

BANYULE / NILLUMBIK LOCAL LEARNING & EMPLOYMENT NETWORK

Board Meeting

Wednesday, April 9th

7.15 AM to 8.45 AM

Diamond Valley Learning Centre

1. WELCOME

- a) **Attendance:** Gerry Fogarty (Chair), Cheryle Michael, Kate Rhodes (EO), Stephen Smith, Stephen Brackenridge, Julie Johnston, Darrel Caulley, Cheryle Michael, Lindsay Round, Stephen Fiyalko, Ian Roberts, Jackie Massa(visitor), Jackie Doyle, Trevor Jenkins, Chris Spindler, Ian Harrop,
- b) **Apologies:** Eleanor King, Susan Lees, Marie McNeil, Jacinta Feeley
- c) **Welcome**
Gerry welcomed the new Board and Jackie Massa to the meeting. Gerry agreed to chair the meeting until the election of officers for the new Board at the end of the meeting. All the Board members introduced themselves to the new members.

2. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

- a) **Declaration of conflict of interest - Nil**
- b) **Minutes of previous meeting – Wednesday, March 12th confirmed**
Moved: Darrel Caulley
Second: Ian Roberts
- c) **Matters arising not dealt with separately on the Agenda**
Scope 2008 survey and workshop on April 14th
DEECD Blueprint discussion paper

3. CORRESPONDENCE

Kate highlighted the letter from George McLean to Gerry accepting our 2007 Annual Report but requesting that the Board address the issue of the cost of the Nillumbik Community VCAL program that resulted in a deficit last year. The letter asked that the LLEN address the following:

“Provide the VSC a separation of cost factors and resource recovery strategy relating to the VCAL Program given a reported loss of approximately \$26,000 in 2007”.

Kate informed the Board that the auditor made it clear that it was not sufficient that the Board had taken measures this year to ensure a balanced budget through various cost cuts; but that DEECD wanted to know how the BNLLLEN would recover the loss that they implied was their money.

There was considerable discussion by the Board about the request and the use of DEECD funding. The Board felt the loss was an internal issue and that the Community VCAL program had been a project that was successful. The project was seen as an investment not as a debt. The Board felt the funding provided by the government was to be spend to achieve the goals of the BNLLLEN and the outcomes in the contract. The Community VCAL program was

successful in achieving these goals in terms of the outcomes of the students and reengaging them back into education. Also the BNLLLEN was able to facilitate a partnership this year to continue the program with a school as the manager, another success of 2007.

The Board agreed that Gerry needed to reply to the letter and there was some discussion regarding the content of the reply. The Board noted that the letter needed to make it clear that the decision to manage the Community VCAL program was done with their knowledge and with consideration. It was felt the program was a strategic investment in social capital.

The letter also requested that the Board address the issue of Long Service Leave and other unfunded benefits. It was agreed that this did need to be addressed and would be considered by the Risk Management Standing Committee.

ACTION: For Gerry to write a response to the letter from George McLean taking into consideration the points made by the Board.

Moved: Cheryle Michael
Second: Stephen Brackenridge

4. BUSINESS ARISING

a) Youth Project – Stephen Brackenridge and Jackie Massa

Steve and Jackie spoke to the Board about the DART Board of which they are both members. DART or the Discussion, Action, Representation and Thought group is organised by the Banyule Council's Youth Services division for young people from age 12 to 24. Stephen provided a short history of DART and some of their successes. DART was influential in providing input from a youth perspective about the lack of public transport in Eltham and they participated in the "Arty Farty" festival, which is part of the City of Banyule's March Festival and their participation was successful in informing young people about the program and getting some new members.

DART is now looking at becoming independent from the Council so they can apply for grants and have a more focused youth leadership. They are developing a MOU with the Council as they want to continue the links and they are developing a Youth Charter with the Council. They also plan to investigate whether to become incorporated, and how they might expand their boundaries and membership. Their aim is to ensure that a youth voice is heard and to ensure that young people are consulted regarding projects in the local community that involve youth.

The Board suggested that they link with the Oaktree Foundation a youth led organisation with an international focus, and the Youth Foundation program in West Heidelberg. They have already linked with the Youth Foundation project in West Heidelberg through Cheryle. Board members also offered practical support to supplement the Council support if required. Jackie and Stephen will keep the BNLLLEN Board informed so we can provide future support. The Board also agreed that Jackie could fill in for Stephen at the May meeting as Stephen will not be able to attend.

b) Employment links

At the March meeting it was noted that there was a lack of an employment focus from the DEECD at the briefing for LLEN EOs. It was felt that the LLEN was well placed to play a leadership role in addressing some of the employment issues. The Board then spoke about a range of issues and concerns regarding getting young people into employment, keeping them there and how the training programs need to lead to employment.

The point was made that there are many programs that provide training for job seekers and for existing workers, that it is not difficult for people to find training; but that these programs do not necessarily lead to a job or a lasting job.

Some of the issues discussed were that:

- the training won't be successful unless there is an incentive to link the trainees into employment
- a number of private RTOs were abusing the system and not fully training people and not linking them to employment
- the competition for work placements was huge and did not match with the training. There is no strategy to ensure that the work placements link to employment
- the DEECD only ask that schools report on completion outcomes, hence if a student gets a job this is viewed as unsuccessful as they have not completed a program.
- young people may be getting a job but they leave very quickly as they have no sense of the workplace. There is a need for training programs to include an induction that helps familiarize them with the work place
- there is a need to follow up on employment places, to monitor them to ensure that any problems are immediately addressed
- many young people don't have the skills and the experience needed in the workplace. There are huge skill shortages but the training is not effective so they fail on the job. This can also be dangerous as well as ineffective

In summary the training needs to be incorporated with links with the workplace so the young people have a sense of what the workplace is like and what is expected of them.

It was agreed that a working party needed to be set up to look at all the issues and then perhaps put a paper to the Board on how the BNLEN might address the issue. Stephen Fiyalko, Cheryle Michael, Ian Roberts, Chris Spindler, Ian Harrop and Jackie Doyle volunteered to be part of the working party.

ACTION: Kate will organise a meeting of the working party within the next two weeks.

5. REPORTS

a) Finance Report

Stephen spoke to the report, tabled. We have spent about 24% of the budget which is acceptable at this time of the year. Stephen said that we needed to organise a meeting of the Risk Management Standing Committee asap. The Standing Committee needs to look at the issue of long service leave as well as our investment strategy.

Moved: Stephen Smith

Second: Stephen Brackenridge

b) Staff report

Kate highlighted the following aspects of the report:

- Disability Agency Network
- Printing tasters at RMIT
- Try a Trade
- The appointment of a student, Elisabeth Dewes from Our Lady of Mercy as an ASbA at the BNLEN office
- The appointment of Jayne Valle to replace Colleen Hughes as the SWL and the Adopt a School Coordinator for the LCP program. Kate is developing an electronic newsletter that will include interviews with each of the new employees.

6. OTHER BUSINESS

a) Election of Office bearers

Kate chaired the meeting for the election. The following officers were nominated and elected:

Chair:	Gerry Fogarty – nominated Cheryle Michael, seconded Stephen Fiyalko
Deputy Chair:	Cheryle Michael – nominated Darrell Caulley, seconded Stephen Brackenridge
Treasurer:	Stephen Smith – nominated Julie Johnston, seconded Stephen Brackenridge

Secretary: Trevor Jenkins – nominated Cheryle Michael, seconded Lindsay Round

c) Standing Committees

Gerry explained to new members that Board members nominate to be on one of the two standing committees and that the committees meet a minimum of four times a year. Members were asked to inform Kate which standing committee they wanted to join.

d) Skills audit

A requirement of the LCP contract is that the Board completes a skills audit. Kate tabled an audit for Board members to complete.

e) Scope workshop

Kate informed the Board that members were welcome to attend the workshop being organised by DEECD which was a follow up to the Scope survey being conducted by KPMG for the LLEN contract beyond 2008. Darrel and Cheryle expressed interest in attending on April 14.

Meeting closed:	8.45 AM
Next meeting:	Monday, May 12 th 4.00 to 5.30 The Ivanhoe Centre