

## **Note of the Lifelong Learning Partnership Executive Group Meeting held on 12<sup>th</sup> May 2009 in Angus House**

**Present:** Rachel Green, Helen Reid, Tom Davidson, Neil Logue (Chair), Marion Beattie, Mai Hearne, Graham Hewitson, Cath Ferrie and Councillor May.

1. Neil Logue welcomed Councillor May, Cath Ferrie, Marion Beattie and Mai Hearne to their first meeting of the group.
2. **Note of the previous meeting** – the note of the previous meeting was agreed as an accurate record, subject to a minor change regarding the acronym for AAVO, which should now read AAVO and not AVVO.

### **3. Matters Arising from the Minute**

- 3.1 HMIe Inspection process - Graham Hewitson's discussion with secondary head teachers went ahead as scheduled on the 12<sup>th</sup> March. This was a useful exchange and provided an opportunity to explore the connections between secondary schools and Learning Community inspection processes. It also allowed for some discussion around the community learning and development dimension of the school inspection process. Subsequent to the meeting Graham Hewitson is in contact with head teachers to arrange more local opportunities for discussion around specific matters in each school.

This model of HMIe inspection is still in its early stages and there remains a need for greater clarity on the part of HMIe in respect of the CLD aspect of school inspections. This would broadly seem to focus on the way the school engages with community life and ways in which the community supports the work of the school, but a clearer articulation would be helpful.

The very positive HMIe inspection report recently published in relation to the work of Angus College was noted. Congratulations were passed on, on behalf of the partnership to all colleagues in Angus College who had contributed to such a successful outcome.

- 3.2 CPD and Assessment Project – this is progressing reasonably well. The project will develop an assessment resource for CLD practitioners and link this to training activity which is scheduled to begin in late summer/early autumn.

Fife and Tayside Wider Access Forum is also intending to run awareness raising activity in relation to the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework for practitioners in all sectors of lifelong learning. Discussions will shortly take place with forum staff around the activity scheduled for Angus. Every effort will be made to ensure this is fully integrated with the broader CPD assessment project.

- 3.3 Lifelong Learning presentation to the Community Planning Partnership – the presentation scheduled for April 2009 has now been deferred to 17<sup>th</sup> June 2009.

- 3.4 Survey of partner organisations – preparatory work is progressing. There has been discussion with the community capacity building sub-group and some of the youth work partners.

The intention is still to issue the survey for the first time in late May or early June, with a view to collating and analysing data over the summer period.

- 3.5 Voluntary Sector Intermediary Bodies – the position statement referred to at the previous meeting was presented to the Community Planning Partnership, in April 2009 as a proposal.

As a result of discussion with the Community Planning Partnership a futures group has been established which comprises the chair and manager of both AAVO and VCA and their respective advisors from Angus Council. This futures group has yet to have its first meeting to focus its remit and agree its work plan.

Mai Hearne highlighted the fact that the work of the futures group will be complicated by the constantly changing political and economic landscape which may have a very real impact on any proposals to be taken forward in Angus.

Mai further indicated that AAVO and VCA are working together well in Angus to prepare for the new funding regime.

- 3.6 Fairer Scotland Funding - Graham Hewitson reported good progress in moving forward the allocation of Fairer Scotland Fund youth work resources. Discussions have taken place with partnership bodies in Arbroath, Montrose and Forfar. A similar discussion is scheduled for Brechin.

These discussions are being taken forward within a broader context of funding for youth work. The Youth Initiatives Fund is currently open for applications and decisions will be made in late May or early June. The group involved in taking these decisions are firmly committed to ensuring that they take account of all youth work grants and allocations in their considerations. This is hopefully a stepping stone to consolidating decision making around youth work and diversionary activity funds in one body.

Councillor May enquired as to whether sustainability was a factor which was being taken into account in the development and assessment of proposals. Graham Hewitson confirmed that this was in fact the case. He also reminded the group of a broader commitment made by the Youth Work Partnership Group to develop a resource plan for youth work to better enable all partners to take advantage of funding opportunities.

