

Minutes



Leading learning and skills

Date 27 February 2006
Subject Local Council
Location Board Room
Time 16:30
LSC office Tyne and Wear
Publication intent Internal

Present Ashley Winter (Chairman), Chris Roberts, David Barker, Carol Barwick, David Cheetham, Mohammad Farsi, Graham Randell, Peter Slee, Michael Stephenson, Judith Woodruff

In attendance Susan Oliphant - Business Link Tyne and Wear
Peter Robertson - Connexions Tyne and Wear
Joe Swinburn - Government Office

LSC staff Linda Bailey, Michael Johnston, Christine Rutherford, Pauline Watson

Apologies Apologies have been received from:
Diana Bourke, Christopher Edwards, Morven Smith
Also: D Hedley, D Brophy, M Hunt.

Item 1. Appointment of Council Member: Dr Mohammad Farsi

1.1 Dr Farsi was welcomed as a member of the Local Council.

Item 2. Declaration of Interest

2.1 The Chairman drew attention to the aide memoir reminding members of the opportunity to consider whether they needed to declare an interest in any business on the agenda.

Item 3. Minutes

3.1 Minutes of the meeting held on 23 January 2006 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

Item 4. Chairman's Remarks

The Chairman reported:-

4.1 The Chairman had exercised his delegated authority from Local Council to sign off the Tyne and Wear Annual Plan.

- 4.2 Regional Board had met that day to consider all four Local Plans for the region. National Council member John Merry had been present at the meeting and had been very supportive. It had been a positive meeting and all of the plans had been approved. The Regional Chairman and Regional Director would present the plans to National Council.
- 4.3 Arrangements were to be made to reschedule the September meeting of Local Council and cancel the October meeting.

Action: K Coulson

Item 5. Regional Director's Report

Chris Roberts reported:-

- 5.1 Theme 7 Agenda for Change: Interviews and Assessment Centres were now underway for senior staff. The coming months would be an anxious period for individual staff whilst they went through the process with uncertainty as to whether they had a job and which job. The intention was that the new organisation would commence from 1 June.
- 5.2 Core Cities Proposal: the Office of the Deputy PM had invited draft proposals from 'core cities' seen as providing economic drivers for the economy. Work on a proposal had taken place involving the LSC, ONE NE and Local Authority Chief Executives around issues of transport, spatial planning, economic development, and employment and skills issues. There had been careful positioning of the LSC as a major player in a fast moving agenda. The outcome was expected to be linked to further changes on behalf of Government and changes to Local Authorities. Implications for the LSC would need to be understood but the Tyne and Wear City Region business case referred to employment skills, high level skills, 14-19 issues and incapacity benefit issues. Proposals would not impact on LSC governance or funding accountabilities. At the point there was a paper from the ODPM a report would be brought back to Local Council.
- 5.3 John Cushnaghan (formerly Nissan) was undertaking work on developing an Engineering/Manufacturing Academy on behalf of the DfES/LSC. The Regional Director was acting as an adviser. Arrangements would be made to invite him to a meeting at a future date.

Action: C Roberts

- 5.4 A letter had been sent to the Minister, Bill Rammell, concerning the decision by Nexus in Tyne and Wear to remove Teen travel to fund free travel for Over 60s. The impact was a 50% increase in travel costs for around 10,000 young people, directly offsetting the benefits of EMA which had increased participation by 4%-7%. Members were concerned that this would take away choice for young people post 16. It was noted that Connexions, College Principals, and the Chamber were all making similar representations.

Item 6. Annual Plan 2006-07

- 6.1 Submitted: Paper highlighting some of the key issues and challenges for 2006/07, considering the implications of these challenges, and updating members on the final stages in the delivery of the Annual Plan 2006/07.

6.2 A presentation to Mark Haysom on 17 February concerning regional and local planning perspectives had been well received; the meeting had been very productive with positive feedback.

