

West Lancashire Local Strategic Partnership
Employment, Learning & Skills (Working) Group Meeting

9th December 2009 10.00 am

West Lancashire Investment Centre

Attendance:

Greg Swift – West Lancashire Council for Voluntary Service (WLCVS) Chair for meeting

Paula Huber Economic Regeneration Manager – West Lancashire Borough Council (WLBC)

Pete Trewin Support Officer - WLBC

Ann Boocock – Lancashire Adult Learning

Gina Moran – Skelmersdale & Ormskirk College (SOC)

Philip Russell– Lancashire County Developments Ltd (LCDL)

Maureen Fazal – Exsel

Khalid Saifullah – Business Link

Phyllis Roberts – Lancashire Young Persons Service

Phil White – Job Centre Plus

1. Apologies

Councillor Adrian Owens – WLBC

Greg Mitten – WLCVS

Emma smith – Job Centre Plus

Hugh Evans – Chamber of Commerce

Jeanette Newman TWL – replacement to be decided

2. Minutes (15th October 2009)

The Minutes were agreed as a true record.

3. Actions from 15th October 2009 meeting

The following updates on action points were reported:

Fleetwood Pilot: PR reported that the pilot had been delayed until mid Jan 2010.

NHS Skills Academy: PT reported that a plan of action including both Future Jobs Fund and a pre employment programme had been agreed with a target date of April 2010. The HR director of the NHS Trust is supportive.

WLBC Local Employment Partnership (LEP) and JCP representation and continuity: PT said that a report had been taken to the Council's

Senior Management Board to take this forward (including Skills Pledge as well as LEP) and that they had decided to take it forward from the beginning of April 2010. He had passed the group's concerns to JCP.

LCC extension of apprenticeships and pre-employment training to placements in the voluntary sector: PR will take up this action point.

Item 5: Performance Reward Grant: PT to inform the LSP Executive of the priorities identified: PT reported that he had passed on the group's priorities to the LSP Executive.

Item 7: PT to monitor discussions between the NWDA & Business Link on the ERDF project: PT reported that the issue was on the agenda for the meeting of the Lancashire Worklessness Programme Board on the afternoon of 9th December 2009.

Item 9: Performance Indicators: Management & Reporting: PR of LCC to make information available for this meeting: Item 8 on agenda.

Any other Business: PT to ask Business Link to make a presentation to the group: Item 4 on agenda.

4. Business Link Presentation

4.1 Khalid Saifullah made the presentation. Business Link made major changes to its services in April 2007 with the emphasis placed on making it easier for businesses to access support. BL provides the diagnosis and then engages a broker to assist the company over a 12 month period – there are also public sector brokers. Intelligence on sectors at risk is a priority since the recession started – this has seen an increase in requests for assistance and from business start ups. Train to Gain can now be delivered in 'bite-sized' training modules. A leadership and management programme is now available.

4.2 PR said information on growth sectors would be useful for working with schools. GM asked if there would be less Train to Gain funding in future. KS said that funding should hopefully be available to meet demand over the next three years. PT agreed to send out the presentation with the minutes. PH added that WLBC are working closely with Business Link regarding data sharing and as a result, WLBC may be able to assist Lancashire Young Persons Service in providing useful information for school enterprise events.

5. Skelmersdale Vision: Connecting People to Jobs

MF reported that the West Lancs Recycling forklift truck training project had been completed in early Dec 2009. 11 people had enrolled, 1 had dropped out and 7, but possibly 9, had received a licence. PH reported that the agreement for the Community Enterprise Hub Feasibility Study had been signed and WLCVS were now underway with the project.

6. LSP Position Paper – Employment & Income: Narrowing the Gap

PT reported that the paper had been requested by the LSP Executive. The paper identified the Skelmersdale four ward hotspot of deprivation and unemployment as the area most in need in West Lancashire, and that this need had increased with the recession. The paper identified where the issue sits within the Borough's Strategic Aims and listed work planned/undertaken to tackle the issue, as well as key priorities for future funding. PH suggested that a section be added to the paper on the need for a staffing resource to ensure delivery of the actions needed to tackle the issue.

Agreed: that PH adds a section on the need for a staffing resource to ensure delivery to the paper.

7. Future Jobs Fund – Update

PT reported that the Mid Lancs FJF Working Group had agreed to further the WLCVS and Health Academy bids, having overcome issues with brokerage. We should therefore be well placed to meet the FJF target of 80 places for West Lancs up to March 2011.

8. Performance indicators: Monitoring and Reporting

PT circulated two spreadsheets provided by PR on progress with meeting NI 153 - the percentage of people on benefits in the most deprived neighbourhoods. This had increased from 12.4 in February 2008 to 14.2 in May 2009. For the worst SOA's, the figure had increased from 28.07 in February 2008 to 34.3 in May 2009. However, it should be noted that the SOA's measured had changed over that period. On the other NI's, PR said that he would identify the officer responsible at LCC and report back. On NI 117 (NEETs) PR said that the YPS works closely with JCPlus on, for example New Deal, but that there was a problem with College drop-outs..

9. Any Other Business

1. AB said that LAL are running an employability course for ex offenders aged 18+ in January 2010 and an awareness training course for carers up to March 2010. PT asked for details to send out with the minutes.
2. PR said that YPS are holding a catering event in the Concourse Information Centre on 12th January 2010. They are also holding an industry week during the second week in January 2010. Will send details to PT to send out with the minutes.

10. Next Meeting

10.00 am Wednesday 27th January 2010 at the West Lancashire Investment Centre.