

Minutes



Leading learning and skills

Date 3 April 2006
Subject Council Meeting
Location Castle Marina
Time 17:30
LSC office Nottinghamshire
Publication intent Internal

Present
Keith Stanyard
Stuart Anthony
Graham Chapman
Elaine Clark
Chris Hasty
Roger Hursthouse
Jon McLeod
Barbara McKenna
David Sadler
Deborah White
Pat Woodfield

In attendance

LSC staff
Louise Benson
Mick Brown
Nigel Jackson

Apologies

Apologies have been received from:
Milton Crosdale
Mick Storey
Mike Syms
Jean Pardoe
Tom Stockwell
Peter Ward

Item 1. Welcome and introductions

1.1 The Chairman welcomed everyone present to the meeting and, on behalf of the Council, congratulated Mick Brown on his appointment as Area Director of the LSC Nottinghamshire under theme 7 of *agenda for change*.

Item 2. Minutes of last meeting

- 2.1 The minutes of the last meeting were agreed to be a true and accurate record.

Item 3. Matters arising

- 3.1 Louise Benson advised that the *agenda for change* working group, chaired by Deborah White, will meet on 19 April at 08.00 at Castle Marina. The group will report back to the full Council on 25 April.
- 3.2 The Chairman advised that the steering group overseeing the planned merger between Newark & Sherwood and Lincolnshire Colleges has met. Governors of both colleges are fully engaged with the process and consultants have been appointed to undertake the due diligence work. Mick Brown advised that he had attended the last meeting of the Newark & Sherwood Corporation, and reported that the governing body is committed to ensuring that the process leading up to merger is followed to the letter.
- 3.3 Further to the discussion about the frequency of Council meetings on 14 March, the Chairman advised that he intended to add two additional meetings to the 2006 schedule on a provisional basis. The dates are 4 July and 21 November, with both meetings scheduled to start as usual at 16.00. Louise Benson agreed to confirm these dates by e-mail. **Action: LB**
- 3.4 The Executive Director advised that a decision from the Secretary of State regarding the merger between Broxtowe and the People's Colleges is expected imminently. The Chairman advised that he had just received a letter from NCN, which states that "the Board approves that in the light of the assurances given by the LSC to the Corporation at its special meeting on 1st February and subsequently, and following NCN's own risk analysis, no formal objection is to be submitted to the Secretary of State regarding the proposed merger of Broxtowe and The People's Colleges." The Council welcomed this development.
- 3.5 The Executive Director advised the Council that the People's College re-inspection had taken place on 13 March. The results are expected.
- 3.6 At the next meeting Terry Laws will provide an update on the planned visit to a high performing LSC operating in a similar environment to Nottinghamshire. **Action: TL**

Item 4. LSC Nottinghamshire Capital Strategy

- 4.1 Nigel Jackson advised the Council that this paper, previously considered by the Council in January 2006, had been included to provide the context for the two capital applications to be reviewed by the Council. Nigel Jackson advised that Annex A has been updated to reflect the LSC priorities and this will inform discussions with colleges about their capital plans. The Chairman reminded the Council that the FE Committee will review FE capital plans within the Conurbation at its next meeting and provide full feedback to the Council thereafter. Roger Hursthouse questioned why, under section 5.1, High Pavement College was not itemised separately. Nigel Jackson replied that the reason was that there was no projected growth in learner numbers

from that institution in the conurbation. It was confirmed that following presentations by individual colleges a prioritised paper will be prepared.

Item 5. Capital application for the development of the Toyota learning facility

- 5.1 Introducing this agenda item, Nigel Jackson advised the Council that the financial information contained in the paper and detailed in the annexes has been re-modelled on the basis of the merged Broxtowe/People's College rather than on Broxtowe College alone. As the recommendations highlight, there is still work to be done on the proposal, particularly on matters relating to property, and the Council is therefore requested to approve it on a conditional basis.
- 5.2 The Executive Director stated that the Toyota development is an important, but complex, project involving a range of partners, notably the merged college, emda and Nottingham City Council. There are, he advised, a number of issues still to be resolved about the ownership of the site, which may result in the overall cost of the project increasing to up to £11 million. However, he assured the Council that, were the costs of the project to rise, the LSC would not be expected to make an increased contribution and any increase in the LSC's contribution, if requested, would be subject to approval by the Council.
- 5.3 In the ensuing discussion, Roger Hursthouse questioned the fact that, at 0.2 per cent, the net present value of the project is lower than the LSC's guidelines, quoted in the Dukeries capital application paper, of a 1:1 ratio. The Executive Director confirmed that the 1:1 ratio is a guideline only, but agreed to speak to the Regional Finance Director for further clarification.
- Action: MB**
- 5.4 The Executive Director advised that, as stated in the paper, the LSC will provide Broxtowe College with exceptional support to cover inherited net current liabilities and rationalisation of staff and systems costs associated with the dissolution of the People's College at the point of merger. In response to a question from Stuart Anthony, the Executive Director confirmed that all reasonable steps are being taken to minimise the LSC's liability and that the level of support agreed constitutes the LSC's maximum level of exposure.
- 5.5 Nigel Jackson confirmed that the outstanding property and planning issues referred to in the paper were being progressed and that funding is conditional on planning permission being secured. The Executive Director also advised that, in his view, emda is fully committed to the project and that the Development Agency's financial contribution, detailed in the proposal, is secure.
- 5.6 Barbara McKenna questioned whether the LSC had a role to play in ensuring that the development and implementation of the project is informed by previous experience, notably at Bilborough College. Mick Brown advised that Broxtowe College has considerable experience of managing capital projects but agreed with the Chairman's suggestion that the project manager should be invited to present to the Council, or FE Committee, to provide the requisite assurance that the project is being managed appropriately.

