

**TBAG Meeting Minutes**

**8 July 2008**

**Bedford Lodge, Newmarket**

	<p><b><u>Present:-</u></b></p> <p>Jim Brown          Noel Byrne – Chair          Sharon Fairweather          Lynne Finnigan          Lesley Humphries – minutes          Yiannis Kerestentzopoulos          Hazel Mackintosh          Jenny Sheppard</p>	<p><b><u>Apologies:-</u></b></p> <p>Bob Kells          Fiona Kerr          Dee Ludlow          Gayle McAndie          Tracey Robertson</p>
		<b>ACTION</b>
<b>1</b>	<p><b><u>Apologies For Absence</u></b></p> <p>Apologies Given.</p>	
<b>2</b>	<p><b><u>Matters Arising From Previous Minutes</u></b></p> <p><i>Item 3</i> – Lynne’s information was circulated to which there was a good response.  <i>Item 4</i> – Jim will ascertain as to the current situation and report at the next meeting.  <i>Item 6</i> – Tracey is very enthusiastic about being our link to the schools.  <i>Item 8</i> – Lynne will send to Jim the number of tourism businesses that she and Christian Bone have contacted.</p>	<p><b>JB</b></p> <p><b>LF</b></p>
<b>3</b>	<p><b><u>Business Link East Update</u></b></p> <p>It was well recognised that the existing and developing economic climate will impact on the tourism and leisure sectors. Therefore the role of TBAG is vital in raising awareness of training opportunities as this is what tends to be affected when times are hard.</p> <p>Lynne has been promoting the 50 Profit through Productivity (PTP) places on offer worth £2,500-3,000 at a cost of £99 plus VAT. Two Suffolk businesses have already signed up. <i>If requested by Lynne Jim is prepared to telephone 10 Suffolk hoteliers to inform them of this opportunity and to also follow up in the next STP newsletter.</i></p> <p>The group was reminded that funding can only be offered to quality assessed businesses where applicable. <i>Lynne will check that this is being complied with.</i></p> <p>Business Link East is also brokering the ‘Train to Gain’ initiative. Lynne advised that she had recently visited a self-catering agency on the Suffolk Coast <a href="http://www.bestofsuffolk.co.uk">www.bestofsuffolk.co.uk</a> which is a very good website.</p> <p>The Business Link East events team have asked for suggestions on specific training needs in the tourism sector. Lynne has spoken to a small number of people who wanted fire regulation training, although this does not show in the top four of the STP training survey. An awareness seminar provided in Bury St Edmunds proved to be very successful in terms of attendance but was generally unsatisfactory due to different business requirements and fire officer’s interpretations – this is really based upon a property to property basis. <i>Lynne will send to Jim a copy of the notes that Martin Hickey (Norfolk) has prepared with the Norfolk Fire Brigade.</i> In time all businesses will receive a visit checking their fire regulation compliance but meanwhile they have to self-assess proving conformity should anything go wrong.</p> <p><i>STP, through their newsletter, will ascertain whether providing training workshops on self risk assessment would be wanted.</i> Previously the industry hasn’t really responded to these requests.</p> <p>Two further areas of training identified are ‘green tourism’ and ‘websites’ particularly search engine optimisation.</p> <p>Business Link East is supporting the Tourism in Suffolk Awards by sponsoring the</p>	<p><b>LF</b></p> <p><b>LF</b></p> <p><b>LF</b></p> <p><b>JB</b></p>