Lifelong Learning Collaborative Forum 4<sup>th</sup> March 2009 – the collaborative forum meeting went ahead on the 4<sup>th</sup> March and was reasonably successful. The workshop activities generated useful data which has been fed into appropriate planning and delivery processes.

Better Community Engagement Development Project – an expression of interest was submitted from Angus on behalf of the Community Planning Partnership. The original timeline promised a decision by 8<sup>th</sup> May. At this stage, no decision has been received.

In the meantime, those involved in delivering the previous community engagement training programme have met to consider future actions. The outcome of this discussion will provide a useful basis for discussion with the contractor for the national project should the Angus submission prove successful.

Work is also proceeding to context the existing community engagement training materials for use with colleagues in NHS Tayside and to strengthen training capacity within that sector.

Neil Logue drew attention to a community engagement conference which is taking place in Edinburgh on the 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2009. Rachel Green is attending this on behalf of the Community Planning Team and will be able to provide feedback to the group at a later stage.

WALT Challenge Fund – there has been some delay in progressing proposals from initial idea through into action. This will be given greater priority over the summer period.

Local Self-evaluations – self-evaluations are planned for the Montrose and Forfar areas on the 11<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> June 2009. Correspondence to participants will go out within the next few days and the

CLD Service will work with agencies to help them undertake preparatory work.

In addition to the new work in Montrose and Forfar, partners in Arbroath will shortly be invited to re-visit the evaluation which they completed in 2008.

Neil Logue highlighted the fact that external scrutiny agencies including HMIE and Audit Scotland are taking a particular interest in how voluntary and community organisations are supported to develop their self-evaluation and quality improvement practice.

#### **4. Community Engagement Survey**

There was a lengthy discussion on the community engagement survey and how the experience of 2008 -9 could be used to improve the survey in 2009 -10. A number of matters were discussed including:

- the need to increase the number of agencies making returns. This might include identifying a target number
- considering alternative ways of distributing the survey including the use of SNAP software which would allow for electronic returns
- better targeting of the survey towards Council departments and sections in other agencies, which have a direct responsibility for engaging with the public
- moving away from a universal survey to something which is more targeted to allow for the collection of more qualitative data
- further shifting the emphasis in the survey from community engagement activity to the impact which community engagement has on policies and services
- including a request for good practice examples
- seeking to ensure that the survey gathers information on effectiveness in engaging with harder to reach and engage communities
- capturing elected member engagement, through surgeries and other activities, within the broad frame of partnership community engagement

It was agreed that the Community Capacity Building Sub-group would now proceed with the design and implementation of an audit for 2009 -10. No specific timescale was set, but it is likely that the survey will be issued in the autumn.

#### **5. Single Outcome Agreement**

Neil Logue confirmed that the Lifelong Learning Partnership's Executive Group has been charged with responsibility for monitoring lifelong learning contributions to the Single Outcome Agreement.

Monitoring and implementation arrangements are currently being put in place and will be the subject of discussion with community planning colleagues in the near future. The expectation is that there will be delivery plans in place to support the SOA and that each of the partnership will provide reports to an implementation group on a regular basis. The precise implications of these expectations will be identified shortly.

A question was raised regarding the extent to which the Single Outcome Agreement could evolve over its life time to take account of change in social and economic circumstances. Neil Logue confirmed that the annual review process provided an opportunity to update the plan by amending existing outcomes and targets or introducing new targets more appropriate to the time. In all of this review work the Community Planning Partnership will need to take full account of both demand from communities and capacity to respond.

Marion Beattie circulated a copy of the recently produced Skills Development Scotland

Corporate Plan which seeks to make overt connections to national outcomes and therefore outcomes included in the Angus Single Outcome Agreement.

Neil Logue confirmed that the SDS corporate plan was one example of a number of delivery plans already in place to support the Single Outcome Agreement. He confirmed the need to ensure that delivery plans such as the Integrated Children's Services Plan, CLD Strategy and Service Plans were clearly and appropriately aligned to the Single Outcome Agreement priorities.

