

**Third Sector Skills Advisory Group
18 January 2011
COVER, Little Chesterford**



Present:

- Nikki Kikis – COVER (Chair)
- Mary Sanders - Children Matter East
- Vanda Bailey – Beds and Luton LP
- Sarah Elliott – HTDC
- Jim Church – JCP
- Toby Cullingham – Community Connections
- Simon Waldron – Suffolk Learning Consortium
- Linda Riley – Voluntary Sector Training
- Sue O’Gorman – NIACE
- Julia Brady – National Apprenticeship Service
- Helen Mann – Skills Funding Agency
- Mark Barnsley - ACER

In attendance: Bob Reeve, Janice Mossey (minutes)

		Action
1.	Apologies Tim Cracknell (Cambs GET Group), Ruth McCallum (Cambridge CVS), Andrew Cogan (COVER), Richard Boyd (Disability Essex)	
2.	Minutes of the meeting of 18.10.10 The minutes were agreed.	
3.	Matters arising <u>Item 6 EEDA Skills Priorities Statement</u> Judith Kay is now with the Skills Funding Agency. Nikki to find out who is taking the work forward. <u>Item 7 NIACE Efficiency Savings project</u> Nikki represents Learn East on the advisory panel. Simon and Linda took part in telephone interviews on their work around efficiency saving.	NB
4.	Engage and Enable TA Project Progress Report and Review of Regional Third Sector Skills Action Plan Nikki’s report had been circulated to the group. Her work with ACEVO is around future infrastructure support and capacity building. Nikki will circulate their report when it comes out towards the end of January/early February. The Group discussed the updated Skills Action Plan. The resource pack for commissioners is almost ready for printing. We need to know how many copies we would need to have printed. Please send Nikki or Janice the names and contact details of people to whom you think it would be useful to send a pack. It was agreed that the Skills for Life Action Plan should be revisited. The SfL Action Plan is attached with these minutes and will be on the agenda of the next meeting. As potential subcontractors working with prime contractors we need to make our experiences known to those who have influence. It was	ALL Attached

	<p>suggested we develop a template for everyone to use to offer the prime contractors. We could use our experiences, review our successful bids and take the elements that would show our skills in the best light. This will be discussed further at the next Learn East meeting.</p>	Learn East
5.	<p>Learning and Skills Delivery Models for Third Sector Providers</p> <p>There was a discussion and a SWOT analysis of the Skills Advisory Group was done (attached). Technical Assistance will continue after the demise of GO East. The landscape is changing but it was agreed that the Group still has a role to play. COVER is moving to Waterbeach in July and there is no available meeting room there. It was suggested that members could take turns in hosting meetings.</p>	Attached
6.	<p>Learn East Member partnership reports</p> <p><u>Suffolk – Simon Waldron</u> The ‘Work Programme’ - following the announcement of Prime Contractors, awaiting action from A4E, Avanta and Ingeus on subcontracting for end to end and support. NLDC funding - Suffolk County Council CLSD have now arranged free Safeguarding and REfLECT training for all organisations delivering NLDC funded learning. IfL - Regional Events in East Region. Well worth attending, last date is 25th January @ West Herts College, Watford Campus. To book please email judith.roberts@acer.ac.uk. A reminder that all consortia / lead partners should designate and sign up as an IfL Volunteer Connection to enhance their representation role. MyGuide - their partners are currently under target for supporting this programme and there will be another National press campaign in January to stimulate sign-up. LLUK Teacher Qualifications Review - Nikki and Simon are attending the second group review in London. LSIS Learning Fair East - 10th February in Cambridge. Simon has attended Learning Fairs in East Midlands and London and considers that they are well worth attending for briefings, workshops and networking. Practical Toolkits – www.trusteelearning.org fully updated over Christmas with new Code of Governance. They currently have 2,200 learners signed up on this package. LSIS Advanced Change Agents - will replace e-PDA, e-Guides, SLC and incorporate STEM into new CPD offer. Simon is on the National consultancy groups of 12 to shape the Change Agent Module (with LSIS) and e-Guides (with NIACE).</p> <p><u>Essex - Linda Riley</u> VST moved offices in December. Essex County Council has developed a VCS strategy linking County and the voluntary sector. They are linking in with Prime Contractors for the DWP Work Programme. An Impact Assessment has been carried out and case studies are available. They have their AGM next Monday. They are looking to set up a trading arm which would provide more sustainable income.</p> <p><u>Bedfordshire and Luton – Vanda Bailey</u></p>	

