

**West Lancashire Local Strategic Partnership**  
**Employment, Learning & Skills Thematic Group**

**Minutes of the 26<sup>th</sup> January 2011 meeting**

**West Lancashire Investment Centre**

**Present:**

Cllr Adrian Owens	Portfolio Holder Regeneration and Estates (Chairman)
Maureen Fazal	Exsel (Int) CIC (West Lancashire Community Recycling)
Greg Mitten	West Lancashire Council for Voluntary Service (WLCVS)
Greg Swift	WLCVS and Quarry Bank social enterprise
Phyllis Roberts	Lancashire Young Persons Service
Brett Winn	Skelmersdale and Ormskirk College
Steve Waters	Job Centre Plus
Jane Friend	Groundwork Wigan and West Lancashire
Carl Clarke	InTraining
Paula Huber	West Lancashire Borough Council (WLBC)
Amy Kirby	WLBC
Alex Lambie	WLBC

**In Attendance:** Julie Hotchkiss and Paul Halfpenny, Deep Green Community CIC

**1. Welcome and Introductions**

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and introductions were made around the table. The Chairman also offered a warm welcome to AK and AL and expressed how pleased he was that they were both in post.

The Chairman opened the meeting with information on Job Seeker Allowance figures, explaining that although we need to be careful, they were at their lowest in 2 years, which was a very positive sign.

**2. Apologies**

Karen Ingram, Skills for Health, Phillip Russell, Lancashire County Council and Ann Boocock, Lancashire Adult Learning.

**3. Presentation from Deep Green Community CIC**

The Chairman welcomed Julie and Paul and explained how the group were interested to hear the presentation and the new proposed development for Skelmersdale.

Julie outlined the background and values associated with the proposal, including her own personal circumstances and what led to the Deep Green Community CIC concept.

Julie explained the CIC would cater for 18-64 year olds with life affecting diseases, i.e. MS, motor neurone, Parkinsons and congenital disabilities. The CIC development would offer both temporary and permanent accommodation for family and friends as well as staff and student nurses, and links were being developed with Edge Hill University. It was also hoped there would be business ownership opportunities individuals with disabilities.

Paul explained how the CIC would be developed as a social enterprise and following extensive research across the north west, a site at Cobbs Clough in Skelmersdale had been identified. Paul briefly touched on 'Social Impact Bonds' and how this model would be explored further as a mechanism for funding. He gave an example of a case study involving 'Damien' who at a cost of £250k p.a. lived at home, whereas at a cost of £90k he and his family would be able to stay at Deep Green Community CIC. In response to a question from GS, Paul agreed to send on further information on Social Impact Bonds.

GM commented on the amount of work that had been undertaken and how there were potential links into the West Lancashire Challenge project. In response to GM's comment on Brookfields in Ormskirk, Julie explained they are very different target groups.

PH asked whether discussions had commenced with WLBC planning department and Paul responded that meetings had been held with both planning and the land owners Homes and Communities Agency.

PR explained that young people often undertake vocational training and can often experience barriers to accommodation and employment, in particular those young people who are cared for and she felt this development could assist.

The Chairman acknowledged the support of the group, but mindful of the scale and size of the development and the remit of this group. He asked all partners to keep in touch with Julie and Paul with relevant contacts or information. The Chairman also suggested they contact Jane Cass from the Primary Care Trust as the presentation may be useful to the LSP's Health and Wellbeing thematic group.

*Full details of the presentation and prospectus to be attached to the minutes of the meeting. PH*

#### **4. Minutes of the Last Meeting, 20<sup>th</sup> October 2010**

With the slight correction on page 3 (NI 171), the minutes were agreed as a correct record.

## **5. Matters Arising**

The Chairman explained that the Work Programme would be an item on the next Agenda, where it was hoped PAR and CC would be able to provide an update. There were no additional matters arising.

## **6. West Lancashire Challenge Project**

PH circulated the West Lancashire Challenge outcomes document and provided an update on progress. PH explained how we hoped to have the project up and running shortly, but this was likely to be 1<sup>st</sup> April 2011. There had been some delays in terms of finalising Service Level Agreements between the LSP Secretariat and WLCVS, but these issues would be resolved shortly.

PH also reported that the advert for the WLBC's Business Engagement Officer post had recently been issued and was available on the Council's website and the [www.jobsgopublic.com](http://www.jobsgopublic.com) website.

