

**Minutes from the North Norfolk Skills Partnership Steering Group held at  
Merchants' Place, Cromer on 8 July 2008 at 10.00 am**

<b>Agenda Item</b>		<b>Action</b>
	<p><b>Present:</b>            Roger Allen – Connexions            Jon Holt – Jobcentre Plus            John P Morgan – Skills Partnership Development Officer            Jan Munn – 14-19 Learning Systems Group            Richard Polley – Learning and Skills Council            Robin Smith – North Norfolk District Council            Denise Treissman – Learning for Everyone            Don Venvell (Chair)            Judy Youngs – Norfolk Adult Education            Linda Newcombe representing Tim Ellen, Paston College?            Julie Schofield – UEA</p>	
1	<p><b>Introduction and Welcome</b>            DV welcomed everyone to the meeting and apologised for the lack of a formal agenda. This had been mainly because JPM had been working on an Article 10 audit of a project which had finished in 2005.</p>	
2	<p><b>Apologies:</b></p> <p>Ian Doughty – North Norfolk Business Forum            Tim Ellen – Paston College FE sector            David Martin – Business Link            Rik Martin – Norfolk Learning Partnership            Pat McIntosh – Norfolk Learning Difficulties            Su Pointer – Health and Social Care Sector            Geoff Thompson – North Norfolk District Council            Steve Walker – GMB Union Learning Rep            Beatrix Ward – North Norfolk Community Partnership            Andy Williams – Fakenham College            Julie Worrell – UEA representing HE Sector</p>	
3	<p><b>Centre for Enterprise</b>            Papers were circulated giving details of this project. RS reported that, some time ago, he had had the aspiration to create an enterprise centre which would bring on entrepreneurial skills. He had researched one or two models to emulate and had recently met with education leaders to seek their support for a centre. Following discussions, it was agreed the facilities in the centre should be broadened to contain some learning zones for the new diplomas.</p> <p>RS was concerned about how this could be funded and therefore visited a similar building in York built by the Helmsley Group. This Group could build the centre by the end of next year. RS intended to take his proposal to Cabinet in September but would like to hold a joint meeting of the Business Forum and Skills Partnership in August to hear a presentation on the proposed centre by the Helmsley Group. The centre would be leased back to the Council who would invest between £1m and £1.5m. RS hoped EEDA would also invest in this project, the total cost of which would be between £3.5m and £4m. RS circulated a picture of what the building could look like.</p> <p>If the financial and business model works RS proposed creating a second building on new employment land at Holt so there would be centres in both the east and west of the District. Ian Doughty had proposed a similar project for Melton Constable so the second could be based there instead.</p>	

	<p>The Skills Partnership and Business Forum would take up residence at the centre and the Virtual Business Support project would also be based there. It would also house an innovation hub. RS stated that it would not be managed work space but more of a learning and trading environment. He hoped people of all ages would be more able to manage risk taking and have a better understanding and judgement of the risks. RS asked for the endorsement of the Skills Partnership to this project.</p> <p>JM commented that it would be useful for young people to have the opportunity to experience this centre through the diplomas as it would not be like school. It is also very important to have local facilities. Since the meeting with RS, two consortia are keen to be involved in the project. At the moment it is very difficult to say what the take-up of the diplomas will be, but the first one had 40 people on it. She clarified that some learning will take place in schools, some at the centre, depending on what the course is. Diplomas were not aimed at less able students as they were worth four or more GCSEs. The Fakenham centre was focusing on construction and other centres would focus on different vocational areas. The diploma system would be a challenge as students would still need to do the core curriculum. Having a local centre would reduce travel for students.</p> <p>RS also wanted to develop a single market place in North Norfolk based around procurement to enable smaller local businesses to bid for public sector expenditure.</p> <p>DV was concerned about how much discussion there had been with heads of schools. JM reassured him that all schools were fully aware of the proposals and RS was pleased to report that everyone involved seemed to speaking with one voice. RA commented that it was important to include provision for those who were NEET as this was high on the national and local agenda. Some were looking at self-employment and the centre could give them the necessary skills. DT commented that the centre would be important for adults, giving them an opportunity to retrain locally.</p> <p>RS had held several meetings with EEDA and they were prepared to give the land free of charge plus invest £0.5m. The Council had offered £0.5m but RS hoped they would increase this to £1m. RS would like the official support of this group and DV agreed to write a letter of support. JM will also contact the Princes Trust about a letter of support.</p> <p>RS was thanked for his presentation.</p>	<p>DV JM</p>
<p>4</p>	<p><b>Issues to be Raised by Individual Members</b></p> <p>DT informed the group that there were now 7 IAG information points in the market towns and there had been appointments at all of these. She will bring a report on the project to the next meeting. There had been a very successful adult learners week with over 400 people in attendance. There was a magazine in the pack circulated at the beginning of the meeting which contained more information. Merchants' Place had been very successful over the last two years.</p> <p>JM circulated several documents about the diplomas containing information on where they were taking place, who was organising them and progress so far. There is still a lot of work to be done but plans are being ratified now.</p> <p>RA had attended a meeting at Holt Hall and was keen to do something for people who were NEET. National IAG standards for young people were available for people to access and use on the DCSF website. The concept is to work towards an IAG kitemark. He suggested the group look at these standards.</p>	

	<p>JY reported that Ian Doughty had agreed to sit on an interview board for a recent appointment. The Learning for Life in Norfolk Partnership were working together to decide how best to meet the needs of informal learning. Adult Education was developing a website forum to identify duplication or gaps. JY suggested this could be demonstrated at a future meeting.</p> <p>The UEA had held its first debate at The Forum on low carbon initiatives. The Forum was being redeveloped to include hi-tech plasma screens, an auditorium, BBC suite and 32 laptops. There will be an event on at the Forum on 15 and 16 July.</p> <p>Paston had applied for planning permission to build on the new site and hoped to hear soon. They will then apply for funding. A lot of work has already been done. There has been no decision on the use of the current building. RP commented that there will be many opportunities to make use of Paston. He also pointed out that they had received an excellent Ofsted Report and applications to attend were at their highest level.</p> <p>Reepham High School Sixth Form is due to open in September 2009.</p> <p>The NNCP has been reconstituted and a number of organisations do not now sit on the Board, including Paston and the LSC. However, DV is still a Board member.</p> <p>JH informed the group that two contracts had been let beginning this month. One was to target those people who were particularly vulnerable, eg disabled, homeless etc, and help them develop appropriate skills. The other was to do with intermediate labour markets and social enterprises.</p> <p>DV had attended a conference regarding encouraging young people to volunteer. There were a number of issues but it was agreed that voluntary work would help prepare young people for employment. RA said there was a good website 'be inspired/involved?' which gives you opportunities for volunteering in your area.</p> <p>JPM reported that all is going well with the Gateway project. NNCP funding is required and he will make a submission. He is also waiting to hear whether he has received Interreg funding.</p> <p>RS was concerned about funding for Merchants' Place from NNCP and felt there should be a robust defence of its case as it enabled NNCP to meet many LAA targets. Their next meeting was on 29 July. He felt there should be a letter of support from this group recognising the importance of the centre.</p>	
<p><b>5</b></p>	<p><b>Next Meeting Dates</b>  The next meeting is on 9 September and it was agreed to hold it at Merchants' Place. DV will not be available for the meeting on 21 October.</p> <p>The meeting closed at 12.00 pm.</p>	

Signed: .....

Dated: .....