

BRIDLINGTON LEARNING AND SKILLS FORUM

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 29 JUNE 2016 AT 9.30AM AT BRIDLINGTON BUSINESS CENTRE

- Present:** Sue Revell - Shaw Trust
Chris Matson – Job Centre Plus
Simon Thomas – Job Centre Plus
Andy Levitt - Headlands School
Helena Moss – East Riding of Yorkshire Council, Education, Employment and Skills
Sophia White – Christ Church Community Services
Julia Thompson - WEA
Vicky Neilan – East Riding of Yorkshire Council, Bridlington Renaissance
Sara Fletcher – East Riding of Yorkshire Council, Education and Skills Partnership
- Apologies:** Liz Philpot – East Riding of Yorkshire Council, Bridlington Renaissance
Mike Heslop-Mullens – Bridlington Town Council
Adrian Brown – Pure Training Solutions
Andrea Turton – East Riding of Yorkshire Council, External Funding
Jean Thornton – East Riding of Yorkshire Council, Children’s Centre
Laura Snow, East Riding of Yorkshire Council, Children’s Centre
Melanie Brown, East Riding College
Pam Lee - CiTB

1. **Minutes of last meeting/matters arising**

Minutes approved as true record.

2. **Community Led Local Development – Identifying Gaps and Opportunities**

The group agreed to discuss potential projects and gaps which could be addressed through the CLLD programme – ideas can be fed into the Local Development Strategy (LDS) and fed into a potential action plan.

Headlands School are looking at developing a programme of engagement activity with older people at the school involving potential NEETs. The school are equipped to transport people in using their minibuses and hope to provide opportunities for students to be able to learn new skills through this engagement.

There needs to be some work done to identify progression paths. For example family learning. There is a need not to duplicate what the children’s centre or Education, Employment and Skills (ESS) are delivering but develop a route where referrals can be made between the two and other services.

The WEA are running an accredited course, ‘Supporting Work in Schools’, which is aimed at volunteers. Upon completion people could then go onto the Teaching Assistant course provided by EES. There is a potential opportunity through the CLLD to provide a bursary as the volunteering course costs £165 and there is some scope to waiver fees for those on benefits but it is not across the board. The bursary could also be widened out to cover transport and childcare costs as, even if the course can be funded, people are often still

unable to access it as they cannot fund these themselves.

It was highlighted that there is a gap in childcare provision for older children – especially during school holidays which can be a barrier to work and training. One possible solution could be a summer camp, perhaps run by Sport, Play and Arts which could cater to the hours needed. This could also provide an opportunity for teenagers to volunteer and develop their skills which would help with university applications.

The Youth and Family Support Service are delivering a summer work experience scheme this year which may provide a draft structure. The CLLD funds could potentially be used to commission a service which a range of providers could bid into with their own ideas for summertime childcare provision.

There seems to be a gap in funding for courses over the summer months. This can lead to those hard to reach groups who have made the initial step being disengaged. Could the CLLD provide a fund which could commission a year round offer?

SF suggested the benefits of a prospectus of activity for the unemployed. One is e=being developed through the LEP for young people but a central point for providers to update with courses, training and opportunities could be very beneficial for both service users and staff. Is this something that the CLLD could fund?

Again, there is support for 16-19 year olds via Springboard – delivered by EES. This is one to one support for those looking for work or training. It is a model which could be developed for the over 19s and offer extra support in accessing training with workers able to accompany people to work on the first day etc. Jackie Langley is the contact for more information.

Next year there will be a focus on health and wellbeing as programmes will be looking at encouraging those on Employment Support Allowance into work. Would it be possible to run some 1st step courses perhaps delivered by clinicians with teaching qualifications?

There is a gap with the information, advice and guidance support offered. If this was improved then people could be steered in the direction that will help sustain them in work suited to them rather than jobs which they will not continue with. This goes hand in hand with the need for volunteer placements – the target group would often benefit from a stepping stone before they enter paid employment.

Would there be scope to fund a person or team whose role is to pull together all training, volunteering and employment opportunities that can support services and individuals through their progression to employment? This would need to be one to one support from the very beginning of their journey and would work alongside the prospectus mentioned earlier. It could be an employment support volunteer bureau but would need to be based in the town and staffed by people who know the area and relate to the clients.

A further suggestion was for a Facebook Bridlington Learning and Skills page to be created. This could be done with some initial start-up costs and updated by students at Headlands School if it fit with the curriculum. AL will look into this.

An exercise is also need with employers to find out what their needs are in terms of skills. Many employers will have been let down by people who are unreliable and not consistent

at attending work so life skills of a potential workforce will also need to be addressed.

This exercise could involve developing skills based work packages based on the different sectors.

A previous scheme involved training to work and being provided with a wage instead of benefits. SR will look into what this scheme was called. It was questioned whether something similar could be developed with a step by step programme with achievable aims. Along with support from a one to one worker in terms of confidence building and financial capability, this could increase sustained employment.

It is important to educate employers who often have too high expectations from potential workers. If someone has no recent work history they are often disregarded at the first stage. A volunteering reference would often be sufficient but individuals do not always recognise the benefits of volunteering as a step on the route to employment.

The group feel it is important to map the route from unemployment to employment as a means of highlighting the gaps in provision and support. A template was discussed which will be sent out for population prior to the next meeting where it will be on the agenda to look at further.

JT suggested developing a 'Grow our own tutor' scheme where there is a progression route from taking part on a course to training to be able to deliver it. The new trainer will be able to relate to those taking part as they have been in their position. This would be strengthened if volunteer opportunities could be provided through the EES team. Governance and management could be done by to a voluntary organisation.

There are a high number of people who aren't claiming benefits in their own rights but are a dependant of a partner who is. This group is very hard to identify but would need addressing through the CLLD programme.

The need for more work placements is a theme which ran throughout the meeting. It is important that these are not used to mask an actual employment vacancy but are offered as an addition. Could a scheme be developed where there is an incentive for employers to take on work placements?

A further gap is in the support available to those who have been unemployed for less than 12 months. The work programme can offer help with finding vacancies, filling in forms and accessing transport for those who have been unemployed for over 12 months but there is nothing like this available for those who haven't. Is there scope to employ a worker who could provide the additional support service? This worker would need to be based in the community for instance working out of Christ Church.

A final suggestion was for the CLLD to look at subsidising the Wheels to Work scheme. Due to the cost the job centre do not refer individuals to this scheme anymore which is often a barrier to getting people working.

5. **Dates for next meetings**

Wednesday 13 July 9.30am

Wednesday 21 September 9.30am

Wednesday 30 November 9.30am