

Minutes

Event:	Voluntary and Community Sector Workforce – Project Steering Group	
Date:	25 July 2006, 11am – 1pm	
Venue:	Lifelong Learning UK Offices, London	
Present:	Alix Craven Bansari Somani Caroline Roberts Chris Catchpole Emma Skipper John Thorpe Sue Hunter Sue Hook Kim Harman	Lifelong Learning UK SkillsActive Sector Skills Development Agency LANTRA Skills for Health (Chair) SkillsActive Skills for Justice (SHu) SkillsActive SkillsActive
In attendance:	Janet Fleming Kate Thomas	NCVO / Workforce Hub WCVA / Workforce Hub
Apologies:	Mark Freeman Lisa Devayya	NCVO / Workforce Hub GoSkills

Item No.	Minute	ACTION
1	Welcome and Introductions	
1.1	Janet Fleming and Kate Thomas of the UK Workforce Hub were welcomed to the group as observers. Apologies were given as above and introductions were made for the benefit of observers today.	
1.2	Sue Hunter was introduced as the Skills for Justice attendee. Sue is the lead contact for the project group but may not remain as an Ambassador.	Noted
1.3	Bansari Somani was introduced to the group. She will be taking on the project lead from Sue Hook, and will also be the Ambassador for SkillsActive.	
2	Notes from last meeting – actions	
2.1	Previous minutes: Item 2 (Last meeting and actions)	
2.1.1	2.1.1 AC noted that she had informally approached Creative and Cultural Skills and it was not seen as a priority area for them at this time. A formal invitation should still be made. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CC Skills is approaching its research phase for Sector Skills Agreements (SSAs) and may be interested in joining the group later. • Wider invitations to the Sector Skill Council (SSC) network have been made but for many others it was not a priority. • The group agreed to invite the network again when further benefits were available. 	Noted
2.1.2	2.2.1 JF advised that the CEO of CRISIS has not resigned from the SSSA Board. SSSA Board members have a three year representation. Shaks was not sure if she will be retaining the SSSA board membership once	Noted

she has left Crisis, later in the year.

- 2.2 KT asked how devolved administrations would be involved?
- It was noted that SSCs have a national remit.
 - It was suggested that linking in to the Hub would be useful.
- 2.2.1 • CR recommended a separate Task and Finish group to manage the SSC Board event as it could easily take over project meetings. JT suggested that the Ambassadors could help organise the event. **Noted**
- 2.2.2 • Mark Freeman is drafting a joint letter to SSC Board members. Mark Freeman and CR are to liaise regarding the letter and list of SSC Board members, and will then consider the event. Mark Fisher, CEO of the SSDA being asked to sign the letter. **CR/MF**
- JF agreed to ask Mark to forward the letter for circulation to the group for comment. **JF/MF/CR/KH**
- 2.3 Previous minutes: Item 3 (Contracting)
- 2.3.1 • JF noted that the Hub had not yet received their contract and that this delay is beginning to affect work programmes and relationships around the network. CR agreed to follow this up. **Noted/CR**
- 2.3.2 3.4 SH noted that signed Ambassador contracts' had not yet been received and asked group members to follow these up. **ALL**
- 2.4 Previous minutes: Item 4 (Progress against workplan)
- 4.2.2 CR has circulated a list of SSDA Regional Partnership Managers but they have not yet held a meeting.
- 2.4.1 • CR will first meet with the National Managers before speaking to the Regional contacts. **CR/Noted**
- 2.5 Previous minutes: Item 5 (Hub Update)
- 2.5.1 5.3.1 SH felt this minute was not clear, and clarified that SkillsActive would provide a letter of support for the fundraising standards when approached. **Noted**
- 5.4 It was noted that some Ambassadors have linked their SSC website to the Hub website.
- 5.5.1 The Board event is discussed with further action at minute 2.2.2.
- 5.6.2 CR noted that these points would be discussed later in the meeting.
- 2.6 CR added that she was trying to raise the project profile via the SSDA NSG (Network Strategy Group).
- A similar presentation at their last meeting had been very well received.
 - It is a challenge to add any items to their Agenda. CR asked the group if she should pursue this opportunity and the group agreed this was worthwhile. **Noted**
 - ES added that a joint presentation from Ambassadors would emphasise the links and joint working.
 - CR agreed to find out future meeting dates for the NSG. **CR**
- 2.7 KT noted that her next Welsh Hub meeting would be on 8 March 2007.
- JF noted the next London meeting would be the 9 January, and this may be an opportunity for Ambassadors to meet with the Hub partners, and to explore the resources available at the Hub offices. **Noted**
- 2.8 (For discussion on the Memorandum of Understanding project specification, please see Any Other Business).

