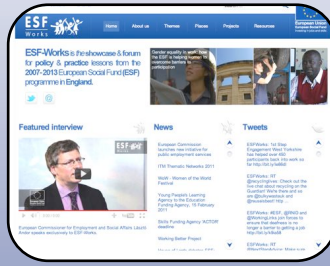


Merseyside Network for Europe



Newsletter

May 2011

Welcome!

Welcome to the May edition of Merseyside Network for Europe's newsletter, reporting on European issues relating to the Voluntary Sector.

EU Programme 2014-2020



The 2014-20 programme is beginning to take shape. Following Europe 2020 and the Fifth Cohesion Report last year, comments and proposals have been submitted and discussions held by the Committee of the Regions and the European Parliament. The European Commission was expected to produce the Regulations before the summer break, but these may now be delayed until September. The financial proposals (2014-20 budget) are expected to arrive on 29th June and there will be considerable discussions before a version of these are adopted. Poland takes on the Presidency for the sixth months from 1st July and has confirmed its priority to move towards agreement. This might be possible by the end of December but if not negotiations will continue under the hand of the 'trio' (the three Presidencies - Poland, Denmark and Cyprus).

In preparation for the Presidency, the new building for the Polish Permanent Representation in Brussels was opened on 23rd May, a short distance from the Commission's Berlaymont building. Three hundred staff are expected to be working there throughout the Presidency.

Liverpool City Region - Employment & Skills

Liverpool City Region Employment and Skills Programme Board took place on 4th May with an overview showing how it connected with the Board and with the Delivery Group. There was an update on the ESF complementary strand and information on the quarterly performance tool, a four page document which provides key indicators, headlines and statistics relevant to Employment and Skills. There was an update on the successful Future Jobs Fund which with the strong support of the Voluntary Sector delivered 6,735 short term jobs (99.5% of the target). An evaluation is now underway, due for the end of June. It was noted that A4E and Ingeus Deloitte would be Work Programme providers in the City Region and discussions with them would continue. The next meeting is 4th July.

Ongoing changes

Merseyside Network for Europe's Board of Directors met on 13th May to discuss the future of the organisation. This is a time of rapid and significant change in the region and we are determined to respond to the challenges and opportunities facing the Voluntary and Community Sector. We are now working across the whole of the North West and welcome more involvement from organisations. We hope to announce new developments shortly.

Supported by:



Steps to Success



As part of Social Enterprise North West's ESF ITM project twelve people visited the Wielkopolska Region in Poland in May, looking at a variety of Social Enterprises. This was again organised by our colleagues at Centrum Pisop (a regional infrastructural organisation like MNE) and was a follow on to the visit in February. Strong links are

being developed with the Barka Foundation, which has a twenty year history of creating jobs and supporting the most disadvantaged. Reports from participants after the visit referred to the efficient planning and co-ordination of the visits, the friendliness and openness of the people, and the speed at which projects had been developed in a proactive way.

"...it was an amazing experience that opened my eyes to the potential progression of Social Enterprise".

Further visits to Poland, Barcelona and Sweden will be taking place as part of this project.



TSEN

The Third Sector European Network Board met again in London on 23rd May to consider the possible transfer of its national responsibilities to represent the Voluntary Sector on the ESF National Programme Monitoring Committee to NCVO.

ERDF Tech Group

Merseyside's ERDF Technical group met on 24th May. It continued discussions around the Priority Two bids (from the Universities) and discussed the latest position on the updating of the Investment Frameworks as well as the position of projects that have not moved forward for many months. The position on Priority Four was discussed with the Local Authorities preparing proposals following the Social Enterprise bid and the Blue Orchid bid. MNE again requested that all organisations worked together to ensure strategic proposals to make the best use of funds under Priority Four.

The next meeting will be on 28th June.

