

Minutes

**East Surrey Community Learning
Partnership (CLP) meeting**

East Surrey College

16th February 2011

Action points agreed at the meeting:

- a. SLLP to review the terms of reference for Community Learning Partnerships (note: this is a county-wide initiative).
- b. SLLP to review the membership of the CLP and invite representatives from organisations who is it felt should be present but currently weren't (for example, Job Centre Plus).
- c. Simon Bland to provide economic data from SEEDA via SLLP for onward circulation to all CLP members [Completed – data circulated with these minutes]

1. Welcome and introductions

The following members were present at the meeting and introduced themselves and their organisations:

Gwen Hurrion - East Surrey College (Chair)
John Thurlow - SLLP (Minutes)
Kevin Delf - SLLP
Sarah Albert - Surrey County Council
Simon Bland - Reigate & Banstead Borough Council
Arthur Browne - U3A
Helena Crofts - Richmond Fellowship
Alison Dowrick – Oakwood School
Tracey Burrows - Merstham Community Facility
Jane Waller - WEA
Sarah Davison - Tandridge Confederation
Sarah Merrick - Welcare Playlink
David Russell - Next Step
Liz Wells - Surrey Library Service

2. Apologies for absence

These were received from:

Bernadine Philpott - Horley Learning Partnership
Pauline Guppy - Surrey County Council
Phil Mack - SCC 'About Us' Life Skills Service

Sharon Bondonno - Steppingstones Children's Centre
Laurence Nasskau - Raven Housing Trust
Paul Wilson - NESCOL
Helen Hawkins – RBCVS
Abby Guinness – Community Archaeologist, Surrey County Council

3. Minutes of the last meeting

The minutes of the last meeting, held on 6th October at the Merstham Community Facility, were read and accepted.

One action is still outstanding from that meeting: SLLP are still to address new terms of reference for Community Learning Partnerships. However, Gwen Hurrion remarked that one of the aspirations mentioned when this was discussed at the last meeting, ie the need for a consistent group of people to meet at the CLP, was being met. It was agreed that SLLP would review the membership of the CLP and invite any organisations that should be included but not currently represented, for example Job Centre Plus.

The second action item is covered under Item 5 below.

4. What's new, what's changed

Kevin Delf presented a review of the “Skills for Sustainable Growth” White Paper (November 2010) and circulated a short note summarising the key points. He explained that there would be a 3 month period of further planning by BIS which SLLP had volunteered to be involved with. He drew out the key points from each of the four chapters in the White Paper:

Chapter One – Skills for Growth

- Expand numbers of adult Apprenticeships by up to 75,000 by 2014–15
- Level 3 Apprenticeship to become one to which learners and employers aspire
- Provide clear routes from Apprenticeships to higher level training including, Level 4
- Ensure that vocational qualifications reflect the changing needs of employers
- Reduce the reliance of some sectors of our economy on migration to fill jobs
- Support employers with £50 million growth and innovation fund to help address skills needs
- Provide some co-funding for training at Level 2 delivered in SME companies
- Encourage more widespread teaching of entrepreneurial skills

Chapter Two – Skills and a Fair Society

- Adults without basic literacy and numeracy to have access to state funded training
- Provide state funding for targeted provision for people on active benefits

- Engage disadvantaged people and create progression routes to move on to formal learning
- Provide grant funded training for young people to help them move from education to work
- Consult on a simplified learner support offer

Chapter Three – A Shared Responsibility for Skills

- Introduce loans (2013/14) to help people finance intermediate & higher-level qualifications
- Lifelong Learning Accounts for all to bring together funding and learning opportunities info
- Establish an all-age careers service, with intensive support for those with greatest need
- UK Commission for Employment & Skills to advise employers on getting best from workforce
- Support initiatives taken by employers to build modern high-performing workplaces

Chapter Four – A Reformed System with Increased Freedom

- No imposed top down skills targets
- Streamline the organisational landscape
- Simpler funding system with alignment where appropriate across pre- and post-19 systems
- Remove regulations to free colleges to deliver for their local communities
- Decisive action to tackle unacceptable performance

SLLP also circulated a table showing ‘Changes to Funding Entitlements 2011/12’ which sets out the new funding arrangements for adult learning for next year.

