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**LEARNING FORUM**

**11 June 2008 – 2.00 pm**

**PRESENT:**

Representing Norfolk County Council Children's Services:  
Jill Warwick

Representing Norfolk Library and Information Services:  
Mary Kent

Representing Great Yarmouth People:  
Lindsey Seward

Representing Great Yarmouth Museums:  
Colin Stott

Representing Great Yarmouth LSP:  
Tim Leonard

Representing Norfolk Learning Partnership:  
Andy Hodgson

Representing Great Yarmouth Parenting Strategy:  
Liz Drake

Representing Seachange:  
Joe MacIntosh

Representing Norfolk County Council Adult Education Service:  
Gillian Plumb and Judy Youngs

Representing Great Yarmouth Community Trust:  
Rosie Marler

Representing Connexions:  
Teresa Gonzalez (in the Chair)

Representing Great Yarmouth Excellence Cluster:  
Alison Hopley

Representing Norfolk Voluntary Sector:  
Simon O'Leary

Representing College in the Community:  
Christine Chalmers

## **1. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRMAN**

In accordance with the Constitution, the Learning Forum was required to confirm the appointment of a representative from a voluntary faith and community sector as a Chairman of the Learning Forum for the 2008-09 Municipal Year. Tim Leonard outlined that the usual procedure is for the existing Vice-Chairman, Christine Chalmers to move into the position of Chairman however, Christine Chalmers had stated that due to current issues around voluntary sector funding she was unsure if she would be available to carry out this role. Teresa Gonzalez explained that she was prepared to remain as Chairman for the next three months and at this point Christine Chalmers would have a clearer picture of her priorities.

It was suggested that all Members of the Forum should consider their availability to take on the role of Chairman of the Learning Forum and any nominations made by other members of the Forum should be discussed with the nominees, and suggest that they may like to discuss the role with Teresa Gonzalez to assist them in making a decision. Nominations should then be forwarded to Karline Edmonds and a vote could potentially be taken at the next meeting, by which time Christine Chalmers should have a clearer idea of her availability. The Forum discussed the issue of a Facilitator for the Forum and it was agreed that a request should be submitted to the LSP Executive meeting on Friday, 20 June 2008 requesting a Facilitator for the Learning Forum.

### **RESOLVED:**

That Teresa Gonzalez remains as the Chairman for the Learning Forum for the next three months.

## **2. APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIRMAN**

It was agreed that the appointment of a Vice-Chairman for the 2008-09 Municipal Year be deferred until the future meeting in order for the Chairman position to be clarified.

## **3. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Jeff Leek, Trevor Cockburn and Rod Gilchrist.

## **4. MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 12 March 2008 were confirmed subject to the amendment that Andy Hodgson had submitted her apologies for absence.

## **5. MATTERS ARISING**

There were no matters arising from the above minutes which were not covered elsewhere on the agenda.

## **6. MONITORING LIFELONG LEARNING**

Tim Leonard advised the Learning Forum that the meeting scheduled to take place with Teresa Gonzalez and Christine Chalmers had unfortunately not taken place. Tim Leonard explained that the area of reporting was currently under review and that there was a need to have a focussed meeting to look at how this could be achieved. It was reported that this could tie in with the Working Neighbourhood Fund and that this would assist in getting people back to work and help them gain confidence. Tim Leonard went on to advise that the Worklessness Data was available from Job Centre Plus.

It was felt that at the next meeting, an agenda item should be included that would be a practical exercise in gathering information on how this information could be collated.

RESOLVED:

(i) That it was agreed that a meeting would be held between Tim Leonard, Rosie Marler, Christine Chalmers and Teresa Gonzalez.

(ii) That all attendees at the meeting would bring with them reporting data that they had gathered to assist and identify exactly what information should be available and how it could be used.

## 7. NRF PROJECTS

Tim Leonard addressed the Group regarding NRF projects from the papers already circulated with the agenda for the meeting. He went on to advise that reports from monitoring visits and quarterly returns should be completed by project leads. It was felt that main-streaming was a key issue. The NRF Team papers show what has been achieved and if outputs had been achieved, they were also identified as a key item for targeting where lessons had been learned.

