

Minutes



Leading learning and skills

Date 13 September 2005
Subject London Regional Board
Location Centre Point
Time hh.mm
LSC office London North
Publication intent Internal

Present

Rod Kenyon	(LW - Chairman)
Jacqui Henderson	(RD)
Ian S Ferguson	(LN)
Philippa Langton	(LN)
Vivien Cutler	(LE)
Ken Coello	(LE)
Richard Carter	(LS)
Jay Mercer	(LS)
Peter Pledger	(LW)
Jill Lowery	(LC)
Yvonne Thompson	(LC)

In attendance

Doug Norris	(LN - note taker)
Brian Godbold	(RFD)

Apologies Apologies have been received from:

Verity Bullough	(LC)
Peter Lyne	(LN)

Item 1. Action points from the previous meeting

1.1 Skill City

JH thanked everyone for their contribution to making the event a success in difficult circumstances. All feedback to date has been positive. JH has made it clear to London First that the LSC would not be able to repeat the same level of financial support.

1.2 PP said that the London event was of better quality than the equivalent in Manchester.

1.3 Deputies

Action: LC, LW, LE and LS to notify DN of deputies to attend LRB if chairs are unavailable to attend.

Item 2. Performance Summary

- 2.1 DN summarised the performance data with particular emphasis on WBL PSA starts. He highlighted the key issues arising from our success – shortage of funds to manage higher participation and falling completion rates. The PFG is preparing an issues and options paper to put to LMG on 30 September. Chairs noted the current situation and asked to be updated on developments.

Action: Following the next LMB, Clare Arnold to prepare a briefing paper for LRB members.

Action: DN to place WBL issues on the agenda for 30/9.

Item 3. Agenda for Change

- 3.1 JH highlighted the key issues arising from AfC, especially theme 7. The LSC needs to create an organisation that is fit for purpose to deliver themes 1-6. Major structural changes are anticipated but the details must remain confidential until Mark Haysom's formal announcement on 16 September, with a 90 day consultation with staff commencing on 16 October. RK said that Chris Banks has been looking at a regional governance model.
- 3.2 ISF pointed out that AfC is currently focussed primarily on FE, but is intended to cover a wider range of providers in the longer term. MH has delegated authority for all the executive functions; the implications for non executives are not yet clear. RK said the LRB may need to be strengthened as a result.
- 3.3 RC has responded to Chris Banks and expressed concerns that the consequences for local Councils have not been properly explained.
- 3.4 KC queried the lack of consultation with chairs and the timeliness and quality of communications on this topic. He contended that the changes may cause a further lack of clarity for the role of board members, and speculated that a single Council for London may be possible. He suggested that the LSC should evaluate how it has handled communication and consultation of this matter.
- 3.5 YT and ISF shared the concerns of other chairs. KC stated that we are heading for a period of low morale. RC supported this and expressed pessimism over the possible effects on delivery and local relationships. He felt that the chairs have been largely left out of the process.
- 3.6 RK reported that he had previously met MH and been informed in advance of his plans for the new RD. A meeting has been arranged with MH at GG on the morning of 16 September and all chairs should make every effort to attend or send a deputy. He said that he perceived a difference in the positions expounded by Chris Banks and MH.
- 3.7 KC worried that the size of staff cuts may affect the operations of local Councils.
- 3.8 JM pointed out the position of EDs and local Councils as set out in Schedule 2 of the Learning and Skills Act.
- 3.9 ISF asked that the announcement should be explicit about the future role of local Councils and suggested that RK communicate the LRB's views to Chris Banks.

- 3.10 RC said that we need a stronger LRB but this should not be at the expense of local Councils. He endorsed the approach taken by RK.
- 3.11 RK said that the concerns expressed by chairs should not be interpreted as a lack of support for EDs. JH said she still feels positive about delivery and relationships in the future.

Action: All chairs (or nominated deputies) to make every effort to attend the meeting with Mark Haysom on 16 September.

Item 4. GLA/LDA relationships

- 4.1 JH summarised the current situation and reported that the LDA is making an attempt to take control of LSC funding for skills. GLA and LDA have criticised the LSC to the ODPM. However, their case is now based on constitutional rather than performance grounds. David Milliband is promoting the concept of 'City Regions'. A consultation paper will come out next month, with a possible announcement in Spring 2006. KC questioned the wisdom of theme 7 preceding the LDA decision. JH said that DfES is strongly supporting the LSC position.
- 4.2 JM pointed out that the ultimate decisions will be political rather than based on fact or logic. ISF drew parallels with the NW region and highlighted the seriousness of the situation. PL pointed out that London is seen as a precedent for the rest of the country.

Item 5. Race Equality Scheme Action Plan

- 5.1 PL explained in detail the plans drawn up by the LSC to meet its statutory obligations and these were distributed to members. The LSC is ahead of many other public bodies in this respect.
- 5.2 KC pointed out the unique position of London and said that Council members need to be made aware of the implications. He speculated that theme 7 will disproportionately affect BME staff.

Action: LRB members to pass to PL any comments they may have on the RES Action Plan.

Item 6. Any other business

6.1 Theme 7 announcement

It is a matter for chairs to discuss with EDs whether they attend local briefings.

6.2 JH retirement

RK expressed the appreciation of all local chairs and Councils for all JH's magnificent work for the LSC since 2001.

Item 7. Date of next meeting

- 7.1 14 October, 9.00-11.00 at Centre Point.

Meeting chair	Rod Kenyon
Minute taker	Doug Norris
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