

Third Sector Skills Advisory Group
5 July 2011
COVER, Little Chesterford



Present:

Nikki Kikis – COVER (Chair)
 Mary Sanders - Children Matter East
 Vanda Bailey – Beds and Luton Learning Partnership
 Toby Cullingham – Community Connections
 Angela Jefford – Community Connections
 Linda Riley – Voluntary Sector Training
 Sue O’Gorman – NIACE
 Julia Brady - NAS
 Tim Cracknell - Cambs GET Group
 Mark Barnsley - ACER

In attendance: Sylvia Gentleman – LSIS
 Janice Mossey – COVER (minutes)

		Action
1.	<p>Apologies Andrew Cogan (COVER), Sarah Elliott (HTDC), Helen Mann (Skills Funding Agency), Simon Waldron (Suffolk Learning Consortium), Stuart Durrell (Jobcentre Plus)</p>	
2.	<p>Minutes of the meeting of 20.4.11</p> <p><u>Item 7 ACER – Mark Barnsley</u> It should read ‘With the LSIS project there were 11 VCS organisations engaged in the programme’.</p> <p>The minutes were agreed with this amendment.</p>	
3.	<p>Matters arising</p> <p><u>Item 4 – Engage and Enable TA Project Progress Report</u> The Community Grants contract has been awarded to TCHC. Mark Mitchell is the representative on the regional advice group.</p> <p>The reply from John Hayes, MP, regarding LSIS accounts had been circulated.</p> <p><u>Item 4 – Learning and Skills Representation and Engagement Activity</u> We have heard that the next round for ESF TA is now open and they are receiving applications.</p> <p><u>Item 6 – Learn East Member partnership reports</u> Sarah to send through the contact details for the contract co-ordinator for SERCO on the ESF Job Deal.</p> <p>Mary Saunders reported that Cambridgeshire Enterprise Services has allocated the Legacy Funding to Living Sport, the county sports partnership for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough.</p> <p><u>Item 8 – Merlin 80 template</u> Awareness of the template’s existence has been raised at various national events. It has also been passed to Consortia+ and NIACE.</p>	SE

4.	<p>Engage and Enable TA Project Progress Report and Review of Regional Third Sector Skills Action Plan</p> <p><u>Progress Report</u> Nikki gave a presentation of progress on the Engage and Enable TA project. The presentation is attached with these minutes. There was a discussion about the regional partnership meeting being arranged for the 14th September. It was agreed to keep the invitations to Third Sector organisations and Principals of FE colleges. Another event could be organised later for engagement with private companies. The stakeholder benefit questionnaire was sent out last week. Sue O’Gorman is conducting interviews with consortia leads, gathering case studies and checking the partners’ websites. It was suggested that it would be useful to gather data on bids submitted during the project. Toby informed the group that they had carried out an impact assessment earlier in the year. He will circulate the questions they asked for the other partners to use.</p> <p><u>Third Sector Skills Action Plan</u> It was agreed that we had made a contribution to most of the elements in the action plan. For the ongoing items it would be useful to gather evidence of impact which could be used in a future bid. Nikki to set up the plan as a Google Document so that everyone can access it to add their comments.</p> <p>Mark said that ACER could provide statistics on how many VCS organisations had engaged with their projects.</p>	<p>Attached</p> <p>Toby C</p> <p>NK</p> <p>MB</p>
5.	<p>Review of Skills for Life Action Plan and Skills for Life Update</p> <p>There is a lack of funding available at present for Skills for Life activities but it was agreed that we should still be seeking to progress Skills for Life opportunities. It was agreed to draw a line under this action plan but incorporate Skills for Life development into the Third Sector Skills Action Plan.</p>	
6.	<p>LSIS Accounts</p> <p>Sylvia Gentleman, Regional Development Manager at LSIS, gave an update on LSIS Accounts. A discussion paper for regional conversation was circulated. Sylvia to send through for circulation a presentation from Rob Wye from a recent feedback event. The key messages received were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LSIS should carry on supporting teaching and learning • LSIS to keep working in regions but being careful not to overlap with what other organisations are doing • Big Society – minimum contract levels have meant that organisations have needed to join up with others but the individual specialist organisations are still needed <p>Restrictions on LSIS accounts have been imposed due to reduced funding. Providers that are subcontractors can still try to apply for an account. There will be a costing and pricing of services in September. Much of the LSIS support is free, such as support networks. Their Improvement Advisory Services will start in September but will be restricted to those organisations most in need of improvement.</p> <p>LSIS is going through a restructure due to the reduced funding. The Regional Development Manager role will continue. Mark Barnsley will be job-sharing this role with Sylvia.</p>	<p>SG</p>