They are winding up several successful projects which are finishing in March. Their Qualification Conversion project has been extended to June. They have an Economic Participation project delivering L2 and L3 qualifications in skills for work. Several Expressions of Interest have been completed with Prime Contractors for DWP and they are developing relationships with the Prime Contractors. They have submitted a Community Grants tender to include work with Learn East members. There is a PCF meeting on Friday. They have sent a questionnaire to their networks about activities and events for this year.

Norfolk – Toby Cullingham

Over 1,000 users accessing the Norfolk Unites site each month. Linked members to ESF NEET applications. Added numerous funds to website. Starting to operate an 'opt out' principle for membership to increase numbers – all anecdotal evidence says members have benefited from the service - they are trying to make NU (and the Directory) the place to go to identify relevant groups. Linked specific members to numerous relevant funding opportunities. Since the last Skills Advisory Group they have delivered Unite 4 – cross sector attendance, positive feedback. Added NHS page and split 14-19 and adults into two pages due to feedback from Unite 4. Requested to attend a Norfolk CC meeting as 'the VCS rep' as a trusted point of contact and to ensure the relevant groups are then kept in the loop. Passing on funds to Simon for Learn East website. Sent new case study to Simon for Learn East website. Accepted three new SG members from cross sector organisations – next (annual) SG meeting later this week (Fri 21st).

Cambridgeshire – Tim Cracknell

Tim didn't attend the meeting but emailed an update for the minutes. The next PTLLS course starts Feb 2nd and is fully booked - new provider St Mungo's. The future of CVSIC - or at least its core funding and therefore capacity - remains uncertain, not least as Cambs County Council is not in a position to make funding or some relevant strategic decisions until February. They have a paper on the future options which a working group have worked up and are presenting at this afternoons meeting. Tim will continue as Chair until at least March. Core funding for GET Group appears to be ok for 2011/12. Their Membership restructure is going well. They've had an ESOL panel (December) and 3 of the 4 applications were approved, all three multi-partner projects led by GET Group/VCS organisations. The unsuccessful bid was FE college. They have decided to run another Celebration of Adult Learning in Cambs event, (as part of ALW) on the back of last years successful Engage and Enable backed event, with a similar format. Friday May 20th. They have the full support (and financial backing) of County Council Adult Learning, planning begins at the next IAL Partnership meeting (January 27th) when a Working Group will be set up, led by Tim and one of the Adult Learning Managers. They have their first formal meeting with the new Head of Adult Learning at the County Council on Thursday (Jan 20th) – Tim, Andrew Church, (the Chair of GET Group) and one of the Adult Learning Managers.

