

**BLSP Learning and Skills Sub-Group  
4 November 2008  
12.30pm – 2.30pm  
Idle Valley Rural Learning Centre**

**MINUTES**

**Attending:**

Fran Walker (Chair)	North Notts College
Lynn Barlow	Enable/Learning Champions
Pip Beasant	Children's Centres
Vicki Seth-Kosoko	Bassetlaw Primary Care Trust
Nicola Simpson	Nottinghamshire County Council
Steve Walker	Valley Comprehensive School
Bob Wallis	Nottinghamshire County Council
Esther Watt	Bassetlaw District Council (Policy)
Councillor Chris Wanless	Bassetlaw District Council

**1. Introductions and Welcome**

Fran Walker welcomed members to the meeting and thanked them for their attendance.

**2. Apologies**

Apologies were received from Jean Haywood, LSC Notts; Helen Goldsbrough, Notts County Council; Robin Woodhead, Priory CofE Primary School, Len Hull, Bassetlaw District Council; and Shona Neill, Connexions.

**3. Minutes of the last meeting and matters arising**

3.1 The minutes were agreed as a true and accurate record.

3.2 In response to a question, Fran explained the concept and development of the Idle Valley Rural Learning Centre.

3.3 The Sub-Group discussed the Action Plan that had been emailed with the agenda. Priority 3 is raising aspirations and 3.1 states, "to promote learning success stories and opportunities". It was decided that articles should be placed in the local newspapers advertising good news stories and it was decided that six per year would be adequate.

3.4 Fran informed the meeting that the World Mental Health Day event was held on the 10 October 2008 at The Crossing. This was publicised in the local media and approximately 400 people attended. Fran and Sue Gill have been asked to do

organise another event next year due to its success.

#### **4. Introduction to the Skills Pledge**

Fran explained that the Skills Pledge is a voluntary public commitment by the leadership of a company or organisation to support all its employees to develop their basic skills, including literacy and numeracy, and work towards relevant valuable qualifications at least to Level 2 (equivalent to five good GCSEs). The purpose is to ensure all staff are skilled, competent and able to make a full contribution to the success of the company/organisation.

Victoria noted that Bassetlaw Primary Care Trust have signed up to a similar scheme. Fran added that a meeting has already taken place with the Head of HR at Bassetlaw District Council and M Kilraine at North Notts College who are both moving towards signing the Skills Pledge.

Pip noted that she had previously undertaken a similar scheme in an attempt to get Childcare Practitioners to undertake English and Mathematics qualifications, however it can prove very difficult. Pip added that childcare facilities could be problematic for parents who want to improve their skills level. However, a bid has been submitted, and if successful, the monies could be used to provide childcare facilities for people who wish to attend college, courses, etc.

In response to a question, Bob stated that he would enquire to see whether Nottinghamshire County Council has signed up to the Skills Pledge. Victoria added that the NHS is also looking into apprenticeships and could ask someone to speak to the Sub-Group at the next meeting.

The meeting discussed a potential Skills Pledge being signed by local schools, however it was noted that schools should already be teaching children literacy and numeracy. Steve added that there are approximately ten girls in Year 9 who appear to be behind some of their classmates with regards to their literacy and numeracy skills. The Sub-Group noted that it was extremely important to raise awareness of these skills because in five years time these would be extremely important in gaining a job and in everyday life, e.g. filling in forms. Members discussed providing an event/inviting them to a future meeting to discuss this with the young people. Chris added that he had been invited to secondary schools within the District to speak to some of the young people. It was noted that Lynn, in her role through Enable, helps people gain qualifications once they have left school at the age of 18.

The Sub-Group discussed having a mini Skills Pledge for secondary schools and to see whether this would be beneficial. The Sub-Group also discussed data that highlighted the increase in violent behaviour by some girls of school age. It was decided that raising aspirations was incredibly important and should be retained within the Action Plan 2008/09.

#### **5. Review of Action Plan 2008/09**

The Sub-Group discussed the Action Plans, however a further meeting was planned later in the year with all the Sub-Group Chairs. The meeting was intended to discuss the delivery of the Local Area Agreement targets to ensure all were being met through the Sub-Group Action Plans.

It was noted that the Sub-Group might be looking at an older version of the Action

Plan; therefore Esther was to check progress and ensure all amendments were made to the latest version of the Action Plan. Lynn added that she had previously sent the NLDC targets for last year, all of which were achieved. It was decided that Lynn would send these to Esther to be incorporated into the Action Plan.

## **6. Future Meeting Dates for 2008 and 2009**

6.1 Dates for 2009 were agreed as:

- 12th January
- 6th April
- 6th July
- 5th October

It was decided to hold the next meeting at Valley School from 12 noon to 2.00pm.