



**MINUTES OF THE STEERING GROUP MEETING  
HELD ON FRIDAY 11 JUNE 2010 AT 10AM (UNIVERSITY OF WORCESTER)**

**Attendees**

Professor Geoffrey Elliott (Chair)	Director of Regional Engagement, University of Worcester
Mrs Debbie Lambert	Manager of the LLN for H&W
Mr Mike Rookes	Director, Open University (West Midlands)
Ms Gail Rothnie	Head of Outreach, University of Birmingham
Mrs Cath McGourty (Minutes)	Administrator for LLN for H&W

**1. Apologies**

Miss Donna Obrey	Project Officer for the LLN for H&W
Mr Ian Peake	Principal, Herefordshire College of Technology
Mr Chris Morecroft	Principal, Worcester College of Technology

**2. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting & Matters Arising**

The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed as an accurate record.

Item 5: Stratagia – Enda Donnelly to contact Mike Rookes reference OU courses. This has been progressing and the final report is due after evaluations are completed.

**3. Chair's Business**

Thanks and appreciation was offered to Chris Morecroft for his valuable contribution to this Steering Group. The group wishes him the best of luck in his future endeavours.

Funding Approval

- An extension to project work being undertaken by Stratagia
- Extension to Employer Engagement Project
- Ludlow College Progression Project

Future of the Lifelong Learning Network

The future of the Lifelong Learning Network (LLN) which continues to end of December 2010 will be taken to the University of Worcester. Unfortunately this has coincided with the economic down turn and no decisions have been made at this stage. The team are trying hard to ensure that the key elements of the LLN, e.g. Work Based Learning, work in Herefordshire and curriculum planning has been embedded. GE explained that the Vice Chancellors group and Executive Board have been broached regarding a new approach to partnerships and business development.

The plan includes making use of HEIT funding for the seconded part of the team and the LLN contingency/transitional funding for two on fixed contracts, as well as attempts to secure external funding. The group approved the use of this funding for this purpose.

#### 4. Budget Update

The Group received and reviewed the budget update.

The main changes were examined as follows:

- Money has gone back into the budget due to Liz Davies-Ward starting a new job and now undertaking only one day per week for the LLN.
- Predicted under-spend of £20,000.

The commitments and allocations were identified.

DL informed the group that there is £20,200 left in the budget and the following proposals should be considered:

- Extension to Joe Hodgson's contract. **APPROVED**
- Liz Davies-Ward would like funding for projects within the Health area; the Strategic Health Authority have requested a conference to discuss the health work undertaken by regional LLN's and a contribution of £2000 has been requested; a Regional Masters in Public Health with a requested contribution of £2000. **APPROVED**
- The Arts group would like to hold a joint show for Art students within Herefordshire and Worcestershire to demonstrate and exhibit their work. This will enable students to professionally showcase their work and will also involve collaboration. The estimated cost is up to £5000. The group approved this event on the basis that a framework be produced to enable running in future years. **APPROVED**
- DL informed the group that due to the amount of time the LLN has left to run there is now a need to more closely manage the project funding. She proposed that any projects due to complete by 30 April 2010 must claim funding by 31 July 2010 and projects completing by 30 May 2010 would need to claim by 31 August 2010 in a rolling deadline. **APPROVED**. Any claims not processed and funding not issued would then be put back into the projects fund for one last round of projects that would need to be completed by December 2010. DL would alert partners that this would happen to allow them time to consider any project ideas they may have. GE stated the projects must contribute to the sustainability of LLN priorities in some way and this would need to be built into project criteria. **ACTION: DL to alert colleges to the prospect of one last round of project bids**

#### 5. Projects

##### Project Tracking Sheet & Summary by Institution

The group reviewed the current LLN projects.

## Summary of Projects Not Yet Completed

DL informed the group that she will be taking the list of un-completed projects out to the relevant institutions. This will hopefully bring attention to the projects and assist completion. DL stated that this list is a useful way of tracking projects that need action.

## Project Closure Forms

The Steering Group received Project Closure Forms for the following projects:

HCA	Step Up 2 HE Scoping transition to HE and/or employment in the Creative Sector Developing a Process to Deliver “How To” Induction Sessions via “Flexible Learning” across a wide range of courses at HCA. <i>An output is required for the Content Repository</i>
UW	Developing a Framework for Work Based Learning. Online induction for Flexible and Distance Learning MSc European Basketball Science
UW and HPCT	Bridging Programme for Herefordshire PCT Cadet Nurses to Higher Education Nursing Programmes November 2009. <b>ACTION: DL to find out if this will be running again</b>
LC	To investigate the opportunity to deliver a Foundation Degree for Early Years practitioners at Ludlow College, and therefore support the local community and future employment. <i>This course has recruited.</i> To investigate the opportunity to deliver a Foundation Degree for Art and Design at Ludlow College, and therefore support the local community and future employment.
RNCB	Work placements for Undergraduates with a Visual Impairment – Inclusive of the Range of Disabilities Presented by Visually Impaired Learners
OTHER	Investigate the Approved Prior Learning and Approved Experiential Learning Processes in Further Education across Herefordshire. <i>This has proved a useful exercise and has established the limited scale of the use of APL and APEL in the region.</i>

DL pointed out that the Alternative Format Media project has submitted such a detailed report that they have not been requested to submit a Project Closure form.

