

LSC announces new regional council for London

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The new regional council of the Learning and Skills Council in London held its first meeting at Centre Point today. The council, which was established as part of the Further Education and Training Act 2007, replaces the 5 local non-executive councils and is chaired by Claire Ighodaro, CBE.

The new council includes representation from the world of business and learning and is made up as follows:

- Barry Francis - Unionlearn Regional Manager for the Southern & Eastern TUC.
- Caroline Allen - Principal of Orchard Hill College.
- Claire Ighodaro, CBE (Council Chair) - Non-Executive Director of the Banking Code Standards Board and Lloyds of London.
- David Hughes - Regional Director for London at the Learning and Skills Council
- Douglas Hands - Chair of Governors at Lewisham College.
- Frances O'Grady - Deputy General Secretary TUC (Observer from the National Council)
- Iain Smith - Head of Skills at London Underground.
- Javed Khan - Director of Community and Cultural Services at the London Borough of Harrow.
- Mohamed Omer - Director of Holt Whitney & Co Ltd.
- Pablo Lloyd - Deputy Chief Executive at learndirect.
- Paul Butler - Chair of Leyton Sixth Form College in East London and the London Voluntary Services Council.

- Peter Ibbetson - Regional Chairman for Coutts and Chairman of the Social Enterprise Loan Fund.
- Roger Mills - Regional Managing Director of Newsquest (London).
- Sue Davidson - Interim Executive in the public and private sectors.

Congratulating the new Council members on their appointment, LSC Chair, Chris Banks said:

“We have a single aim; to improve the skills of the nation. Over the next two to three years the LSC has a huge and important job to do. As we continue to build on the progress we have already made ensuring that improvements will continue to happen in future years, I am therefore delighted to welcome the new regional council for London. They will play a key part in driving forward this crucial agenda and ensuring the voices of both employers and learners are heard at the highest level.”

Claire Ighodaro CBE, Council Chair, said:

“I fully support the LSC’s core role to make England better skilled and more competitive and look forward to giving the council the benefit of my 3 years on the National Council and 25 years experience in industry, especially my understanding of the type of skills employers need. I share the view of the London Skills and Employment Board that there is a strong link between skills and employability. The paradox of London is the extremes between very high skills and wealth; and very low skills and poverty. We must enable workless people to enter sustainable employment, whilst ensuring we meet employers’ skills needs.”

David Hughes, LSC Regional Director for London said:

“I am delighted that we have appointed such a strong and dynamic group who will add huge value. The new council members will provide challenge, support, and leadership to the LSC’s work; and in so doing will help to shape a world class education and skills system for London. They will play a key role in ensuring that the LSC continues to deliver for learners

and employers, whilst supporting the organisation as we transition to new delivery arrangements.”

Minister of State for Lifelong Learning, Further and Higher Education, Bill Rammell, said:

“This is a crucial time for the LSC and for the Further Education and training system as a whole. Education and skills lie at the very heart of this country’s future success and prosperity, and the LSC’s Regional Councils have a key role in continuing to drive forward progress in support of our shared ambition for every 16 and 17 year old to participate in education and training; and for every adult to have the chance to improve their skills and have a more successful economic life.

“We are embarking on a major reform of the post-16 delivery landscape; and the consultation currently underway sets out our proposals to move to a radically different model of organising the skills system based on a new demand led system, and to transfer leadership and accountability for the outcomes of all young people to local authorities as part of their wider responsibility for delivering an even more integrated approach to Children’s Services.

“Strong leadership of the LSC will be vital during this time, and the LSC, supported by its Regional Councils, has a crucial role to play over the next 2-3 years in working with the FE sector to ensure that it can continue to respond effectively to the changing needs of individual learners, employers and wider communities, and to secure the skills we need to compete on world markets.”

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Notes to editors

Learning and Skills Council:

The LSC exists to make England better skilled and more competitive. We are responsible for ensuring the availability of high-quality education and training for everyone. We have a single goal: to improve the skills of England's young people and adults to world class standards. Our vision is that young people and adults in England have knowledge and skills matching the best in the world and are part of a truly competitive workforce. We work nationally, regionally and locally to deliver this ambition on behalf of learners and employers.

The Further Education and Training Act 2007

The new Regional Councils - established as part of the Further Education and Training Act 2007 will inform the LSC's decision making at a regional level, guide progress and make sure the Government's strategy for education and skills works on the ground.

The Act streamlines the LSC's "non-executive tier" replacing 47 Local Councils with 9 Regional Councils, resulting in a more simplified, less bureaucratic, structure, as well as being aligned to the organisation of the LSC executive team. In this way, the new Councils will reflect both the local and regional needs of learners and employers.

Machinery of Government consultation "Raising Expectations: enabling the system to deliver"

On 17 March 2008 the Secretaries of State of the Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills (DIUS) and Department for Children, Schools And Families (DCSF), announced the Machinery of Government consultation "Raising Expectations: enabling the system to deliver" which proposes that there will be two new bodies that will continue to drive ahead the huge agenda that the LSC has been charged with since 2001.

