

**Minutes from the North Norfolk Skills Partnership Steering Group held at
Merchants' Place, Cromer on 9 September 2008 at 10.00 am**

Agenda Item		Action
	<p>Present: Roger Allen (RA) – Connexions David Martin (DM) – Business Link Jason Middleton (JMid) – Shaping Norfolk's Future John P Morgan (JPM) – Skills Partnership Development Officer Jan Munn (JMunn) – 14-19 Learning Systems Group Linda Newcombe (LN) representing Tim Ellen, Paston College Richard Polley (RP) – Learning and Skills Council Robin Smith (RS) – North Norfolk District Council Jose Socao (JS) – North Norfolk District Council Geoff Thompson (GT) – North Norfolk District Council Merlin Tolley (MT) – North Norfolk District Council Denise Treissman (DT) – Learning for Everyone Beatrix Ward (BW) – North Norfolk Community Partnership Judy Youngs (JY) – Norfolk Adult Education Mark Stead (MS) – Easton College</p>	
1	<p>Election of Vice/Chair for today's meeting In the absence of the Chairman, it was proposed by RS and agreed that JPM chair the meeting.</p>	
2	<p>Introduction and Welcome JPM welcomed everyone to the meeting and everyone introduced themselves.</p>	
3	<p>Apologies: J Bloomfield - Health and Social Care Sector Mike Castle – Stalham with Happening Area Partnership Pauline Chamberlain – Fakenham College Ian Doughty – North Norfolk Business Forum Tim Ellen – Paston College FE sector Jon Holt – Jobcentre Plus Rik Martin – Norfolk Learning Partnership Pat McIntosh – Norfolk Learning Difficulties Su Pointer – Health and Social Care Sector Sharif Sharif – Easton College Don Venvell – Chairman Skills Partnership Steve Walker – TCHC Train to Gain Broker Andy Williams – Fakenham College Julie Worrell – UEA representing HE Sector</p>	
4	<p>Minutes of the Last Meeting On the last page and the penultimate paragraph of item 4 regarding the Gateway project, the second sentence should read "The drawing down of NNCP funding is required ...". Apart from this amendment the minutes were agreed as a correct record.</p>	
5	<p>Matters Arising There were no matters arising.</p>	
6	<p>Updates <i>Interreg Funding</i> RS and GT had attended a meeting about this the previous week in Holland. GT reported that it had been a good meeting with the six of the seven European partners for this funding in attendance together with the consultants. The bid had included further funding for both the IAG and VSB projects, however it had been rejected. The meeting was to discuss how to progress. Two partners had now dropped out leaving five to modify the bid in the light of comments received in order that it will be</p>	

successful. It had been agreed to bid again in January.
RS commented that in order to make a difference in North Norfolk it is important to have several projects including the Enterprise Centre, IAG, VSB and local procurement.
JMid pointed out that after April 2010 any projects had to be in line with EEDA strategy. GT informed him that EEDA were content with these projects.
The financial model needed to be reworked and match funding spent.

Diplomas

(Note from Andy Williams read out – John, do you want to include any of this?)

JMunn informed the group that the Fakenham Construction Centre was now operational with 44 students attending. It is hoped to open the centre up to the community eventually. The Central area had started the Creative and Media diploma. Work is going on to prepare students and schools for future diplomas in this area including land based and the environment. It is hoped that by 2010 many lines of learning will be available locally. The next group of applications, including travel and tourism and information technology will be presented for approval towards the end of October/beginning of November. It is important to maintain the link with the Business Forum. Ideally all young people will get good quality training without too much travelling, although not all schools and colleges can offer all diplomas.

RA informed the group that there will be a Diploma Roadshow in January.

DM asked how the diploma activity blended with the Apprentice Matching Service. RP explained that anyone of any age was able to apply to become an apprentice now. Employers will be able to provide details of vacancies to training providers so people can make informed decisions bearing in mind availability of work. There is to be a big marketing campaign to encourage employers to use this system. JMunn informed the group that this scheme is much broader than diplomas and will form part of the career guidance to students at 12/13 by including taster sessions before they choose their options. DM stated that business needs to know about this and said that Business Link will be pleased to help and that the Business Forum is the ideal route for promotion. RA commented that there are a variety of advice providers and it is important they all give consistent advice.

DT asked whether there would be adult provision for those wishing to retrain and JMunn said this would happen in the future. RA said that there also needed to be provision for those who were NEET. RP commented that it is important that opportunities happen in the right place at the right time and that Train to Gain was still underspent. RS was concerned that there would not be sufficient people to verify competence but LN said that there was more money this year to put people through the verifying units. RP commented that the FE sector should respond to the needs of business.

