

# Minutes



Leading learning and skills

**Meeting Subject** LSC Norfolk Council Meeting  
**Date, Time and Venue** Thursday 26 May 2005 at 5pm at LSC Norfolk  
**LSC office** Norfolk  
**Publication intent** Internal

**Present** Edward Libbey Chair  
John Holmes  
Peter Medhurst  
Peter Stewart  
Marya Parker  
Caroline Jarrold  
Gordon Boyd  
John Farley

**In attendance** Keith Hawkins GO-East  
Fiona McDiarmid Connexions  
Beverley Evans Norfolk County Council  
Julian Campbell Business Link

**LSC staff** John Brierley  
Graham Brough  
Nick Craig  
Andy Stoddart

**Apologies** Susanne Mills Minute Taker  
John Elliott  
Pat Holtom  
Mike Burrows  
Jeanne King  
Rob Hetherington  
Sue Rossiter

## 1. Apologies

Apologies were noted as above. John Farley was welcomed to his first meeting.

## 2. Approval of Minutes of 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2005 and Matters Arising.

The minutes were approved as a true record of the meeting. It was noted that the target date for legal merger of COWA and Isle College was 1<sup>st</sup> April 2006.

RESOLVED: That the Council approved the minutes.

### 3. Council Members' Interests

The Chair reminded Council Members to declare any interest(s) before each item. Mr Stewart and Mr Medhurst declared their interests where relevant.

### 4. LID Proposals for 2005/06 Endorsement

Mr Craig provided a verbal briefing of the report which informed the Council of the plans for the expenditure of the LID fund for 2005/06. It was noted that during 2005-06 LSC Norfolk would have an allocation of £1, 742,000 which represents a reduction of £258,000 on the 2004-05 allocation. The proposed activities reflect the strategic priorities established in the local Annual Plan for 2005-06. Mr Medhurst questioned the level funding with regards to the Learning Communities. Mr Craig advised that the overall amount of funding for Learning Communities is reducing and that the organisations are aware of this and have been advised that this is not a sustainable form of funding. The funding for 2004-05 was circa £200K and will be £175K for this year. Each Learning Partnership will receive £25K, although a number of factors will be taken into account, particularly what other funding the area is in receipt of. It is envisaged that Learning Partnerships align themselves with each of the Local Strategic Partnerships. A general discussion took place regarding the future funding and role of the Learning Partnerships.

Ms Parker questioned the reason for the LSC offering equality and diversity training to the providers and colleges. Mr Stoddart advised that this is a temporary support mechanism to meet the aspirations that the LSC has of colleges and providers with regards to equality and diversity. Mr Brierley added that LSC employees also participate in the training and that more specifically in relation to the LSC's race relations policy there is a requirement upon LSC's to focus on this area.

Ms Jarrold raised a query regarding the level of funding for the Construction Academy. Mr Brierley advised that the figure derived from discussions with the Principal of City College Norwich and Mr Farley and it was agreed that £75K was an appropriate level of funding.

Mr Stewart welcomed a discussion regarding the Construction Academy model at a future meeting.

RESOLVED: That the local Council endorsed the proposals for LID expenditure for the 2005-06 financial year.

### 5. StAR Implementation Update

Mr Brough advised that the StAR Implementation Plan now referred to as the Next Steps Plan has been revised in order to clarify issues regarding membership, communication and the question of where executive powers sit. Task and Finish Groups are being established for each of the five areas, the Data Group has already met. The Strategy Group is currently being formed.

Mr Brough drew the Councils attention to the forthcoming 14:19 area inspection in the West area.

Mr Stewart advised that he was pleased to see that the Children's Services structure has been aligned with the StAR area groups. However, this function will require Groups to support its development and there is concern that if Children's Services mirror the StAR approach there will be the need for organisations to engage in a high number of planning groups. Mr Brierley responded that he would hope that these groups can relate to the Children's Services structure and also that certain groups will disband once a particular role has been fulfilled. Mr Medhurst advised concern has been expressed from Easton College in that it is a small college and does not have the level of staff to participate in five area groups. Mr Brierley responded that this issue could be easily resolved and that participation at all groups / meetings would not be expected.

RESOLVED: That the Council noted the StAR Implementation Update.

### 6. Council Member Future Involvement

Mr Brierley reported that the paper sets out the formal role of Council members. With regards to the Strategy Groups which are in the process of being formed, it was noted that the following nominations had been made: Mr Boyd to sit on the 14:19 Group, Mr Burrows to participate in the Adult Learning Group and Ms Jarrold and John Farley have expressed an interest in the Skills Advisory Group. The Chair thanked the Council members for volunteering.

The Chair advised that Mr Burrows has been chairing a working group with GY and ENSF Colleges which seems to be progressing productively.

RESOLVED: The Council noted the paper and the nominees for the groups.

## **7. FE Funding 2005/06**

The Council noted the current FE funding position for Norfolk. Mr Brierley advised that the main issue is the way in which the information has been presented nationally to the press. However, it is true to say that the LSC is responding to the Government strategy and priorities which are clearly set out in the 14:19 White Papers. The growth in sixth forms has been badly handled, the original ringfenced budget was not sufficient, the department has not provided any other funding and therefore costs have been met from other budgets.

