

Minutes from the North Norfolk Skills Partnership Steering Group held at Merchants' Place, Cromer on 27 September 2007 at 10.00 am

Agenda Item		Action
	<p>Present: Roger Allen – Connexions Tracey Alston – Norfolk Adult Education Pauline Chamberlain – Fakenham College/Learning Community Tim Ellen – Paston College FE sector Karen Hudson (substitute for Melissa Wallis-Riches) – Meridian East Samir Jeraj – Research Graduate Rik Martin – Norfolk Learning Partnership Pat McIntosh – Norfolk Learning Difficulties John P Morgan – Skills Partnership Development Officer Su Pointer – Health and Social Care Sector Richard Polley – Learning and Skills Council Rena Savage – Norfolk Adult Education Robin Smith – North Norfolk District Council Geoff Thompson – North Norfolk District Council Don Venvell (Chair) Beatrix Ward – North Norfolk Community Partnership Julie Worrell – UEA representing HE Sector</p>	
1	<p>Introduction and Welcome DV welcomed everyone to the meeting. As there were some new attendees, everyone introduced themselves.</p>	
2	<p>Apologies: Jon Holt – Jobcentre Plus Jan Munn – Learning System Group Melissa Wallis-Riches – Meridian East Judy Youngs – Norfolk Adult Education Steve Walker – GMB Union Learning Rep Andy Williams – Fakenham College</p>	
3	<p>Minutes of the Last Meeting The minutes were accepted as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.</p>	
4	<p>Matters Arising DV brought an article in Thursday's EDP to the attention of the meeting. It expressed the concern of the region's top manufacturing companies at the lack of skilled workers locally. RP commented that there was little involvement with Train to Gain which could address this problem. JM said the road show promoting Train to Gain was not coming to North Norfolk and that two local employers who had requested their help had received no response. SP said the care sector had benefited from Train to Gain and she suggested finding examples where this had made a difference to encourage others. It was agreed to respond to this article. With reference to item 5, RA said that the online prospectus will be available across the whole of Norfolk as an information resource from now onwards.</p>	
5	<p>Issues to be Raised by Individual Members RP suggested publishing the objectives of this group to clarify its role. DV said the Chairs of the Skills Partnership and Business Forum were having a review session and had to give account of what they had achieved. The results of the research being undertaken by SJ would be significant and would be communicated to Paston, adult education and the UEA. JW commented that the new Vice Chancellor at the UEA would like to know more about the Skills Partnership. RS said that it is necessary to look at the Partnership's original mission – to be a steering single voice where there is market failure. There is a need to be proactive and demonstrate coherence. TE remarked that PR is important in order to catch the attention of business and that</p>	

	<p>personal contact is necessary. RP asked if the Skills Partnership strategy could be published. JM said this was available but he would put it in a more accessible format. DV suggested putting an article in the EDP. SP said that the main purpose of this group was to respond to the needs of employers and help training providers to engage with employers. Priorities in the strategy should be aligned from the results of the survey. Good practice should be shared. It was agreed to review the Action Plan at each meeting.</p> <p>RS informed the Partnership about the progress on the enterprise centre at North Walsham. There had been a feasibility study and now a business plan was being prepared. All being well an application for funding would be made by January. He hoped EEDA would build the centre and that the Business Forum and Skills Partnership would have their headquarters there. It would house training rooms and have access to learning and virtual business support. Businesses wanted a skills centre set up to address the lack of skills locally.</p> <p>RS has written a new service plan which is aligned with Shaping Norfolk's Future. He will bring this to the group. The Skills Partnership and Business Forum will be instrumental in future economic development plans of the District Council.</p>	<p>JM</p>
<p>6</p>	<p>Projects Update</p> <p><i>i) Action Research IAG Project Proposal</i> It was proposed to set up IAG learning gateways in each of the seven main towns. These would identify training needs which could be fed through to training providers. A full application had been made to Investing in Communities (IIC) for funding which had been approved. The rest of the funding was secured. JM was well on the way to getting these all established. Sheringham, Cromer, Fakenham and Stalham were already set up and he was in discussion with North Walsham and the Area Partnerships in Holt and Wells. Once they were all set up they would be publicised to raise their profiles. Outputs would be collated and training needs reported back to this Partnership. RS mentioned that the virtual business support would be an asset for IAG centres.</p> <p><i>ii) Graphic Design request for support</i> A paper on this had been circulated. There was concern from all at the insufficient information provided and it was agreed that the Partnership could not support this request.</p> <p><i>iii) Other initiatives – migrant workers, LDD</i> JM had attended a meeting with the Benjamin Foundation and Meridian East about a proposed centre for disadvantaged groups which would provide skills development and training. An application for funding had been made to IIC and the Benjamin Foundation had provided some money. There will be a feasibility study and then a business plan. JM will ensure the feasibility study will involve the Skills Partnership as this would be a multi-million project if it went ahead. RM will provide information on a mobile IAG that they are hoping to develop. SJ had done some research on the issue of migrant workers and had some information which he would circulate. He said it is hard for these workers to complete benefit forms and they suffered isolation. There is a County-wide ESOL (English Speaking Other Language) group which is looking at issues. Adult Education offer ESOL courses. SP said an interactive CD Rom had been produced to help people on work placements. A survey had also been done in the social care sector giving details of EU and non-EU workers and their job roles and skills levels. She could make a copy of the report available.</p>	<p>RM SJ</p>
<p>7</p>	<p>Other Matters/Reports</p> <p><i>i) Development Officer</i> JM had nothing further to report.</p>	

	<p><i>ii) Research Worker</i> The survey is ready for dispersal next week. There will also be an online option which will not have the background. The total business stock will be targeted but there will be a higher hit rate for larger businesses. The return date will be set once the questionnaire has been finally agreed. SJ will collate the responses. It is hoped to get a 10% response rate.</p> <p><i>iii) Financial</i> JM reported that the spending is similar to previous reports.</p>	
8	<p>Appointment of Vice Chair It was suggested this should be an independent person, perhaps someone from business. It was agreed to bring nominations to the next meeting.</p>	All
9	<p>Events and Publicity It is necessary to put together some publicity materials. It was agreed that this should be put out to tender together with creation of an identity for the Partnership. There will be an opportunity at the launch of the IAGs to publicise the Partnership. A website is also being developed. It was agreed to put this meeting's minutes on that website. JM said he would circulate details of the website once it was done. It is important to be transparent about membership of this group and JM requested all members to send him their up to date logos for inclusion on the website.</p>	JM All
10	<p>AOB, other venues and Next Meeting Dates JW said the Partnership were welcome to go to the University out of term time so it was agreed to meet there during the week beginning 8 January 2008. Other venues suggested were Oddfellows Hall in Sheringham, the Conference Centre at Fakenham College and the Nelson Room at Paston. It was agreed to hold the next meeting on Wednesday 21 November at 10.00 am and PC agreed to find out if Fakenham College would be available then.</p> <p>JM was delighted to inform the meeting that Merchants' Place had won the National Action for Market Towns Award and five of its projects had been shortlisted for European awards.</p> <p>The meeting closed at 12.05 pm.</p>	PC

Signed:

Dated: