Minutes of Meeting of East of England Branch 14th March 2018 13.30 – 16.30

Room B35 City College Norwich, 5 Ipswich Road, Norwich NR2 2LJ

Attendees:

1. Rachel Öner (Chair), Öner Training & Consultancy
2. Susi Pearson, Nile
3. Sarah Mount, Transform ELT Limited, Nile, Norwich
4. Jane Evans, Norfolk Educational Services, Attleborough Academy & vol. ESOL tutor
5. Ian Lain, City College Norwich
6. Kate Wallace, City College Norwich
7. Richard Spellacy, City College Norwich
8. Anna Flack, City College Norwich
9. Carol Barnard, City College Norwich
10. Rosie Sexton, English+, Norwich
11. Jenny Coppard, New Routes, Norwich
12. Paola Colombo, NHS, Norfolk
13. Ana Dias, East Coast College, Norfolk
14. Annette Mackay, Adult Community Learning Services
15. Amanda Reeve, Adult Community Learning Services
16. Kathy Shaw, Adult Community Learning Services
17. Deborah Barton East Suffolk College
18. Isabel Gavra, Realise Futures, Suffolk
19. Graham Harwood, Acentis
20. Carol Jordan, Syrian Refugee Project Norwich
21. Ellie McKinlay-Khojinian, WEA East
22. Rachel Turner, WEA East


1) Welcome & introductions

- RÖ passed her thanks to all for attending.
- Thanks to Ian Lain & City College Norwich for hosting and helping to organise.
- Thanks to Pauline Blake-Johnston of NATECLA Scotland for her help and advice in setting up this branch.
- Round robin for introductions. Comments of interest:
  - Ascentis – awarding body and educational charity, support NATECLA nationally and look forward to supporting it regionally.
  - WEA - Workers Education Association, 2 delegates today. Do a lot of work with New Routes also attending today.
  - NHS & Norwich MIND – wellbeing for ethnic minority groups, mental health – they have found that many languages do not necessarily have the words for mental health issues and certain conditions.
  - Nile – Training for ELT. Susi will be presenting today.
  - Transform ELT – Sarah Mount will be presenting today doing an abridged version of her presentation form last national conference.
  - NCLS – formally Norfolk Adult Education, 3 delegates attending today.

2) Purpose of the branch & needs of region

- Region is very large & spread out (thanks to those who have travelled quite far today)
- National events quite hard to get to
The organisation is about fostering relationships between organisations: more cohesion & awareness needed between regional providers and community support groups.

- Lack of CPD for ESOL (much focus on FS & GCSE)
- National Office will support and promote activities, events, initiatives we run.

3) Video message—NATECLA Co-Chair, Jenny Roden

- Apologies for not being able to attend and wishes branch the best of luck
- Thanks to Rachel for launching this branch
- Organisation founded in 1979
- Supports CPD events
- Act as consultants in the field & offer training
- Lobby for strategies that affect ESOL & funding

4) Presentation: Rachel Öner—‘An update from the field of ESOL’

- Local level to National update. The branch & its website can communicate on this.
- Timely that this event is being held today as the news has been discussing new funding under the Integration Strategy
- ESOL Strategy for England—proposals that were launched just over a year ago
  - As Jenny said, exists in Scotland & Wales.
  - Document link will be available, but is basically for policymakers and funders and outlines why England needs a strong strategy.
  - Contains a range of proposals
  - Represents a consensus of views across a wide range of ESOL stakeholders
  - Covers:
    1. Funding and entitlement
    2. Monitoring and co-ordination nationally
    3. Monitoring and co-ordination locally
    4. Proposals for providers
  - An update document available to see how far the proposals have come. There has been publicity in TES and in August 2017 the All Party Parliamentary Group on Social Integration invited NATECLA to speak to the Panel. It subsequently published a report (August 2017) recommending that the government:

  “Devise a comprehensive strategy to promote English language learning, which would complement the broader government strategy for the integration of immigrants (pg 21)”.

- Today’s news seems good on the surface, but only 5 councils will be receiving funding for ESOL. NATECLA will be issuing an official response later today as they were hoping for a NATIONAL policy.
- British Council NEXUS site. Had loss of functionality, Jenny Roden has written to the BC and this is now back online. If you see anything not working, can contact NATECLA on the link in the monthly bulletin.
- BBC Bitesize BETA—for Functional Skills, but a great set of videos useful for all, soon to have many more than the current 2 vocational contexts.
- ETF’s Regional Professional Exchange Network is being run. Some people at this group today are also attending. A very worthwhile group to also attend to network and share resources and ideas. Runs at ACER in St Ives.
• NATECLA has a range of CPD – see website for details
• ETF’s Spring CPD Programme has been announced
• City & Guilds will be launching some generic teaching and English focused CPD open events soon.
• Functional Skills new standards are out. Awarding Organisations now working on their new exam materials for September 2019
• Jobs:
  o Trinity College are currently recruiting examiners, see the bulletin or their website for details.
  o East Coast College (formally Great Yarmouth College and Lowestoft College) are looking for ESOL tutors for Lowestoft. Contact Val Prior.

