

The purpose of the Compact is to facilitate a collaborative approach to sharing information, promote the exchange of good practice, encourage more people to join the public services sector making it a preferred employment choice, and take action around key issues related to workforce improvement and development in the public services sector in Northamptonshire.

From the Chair

Colleagues



The Compact is now moving into it's third year and at our recent Steering Group meeting I was delighted to acknowledge the impact that the Compact is now making in addressing our annual priorities. It was reported that (i) we now have 9 public sector organisations committed to the Skills Pledge and that this figure is expected to increase to 16 by the end of March 09; (ii) there have been approximately 40 new apprentices employed in the public sector since July by organisations that were represented at our summer Apprentices Event; (iii) we are supporting pilot activity in sector organisations to increase access to Skills for Life training and (iv) we are actively exploring potential models of tailored 'Leadership and Management'

In addition to these achievements, we have also been active in a number of other areas where we feel that collaborative working can bring efficiency and productivity gains to sector organisations in addressing training and recruitment issues. Specifically (i) we have delivered a very successful 'Skills Pledge Breakfast Briefing' [see pictures elsewhere in this Newsletter]; (ii) we have held a good practice seminar so that professionals in the sector were able to share effective approaches to Equality and Diversity Training; (iii) we have developed our web site so that it features a wealth of reference material for professionals to download and use; (iv) we have supported the work of Job Centre Plus to develop 'Local Employment Partnerships', with 4 of our local sector organisations having now made the 'Jobs Pledge' and (v) we have embedded our Members' Charter as a result of which an increasing number of Northamptonshire public sector organisations have made a formal commitment to working together to address the particular challenges that face the public sector.

We are also interested in how the Compact can lead collaborative work to ensure that the sector continues to honour a commitment to workforce development and provides high quality services locally in times of recession. The planning for 09-10 will begin soon at Theme Group level. The Chairs of these groups (see reports on Theme Group activity elsewhere in this newsletter) always welcome new members so why not get involved?

The continued success of the Compact relies on the input from professionals working in the sector. If you wish to contribute to the work of the Compact please email the Compact facilitator Chris Donkin (chris@donkinitex.co.uk). Many thanks for your support for the Compact

*Len Closs
Principal of Northampton College and Chair of the Northamptonshire Public Sector Compact
Steering Group*



Update from the Recruitment and Retention Theme Group

Since the last Compact Newsletter was published in September, the Recruitment and Retention Theme Group has continued to actively support sector organisations in addressing the 'HR Agenda'. A summary of our recent activity is given below.

We have supported the Apprenticeships Event held in July. Since the event we have been involved in supporting arrangements being put in place by NTDP to record and monitor the follow up activity. We have representation at the NTDP monitoring meetings and we are steering the NTDP focus towards additional sector organisations who may benefit from increasing the number of apprentices employed in their organisation.



We are continuing to make good use of the web site to implement many of our aspirations. (www.empscompacts.org.uk/northamptonshire.asp). For example, we have used the web site to publicise shadowing opportunities available in the sector in the county. We have made available for download an on-line 'Recruitment Brochure' and we have set up a web page to advertise current vacancies available in the sector. We have also made good use of the 'document repository' aspect of the site to post key (up-to-date) information relating to engaging with volunteers, graduate recruitment and apprenticeships.

We are working with colleagues from Job Centre Plus to develop Local Employment Partnerships within the sector in Northamptonshire.

At our next meeting we will be accommodating an 'informal seminar' to absorb an input from local sector organisations who have embedded successful apprenticeship schemes with a view to rolling out good practice elsewhere.

We supported the 'Skills Pledge Breakfast Briefing' Event staged in October and we are looking to play an active role in ensuring that an additional 10 sector organisations commit to the Pledge during 08-09.

We have been instrumental in helping produce the first draft of the Action Plan for 08-09 to meet the annual priorities. We devoted a significant time slot at our recent meeting to proposing new actions.

We are always keen to welcome new members to the Group. To get involved simply email the Compact facilitator Chris Donkin (chris@donkinitex.co.uk) and he will make the necessary arrangements. Our next meeting is at 10.00 am on Tuesday the 10th February why not come along and join us ?

Dianne Panter

Workforce Development Manager NHS and Chair of the Recruitment and Retention Theme Group



Update from the Learning and Development Theme Group



Over the last few months the Learning and Development Theme Group has continued to develop and implement a set of actions that are designed to provide 'collaborative working' solutions in addressing areas of common interest from the training agenda. A brief outline of our current activities is provided below:

A list of all the courses for adults offered by the three FE colleges and the University has been sourced and this has been distributed to our membership and posted on the Compact web site. A demonstration of how to make best use of this facility was given by Tresham Institute at our recent Theme Group meeting.