3 Progress against work plan milestones

- 3.1 The workplan (Appendix 1) had been circulated prior to the meeting. Milestones for the end of July claim were considered:
- A1: Ambassadors have been identified and are currently being contracted (please see 2.3.1 of these minutes)
- Discussions regarding a toolkit have begun with the Hub and this is included in the collective workplan with the Hub
- A4: The operational plan will include details for the development of further resources, but this has been delayed due to late contracting of the Hub.
- A5: Invitations have been made to other SSCs with limited response – this will be kept as an open invitation. **Noted**
- B1: Ambassador action plans will include KPIs. SH noted that some Ambassadors will share similar strategic issues. An exemplar action plan to include with the claim will be available.
- E2: The Hub representative on the project group is Mark Freeman.
- 3.2 JT stated that a joint work programme has been brought in for management and leadership work areas, and asked JF and KT if a similar joint work programme could be a useful tool for this group?
- A joint proposal has already been submitted.
 - JF noted that the Hub reported on a per nation basis.
 - SkillsActive to liaise with Mark Freeman regarding this. **KH/MF**

4 Hub Update

- 4.1 JF gave an update:
- 10,500 copies of the pocket-sized Trustees and Management Committee NOS have been circulated to date
 - 2000 full sets of the suite have been downloaded online
 - Before download, users must register on the website (free of charge). **Noted**
- 4.2 Labour Market Information (LMI) – Skills Foresight Project
- This joint research project into the voluntary sector is now testing the methodology with Skills for Health. Questionnaires continue to be completed.
 - Partners include the Hub, Lifelong Learning UK and Skills for Health.
 - Skills for Justice also expressed interest; JF noted that Jenny Clarke in their research department would be in touch with SHu.
 - The research project will be open to other SSCs once the pilot with SfH has been completed. There are plans to work with SSCs with a significant VCS footprint.
 - A full rollout of the research phase is expected in September.
 - All those SSCs with Ambassadors have been interested in engaging with this research.
 - The idea is not to duplicate work for the Sector Skills Agreements but to work alongside that process.
 - This has proved to be useful work for some SSCs, depending on what stage they are with the SSAs. **Noted**
- 4.3 KT noted that they would hopefully receive funding to carry out similar work in Wales and in Northern Ireland (through NICVA).
- JT added that 30% of the UK workforce is not covered by SSCs, which was the original reason for this research. **Noted**

- This is an excellent opportunity for joint working.
- 4.5 The Hub:
- ChangeUp is currently reviewing the Hub and is carrying out consultations.
 - JT, BS and formerly SH, attend the Hub meetings.
 - BS asked if a copy of the research methodology was available? JF agreed to ask Jenny Clarke to circulate this.
 - JT asked if anything had yet emerged from working with Ed Miliband?
 - JF replied that they were awaiting the outcomes of consultation and review.
 - A cabinet review is trying to link departments with a voluntary focus, such as health and sport.
- JF/Noted**
- 4.6 JT felt that the success of the pocket-sized books was because they are very accessible.
- He added that in Scotland, several SSCs had worked together with SCVO to produce a workforce CD for Scotland.
- 4.7 SHu noted that Skills for Justice had wished to revise the Capacity Builder CD and has submitted a proposal to SSSA to fund this.
- There is a good track record for using electronic solutions in their sector.
 - CR agreed to follow up the proposal with Jen Teulon at SSSA.
 - SHu felt this work needed to begin but is unable to wait for funds.
 - Skills for Justice are using the same web developer as was engaged on the Skills for Health web-based competence tool, so the resources should look very similar.
 - ES noted that the Skills for Health tool only applies to their own occupational areas, currently with largely an NHS focus and SfH is potentially looking to develop to meet needs of a voluntary and community sector, linked in as a SSA deliverable.
- Noted**
- 4.8 SHu also added that Skills for Justice was beginning a project on governance.
- Considers non-paid governance, and is funded by the SSSA.
 - Police authorities will draw closely on Trustees and CSA Governance as well as Management standards, so there is unlikely to be a large amount of new content.
 - SHu noted that they were disappointed to not have continuing engagement of all appropriate SSCs and
 - SHu added that some good consultees, who have been engaged in development work, were required.
 - Lifelong Learning UK initially supported the bid.
- All/Noted**
- 4.9 Inspection NOS (a cross sector project):
- SHu noted that these are also being developed,
 - NOS for those working with ALI, the QAA, inspection of sites in prisons, by police and possibly in schools
 - Skills for Care and Development and Skills for Health have been involved with this project.
- Noted**
- 4.10 JF added that she would circulate a joint working brochure for the Hub with news of all projects and initiatives.
- The update could be linked to this project to ensure that all gaps are covered.
 - JF further added that they had been approached by BOND, the umbrella organisation for overseas voluntary organisations.
- Noted**

