

Third Sector Skills Advisory Group
21 July 2010
COVER, Little Chesterford



Present:

Andrew Cogan – COVER (Chair)
 Nikki Bennett - COVER
 Mary Sanders - Children Matter East
 Vanda Bailey – Beds and Luton LP
 Sarah Elliott – HTDC
 Jim Church – JCP
 Toby Cullingham – Community Connections
 Tim Cracknell – Cambs GET Group
 Simon Waldron – Suffolk Learning Consortium
 Linda Riley – Voluntary Sector Training
 Sue O’Gorman – NIACE
 Julia Brady – National Apprenticeship Service
 Judith Kay – EEDA
 Mark Barnsley - ACER

In attendance: Bob Reeve, Janice Mossey (minutes)

		Action
1.	Apologies Helen Mann (Skills Funding Agency), Steph Luke (Skills Funding Agency), Ruth McCallum (Cambridge CVS), Pet Thornton (Disability Essex)	
2.	Minutes of the meeting of 20.4.10 The minutes were agreed.	
3.	Matters arising <u>Learner Support Qualification</u> The Learner Support Qualification course starts in September at Great Yarmouth College with up to 25 places. The College may deliver the qualification in other areas. Other providers offering the qualification are Barnfield College, Cambridge Regional College, Epping Forest College and City College Norwich. <u>Functional Skills</u> Nikki hasn't received a response to her email. Nikki to contact Rob Shaw.	NB
4.	Engage and Enable TA Project Progress Report Nikki's report was circulated. The first claim has been submitted on profile. All partners except Cambridgeshire had submitted their claims and evidence.	
5.	Review of Regional Third Sector Skills Action Plan It was agreed that the name of the plan should remain as it is and that the plan is still useful as a list of the aims and objectives that we want to achieve. It was felt that it is important as a tool to promote ourselves. It was agreed that we should complete the progress columns as far as possible. Let Nikki have any comments and contributions on progress. There was a discussion about the TSNLA and whether it is still functioning. Sue and Nikki to look into this further. Work has started on a prospectus/resource pack. Jane Falkner (COVER) has started working on case studies.	ALL NB/SOG
6.	Learn East Member County Activity Reports <u>Hertfordshire – Sarah Elliott</u> Hertfordshire County Council has provisionally agreed £90,000 for VCS workforce development with Adult Care Services and £10,000 for work with Children, Schools and Families supporting skills advice and teacher training courses. There are only 2 terms to work with as this funding is until March 2011. Their new website is progressing and should be up and running by the autumn. Their Management Committee is using a consultant to carry out a review of their practice and services.	

Suffolk – Simon Waldron

JC+ Flexible New Deal - all sub-contractors and partners have received notice of cancellation of this contract, to finish June 2011. Exit plans and compensation claims are being drawn up, although SAVO is not making a claim due to careful planning. It may be that their contract holder will pick up one of the new 'Work Programme' contracts and continue to work with existing sub-contractors and partners.

NLDC funding - on July 15th Suffolk County Council and the Suffolk Learning Consortium held a meeting to assess applications and award funds. £166,500 was divided between 31 projects.

MIF ESOL funding - Suffolk County Council asked the Suffolk Learning Consortium to publicise their Migration Impact Fund English for Speakers of other Languages funding to the Third Sector, seeking bids of up to £8,000 (much needed funding due to a shortfall of ESOL within the county). Suffolk County Council asked them to publicise this funding due to their ability to post on their website instantly; the Application Form and Guidance Notes were based on those used for NLDC funding to make applications easier.

Apprenticeship Scheme - after a six month trial in West Suffolk between County and District Councils and the Third Sector, funding has been secured to continue this project for another year, and they have signed up two apprentices to a Third Sector organisation.

Practical Toolkits - funded through BASIS2, www.practicaltoolkits.org.uk; a 'Starter Toolkit' has been added with all you need to know about setting up a new organisation. During the first six months of 2010 they had 190 sign-ups for the first 8 toolkits.

