



## Improving Redundancy Support – A Change of PACE?

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**PACE Conference report: 25 February 2014, Edinburgh  
Report by University of Glasgow**

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# CONTENTS

<b>1. Introduction</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>2. Conference Presentations</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>3. Question Time Panel Session</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>4. Workshops – What can we do to Improve PACE?</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>5. Key Messages from the Conference: What Can Be Done to Further Improve Redundancy Support in Scotland?</b>	<b>15</b>

# 1. Introduction

## Background

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Partnership Action for Continuing Employment (PACE) is the Scottish Government's initiative dedicated to helping individuals and employers with advice and support when faced with redundancy. The PACE Partnership, which includes the Scottish Government, Skills Development Scotland (SDS), Jobcentre Plus and many other partners, responds to redundancy situations through providing skills development and employability support to minimise the time people affected are out of work.

The PACE Conference held on 25th February 2014 was the third PACE Conference and focused on the question 'Improving Redundancy Support: A Change of PACE?'.

## Structure of the Conference

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The Conference was chaired by John McClelland CBE, Chair of SDS who introduced keynote speeches from:

- Fergus Ewing MSP, Minister for Energy, Enterprise and Tourism
- Colin Williamson, Senior Adviser/Collective Conciliator, Acas Scotland
- Dr Gerry McCartney, Head of the Scottish Public Health Observatory, NHS Health Scotland
- Dr John McGurk, Head of CIPD Scotland
- Dr Graeme Roy, Deputy Director, Scottish Government Office of the Chief Economic Adviser

The keynote speeches were followed by a panel session chaired by Alan McGregor, Professor of Economic Development and Director of the University of Glasgow Training and Employment Research Unit (TERU). The members of the panel were:

- Colin Borland, Head of External Affairs (Scotland), Federation of Small Business
- Danny Logue, Operations Director, SDS
- Dr Graeme Roy, Deputy Director, Scottish Government Office of the Chief Economic Adviser
- Rona Hunter, Senior Economic Development Officer in Employability and Skills, City of Edinburgh Council
- Stephen Boyd, STUC Assistant Secretary
- Stephen McConnachie, Jobcentre Plus Partnership Manager for Scotland

The Conference concluded with workshop sessions that provided participants the opportunity to debate and discuss *how to improve redundancy support*. This report provides a summary of the Conference presentations and discussions.

## 2. Conference Presentations

### PACE in Context – Introduction by John McClelland, Chair of SDS

PACE has continued to play a key role in the context of employment, unemployment and redundancy in Scotland. Partner organisations across Scotland are accustomed to working together to bring solutions for individuals and employers. Importantly they come together and respond quickly, thereby helping to address and even anticipate the implications that redundancy situations bring as early as possible. As a result of the support provided – which can range from job search support, careers guidance, money advice, training, and helping people cope with the stress associated with redundancy – PACE has achieved a number of positive outcomes for individuals and employers.

This third PACE Conference provides an excellent opportunity to take stock of the achievements of PACE since it was formally established in 2009 and look forward to the future and consider how redundancy support in Scotland can be improved further.

### Views on the PACE Partnership

#### The Importance of Working in Partnership

- The PACE Partnership involves a wide range of different organisations working together to support employers and employees in the redundancy situation.
- Working together in partnership is vital as a single organisation cannot provide all the different supports that employers and employees need. Collectively the PACE Partnership benefits from a wide range of different skills and expertise.
- In doing so, each organisation also benefits as they each learn from one another.

#### PACE in Practice

- PACE supports individuals and employers in a number of ways including helping people with advice around money and benefits, job opportunities, career options, training opportunities, qualifications, CVs, applications, and starting a business.
- Support can be provided through presentations, workshops and one-to-one sessions. It can be delivered through a variety of ways, including on-site at their place of work or over the telephone.
- Before being told about PACE and the support on offer, employers and employees generally have little awareness of PACE.
- However, having received help, individuals rated the service very highly. The response was quick; the process was smooth and discreet; and the support and advice was of a high quality. For some, the support received means they have now moved into a job they really value.
- PACE helps people to find hope and opportunities at a very difficult and traumatic time of their lives.