## **6. Plans for the Future of Wider Horizons**

Meetings are currently being conducted with the University ILS department. Wider Horizons and its budget will be transferred over to ILS who has agreed to keep it running until December 2011 in its current state. The site will also be developed into a ‘Son of Wider Horizons’ to integrate a library project and a first stage bid has been submitted to Nominet for further investment in the site. In conclusion the LLN have been successful in sustaining Wider Horizons.

## 7. Employer Engagement Activity 2010

An Employer Engagement forum was held at the end of March 2010 and was used to evaluate all activity that has been done so far and also to discuss plans for this year. Three Counties Consortium have contributed funding in this area. Activities will include working with providers to increase progression from apprenticeships, providing information for brokers, and the direct promotion of the benefits of HE to business networks. Jim Shuker will be undertaking this project again. **ACTION: DL to contact Tom Bonner at the Open University with details of the Employer Engagement Project**

### Outputs

The work that has been undertaken has been promoted by the Herefordshire & Worcestershire Chamber of Commerce. Quite a number of small local businesses have taken on Graduate Interns and a system for students looking for placements is being developed along with the Worcester Award.

## 8. Tracking the Entry of Vocational Learners into Higher Education in Herefordshire & Worcestershire

Thanks were offered to Donna Obrey and Colin Wood of the LLN team for conducting this research which has been submitted to feature in an LLN e-Book.

DL gave an overview of the key findings of the research which included:

- 70% increase in student numbers (Health, L&M, Sport, Media, Heritage, Culture, Tourism)
- 35% growth in student registrations with Vocational qualifications.
- An increase in Health in last 3 years.
- Students are registering onto longer courses than before.
- Sport has an 88% increase in students with vocational qualifications entering sport.
- UW has seen a decrease in the proportion of vocational students coming from Herefordshire and Worcestershire.

UW may use this research to set a baseline with partners for progression which will involve setting targets to raise the profile of progression. MR enquired how much part time student numbers would impact this research. **ACTION: DL to ask Donna Obrey and Colin Wood to consider how part time numbers would affect the retention research and feedback.**

**ACTION: Colin Wood and Donna Obrey to attend the next HE for Herefordshire meeting to discuss the Herefordshire research. HE Promotion information should also be included.**

GE informed the group the Further Education Research Association (FERA) website might be available as a repository for LLN research undertaken nationally. Staffordshire LLN may be funding FERA to enable development of the site for this purpose. GE will also be recommending that the FERA Journal publish a special LLN issue to showcase research undertaken. LLN research will also be available on the content repository within the Wider Horizons website.

## **9. Report on Work in Progress (including an Update on Progression Agreements from Cath McGourty)**

DL summarised a few of the key areas as follows:

- Final Employer Needs research has been circulated.
- The 14-19 Consortia should now be working with Aimhigher reference progression which will also involve Stratagia.
- HE in Herefordshire Promotions Group has involved positive progress including production of booklets for IAG providers, booklets for employers, design of a new landing page on the web, organisation of road shows at local market towns, promotional campaign materials and links to feature on other websites. All these activities are currently in progress.
- Employer needs in Worcestershire North research has led to 80 plus employers requesting further information and contact though the research also showed spending on education to be modest.

### Progression Agreements

It was confirmed that many of the progression agreements have required updates due to course changes. A number of partner college courses have also ceased to run.

GE sought clarification on the systems in place for progression agreements to ensure they are embedded. CM confirmed that UW does have a system to track and monitor the agreements through Annual Monitoring Reports and Quality Assurance systems in place.

DL informed the group that new progression charts the team are concentrating on more are general and stay current for longer. Charts available on the Wider Horizons website are:

- Progression opportunities for all advanced apprenticeships
- General progression maps for Arts, Engineering, Rural, Sports, Business and Health

The team updates were reviewed.

## **10. HEFCE Analysis of Monitoring Reports**

For information.

## **11. Any Other Business**

No business was discussed

## **12. Date of Next Meeting - TBA**