

**Employment and Skills Partnership
Thursday 7th May 2009
Explosion Conference Room, Priddy's Hard**

Present: Please see attached list

Apologies: Heidi Gray, HCC; Eric Halton, HCC; Sue Davis, GBC;
Phil Mirner, Train to Gain; Jenie McIndoe, Bay House School
Cluster; Geoff Phillpotts, PHA, Annie Martin, Next Steps; Cath
Longhurst, EBP; Fran May, Portsmouth College.

Attending: Christine Threlfall, GBC, Minutes

1. Welcome and Introductions

- 1.1 Steve Wain thanked everyone for attending the inaugural meeting of the Employment and Skills Partnership. Steve introduced himself as the Chair and asked those present to briefly introduce themselves.
- 1.2 Lynda Dine outlined the purpose of the Partnership and how it had come by combining GRAF (Gosport Regeneration Action Forum) and the CLF (Community Learning Forum). With the fast changing initiatives being introduced by PUSH a new focus and proactive approach was needed towards Employment and Skills.
- 1.3 Steve introduced the agenda and asked those present to give consider becoming part of the Partnership Board, which will meet quarterly and lead on an action plan for the Partnership.

2. Presentation on PUSH Employment & Skills – Priority & Progress

Kathy Wadsworth, Strategic Director at Portsmouth City Council and lead officer for the PUSH Employment Skills Board set the context for the sub-region. (A copy of Kathy's presentation is attached to these minutes at Appendix A).

- 2.1 Kathy welcomed the merging of the Employment and Skills agenda and emphasised the importance of a sector based approach that aligned with the priorities of PUSH.
- 2.2 The Gosport Employment & Skills Partnership will have a great opportunity to link into the PUSH agenda. Over the next few months there will be a review of the Business Plan. Latest information can be found at www.PUSH.gov.uk.

3. Presentation on Business Sectors – PUSH priorities and the Recession

Peter Grant, Employment & Skills Board Support Manager, explained the role of the Employment and Skills Board in more detail and made a presentation on the growth and decline of business sectors in the PUSH area.

(A copy of Peter's presentation is attached to these minutes at Appendix B).

- 3.1 The Employment and Skills Board in the PUSH area has an emphasis on involving employers in the Board. This will steer delivery of Employment and Skills activity and funding in the sub region.
- 3.2 There is a need for debate on how best to tackle sector-based working: should sectors be targeted or should the work be more cross cutting?

4. Overview of 14-19 Reforms and Provision in Fareham & Gosport

Bob Gellet, acting co-ordinator for the Fareham & Gosport 14-19 Consortium presented an overview of 14-19 reforms and provision in the area.

(A copy of Bob Gellet's presentation is attached to these minutes at Appendix C).

- 4.1 The Government target is for full introduction of the 14-19 Diplomas by 2013. A number of Diploma lines are being introduced by the Fareham and Gosport Consortium from 4th September 2009 – including Hair and Beauty; Creative & Media; Engineering.

Steve Wain thanked the presenters for their informative and interesting presentations and asked if there were any questions or discussion points that attendees would like to raise.

- Tim Houghton asked Kathy whether the ESB membership has a role for the third sector. Kathy replied this most definitely was the case with 50% of membership coming from the private sector and 50% from the public/voluntary sector; including a representative from the Hants CNS grouping.
- Tim Houghton asked Peter whether sustainability in the green economy was being addressed and whether PUSH was doing any work around this? Peter replied that they are currently looking at emerging business sectors which included environmental technologies and green infrastructure. Kathy also added that sustainable business improvements are considered by all PUSH panels. A PUSH bid through SEEDA is looking at both environmental and technological businesses.

- Nicky Stavely said that the number of volunteers had doubled over the last four months, although the GVA had not received any more resources. There is a need to fund Voluntary Centres to get people into work as the first step. Kathy said PUSH is committed to working with voluntary organisations and the huge role they play in helping people into work is recognised and valued.
- Tim asked whether there were any statistics available for a breakdown of employment areas for Gosport. Lynda Dine replied these were available. Peter said generally vacancies were in same business service areas and Care and Health. Steve Wain asked whether vacancy data is also available by skill level. Peter said at present these statistics were not available but the information could be made available and in future they hope to produce statistics for skill levels.
- Ian Potter asked what the 14-19 Consortiums are doing in terms of providing advice to parents and children. Bob replied that at present they aim to give schools and parents a greater understanding of the range of learning routes available to them.
- Whilst the 14-19 Diplomas gave parents and young people alternatives to GCSEs, the point was made that more information is needed for the Year 9 pupils when choosing their options.

5. Update by Key Partners

- 5.1 Debby Miller of ESSU gave information on the Skills For Life in the Workplace Programme. This offers short numeracy and literacy courses as a means of engaging people before further education. More information can be found at www.essu.org.
- 5.2 The Wheatsheaf Trust will be delivering a PUSH pilot project in Gosport from the beginning of June operating from the Old Chapel in St George's Barracks, advisors will be able to provide employment and skills advice and support to both unemployed and employed Gosport residents. The project will work with other initiatives and services to provide a broad range of help and address any barriers that clients face.

6. Terms of Reference & Invitations to join the Board

- 6.1 A draft copy of the Terms of Reference were passed round for comments. Beverley Jones (HCC) was keen to see links between adults and education and family learning groups. He asked whether a sub-group would be looking at softer skills – which help to gain confidence before starting training and education programmes and keep people engaged (particularly important given the growing number of unemployed). This needs to be reflected in the Terms of Reference.

- 6.2 Ian Potter (Bay House School) asked who was responsible for the funding as there could be concerns that too many partnerships are working towards the same end. Steve Wain had spoken to Eric Halton (who is leading on the Children and Young People's Partnership and Education Improvement Partnership) regarding any overlap and also said it would be useful to produce mapping of funding – where it's coming from and where it's going.
- 6.3 Simon Paine (Enterprise Gateway) said happiness and well-being were building blocks for individuals who don't choose mainstream routes and would affect issues round softer skills.
- 6.4 Mary Cavanagh, (Probation Service) said mapping of provision was very important – not just for mainstream provision – as it is important that agencies know what is being offered.
- 6.5 Lynda said that a template had been sent round asking people what they provided and this would be used as part of a mapping process.
- 6.6 Steve asked if there was general support for the Terms of Reference and it was agreed there was. The minutes and copies of all presentations will be sent round to members.
- 6.7 If anyone had any interest in taking up a place on the Board they should let Lynda Dine know.

7. Next Meeting

- 7.1 It was agreed the wider Partnership would meet on an annual basis and that the Partnership Board will meet quarterly. Papers from all meetings will be circulated to all members of the Partnership.