5. Members’ market place

Gwen Hurrion, ESC

- Gwen prefaced her comments by stating that unemployment levels were not high in the Redhill area compared with the rest of the country and that the College was finding it hard to fulfil its contracts for courses for the unemployed. She circulated a paper on market intelligence which contained data on:
 - Apprenticeships;
 - Job Centre Plus advertised vacancies in the Redhill area in retail, hospitality, care and facilities management;
 - current and projected attainment levels in basic skills;
 - top 20 fastest growing and fastest declining occupations; and
 - occupations with high priority skills needs.
- Gwen spoke to this paper drawing out various highlights. In particular, problems with finding employers to offer apprenticeships, skills deficits and the imbalances between job seekers and job vacancies – often the former far outweighed the latter but sometimes there were job big numbers of

vacancies in a specific area with very few people qualified or inclined to apply for them. There was also a discussion about Job Centre Plus' role in referrals to learning providers and it was agreed that a representative from 'JCP' should be encouraged to attend the next meeting. Gwen also mentioned that the current employment-related contracts ended in March and that there was uncertainty about what would happen to these in the interim between April and September when new contracts were to be awarded. In addition, under the new arrangements, the College would not be able to offer certain courses such as the 'CSCS' construction card course as their adult-funding in the future had to be linked to 'units of achievement'. In the future, such courses would have to be aimed at literacy, numeracy, employability and career development. Gwen also made reference to the prospect in the future of mandatory training courses for the unemployed or benefits claimants where benefits might be withdrawn for non-attendance.

Helena Crofts, Richmond fellowship

- In response to an earlier point, Helena said that Richmond Fellowship did deliver some Next Step services but specifically within the mental health sector. She handed around leaflets describing the two main 'RF' offerings – Employment Services and Community Based Services (Community Links). The former supports people who are recovering from mental health problems back into work, training or volunteering while the latter involves a community links advisor working with a client to set positive and achievable goals possibly involving voluntary work, education and training, including 'CLAiT' IT training.

Alison Dowrick, The Oakwood

- Alison handed out flyers for adult evening classes taking place at Oakwood School but said take up had been so poor that many of the courses had been cancelled including numeracy, literacy and IT and so they were reviewing future plans. Alison was asked who the courses were aimed at, and when she said 'parents' (of children at the school), someone suggested it would be better targeting grandparents. Gwen Hurrion echoed the problem with IT losing its appeal with reduced take up on College courses but Liz Wells said that the libraries IT offer continued to be heavily oversubscribed. Liz said that their problem was in not being able to offer progression or find other outlets to reduce the pressure (in numbers). A short discussion then ensued on how and to who to advertise courses with Gwen Hurrion stating the College's website was now the most successful avenue for promoting courses.

Sarah Davison, Tandridge Confederation

- Sarah gave an update on the changes to Schools Confederations that are now happening across the county. Funding for Confederations has been cut by 67% and although some of the funding will now go directly to schools, it is no longer ring-fenced. This effectively means that community cohesion initiatives and extended schools provision is now ending. Contracts for

Home-School Link Workers are also running out. It will be up to schools to decide whether to continue funding such posts and initiatives. Confederations are being merged – there will be one in the East of the county covering Horley, Tandridge, Reigate and Banstead.

Sarah Albert, Surrey County Council

- Sarah did not have any updates for the meeting but offered to take back any questions from the meeting to SCC.

Tracey Burrows, Merstham Community Facility

- Tracey provided an update on the work continuing at the Merstham Community Facility, mentioning that courses being held there this term were very well attended. She also mentioned the IT/Job Club that ran on Mondays at the facility, aimed at people not ready to return to work, being well-supported but that there were always volunteering opportunities for 'IT buddies'. Tracey also mentioned the youth work initiatives that were underway involving a media project together with accredited qualification opportunities. Tracey also told the meeting about a new idea for setting up a PC Refurbishment Social Enterprise which would also address 'digital inclusion' by providing one-on-one support to residents who couldn't use a PC. Tracey did, however, explain that it takes a long time to establish trust in the community but that they were now getting a lot of enquiries about benefits but weren't attracting job-seekers, instead were doing a lot of work with long-term unemployed and mental health sufferers. A flyer covering all the activities and opportunities at the facility was distributed to participants at the meeting.