	<p>The regional updates are on the LSIS website. Sylvia will arrange for the September partnership event to be put on their website and offered to put other messages/events on there too.</p>	SG
	<p>Sylvia to send us more information about Organisational Health Checks.</p>	SG
7.	<p>Learn East Member partnership reports</p> <p>Suffolk – Simon Waldron Simon was unable to attend the meeting but emailed an update. 11th July – LSIS National Teaching and Learning Fair in London – will be launching new modular CPD system, together with funding to support rollout. Informal Adult Learning – Suffolk Learning Consortium now sits on SPIAL (Suffolk Partnership for Informal Adult Learning), currently writing IAL policy/strategy for Suffolk County Council, and Consortium to be used for rollout of Migrant Impact Fund (ESOL) and PCDL Funding, following success with NLDC. The Suffolk Learning Consortium has been financially sustainable for the past three years, with sub-contracting and management fees covering staffing costs, but not sure if this will continue in current financial climate. OFSTED Update – ratings have tended to fall recently with two main problem areas; ‘Death by Worksheet’ and ‘Teaching, not Learning’, i.e. not enough effort being put into delivery to ensure learners learn.</p> <p>Cambridgeshire – Tim Cracknell Their project to provide a ‘snapshot’ of Cambridgeshire VCS Learning Providers is mainly focused on primary information on Cambridgeshire.net. Their Celebration of Adult Learning event in May was very successful - 98 people attended and the feedback was very good. They are still trying to set up a Job Club for Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire. Their PTLLS courses with their new provider, St Mungo’s, are going well with good feedback. They have some training delivery arranged in July and September on mental health and a networking event also on mental health in October at St Andrews Hall. A working group has been set up to develop a Quality Mark in Cambridgeshire for training providers. Tim is working with the Cambridge City Council Quality Standards Manager. He has also been busy adjudicating 23 bids for NLDC. There is an Informal Adult Learning Partnership meeting on Thursday. The Adult Learning and Skills Board feeds in to the LEP. Tim will send out a presentation about the LEP. Dr Lyn Morgan, CEO of Arthur Rank Hospice, is a representative on the Board. She will be giving a presentation for GET group in September or October about input to the LEP.</p> <p>Bedfordshire and Luton – Vanda Bailey Vanda reported that they also had a successful Adult Learners Week award ceremony. Prizes were donated by the colleges. They launched their NLDC project yesterday to their networks. They have a celebratory event on 28th July. Their new website is now up and running. With the LSIS LeaP project they have completed visits with the consortia partners. A report and action plans are being prepared and they will meet again on 26th July to discuss. They are developing work groups with the local authorities to set up Job Clubs and working with learning champions to promote them. With the NIACE ACL fund they ran surgeries and checked bids.</p>	Tim C

