

Lincolnshire and Rutland Public Sector Compact Newsletter - Issue 3 - April 2008

The mission of the Compact is for the public sector organisations in Lincolnshire and Rutland to work together to address the particular challenges that face the public sector in the two counties. These include; (i) issues associated with recruitment and retention affected by rurality, (ii) low level of skills in some public sector organisations and (iii) difficulties in ensuring that the sector is responsive to the changing population profile in Lincolnshire and Rutland.



From the Chair



Colleagues

As we move into the second year of the Compact it is useful to reflect on the experience of the first twelve months. We have now embedded a working arrangement where two established Theme Groups (Recruitment & Retention and Learning & Development) are implementing actions to address issues of common interest. You will read of the progress that these groups are making elsewhere in this newsletter. During the first year we have also delivered a series of good practice seminars that have promoted collaborative working within the sector and have been very well received.

At the recent Steering Group meeting we had a debate as to where we should focus our efforts in the future. We had a discussion structured around answering the following questions:

- Should the Compact require a formal commitment from the participating organisations ?
- Is the Steering Group the right size and shape ?
- Where and how can we most effectively link with other complementary groups ?
- Should we set ourselves "hard" targets ?
- Is there scope for a regional approach ?
- Are our action plans effectively meeting the stated aims of the Compact ?

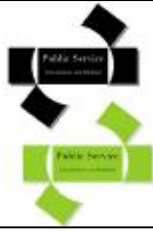
The initial feedback from the Steering Group was that we should consider introducing a 'Members Charter' for organisations to signal their commitment to partnership working and we should consider setting performance targets for the Compact around commitment to the Skills Pledge and increasing apprenticeships in the sector. We also felt that we could do some work to ensure that the Steering Group was more representative of the sector as a whole.

I will be working with members of the Steering Group to frame a proposal for 'year 2 working' for consideration at the next Steering Group meeting in June. We would be interested to hear your views and how you may be able to contribute. The continued success of the Compact relies on the input from professionals working in the sector. If you wish to contribute to the debate please email the Compact facilitator Chris Donkin (chris@donkinitex.co.uk)

Many thanks for your support for the Compact

Nigel Howells

(Chief Executive of East Lindsey District Council and Chair of the
Lincolnshire and Rutland Public Sector Compact Steering Group)



News

Compact to encourage sector organisations to sign the skills pledge.

(see key messages for the Skills Pledge Breakfast Briefing on page 4)

Compact to play a leading role in increasing the apprenticeships in the public sector.

The Compact will stage an event in early June to promote apprenticeship opportunities within the sector. City of Lincoln Council, South Holland District Council and the Lincolnshire County Council are all booked to make a contribution to this event. Keep visiting the web site for further details or register your interest in attending by emailing chris@donkinitex.co.uk

Compact to organise Jobs fair

Coming soon — keep visiting the web site.

Compact now has two logos !

Following a competition involving media students at Boston College, the Compact has adopted a second logo (the 'green people' logo will still be retained as it is used elsewhere in the EM region). The new logo can be seen on the top left of each page of this news letter.



Update from the Recruitment and Retention Theme Group

The Chair is convening a group involving representatives from JC+, the University of Lincoln, the Bishop Grosseteste College, a major public sector employer (e.g. a district council) and the LSC to develop a closer working and better understanding of the requirements of the University and the employment needs of the sector. This group will also seek to involve the wider counselling services such as Connexions and Prospects. The group to also consider how to promote the benefits of living in Lincolnshire including ways of using our web site to achieve this. The working group will report back to the next Theme Group meeting.



The Theme Group is becoming increasingly active in supporting the sector's interest in the Leitch Skills Pledge. The Chair of the Theme Group recently contributed to the Skills Pledge Breakfast Briefing held at The Admiral Rodney in Horncastle.

The Theme Group has arranged for the public sector vacancies advertised on the web site to be updated and increased. The group are also now engaging more actively with the IAG services. The Prospects Manager gave a presentation at the recent Theme Group meeting and the Compact facilitator reciprocated at the 'Prospects Delivery Network' meeting. The Group are now aware of what IAG services are available to the sector from Prospects and the Prospects network of advisers are better positioned to promote the sector.

The Group will be actively supporting the Apprenticeships Event in May. The Group have supported the Regional Apprenticeships Project and City of Lincoln Council, South Holland District Council and Lincolnshire County Council are being nominated as 'case study' organisations for this project.

