

Networking: The importance of networking was stressed and it was reported that a national meeting of the LLN Directors has been set which DL will be attending.

4. Draft Delivery Plan for the LLN

The LLN team have looked at the original document to identify the overall aims of the LLN and then identified outcomes, outputs and targets for each of the areas to see how they each contribute to meeting the overall aims. Five Delivery Plans have been produced for: the delivery of the Overall Aims of the LLN, Curriculum Development, Learner Progression & Support, E-Learning & OOE and Monitoring, Evaluation & Collaboration. The group considered each of the draft plans and discussed the following.

DL stated that a further principle will be added to the Overall Delivery Plan which states that where possible the LLN will use and build on existing work rather than duplicating items.

The group discussed whether there should be an overall aim which includes non-learners who are currently not in work, education or training as it was felt that this was not represented in the current document.

Action: DL to adapt one of the overall aims to incorporate non-learners

5. Report on Work in Progress

A report on work in progress was received by the group and summarised for discussion.

Leadership & Management: Tim Maxfield will continue to be seconded on a part-time basis to work on Leadership & Management. It is anticipated that he will produce the background work that will feed in to a conference/workshop for L&M that will be attended by representatives from around the region. This conference/workshop will facilitate discussion about appropriate provision for new courses in this area and identify what would be helpful in the following year. A conference/workshop has already been set for the Health & Social Care theme which will take place on 5 June. It was suggested that a co-ordinator should be identified for each of these groups to facilitate the communication channels.

Proposed New Curriculum Theme: It was reported that the LLN are proposing a third area of the curriculum – Tourism, Heritage, Sports, Culture and Media. This area has been chosen as it is felt that there is limited current provision in the region. It is hoped that the LLN will make a joint appointment with the University of Worcester to lead this area. The group were advised that this area was of particular interest to the HE for Herefordshire group as it was seen as having the most potential in this region. GE attended a meeting with the University of Birmingham recently to look at ways in which the two universities could work together on this.

Progression Agreements: DL will begin undertaking work on the Progression Agreements until the new post holder is in post. They will initially concentrate on setting up Progression Agreements in to and out of the designated LLN courses, in order to develop a specific bridging package that will give people the key skills required. It is also anticipated that this will make people aware of the help available to them and the ways in which they can access this help. It was noted that Anne Brownless had conducted a project on bridging for Aimhigher which might be helpful.

Action: DL to contact Aimhigher re Bridging Project

Communication within the Network: The LLN have already established a number of ways for communicating within the Network. Firstly, the website is in the process of being designed and will hopefully be set up by the end of May. Secondly, a brief email has

been sent to the contacts in order to update them on the work of the LLN. It was felt that this would be more beneficial than producing a monthly newsletter as people would be more inclined to read a brief email which could contain links if people were interested in reading further. The FE Marketing Managers Group are also willing to receive updates in this way for circulation within their own colleges. CM suggested that it might be useful for DL to attend the Principal's Meeting at least annually as there are currently concerns that the LLN will detract people from HE courses in FE colleges. However it was confirmed that this should not be the case and that the LLN should have a positive impact.

Curriculum Lead Health & Social Care: Liz Davies-Ward has arranged a workshop for the H&SC theme, the invitations for which are in the process of being sent out. She has also spoken to many contacts within the region in order to identify areas for progress.

Technology Co-ordinator: Viv Bell has begun visiting her regional contacts and has also commenced work on the LLN website which will hopefully be launched by the end of May.

Research in to HE Provision in Herefordshire: Donna Obrey has been undertaking research in to HE provision in Herefordshire in order to establish baseline data on the number of HE courses available to Herefordshire and the number of students studying during 2005/2006. The results of this research will be presented at the next HE for Herefordshire meeting at the end of May.

Research in to Tracking Progression: Preliminary work has been undertaken in to the main LLN research in tracking progression of students from Level 3 to Level 4 qualifications. The first draft of the research plan has been circulated for comment to Carl Flint (WCT), Mike McCarthy (NEW College) and Mike Smith (Hereford & Worcester Training Providers Association). The next stage will involve talking to Worcestershire County Council and Aimhigher to approach a consultant to help with this research.

HE Progression Fair: A meeting has been set to discuss the HE Progression Fair. DL advised that the LLN may be required to part-fund the cost of some of the coaches for the schools. In order to ensure that the fair is a success, it was suggested that the LLN should approach Aimhigher to set up some pre-work in the schools before the event. From past experience, it was also advised that talks should be provided for the students on how to fill out the forms and also something for the staff. GR also informed the group that she already had something useful prepared on writing references which she could provide if it was felt that this would be useful.

6. Update on Projects

The group were given an update on existing projects and also approached to consider approval of some new projects.

Market Research in to CPD: This project has now been completed and the results have been disseminated.

