

**Minutes from the Meeting of the North Norfolk Skills Partnership Steering Group  
held at Merchants' Place, Cromer on 28 April 2009 at 10.00 am**

Agenda Item		Action
	<p><b>Present:</b>            Pauline Chamberlain (PC) – Fakenham College            Richard Crook (RC) – Trade Union Learning Link            Margaret Drury (MD) – Norfolk and Suffolk Care Support Ltd            Tim Ellen (TE) – Paston College            Jon Holt (JH) – Jobcentre Plus            Rik Martin (RM) – Norfolk Learning Partnership            John P Morgan (JPM) – Skills Partnership Development Officer            Richard Polley (RP) – Learning and Skills Council            Gill Powell (GP) – North Norfolk Business Forum            Jose Socao (JS) – North Norfolk District Council            Geoff Thompson (GT) – North Norfolk District Council            Don Venvell (DV) – Chairman            Kevan Williams (KW) – Norwich Business School - UEA</p>	
1	<p><b>Introduction and Welcome</b>            DV welcomed everyone to the meeting, especially those attending for the first time. Everyone then introduced themselves.</p>	
2	<p><b>Apologies:</b>            Roger Allen – Connexions            Ian Doughty - NNBF            Paul Dunning – 14-19 Worker            Karen Hudson – Meridian East            David Martin – Business Link            Jan Munn – 14-19 Learning Systems Group            Su Pointer – Health and Social Care Sector            Robin Smith – NNDC EDU            Mark Stead - Easton            Denise Treissman – IAG            Steve Walker – TCHC, Skills Broker, Train to Gain            Beatrix Ward – North Norfolk Community Partnership            Julie Worrell – UEA representing HE Sector            Judy Youngs – Norfolk Adult Education</p>	
3	<p><b>Minutes of Meeting held on 24 February 2009</b>            The Chairman signed the minutes of the special meeting held on 24 February as well as the minutes of the ordinary meeting on 20 January.</p>	
4	<p><b>Matters Arising</b>  <i>IAG Gateways</i>            JPM reported that the IAG gateways were very stretched especially as the Response to Redundancy involved some team members. The project had started in 2007 and was funded until December 2009. The target was to reach 1750 people and thus far more than 1100 have been assisted. Over 50 people have gained skills for life qualifications and 85 found work or assisted to improved work. There were six people delivering the service but one is now having a sabbatical so there will be a review to fill the gap. The gateways are centred on the market towns but Cromer has the biggest demand. This project has been very successful but is always looking at ways to improve.</p> <p><i>VBS</i>            The initial phase of this project finished at the end of December. The Objective 2 closure report has been submitted and accepted. There have been 46 beneficiaries. JPM will circulate the closure report at the next meeting. The continuation of this</p>	<p align="right"><b>JPM</b></p>

project forms part of the Interreg bid. At present the focus is to service the 26 people with laptop loans and work through the current waiting list utilising current resources.

#### *Interreg Bid*

GT reported that there were now 8 European partners bidding for 5.4m Euros of which our portion was 542,000 Euros, approximately £478,000 depending on the exchange rate. Other partners are from Germany, the Netherlands, Luxembourg and Belgium. The project is aimed at matching a skilled workforce to the needs of local businesses. The IAG gateways and VBS form part of this bid. A single market place encouraging local procurement is also included. The idea is to provide a portal to allow smaller local businesses to tender for public sector contracts. Apprenticeships will be encouraged as will better regulation.

It is a very exciting project although very complicated owing to the different partners and languages. This may present the opportunity to increase business links with these countries as well as promote this area and possibly broaden people's horizons. The result of the bid will be heard in July and GT was very hopeful of success. The Skills Partnership and Business Forum are very important partners in this bid.

#### *NN Centre for Enterprise*

JS reported that EEDA will not now be part-funding this although they are still donating the land. There is therefore a funding gap which the County Council is being asked to fill and discussions are ongoing. There is to be a meeting next week between public and private sector partners to consider the ramifications of private funding. Once ERDF are happy that all arrangements are in accordance with their rules the project will proceed to the next stage, which is going out to tender. The Council is recruiting a new consultant to prepare an updated feasibility study and tender documents. It is linking with the UEA to prepare 3D modelling to get a better idea of the interior of the centre, its space and facilities. JS still hopes that construction will start by the middle of next year.

#### *14-19 Diplomas*

TE commented that these are really important and it is vital they are successful. PC reported that there was not as much take-up for the construction diploma next year. The facilities at Fakenham should be used more and she would like Jobcentres to use them. Practical skills are being integrated with use of IT which is vital to survive in these industries. JPM commented that diplomas provide the whole package of literacy, numeracy and IT skills. With the growing trend towards self-employment, people need all these skills.

#### *Paston College*

TE reported that there was no more news. The LSC's budget had been taken up by projects which were more advanced. He still hoped to get some funding to improve facilities at Paston. RP commented that the LSC has committed £1.2bn over the next four years nationally.

#### *Train to Gain*

RP reported that, after a slow start, this has sped up. Extra money has been allocated to support post-16 learning to ensure all those 16 year olds who want to stay on in education can.