ERDF PMSC

The ERDF Performance Monitoring sub-committee met on

25th May, for a meeting which lasted much of the day. There was an update on the ERDF Transition and the usual reports on programme performance and Outputs and Results as well as an update on the progress in revising the Investment Frameworks for the four ERDF Priorities. Much of the meeting was spent discussing the Priority Two Bids (mainly from the Universities). With the reduction of the NWDA, the ERDF European Programme Executive has less access to the Agency's strategic staff and are therefore working more closely with the Programme Partners. The process for the P2 bids included a scoring system, with a third of the scores coming from the sub-regional partners based on local and strategic relevance. There was general agreement that while not perfect an effective and transparent process had been agreed and implemented and a group of projects were endorsed.

Merseyside ChangeUp

The Consortium met on 26th May, with a depressing update on the effect of the cuts on the CVSs and other infrastructure organisations. There was an update on the

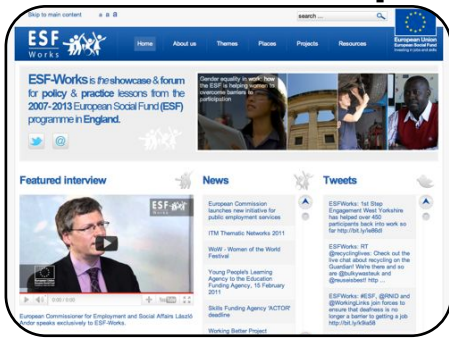
successful activities of ChangeUp and a statement of determination for it to continue albeit in a reduced form. There were discussions about representation on the LEP (Local Enterprise Partnership) and about the position on ERDF Priority Four proposals.

The End of NW-REP



North West Regional European Partnership (NW-REP) is sadly no more. This group has been hugely successful in bringing together people across the region, as well as the Committee of the Region representatives, to look at the many aspects of European Funding and to develop the partnerships and proposals which have led to significant funding reaching our area. With the closure of the NWDA and the funding reductions felt by the Local Authorities and others it has not been possible for the group to continue. Nevertheless, NW-REP's EU Co-operation Group group met again on 31st May (chaired by Richard Caulfield of Voluntary Sector North West), and we trust this will continue.

ESF-works Revamped



The ESF website has recently been re-vamped and redesigned, featuring a new twitter feed. ESF-works is the showcase and forum for policy and practice lessons from the ESF programme in England. ESF-works is complementing the main ESF England website and offers a wide ranging and in-depth record of the activities and outcomes of projects and participants. For further information please visit:

www.esf-works.com

For the main ESF England website please visit: www.dwp.gov.uk/esf

ESF - Skills Funding Agency Update

As reported on our last newsletter, the next freeze of information of Approved College and Training Organisation Register (ACTOR) is scheduled for 17:00 on 22nd June 2011. Activities procured under this round will include:

- Workforce Entry and Progression through Apprenticeships,
- Support for the Unemployed (including Apprenticeship Support for Employers) – European Social Fund (ESF),
- Skills Support for Redundancy - ESF,
- Apprenticeships for those Not in Education, Employment, or Training (NEET) including Age Related Grants Growth,
- Innovation Fund Joint Investment Programme.

The Skills Funding Agency will apply a mini competition process to all of the areas above. This will

mean that the Agency will issue a shorter, bespoke ITT to organisations that have registered interest to deliver services under the above provision. Interested organisations will receive automatic notification of the procurement exercise.

Any organisation which submitted a Due Diligence Pre-Qualification Questionnaire (PQQ) for the March, April or May freeze dates will have been advised of the outcome before 8th June to allow time for any organisation that does not pass these PQQs to resubmit their details before the June freeze date.

The Skills Funding Agency has published a list of the colleges and training organisations which do not have to submit an ACTOR due diligence questionnaire at this time, which can be found by visiting the Skills Funding Agency website. For further information please visit:

<http://skillsfundingagency.bis.gov.uk/providers/programmes/actor>

Skills Provision Event



Skills Provision and the Unemployed: Maximising efficiency and effectiveness for the benefit of learners.

