing Successful Experiences.** Businesses relate best to the experiences of other businesses, particularly as many are reticent in seeking support from 'the government'. Sharing successful experiences is a key part of this and can demonstrate to businesses what can be done should they find themselves in a redundancy situation. The Federation of Small Businesses, Trade Unions and other key partners would offer useful mechanisms for sharing this information. Case studies of employers work well, but require significant resource to do well.
- **Exploiting Social Media.** The rise of social media offers a new and powerful mechanism for engaging with individuals and businesses through Facebook and other similar networking sites. There is potential for PACE to exploit these technologies.
- **Flyers and Leaflets.** Promotional material such as flyers and leaflets would be useful to have available to partners to hand out to private sector employers with whom they engage.



- **A Local Response.** A tailored local response is likely to have the greatest success. What is required are clear local messages drawn from evaluations that look at good practice, although this is difficult to address as PACE is delivered from within existing budgets.
- **Organisation Remains Central.** When it comes to assisting companies, it is the organisation itself that is central and will ultimately decide when they are in trouble and need help. It is important that businesses know that PACE is there to help, but that they are not seen in a 'policing' role, checking what they are doing.
- **Tailoring to Business Needs.** To be useful to businesses it is vital that PACE is clear about the type and intensity of support that is needed by businesses. It needs to be clear about what is being offered to businesses and this business offer must be robust.
- **Easily Accessible Materials.** Web-based materials offer an easily accessible and relatively cheap resource for employers. PACE needs to ensure that its use is maximised.
- **Keeping Bureaucracy and Paperwork to a Minimum.** SMEs, but micro-businesses in particular are often reticent to engage in initiatives as they fear the amount of bureaucracy and paperwork that they perceive they entail. It is important that this is kept to a minimum to secure and sustain the engagement of these businesses.
- **Focus on Micro-businesses.** In local PACE meetings some partners report that the very smallest companies fall through the net, but nonetheless may have a great impact on the local area, particularly in rural areas.
- **Utilising Key Influencers.** There is a need to get committed national organisations such as the Chambers of Commerce to persuade members locally to engage.

Are there any other services which should be added to the PACE mix to further enhance the support offered to people under threat of redundancy?

Participants struggled to come up with a wide range of additional services, with the view raised in one workshop that it is 'better to do a few things well'.

- **'Help Pack' for SMEs.** PACE was designed for the 'big hits' to get economies of scale, however increasingly there is clear value in working with smaller employers. There is a need for a more effective mechanism to engage with SMEs, as they are often reached too late to be of real assistance. The PACE message needs to be 'drip fed' to SMEs regularly. A potential solution would be a bespoke 'help pack' targeted specifically at SMEs. This needs to be continually updated to ensure its relevance.
- **Support for Apprentices.** Specific support for apprentices that have been unable to complete their apprenticeship due to redundancy. Although participants thought that PACE had been able to offer some assistance in this area, there has been neither a uniform approach, nor continuous funding available to pick up on this.
- **PACE as Part of Business Culture.** There is a tendency for businesses to engage with the redundancy agenda only at the point at which they are faced with it as an issue. PACE could potentially be integrated into the operational side of business rather than it just existing as a point in time response to redundancy. Incorporating PACE into business culture in this way would be particularly challenging for small businesses, who tend not to have the capacity to put formalised policies and processes in place.

- **Health and Wellbeing.** The Health and Wellbeing of individuals facing redundancy should be a key consideration. However, the approach to Health and Wellbeing at a Scottish level does not appear to be joined-up, as there is a second conference taking place at the same time as the Conference, which many participants would have liked to attend. It is not that PACE necessarily needs to provide a service, but more that partners need to be better informed and engaged in the Health and Wellbeing activities that are currently on offer through other partners such as the Scottish Centre for Healthy Working Lives.
- **Migrant Workers.** Some areas of Scotland have significant numbers of migrant workers, many of whom are working within small businesses and at risk of redundancy. Difficulties around language and a lack of knowledge about mainstream services leave them vulnerable. PACE should be in a position to support these migrant workers effectively by opening up access to tailored support.

In a time of expected public sector spending cuts, how should PACE maintain and strengthen its partnership focus and ability to provide a service for people under threat of redundancy?

- **Retaining a Consistent National Framework with Flexible Local Delivery.** Many participants identified the real benefit of PACE as the 21 PACE Partnerships working within a consistent national framework but designing and delivering context specific local responses.
- **Addressing the Needs of the Public Sector.** The public sector is facing significant potential redundancies in the face of substantial budget cuts and PACE must be recognised as integral to the process of responding to the challenges as they arise.
- **Greater Engagement with Key Public Sector Bodies.** There is a need for more dialogue with COSLA and CEOs of government agencies.
- **Voluntary Versus Mandatory Engagement.** Whilst there may be some attraction in making engagement with PACE mandatory for organisations making staff redundant, this is not practical and could potentially turn some organisations off engaging.
- **Ensure All Partners Across All Levels in Organisations Clear on PACE Offer.** Some Jobcentre Plus staff felt that they were not fully aware of the PACE offer, with several stating that they thought that PACE was an approach for big companies until this Conference. Without clarity from Jobcentre Plus, it cannot be expected that employers and particularly SMEs are in a position to know what is on offer. There is also a need for Jobcentre Plus frontline staff to be more aware of what is on offer. There is a clear need to ensure that all frontline staff understand the fundamentals that PACE can offer. To date there has been a significant focus on informing customer facing staff, but in reality there needs to be a greater awareness amongst all staff.
- **Appropriate Local Response.** Because PACE has a different make up in different local areas, the experience of both partners and clients is different across the country and these differences need to be recognised. Partner organisations must make PACE work for themselves and should not be too prescriptive about what is on offer. The key is in tapping in to local resources, whilst remaining as inclusive and flexible as possible. Key partners need to work together to decide who is best placed to respond in any given situation and not be too prescriptive.
- **Honesty with Partners.** It is critically important that all partners are frank and honest about the value of the services that they can bring to the table. Arguably different departments and organisations within the public sector have historically protected their own budgets, but now it is imperative that partners are honest.
- **Complementary Role.** The role of PACE is to bring together partners which complement each other in terms of skill sets and activities.
- **Getting the Message Out.** There is a need to get the message out clearly about what is on offer to support clients and from whom, as many partners remain unaware of what has been done or what can be done and by which organisations.

