

Minutes



Leading learning and skills

Date 16 May 2006
Subject London West Learning and Skills Council Meeting
Location London West
Time 14:00
LSC office London West
Publication intent Internal

Present
Rod Kenyon - Director British Gas Engineering Academy
Clare Arnold – Acting Area Director London West LSC
Paul Raina - MD, Training and Assessment Services
John Hensley - Engineering Systems Manager John Guest Ltd
Rachel Davies - Principal Uxbridge College
Saeed Gillani - Principal Accountant Gee Kay Farrar
Geoff Crispen - Vice Chancellor Thames Valley University
Javed Khan - Director of Learning Services Harrow Council

LSC staff
Peter Holmes - Director of Planning and Development
Chris Smith – Director of Finance
Ian Cosnett – Regional Train to Gain Implementation Manager for agenda item 6
Claire Dimmer - Head of ESF for agenda item 7

Apologies
Apologies have been received from:
Andrea Berkeley - Headteacher Preston Manor High School
Sue Ferns - Head of Research & Specialist Services Prospect
John Stone – Chief Executive Learning and Skills Network
Jeremy Crook - Director Black Training & Enterprise Group
Frank Wingate - Chief Executive West London Business
Brian Noble - Network Manager Business Link for London
Sailesh Devani - General Manager Connexions London West

Item 1. Opening Remarks from the Chair

- 1.1 The Chair welcomed all and declared Clare Arnold a full voting member of this Council.
- 1.2 The Chair referred to relevant passages from the FE White Paper and that Chris Banks had been asked to advise on a new streamlined LSC accountability structure, which secures strong engagement of employers and other stakeholders, including proposals to change the current structure of 47 local councils. All local and regional Chairs will meet this week with Chris Banks to discuss the issue knowing that he is fully committed to strong local employer representation.
- 1.3 ODPM's review of the Mayor's powers is now with government and an announcement is expected in the near future.

Action: The Chair will circulate documents which discuss London's special situation.

Item 2. Minutes and Matters arising from the meeting held on 24 April

- 2.1 The minutes were approved as an accurate record.
- 2.2 John Hensley presented a case on issues with exemption from key skills examinations and asked the Learning and Skills Council to enter into discussions with lead bodies to review their awarding procedures.
- 2.3 Clare Arnold reported that the college in question had taken actions and that a favourable outcome was expected. She further agreed to take the case to the Work Based Learning Task Group, a national LSC body, which is best placed to deal with this.
- 2.4 Javed Khan, John Hensley and Rachel Davies declared an interest in agenda item 3 – the Harrow Collegiate Capital Bid.

Item 3. Harrow Collegiate Capital Bid – Update on Progress

- 3.1 Clare Arnold reported that the proposal had been presented to the National Capital Committee on 2 May who expressed concerns about governance arrangements, value for money, creating a number of small sixth forms, and the priorities in London; they referred the bid to the London Regional Board for consideration. The London Regional Board (consisting of all local Chairs, the Regional Director and the Area Directors) discussed all aspects and referred the proposal back to the London West Learning and Skills Council for re-consideration.
- 3.2 The Chair confirmed that after the signals received by both National Capital Committee and Regional Board the bid was likely to fail if it were re-submitted in its current form.
- 3.3 Rachel Davies summarised that the bid seems to have failed in principle, on educational grounds.
- 3.4 Javed Khan posed the question whether the National Capital Committee was convinced that the bid was for a 'collegiate' and not 'a number of small sixth forms'; had they considered the needs of local learners, this proposal was a response to last year's Needs Analysis; regarding value for money the

proposal had looked into alternatives and come up with this, the most economic one. He also pointed out that the momentum of true collaboration among Harrow school providers should not be lost.

- 3.5 Geoff Crispen suggested re-working the proposal, keeping it on the agenda and bidding against the regional capital fund in the near future.
- 3.6 The Chair recommended to Harrow and to this Council not to re-submit the bid to the National Capital Committee but to get regional input (via David Hughes) and work together on the issues that stand in the way of a positive outcome.

Decision: The Council requested the London Borough of Harrow and LSC officers to work with a Regional LSC representative on further developing the proposal to address the concerns raised by the National Capital Committee and the London Regional Board. These concerns include the strength of the governance arrangements, the creation of a number of sixth forms with potentially small numbers of students individually, the limited number of new learners as a proportion of the total places funded and the relationship of the Harrow proposal within the overall 16-18 London capital strategy.

Item 4. Reports from Chairs of Audit Committee

- 4.1 Paul Raina informed the Council that the Audit Committee had approved Peter Pledger signing the Statement of Internal Control and had endorsed the Annual Assurance Statement.
- 4.2 Local Audit Committees are to be disbanded and in their place Regional Audit Committees will be created. This was because allocations are now held and accounted for on a regional level.
- 4.3 Paul Raina has agreed to serve on the London Regional Audit Committee on behalf of London West LSC.

Item 5. Annual Plan – Update 2005-06

- 5.1 Peter Holmes updated members on the September Guarantee being discussed with all colleges and that the Careers Information Education and Guidance has been included in the Learner Offer.
- 5.2 London West LSC 2006/07 Plan was now incorporated in the London Plan and Peter Holmes would report back with final numbers after negotiations with providers have been concluded.

Item 6. Train to Gain – Introduction and Update on Progress

- 6.1 Ian Cosnett presented the Council with an update on the Train to Gain initiative and answered a number of questions:
 - Hard to reach employers were those who had neither accessed NVQ/LSC funded provision during the last 12 months nor were Investors in People; this included SMEs.
 - Employers are funded only if they have gone through the brokerage system.

- Train to Gain does allow for rapid response to large numbers of redundancies, however, its main purpose is to make employers aware of the importance of training their staff.

Item 7. European Social Fund (ESF)

- 7.1 Claire Dimmer gave an overview of the different ESF rounds, local and Pan London ones, and the joint LSC/LDA Olympic initiative. She explained that while there were eleven priorities now, post 2008 there would only be two.
- 7.2 Geoff Crispen noted that regional bids outside London were most effective and that it was hoped the Olympics would achieve the same for London. For this a regional strategy was needed.

Item 8. Theme 7 – London Structure

- 8.1 Clare Arnold informed members that band 5 and 4 selection processes were completed but that there were still about 50% vacancies. London West had so far confirmed the acting Area Director and one temporary Partnership Director (both for six months).
- 8.2 The Chair advised the Council of the number of vacancies of senior posts and the implications this had for the work of the London West LSC.
- 8.3 Clare Arnold assured the Council that hard work was being done in order to ensure a smooth transition.

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 Tuesday, 18 July at 14:00, with refreshments available from 13:30.

Meeting chair	Rod Kenyon
Minute taker	Ingrid Fischer
Date created	17 May 2006
Document ref.	G:\LWLSC Council meetings\16 May\low-londonwestlearningandskillscouncilmeeting-minutes-16may2006.doc