

## WALTHAM FOREST TOGETHER

### Minutes of the meeting of the LSP Employment & Enterprise Theme Partnership held from 2.00pm – 4.00pm on Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> November in Committee Room 2, Waltham Forest Town Hall (DRAFT)

#### Present:

Fawaad Shaikh (Chair) (FS)	Waltham Forest Business Board
Cllr Terry Wheeler (TW)	Portfolio Holder, Enterprise and Investment
Jason Vosa-Baigrie (JVB)	JobCentre Plus representative (alternate for Wally Steel)
Sarah Carrick (SC)	Learning & Skills Council representative
Gary de Ferry (GF)	WF Housing Association Liaison Group representative
Vernon Herbert (VH)	LBWF, Interim Assistant Director - Development

#### Officers

Bruce Clarke (BC)	LBWF, Committee Manager
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#### Also in attendance

Julian Martin (JM)	VAWF nominee as Voluntary Sector representative
Valentin Yombo Djema(VYD)	VAWF nominee as Voluntary Sector representative
Mme Jeanne-Marie Yala Koum	Africa Foundation Stone representative in Cameroon, in London on a Commonwealth scholarship.
Anne Bonsor (AB)	LBWF, Head of Regeneration Programmes
Paul Convery (PC)	Centre for Economic & Social Inclusion
Michele Moloney (MM)	LBWF, Head of Performance & Service Improvement
Libby Allmand (LA)	LBWF, Performance & Service Improvement Manager

#### 1. Introductions and Theme Partnership appointments

- 1.1 The chair welcomed everyone to this meeting of the LSP Employment & Enterprise Theme Partnership. All those present introduced themselves.
- 1.2 Apologies had been received from: Wally Steel (JobCentre Plus) – *Jason Vosa-Baigrie deputising*, Patricia Salami (Government Office for London), Alison Dickens (North London Strategic Alliance), Iain Elliott (Waltham Forest Collegiate Board), Leora Cruddas (LBWF, Head of Education for Communities) and Chris Dransfield (LBWF, Economic Development Manager).
- 1.3 The Committee Manager noted that several members hadn't completed and returned the Financial Interests and Equalities Monitoring forms emailed to them on 12<sup>th</sup> October 2007.  
**ACTION:** Further set of forms to be emailed to all those members not having so far completed them. **BC**

#### 2. Minutes of the meeting on 11<sup>th</sup> September 2007.

- 2.1 Reviewed and agreed as presented – the Chair signed in confirmation.

#### 3. Update on Sustainable Community Strategy.

- 3.1 The Chair noted the two papers presented (Update on SCS Development - Enterprise and Skills Thematic Partnership and Sustainable Community Strategy; Thematic Paper approach) and encouraged all members to use them in order to better understand the work on the SCS.

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### 4. Update on Employment and Skills Strategy.

- 4.1 Paul Convery, Centre for Economic & Social Inclusion gave a short Strategy Update presentation covering Waltham Forest's economic legacy, economic future, changing the policy context and 'exploiting the growth dynamic'.  
**ACTION:** presentation to be circulated to members. **BC**
- 4.2 Paul noted that the next stage in developing the Strategy would be for Thematic Partnership members to provide responses to the current draft document and issues raised therein so that work can commence on drawing up a related Action Plan. Members requested that the latest version of the draft Strategy be made available to them to facilitate responses.  
**ACTION:** latest draft Strategy to be circulated to all members. **BC**
- 4.3 Noted the following further comments from attendees:
- Need to agree the final, correct title for the Strategy. Draft document refers to 'Enterprise and Employment', previously known as 'Employment and Skills', Thematic Paper is called 'Economic Development, Employment and Skills' – it was **Agreed** that the Strategy be entitled 'Enterprise, Employment and Skills'.
  - 'Exploit the growth dynamic' in Paul's presentation contained six bullet points – these should be reflected within the Thematic Paper. It was noted that the Thematic Paper already exists and, after a final check on updated statistics, will now go forward to the next stage of SCS planning.
- ACTION:** circulate the existing Thematic Paper to all members. **BC**
- Some issues needing more work – 'opportunities', do we build around 'food clusters', does the office market sector exist in Waltham Forest, the visitor economy (particularly in the context of 2012), inward investment and income levels.
  - Urgent need to 'test' the six issues raised within 'exploiting the growth dynamic'.
  - Need to be aware of cross cutting links with the other eight SCS Thematic Papers.
  - LAA 2 from 2008/9 onwards also needs to be integrated into the SCS Papers – no sign yet in Waltham Forest of such integration.
  - Skills objectives need to be included in both LAA 2 and the Strategy Action Plan.
- 4.4 The Chair requested that in order to assist with feedback from members on the draft Strategy document, a series of questions be drawn up that would allow for specific responses.  
**ACTION:** draw up a series of Strategy related questions. **AB**
- ### 5. Local Area Agreement Performance, 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter 2007/08.
- 5.1 Libby Allmand presented this item, noting that of the seven indicators being monitored four are on target and the other three are designated exceptions as being not on target:
- A) Lone parents from NMAs into sustainable employment – reward target 97, actual 20 – one key action to improve

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performance is that the Council Leader is arranging a meeting with senior JobCentre Plus (JCP) representatives regarding improved partnership working.