The Group accommodated an 'Approaches to Equality and Diversity training' seminar at our recent meeting.

Excellent presentations describing a variety of good practice models of delivery were given by the Northamptonshire Police, The Fire and Rescue Service, Kettering Borough Council and Northampton College. The key messages from this seminar have been posted on the Compact web site.

At our recent meeting we established arrangements for HR/Training Managers to be given the opportunity to advertise vacant places from their courses to other sector HR/Training Managers. These arrangements are now in place and already one organisation has made use of this facility.

The group is supporting the follow up work promoted by the Apprenticeships and Skills Pledge Breakfast Events

The group plan to pilot support for the 'Test the Organisation' scheme in at least one sector organisation - with a view to increasing access to literacy / numeracy provision. It is hoped that lessons learned from the pilot can be absorbed and this approach can be rolled out more widely.

At our next meeting we will be accommodating an 'informal seminar' to absorb an input from the University and NTDP to explore how the sector can get greater access to relevant Leadership and Management training.

The Group have been active in making a significant input into the Action Plan for 08-09 to meet the annual priorities.

Like the R&R Group, the Learning and Development Group are keen to absorb the contribution of as wide as possible representation from across the sector. To join the Group simply drop an email to Chris our Compact facilitator (chris@donkinitex.co.uk) . Hope to be working with you in the New Year.

Sue Fairbrother

Learning and Development Design Manager of Northamptonshire Police and Chair of the Learning and Development Theme Group



News ... News ... News ... News ... News

Compact to encourage sector organisations to sign the Skills Pledge

Committing to the Skills Pledge has now been flagged as one of our Annual Priorities. We are looking for 10 more sector organisations to make the commitment before the end of March. To help support those organisations who are considering 'taking the Pledge' we hosted a Skills Pledge Breakfast Briefing at the Sunley Management Centre in Northampton on the 21st October.

The event was adjudged to have been a success with the delegates providing very positive feedback. The presentations in particular were excellent with Corby Borough Council, Connexions and Tresham Institute all extolling the benefits of making the Skills Pledge commitment.



The picture above shows Councillor David Harley (Corby Borough Council), Lee Denton (Senior Coordinating Manager Connexions) and Mark Silverman (Principal of Tresham Institute) signing up to the Skills Pledge with Liz Searle the Area Director of the LSC in attendance.

The Compact are now working with the approved LSC Skills Brokers (East Midlands Business) to follow up the interest generated by this event. Specifically the Compact will be organising an 'action planning' workshop for those sector organisations who have either just made the Skills Pledge commitment or are about to do so. This workshop will take place in February. If you are interested in taking part contact Chris Donkin (chris@donkinitex.co.uk)



The Compact plays a leading role in increasing the number of apprentices employed in the public sector

As reported in the last newsletter The Compact staged a very successful event in August to promote apprenticeship opportunities within the sector. Lord Digby Jones, the Minister of State for Trade and Investment made a powerful contribution to this event with a rousing speech outlining the positive impact of the apprenticeship initiative. We have noted that since the event that a significant number of employees within the organisations represented at the event are now employed on apprenticeship contracts. The Compact is working with NTDP to support follow-up activity. To play a part by declaring your interest in increasing the number of apprentices employed in your organisation simply send an email to our facilitator Chris Donkin (chris@donkinitex.co.uk) and he will connect you to the relevant and appropriate support agencies.

One organisation that has recently increased the number of apprentices working in their organisation is Corby Borough Council. Pictured opposite (with Liz Searle of the LSC second from the left) are the key individuals who made this happen. Norman Stronach (Corporate Director) is on the left, Councillor David Harley is seated with the HR management team Stella Jinks and Sarah Rodmell on the right.



Coming Soon ... Coming Soon ... Coming Soon

Skills Pledge 'Action Planning and TNA Workshop' .. In February (date and venue TBC)

Leadership and Management Training Seminar—hosted by the Learning and Development Theme Group

How to employ more apprentices : A seminar where a leading local sector organisation gives feedback explaining how they did it - hosted by the Recruitment and Retention Theme Group

To find out more keep visiting the web site. Details will be posted as they become available

To see the Compact's Action Plan, or to catch up on all the latest up-to-the minute Compact News - visit the Northamptonshire Public Sector Compact web site :

www.empscompacts.org.uk/northamptonshire.asp

To contribute to the work of the L & D Theme Group or the R & R Theme Group why not attend the next meeting the dates are Tues 10th Feb (R&R) and Thurs 12th Feb (L&D). Email Chris Donkin to confirm your attendance. All interested professionals working in the Public Sector welcome. (chris@donkinitex.co.uk)