To better understand how PACE works in practice, **video case studies** can be viewed at [www.youtube.com/watch?v=ul4vPUBJTCM](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ul4vPUBJTCM)

## Changes to the Employment Landscape – Colin Williamson, Acas

The presentation provided an up-to-date overview of the changes to employment legislation and the implications for responding to redundancy situations. It focused on four main topic areas:

- Statutory consultation in redundancy situations.
- Disputes and tribunal cases.
- Early claims/conciliation.
- Impact of Acas workplace training.

### Statutory Consultation in Redundancy Situations

In responding to redundancy situations, consultation needs to start early and should cover:

- How the redundancy situation has arisen.
- How to select individuals for redundancy – and what these individuals will be paid.
- How long the process is going to take.
- What supports individuals can access.

As of 6th April 2014, the law has changed to stipulate that consultation with employee representatives or union representatives must begin ‘in good time’ and before the first of the proposed dismissals take effect – specifically:

- At least 30 days where 20 to 99 redundancies are proposed within the next 90 days.
- At least 45 days where 100 or more redundancies are proposed within the next 90 days.

For fixed term contracts, a consultation process is needed if they are being terminated early on grounds of redundancy and 20 or more staff are affected. By failing to consult, a tribunal can award 90 days’ pay to affected employees. Acas has published non statutory guidance which explains the principles of consultation and how to deal with collective redundancy (see [www.acas.org.uk/index.aspx?articleid=4256](http://www.acas.org.uk/index.aspx?articleid=4256)).

A key issue is defining what ‘an establishment’ is and the Woolworth’s case in the European Court of Justice (ECJ) should set precedent in relation to this by setting out whether consultation applies to 20 or more redundancies in individual premises of a business (i.e. individual Woolworth’s shops) or across the business as a whole. A question was asked on when the ECJ ruling will be made and, while there is no definitive timescale, it is likely to be in early 2015.

### Disputes and Tribunal Cases

The number of tribunal cases had been increasing since the 1980s as employees became more aware of their employment rights but the number has been falling since the recent recession. This fall can partly be attributed to changes in legislation and employers improving their practices and maintaining better employee relations. As of 29th July 2013, employment tribunal fees have been introduced in the Employment Tribunals and Employment Appeal Tribunal Act. All claimants in employment tribunal claims must now pay a fee to issue a claim and to proceed to hearing. It is currently unclear what impact this change will have on the number of claims made – for example, the fee may reduce the number of claims made.

## Early Conciliation

A key change being introduced from 6th April 2014 is that prospective claimants will need to notify Acas of their intention to make a Tribunal claim. There is then a period of usually three months when their legal rights to tribunal are put on hold and Acas works with the employer to resolve the complaint through conciliation. If the case is not resolved (and the conciliation process is voluntary), the claimant can proceed to lodge a Tribunal claim.

The notification process is being kept as simple as possible. The main route of entry will be through a web form and require limited information – e.g. name, address and phone number. Most cases are expected to come from employees but employers can also bring cases to Acas.

The main opportunity that the change brings is that Acas can speak to employers and promote the wider benefits of good employment relations. However, the impact on claim numbers is not known and there may be some employees who bring cases to ‘test the water’ rather than seriously intending to claim.

A question was asked around the most common stumbling blocks between employers and employees that might lead to a claim being made. In response, much comes down to misunderstanding and lack of clear communications. As a result, it is important that the redundancy process is as transparent as possible and communications are clear.

## Early Intervention – Acas Workplace Training

Acas provide training to employees and managers on issues such as what redundancy is about, consultation, and the role of employee representatives. The training increases people’s understanding of the redundancy and consultation process and Acas will soon be publishing a report on the impacts of their work with organisations.

## Is Redundancy a Matter of Life and Death? – Dr Gerry McCartney, NHS Health Scotland

The presentation provided an analysis of the health of Scotland’s population and the implications that redundancy can have on individuals’ health. Beginning with the analysis of Scotland’s health, life expectancy (as the headline health indicator) is improving in Scotland but at a slower rate than comparator advanced economies. Internationally Scotland is therefore lagging behind. However, in addition to national performance, there are significant health inequalities within Scotland, whether within and between Scotland’s local authorities, cities and towns.