- B) Incapacity Benefit claimants from NMAs into sustainable employment – reward target 50, actual 6 – key action as above.
- C) VAT registrations per 10,000 population–target 31,actual 27.7

5.2 Noted the following further comments/questions and responses regarding indicators A) and B) above:

Comment: JVB noted that regarding A & B above the world has moved on since those targets were set – there'll be increasing problems from April '08. He offered to assist with setting up JCP / LBWF meeting(s).

Response: MM believed if we thought the world has moved on, and the targets set are consequently impossible to achieve, we should say so. She will contact JVB regarding his offer of help in setting up meetings.

Comment: JVB noted that the partnership between JCP and the WorkNet team is working well.

Response: MM said the targets couldn't be changed but it would be possible to comment on positive aspects of collaborative work actually being done.

Question: SC believes it's the definitions pertaining to the measurement of 'Actual Performance' that are the problem – can they be changed?

Response: MM noted this to be another reason for a high-level meeting between LBWF and JCP representatives. Need to highlight the positive work being done.

Question: FS asked what could we do as a Group? SC asked specifically about contact with Government Office for London.

Response: MM noted that she had spoken with GoL and would be pleased to supply members with their contact details.

Comment: PC advised he's currently working with the Worknet team; they've helped a significant number of clients but with only a limited number thereof entering employment. In order to emphasise their good work he'd suggest replacing 'Actual Performance' with 'Eligible Performance'. JVB said he could supply JCP data on 'global performance' levels but this wouldn't assist with identifying those emanating from WorkNet involvement.

Response: MM noted that targets will be reviewed with GoL in 2008; we're unlikely to receive the reward targets but essential to receive reliable data from participating partners.

5.3 Noted the following further comments regarding indicator C) above:

- For businesses with over £100k turnover it makes total sense to register for VAT in view / terms of recoverables.
- A lot of businesses operating in Waltham Forest have registered for VAT in other boroughs – better 'business address'.
- Poor understanding within the borough of what is offered via

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Business Link – they should be invited to attend our meetings.

**ACTION:** invite Business Link to attend our next meeting.

**BC**

- VAT de-registration numbers are also decreasing – total of businesses now registered is at an all-time high. More of those previously registered are still registered.

5.4 MM advised that her department have now taken over LAA Performance monitoring. She'd appreciate any further comments regarding today's report (both contents and method of presentation); they should be sent in the first instance to BC.

The Chair asked if the meeting had sufficiently covered the Recommendation item 'actions being taken ...'; MM advised that some points had been raised but members aware of any others to be addressed should raise them directly through her.

PC requested one specific amendment to the Exceptions sheet regarding VAT registrations – the title should be amended to 'Number of VAT registrations per 10,000 **adult** population'.

**ACTION:** amend the relevant Exceptions sheet.

**LA**

### **6 & 7 LSC Annual Statement of Priorities / Input from members on local employment and skills priorities.**

6/7.1 SC distributed a limited number of copies of the LSC Annual Statement of Priorities amongst the attendees; further copies can be obtained by contacting her through BC. Noted the following further comments:

- Document just published by the National LSC covering the next academic year 2008/09.
- The LSC will be talking to many individual groups within the borough over the next few months – if contacted, think Waltham Forest.
- Increased emphasis for young people on work-related training opportunities / increased funding primarily for 'apprenticeship' type training (the latter difficult for Waltham Forest with relatively few large employers).
- Main ways of engagement – employers to be more involved in design and delivery of training / increased involvement in what will more likely lead to increased employability.

6/7.2 Noted the following further comments from attendees:

- Colleges more focussed on 'ticking boxes' than numbers of students actually going straight into employment.
- The political will exists - problem is the 'how'.
- Educational attainment linked to routes into work needs to be improved – advance knowledge of future employment possibilities would enable more focussed, realistic training.
- Community groups – significant employment opportunities plus their own training schemes – how to include in the LSC plans? SC indicated existing Train to Gain opportunities – will look at possibilities of 'apprenticeships' in the voluntary group scenario.

