

# **LARGER PRINT COPY AVAILABLE PLEASE TELEPHONE: 01493 846325**

## **GREAT YARMOUTH EMPLOYMENT AND SKILLS PARTNERSHIP**

**7 December 2012 – 10.00 am**

### **PRESENT:**

Jackie Tinkler (Job Centre Plus) (in the Chair); Asad Abbas (NTS), Paul Cheeseman (GYBC), Debbi Christophers (Business in the Community), Nova Fairbank (Norfolk Chamber of Commerce), Daniel Hastings (Job Centre Plus), Julia Howard (Great Yarmouth College), Tracey Jones (GYBC), Keith Loveys (Nexus), Christopher Macdonald (GYBC), Ellie Marcham (GYBC), Ben Sampson (Voluntary Norfolk), Councillor T Wainwright (GYBC), Richard Yardey (ATT Limited) and Karline Smith (GYBC).

### **1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received from Anne Rawstron (Job Centre Plus) and Donna Whittingham (A4e).

### **2. MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 11 July 2012 were confirmed.

### **3. ACTION POINT UPDATE**

- (a) Tracey Jones reported that Job Centre Plus would now be included in the Youth Advisory Board Membership and Great Yarmouth College had also requested to be Members of this Group.
- (b) It was reported that the Chairs of the Economic Reference Group and Employment and Skills Board had met with Peter Wright, Elli Marcham, Chris MacDonald and Paul Cheeseman to discuss the Economic Reference Group and the Employment and Skills Group and had agreed that the two Groups had sufficient differences in their aims, objectives and agendas to remain as two separate groups. If there was potential overlap of agenda items this would be discussed in advance and a joint meeting could be held if deemed necessary.
- (c) A meeting had recently been held to progress on Great Yarmouth's application to the Big Lottery's Fulfilling Lives Programme. This aims to better support people with complex needs and provides the potential for up to £10m of funding over eight years. Paul Cheeseman reported that at a recent meeting, the partnership had agreed its vision to transform the relationship between citizens, their communities and services. The first stage of the application has to be submitted by 17 December 2012.

- (d) Paul Cheeseman also reported on another Lottery programme although unlike Fulfilling Lives, this one will not be delivered in Great Yarmouth, focusing instead on King's Lynn, Waveney, Ipswich and Norwich. The programme, which is called Talent Match, aims to support young people into training and employment and is being led by the Prince's Trust.
- (e) Chris Macdonald reported that he had carried out a survey of employers and they had sent out 800 surveys to businesses in the Borough receiving 34 replies. Chris reported that employers advertised through the internet or on their own website and many were reluctant to recruit through the Job Centre. They spoke of a lack of specific skills and experience when recruiting people from the Borough, but stated that general soft skills and experience was most important when recruiting. It was agreed that the results of this would be circulated with the minutes once received from Chris Macdonald. Job Centre Plus reported that they were now looking at the quality of CV's being submitted to employers.

#### **4. PRE-EMPLOYMENT RELATED SUPPORT SERVICES**

##### **(a) Community Budgets**

Ellie Marcham reported on the Small Grants Programme stating that two organisations had been awarded funding, these were Great Yarmouth Community Trust who had received £10,000 to employ people to gain work experience which would then enable them to go on to paid employment. GYROS had received almost £4,000 to support local residents to undertake work placements in their café.

The Community Budget has also provided financial support to T S Warrior and has committed to support a social enterprise to run a bike repair and loan scheme.

It was reported that there had been a significant increase in the uptake of the services of Target Opportunities across all age ranges, with the biggest increase notes amongst people aged 50 and above. Explanations for this include the current economic climate and also changes to Housing Benefit and Council Tax, as people look to maintain or increase household budgets. Ben Sampson reported that each advisor usually sees 200-250 new clients each year but he had seen 220 new clients in his first three quarters. 51 of the 220 people he had seen had gained new employment and he had seen more skilled people coming through and going into jobs. He reported that six of the 51 had got into the offshore industry. He also reported that nearly 20% of his referrals were made by Job Centre Plus.

##### **(b) Work Programme**

Norfolk Training Services reported that over the last four months they had hit their target and there were now more jobs available for both skilled and unskilled people across the Borough. It was reported the new B&M Store which would be opening soon had meant 20 vacancies and 16 of these had been from NTS people securing work. NTS were currently running workshops on CV's. Paul Cheeseman enquired about the recent national press coverage on the Work Programme following publication of performance data. NTS reported that the picture in Great Yarmouth seemed more positive and that their successes meant that more people were now trying to access the service.