	Leisure Activity provider category.	
4	<p><b><u>TLC Group Update</u></b></p> <p>West Suffolk College won this year's Junior Masterchef. Due to the decline in people attending the Training, Learning and Careers (TLC) group an assessment is taking place with new contacts made at Otley and Ipswich Colleges. We will re-introduce the role of the TLC Group and gauge interest. Administration of the group needs to be considered particularly with regard to the co-ordination of the Junior Masterchef competition where it was suggested that sponsorship from the private sector could possibly pay for this. Other suggestions for admin support were made and Jim advised that STP doesn't have the capacity to take minutes and also provide a coordinating role for the TLC group as well as the many other groups it supports. Jim also suggested that meeting action points rather than minutes would cut down the administration. <b>Yiannis to email previous minutes to Jim who will use the Vision of the TLC group and present to potential TLC group members.</b></p> <p>Hazel (LSC) stated that there is potential for funding to meet tourism needs, but this needs further thought. LSC can attend future meetings to lead on 'capacity building' and any advice would be welcome.</p>	YK JB
5	<p><b><u>STP Training Survey Update</u></b></p> <p>As in item 2 - more work to do on the Training Skills audit in order to achieve higher response rate from industry.</p>	
6	<p><b><u>EET Update</u></b></p> <p>'Towards 2010' closed in March and out of 330 businesses that benefitted 41 were from Suffolk. There is a bid for funding for a new scheme 'Beyond 2010' aimed at the Leaders and Managerships skills in businesses with under 50 staff. Although discussions are still to take place, this scheme will probably start in September and operate on a three year plan. It was noted that the tourism sector had only been allocated 3% of the overall funding of this training programme and no way reflected the breakdown of the business sectors in the region. 'Train to Gain' also has funding for Leadership and Management training. There is a small programme of Welcome to Excellence courses which are now all at full cost.</p> <p>EET is providing free 'Smarter Marketing' training on their new DMS. This is for small businesses who don't have to be members of EET but they must be assessed for quality and must make contact through their local Tourism Officer. <b>Leigh Evans of EET (01284 727494) is co-ordinating the training and Jenny will ask her to call Lynne.</b> It was questioned why BLE and EET do not work together on Train to Gain initiatives.</p>	JS
7	<p><b><u>LSC Suffolk Introduction to Business Skills Activity</u></b></p> <p>Hazel introduced herself and explained the role of the LSC. Whilst most of the LSC funding has been targeted at young people – further education, her specific role is focused on developing skills in all sectors to gain qualifications for adults. There is more funding being made available for this.</p> <p>A report on 'Hospitality, Leisure, Travel and Tourism' was circulated for discussion and the feedback initially is that this is a good report. 'Train to Gain' is being brokered countrywide and Hazel is endeavouring to address this to ensure Suffolk colleges provide this training to Suffolk.</p> <p>Funding is available but employers need to be made aware of funding / training opportunities. Holding a conference with the tourism industry would prove useful in terms of identifying training needs and promoting training opportunities, however, it was well recognised that this type of consultation has happened and therefore needs to have a defined action orientated goal. It was suggested that this could be taken forward with a small workshop to identify the issues which can be presented at a bigger event to raise awareness and hopefully some action activity. Due to lack of funding for training and business advice activity Jim advised that STP wouldn't be</p>	

	<p>able to fund or coordinate these workshops or events, but through TBAG would communicate activity to the industry.</p> <p>It was suggested to contact Christian Bone (Business Link East) as a useful partner. <b>Hazel will work on a proposal to circulate to the group.</b> The circulated document could be used with amendments to reflect the hospitality / tourism sector.</p>	<b>HM</b>
<b>8</b>	<p><b><u>Business Marketing Workshop Idea</u></b></p> <p>It was suggested that an event be held where small businesses could learn about a range of marketing disciplines, such as Branding for Small Business, PR, Advertising, Website development. These could be 30 minute awareness presentations by local experts in their field on 6-7 different marketing subjects and hopefully encourage businesses to consider attending other more focused training opportunities. <b>A proposal will be circulated by Jim. Noel will present the idea to the STP Marketing Group.</b></p>	<b>JB / NB</b>
<b>9</b>	<p><b><u>Any Other Business</u></b></p> <p><i>Sharon</i> – Asked for thoughts on whether it would be viable to run countywide courses for anybody who comes into contact with visitors to become Suffolk's Ambassadors for 2012. EET have run a 'Welcome Town' course. It was suggest that she contact Tim Humphries who had taken King's Lynn through this process. A further suggestion was to contact West Suffolk Local Strategic Partnership, for funding, who are locally focused and looking for community development ideas. <b>Sharon will investigate further and report back.</b></p> <p><i>Jenny</i> – Keith Brown is going to the Beijing Olympics as the EET Ambassador. Jenny also requested the date of the STP Conference. Jim advised that whilst it's usually held in the Autumn we have approached University Campus Suffolk in Ipswich about holding it in their new building in the Ipswich Waterfront. Taking into considerations any delays they have suggested some time in February 2009. It is hoped that the tourism industry will be encouraged to attend the annual tourism conference and have an opportunity to see this new iconic building.</p>	<b>SF</b>
<b>10</b>	<p><b><u>Date Of Next Meetings</u></b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Date: 22 October 2008, Venue: Felaw Maltings, Ipswich Time: 11am if following TLC otherwise 10am</p>	