5) In the absence of Sally Bates (due to present but send apologies as she is ill), groups discussed what they see as their challenges currently. Responses:
• Funding
• Recruitment of tutors
• Demands on tutors
• Teaching qualifications (particularly ESOL) and their availability
• Employer engagement
• The number of ESOL course hours on offer across providers can vary – learners complain about this.
• Availability of materials and resources for ESOL
• RÖ – our website can have links to resources. Delegates asked to submit ideas for posting

6) Presentation: Susi Pearson, NILE – ‘CELTA, DELTA & on-line courses’

• CELTA is a challenging course!
• Well recognised international standard
• 4 weeks full-time
• 6 hours of assessed teaching practise
• Now a level 5 qualification (Susi to check)
• Can do a part-time on-line version
• No conversion form TEFL – interview process to enrol
• DB pointed out that Adult Learners can be funded by the Adult Learner Loan
• Cost is £1500 inc Cambridge Registration Fee
• 10% discount offer for NATECLA members if apply before 01/05/18
• DELTA £3000+
• Also have an online and MA Programme

RÖ asked the delegates if they would state what the minimum standard to teach in their organisations was. Overwhelmingly, CELTA was the minimum, Level 2 minimum in English, ideally L3 as marking & feedback must be a good standard. Subject Specialisms still a target, but hard to find.

7) Presentation: Sarah Mount, Transform ELT Ltd - 'Achieving Excellence in School Inspections'
• Intro film project : The Inspector
• Group discussion – how do we feel about inspections
Negative Responses: Pressure, observations snapshot only, false image of institution, political as connected to Government policies

Positive Responses: institutional benchmark

- Identify your need then work out how you are going to improve it. Inspections can be an opportunity for change & self-development, consolidation across the department.
- In self-assessment be open and honest, identify issues then assign tasks and distribute workloads.
- Don’t forget to be guided by staff who have been through inspections
- Collaboration and communication essential

8) Video message on NATECLA Membership, Laura Plotnek-Jones

- Introduction of Laura and Jane Arstall.
- Membership benefits
- Language issues publication (praised by some delegates in the room)

Branch issues - RÖ: genuinely excited about setting up a regional branch and wants more of this. Looking for enthusiastic individuals to help run the branch it doesn’t matter if you are volunteer teachers, tutors, managers or work for private companies with links to ESOL provision or charities supporting those with ESOL needs. Ideally hope to have event meetings 3-4 times/year where CPD can be covered. One of these can be an annual conference.

Events are run by committee members of the branch, doing ground work such as booking venue, catering, speakers/workshop leaders if they’re local, setting up, clearing down etc. If it is a large event National office helps with website advert, advertising to institutional members and any contacts they have, garnering sponsorship if it’s a bigger event, getting trainers.

a) CPD – Will be canvassing for your CPD ideas shortly. Very little CPD is free, hardly any pure ESOL in fact is actually put on currently

b) Workshop topics & conference – group was asked what would be a good time to hold a conference. October was decided upon. RÖ wants people to think about speakers and if anyone would like to run a workshop to let her know. Will probably be help more centrally to region.

c) Local website - RÖ really would like to have some news stories to put on our regional website. These can be anything form new courses you are running, learner awards or community group initiatives. East Coast College have submitted two case studies today which will be posted on the site.
  - Suggestions for resources can be posted there also
  - How you would like your organisation represented on the site – are links enough & easier than updating info? – Decision was yes.

d) Branch committee RÖ going to be looking for volunteers to help set up a branch committee. Needs key people in key position to reflect what is suitable for our region. These are suggestions at the moment:

  - Chair – This will be Rachel Öner & she will be doing the bulk of the work! Arranging events, liaising with HQ, arrange speakers. Will also be the ... Management Council Rep – someone who attends MC meetings (Birmingham, London), one each term and National Conference. Though a second rep would be great as the branch gets more established. Expenses paid.
- **Secretary/membership secretary** - minutes, sending out info to members, maintaining records, website

- **Treasurer** – can be combined with another role as there is no longer much too this as payment for any events is taken centrally. Simple branch record needed.

- **Website co-ordinator** – to add updates and news stories when required. At the moment any volunteer or another though any committee member can do or share this, but as things get busier, it may be too much to ask to combine with another role.

  RÖ stated though the branch committee needs to reflect the needs of the region. RÖ will be canvassing for volunteers shortly. Anyone else who doesn’t want a ‘role’ per say but would like to offer services welcome!

**AOB** – Ian Lain said City College Norwich will be holding an ESOL Festival on Wednesday 2nd May, 10am – 2pm. ESOL learners will be presenting be vocational activities and probably food! Every one welcome!

RÖ again thanks everyone for coming and City College for hosting. A survey will be sent out to delegates soon.