

Community Learning **MINUTES**



Website www.yourtestvalley.com

NOTES OF MEETING

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| Team: | Adult & Community Learning Group | | |
| Date: | 2 nd July 2008 | Copies to: | As Listed |

| Present | | |
|---|---|---|
| David Gleave (Co-ordinator, TVBC) | Clive Graham (Chairman and Harrow Way Community School) | Lesley Johnson (acting Community Education Manager, Mountbatten School) |
| Bev Jones (Recreation & Heritage, HCC) | Jane Kent (Recreation & Heritage, HCC) | Jan Lefley (Romsey School) |
| Apologies | | |
| Christine Alexander (Everybody On-line) | Paul Connor (TABS Training) | Sandy Craig (Harrow Way Community School) |
| Mary Whitworth (Learning Links, Learning Net) | | |

| Agenda | | |
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| 1. | Apologies for Absence | See above |
| 2. | Minutes of Previous Meeting | Agreed |
| 3. | Sustaining and Developing ACL (2008-2009 and beyond) | |
| 4. | Dates of Future Meetings | |

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Summarised notes of the discussion and action points

3.

Sustaining and Developing ACL (2008-2009 and beyond)

CG introduced the meeting by saying it would focus on sustaining and developing Adult & Community Learning in Test Valley as part of a review currently being undertaken by Hampshire County Council. He asked whether in any future model the County would commission, provide learning or do both depending on local circumstances. Colleges have been told to identify their PCDL to ensure they spend all of their funding on site or as outreach (Andover College has £40,000 PCDL).

BJ gave a comprehensive account of the County's current thinking based on the presentation which was circulated.

Generally, relationships with colleges were improving. In future there will be a "mixed economy" in terms of what HCC will do itself and what others will provide. Hampshire is creating a "Strategic Board", representing all relevant services, including the PCT, in September 2008. If funding is getting tighter the resources will not be there for more tiers of management. Operational activities could take place through local district partnerships (eg. Test Valley Community Learning Partnership) supported by HCC area-based specialist staff.

By contrast, Government would prefer to deal with colleges to achieve its skills targets - the larger the colleges, the better.

At Hampshire, Adult Learning has moved from Children's Services to Recreation and Heritage mirroring Government changes from the old Department for Education and Skills to the Department for Children, Schools and Families.

Strategic planning (by the LSC) is in decline: there won't be any for the next 2 years in the lead up to the abolition of the LSC and the continuing transfer of its responsibilities to LEAs (Connexions, 14-19 Agenda) and in due course the Young Peoples' Learning Agency and Skills Funding Agency.

There has been both confusion over which body is responsible for ensuring quality of learning and the temptation to impose a single system of quality control which is unreasonably onerous for small scale outreach

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| <p>programmes in the community and where it has been counter productive and inhibited delivery.</p> <p>The Government's big policy is Train 2 Gain, in which responsibility has been passed from colleges to industry. However, there is some recognition of the importance of informal learning – whose numbers have been in decline for some years.</p> <p>Colleges now seek to attract adult learners in September but know they will lose a significant number. This is not as an efficient way of attracting and retaining learners as the more intensive family learning/community development approach.</p> <p>By 2010 we will have the Skills Funding Agency which will administer workforce learning in demand-led rather than a forward planned manner (as the LSC was originally set up to).</p> <p>The SFA will also differ from the LSC in that it will be answerable direct to the Minister rather than an independently funded quango.</p> <p>Accredited Learning – Foundation Learning Tier leading to level 2 progression.</p> <p>Credit Framework being established will eventually lead to level 2 qualifications.</p> <p>Unique Learner Number – will follow the learner. The pilots have finished and it will start in two year's time.</p> <p>Provider requirements: is it personalised learning, learner-led or provider-led? Need to prove progression; need to prove provider can reach people out in the community, in social housing estates.</p> <p>Balances skills and leisure: a future Conservative government would emphasise skills whereas Labour support leisure learning.</p> <p>The voice of the learner in all this is pretty quiet!</p> <p>Conclusions Hampshire did have 89,000 learners. It now has 14,000 so is it already too late?</p> <p>We need a flexible organisation that performs. This could include a tutor</p> |
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workforce, rather than a body of tutors employed directly by HCC.

Discussion

Adult and Community Learning needs to change.

Why has it declined? Because of the change of policy to full cost recovery but also because community schools have drastically cut provision. In part this also reflects the attitudes of the schools and those responsible for delivery.

There are 3 main providers in Test Valley: Romsey School, Mountbatten School and Harrow Way Community School. The County Council is seriously thinking of pooling its resources (to these three) within a "Test Valley Partnership" which would be supported by a County Co-ordinator. The role of co-ordinator would include monitoring performance.

While resources to the three providers would be guaranteed such a partnership arrangement, which held out the possibility of future additional funding, could attract the other secondary schools which currently do not offer ACL.

Such a partnership would allow for the possibility of one provider stepping in if an existing provider was unable to deliver in order to ensure continuity of provision.

Such a partnership would also be consistent with the Governments' White Paper, published 18 months ago, empowering communities to do more for themselves.

BJ agreed to "tidy up" his initial presentation for a possible Test Valley Adult and Community Learning Partnership and to think about a revised remit for this group.

Given the potential importance of the Test Valley Partnership Adult and Community Learning sub group – monitoring progress, devolved budget etc – it was considered that it could be merged with the parent Test Valley Community Learning Partnership group: the first part of a combined meeting could be devoted to Adult and Community Learning and the second half to other community learning work. However, there is more work to be done so, subject to any further notification, for the next meeting on 15th October 2008 the status quo will prevail.

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| 4. | Dates of Future Meetings Wednesday 15 th October 2008 Wednesday 3 rd December 2008 Adult & Community Learning sub group 10am-12pm Test Valley Community Learning group 12-2pm Lunch provided at the Grosvenor Hotel, Stockbridge. |
| Signed: Date: | |