PTLLS Course - Suffolk County Council have organised a course for Suffolk Learning Consortium members funded through ESF. They also provide PTLLS courses for organisations who have won NLDC funding.

IfL - the Institute for learning has appointed Regional Advisors who will provide local support and publicity from September 2010 for 6 months. Judith Roberts will cover East Anglia and Simon will cover East Midlands. Simon has also been asked to produce a Case Study on his role as a Volunteer Connection and how he hopes his role as a Regional Advisor will raise the profile of the Third Sector in delivering learning.

LSIS TLC - launched at the Learning and Skills Improvement Service Conference in June (see report on www.learnEAST.org.uk), 'Teaching and Learning Central', developed in partnership with IfL and CETT, will soon be on the Excellence Gateway and builds on the existing CPD systems of SLC's (Subject Learning Coaches), eCPD (PDA's and e-Guides) and STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths.).

Suffolk Learning Consortium has been invited to help develop the e-Guides element following their involvement in the Advanced e-Guides programme.

Train to Gain L&M funding - Leadership and Management funding is still available and is easier to apply for through www.tchc.net.

Zoomerang - the Suffolk Learning Consortium has invested in an account for this on-line survey system and is offering the service to members / partners for a small fee.

Cambridgeshire – Tim Cracknell

Tim is chair of CVSIC and their meetings are taking place bi-annually. Their delivery agenda is changing rapidly. LPSA reward money is being cut and there are some Cambridgeshire VCS organisations, such as Care Network, which are not being paid for projects. They have a PTLLS course delivered by the WEA with BASIS2 funding. Their NLDC panel met last week as did their ESOL panel. MIF funding – there was only one VCS bid from the Women's Resources Centre. They held their Third Sector Assembly event in June and had a successful Adult Learning event in May with presentations from learning providers. The Interim Board meets next week.

	<p><u>Bedfordshire and Luton – Vanda Bailey</u> Their Adult Learning event was very successful and well attended. They also had a successful NLDC celebratory event yesterday. Their recent Capacity Building programme for community learning organisations went well with all learners successfully completing funding applications. A member consultation has been carried out which highlighted key issues about partnerships, funding etc. Interviews are taking place tomorrow for their Economic Participation project in Luton for Workability Champions to be trained as IAG advisers. They are awaiting confirmation from EEDA for a Learning Communities project in Bedfordshire on raising awareness. Their LSIS tender with Central Beds College was successful carrying out a skills audit working with 10 organisations (6 VCS) looking at what their needs are. With MIF funding they have a project working with 10 providers in the Fire Services and Police.</p> <p><u>Norfolk – Toby Cullingham</u> Local Operational Partnerships (LOPs), how the Norfolk CC 14-19 team work with clusters of high schools and word based learning providers. A meeting was facilitated with them and third sector representatives so that there is a clear and open channel through in terms of representation and being in the loop on information. We are helping set up that process that does not rely on me, as Norfolk Unites Co-ordinator, being the person who is always there. We will use the website to signpost. Last month, 870 different users and there are now over 80 members signed up. Adult Advancement and Careers Service tender. Three partnership requests were advertised and all IAG registered organisations were contacted to alert them to this in order to encourage partnership working. NHS Norfolk now using Norfolk Unites as an added means to contact relevant third sector organisations. Their ‘offers’ are advertised on our website and specific organisations registered on our website (under health) have been contacted to alert them to this. Norfolk County Council and YPLA reports recommending Norfolk Unites as an effective and efficient way to engage with relevant third sector organisations. Regional NOMS contract – alerted to this by Linda Riley from intelligence she gathered at a Peterborough meeting as to who were leading on the bids. All Learn East members were informed it was put on the Norfolk Unites general circulation and specific relevant organisations as registered under ‘ex/offenders’ were contacted.</p> <p><u>Essex – Linda Riley</u> They have achieved CES Level 1 PQASSO accreditation. They are developing more accredited modules with OCN such as Resources for Volunteers and Equality and Diversity relating to Customer Services. They have a regional project for L3 Volunteer Management with 67 people being trained from September to January. VST is now a Lantra centre. They put in an expression of interest for the NOMS project for the East of England. The Flexible New Deal/TNG contract is ending. They hope to link with Essex County Councillors and Chief Officers in October to work together on the Big Society.</p>	
7.	<p>EEDA Skills Strategy & Consultation Update Judith Kay reported on the progress of the East of England Skills Priority Statement looking at the broader aspect of skills provision for the future and key priorities for the region. The initial draft document has been on the EEDA website since June and a number of responses have been received. It is important that the VCS puts views forward. The second draft will be on the website this Friday. An alert email should be sent out asking for consultation responses. People can contribute to the consultation up to the end of August (www.eeda.org.uk/5172.asp). BIS will have the full draft document by 30th July.</p>	