- Bidding for NOS projects normally begins in the autumn but there has been no release of a prospectus or process as yet.

5 Ambassador Update

5.1 There are five Ambassadors in this phase of the project, with some changes:

- Alix Craven replaces Ted Le Riche for Lifelong Learning UK
- Sue Hunter replaces Gill O'Connell from Skills for Justice, but may not remain the Ambassador
- Bansari Somani replaces Jackie Hayhoe for SkillsActive, as well as taking project lead in place of Sue Hook
- Ambassadors are making optimum use of resources and are promoting joint working.

Noted

5.2 Action plans are being developed, and work on this is being shared and coordinated.

- Opportunities for joint working or shared events can be written into the plans.
- Many lessons have been learnt that can be taken forward, including more UK-wide work.
- Some Ambassador contracts are still to be returned (minute 2.3.2).

Noted

5.3

The whole work area ties in very strongly with the upcoming London 2012 Olympic Games and Paralympic Games.

- Sandra Scott, Olympic Coordinator at the SSDA, is to attend the next meeting of either the Ambassadors or the project group.
- It was felt key not to lean all work toward the sport and activity sector but the high profile is an opportunity to open doors.
- Jackie Hayhoe at SkillsActive is currently working on NOS for the Olympics – this activity needs to be monitored.

Noted

6 Any Other Business

6.1 A tender specification for a discreet project on the Memorandum of

6.1.1 Understanding (MoU) was discussed after item two on the agenda. (Please see the revised and final version at [Appendix 2](#)).

6.1.2 Discussions for the last MoU were concluded 18 months ago. However the feeling is that the MoU needs refreshing, to be between the Skills for Business Network (SfBN) as a whole (or 'an' SSC), and the UK Workforce Hub.

6.1.3 As an outcome of this work:

- A revised MoU
- Effective working and contractual arrangements for a lead SSC
- Basic outline for a three year plan, (building on existing and previous work and including initiatives such as the 14-19 Agenda and SSAs).

Noted

6.1.4 JT noted that this work would be complete by January 2007, and would hopefully lead to further SSDA contracting in March 2007.

- A revised draft of the tender should be ready by the end of July
- Members were asked to forward on recommendations for potential consultants
- The tender will be sent to all members and highlighted consultants, with a shortlist for tender by the end of August.

Noted

- 6.1.5 • JF asked JT to add a line that this builds on the good practice between the government and the voluntary and community sector. JT agreed. **JT**
- CR noted that a three year plan would need to have very clear deliverables and outcomes.
- 6.2 ES asked how a lead SSC would be appointed?
- JT replied that the consultants would be asked to devise a methodology.
- All SSCs and strategic partners will need to be involved, to see what may work.
- CR suggested that the lead SSC may be a purely contractual lead – this might encourage CEOs of SSCs to engage more. She felt it was essential that the network listens to this work, and is willing to help engage with CEOs. **Noted**
- It was noted that the any lead SSC would need to be selected in a clear and transparent manner.
- 6.3
- KT asked if other nations would be consulted with?
- SSCs may be more active in some regions than in others.
- SH noted that if SSCs are engaged at CEO level, then they would be responsible for delivering UK wide. **All**
- 6.4
- JT asked the group to respond with any further comments on the tender.
- The tender will be posted to various websites including SkillsActive, the project website, and an approach to SSSDA will be made. **All**
- SH noted that this was quite a specialist area and urged the group to send recommendations for consultants.
- 7 Dates of Next Meetings**
- 7.1 The next project meeting date had been previously agreed as 3 October, with the Project Steering Group in the morning and the Ambassador meeting in the afternoon.
- Some members are unable to attend on the 3 October so this is provisionally re-arranged for the 5th of October. **All/Noted**
- Every effort will be made to tie this in with the Ambassador meeting to help logistics and minimise travel.
- 7.2 Update: Further potential meeting dates will be circulated to the group after the meeting.