In terms of the links between employment, unemployment and health, evidence suggests that an individual’s health is improved by having a good job (e.g. having control over your daily/weekly work), greater seniority (i.e. involved in decision-making) and good pay which increases income and living standards. A number of questions were raised around this issue.

- Does employment in a senior position in the public or private sector make a difference on health? The evidence would suggest the pattern is the same across sectors.
- Does employment in specific occupations impact on health? The research suggests it does in occupations with specific health hazards (e.g. chimney sweeps).
- Does work and/or volunteering in third Sector organisations impact on health? While not aware of any specific evidence, the motivation of working towards the objectives of third Sector organisations might bring about better health.
- Are there any studies of social mobility and the impacts on health? There have been many studies that have followed people from birth and the data suggests that the lifetime risk of poor health is dependent upon a person’s cumulative experience – e.g. length of time exposed to negative factors.

Quality of employment is important in improving health, while unemployment is found to have a negative impact on health. For example:

- Moving from employment into unemployment increases the risk of death by 63% (a question was asked whether the movement into retirement had a similar impact, and the evidence suggests not). Factors that contribute to the increased risk of death include lower feeling of self-worth/depression, loss of social networks and loss of time structure. Moving into employment reverses the impact – meaning it is a causal relationship. In response to a question asked about the time that impacts are felt, the evidence suggests that the impacts are felt in the first 10 years of unemployment which highlights the need for early intervention.
- The impact is worse for men than women (78% compared to 37% increase) and for younger adults.

To improve Scotland's health, the evidence would suggest the need for:

- Creation of more jobs in Scotland as there are more people looking for jobs than the number of available jobs, which results in unemployment and poorer health.
- High value universal benefits that bring greater income equality and protect against the negative impacts of unemployment.
- Economic growth that provides benefits for all – i.e. there is a commitment to invest in health and education systems.

### **Transitions, Resilience and Recovery in the Job Market for Individuals and Organisations: The Role of Professional People Development – Dr John McGurk, CIPD Scotland**

The presentation set out the role of people management in the context of redundancies and, more widely, the changing nature of the Scottish economy. Beginning with the economic environment, Scotland's economy is performing well relative to the UK as a whole with higher growth, lower unemployment and a more diversified economy. Much of this depends on Scotland having more skilled individuals who work in higher value, skilled jobs – and this is an ongoing, long-term transition.

The transition to Scotland's 'Skilled Future' does, however, have implications. We need to keep investing in skills to address current and future skills gaps that affect key sectors of the economy (e.g. in the oil and gas sector) and ensure that individuals remain competitive in the labour market. Not only do individuals require key job-related skills, they also need to be resilient as changes will happen whether in the form of long-term sectoral changes or redundancies.

When redundancies do happen, resilience is vital and may involve individuals retraining or moving to a different area where job opportunities are better. PACE can and does support this transition process by providing targeted support ranging from job coaching, counselling, careers support and training that enables people to make informed decisions on their next steps.

Professional people management has an important role to play in this process and can involve the following activities.

- Initially consider all steps to avoid redundancy, such as introducing part-time contracts or restructuring the business.
- Develop planning and employment strategies which enable organisations to deal with the requirements of short-term labour fluctuations, minimise the risk of enforced redundancies and maximise alternative opportunities.
- Manage redundancies fairly, legally and sustainably. Employers can draw on advice from CIPD and Acas on how to manage the redundancy process well.
- Communicate and clearly explain the reasons for the redundancies as part of the consultation process.



In relation to the points made above, a question was asked around what can be done to mitigate the impacts of redundancy? Experience would dictate that the key actions are looking at wider job opportunities and try and match redundant workers to these; understanding the future of the industry so that individuals get a clear sense of where other job opportunities may lie; and encouraging training and up skilling where appropriate.

