

Minutes

Date 15 November 2005
Subject London West Learning and Skills Council
Location London West LSC
Time 14:00
LSC office London West
Publication intent Internal

Present Rod Kenyon - Director, British Gas Engineering Academy
Peter Pledger - Executive Director, London West LSC
Vijay Amin - Director, ABi Associates
Paul Raina - MD, Training and Assessment Services
Geoff Crispin - Vice Chancellor, Thames Valley University
Javed Khan - Director of Learning and Community Development, Harrow Council
John Hensley - Engineering Systems Manager, John Guest Ltd
Sailesh Devani - General Manager, Connexions London West
Jon Fairclough - Government Office for London, attending on behalf of Andy Mitchell

LSC staff Peter Holmes - Director Planning and Development
Martin Freedman - Head of Research for agenda item 8
Paola Santa Cruz - Head of Planning for agenda item 7

Apologies Apologies have been received from:
Jonathan Hood - Executive Vice Chairman, Cadogan Tate Group
Jeremy Crook - Director, Black Training and Enterprise Group
John Stone - Principal Ealing, Hammersmith and West London College
Saeed Gillani - Principal Accountant, Gee Kay Farrar
Rachel Davies - Principal, Uxbridge College
Andrea Berkeley - Headteacher, Preston Manor High School
Frank Wingate - Chief Executive, West London Business
Sue Ferns - Head of Research and Specialist Services, Prospect
Brian Noble - Network Manager West, Business Link for London
Isobel Morton OBE - District Manager, Jobcentre Plus
Clare Arnold - Director of Operations and Quality
Chris Smith - Director of Finance

Minutes

Item 1. Welcome and introductions

- 1.1 Rod welcomed those present including Jon Fairclough, attending on behalf of Andy Mitchell.
- 1.2 It was noted that this meeting was not quorate and therefore any agenda items where decisions need to be made would be covered under Chair's Action.
- 1.3 Council members passed on their congratulations to John Stone in his new role as the Chief Executive of the Learning and Skills Network.
- 1.4 Council members also passed on their thanks to Isobel Morton for her contribution to Council meetings. She has now become the District Manager for Jobcentre Plus in Central London.

Item 2. Minutes and Matters arising of meeting held on 20th September 2005

- 2.1 The minutes were approved as an accurate record of the meeting.
- 2.2 It was noted that no local authority Chief Executive had yet applied for the vacant Council position, but it was understood that an application would be received soon.
- 2.3 Peter reported that enclosed with the minutes was the proposed new LSC London Region structure chart emerging from theme 7 of Agenda for Change. The statutory consultation period commenced on the 31st October and will run for three months. Existing employees will be asked to re-apply for the new positions and recruitment will be grade by grade, starting with grade 5 positions in December 2005.
- 2.4 Rod said that the Learning and Skills Council **should not be seen as "going regional"**. The local LSC's are very important and this proposed new structure **is aimed at improving their performance**. Currently the five London LSC's appoint a Regional Chair from amongst the local Chair's. The position of Regional Chair would now be **an appointment made by the** National Chair.
- 2.5 Javed asked if the proposed numbers of positions in London West, in the new structure, are appropriate to cover its responsibility.
Peter said that it is intended to be appropriate although we only have the proposed structure but do not, as yet, know the role descriptions for the positions indicated. There would be more support from the new expanded regional office.
- 2.6 It was noted that Council members would like to invite David Hughes, Regional Director for London, to a future Council meeting to explain the new structure.

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Action: Peter Pledger

Item 3. Grant Letter 2006 – 2007.

- 3.1 Peter informed Council members that the Learning and Skills Council has received the Grant Letter for 2006-2007. The letter sets out the remit to the Learning and Skills Council in terms of strategy and priorities that the Council pursues in allocating and monitoring grant for 2006-2007. It covers key Priorities for 2006-07, 14-19 Learning, Skills, FE reform, Success for all and Equality and Diversity.
- 3.2 It was noted that it was very difficult to get funding for employers. John Hensley said that we need to look at moving the money to the employer to purchase the skills required.