## **6. Integrated Children's Service Plan**

The new Integrated Children's Services Plan will be going to print within the next few days and be issued to key partners in late May or early June. The slight delay in producing the plan has resulted from a desire to ensure that it is closely aligned with the Single Outcome Agreement.

## **7. Community Achievement Event**

A Community achievement event took place in Wellbank Hall on 27<sup>th</sup> March 2009. It was attended by 80 community representatives from 36 organisations and provided an opportunity to acknowledge the many contributions which they make and provide a boost to their morale.

The event incorporated the launch of a DVD which showcased and celebrated achievements of Angus communities. The DVD has been produced for public audiences. 1500 copies have been commissioned and they will be made widely available to members of the public through outlets such as libraries and other Council and partnership offices. The DVD has also been provided to staff at Angus Ahead with a view to them streaming the film within the site.

It was agreed that copies should also be distributed to agencies, including those working with unemployed people, as the DVD might provide a useful stimulus for discussion about involvement in voluntary activities as a stepping stone towards employment.

Neil Logue thanked the Community Capacity Building Group and particularly Tom Davidson and Bev Gibb from Community Planning for their work in drawing together the DVD and the community achievement event.

## **8. 16+ Learning Choices**

- 8.1 Marion Beattie gave a very brief description of the 16+ Learning Choices initiative and confirmed that its central intention was to provide an offer of a positive destination to all young people leaving school at their first (statutory) leaving dates. This will include offers to stay within mainstream schooling, progress to further and higher education, progress into training, employment and a range of other more bespoke opportunities in communities.

16+ Learning Choices has been piloted in 2008 -9 and will be rolled out across the country in 2010.

- 8.2 Marion went on to highlight the good progress which is being made in Angus. This includes:

- the creation of a 16+ reference group, as a sub-group of the MCMC partnership group. This group includes representation from Education, Angus College, Skills Development Scotland, independent training providers and Volunteer Centre Angus
- a 16+ Learning Choices fund has been established with resources secured from the Fairer Scotland allocation. The purpose of this fund is to assist young people who are not entering statutory training or learning provision to progress. The sum of money

available is £45,000. This allows for the purchase of very specific learning opportunities to enable young people to overcome barriers to employment or training. An example of the use of the fund was given. This involved two young people from Brechin being supported to attend a tractor driving course at Elmwood College. As a direct result of this two day training programme the young people have secured some employment

- the Education Service has produced an information leaflet which has been distributed to parents and partners outlining the purpose of 16+ Learning Choices
- a timeline is in place for schools to work with SDS Staff to implement 16+ Learning Choices. The initiative was launched with the 2008 winter leavers. A number of lessons were learned, which are now being applied to the process for summer leavers in 2009
- evaluation of the work done in 2008 highlighted the need for a dedicated resource to coordinate and drive forward the 16+ Learning Choices agenda, particularly within the context of changing and weakening economic circumstances. A funding bid was submitted to the Scottish Government to establish a short term seconded post to take this work on. This bid has been successful and an appointment will shortly be made
- Skills Development Scotland and Education Service staff have participated in development days to explore their respective roles in the implementation of 16+ Learning Choices
- A development day will take place on 26<sup>th</sup> May 2009 for organisations in the community who have a potential contribution to make to the implementation of 16+ Learning Choices

## 9. Reports from Sub-Groups

### 9.1 Community Capacity Building – the most recent meeting of the Community Capacity Building Sub-group had considered:

- the data from the 2008 -9 community engagement audit, as discussed earlier in the meeting
- the proposed survey of partner organisations and related measures and indicators

The group has now established an electronic training calendar which needs to be populated and used effectively to support community activists in accessing the training which they require.

There has also been discussion of the need for further joint training in relation to charitable registration and the effective completion of grant applications.