	<p>Essex – Linda Riley VST has established Versatile Skills Training CIC – a trading arm that will offer training to private / public sector. Profit to be fed back to VST. Website developed and launched. www.versatiletraining.co.uk VST continued delivery of training programme across Essex. Take up slowing. New programme for autumn prepared and being promoted. See www.voluntarysectortraining.org.uk Commissioning and Procurement support activity for VCS– a) Accredited (OCN) modules developed b) Project activity will include Champion to develop case studies, support for Development workers and later engagement with the health agenda Personalisation Successfully completed PQQ related to training for micro employers and PAs. Invited to tender. Attended Fair Train event for employers (see notes attached). Progress on apprentices in the VCS is slow but developing. Fair Train are planning a similar event for training providers. Linda to circulate details when available. Continued engagement with various partnership meetings and networks across districts in Essex. Worked with ECC Skills unit developing supported employment and training opportunities for NEETs in a number of social enterprises in Essex. Starting work on a skills/ apprenticeships event for autumn.</p> <p>Norfolk – Toby Cullingham There is a Norfolk Unites Hub now. For £25 per year, organisations can enter their own information onto various sections such as events, training courses and jobs. Their information is then sent to the relevant groups registered on the directory. Now they need to make people more aware of the resource. Toby is leaving Community Connections. He introduced Angela Jefford who will take over his role from September for one day a week.</p>	<p>Attached LR</p>
<p>8.</p>	<p>Stakeholder Updates and information</p> <p>Skills Funding Agency – Helen Mann Helen was unable to attend the meeting. Her update is attached to these minutes.</p> <p>National Apprenticeship Service – Julia Brady The Access to Apprenticeships programme has been launched and is open to contractors delivering the Apprenticeship programme. There may be an opportunity for VCS organisations to work in partnership with core providers to engage and support the underrepresented groups. (Julia emailed a link to further information following the meeting) The Pre Apprenticeships programme funded by the YPLA for 14-19 years olds that are NEET and at risk of dropping out has been launched. It offers flexible support and training (non accredited as well as accredited) ultimately aiming at getting them job ready and / or progressing into an Apprenticeship. Hertford Regional College were successful in securing a regional contract for the East of England (except Beds and Luton). Barnfield College have been contracted to deliver pre-apprenticeships in Luton and Central Bedfordshire and Exemplas in Bedford Borough. A list of partners was circulated for people to link with for the 2 year programme. In addition, the only three local authorities in our region who have a Co-financing status, Bedford Borough, Central Beds and Luton Borough Council are independently negotiating contract involving pre-apprenticeship provision. For adults, SFA are launching a similar programme offering support and financial incentives for those aged 19+. Julia will have more information at the next meeting.</p>	<p>Attached</p>

	<p>In terms of an internal restructure, NAS is setting up a centralised function, a Small Business Unit. Employers with fewer than 250 staff will be able to access support by phone and website. Large organisations with over 250 staff will access face to face support from Employer Services Managers based within regions. The new changes will take effect from 1st October.</p> <p>ACER – Mark Barnsley The LSIS Support for Literacy, Language & Numeracy Programme is due to finish in August. A survey was carried out for the evaluation of the programme and most providers considered the support they received was good or outstanding. The LSIS East of England webpage has an update with a NIACE ESOL guidance document and case study on family learning. The programme slowed down over Easter but has picked up again. They are confident of meeting the performance indicators. There will be information and commentary on the evaluation of the project. LSIS request information from lead providers about future working. ACER is also undergoing a restructure with 60% of staff facing redundancy. Some have been offered reduced contracts. They held a successful stakeholder event at Duxford about innovation in education which was well received. Their new CEO, Andrew Thomson, is looking for new opportunities.</p> <p>NIACE – Sue O’Gorman NIACE is managing the Adult and Community Learning Fund which has been over subscribed. Only a small number of bids will get through. There will be an announcement of the successful bids on 22 July. There will be a BIS consultation on Informal Adult and Community Learning. The document will be published on 11 July.</p>	
9.	<p>Any other business</p> <p>This was Toby’s last Skills Advisory Group meeting. Nikki thanked him on behalf of the group for his contributions to meetings and support and wished him well with his new career.</p>	
10	<p>Date of next meeting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Friday 14th October at 10.30 a.m. followed by lunch Venue to be confirmed 	