Study of LLN and Evaluation Instruments: JB circulated a paper summarising the responses to the questionnaire that she had received to date. The group considered the comments received to date and DL will respond to the comments and circulate this for information to the LLN network.

Action: DL to respond to final comments and circulate for information

HE Provision in Herefordshire: No funding was required for this project. Progress on this project was discussed under agenda item 5.

Establishing Progression Baseline: DL to talk to Worcestershire County Council to make contact with the consultant that they have employed to undertake associated research. It is anticipated that the research will be undertaken by the consultant with the help of Donna Obrey who will liaise with the partner colleges.

Marketing Foundation Degrees in Food (WCT & PGoC): A Project Proposal Form was tabled for funding a project that would jointly market the Foundation Degrees in Food, that are offered by WCT and PGoC, as foundation degrees struggle to recruit to target. There are two phases to the project, firstly tutors from the courses will go in to the appropriate businesses to meet their employees to raise awareness regarding the course and secondly, administration staff will update old databases of employers to aid long term communication with the employers. The group assessed the benefits of the project which were collaboration, the potential for more students, plus the opportunity to find out whether this new direct marketing approach would work. The total funding of £4,755.00 (£2,755.00 for WCT and £2,000 for PGoC) was approved.

Action: DL to notify Project Team of approval

Research in to Barriers to Progression from Level 3 to Level 4: NEW College and WCT both have an interest in to barriers to progression from Level 3 to Level 4. CM reported that WCT have already been undertaking work in to this and have achieved an increase in the number of students progressing to Level 4 (45% of Level 3 students progressed to Level 4 courses last year, this is compared with only 33% in the previous year). It would therefore be beneficial to actively involve WCT in this project to ensure there is no duplication of information. DL and DO have arranged to meet with Mike McCarthy (NEW College) to discuss this potential research; it was felt that the same research should also be undertaken at WCT in order to have a comparison across more than one college.

Learning Champions Employed by H&W County Councils: A Project Proposal Form was submitted by Annette Wright (Adult & Community Service, Worcestershire County Council) to fund a short-term project (3 months) which looks at engaging adult learners. The funding required would be £18,746.00 to fund salaries, travel, admin costs, meetings and marketing/resources plus an additional cost for 12 laptop computers. There were concerns regarding the use of the laptops after their 3 months use on the project and it was suggested that these be loaned to the FE Colleges for use by students between projects. The total funding of £18,746 plus the purchase of 12 laptops was approved.

Action: DL to notify Annette Wright of approval and DO to purchase laptops

Professional Programme at Worcester 6th Form College: A Project Proposal Form has not yet been completed for this project that will look to develop a short course in a particular professional area (either health or business) which will provide support regarding careers, skills and courses. Project Proposal Form and costing to follow.

7. Logo Competition

It was reported that 69 logos had been submitted for the Logo Competition, from 31 students across 7 colleges in Herefordshire & Worcestershire. The group considered the shortlist of logo entries and agreed on the logo that had been submitted by Joanna Marshall from Herefordshire College of Art & Design.

Action: DL to notify competition winner and arrange for presentation of prize

8. Budget Update

It was proposed that a different format is used to present the budget at future meetings. An initial projection will be prepared to show the income and projected expenditure over the 3 years however the group agreed that it would be useful to see a summary sheet for

the current financial year which shows the income, expenditure, commitments and balance remaining.

Action: DO to produce summary of budget for next meeting

The LLN has received £65,000 funding from the regional Learning & Skills Council, via HEFCE, to enhance its work around the LSC priorities (i.e. Apprenticeships, Foundation Degrees, IAG in the workplace and the new 14 – 19 Diplomas). It is anticipated that this funding will be used for one or two specific projects, an initial idea is that this could be used to link and improve existing databases of courses which can be used by IAG people, Train to Gain and students.

9. Any Other Business

In light of the LLN's responsibilities in the Higher Education for Herefordshire initiative, it was proposed that a representative from an FE College in Hereford should be invited to join the Steering Group. The group agreed that this would be a good idea and felt that it would be appropriate to approach Ian Peake, Principal from Herefordshire College of Technology.

Action: DL to invite Ian Peake to join the H&W LLN Steering Group

The group were advised that Alex Hughes will be leaving the University of Birmingham this month. It was requested that any correspondence in the near future should be sent to Gail Rothnie.

SUMMARY OF ACTIONS

Item	Action	By Whom
3	Look at documentation already produced by the OCN	DL
4	Adapt one of the overall aims in Delivery Plan to incorporate non-learners	DL
5	Contact Aimhigher Re Bridging Project	DL
6	Respond to final comments and circulate for information	DL
6	Notify WCT/PGoC Project Team of approval	DL
6	Notify Annette Wright of approval and purchase laptops	DL & DO
7	Notify logo competition winner and arrange for presentation of prize	DL
8	Produce summary of budget for next meeting	DO
9	Invite Ian Peake to join the H&W LLN Steering Group	DL