The Group are still fully committed to organising a Jobs Fair. The likely date for this event is August 2008.

Derrick Brown – Area Manager for Job Centre Plus

March 2008



Update from the Learning and Development Theme Group

The Theme Group are exploring ways to ensure that the work of the Compact and the work of the Shared Services Project (SSP) for local government are complementary. At the recent Theme Group meeting a discussion took place. Some Compact members had suggested that there may be a case for merging the L&D Theme Group and the 'Workstream' group of the Shared Services Committee. If this was perceived to be too challenging, a refined suggestion had been mooted that the two groups could share a single action plan.



A Theme Group member who attends both meetings considered that a merger was inappropriate as the Compact's remit was different to that of the Shared Services Group – with the SSP being driven by specific outputs some of which affected contracts and terms and conditions. It was also reported that implementing a shared action plan would be a problem as the SSP action plan outlined a business case for implementing specific actions using project funding. The Chair of the Theme Group pointed out that the Compact's L&D Group featured a much wider membership with many members of the group not employed in local government. It was agreed that despite some pragmatic difficulties, the potential for the two groups to work together existed and that such collaborative work could promote a coordinated approach to aspects of workforce development in the sector. Closer links to be forged.

- The Theme Group is becoming increasingly active in supporting the sector's interest in the Leitch Skills Pledge. The Theme Group are supportive of and contributed to the Skills Pledge Breakfast Briefing on the 19th March.
- On behalf of the Theme Group, the Chair is looking into the possibility of level 4 'sector specific' management training being made available to Compact organisations.
- All 4 FE colleges have indicated that they still have some unallocated Personal and Community Development Learning (PCDL) funding for 07-08 and would be interested in working with sector organisations to offer 'non qualification' tasters. HR Managers have been contacted and collaborative work is now likely.
- A Theme Group representative (Karen Austin of the Health Service) attended the county wide E&D Practitioners meeting in January to ensure that consideration is given to (i) monitoring changes in E&D legislation; (ii) promoting Case Studies of good practice and (iii) where possible and appropriate arranging for sharing of resources and/or information relating to E&D training practices. KA will now act as the link between the Compact and the E&D Practitioners Group and provide regular updates to the Theme Group.
- The Theme Group have discussed 'Skills for Life' support for public sector employees who have literacy and/or numeracy issues and are currently constituting a working group to look at this issue and report solutions / recommendations to the next Theme Group meeting.
- The Theme Group have now established good links with the 'Work Based Academy' and a representative from the Academy will attend all future Theme Group meetings. The Theme Group are fully supportive of the Compact's work on behalf of the regional project to increase the uptake of apprenticeship programmes accessed by sector organisations.

Paul Collins – Business Development Manager at Boston College and Chair of the Compact's Learning and Development Theme Group

March 2008



Lincolnshire & Rutland Public Sector Compact Skills Pledge Breakfast Briefing



The presenters : From left to right Keith Underwood (Unison), Esther Corby (East Midlands Ambulance Service), Nigel Howells (East Lindsey District Council), Jan Mehmet (Lincolnshire County Council), Derrick Brown (Job Centre Plus) and Mick Gill (Mortons the Printers of Horncastle)



Key messages from the Skills Pledge Breakfast Briefing held on 19th March 2008

- *The Skills Pledge helps to formalise what good public sector employers are doing anyway. – i.e. planning for and supporting relevant training for their employees*
- *Declaring intent to sign attracts support from external agencies (e.g. T2G and JC+) who can assist with the complementary workforce development planning processes*
- *Organisations who have signed have discovered unexpected benefits (e.g. employees feeling more valued and a 'learning culture' developing)*
- *A commitment to the Skills Pledge can help sector organisations address associated workforce development issues (e.g. succession planning and increasing the uptake of apprentices)*
- *Before committing to the pledge it was useful for some sector organisations to have established their employee qualifications profile (to find out what % of their workforce was not currently qualified to level 2 standard)*
- *The Compact can act as a focus for the sector engaging with the 'Skills Pledge' initiative in a comprehensive way.*
- *PP presentations used at the event should be made available on the Compact web site (www.empscompacts.org.uk/lincsandrutland.asp)*

To see the Compact's Action Plans visit the L&R PSC web site :

To contribute to the work of the L & D Theme Group or the R & R Theme Group attend the next meeting the dates of which will be advised on the web-site. Email Chris Donkin to confirm your attendance. All interested professionals working in the Public Sector welcome.