Beyond specific tasks the group continues to provide a useful forum for the exchange of information between organisations involved in supporting communities in Angus

### 9.2 Angus Youth Partnership – good progress is being made in expanding access to the Youth Achievement Awards in Angus. 13 units are now established resulting in the need to strengthen the moderation infrastructure. Information was recently distributed to schools through the Education newsletter VIEW. This has elicited a very positive response. Funding has been secured from the Fairer Scotland Fund to subsidise some young people in accessing the Awards, thereby removing a barrier.

Child Protection training has continued to be provided to community and voluntary organisations. In 2008-9 eight organisations accessed training in relation to their responsibilities for protecting children and young people. A further 88 people attended an introduction to child protection programme and evaluated this positively. A delivery programme is in place for 2009 -10 and the staff involved are currently reviewing and improving materials.

The next meeting of the group will take place on the 25<sup>th</sup> May 2009. This will be attended by Richard McIntosh from NHS Tayside to explore matters relating to sexual health and

mental wellbeing. It is also the intention to establish sub-groups at this meeting to deliver the proposed youth work conference later in 2009 and to develop an information resource for young people. Consideration will also be given to how the Angus Youth Charter can be put to effective use with partner agencies.

Youth engagement work is proceeding. A conference was held on the 21<sup>st</sup> March 2009 attended by approximately 30 young people, many of whom were from more excluded groups. Almost all of the young people attending have expressed interest in continued involvement through a number of sub-groups which will shortly be established. A further conference is planned for October or November 2009.

The Integrated Children's Services Plan includes a clear commitment to the development of a multi-agency youth engagement strategy. A preliminary meeting of key partners has been held to take this action forward. This was a very positive meeting and with all partners committed to working together to ensure effective coordination and management of engagement activities.

- 9.3 Adult Learning – Lead Scotland is currently undertaking a feasibility study to identify potential roles for the organisation in Angus. Lead has not been active in Angus for some time and is keen to reengage with the partnership.

The partnership group continues to be successful in securing Fife and Tayside Wider Access Forum funding to run pre-access courses. These are courses targeted on those who are less likely to engage in further or higher education and who are furthest from the labour market. There are currently five courses running or about to commence. The partnership group has already begun to plan a programme for 2009 -10 in anticipation of an opportunity to bid for funding.

A new member of staff has been recruited to take forward an offender literacy project for which Learning Connections has made funding available. The member of staff is Gillian Bruce and she will take up post on the 18<sup>th</sup> May 2009. While the focus of her work will be with offenders in the community, new links with the education provider in the open prison estate at Noranside are also being developed.

The next meeting of the group will be in June 2009. A key agenda item will be the reviewing and updating of its Action Plan with particular reference to the Single Outcome Agreement.

## **10. Valuing Young People**

The Scottish Government and COSLA have recently published 'Valuing Young People'. This is a document which draws together a number of policy strands and initiatives and describes the relationship between them. It also provides useful links to support agencies and resources. The publication is intended for both strategic and operational staff.

The Education Service has a supply of the documents and these will be issued in the near future to those involved in providing services to young people.

## **11. Collaborative Forum June 2009**

To date no partners have submitted agenda items for consideration by the forum.

It was agreed that youth engagement and 'Valuing Young People' might provide a useful focus for a collaborative discussion.

Neil Logue and Graham Hewitson will liaise over the final agenda.

## **12. BV 2 Audit**

Angus Council is one of five pathfinder authorities for the Best Value 2 Audit process.

Audit activity has already begin with the authority compiling self-evaluation information. This will feed into a scoping phase which will run between now and the end of July. Auditors will be in Angus between August and November 2009.

Following completion of the audit an Angus Scrutiny Plan will be developed. This is a document which will be designed to ensure that Angus Council has appropriate improvement processes in place.

Community Leadership is an area which Audit Scotland will be interested in as part of BV2. This links very closely with previous discussions on community capacity building and community engagement.

## **13. A.O.B.**

Councillor May reported positively on a recent visit to the Brechin Learning Centre. He had been very impressed with what he saw there and felt it was making a positive contribution.