

Third Sector Skills Advisory Group
20 April 2011
COVER, Little Chesterford



Present:

- Andrew Cogan – COVER (Chair)
- Mary Sanders - Children Matter East
- Sarah Elliott – HTDC
- Jim Church – JCP
- Toby Cullingham – Community Connections
- Linda Riley – Voluntary Sector Training
- Sue O’Gorman – NIACE
- Helen Mann – Skills Funding Agency
- Tim Cracknell - Cambs GET Group
- Mark Barnsley - ACER

In attendance: Janice Mossey (minutes)

		Action
1.	<p>Apologies Nikki Kikis (COVER), Vanda Bailey (Beds and Luton LP), Simon Waldron (Suffolk Learning Consortium), Julia Brady (NAS)</p>	
2.	<p>Minutes of the meeting of 18.1.11</p> <p><u>Item 7 - JobcentrePlus restructure</u> The new Central England Group will incorporate East and West Midlands, Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire.</p> <p>The minutes were agreed with the above amendment.</p>	
3.	<p>Matters arising</p> <p><u>Item 7 – NIACE</u> Sue reported that no nominations of learners had been received for Adult Learners Week. Tim had submitted a project for nomination.</p>	
4.	<p>Engage and Enable TA Project Progress Report and Review of Regional Third Sector Skills Action Plan</p> <p><u>Engage and Enable TA Project Progress Report</u> Nikki’s report had been circulated. The Learn East partners are promoting the Bursary Scheme again. The questionnaire to evaluate the impact benefit of activities and support by Learn East will be delivered online after the Easter/May Bank Holiday period. Sue O’Gorman will be conducting the interviews with Learn East partners in late July/early August. We still haven’t heard whether the Beds and Luton Learning Partnership were successful with their bid for Community Grants. Helen will try to find more information on this. Toby reported that LSIS accounts are now only available for organisations in direct receipt of SFA contracts. Therefore many VCS organisations are losing out as they are ineligible to deliver contracts. It was proposed that we send a letter to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • John Hayes – Minister of State for Further Education, Skills and Lifelong Learning, BIS 	<p>HM</p> <p>JM/AC</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rob Wye – CEO, LSIS • Sylvia Gentlemen – Regional Development Manager, LSIS <p>Local Partnership Development and websites – it was noted that the membership numbers given for VST and GET Group were for infrastructure/network groups with large memberships.</p> <p><u>Learning and Skills Representation and Engagement Activity</u> The group considered Nikki’s report. It was suggested that we should keep talking to LSIS about funding from the Regional Response Fund. Sue will ask Sylvia Gentlemen to invite Nikki to a Regional Needs meeting taking place in June. It was agreed to explore further the opportunities for a future ESF TA bid. Helen will check when the next round is due to open.</p> <p><u>Review of Regional Third Sector Skills Action Plan</u> It was agreed to discuss the Skills Action Plan at the next meeting in July.</p>	<p>SOG</p> <p>HM</p> <p>Agenda July</p>
5.	<p>Review of Skills for Life Action Plan and Skills for Life Update</p> <p>The Skills for Life Action Plan will be discussed at the next meeting in July.</p>	<p>Agenda July</p>
6.	<p>Learn East Member partnership reports</p> <p>Essex – Linda Riley VST continues to deliver training and circulate information to their partners. They are working on commissioning and procurement with accredited training through the OCN. They’re delivering workshops in West Essex. ESTIC has now closed and residual information is hosted on different websites. This has resulted in a stronger partnership network. Their L3 Volunteer Management training has been completed and also their training delivery on the Progress project. To extend their L3 Volunteer Management work they are looking to work with Skills Third Sector and the Joint Investment Programme. VST is setting up a trading arm and recruiting a Business Development Manager to sell across the wider networks.</p> <p>Hertfordshire – Sarah Elliott They’re working on their end of financial year matters. They now have their HCC Adult Care Services contract to deliver Workforce Development with skills advice courses for the VCS and also PTLLS courses. The Adult Care Services and Children, Schools and Families departments are to merge as one department. Sarah has been invited onto the Hertfordshire Safeguarding Children Board Training Subgroup. They were not successful with the DWP Work Programme. The two Prime Contractors for the East of England are Ingeus and Seetec. They are working to develop proactive relationships with the Prime Contractors. The work with the Housing Associations is going very well with good engagement with members. They have an event on 12 May with QCF, Workforce Development and JobCentre+ workshops. The Hertfordshire Probation training has been well received by the VCS. The courses were adapted to suit the VCS. They are also talking to SERCO about the ESF Job Deal and regional opportunities for specialist intervention work. Sarah to send through the contact details for the contract co-ordinator.</p> <p>Norfolk – Toby Cullingham Produced a template expression of interest form that could be used on learning skills contracts, as per discussions at last group. Around 300 members now (up from around 130 at last meeting) due to ‘opt</p>	<p>SE</p>