#### *NNCP Thematic Group – Better Jobs and Prospects*

JPM circulated papers showing the three main themes of this group. The initial document is being submitted to the Thematic Group next week.

#### *Future of Norfolk Learning Partnership (NLP)*

RM reported that the Strategic Board had been disbanded and only the operational

	<p>organisation was continuing until 2010. Funding from the LSC was now going to Children's Services instead. RM's post was not required so he would not be with the NLP much longer.</p> <p><i>LMI Tables</i> These had been circulated. The relevant statistics had been highlighted. The figures from July/August to now showed a dramatic increase. JPM agreed to circulate figures for North Norfolk broken down in wards per working age population when available.</p>	<b>JPM</b>
<b>5</b>	<p><b>Recession Summit 20 April</b> JPM hoped to have a final report available soon. However, in the meantime, he had circulated a summary of the top three issues and actions from each of the 14 tables. He pointed out that this was a first draft and was subject to approval and change. This group has an opportunity to respond to the document so if there are any errors, omissions or areas where there should be greater emphasis, this could be fed in. JPM asked the group to let him or Robin have any suggested amendments as soon as possible. There had been 140 delegates from the public, private and voluntary sectors and there were very good discussions. The report produced as a result of the Special Meeting of this group had been presented at the summit. TE was concerned that schools had not been represented as these were vital for skills development. He agreed to write something on behalf of schools. RP commented that Jan Munn attended meetings with head teachers so was able to pass on their thoughts. It was agreed that head teachers should see the action plan.</p>	<b>TE</b>
<b>6</b>	<p><b>Norfolk Skills Conference 21 April</b> A number of people from this partnership had attended this conference. RP informed the group that the major sponsor of this was the LSC and it reinforced the need to keep trading through the recession. There were some good discussions and a report is being written from the output of the tables which should be available soon. JPM was concerned that several speakers interchanged the words 'skills' with 'qualifications' and highlighted the need for level 4 qualifications as the solution for the UK to be globally competitive as opposed to working on the competences that employers want..</p>	
<b>7</b>	<p><b>LSC</b> This had been covered previously. RP also mentioned the Big Skill nominations which closed on Thursday. The award will be presented on 8 June.</p>	
<b>8</b>	<p><b>LAP Recession Roadshows</b> There have been two of these so far at North Walsham and Fakenham. There were 7 or 8 agencies at North Walsham and about 100 people came through the door. JPM felt this should be viewed as a pilot. Fakenham held theirs last Tuesday. Unfortunately this had not been well attended owing to short notice and poor communication. It was suggested these events should be renamed to be more upbeat. JPM agreed to obtain a detailed report and liaise with Beatrix Ward about future events.</p>	
<b>9</b>	<p><b>NNSP Action Plan</b> It was agreed to wait until the major recommendations from the summit were published and then alter the action plan in response.</p>	
<b>10</b>	<p><b>Issues to be Raised by Individual Members</b> KW informed the group that he is a Director of the Norwich Business School and is involved in liaison between that school and other organisations. This is the largest school in the UEA with just under 1,000 students and he wished to find out how it could be used more around Norfolk. They had secured funding to support three groups through the recession:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Managers/professionals made redundant or risking redundancy</li> <li>• Unemployed recent graduates</li> <li>• Small businesses</li> </ul>	

	<p>The areas of intervention will be skills, career changes, coaching and mentoring and training courses. The recession will end and their aim is to help businesses be ready for the upturn. It is also important to improve their carbon performance. A key point is to have local delivery of training wherever this is relevant. Delivery will start from the end of May to be completed by the end of September 2010.</p> <p>A mentoring project called Norfolk Knowledge is already ongoing. It was agreed to circulate a summary of this. DV commented that people retiring from work may be willing to volunteer to spend some time mentoring others. PC asked if this project was be run at colleges and KW agreed to find out.</p> <p>PC informed the group about an environmental awareness event to be held at Pensthorpe on 16 May and circulated flyers.</p> <p>JPM informed the Partnership about an event to be held at the Holt Youth Project of Saturday 9 May. This is part of the IAG gateway and is being held in partnership with Adult Education and Aim Higher to promote learning and skills.</p> <p>JPM reported that L4E are organising a celebration of achievements on Friday 3 July. Norman Lamb is due to be guest of honour. The event will feature clients of Gateway, Springboard, VBS etc initiatives run by the team and their achievements – achievement in terms of qualifications and personal ambitions. A big part of the evening will be the qualifications gained on the L4E courses run at Merchants Place – business admin and skills for life.</p>	<b>KW</b>
<b>11</b>	<p><b>AOB</b></p> <p>The Business Forum is holding a ‘speed dating’ event jointly with the voluntary sector at Fakenham Racecourse on 20 May. They also have their AGM on 17 June at Oddfellows Hall in Sheringham.</p> <p>DV thanked RM for his contributions to the Skills Partnership meetings as this may be his last meeting.</p>	
<b>12</b>	<p><b>Dates of Next Meetings</b></p> <p>These are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>9 June 2009</li> <li>14 July 2009</li> <li>8 September 2009</li> </ul> <p>The meeting closed at 11.50 am.</p>	

Signed: .....

Dated: .....