### **Presentation by Fergus Ewing MSP, Minister for Energy, Enterprise and Tourism**

The presentation provided an overview of PACE and the Minister's experience of it in action – most notably in response to the Scottish Coal Taskforce. The presentation concluded with potential areas of discussion in relation to how redundancy support in Scotland can be improved further.

Beginning with the overview of PACE activities, the PACE Partnership was formally established in 2009 in order to provide better support for people facing redundancy. It provides an extremely important and necessary service that supports people at a very traumatic period in their lives. This is done through a friendly and tailored service that puts people at ease with high-quality information, advice and guidance. In relation to the Scottish Coal Taskforce case, PACE intervened quickly and effectively. In doing so the partnership helped to address issues that included updating employees' qualifications and certificates to match the skills and training they had developed.

In the year 2012/13, PACE supported approximately 12,000 individuals and 300 employers. It appears to be effective with 74% of those surveyed who received support from PACE in 2012 finding jobs, compared with 51% in 2010 of those surveyed in 2010 (which partly reflects the improved labour market). Satisfaction rates with the quality of support provided to redundant workers is also high. However, what can be done to further improve redundancy support in Scotland?

Teeing up the panel discussion and workshops, there were a number of areas where it was felt more could potentially be done by PACE. These were:

- Redundancy support in rural Scotland, with many business closures going unnoticed in rural areas due to the small size of the businesses.
- Redundancy support for small businesses, as their size means government and media attention will be less and PACE will not be notified about it.
- Scope to include new organisations within the PACE Partnership. ICAS and CIPD are, for example, in the process of becoming partners but are there other organisations that can be added to further enhance support?

### **State of the Economy – Dr Graeme Roy, Scottish Government**

The presentation provided an overview of recent economic development, key issues within the current labour market, and a look forward at future economic trends. Beginning with the recent economic developments, the key messages are:

- Following a sharp economic downturn there has been sustained growth over the last 18 months. However, Scotland's economy remains smaller now than at the start of the recession.
- Comparing the UK with other G7 economies, only Italy has had a slower rate of recovery. This is an important issue for Scotland as its main trading partners are the UK and the EU.
- There are variations between sectors with construction being more severely impacted on than production and service activities.



**In terms of current labour market conditions, the key messages are:**

- Unemployment peaked in around 2010-11 and is now falling. It is currently around 7% to 7.5% in Scotland and the UK, with employment rates around 72% to 73%.
- The employment rate is now above the long-term average but so too is the unemployment rate. This is partly because Scotland's population has grown and more people have moved from economic inactivity into looking for work. There is therefore a need to create more jobs to reduce the unemployment rate.
- Whilst employment levels are holding up, more employees are working fewer hours with people more likely to work part-time than before the recession. Underemployment is therefore a key issue if people want to work more hours than they are given the opportunity to do.
- By duration of unemployment, the biggest increase has been in the group who are long-term unemployed (12 months plus). This can have particular problems in terms of loss of skills and disengagement from the labour market.
- By age, there has been an increase in unemployment across all age groups but youth unemployment remains a key challenge.
- By gender, there has been a large movement of females from inactivity to being economically active. This could be a cyclical implication as households are looking for supplementary income.
- In relation to income, the level of inflation has been increasing faster than wages which has squeezed income levels.
- In relation to productivity, productivity usually rises during and after recessions but this has not been the case since 2008 with productivity staying flat/decreasing slightly. This raises the question of what happens when the economy recovers. If productivity increases, for example, employment levels may not increase and instead those in work will be rewarded with better pay.

Looking forward, the UK economy is expected to grow with long-term growth of approximately 2.5% a year. The concern is that the UK needs to move to a broader based economic recovery with less reliance on borrowing and housing market boom, but this has not happened to date. Nevertheless, the economy has probably reached what is termed as the 'escape velocity' and labour market conditions are likely to improve.

## 3. Question Time Panel Session

The panel session with Colin Borland, Danny Logue, Graeme Roy, Rona Hunter, Stephen Boyd and Stephen McConnachie began with the panel being asked what they thought the key messages from the State of the Economy presentation were. The responses were as follows:

- To secure a sustainable economic recovery, there needs to be business investment and not another housing bubble. Encouragingly access to credit is beginning to ease and businesses are now starting to invest in their businesses.
- Challenges around the trajectory of the labour market and the demand for jobs.
  - Underemployment, zero hours contracts and low wages are all significant concerns. Employment is increasing but not necessarily the quality of the jobs. In Edinburgh, for instance, zero hours contracts are common. Universal Credit aims to minimise the impact of part-time working by enabling people to retain some of their benefits to help ensure they are better off in work.
  - In terms of industries, manufacturing employment is declining but has historically been an important provider of well paid jobs. In contrast, the service industry has a high proportion of low pay, low skill jobs.
  - Differences in local labour markets and ensuring that local policy meets local needs.
  - Many of the new vacancies are for graduate level jobs, which raises the issue of how non-graduates can compete for these jobs?
- Redundancies will still happen and we will need to continue engaging with employers and employees through PACE to minimise the impacts of these situations. PACE will therefore continue to have an important role to play. Its continued effectiveness relies on the range of organisations supporting PACE as this partnership approach enables bespoke responses to be provided to employees and employers.

Following the panel's initial observations, the questions put forward by the Conference participants were as follows:

- **Q. Unemployment was below 4% before the recession. Is the Scottish Government as concerned about the need to return to similarly low unemployment levels?**
  - It is difficult to fully understand the current and future labour market because there is so much happening. A key question is where the long-term level of unemployment now lies. Can it conceivably return to 4% or will it now be historically higher?
  - In view of this uncertainty, the big issues for the Scottish Government now are underemployment, part-time work and skills. There are also significant differences between regions. For example, areas that had high levels of unemployment before the recession have had the largest increases in unemployment. This presents a real challenge.
- **Q. There has been decline in manufacturing employment over a number of decades. What can be done to support former manufacturing employees – many of whom are male and long-term unemployed?**
  - It is a real challenge as even investing in modern manufacturing, which brings greater technological progress and productivity, will not create many new jobs. Manufacturing has moved away from traditional, heavy industries and towards advanced manufacturing producing high-end products. Long-term unemployed males will therefore struggle to re-enter manufacturing without retraining.
  - Tackling the perceptions of long-term unemployed males is critical. Many do not want to re-train to work in service sector jobs but it is in these sectors (such as tourism and care) that the job opportunities are.
  - To change perceptions, and drawing on the experience of Ravenscraig, individuals need incentives to re-skill and also the opportunity to train in something that really interests them.

- Irrespective of the difficulties of working with long-term unemployed males, the changes to the welfare system mean it is now harder for them to disappear from employability services as they could lose their benefits entitlements.
- **Q. With examples of businesses leaving Scotland and relocating their operations abroad, how can we stop relocations and redundancies happening in the first place?**
  - This is a tricky situation as globalisation means that some employers will leave Scotland, while others will come to Scotland. Ensuring that Scotland attracts more jobs than it loses requires a long-term commitment to investing in the skills and infrastructure that Scotland can offer. Scotland, therefore, needs to build up credible propositions that help to retain and attract jobs and businesses.
  - While relocations overseas attract the most attention, it is important to recognise the importance of the small business base. These businesses typically have strong ties to the local area and are unlikely to relocate but receive little support when facing redundancy situations.
- **Q. With reference to the Caithness and North Sutherland Regeneration Partnership to support Dounreay's supply chain, what would a best practice skills transition programme look like?**
  - Listening to employers to find out what skills they need – and then shaping the skills provision accordingly.
  - Where there is a mismatch between the skills of workforce/ job seekers and what employers want, there needs to be good quality careers advice and support in place, backed up by a skills and training system.
  - Programmes have to connect to the workplace and real jobs – i.e. there have to be jobs at the end of it that individuals can compete for.
  - Be realistic so that local solutions can be designed and implemented that will actually work in the local area. For example, a strategy of creating new business starts and connecting with the Scottish Government's growth sectors is unlikely to significantly improve employment prospects in Scotland's deprived towns and communities.

## 4. Workshops – What can we do to Improve PACE?

The Conference concluded with participants being asked what could be done to improve redundancy support in Scotland. Participants were grouped into four different workshop settings. The feedback is a summary of the key points raised across the four workshops.