6.3 Key issues were:

Young People

- 14-19 learner choice and collaboration within each local authority area. Joint Area Reviews would be a key aspect of the work in the year ahead for Area Directors and partnership teams.
- NEET remained the big challenge, still at 11.3% it was hoped to reduce this by 1.3% over the year through improved E2E performance to obtain better progression, joint work with Connexions with a planned 93% uptake on EMA.
- Level 2 at 19 was a key area of performance to be measured; there was steady progression, better tracking and a target for 522 more young people to achieve Level 2 at 19.
- Apprenticeships was targeting 2000 young people to complete the full framework in 2006/07 via stretching targets with providers and continuing to target key sectors of employment.

Adults

- Level 2 target: 36.7% of working age people in Tyne and Wear had no level 2 qualification. Locally it was planned to deliver a 10% increase in participation and achievement.
- Skills for Life: Numeracy was a big issue for 85% of the population and literacy 66% of the population, below Level 2. There was a continuing shift in FE provision and performance towards LSC priorities and a focus on meeting the needs of key sectors and the plan.
- Train to Gain would look to build on ETP performance
- the Regional Skills Brokerage service would be implemented

Agenda for Change

- the six key priorities would be taken forward.

Decision: That the Chairman's action in exercising his delegated authority to approve the plan be endorsed.

Item 7. Allocations Process

Chris Roberts reported that:

- 7.1 Further Education: the Tyne and Wear budget was less than inflation at 1.8%. Work with the FE Planning Group, including FE Principals, had ensured a transparent allocations process. Whilst individual institutions may not be satisfied with the actual allocation the basis of it was understood.
- 7.2 Adult and Community Learning: there had been a 7% reduction in budget. Local Authorities had been guaranteed at least 90% of last year and would receive between 91% and 94%, seeking to balance out irregularities based on population.

7.3 Work Based Learning: there had been a 5% reduction in budget. Provision that did not achieve floor targets was not being re-contracted.

Discussion

7.4 The LSC had been very open with colleges and had sought to mitigate the effects of the settlement. The impact depended upon the curriculum mix in different colleges. Those who had sizeable 16-18 provision had benefited whereas others with a greater proportion of adults had suffered a significant cash reduction in real terms that would require a realignment of resources and may result in redundancies.

7.5 In Tyne and Wear the range of settlements varied from 2% reduction to 4% increase except for one local authority provider where there had been a substantial reduction on the grounds that targets were not being met. The provision had transferred to the FE College.

Decision: That the report be received.

Item 8. Agenda for Change Theme 7: Transition Plan

8.1 Submitted: Draft Transition Plan, for information.

8.2 The plan was to ensure the effective management of the transition to the new organisation. The development of the plan would be an iterative process. There would be regular review through the EDs Theme 7 Group and regular consultation with local offices and the regional team.

8.3 In parallel work was taking place to develop business processes. Currently these processes were high level but from April onwards these would be developed down to operational level engaging senior managers in each office.

8.4 The plan included the role of Local Councils and Regional Board. Local Chairs were involved in the appointment of the lead Directors for each Local Council.

Decision: That the report be received.

Item 9. Regional Capital Strategy and Local Capital Plan

Submitted:

- Paper seeking authority for the Capital Members Sub Group to consider the Local Capital Plan which was in development;
- Supplementary Paper setting out the draft Regional Capital Strategy.

Decision: That

- a. authority be delegated to the Capital members sub group to assess the local capital plan and to consider the Regional Capital strategy;
- b. the Executive Director be authorised to exercise delegated authority to make the final recommendation to the Regional Board and/or National Capital Committee, as appropriate.

Action: C Roberts/K Coulson

Item 10. Tourism Sector: Exploring Tourism Project

10.1 Presentation by Christine Rutherford concerning a LIDF project from August 2005 to 31 March 2006. The project had resulted in a series of outcomes and recommendations arising from work with 13 schools and a range of employers aimed at:

- developing the employment and careers image of the Tourism sector
- raising young people's awareness of career opportunities in that sector.

Decision: That the report be received.

Signed: -----

Chairman

Date: -----

Meeting chair	Ashley Winter
Minute taker	Ken Coulson
Date created	1 March 2006
Document ref.	G:\Corporate Services\Local Council T&W minutes\Local Council Minutes 2006\tyn-localcouncil-minutes-27feb2006.doc