## **7. West Lancashire NEET Target Update**

PR provided an update to the group and how fantastic the support had been from partners around the table, in particular WL Recycling Services, who provided 60 fork lift truck training places, and Skelmersdale and Ormskirk College who provided construction courses, involving tasters sessions of different trades, as well as the Skiing and food hygiene courses.

PR explained that there are three programmes designed specifically for young mums, but highlighted how difficult they were to engage with as they are content with their family circumstances.

PR also explained how difficult it is to engage young males and this is felt to be down to their night-time habits i.e. computer use late into the night affecting their daytime lives.

The Chairman invited AK and AL to input their thoughts on PR's update. AL explained how he fully understood the issues and problems and that he had found securing employment difficult before his apprenticeship with the Council. AK agreed with AL's comments and explained that she had used the Connexions service to help her to find the apprenticeship with the Council.

SW added how the JCP focus was on 18 year olds, but that there are additional mechanisms that are useful in attracting young people to employment opportunities. He went on to add that JSA figures are bucking the trend for 18-24 year olds in West Lancashire.

The Chairman complemented the work of the Young People's Service and partners around the table and confirmed he would report the positive feedback from PR to the LSP Executive.

## **8. Skills and Worklessness Strategy Action Plan**

The group discussed updates on each of the items within the action plan. Key points included:

- A shared press release with LSP partners who have contributed to the success of the Future Jobs Programme.
- GS updated on the 'Wheels to Work' option that LCC and WLBC are investigating in relation to taxi operators and that a Burnley model was being looked at. The Chairman explained some of the S106 difficulties and that a report would be prepared by WLBC officers in the future to decide options. PR added that Connexions used to have 15 motorbikes that were loaned out to young people as well as the opportunity to complete the Compulsory Basic Training.
- MF reported on the bicycle recycling scheme and how this had developed from the collection of bulky goods. The Second Homes Funding application would help to finance a member of staff and it is hoped the project will secure a successful lottery bid. MF thanked the group for supporting the Second Homes bid.
- The Chairman and PH updated the group on item 10, explaining how, following discussions with Intraining, it was felt that by working closer together the outcomes of the Second Homes bid would be achieved and therefore the bid should be withdrawn. The group agreed to this action.

*Action Plan to be updated with the above feedback (including an update on NEET's from PR) and circulated with the minutes. PH*

The group agreed that this would be the final update on this particular action plan and that it would be replaced by the West Lancashire Challenge Outcomes document for the group to monitor.

## **9. Any Other Business**

PH gave a brief update on recent activity undertaken by the Lancashire and Blackpool Tourist Board, including a 'Car Free Itinerary' that had been produced for Burscough town centre and which would feature as a tab on the front page of the visitlancashire.com website.

PH explained to the group that the 2011/12 Tourist Board membership (subvention) would be due 1<sup>st</sup> April 2011, but that timing issues would mean that the End of Year Report would be received after the next LSP Executive meeting and before the next meeting of the thematic group. The group expressed their support for continued membership post

March 2011 and PH agreed to circulate the End of Year Report to the group.

CC provided a brief update on the activity of InTraining in relation to the Work Programme, explaining how there are two prime contractor slots available for the Cumbria and Lancashire lot and that InTraining had been short-listed. The outcome was expected in the next few weeks, with a potential start of Summer 2011.

MF reported that the business was thriving and interest had been received from Housing Associations along the M62 corridor. MF also reported on the Social Enterprise Awards event that was taking place that evening, with over 100 attendees expected and 8 award categories.

GS reported on the Future Jobs Fund programme and how 21 young people had been placed within social enterprises across the Borough.

GM explained how they had worked on refining the SMART outcomes of the WL Challenge project and that they were keen for the project to move forward. GS also commented on how good it was to see AK and AL in post, which was seconded by BW.

SW updated the group on JCP activity, including targeting the 18-21 age group with work experience opportunities, which would be extended from 2 weeks to 2 months, without affecting benefits. He explained that De Vere Hotels and McDonalds had signed up to support this initiative.

SW commented that there had been no large-scale redundancy notifications in the Borough, but neither had there been an increase in employment opportunities either. New Deal would be in place until end June when the Work Programme would begin.

## **10. Date of Next Meeting**

11<sup>th</sup> May 2011 at 10am, West Lancashire Investment Centre