### Increase Number of Partner Organisations

The workshops suggested the need for PACE Partnerships to include or work more closely with the following:

- **Insolvency practitioners/administrators.** These are important intermediaries in redundancies and can direct employers and employees to PACE before the business is closed down. One participant suggested that the Insolvency Service could provide details of all firms in Scotland where there had been difficulties paying wages as this information could aid early intervention.
- **NHS/health services.** In response to Dr Gerry McCartney's presentation it was seen as important to have greater input from health organisations.
- **Voluntary sector.** Given the value in keeping occupied and active, it was suggested that the Volunteer Centre and SCVO could be more closely involved to advise on volunteering opportunities.
- **Training providers.** In some cases, people have found their certification had lapsed so PACE Advisers have needed help from training providers. It was advised that the Scottish Training Federation is already involved in PACE.
- **Citizens Advice Bureau.** In the Borders, CAB has proved very helpful in keeping PACE Partners/Advisers informed of local redundancies.

### Further Enhance Partnership Working

Participants felt partnership working had improved but there was scope for further improvements across Scotland's 18 local PACE Partnerships. Suggestions included:

- Scenario planning at the national level that helps to develop a national protocol for when major redundancies happen.
- Ensure all partners are aware of what each partner can offer in a redundancy situation – and how individuals can be referred to each partner organisation.
- Early notification across all partners of when a redundancy situation is likely.

### Sharing of Good Practice

- A number of participants felt it important to share the lessons learned from different PACE interventions across Scotland. This would include sharing of case studies, good practice, experiences, and lessons learned.
- Specific examples that would be helpful to have would be:
  - More on difficulties faced and how they were resolved. It was felt that the Conference focused too much on the positives.
  - Examples of how PACE has successfully intervened early in a redundancy process or even prevented redundancies.

### Improved Service Offers

- **Early intervention.** There is a need to understand what is meant by 'early intervention' – and what this involves in terms of delivery.
- **Literacy and numeracy.** For some individuals, it is important to be able to signpost them to local literacy and numeracy support.
- **Financial advice.** HMRC are no longer attending PACE events and are instead encouraging people to use their webinars. It was felt that this needs to be challenged as they should be represented at events in person.

- **IT skills training.** In some instances there has not been IT skills training for individuals, which has been a significant gap in the redundancy support.
- **Resilience and career management skills.** Redundancies will continue to happen and so it is important that we help make people resilient to redundancies. As such career guidance, employability support, and skills investments should be promoted.

### Tracking of Individuals

- Tracking is important as it demonstrates the effectiveness of PACE but also provides the means to re-engage with those who still face employment issues. We are good at tracking young people so could this be applied to PACE? Some form of tracking is definitely needed but needs to be resource efficient.
- However, this raises the question of at what point is PACE's work done? How much continuous support/future support should be provided?

### Better Understanding of Redundancies in Small Businesses

- As highlighted in Fergus Ewing MSP's presentation we do not know the number of redundancies in Scotland's small businesses. These affect all parts of Scotland and particularly rural areas. To help plan a more targeted response for small businesses it is important that the challenge is better understood. This includes:
  - Getting information on the number of redundant employees in small versus large businesses.
  - Maximising the information from existing work with rural/small business that is recorded but not collated as part of PACE support activity. For example:
    - CCS – details of redundant clients who contact the centre directly.
    - Adopt An Apprentice – a lot of small firms.
    - Contact centre clients.
    - Contact with partners – e.g. Jobcentre Plus, colleges, and local authority etc.

- Once we have better understanding of the small business situation, local meetings in all 18 local PACE Partnerships are needed to devise a strategy to support small and rural businesses. This should be supported with a national rural meeting for PACE Advisers where lessons learned are shared.

### Clarity on Funding for PACE

- There appears to be limited knowledge of what funding is available to support redundant employees and that the funding rules are complicated. As such, getting a funding package in place quickly to meet the needs of individuals is difficult.
- Suggestions for improvements included:
  - Clarity on who is eligible for funding of training. For example, does it include short-term contracts; zero hours; temporary agency workers, and voluntary redundancies where redeployment options are not viable?
  - Simplification of current funding streams for redundancy support through SDS and DWP.
  - More facts and figures on the uptake of training by individuals.
- One participant thought that there ought to be a separate PACE training budget, which is not within the Employability Fund. However, this was contested by another participant who felt a PACE training budget was not realistic and funding is best provided through the Employability Fund.

### Change of Name and Branding

- Some participants questioned whether the PACE brand is overly negative with the focus on 'redundancies'.
- It may be more conducive to highlight that PACE helps to support employers and gets good, skilled people into jobs. As such, it is more about achieving continued employment than redundancies.

## More Effective Marketing

- Marketing is a difficult issue for a service that deals with redundancies but it was felt important that PACE is better marketed so that employers (and particularly small businesses) are more aware of the service. This in turn will encourage employers to engage with PACE as early as possible. Indeed it was thought that there is no reason why employers about to make people redundant should not be contacting PACE. It was thought that introducing employer obligations would be a positive development.
- There were a number of ways that participants thought PACE could be better marketed, and these included:
  - Radio advertising.
  - Local authority business development teams.
  - Acas.
  - Business Gateway seminars – particularly start up seminars.
  - Banks.
  - Accountants.
  - HR firms.
  - Legal firms.
  - Employer groupings – e.g. FSB and Chambers.
- As part of the marketing it is vitally important to highlight that the service is **free** and **confidential**.
- It could also be valuable to set out who does what when it comes to redundancy – i.e. marketing materials that outline how PACE Partners combine to provide support for employees and employers.

## Update Website Information

- The current PACE web offering was seen to be much weaker than its face-to-face services. Criticisms of the content were that it was out of date, confusing and not easy to navigate, and was not focused at clearly identified groups. Suggested improvements were:
  - Developing different content for people who, for example, were made redundant at very short notice; after a long period of consultation; voluntary versus compulsory redundancy.
  - Separate PACE information for employers.
  - Training page links could be developed with examples of individuals who have accessed training.
- The My World of Work portal could be reviewed so that its content is more appropriate to individuals facing redundancy. Similarly Our Skills Force could be reviewed to respond to the needs of employers considering redundancies.



## 5. Key Messages from the Conference: What Can Be Done to Further Improve Redundancy Support in Scotland?

1. There are clear signs that the economy is beginning to recover but there will inevitably still be redundancy situations to respond to in Scotland. Each situation has significant implications for the people and families affected, such as on their income, confidence and self-esteem, and health. The PACE Partnership will therefore continue to be an extremely important and necessary service within Scotland.
2. The third PACE Conference provided an excellent opportunity to take stock of the achievements of the PACE Partnership since it was formally established in 2009 and look forward to consider how redundancy support in Scotland can be improved further.
3. The Conference highlighted the strong foundations on which the PACE Partnership can build. For example, it is characterised by:
  - Strong partnership working across a wide range of organisations.
  - A professional and discreet service that is quick to react and provides a wide range of services and supports in different settings that meet the needs of employers and employees.
  - Despite limited awareness of PACE before support was received, feedback from the employers and employees supported has been very positive.
4. Turning to the question of ‘What can be done to further improve redundancy support in Scotland?’, and learning from the presentations, videos and panel discussion that set the context in which the PACE Partnership operates, the Conference workshops suggested there were opportunities around the following.
  - Increase the number of organisations involved in the PACE Partnership.
  - Further enhance partnership working.
  - Better sharing of good practice and lessons learned.
  - Improve the range of services available to employees and employers.
  - Better tracking of individuals to understand how sustainable their post-redundancy destinations are.
  - Better understanding of the nature and scale of redundancies in Scotland’s small businesses, which particularly affect Scotland’s rural communities.
  - Greater clarity on what funding is available through PACE.
  - Consider the option of changing the name and/or branding of PACE to highlight the more positive message of support for continued employment.
  - Provide more effective marketing of the PACE Partnership and the supports available to employers and employees.
  - Update information on the PACE website to support marketing and awareness raising efforts.