Decision: The London West Learning and Skills Council noted the contents of the Grant Letter 2006-07.

Item 4. 16 – 19 Provision in Harrow

- 4.1 It was noted that Harrow is the most successful borough in London West with its high performing and popular schools. It has one of the highest staying on rates post 16 (88%), progression into higher education is one of the highest in the country (42% at 18) and the unemployment rate is one of the lowest in the capital.
- Harrow is one of only two boroughs in London to have no post 16 provision in schools, having re-arranged its schools and colleges to provide a four tier system in the 1970's. Parents and students in Harrow wishing to choose sixth form provision either seek out-borough places at 11, or seek transfers to out-borough sixth forms at 16.
- 4.2 A consensus is emerging in Harrow about the exciting vision to push Harrow towards universal participation in post 16 education and training and that the changes the partners wish to achieve will widen the choice of institutions and courses available to young people. This is in line with Government policy and with the wishes of parents in Harrow. The Strategic Area Review process recommended that gaps in post 16 provision are filled and growth in demand for sixth form places should be met.
- 4.3 The Council satisfied themselves that the work already done in Harrow meant that the specification should not be opened up to the emerging 16-19 Competition process. They took as their guidance the letter written by Lord Adonis, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Schools to, Javed Khan-Director of Learning and Community Development, on 1st November 2005 in which he stated that where local solutions have already been worked up, and could be seriously delayed by the competitions process, then these could go ahead without the need to hold a competition. In his view Harrow may meet this condition. The Council accepted that work in Harrow is at an advanced stage and could be seriously delayed by the competition process.
- 4.4 London West LSC is looking to the London Borough of Harrow, on behalf of all the providers in Harrow, to make a proposal in response to the

specification. The deadline for responding is 5.00pm on Tuesday 31st January 2006.

Should the proposal include any changes to the designation of any high schools to become providers of post 16 education and training, the proposal will need to indicate the likely capital cost of making changes and at which schools. The LSC will also need to know whether the necessary planning consents are being sought to expand capacity and whether the School Organisation Committee is prepared to support a full consultation on any proposed changes. As a minimum requirement, the Harrow SOC should have commenced the statutory process for change by publishing its proposals for any school redesignation by 31st January 2006.

- 4.5 Geoff asked if schools and colleges are treated equally towards capital funding.

Peter said that The Learning and Skills Council is obliged to fund 100% capital funding for schools and for colleges, normally its 10-50% depending on the need.

- 4.6 Peter said that it has already been noted that this meeting is not quorate and therefore if the council members present agree we could agree the recommendations under Chairs Action, to be taken to the next meeting of London West LSC for approval.

Decision: The London West Learning and Skills Council:

- a. Noted the background to the proposed specification for widening choice in Harrow;
- b. Agreed the specification of need for post 16 provision in schools;
- c. Agreed to consider at its March meeting a bid for capital funding under the 16-19 Capital Fund (subject to a satisfactory proposal coming forward from the London borough of Harrow and its partners).

Item 5. Local Capital Plans

- 5.1 It was noted that each local Learning and Skills Council is required to produce a capital plan to sit alongside the annual plan. The new requirement to develop a local capital plan is an attempt to bring the capital planning process and reinforces the LSC's role as the purchaser of provision.
- 5.2 In London West, the Capital Plan has been developed using the outcomes of StAR as a guide and translating these into likely curriculum needs. The plan has been informed by the LSC's own priorities and strategies such as the Agenda for Change and the government's plans for 14-19 education.

Decision: The London West Learning and Skills Council agreed the categorisation of priorities in Section Ten. These are:

1. Critical Projects:

- Reorganisation of post 16 provision in Harrow including Harrow College, Stanmore College and post 16 provision on school sites;
- Projects that help extend the participation of 16-18 year olds in education or training including the extension of Skills Centres network to meet local demand;
- West Thames College redevelopment.