	<p>in'. Using this in practice: received an email from Norfolk County Council on Tuesday re: commission for young people and was able to send it to around 80-100 contacts within 30 seconds.</p> <p>Working on new areas for website where people can input details of training courses, partnership requests etc and tick on the boxes they want it sent to and it will send that off to everyone registered with those categories on the Directory.</p> <p>Steering group held late March looking at how they can more effectively position themselves in the future.</p> <p>They have a seat at a significant strategic group now and Toby has been representing that group on a Norfolk County Council working group re: communication.</p> <p>Cambridgeshire – Tim Cracknell</p> <p>The GET Group has secured their core funding and will continue for another year. Their present PTLLS course finishes today. There is still a big demand for PTLLS courses. They have a new provider – St Mungo's – and the feedback on them is excellent. They have a mapping project involving Cambridge CVS, County Council and others which will finish in October 2011 to get and maintain a document of training provision in Cambridge for the VCS and other agencies. There is a Celebration of Adult Learning event on 18th May. Their CapacityBuilders funding has finished. Tim will continue as Chair of CVSIC until October 2011. The Cambridgeshire County Council Adult Learning Service has received an Ofsted notification. They reported that partnership working was good. Tim has joined the JSNA Board. They are planning what to do with the LPSA reward money which has now been released. They are setting up a Job Club with Cambridge City Council and JobCentre+.</p> <p>Children Matter East – Mary Sanders</p> <p>HE institutions are to ensure that students come out being 'job ready' by providing them with work experience and internships. The Institute for Learning has doubled its membership fee to £68 which lasts for 18 months rather than 12 months. The Cambridgeshire Enterprise Service has legacy funding of £100,000 for advising small businesses in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough. There is an opportunity for a VCS bid. Details are on the COVER website and e-bulletin.</p>	
7.	<p>Stakeholder Updates and information</p> <p>Skills Funding Agency – Helen Mann</p> <p>A new restructure has started and new Board members are in place. It should be completed by September. It will be a different structure with four new directorates. Helen will forward more information in due course. Guidance Note 7 has been issued and is on the SFA website - http://readingroom.lsc.gov.uk/SFA/GN7-final-11april2011.pdf It covers changes to procurement and contracting arrangements. Helen advised the group to sign up for alerts on the website to receive the updates. The new ESF contracts should be in place by 27th April. A communication will be coming out to key stakeholders on Tuesday.</p> <p>ACER – Mark Barnsley</p> <p>Mark gave some statistics for VCS engagement with their ESF projects and LSIS. With the Regional Maths Project there were 70 VCS staff trained mainly in PTLLS but also learning support and subject support. The Professional Development Project had 125 VCS learners out of 800 again</p>	

	<p>mainly PTLLS. The projects are now complete and achievement evidence is being gathered to help negotiate further funding. With the LSIS project there were 11 VCS people engaged in the programme. From the evaluation, people are mainly happy with the support received. There have been changes at ACER with a review of senior management. The CEO and Deputy CEO have left and they now have an interim CEO – Andrew Thompson.</p> <p>JobCentrePlus – Jim Church There has been a review of structures at top level. The DWP has launched a call for evidence around ESF funding with regards to employment provisions for families with multiple problems. Details of how to contribute to the call for evidence are on the DWP website. Specifications should be coming out in 2 or 3 months time. The Mandatory Work Activity contract in the region has been awarded to Seetec. Jim informed the group that he will be leaving JobCentre+. He was wished good luck for the future.</p> <p>NIACE – Sue O’Gorman NIACE are downsizing and restructuring. There will be greater emphasis on national rather than regional work. There is a regional event on the Big Society, Localism and Social Return on Investment around Literacy Language and Numeracy on 7th July.</p>	
8	<p>Any other business</p> <p>Merlin 80 template The Merlin 80 template that Toby had put together had been circulated. It was agreed that this was a very useful and usable document for future contractors. Jim will share it with all the regions. Sue will get it passed to contacts in BIS. Toby was thanked for his work on it.</p> <p>LSIS Accounts It was agreed to invite Sylvia Gentlemen to the next meeting in July.</p>	<p>JC SOG</p> <p>NK</p>
9	<p>Dates of next meeting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5 July 2011 10.30-12.30 at COVER followed by lunch 	