The Chair believed there would be more questions after members had read the Report – all members to feed back to SC.

**ACTION:** feed back comments / questions to SC.

**All members**

**8. Funding Updates (to be an Agenda item at every meeting).**

8.1 Vernon Herbert / Anne Bonsor spoke to the circulated briefing paper, setting out the five objectives of the Strategy together with an update of work underway through the Regeneration team.

Noted the following further comments from attendees:

- ESF (LDA) – deadline for bids is January 2008.
- City Strategy Pathfinder – met with them last week, made a start, trying to collate into a proposal. First concept – rolling out of WorkNet pilot through single points of access. Board to discuss / hopefully agree on 30<sup>th</sup> November a £100k pump priming grant to be used to develop the pilot for a full programme.
- LETF (LDA) – the 2012 Job Brokerage Scheme is a separate part of WorkNet’s activities – branded as WorkNet to achieve visibility.
- LID Funding (LSC) – again separate strand of WorkNet 2012 Job Brokerage – different funding stream to LETF above. New 2012 related workforce to arrive imminently.
- 2012 Task Group met recently – opportunity to share plans and initiatives – major issue for City Strategy Pathfinder to achieve.
- The CSP Bid is going to the CSP Board in February 2008 – it will be circulated to our members for comments before submission. A related project group will be established and will report in to Employment and Enterprise.
- East London Area programme (LDA) – to be dealt with through the Business Board – believed to be the right place but overall responsibility will remain with Employment and Enterprise.
- Business Board update – both the Argyle and Leytonstone BIDs are progressing well.

**9. Members progress – how as a Thematic Group can we enhance our working partnership / Terms of Reference.**

9.1 Anne Bonsor presented the draft Terms of Reference and asked for members’ comments. Noted the following responses:

- ‘Information on performance is disseminated through area based structures’ – would be good to see examples of which structures to be used for such dissemination (e.g. Community Council meetings, tenants councils).
- Needs inclusion of ‘skills’.
- ‘Reading Agenda papers before meetings’ – all members agreed this was a real problem to date given the last minute dispatch of such papers. Needs to be urgently addressed by report authors.
- ‘Lobby on issues of regional significance’ and ‘Doing utmost to represent the partnership whenever possible’ – danger of becoming political.
- ‘Termination of membership’ – possibility of utilising alternates on an irregular basis – the Chair noted that the underlying issue is about making strategic decisions by people who can commit.

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It was noted that alternates could take back strategic decisions to the relevant member to be resolved.

- No reference in the document to whether or not the TOR should be regularly reviewed and if so at what intervals – **AGREED** that ‘Annual Review’ should be added.
- Wording of the ‘Purpose’ needs to be briefer – **AGREED**.

**AB**

9.2 **ACTION:** amend the draft document accordingly.  
 Subject to the amendments noted above the Terms of Reference were **AGREED**, as was submission to the LSP Board for final ratification.

**10. Any Other Business.**

10.1 Councillor Wheeler noted the following developments concerning the Construction Skills Academy:

- Two soil tests successfully completed – an ecological survey shortly to be undertaken followed by a de-contamination exercise regarding bird droppings etc.
- Demolition of buildings expected to commence by March 2008.
- Some funding is to be provided by the LSC covering part of the building costs.
- Temporary facilities to be established in December 2007 on the Eton Manor site, to be followed thereafter by taking over a disused premise at Harrow Green for which funding is available to cover the necessary refit.
- Going out to tender soon regarding the 2012 Construction Skills Centre, a joint venture between the five Olympic Boroughs. A full planning application has been submitted.

10.2 JVB spoke about the Local Employment Partnerships and their ‘Jobs Pledge’ – noted a more up-front approach to the clients they’re trying to assist. Employers should endeavour to look more creatively at the type of people they’re seeking to employ. Looking at two areas specifically:

- **LBWF – a significant employer – need to be seen at the LEP Signing ceremony at Romford on 3rd December – would like a firm commitment from them regarding the ‘Jobs Pledge’.**
- WF Business Board – to be used to bring together individual potential employers.

10.3 SC spoke about the London Skills and Employment Board - draft Adult Skills and Employment Strategy recently circulated to all members. Any comments are required by the third week of January; a consultation event has been organised by NLSA on 15<sup>th</sup> January - all are invited.

**Date of next meeting:** Provisionally Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2008, 2.00pm – 4.00pm, Venue: Town Hall Committee Room 2.

**Agreed..... Chair Date.....**

**Contact Officer:**

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