A Member of the Learning Forum asked if an external evaluation would be carried out on NRF. Tim stated that there would be an external evaluation however, no one had currently been appointed. The report was a key tool in completing the investigation. Knowledge provided by the investing in Communities Team was being used to structure the invitation to tender. Overall it was felt that the report did not provide anecdotal evidence and case studies to support the report which would be valuable.

It was explained that the Key Stage Three results needed to be taken into account in evaluating this and these could be provided by Children's Services and that Trevor Cockburn or Ray Leak would be contacted for this information.

## 8. WORKING NEIGHBOURHOOD FUND

Tim Leonard briefed the Group on the Working Neighbourhood Fund stating that in December 2007 Great Yarmouth heard that due to the worklessness statistics in Great Yarmouth they would receive £7.1M from April 2008. This money had started to be received by Great Yarmouth and would be held by Great Yarmouth Borough Council

and would be ring-fenced. The statistics that had led to this were that in 2004 Middlegate was the third worst ward in the country for employment deprivation with 60% of the residents not working and 40% of the residents receiving Incapacity Benefit. Incapacity Benefit claimants included a large percentage of people with mental health issues, anxiety or depression. Alternative therapies were being investigated as a method of assisting this issue. The Learning Forum was advised that Tim Leonard had attended a Learning Day at Westminster.

Engaging with people and confidence building amongst those not working would be crucial. The Employment and Skills Working Group had formed, however, more participation from employers in the area was required. Tim Leonard had spoken to the Chair of the Chamber of Commerce regarding this issue. The Learning Forum discussed encouragement for Work Tasters, however, it was felt that if assistance could be provided for employers surrounding the legislation in connection with Health and Safety related issues. This could lead to employers being more open to providing placements in the work place. A special meeting of the Employment and Working Skills Group would be taking place in the near future. It was identified that Community Connections could be a key player in engaging with those receiving benefit. A recent survey identified that of those currently receiving Incapacity Benefit only one in five felt that they would like to go back to work. The Chairman advised the Group that identifying skills gaps together with identifying mainstream funding and providing vocational training was a key consideration. It was identified that funding transport to work places might also be appropriate.

## **9. VOCATION TRAINING**

This item was included in point 8.

The question of the time frame for WNF funding was raised and it was identified as being three years. It was felt that a joined-up approach would be necessary with perhaps the Facilitator attending other meetings and bringing back information to the Learning Forum. Tim Leonard advised that the Opportunities Week had taken place in March and it was planned to repeat this in 2008/9.

**10. INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL**

Joe MacIntosh provided the Learning Forum with an update on the International Festival. The background briefing was supported by handouts provided. The launch would take place in half-term week in October 2008 and would provide a public platform for work carried out throughout the year. The event would run under the title "Out There" and would involve using public spaces which would be both visible and accessible and encourage strong links to Europe and a multi-cultural society. Funding had been secured in the last few months and the event would run from 30 October to 2 November 2008 with the Festival Village sited in the Market Place. Entertainment would have a cosmopolitan flavour with street entertainers coming from France and Finland. The event would also showcase local talent and volunteers. A multi-agency meeting would take place to identify how young people could be involved. It was suggested that the Learning Forum could provide short workshops together with taster sessions in support of the Festival and incorporate a Learning Festival, timeslots being Wednesday, Thursday, Friday with three three-hour slots.

**11. LSC REVIEW**

The Learning Forum was informed that this item would be deferred to a future meeting.

**12. PCDL**

The Learning Forum received feedback from the PCDL event. It was felt that the event was useful in updating funding spending and Beverly Evans had provided a clear indication on Adult Education Strategies. The overall message from the conference being "we want to work in partnership so come and talk to us".

**13. DATE FOR NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting will be held on 10 September 2008 at 2.00 pm.