

West Yorkshire Lifelong Learning Network

Economic Challenge Investment Fund (ECIF) Steering Group

3rd March 2010

Start time 1400 hours

Finish time 1505 hours

Present: Steve Challenger (Chair), Tie Doepel, Joanne Beaumont, Sue Sykes, Dominic Whowell, Rob Lloyd Owen, Ruth Osborne, Christine Jarvis, Rosemary Sheen, Lindsey Fraser, Fiona Thompson, Maryke Deahl, Michael Cuthbert, Janet Mulcrone, Alan Spain and Anne Hellawell.

Apologies: Tim Thornton, David Smith, Nigel Phillips, Sue Spence, Janet Midgley, Tony Waring, Brian Duffy, Ian Bond, Paul Titman, Michelle Watson, Alison Kinder, James Devitt, Heather Waddington, Anj Handa, Carson McCombe, Fred Yeomans and Catherine Lunn.

Action

1 Welcome and Apologies

Steve opened the meeting and welcomed the attendees of the ECIF Steering Group meeting.

2 Minutes of Meeting held on 15th December 2009

The minutes were approved as a true record of the meeting.

3 Matters Arising

Two dates were offered following the last steering meeting for Match Funding workshops. These were not run due to lack of requirement, and two individuals were supported on a one-to-one basis.

Joanne gave an update on Carlsberg. Timings are awaited for a workshop covering scoping of the landscape for the senior management team and those managers will make a decision on provision for other staff at the company. The company have a limited contract with Penna Consultancy and Yorkshire Forward is supporting through the Redundancy Service and could provide a link through Ian McGregor Brown at Leeds Chamber of Commerce. Joanne spoke further regarding the general careers package which is being developed. There has been a second meeting of the institutions involved in the development, with an approach for funding from HEFCE's Leadership, Governance and Management Fund.

4 Partner Report. The circulated partner report was noted including an updated learner schedule (page 4) covering learner numbers up to the end of January 2010. February numbers are expected by 5th March.

Steve raised concerns regarding the increasing variance to some of the institutional profiles, with shortfalls in Elements 2 and Element 3 (Short and Medium Courses). Tie reported that the recent audit by herself and Alan had improved the situation for February numbers, due to some institutions' non-reporting of numbers previously. A variance of -181 learners in January 2010 had improved to -101 learners by the end of February, with some institutions still to report their February learners.

Tie reported that she was currently exploring with the careers service, Aspire-i and EASA to take some of the Element 2 provision, providing that match could be evidenced. Another alternative being explored is the potential to transfer the Element 2 funding into additional courses on Element 3. Tie will further progress this with HEFCE.

TD

Steve asked partners to comment on referral routes for learners into their institutions for Elements 1 and 2. This varied widely from institution to institution, with a more common theme coming from individual institutions own targeting and marketing/advertising. Rosemary reported that a pilot workshop package was being developed at Joseph Priestley for individuals and Job Shops, which was already being advertised. Tie reported that Leeds College of Building had been very successful in achieving referrals from Job Centre Plus, which could be due to its nature as a specialist building college. Dominic commented from a Job Centre Plus perspective that this was a crowded marketplace and a very difficult niche to enter. Structural changes at Job Centre Plus mean that all clients will be registered on a Job Seeker Regime and fed quickly onto a Flexible New Deal Programme increasing the workload of advisors in the short to medium term. Dominic and Tie agreed to meet to look at ways in which the referral process can be supported, although Dominic reiterated that referrals are most likely to continue to come through the NextStep provision.

TD/DW

Tie reported that three enhancement bids had been successful, with a further two requiring more work. Sue commented that enhancement bids could still be made, and that it was not necessary to spend one fund before applying for another. Sue **AGREED** to pursue with colleagues a streamlined process for second bids and reported that another source of fund was being investigated, additional to enhancement fund, which would not require the match funding. This has yet to be finalised.

SS

The use of Elluminate as a meeting forum has not yet been successful due to firewall issues across institution sites. Tie **AGREED** to work with Chris Parkin over the next eight weeks to resolve these issues, to commence a weekly drop-in session for every institution on ECIF issues.

TD

Tie reported that partner access to management information and reporting functions from the IAGnow system was still not available as the various standard reports commissioned from Axia have not yet been completed. Anne reported that progress has been made on assigning all but two of the remaining "orphans" to their institutions only very recently, and that this would mean that questions regarding reporting could be moved forward. Anne **AGREED** to progress this with Axia as a matter of urgency. The group should be mindful that agreement was made at the meeting on 15th December to take reporting from IAGnow with effect from 31st March 2010, rather than the current manual data collection.

AH

ALL

5. **Reallocation of Credits.** Tie reported on the reallocation of credits from Calderdale College. It has been agreed that the Leeds Metropolitan University programme will be delivered through the NTI and fund match in the form of T2G is available.

Discussion took place on timescales to the end of the project and further re-profiling and re-distribution of credits. The group **AGREED** a cut-off point for further re-profiling as:

End of March 2010 for medium courses

End of May 2010 for short courses

ALL

This will allow the rapid redistribution of credits where the project management feels there is significant risk to the successful completion of the programme.

6. **Initial Audit Analysis.** Tie reported as part of the partner report that eight partners had been assessed with a further three to complete. Common themes of late reporting, unclear reporting guidance as a result of unfamiliarity with the IAGnow system and confusion on match funding were identified. Overall, the exercise had resulted in more clarity and increased numbers to report.

7. **Any Other Business.** Tie asked the meeting to note the WYLLN event at Galpharm stadium on 19th March. Details have been circulated to all WYLLN contacts.
8. **Date/Time of Next Meeting.** The date and time of the next meeting was confirmed as **Thursday 29th April 2010 at 1400 hours** at the University of Huddersfield. **ALL**