With regards to the local position because of the performance of providers and in particular colleges, after discussions regionally and subsequently nationally we have been able to secure the second best settlement in the country and Norfolk has achieved the best settlement in the region. However, there has been significant growth, about a 20% increase in the number of 16-18 year olds in learning over the last 4 years therefore the overall figures have gone up. From August 2006 there will be the Level 2 Entitlement (L2E) to learning free of fees for those adults who don't have a first level 2 qualification. Discussions will take place with each of the colleges and the Adult Education Service regarding their 3 Year Development Plans and how some of the adult funding should be prioritised.

Mr Stewart advised that he congratulated Mr Brierley on the funding settlement for Norfolk as he believes that locally we have done well with the 7% allocation for Norfolk being the highest in the Eastern Region. However, from a Government and LSC perspective the situation has been handled extremely poorly with the final allocation just being received which will have an impact on the courses running from the beginning of August 2005. College prospectuses were compiled four months ago and fees were set at a similar level, yet the fee income target has still not been set. The bringing forward of the introduction of L2E to September 2005 also has a massive effect. For COWA, in addition to the £721K reduction in adult funding there is also a £500K loss of fee income.

Mr Stewart circulated a paper which summarised the areas that the Colleges and Adult Education Service believe will be effected by the funding cuts in the Eastern Region. Ms Evans advised that the main reason to present this information to the Council was to ensure that the LSC understands the impact of the funding reductions. Mr Brierley advised that the LSC is fully aware of the impact and that the message being received in respect of 2006/07 is that unless there is a change in Government funding available to the LSC for adult learning there will be even less funding available. Mr Brierley added that he is pressing National Office to review the amount of adult funding allocated per head in the East of England as Norfolk receives the lowest within the region and also in the Country.

RESOLVED: That the Council noted the FE funding paper.

## **8. Monthly Report**

The Council noted the monthly report which provided an update on strategy and operations during April and early May 2005.

RESOLVED: That the Council noted the monthly report.

## 9. Updates from Observers

The Council noted the update reports.

## 10. Finance Update

**2004/05 Outturn –** Mr Brierley reported that there was an overspend of circa £1.3 million for 2004/05 at a local level. This was mainly Capital which was controlled by National Office along with the school sixth form budget which overspend due to the agreement that all school sixth form places would be funded. There was an overspend in learning, predominately in WBL. National Office were advised at the beginning of contracting that the budget allocated was not enough to meet the targets they set, there has now been late recognition of this. A reallocation of additions funds has taken place to be able to further engage with WBL. WBL performance is an issue reflected throughout the Country and a national basis we will be looking to introduce a more appropriate funding methodology next year.

**2005/06 Budget Position –** Mr Brierley tabled a paper showing the budget position for the current year.

RESOLVED: That the Council noted the 2004/05 outturn and the 2005/06 budget position.

## 11. Performance Update

The Council noted the performance update. Mr Brierley summarised that the 16:18 target would be met, however, the adult participation numbers would not be fully delivered due to the pressure to focus on young people's learning. With regards to apprenticeships starts the local Annual Plan contains a figure of circa 2100 which is believed to be achievable, however local progress has been measured against the target set by National Office of 2437 which we had advised would be unachievable. This has now been recognised nationally and ways of addressing the issue are being sought.

RESOLVED: That the Council noted the performance update.

## 12. Work Based Learning (WBL) / Entry to Employment (E2E) Performance Update

Mr Brough talked through the WBL and E2E performance update advising that in terms of outturn for 2002/03 local performance was slightly off track. We will be looking to drive the NVQ framework achievement forward over the next few months. With regards to E2E period 8 shows that local performance is relatively strong when compared with all other LSCs. Focus will be given over the next few months to further improve performance.

Mr Stewart advised that the £20K set aside for the WBL Apprenticeship Awards is rather a lot and that he hoped that only those apprentices who worked in areas where their employers fully supported the apprenticeship framework commitment would be identified for those awards. It was noted that a major challenge is persuading employers that key skills are critical. Mr Brierley advised that consideration is being given to limiting the celebration and Mr Brough added that a proposal will be presented to the Council in the future regarding a Norfolk wide learning celebration showcase.

RESOLVED: That the Council noted the WBL/E2E performance update.

## 13. COWA / Isle College Merger Consultation

The Council noted the consultation document. Mr Stewart advised that the premises feasibility study is underway and has been extended to cover the Fenland area. The final report is expected during late July / early August. The Council will receive for the September Council meeting the final proposal for the merger.

**RESOLVED:** That the Council noted the COWA / Isle College Merger Consultation paper.

#### **14. Other Items to Note**

The Chair was pleased to report that LSC Norfolk has successfully maintained the liP standard and the Council noted those organisations as listed in the paper on achieving liP recognition or re-recognition.

#### **15. Any Other Business**

Mr Brierley advised that Wymondham College has submitted a bid encouraged by Charles Clarke through the Success for Schools Initiative to extend the site of the school and sixth form by 30 places per year. LSC Norfolk has been requested to support the proposal as part of the school organisation committee. The funding for the increase in development will be allocated from the Children Services. The LSC will give its support subject to two provisos that any increase in learners is drawn from the southern area where it is apparent that numbers are low and access should be made available to vocational and level three options. Wymondham College is also seeking approval with the DfES to increase its boarding members.

This is the first of a number of applications where successful schools will be able to either increase their sixth forms or submit a bid to open a sixth form. The LSC will administer funding as part of the LSC Capital Funding by way of competition for expanding or new school sixth forms.

#### **16. Date of Next Meeting**

The Council Away Day will take place on Monday 4<sup>th</sup> July 2005 at 12.30pm at the Business Base, Drayton Lodge and the next Council Meeting will take place on Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> July 2005 at 5pm at LSC Norfolk.