- **Eliminating Duplication.** Partnership working should be driven to the fore to avoid duplication and offer better value for money. This requires greater alignment of services and maximising existing links through mechanisms such as Community Planning.
- **Maximising College Contribution.** Colleges offer huge potential in supporting and developing PACE, although the full extent of what they can offer is not fully understood. There are good practice examples of this, including the Forth Valley and South Lanarkshire College approaches, and PACE needs to ensure that lessons are learned from this and that Scotland's Colleges are fully engaged.

#### Are there any other ways in which we can strengthen and develop PACE?

- **A Quick Response.** The ability to respond immediately is critical to maximise the value of PACE services. Further consideration should be given to marketing and early interventions strategies which encourage employers to alert PACE if a company is facing difficulties which may result in redundancies.
- **A More Proactive Response.** There is also a need to ensure that there is assistance available to support individuals and employers, prior to the redundancy situation. It is very frustrating for partners to be brought into a situation to provide assistance where somebody has already been released. There is a need to know that support is available to be able to make informed decisions. Although a more proactive response may be required, it needs to be recognised that not all employers are amenable to this type of approach.
- **Being Creative.** PACE partners need to be prepared to be creative in the design and delivery of services to support clients.
- **Clarity of Service.** There are a range of different types of support services available to employers through partner organisations, for example, Scottish Enterprise (SMART Scotland Programme). Although this is more of a business development tool, not all businesses are clear about what is on offer, so clarification is important to ensure that they know where to go for tailored support.
- **Measuring Success and Systematic Evaluation.** Given that it is now critical that all support and services can demonstrate value for money, it is important that the success of the PACE approach is measured. Although there has been positive client feedback, and an evaluation undertaken it is important that this information is updated on a regular basis. Discussions suggest that there are variations in local PACE Partnerships, but what is the hard evidence on this? If there is poor performance in certain areas or with particular types of clients PACE needs to know. Have there been systematic evaluations and is there evidence to suggest why PACE appears to be more effective in some places than others? Evaluations do not have to be costly or elaborate exercises so thought should be put into using e-surveys.
- **Capacity Building.** In times where there are limited funds available for rolling out services, there is a need to build capacity within private and public sector organisations to provide self-help in redundancy situations. For example, there is significant scope for using the HR functions of large scale organisations such as the NHS, Police, and Scottish Government to build capacity within public sector agencies.
- **Clearly Accessible to Employees.** Sometimes employers do not think that they need help, but employees do not feel the same way. Individuals need to know what is available to support them.
- **Focus on Available Opportunities.** There needs to be a clear focus on the labour market, which requires comprehensive, high quality labour market information so that individuals are progressed into real job opportunities, rather than those that they hope are there.
- **Strengthening the Brand Further.** PACE has a strong brand, but need to ensure that the perception that employers and individuals have about the brand is accurate. When PACE was first launched there was a much greater focus on large scale redundancies, so the changes in focus must be reflected in the materials produced and the support on offer.
- **Sensitive Support.** There is a need for all dealings with employers facing redundancy situations to be handled sensitively, to counter the idea that 'PACE is coming in - it must be bad!'

- **Dissemination of Workstream Papers and Action Plan.** There is a need to disseminate information from the work that has been done under the various workstreams, alerting partners about what has been completed, what is still outstanding and what will be taken forward at a national level.
- **Recognition of the Range of Individuals/Employers Needing Support.** Redundancies will hit employers and individuals across all sectors and at all levels of organisations, which demands that a range of services and support are available so that the offer can be tailored to all that need assistance.

### Additional Issues

- **Rationing Support.** If the cuts are to be as deep as predicted, it may be that PACE will be unable to deal with all of the redundancies across the public and private sector.
  - What else is available to support individuals?
  - Where organisations are in a position to be able to afford private sector redundancy support perhaps they should be left to use this rather than using up finite resources. PACE should not be competing with effective, local, private sector offers.
  - Where it is individuals that are being supported, maybe PACE should consider a different level of service for those who are choosing to take voluntary redundancy over those who are forced into a redundancy situation.
  - Where it is employers, perhaps a different approach should be considered for those who are downsizing as a means of cost cutting.
  - Would it be appropriate just to act as a signposting organisation in some instances?

- **Service Cuts and Succession Planning.** Some participants fear that as PACE does not have a dedicated budget, is there not a concern that the level of support and number of services that have been put into place to date will not be sustainable? There is also the danger that many of the key PACE partners will be in the firing line, so there is a need for succession planning to work out next steps.
- **'Promoting Redundancies'.** There is a need to ensure that the PACE initiative does not 'promote' redundancies. At the present time, PACE is focusing too much on the redundancies that are taking place, and not capitalising enough on the success stories.
- **Post Scottish Elections.** The forthcoming Scottish Elections may affect the shape of the PACE Partnership, but PACE still needs to be clear about what the longer term offer should look like.
- **Flow of Redundancies.** There needs to be recognition that it is more difficult to provide effective services to smaller businesses when individuals are leaving in ones and twos, in comparison with timetables, large scale redundancies. There is a need to be able to adapt and use resources differently in response to need, ensuring that the offer is flexible and responsive.