JMid questioned whether the right diplomas are being run in this area and JMunn agreed that this needed to be looked at on a County-wide basis. Those courses which are not required in this area should not be developed.

RS remarked that some diplomas should include training on self-employment skills and mobility and production of a business plan.

JMunn said there are 17 lines of learning which the Government said the County had to offer by 2012 so each one would be available somewhere in the County but the most important to this district should be offered very locally.

Centre for Enterprise

JS stated that this had evolved from just a managed work space to more emphasis on alternative options for self-employment and integrating diplomas into the Centre. Following a meeting, the Helmsley Group had offered to provide funding. Additional funding will be requested from ERDF and EEDA. In order to gain funding from ERDF the main focus of the Centre will need to be on business support and start-up

businesses. The Centre may be able to open up to adult learners to increase skills. A Cabinet report is being prepared looking at the various funding options. The ground floor of the building could be reserved for training with the first and second floors as offices and business start-up units.

Adult Education

There is a nationwide Government initiative to eradicate low skills. The County Council has now signed this Skills Pledge which seeks to get people up to a minimum of NVQ Level 2.

This is the first local authority to offer e-enrolment to courses and this has been quite successful.

Paston College Developments

LN circulated pictures of the proposed new College to be built by the Victory Swim and Fitness Centre. Paston is applying for planning permission and funding. The College will cost £22m and will be an environmentally friendly building for 1,000 students. Construction will start in 2009 and the first students will be accepted in September 2011. The primary focus will be on 14-19 year olds.

There was concern that adult learners would not be catered for but RP said there was opportunity for expansion on the site. RA felt this was a good opportunity to rethink the mix of provision. RS felt it was important to get the Griffon Area Partnership involved and to create links between the College and the Centre for Enterprise. He suggested a meeting be held between the Area Partnership, Skills Partnership, Business Forum and JMunn to discuss connections.

IAG Project

DT circulated a magazine about this. There are now seven IAG points across North Norfolk in the major towns for either a half or full day. Numbers fluctuated but the project was on target. The numbers in Cromer remained high. They were making contact with community groups and schools and distributing the newsletters and leaflets. They were also trying to organise an event per term in all the market towns. Funding was continuing for English, Maths and Business Admin until Easter. Business Admin skills to level 3 were being taught at Merchants' Place together with audio typing and medical secretarial skills. It is hoped to offer Aim Higher.

RA said that the leaflet needed to say something about Connexions and JPM apologised for this omission. There is still some work to be done on joining up and will liaise with RA about this.

The leaflet is being distributed through the gateways, exhibited in the foyer at the District Council and available at The Forum in Norwich

Virtual Business Support Project

So far 32 beneficiaries had been signed up to the project and there were seven on the waiting list as they were outside the Objective 2 area. Nine people had taken laptop loan agreements with six further waiting. There had been two training sessions on online booking for accommodation providers. There are to be four Enterprise Roadshows during the next five weeks with the first at Merchants' Place on Thursday. These will be two hour events including an inspirational talk and discussion of ideas. In October there will be an IT clinic session for existing businesses. There will also be video conferencing training sessions and group mentoring via Flash Meeting. The pilot had been supposed to end on 31 October but had been extended six weeks. The next phase is to find other funding partners to continue this project.

RS commented that this project is very important to create access for all to receive advice, training and information.

7	<p>Issues to be Raised by Individual Members</p> <p>BW informed the group that NNCP had set up three thematic groups. There are to be forums on 23, 24 and 29 September to discuss the issues and put together an action plan. It is important not to duplicate each other's work so she encouraged people to attend and inform the forums about what is going on already. She circulated invitations to the events.</p> <p>DM pointed out that it is important to discover the skills needs of businesses. However, businesses should take responsibility for this and say what they need. He felt the Business Forum sector round tables were fundamental to this. RS agreed and informed the group that money had been found to help establish more sector round tables. (There was already a well-established Tourism Round Table.)</p> <p>JPM circulated a leaflet from Voluntary Norfolk for information. Further copies were available if required.</p> <p>JPM had included with the agenda a draft report for NNCP. He asked for questions or amendments but there were none.</p>	
8	<p>Schedule for Future Meetings</p> <p>It was agreed to continue with a 6 to 8 week cycle, meetings to be held on Tuesday mornings. It was suggested one meeting could be held at the new construction centre in Fakenham. JPM agreed to circulate dates through to next summer shortly. The next meeting is on Tuesday 21 October at 10.00 am.</p>	JPM
9	<p>AOB</p> <p>There was no other business.</p> <p>The meeting closed at 12.00 pm.</p>	

Signed:

Dated: