

Minutes



Leading learning and skills

Date 9 September 2005
Subject Council Meeting
Location London Central
Time 09:00
LSC office London Central
Publication intent Public

Present Keith Faulkner (Working Links) **Chair on behalf of Yvonne Thompson**
Amanda Howells (Youth Crime Consultant)
Angela McConville (Dunlop Haywards)
Janet Morrison (North Westminster Community School)
Liz McGivern (Red Carnation Hotels)
Maxine Jones (LDA)
Raymond Madden (Institute of Chartered Accountants of England and Wales)
Satnam Gill (Working Men's College)

In attendance Liz Cierebiej (Jobcentre Plus)
Chris Heaume (Connexions)
Rob Grover (Business Link for London)
Sue Rimmer (South Thames College)

LSC staff Jill Lowery (Director of Operations, LSCLC) **Deputy for Verity Bullough**
Tony Nelson (Director of Skills and Workforce Development, LSCLC)
Mike Fenton (Head of Research and Planning, LSCLC) on behalf of Steve Crow
David Hughes (Incoming Regional Director for London) **from Item 8**
Chris Wright (Head of FE, LSCLC) - **for Item 5 only.**

Apologies Apologies have been received from:
Yvonne Thompson (ASAP Communications), Chair
Verity Bullough (Executive Director, LSC London Central)
David Congalton (Emprise Services plc)
Cllr Keith Cunningham (Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea)
Peter Ibbetson (NatWest Business Banking (retired))
Peter Ingram (St Ives Financial)

Roy Lockett (TUC (retired))
Su Thomas (PACE)
Steve Crow (Director of Development, LSCLC)

Item 1. Welcome and introductions

- 1.1 Keith Faulkner welcomed the Council and gave apologies for Yvonne and Verity, who were both on Annual Leave. Keith Faulkner chaired the meeting and Jill Lowery represented the LSC on Verity's behalf. The Council welcomed new member Janet Morrison (Headteacher of North Westminster Community School) and Liz Cierebiej, taking Allen Manning's place until his replacement is recruited.

Item 2. Management Changes.

- 2.1 Keith Faulkner gave a brief update on the appointment of Verity Bullough as Regional Director for the East Midlands and David Hughes's appointment as Regional Director for London on Jacqui Henderson's retirement in October. David Hughes came to the meeting at 10:30, to meet the council and answer their questions. Discussion covered:
- Role the Executive Director:** David will be making announcements on the arrangements for Verity's replacement once he has had the opportunity to discuss them with Yvonne Thompson on her return from Annual Leave.
 - Agenda for Change 'theme 7':** Concern was expressed over the handling of the 'reshaping' programme in 2003, in particular the damage caused by a high degree of uncertainty over the nature and scope of the change. David assured the Council that a key part of his role will be to ensure that the process is as smooth as possible and to maintain stability over the 6 – 12 months it will take to manage this process of change.
 - Role of the local council:** The role of the Local Councils needs to be reviewed to ensure that it is embedded in the functions of the LSC in a meaningful way and the council will be consulted on this. However, whatever the changes over the next few months, it would be a mistake to lose the local focus offered by the Local Councils.

Item 3. Minutes of last meeting and matters arising

- 3.1 The minutes were approved. Council reviewed progress on the action points:

3.2.2: Contract Compliance: This action has been carried forward to the next meeting, as Verity was not present to report back.

5.3: Mapping of funding changes for local FE providers: Jill Lowery outlined the implications of funding changes on the FE providers in the London Central area. A table showing the changes was circulated with the minutes.

8.1: 14-19 Forum Development: Due to staff Annual Leave, the paper on further progress and developments in the 14-19 agenda has been carried forward to the next meeting.

Item 4. Declarations of Interest

- 4.1 Sue Rimmer declared an interest in the agenda item on Capital Proposals, as she is principal of South Thames College.

Item 5. Capital Proposals for Lambeth College and South Thames College.

