



**MINUTES OF THE STEERING GROUP MEETING
HELD ON FRIDAY 18 JANUARY 2008 AT 10AM (UNIVERSITY OF WORCESTER)**

ATTENDEES

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| Professor Geoffrey Elliott (Chair) | Director of Lifelong Learning, University of Worcester |
| Mrs Debbie Lambert | Manager of the LLN for H&W |
| Mr Chris Morecroft | Principal, Worcester College of Technology |
| Mr Ian Peake | Principal, Herefordshire College of Technology |
| Mr Mike Rookes | Director, Open University (West Midlands) |
| Ms Gail Rothnie | Head of Outreach, University of Birmingham |
| Miss Donna Obrey (Secretary) | Project Officer for LLN for H&W |

1. Apologies

None

2. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting & Matters Arising

The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed as a correct record. A written update on the matters arising was provided together with the following verbal summary:

Budget Summary – the requested amendments to the budget summary were made in preparation for this meeting.

Broker Meeting between Community First & Existing Providers – this meeting had been arranged but has now had to be cancelled and is in the process of being rearranged.

OU Representative for the OOE Executive Group – Niall Sclater.

Wider Horizons Name: Report on the Process – it was confirmed that the name 'Wider Horizons' had been considered in various arenas and the reasons for the choice of name were provided to the Steering Group.

3. Chair's Business

There was no Chair's business.

4. Budget Update

Since the previous meeting, the LLN Team have reviewed a number of the items previously committed under 'Projected Expenditure' over the 3 years of the project. The Steering Group were provided with a revised proposal for spending this money and it was agreed that this would be reallocated as follows:

£45,000 Continue Temporary Administrator Post to March 2010
£45,000 Extend some staff contracts so that all LLN Team finish March 2010
£35,000 Fund new Curriculum Theme Lead post 100% from August 2009 – March 2010
£250,000 Big Projects Fund

Big Projects Fund – the Steering Group welcomed the idea of a Big Projects Fund. The idea was established from feedback provided from FE Principals saying that they would prefer the flexibility of being able to release staff for up to half a post rather than a module.

The criteria for bids was discussed and it was agreed that these should be altered slightly to include the following:

- Bids should be curriculum linked and create a new programme of learning
- Consider whether the project would include sustainable outcomes
- Bids could look at progression in its broad term
- Bids could incorporate IAG in general sense

All funding will be provided on the condition that the total funding for the project is split 80:20 between the LLN and the partner institution with the LLN funding up to a maximum of £15,000 per bid. Bids will be called for submission in May for consideration by the Steering Group at their May meeting.

Actions: 1) **DL to amend current criteria and circulate for approval at next meeting in preparation for next Principals Meeting**
2) **DL to attend the next Principals Meeting on 19 March to advise of this new fund**

5. Projects

Projects for Approval at this Meeting

Foundation Degree in Spa Management (Gloucestershire College)

This project will involve working with employers across the subject areas of Health & Social Care and Leadership & Management. It was confirmed that they would be UW student numbers and therefore would contribute towards the LLNs ASNs.

It was felt that clarification should be obtained regarding the mode of study for this FD and also to ensure that funding has not also been sought from Western Vocational LLN. Upon receipt of satisfactory responses to these queries, the project funding will be approved up to £4,500.

Action: LD-W to seek clarification from Gloucestershire College

Development of Foundation Degrees in Design (Herefordshire College of Arts)

HCA do not currently have any partnerships with local employers and would like to begin building up long term relationships with employers. The project will allow them to talk with the local employers in order to help identify which Foundation Degree to develop. Although this project would not contribute to the LLNs ASNs, it was acknowledged that it did link with the new curriculum theme and also with progression agreements. Although the new FD would not be validated by UW, it could link to progression to the University of Worcester. The project was approved up to the cost of £4,250.

Development of Foundation Degrees in Arts Management (Herefordshire College of Arts) and Development of Foundation Degree in Music Industry Management (Kidderminster College)

Two separate bids had been submitted by HCA and KC for Foundation Degrees. However as it was felt that the course content would overlap in a large proportion of the curriculum, it was agreed that funding could only be provided on the condition that the 2 institutions share expertise and collaborate in the development of this. If both institutions agree to work together on this development, the Steering Group would be happy to fund a total of £8,000 towards the development of these Foundation Degrees.

Action: DL to seek confirmation of collaboration prior to authorising this project

Tracking the Progress of Level 3 Students through their Studies in FE and Sixth Form Colleges

This project was established following the research project undertaken with NEW College last summer. This project will involve a number of colleges and will feed in to progression agreements. The Group approved the project funding of £5,000.

Progression with Robert Owen Society

This project was taken for discussion at the Leadership & Management Advisory Group earlier in the week, however it was felt that they were unable to advise as there was no-one in attendance from Herefordshire. This project proposal has changed, whereas the initial project was looking at producing a prospectus, this is focussing on progression based on the current provision already in Herefordshire.