1. For young people there will be a new national Non Departmental Public Body, the Young People's Learning Agency (YPLA) with some regional capacity, which will support local authorities in their new role in commissioning and funding 14-19 provision. Local capacity on 14-19 will therefore, as expected, be with Local Authorities.
2. For adults there will be a new Skills Funding Agency (SFA), again with some regional capacity, which will oversee the distribution of funds to the sector and manage the performance of FE colleges. The Agency will also house the National Apprenticeship Service (NAS), the National Employer Service, and the Adult Careers and Advancement Agency. As has already been announced, the Train to Gain brokerage service will transfer to Regional Development Agencies in April 2009.

Pen Pictures of new Regional Council Members

Barry Francis

Barry is Unionlearn Regional Manager for the Southern & Eastern TUC. Barry is a member of the London Skills and Employment Board and has sound credibility with key stakeholders in the region.

Caroline Allen

Caroline is the Principal of Orchard Hill College, a specialist college in South London providing for Learners with Learning Difficulties and Disabilities. Caroline is the former Chair of London South Council and was a member of the London Regional Board. Nationally, she has made a significant contribution to the strategic priorities of the LSC through her leadership of the LLDD Strategy Group.

Claire Ighodaro, CBE (Chair)

Listed by New Nation (August 2007) as the UK's 5th most powerful black woman, Claire Ighodaro was the first female President at the Chartered Institute of Management Accountants (CIMA) from 2003-2004. Claire is currently non-executive Director of the Banking Code Standards Board and Lloyd's of London, an Independent Board Member of the Department for Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform (BERR), a Trustee of the British Council, sits on the Council of the Open University and chairs four Audit Committees. Until December 2004 Claire was an executive at BT plc where she held a number of senior posts, including Finance Director, Broadband, BT Group plc. Claire is also on the LSC's National Council.

David Hughes

David took up his post as Regional Director of the LSC London region in October 2005, following eighteen months as Regional Director of the LSC East Midlands and four years as Executive Director LSC Derbyshire. Prior to joining the LSC in 2000, David worked in the voluntary sector both in the UK and Australia in areas including housing, social enterprise, regeneration and education. David is also a member of the London Skills and Employment Board - chaired by the Mayor; Boris Johnson.

Douglas Hands

Douglas is currently Chair of Governors at Lewisham College – a highly successful GFE in London – a position he has held for over eight years. He has a passion for education and his previous experience in business gives him a solid background from which to draw upon.

Frances O'Grady (Observer from the National Council)

Frances became TUC Deputy General Secretary in January 2003, the first woman ever to hold this post. Frances has lead responsibility for a wide range of key areas of policy development across the TUC's work including trade union recruitment and organisation, inter-union relations and TUC services to members. She sits on the board of the think tank, IPPR and is joint vice chair of the LSC National Council. She is also a member of the UK Skills Board, and in April 2007 was appointed to the Low Pay Commission.

Iain Smith

Iain is Head of Skills at London Underground. He has recently secured the commitment of Transport for London to the signing of the Skills Pledge.

Javed Khan

Javed is currently Director of Community and Cultural Services at the London Borough of Harrow and with 23 years of public service is responsible for a range of high profile services. He is a Trustee of the Learning Communities Network, adviser to the Goldman Sachs Global Leaders Programme and a member of the UK Social Policy Forum. He is also a founder member of the Kashmiri and Pakistani Professionals Association (KAPPA) and earlier this year was included in a list of the 100 most influential Muslims in the UK. He was a member of London West Council and the LRB, and has made a valuable contribution to regional strategies.

Mohamed Omer

Mohamed is the Director of Holt Whitney & Co Ltd. He has substantial experience of working with SME's and the Voluntary and Community sector in London. He was a member of the LSC London East Council, a member of the London Regional Board, and part of the Capital sub-committee for London. He is also a Governor of a Secondary School in Redbridge.

Pablo Lloyd

Pablo is Deputy Chief Executive at **learnirect**, a trustee of UkSkills and a member of the National Skills Forum. He is a Fellow of the Institute of Chartered Accountants and brings extensive board expertise from the public and private sectors. His recent experience includes public affairs, strategic planning and change leadership.

Paul Butler

Paul Butler has a national profile and has worked within the skills and regeneration sector for 20 years. Much of his activities have been within housing, planning, environmental health and further education, where he has established national initiatives for enabling disadvantaged groups to enter into professional careers. Paul is currently the Chair of Leyton Sixth Form College in East London and the London Voluntary Services Council. He also previously served as a council member for London North LSC.

Peter Ibbetson

Peter holds various non executive positions having built up a track record in banking and finance at a senior executive level over thirty years. He is a Regional Chairman for Coutts as well as Chairman of The Social Enterprise Loan Fund and a member of the Eastern Board for the Princes Trust. Peter was also a member of the London Regional Board and chaired the Capital Committee.

Roger Mills

Roger is Regional Managing Director of Newsquest (London) - a company with more than 50 newspapers and 20 websites serving the capital. He brings substantial experience in the business sector and a valuable political astuteness borne of his background in the media. Roger was a member of LRB and the Capital sub-committee.

Sue Davidson

Sue has substantial senior level business experience at a national and global level in the telecommunications industry. She has worked for multi-national, SME and start-up companies in Director/VP/General manager roles including Strategy, Sales, Marketing and Customer Service. She is now pursuing a portfolio career, including work as an Interim Executive in the public and private sectors. Her current Interim assignment is a Strategic Review for one of the Inner London Local Authorities.