- 5.1 Before discussing the proposals in detail, Jill outlined the LSC's process for evaluating and approving Capital Proposals.
- 5.2 Proposals are not speculative but are developed on the basis of needs identified in three year development plans, area wide inspections etc. It has taken some 4 years to develop the proposals from South Thames College and Lambeth College.
- 5.3 Chris Wright, Head of Further Education at LSC London Central outlined the background for the two proposals and the recommendations of the Capital Review Group.
- 5.4 **Lambeth College:** This has been approved in principal by the National Capital Committee¹, but they have asked for further examination of the financial projections before the grant level is agreed. This is due to questions over the Net Present Value (NPV), as the margin for this project is small and the College is asking for a high grant level.
- 5.5 In addition, while there is no question of the strength of the Educational Case for this proposal, and the college has substantial cash reserves at the moment, the financial projections currently show budget deficits in later years. The Council asked for clarity on what level of NPV the National Appointments Committee would be happy with
- Action: Chris Wright to take forward discussions with college, regional finance team and national property team to reach an acceptable NPV and agree the level of LSC contribution.**
- 5.6 The council suggested that a disaggregated proposal would show that some phases of the project proposal have a much higher NPV than others. This approach was considered, however the national property team asked the

¹ This sequence of events is unusual, but was due to scheduling pressures for the National Committee.

college to submit a combined proposal so that the national committee could take an initial view on the project as a whole.

Decision: Council gave in principle approval for the proposal, subject to the agreement of the level of LSC contribution.

5.7 **South Thames College:** This project was approved in principal over a year ago, however, on moving to the detailed planning stage, costs increased substantially from £32million to £49million and the executive had felt that the revised proposals should be brought back to the Council for in principal approval.

5.8 The proposal was discussed at the Capital Review Group (CRG) on 19 August, but approval in principal was not sought at this stage, as the executive is still in discussion with the college about the financial projections. The college has been asked to provide further information on its running costs in future years, as these currently appear to exceed sector averages. When this discussion has concluded, the executive will present the proposal for approval in principle. In order not to delay the project further, the Council is asked to delegate authority for this decision to the Capital Review Group.

5.9 The Council were concerned with the increase in the overall cost of the project and requested further explanation on issues such as the role of surveyors in driving up costs. The national property team has assessed the changes and agrees they are reasonable.

Action: Jill Lowery to circulate detailed breakdown of cost increases

Decision: The Council approved the educational case for the proposal.

5.10 The council discussed their role in decision making on Capital projects, after a number of options were reviewed a decision was reached.

Decision: The Council agreed to delegate the decision on the level of LSC contribution to the Capital Review Group on the condition that the meeting to approve the proposal was open to all council members and that the papers for the meeting were circulated to all.

Item 6. Annual Plan 2005-06: Progress Report

6.1 Mike Fenton outlined the background of the Business Plan monitoring system and the shift towards a more outcome focused approach. The main areas discussed were:

- a. The SERTUC Union Learning Representatives contract: on paper this project looks as though it is in danger of not delivering however, in the past this project has tended to deliver most of the outcomes towards the end of the contract year.
- b. Work-based learning contracting and EMAs: the speed with which the WBL team processed the contracts once budgets were agreed was noted and Chris Heaume offered the support of Connexions in monitoring

whether young people were accessing their Education Maintenance Allowances.

- c. Council members expressed interest in the work of Enterprise Advisers

Action: Jill Lowery to circulate briefing on work with EAs

Item 7. LIDF 2005-06 Review

- 7.1 Mike Fenton briefly introduced the paper, outlining that spend to date is around 10%. This is what has been spent rather than what has been contracted, and given the progress on contracting this year, we expect to have spent the budget by the end of the year.
- 7.2 Council noted the paper and had no questions.

Item 8. Youth Matters: Presentation

- 8.1 Chris Heaume gave a presentation on the proposals of the Youth Matters Green Paper and their implications for LSC London Central. The council would like to discuss the Paper in some depth as there were proposals in the consultation that the Council would like to respond to. Due to time constraints, the council asked for this subject to be put onto the agenda for another meeting or the strategy day.

Item 9. Programme for the Council Strategy Day

- a. Council discussed the programme drafted by Verity, they were generally happy with the agenda, although there were some concerns over the balance of the programme between presentations and discussion. The Council were assured that the focus of the meeting would be discussion, we will have a facilitator for the day and all presentations will be kept to a minimum.
- b. The Council were keen to have both Verity Bullough and David Hughes at the awayday in October. Due to other commitments, this will not be possible as one of them will have to be at a provider event in the East Midlands. The council argued strongly for David's participation in the day, as it would give them the opportunity to discuss the role of the Council in the regional agenda with the incoming Regional Director.

Action: David Hughes to discuss with Verity and Yvonne

Item 10. Any other business

- 10.1 Chris Heaume updated the Council on the Activity Allowance Pilots. Central London Connexions was successful in its application to be chosen as one of the pilot areas. 1500-2000 young people will participate and Connexions will

be working closely with the LSC to ensure progression from Activity Allowances to learning programmes.

Item 11. Date of next meeting

11.1 The next meeting of the Council will take place on 28th of October.

Publication no.

Meeting chair

Keith Faulkner

Minute taker

Saskia Gretton

Date created

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