David Russell, Next Step

- David passed round Next Step flyers and detailed some of the new initiatives he and colleagues were starting for group work in the community covering CV writing and confidence building. At the moment, these initiatives were mainly in the Epsom area, working with Nescot.

Simon Bland, Reigate & Banstead Borough Council

- Referring to the jobs data circulated earlier, Simon said that he had further up-to-date economic data from the South East England Development Agency (SEEDA) and asked whether CLP members would like him to circulate this. It was agreed that such data would be of interest and Simon was asked to provide it via SLLP for onward transmission. He then told the meeting about 14 placements that the Council had provided for 6 months last year supported by the Future Jobs Fund. Of the 14 placements, the Council had kept on 5 of the employees. They were continuing the initiative this year, but now self-funded, and were planning to take on another 14 young people for 6 months working alongside ESC on suitable courses leading to formal qualifications for the participants.

Kevin Delf, SLLP

- Kevin circulated copies of the recent SLLP Annual Report.

Liz Wells, Surrey Library Service

- Liz listed the five libraries in the East of the county that were scheduled for withdrawal of funding for staff, although funding for the buildings, stock and IT would continue. The final decision was currently awaiting SCC approval but the idea is that community groups would be invited to take over the running of these libraries. The five libraries are Ewell Court, Lingfield, Stoneleigh, Tattenhams, and Warlingham. A discussion ensued on how the decision to choose these libraries had been made and Liz explained it had been made on 'footfall'. Liz also told the meeting that the mobile library service would be cut completely. However, on a really positive note, Liz told us about the new IT contract that took effect from April which would mean that WiFi would be installed in every library in the county. She also mentioned a number of literacy and other initiatives that were happening this year, including:
 - A magician appearing on 22nd February at Merstham library as part of Children's Book Week being one of 35 exciting events in libraries across the East of the county;
 - The BBC 'First Click' campaign, where 24 libraries have signed up to deliver free group IT taster sessions, including Epsom, Horley, Dorking and Oxted;
 - Adult Learners Week (14-20 May) where partners were being asked to provide arts and crafts displays produced by people with learning difficulties or disabilities (and mental health sufferers) to which Helena Crofts volunteered the work of Richmond Fellowship's 'Art Matters' project;
 - The 'Reminiscence Collection' housed at Redhill Library;
 - The 'Writers Booked' programme where discussions and workshops with authors were being held at libraries across the county; and
 - The 'Read Yourself Well' initiative.
- Liz provided the meeting with leaflets or flyers covering each of these events of programmes.

Sarah Merrick, Welcare Playlink

- Sarah said that Welcare Playlink on the Merstham Estate was waiting to hear a decision about next year's funding from SCC. She also mentioned an event being held in Redhill on 3rd March where all the children at the Children's Centre or Playlink could choose a free book.

Jane Waller, WEA

- Jane described how the WEA worked in East Surrey, including the joint programme of courses with East Surrey College, strong partnership working at the Merstham Community Facility and collaborations such as 'Art Matters' with Richmond Fellowship and with the Tandridge Confederation, working in community. Jane explained that the WEA courses in the community were not widely advertised as they were only funded to reach specific target

audiences. She said that it was very useful that David Russell from Next Step had come to the meeting.

Arthur Browne, U3A

- Arthur gave an overview of the work of the U3A and circulated copies of a flyer. Arthur told the meeting about the U3A summer school, the upcoming conference and the ongoing programme of study days and also about the 'Virtual U3A'. He mentioned his role at the Reigate and Banstead Voluntary Services and mentioned the volunteer fair they are running at the harlequin Centre in Redhill on March 5th.

John Thurlow, SLLP

- John circulated two briefing notes that had been prepared by Abby Guinness and Pauling Guppy, respectively updating on the Community Archaeology activities across the county and specifically in Merstham and Family Learning courses being held at Children's Centres in the East of the county.

Gwen Hurrion, East Surrey College

- Gwen summarised the three key priorities for the College as:
 - Filling courses for full-time students
 - Focussing on work-related learning
 - Addressing the NEET issue
- She also mentioned providing free learning in areas such as IT and the College bidding to turn Youth Centres into Skills Centres.

6. Any other business

- There was no other business.

7. Time and venue of next meeting

It was agreed to hold the next meeting at East Surrey College on Wednesday, 8th June 2011 at 2pm.