This event is being held on 28 June 2011 at the DW Stadium in Wigan. The event is hosted by the Association of Learning Providers and the Association of Colleges, supported by the Skills Funding Agency and Jobcentre Plus. This event will provide the first phase of a broader support project designed to promote greater levels of consistency, develop effective communication between delivery partners and generally to support stakeholders to work

collaboratively to meet the needs of jobseekers in the most effective way. For further information please visit:

<http://www.learningproviders.org.uk/events>

Working with Prime Contractors

MNE are undertaking an evaluation of how Merseyside's Voluntary and Community Sector has worked with the DWP Prime Contractors during the period 2009-2011.

We will be looking at all stages of the journey from initial contact to delivery of services.

Many of you will have had contact with a particular prime contractor such as Working Links; we would welcome your views and opinions on this method of working.

An initial evaluation meeting has been arranged for 23rd June from 14:30 until 16:00, at our office at 151 Dale Street.

If you would like to attend this meeting or if you require further information, please contact MNE on 0151 237 3972.

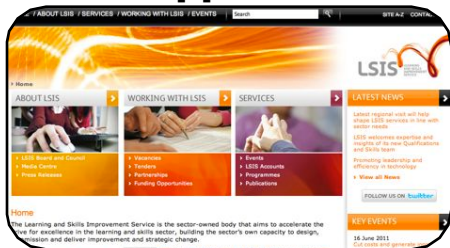
Low Carbon, Green Issues, Environmental Sustainability

Is this your organisation's day to day work? If so we would like to hear from you. MNE is working towards a set of seminars and events around environmental issues which will cover current activity, new and emerging themes and the post-2013 environmental priorities.

If you could help us to deliver useful seminars, please get in touch to let us know what areas of EU policy, programmes or projects we should cover.

For more information, contact Sharon McCarthy on 0151 237 3972.

Skills Funding Agency Minimum Contract Level Support



The Learning and Skills Improvement Service (LSIS) is running online events for providers/partnerships funded by the Skills Funding Agency which are designed to cover the most pressing issues encountered by those preparing for Minimum Level Contracting (MCL) in 2011/12. The briefing sessions aim to highlight current priorities and provide alerts to key areas that lead contractors and sub-contractors need to take action on. These events last an hour and will be held online. There is no charge to attend these events.

The next event titled Partnership Models and Working is on 14th June 09:30 to 10:30 and there is another one on Managing Risk scheduled for 22nd June from 10.00 to 11:00. To register or to find out more, please visit the LSIS website at www.lsis.org.uk

DWP Worklessness Co-design

The Department for Work & Pensions (DWP) has been working with five Local Authorities to Co-design solutions to local issues of worklessness. By working together in partnership, DWP have demonstrated how solutions to worklessness can be co-designed to address local problems. This work has built on the HM Treasury and Department for Communities and Local Government led initiative "Total Place".

The five Local Authorities DWP have been working with are Birmingham, Bradford, Lewisham, South Tyneside and Swindon.

DWP Worklessness Co-design – final report

The final DWP Worklessness Co-design report, published in June 2011, explains what has been achieved, the lessons learned and the next steps. It also highlights how DWP can work together with Local Authorities, providers, employers and community groups to co-design solutions to worklessness. The final report also includes the DWP Worklessness Check List for Local Authorities

which sets out the opportunities to work in partnership with Jobcentre Plus and Work Programme providers.

The final report can be downloaded here:

<http://www.dwp.gov.uk/docs/dwp-worklessness-codesign-final-report.pdf>

Interim report

The Department published the DWP Worklessness Co-design Interim report in January 2011. The Interim report provided the context to the co-design work and DWPs localism approach, as well as setting out the approach each of the five areas was developing with Jobcentre Plus partners.

The interim report can be downloaded here:

<http://www.dwp.gov.uk/docs/dwp-worklessness-codesign-ir.pdf>

Comments and questions

If you have any comments, or questions about the DWP Worklessness Co-design report or the co-design activity please contact DWP by email at:

TotalPlaceWorklessness.Co-design@dwp.gsi.gov.uk

Contact Us

Contact MNE if you want copies, or links to websites for any documents mentioned in this Newsletter, including the North West Operational Programme, Evaluation, Investment Frameworks, and the European Commission's publications, including the Fifth Cohesion Report.

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