2. Important Projects:

- Projects to address other vocational skills shortages in local 16-19 collaborations;
- Phase Two of the College of North West London redevelopment;
- Heathrow Skills CoVE;
- Other specialist skills centres developed in partnership with employers;
- Brunel Academy

3. Desirable Projects:

- Further refurbishment of existing college estates.

4. Other Projects Arising:

- Expansion of successful schools;
- '11-18 Presumption' for successful 11-16 schools.

Item 6. Annual Plan 2005-06 Update

6.1 It was noted that:

- London West LSC has the best Entry to Employment success rate in the country at 57%.
- Following a poor inspection, the LEAP Centre for students with autism will withdraw from learning provision at the end of July 2006.
- The Heathrow Learning Centre has been established in partnership with BAA, TVU, Providers and the London Development Agency. The centre has gained 'Skills for Life test centre' status, 101 out of 300 learners in 2004/05 achieved qualifications.

6.2 Geoff asked if the Heathrow Learning Centre Links with the Cove submitted by BAA.

Peter said that BAA are involved with both bids.

Decision: The London West Learning and Skills Council noted this briefing on the implementation of the Annual Plan 2005-06.

Item 7. Planning Process

7.1 It was noted that work is commencing on planning for the 2006/07 academic year, which will see the beginning of changes in the way the LSC works with its providers as part of the 'Agenda for Change' process.

The National Council has delegated to Regional Boards the power to approve local plans for their regions. London West LSC will require a further meeting in February to endorse the Plan before it is presented to the Regional Director and subsequently the Chief Executive.

In response to the National statement of priorities there is a regional document setting out London's priorities, which has maintained the six national priorities and added a seventh to reflect the Olympics.

Local plans will not include a section on local priorities. These will need to be expressed implicitly through the headline activities, based on the internal analysis of the local needs.

8.2 Following a discussion, Rod requested that the regional and local priorities be circulated by e-mail to Council members for comment.

Action: Peter Pledger

Decision: The London West Learning and Skills Council:

- a. Noted the timetable for preparing plans;
- b. Noted the national Annual Statement of Priorities;
- c. Agreed to provide comments on the draft regional priorities paper;
- d. Agreed to provide comments on the draft emerging local priorities for 2006/07;
- e. Agreed a special meeting to consider the plan will be held in February 2006.

Item 8. Brunel Research Findings

8.1 The proposed Academy at Brunel would be the first to be established under FE regulations and the impact on existing education provision in the area is to be determined. In June, London West commissioned Ecotec – a research and consultancy organisation with considerable expertise in this field – to undertake an independent study of the Academy's likely impact on surrounding schools and colleges. The Council heard an account of the interim findings.

The report considered three main factors in the likely impact;

- participation of students
- demand for education
- supply of teaching staff

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It was reported that the Academy's concentration on maths and sciences could prove problematic for both participation (these are subjects that the 'harder-to-reach' young people tend not to study) and teacher supply (there is a national shortage of teachers in these subjects).

- 8.2 In the final report (due in January), Ecotec will consider several possible scenarios. The Academy could attract young people who would not normally have continued in education post-16; it could merely draw students from existing education provision or there could be a combination of the two. The latter seemed, at this stage, to be the most feasible.
- 8.3 It was noted that the impact of overseas students on the Academy will be included in the report.

Action: Martin Freedman

Decision: The London West Learning and Skills Council noted the contents of the ECOTEC working paper entitled, "An Impact Assessment of the proposed Brunel HSBC Education Trust Academy.

Item 9. Any other business

- 9.1 There was no other business.

Item 10. Date of next meeting

- 10.1 The next meeting of the London West Learning and Skills Council will take place on 24th January 2006 at 2.00pm, with refreshments available from 1.30pm.

Meeting chair	Rod Kenyon
Minute taker	Nasir Lakhanpal
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