5.7 Roger Hursthouse expressed concerns about the transfer of the planning contract from Maber Associates to Blueprint at the request of *emda*. He sought assurance that the engagement of Blueprint had been secured through due process. The Executive Director advised that the procuring body is Broxtowe College not the LSC and that, therefore, it is the College's responsibility to ensure that the procurement process has been conducted in line with its own regulations, and the law. It was agreed that the LSC should receive assurance from the College on these points. **Action: MB**

5.8 Drawing the discussion to a close, the Chairman requested the Council to conditionally approve the proposal subject to the following additional caveats:

- Satisfactory resolution of the position on net present value
- The merger between Broxtowe and The People's Colleges receiving Ministerial approval
- The project manager presenting to a subsequent meeting of the Council or sub-committee thereof
- Broxtowe College confirming that due procurement process has been followed in respect of the engagement of Blueprint.

Subject to these caveats, and those listed under the Recommendations heading of the previously circulated paper, the Council unanimously approved the capital application.

Decision: capital application conditionally approved

5.9 Graham Chapman thanked Nigel Jackson for his work on the Toyota project.

Item 6. Capital Application from the Dukeries College

6.1 Introducing this agenda item, Nigel Jackson advised that the capital proposal has the full support of Nottinghamshire County Council. Mick Brown advised that the proposal needs to form part of, and make explicit reference to, a construction training strategy for North Nottinghamshire developed and delivered in conjunction with West Nottinghamshire and North Nottinghamshire Colleges. The need for this strategy to include employer engagement, and to include the work of the construction sector skills council, was also noted.

6.2 Nigel Jackson advised that, although the paper makes reference to a subsequent bid that the College intends to make for 14-19 construction provision, the viability of the adult proposal is not conditional on any subsequent 14-19 bid being approved. He also clarified that the adult proposal currently under consideration is being made against the Adult and Community Learning budget rather than the main capital budget.

6.3 Roger Hursthouse raised the issue of the limited funding available for adult apprenticeships and questioned how, in the light of this, the facility could deliver the skills required by employers. The Executive Director replied that the question reaffirmed the importance of the facility forming part of an overall construction strategy for North Nottinghamshire so that the foundation level training offered by the Dukeries could form part of a progression ladder leading to higher level and more specialist skills training offered by the

colleges. Mick Brown advised that the facility would not have the specialist staff or equipment required to deliver electrical training but agreed with Stuart Anthony's suggestion that consideration should be given to including plastering within the learning offer.

6.4 The Chairman questioned whether, in the light of the previous discussion, the Council needed to see the project manager of the Dukeries proposal. Graham Chapman proposed that the degree of assurance required should be appropriate to the value of the project and the degree of risk associated with it. On this occasion, he suggested, written assurance of project management capability would be appropriate. The Council members agreed. **Action: NJ**

6.5 The Council approved the capital application from the Dukeries College subject to planning permission being secured and the project forming part of a broader construction strategy for North Nottinghamshire.

Decision: capital application approved

Item 7. Any other business

7.1 Mick Brown confirmed that, under Theme 7 of *agenda for change*, Band 5 appointments have now been announced across the LSC. In the East Midlands two posts remain unfilled – the Area Director for Northamptonshire and the Regional Finance Director.

7.2 Graham Chapman requested that statistics be presented for Nottingham City disaggregated from either the Conurbation or the County. Nigel Jackson agreed to investigate. **Action: NJ**

7.3 Barbara McKenna stated that she had made a presentation to the Federation of Shipbuilders on Apprenticeships and asked that the minutes record her thanks to John Endersby and Elaine Clark for their support. Barbara McKenna asked if she should have sought approval in advance. Keith Stanyard replied that it was not a case of receiving approval but simply of ensuring that the LSC is aware so that appropriate support can be provided if required. As Louise Benson had been informed, this was all in order and the Chairman thanked Barbara McKenna for supporting the LSC's objectives by promoting the apprenticeship programme. It was agreed that Council members promoting the LSC through activities such as this should be encouraged to wear their LSC badges. Louise Benson agreed to order badges for recently appointed Council members. **Action; LB**

7.4 Stuart Anthony advised that, in his capacity as a representative of the voluntary and community sector on the LSC, he has been requested to work with ENABLE at Board level.

7.5 Elaine Clark reported that she had facilitated a workshop on employer engagement at the recent 14-19 conference organised by Nigel Jackson.

Item 8. Date of next meeting

8.1 The next meeting will take place on 25 April at The Pizza Factory starting at

16.00.

Meeting chair	Keith Stanyard
Minute taker	Louise Benson
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