Hertfordshire – Sarah Elliott

	<p>They have a new Management Committee with new members and their first meeting was in January. Their new website is up and running and new organisations are joining. Their second lot of Adult Care Services money hasn't come as yet. The Hertfordshire Probation training is going well and they're looking at getting other VCS organisations involved. This will be discussed at the next Learn East meeting. They are working with Housing Associations and are in discussions with the Prime Contractors for the Work Programme.</p>	<p>Learn East</p>
<p>7.</p>	<p>Stakeholder Updates</p> <p><u>Skills Funding Agency – Helen Mann</u> There has been a reduction in staff and there will be further cuts in the draft structure. They should know more towards the end of March/April time. Guidance Note 6 on how to implement the changes to funding was released on 14 December. It can be downloaded from the SFA website - http://readingroom.skillsfundingagency.bis.gov.uk/sfa/skills_funding_agency_-_guidance_note_6_final_-_14_december_2010.pdf There will be further ESF funding from the SFA coming out around April. The specifications will focus on working with priority groups leading to job outcomes. From 2011/12 SfL programme weighting (previously at 1.4 and 1.2) will be reduced to 1.0 for all levels of literacy and ESOL and levels 1 and 2 numeracy in adult basic skills and functional skills. Full, approved, entry level qualifications in adult basic skills and functional skills numeracy will retain the higher 1.4 programme weighting.</p> <p><u>Jobcentre Plus – Jim Church</u> JobCentre Plus is changing its structure. Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire are being grouped with East Midlands to form a Central England Group. Bedfordshire, Hertfordshire and Essex join with Kent and Greater London. Jim will send more information and providers contact details to Janice.</p> <p><u>National Apprenticeship Service – Julia Brady</u> Apprenticeship Week w/c 7th February. All to email activities planned for that week to Julia. ESF supporting apprenticeship related activity: for young people 14-19 YPLA specification tendered out by Skills Funding Agency on their behalf; tenders have been scored and activity should commence in March, to include pre-apprenticeships, LLDD support and a small element of employer incentives. ESF for 19+ apprenticeships will form part of Skills Funding Agency tendering exercise, national specification being finalised. All apprenticeship frameworks are being mapped to QCF and shall be compliant with the Apprenticeship Blueprint by 31st March. NAS work with Local Authorities and other public sector organisations on building in skills/apprenticeships into the procurement and commissioning process. PQQ stage for many procurers of goods and services includes a question about commitment to apprenticeships. If you are interested in Apprenticeships please contact Julia.</p> <p><u>ACER – Mark Barnsley</u> Mark reported that they are working towards the end of the ESF project in March. The Stepping Stones and Maths projects received additional funding and they look set to achieve their targets. There will be an</p>	<p>JC</p> <p>ALL</p>

	<p>evaluation of the projects. The Professional Development project has gone well with good involvement from VCS organisations. The same with the Stepping Stones project. Rules have changed now to enable them to work with other organisations interested in the programme.</p> <p><u>Bob Reeve</u> Bob Reeve updated the group on his work around Volunteering aspects of Nations and Regions East around the Olympic dividend for the East of England. A volunteering conference will be held on March 23rd at the University of Hertfordshire in Hatfield aimed at students in further and higher education. Bob asked the group for any names/contact details of people who may like to be considered for mentoring those who are volunteering.</p> <p><u>Children Matter East – Mary Sanders</u> Mary asked for clarification of the role of the YPLA and more information about Academies. Helen to send Mary more details.</p> <p><u>NIACE – Sue O’Gorman</u> Adult Learners Week – the closing date for awards is next week. Sue asked the group to think about learners who could be put forward. They are involved with the LSIS support programme for organisations with minimum contract level issues. ALP is leading on this but NIACE is working with VCS organisations and producing support materials. Adult Safeguarded Learning - NIACE is working to support the review of Adult and Community Learning. There will be themed seminars in London.</p>	<p>ALL</p> <p>HM</p> <p>ALL</p>
8	<p>Any other business</p> <p><u>Apprenticeships</u> Apprenticeships Week w/c 7 February – let Julia know of any activities planned – they can help with publicity and post on their events calendar on their website.</p> <p><u>NCVYS Progress Project</u> This project is to deliver accredited short courses for the third sector young people's workforce (volunteers and paid staff). The money could be spent commissioning a fully funded PTLLS course. Contact Jan Cunningham (jan.cunningham@cover-east.org) for details. The project finishes in March.</p>	<p>ALL</p>
11	<p>Dates of future meetings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 20 April 2011 10.30-12.30 at COVER followed by lunch • 5 July 2011 10.30-12.30 at COVER followed by lunch 	