##### **(c) Welfare Reform**

Daniel Hastings from Job Centre Plus reported on the following:-

### ***Universal Job Match***

It was reported that Universal Job Match was a way for people to be able to register on line for their own Universal Job Match account which would then enable them to search and apply for jobs at a time that suited them, 24 hours a day, seven days a week. It allowed them to create a CV or upload a CV, receive email alerts when new jobs that matched their CV and skills were posted and record all their job search activity in one place making it easier to discuss with Job Centre Plus Advisors. It was hoped Universal Job Match would be one of the largest job sites in the UK which would make looking for jobs easier and quicker using the latest technology to help find jobs that are right for the person by matching their CV and skills to the job posted on the service. However, it was reported that uptake from businesses and residents had been slow on this.

It was reported that a Work Club had been set up at the Salvation Army and at the Magdalen so that people could access computers to look for work.

### ***Sanctions and Conditions***

It was reported that harsher penalties would now be given to those that did not comply with Job Centre Plus guidelines and actively seeking work. The high level penalty would result in 13 weeks, one year or three years benefit being stopped. It was reported that they would still be able to apply for Jobseekers Allowance Hardship but this would only be offered for three months. The lower level penalty which would be as a result of them failing to attend one of their Job Centre Plus interviews would be a four week sanction imposed. Paul Cheeseman and Councillor Trevor Wainwright enquired about what happened to people after they had been sanctioned and what support was available to meet their basic needs. Both asked for the impact of sanctions to be monitored, including the effects of re-offending. The Job Centre explained that they do not sanction lightly and that encouragingly many people are then supported into work.

#### **(d) Training and Apprenticeships**

The Job Centre reported they were carrying out a big push of 25 and overs and loan parents for work experience. Julia Howard reported that there had been 66 places provided through Norfolk County Council's Coastal Communities project for apprenticeships and they had already used all of their apprenticeship places. They reported they had set up two Job Clubs, one at the Shrublands and one at the Salvation Army. Julia then spoke of the new Call Centre going into Haven Bridge House which would result in 60 jobs, these would be filled from Job Centre Plus clients and they would be sent to Great Yarmouth College to be trained and would then go to the company for a trial to see if they were suitable for the job. Great Yarmouth College were currently working on a NEET Programme with Norwich City College with under 24 year olds. It was reported that a new Forum had been set up in Norfolk for Norfolk County Council and Colleges called GROW, it was hoped that they would bring more funding into Norfolk.

## **5. ECONOMIC DELIVERY PLAN**

### **(a) Economic Reference Group**

Chris Macdonald reported that the Economic Reference Group would be meeting next week and would be looking at updating the Action Plan for the Economic Strategy.

**(b) Business Start-up**

Chris Macdonald reported that enterpriseGY was coming to the end of its current two year contract. In the last quarter 22 new businesses were established which were small businesses such as hairdressers and gardeners. A consultancy company had started up earlier in the programme and has proved to be a success.

Some of the small businesses had been started by people who had been unemployed for ten years or more.

The Chamber of Commerce reported that they had filled over 40 seats by small businesses as they had been offering discounted rates for £99 for a year although they would be given full access to all the benefits of a full member.

**(c) Key Sector Work**

Chris Macdonald reported that Job Centre Plus were working with Skills for Energy to target the energy sector and that the Enterprise Zone Skills Fund was looking at local skills gaps and what courses were currently available and aimed at redressing these gaps.

Plans for the EPIS Centre are currently being led by Skills for Energy and Norfolk County Council, with the South Denes and the Beacon Park touted as potential sites, although an environmental assessment is needed as a wind turbine would be installed on site.

**(d) Enterprise Zone**

Chris Macdonald reported that the first developments in the Beacon Park Enterprise Zone were soon to be occupied with the Nexus Centre hosting an official opening the following week.

**6. NEW PROJECTS AND FUNDING UPDATES**

It was reported that Great Yarmouth are still waiting to hear if it had been successful in its application for Coastal Communities Funding. Norfolk Training Services reported they had a new project which would be to run a Construction, Skills and Car Maintenance Scheme which would lead to NVQ's and they were now looking to lease a premise in the Town.

**7. COUNTY, REGIONAL AND NATIONAL DEVELOPMENTS**

There were no further updates.

**8. FUTURE DATES OF MEETING AND LINKS TO ECONOMIC REFERENCE GROUP**

It was agreed that dates would be agreed with the Chairman and emailed out to all Members in the near future.

**9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS****(a) Credit Unions**

Paul Cheeseman and Jackie Tinkler gave a brief update on the work of Credit Unions and

their value in terms of providing people with opportunities for regular saving and affordable credit. Both said that they would like to do more work on this area at future meetings. Tracey Jones asked if the Older People's Network could be linked in to any information about Credit Unions and these passed via Peter McGuiness.

#### **10. CLOSURE OF MEETING**

The meeting ended at 11.55 am.