The Steering Group supported the idea of the project however, they requested that the project bid form be sharpened up to show focussed outputs and detail the ways in which these will be beneficial across the Network. They also requested information regarding how they are going to support the students in their progression.

Development of a DVD to support Teaching of Patient Examination & Assessment Skills (West Midlands Ambulance Service)

Funding was requested to develop a DVD for use across a number of courses which would assist WMAS to achieve HE accreditation for these programmes.

The Group were happy to fund ¼ of the total cost (£6,000). In addition it was also suggested that this be produced in a web format in order to make it more accessible.

E-Learning Projects:

A discussion took place around whether it would be possible for Hereford and Worcester 6th Form Colleges to be involved in the project bidding process for e-learning funding. It was acknowledged that they did run a limited number of vocational courses however these are only up to Level 3. The Group suggested a few ideas for possible e-learning projects at the 6th Form Colleges:

- A project that encourages progression to one of the partners in the Network
- A project about accessing the HE providers in the region
- A vodcast with potential literature about the HE providers in the Network
- Work with local employers to provide information about the part-time HE opportunities

- Advice and guidance to inform students that the full-time HE route is not the only way

Whilst it was noted that these projects should be focussed on the LLNs target group of vocational learners, and linked to the LLNs aims, it was also suggested that this could be used to provide advice and guidance for the HE opportunities available to the lower achieving A Level students. If possible, it was suggested that this could involve collaboration with Aimhigher.

Using Video Podcasts to enhance the Learning & Delivery of Foundation Degree in Culinary Skills and Kitchen Management – E-learning Project (Worcester College of Technology)

This project would utilise new technologies. The total funding of £5,000 was approved.

Using e-NVQ to Delivery Apprenticeship Programmes & Work Based Learning – E-learning Project (Evesham & Malvern Hills College)

This project had been previously submitted to the Steering Group. It was acknowledged that this did now focus on Level 3 and 4 and was approved up to a maximum of £5,000.

Report from LLN Funded Projects

Engaging Adult Learners Pilot Project

A total of 60 employers had been visited across Herefordshire & Worcestershire which had resulted in some enrolments on to HE Courses. In addition this has made the learning champions more aware of Level 4 provision for their future work with employers.

For Approval

Project Closure Template

This template was approved and will be circulated to all Project Managers.

Action: DO to circulate to all Project Managers

Miscellaneous

Engineering Project

DL advised the Steering Group that she is currently working with the LLNs in Staffordshire & Birmingham together with Wolverhampton University to investigate the possibility of working on a progression project from HND to degree in Engineering as this is currently viewed as an area of requirement in the West Midlands. This also involves WCT, HCT and Herefordshire Group Training Association.

Market Needs Analysis for Herefordshire Project

It was reported that since approving this funding at the previous meeting, the project has now grown as the LSC requested that the number of subject areas be increased. As a result, the cost of this has now increased to £10,000 which means that it will need to go to tender.

6. Delivery Plans

The Group were provided with a set of revised Delivery Plans for the LLN. The revised template now includes an 'Update' column which shows that the LLN have met the majority of their targets for 2007 with the exception of the area of 'Learner Progression and Support'. DL advised that this was as a result of the Progression & Learner Support Co-ordinator not being recruited until June 2007. It was also noted that some new targets had been added for future years which were highlighted in bold. The Group approved the delivery plans.

7. Draft Six Monthly Update for HEFCE

The Steering Group were happy with the content of the 18 month report to HEFCE which needs to be submitted in February. Members of the Group were invited to send any separate comments to DL.

8. Draft Summary Report to HEFCE on the interim evaluation of LLNs and to consider any implications

CHERI have produced a draft report to HEFCE following their visits to the chosen LLNs, the conclusions drawn from this report were that LLNs:

- need to monitor their activities on a regular basis so that they can demonstrate added value
- need to concentrate on embedding activities into institutional practices and procedures
- need to concentrate on sustainability
- should cope with emerging developments

DL produced a summary of the implications for this LLN which described the ways that this LLN will be addressing each of these areas.

9. Criteria for Designation of an LLN Course

This paper was received by the Steering Group. Clarification was sought regarding how the LLN identifies an LLN student, it was advised that an LLN student was seen as a student enrolled on a course that was running as a result of some input or funding from the LLN. The paper was approved.

10. Update on Aimhigher Activities

The Group received the paper and noted the continuation of Aimhigher up to July 2011.

11. Any Other Business

The LSC are investigating the possibility of funding a new post within each LLN to link between the Level 4 Brokers and the partner institutions. This was discussed at the Leadership & Management Advisory Group earlier in the week and it was decided that it would be more sensible to channel this through the existing Consortium of Colleges based at WCT. This idea was support by the Steering Group.