8.	<p>Stakeholder Updates</p> <p><u>Children Matter East – Mary Sanders/Andrew Cogan</u> The Vetting and Barring Scheme has been halted. There is a place for VCS representation on the Cambridgeshire 14-19 Strategic Group.</p> <p><u>Jobcentre Plus – Jim Church</u> The Jobcentre Plus structure is under review at present. We should know by August whether the district structure will remain intact. There is now a framework for The Work Programme. Jim will circulate more information and the TNG presentation is attached with these minutes. The Flexible New Deal programme will end by June 2011. They would be pleased to hear about any volunteering opportunities for their staff. Send details to Roger (Jim to send contact details to Nikki).</p> <p><u>National Apprenticeship Service – Julia Brady</u> Structure and functions may be subject to review in autumn following the Comprehensive Spending Review. Kempston SFA offices will be relocating, new location yet to be confirmed. The freeze on marketing budgets across the civil service, including NAS is impacting on the ways of working. Julia would therefore appreciate support from Partner organisation in promoting Apprenticeships. NAS Employer Services Managers already made contact with a number of county leads and would be keen to attend events / workshops and provide information and support to VCS organisations who may be interested. Julia thanked Toby for including Apprenticeship information within their website including a link to NAS website following last presentation from Julia. If you'd like to include a link to NAS website, please contact Julia in the first instance. Apprenticeships are very high on the coalition government agenda. Public funding fully covers the costs of training 16-18 year olds. Adult apprenticeships attract approximately 50% of the funding, which means that training providers may charge a fee for training adult apprentices. The government recently reallocated £150m from Train to Gain into adult apprenticeships, which are seen as an increasing priority for 2010/11. The minimum apprenticeship wage will be changing from £95 per week to £2.50 an hour from 1 October 2010.</p> <p><u>Skills Funding Agency</u> Updates from Helen Mann had been circulated.</p> <p><u>ACER – Mark Barnsley</u> The Stepping Stones and Professional Development projects have over achieved on targets. ACER has successfully tendered to run the Support for Literacy, Language and Numeracy Programme through LSIS. The programme will target providers who are new to Skills for Life, offender learning institutions, employer facing providers, and also employers wanting to update the skills of their workforce. Mark to send more details and expression of interest form to Nikki.</p> <p><u>NIACE – Sue O’Gorman</u> NIACE have been commissioned to do the evaluation of the Engage and Enable project. Sue will be setting up interviews for one case study from each learning consortium. She will also be checking websites every 6 months. Nikki will be passing on her suggestions. It is important that there should be no gaps when providing data on the quarterly reporting template. There is an event on 21st September at Ickworth House near Bury St Edmunds. There will be speaker from BIS with case studies on transformation projects and different themes, and a panel at the end. Abi Patience will represent the Sector on it. Sue to do a brochure for it and send round.</p>	<p>JC</p> <p>JC</p> <p>MB</p>
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9.	Any other business There was no other business.	
10	Dates of future meetings 18 October 2010 10.30-12.30 at COVER 18 January 2011 10.30-12.30 at COVER	