

**New Approach to ESOL
Tuesday 27 April 2010, 2pm
County Hall, Exeter**

Minutes

www.devoneconomy.co.uk/new-approach-to-esol

Present:

Name:	Organisation:
Andrew Lightfoot (Chair)	Devon County Council and Devon Economic Partnership
Bob Mycock	Exeter College
Caroline Romijn	Exeter College
Claire Henry	Refugee Support Group
Daniel Bailyes	Devon Economic Partnership
Eoghan Kelly	Devon County Council (Devon Care Training Coordinator)
Gaby Kanarek	Access 4 Employment
Irene Chapman	Devon County Council (Devon Adult and Community Learning)
John Willis	Consultant
Matthew Jones	Devon Economic Partnership
Pam Cole	Skills Funding Agency
Russell Endean	Devon Economic Partnership (work experience placement)

Apologies:

Name:	Organisation:
Dave Wright	Devon County Council (Hate and Prejudice Crime Prevention Officer)
Ian Tearle	NHS
Janet Sinclair	Job Centre Plus
John Demeger	South Devon College

1. Welcome and Introductions

Andrew thanked the group for their attendance and apologised for the parking difficulties, suggesting that a different venue in the future may be more convenient.

Introductions were made around the table for the benefit of Matthew and Russell who were attending for the first time. Matthew began work for the Devon Economic Partnership this week on a six-month placement organised through Exeter University's Graduate Business Partnership. He will be replacing Daniel, whose own six-month placement on the scheme ends this week. Russell is a second year Business and Economics student at the university, and is working at the Devon Economic Partnership, and with colleagues in County Hall, on a three week work experience placement during the Easter holidays.

2. Update on mapping of current ESOL provision: Private Providers

An action point arising from the last meeting identified private providers of ESOL as a group not yet covered by our survey, with Dave Wright agreeing to work on the issue. However, apologies were received from Dave shortly before the meeting began. Although intending to be present, he was called away unavoidably to a hate crime incident. Without Dave present, it was decided to focus on other agenda items in this meeting.

Pam Cole, however, suggested that Skills Funding Agency data could help, with most private providers being funded by them.

Action Point (Andrew): To confer with Dave and link with Pam to gather the necessary information.

3. Evaluation of data and assessment of priority groups

- 3.1 The purpose of the survey of current ESOL providers is to gain an understanding of where the gaps in ESOL provision are situated, and to compare with data from the community (e.g. through the Community Safety Mapping project). A survey of current providers is one part of the jigsaw being compiled to give the group the evidence it needs to determine where future provision ought to be targeted.
- 3.2 Referring to the table circulated to the group prior to the meeting (see link below), discussion centred upon the data that would be needed from each provider.

<http://www.devoneconomy.co.uk/assets/PDFs/ESOL/ESOL%20Providers%20in%20Devon.doc>

Questions were raised as to the level of data that would be required, with the concern being that the group may have been attempting to access information not necessary for our purposes. It was agreed that collecting extensive data from providers on its own would not help to identify gaps in provision – except perhaps geographically. However, if data collected from providers could be compared with intelligence from the communities, then a better picture could be built that could lead to specific, evidence based action points.

On the issue of data collection, Andrew informed the group that his aim would be to develop a simple system for data collection so that, in the future, regular surveys of provision could be made as efficiently and easily as possible.

It was suggested, based on an earlier discussion, that the Skills Funding Agency might provide the core data on providers. The core data, it is hoped, would provide a list of all providers funded by the Skills Funding Agency in Devon, with information giving a picture of the size of provision, those groups being served etc. The group recognises that there may be limitations on the data the Skills Funding Agency can provide, but our survey would fill any gaps.

Action Point (Pam): To investigate and keep the group informed of the kind of data that the Skills Funding Agency can provide.

Referring to our survey, it was agreed that a template needs to be created which can provide uniform data from the various providers.

Action Point (Daniel / Matthew): To put together such a template, taking into account the data already provided by the Skills Funding Agency, that can be sent to the group.

Action Point (All): To make additions / amendments to the template so that information required can be included. Once all the comments have been received, Matthew will circulate the final draft for approval by the group.

It was agreed that this survey would take place on an annual basis in June.

A number of proposals were made to make effective use of the data once the survey is completed:

- The data could be placed in an easy to access and relevant format on the Learn Devon website. This would include the contact details of the various providers, which would be of great help to stakeholders on the ground, such as Access 4 Employment (A4E).
Action Point (John Willis): To investigate the use of the Learn Devon website for this purpose.
- It was also suggested that the data be mapped using the GIS system. This would graphically illustrate the information, and could be overlaid with further, relevant data (such as the results of the Community Safety Mapping project, for instance).

Responsibility for collecting the data will belong to the group, with Devon County Council, through Andrew, coordinating.

3.3 Having discussed the data, Andrew moved the discussion onto priority groups, and whether our current information suggests gaps in provision. It was agreed that the summary circulated to the group in advance of the meeting (see link below) highlights a number of issues that could benefit from funding, but that insufficient data is available to specify where the need is greatest.

<http://www.devoneconomy.co.uk/assets/PDFs/ESOL/Summary%20of%20ESOL%20work%20to%20date.doc>

Irene made the point that knowing where something takes place is not the same as knowing where a provision needs to be. Information from the community needs to come together first before we can use data from the providers.

4. European Fund for the Integration of Third Country Nationals

The letter circulated in advance of the meeting, detailing the funding that might be available for actions arising from this group, is available on the Devon Economy website (link below):

<http://www.devoneconomy.co.uk/assets/PDFs/ESOL/European%20Fund%20for%20the%20Integration%20of%20Third%20Country%20Nationals.doc>

There was confusion concerning the qualifying criteria relating to refugees. The letter suggests that refugees do not qualify – yet Eoghan discovered that the definition of Third Country Nationals in the Geneva Convention specifically includes them.

Dave Wright circulated to the group initial notes on a proposal to bid for funding. These notes can be found on the link below:

<http://www.devoneconomy.co.uk/assets/PDFs/ESOL/Europe.doc>

The Hate Crime Prevention Task Group will be putting together a proposal focusing on ensuring that new arrivals have early access to community issues and overcoming mistrust of the police at the earliest opportunity. He will be working on putting an outline proposal together over the next two weeks in partnership with the police and would be happy to incorporate any suggestions from the ESOL group, or to work on the detail with anyone from the group who might be interested in getting involved. He is happy to work on a partnership bid.

It was agreed that this group would work in partnership with Dave on any proposal we put forward. The resources for putting together a bid are available at Devon County Council in Andrew's team, and DCC also have a dedicated pot of money to use as match funding for European bids.

Andrew argued that a discussion would need to take place to decide whether to submit a single Devon bid, or individual bids for each of the different aspects. An email exchange will need to take place to clarify parameters.

5. Action Points

A number of action points agreed at the last meeting (8 March 2010) were discussed.

Firstly, the idea proposed by Gaby and Eoghan to get hold of a bus (DORIS) to use in rural areas promoting ESOL provision. However, on investigation, DORIS was sadly sold two weeks before the suggestion was made. The Devon mobile library service was suggested as another opportunity. It also emerged that COSMIC (at least used to) own an IT bus.

Action (John Willis): Send Gaby contact details for the IT bus.

6. Potential Links

Andrew raised the issue, discussed at a previous meeting, of targeting parents in need of ESOL provision through the schools. John mentioned two contacts (Liz Crone and Lorraine Davis???) who could help.

Action Point (John Willis): Pass contact details of those involved to Andrew.

A few examples of previous initiatives were raised to the attention of the group. For instance, one such scheme involved a teacher calling in on Chinese restaurants in Exeter identifying ESOL needs on the way. From that they would be put in contact with volunteers who could teach from learner homes. Pam also brought to our attention 'Learning Champions' (NIACE). (Link below):

<http://www.niace.org.uk/current-work/community-learning-champions>

7. Notes of last meeting

The notes were approved without comment.

Andrew raised an issue discussed at the last meeting – the training of trainers. It was mentioned that voluntary and community groups would benefit from training provision. This would also be sustainable.

8. News Round-up

Caroline reported that Exeter College has just launched the adult learning guide for next year – which includes a list of the college’s ESOL provision. This is available on the college website.

9. Agree actions and date of next meeting

There are two time limited action points from this meeting:

1. The audit of providers by June;
2. The bid for European money

Andrew argued that no further meeting would be needed until July to reflect on the audit exercise. The bid application can be done by small groups coming together and by email.

The date for the next meeting in July will be organised by Matthew – messages to be sent out shortly.