

DEVON COMMUNITY LEARNING PARTNERSHIP

Secretary: John Willis, 28 Cross St, Moretonhampstead, Devon TQ13 8NL
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MINUTES OF EXECUTIVE MEETING

Friday 10th September 2010 at 2.00 pm in the Ockment Centre

1. Present

Peter Harding, Community Council of Devon (Chair)
Jenny Thorns, Devon ACL
Danni Goff, Exeter College
George Curry, Westward Pathfinder Trust
Ros Simpson, Petroc
Alison Angelos, Teignmouth Community College

In attendance:

John Willis, Consultant
Wendy Head, Learn Devon 2 Project Officer (minutes)

1. Apologies

Huw Davies, Petroc
Ian Fleming, Pluss
Margaret Davidson Devon ACL

2. Minutes of May meeting

Minutes agreed as a true representation of the meeting. No issues arising.

3. Current Agenda - changes in adult provision

Updates & issues from around the table:

- Adult funding cuts - Funding more targeted
- Same learner numbers, less money
- Need for smaller organisations to form federations or partnerships with new requirements for minimum contract value (probably £1m for DWP / SFA)
- DWP : £10-£50m contracts for 8-10 providers in S.W. region to start by April. Funding is not guaranteed, payment by results and clawback possible

- Large contracts: does not fit with localism and small flexible providers
- Petroc have had compulsory redundancies and recreational programme is self-funding
- Teignmouth Community College have picked up Talk Training's PSfD contract for Skills for Work. They are considering creating a community interest company under TCC
- DACL has a new programme; some short courses have been removed. Fees look higher but courses are longer. DACL is now the only Next Step sub-contractor for IAG. Devon County Council has a block on recruitment
- Recession seems to be affecting providers more this year

It was agreed that John Willis will make a Partnership response to the BIS consultation papers; the Executive felt the following points should be raised:

- Unit funding could be key
- Entitlement needs to be flexible
- Adult learning needs to be flexible in content and length
- Community Learning Partnerships are working well
- First Steps results need to be communicated
- Funding could impact on community learners
- Big society v. localism
- Information on locally funded courses e.g. Floodlight is needed
- Improvements needed for accessibility to careers advice
- Simplifying fee subsidies
- Match funding and private contributions can lead to shortfall in fee income

Action point - John W to draft a response and circulate this to the Executive for comments and when complete to submit it to BIS and to the wider CL Partnership

4. Learn Devon 2 - The Website

Wendy reported that the website is significantly improved and most pages are working well. The remaining issues are being dealt with, namely the Tutor page and its search facility together with the detail about the Tutor's relevant experience and qualifications which needs to be included. The Community Learning members list still needs to be added and we are trying to establish if the login & password for members' pages are necessary and if so, whether the password can be altered to a more memorable one. If you have not already done so, please take a look at the site - www.learndevon.co.uk. **Action point - John W to check progress on these issues at next meeting with developers and whether analysis of 'hits' is underway. Talk Training needs to be removed from the Provider list and Teignmouth Community College added.**

Guide on Providers for Community Groups

This final part of the first Learn Devon project will shortly be published. Its aim is to help groups find a provider who can provide learning for their group in local venues. The information will be as up-to-date as is possible for a printed publication!

Delivery Plan

Please see the attached.

In year 1 we have Productive Skills for Devon funding, managed by DACL and in year 2 LSIS (Learning & Skills Improvement Service) funding takes us to 30/9/12. This will be managed by North Devon Pathfinder Trust. We plan to share experiences and evaluate as the project proceeds.

Phase 1 - applications for taster activities were invited and are being considered now with scores applied to pre-set criteria to ensure consistency in the approval process. The plan is to support only about 25 so the approval process needs to be more specific; progression is the key area and for phase 2 may need to be further clarified. We agreed that progression on the QCF must be an achievable step following the taster (say within a year) rather than something a learner could do in 5 years time, and we should look at what steps have been identified in between to enable the learner to achieve such progression.

The length of the tasters will be limited to 3-6 hours, and we will aim to achieve a geographical spread throughout Devon, initially applying a cap of five approvals per organisation.

As DACL and Westward Pathfinder are lead partners and will also be running tasters or unit accredited programmes there could be a conflict of interest in the approval process. It was agreed that in that case, either they be asked to decide on each others' applications, or the CL Executive Chair Peter Harding decides on them.

Action point - John W and Wendy to make recommendations to Jenny at DACL for Phase 1, and revise the criteria for phase 2, following the above discussions.

5. Launch conference

The Learn Devon 2 launch is planned for November 5th 9.30-15.30 at the Ockment Community Centre, Okehampton with invitations to be sent to Community Learning Partners and other organisations involved in community learning in Devon. Whilst a draft programme was discussed there is still work to be done on this and possible invitations to speakers from organisations such as NIACE, LSIS, YMCA (via Ian Fleming), County Council or Ministers to attend.

Action point - John W and Wendy to revise programme, pursue contacts for possible speakers and (next week) circulate a flyer to advertise the date and venue. John, Danni and Peter will meet 2 weeks before the event to finalise.

6. First Steps Project

Gaps in provision for adults with learning difficulties or disabilities were identified and short courses were developed to meet these needs. 8 courses were run at ROC, Pluss, Plymouth ACL and Exeter College with 61 learners participating.

Devon Learning Account - again 61 learners were able to attend courses where a fee had to be paid giving them confidence and motivation, with the majority keen to do further learning and some even work experience.

We will be progressing opportunities further under the Learn Devon 2 project to build on the valuable experience of 'First Steps'.

7. Next meeting

This is on Friday 19th November at 2.00pm in the Ockment Centre.