

# Minutes



Leading learning and skills

## Minutes of meeting

<b>Date</b>	8 <sup>th</sup> September 2005
<b>Subject</b>	Council Meeting
<b>Location</b>	Learning & Skills Council
<b>Time</b>	16:00
<b>LSC office</b>	County Durham
<b>Publication intent</b>	Internal

<b>Present</b>	James Ramsbotham (Chair) Phil Hughes Brian Walker Keith Hodgson Paul Unger John Poland Diane Morton John Widdowson John Reilly O'Donnell Rob Fallon
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<b>LSC staff</b>	Tom Crompton Val Goodrum Nick James Ann Jobson
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<b>Apologies</b>	<b>Apologies have been received from:</b> Jo Swinburne Gloria Wills Graeme Wallace Peter Cook Kingsley Smith Alan Bilsborough Mervyn Blades Janice Bray
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## Action

### 1 Introduction and Chairman's Remarks

The Chairman opened the meeting.

JR reported on two recent ministerial visits to the area. Ruth Kelly attended an ASPIRE event and was particularly positive about its activities and achievements to date. Phil Hope, Skills Minister in the Department for Education and Skills, made a brief visit to New College, and had been impressed by the facilities at the new development.

JR updated the meeting on the proposal to hold a major conference at the SAGE on January 20<sup>th</sup> 2006, to bring together all 14-19 providers. This would be a jointly funded event between ONE North East and LSC. Provisional date to be noted with further details at the next meeting.

**J. Ramsbotham/  
A. Jobson**

## **2 Minutes of the previous meeting (23/06/05)**

The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed as a true record.

### **Matters arising:**

- i) Due to the absence of Gloria Wills, an update from the Regional Equality and Diversity will be communicated at a future meeting.

**G. Wills/  
A. Jobson**

## **3 Executive Directors' Report**

**Erratum:** paragraph 2, line 2 should read grade A – E (not A – B).

TC spoke to his report, focussing and expanding on a number of activities.

TC highlighted the development of a curriculum mapping tool, which would give open access to software in order to examine provision to full gaps where appropriate.

It was reported that work-based learning provision in Durham had dramatically improved, and was now above the national average. PSA (Public Service Agreement) targets have been achieved for the first time.

Skills for Life had also shown an improvement, but local targets had not yet been met. However, a major initiative to '*Test the County*' was a highly visible and innovative project which was expected to make a major impact. Progress will be reported back at a future meeting.

**T. Crompton/  
N. James**

Sector Skills was an emerging priority with the establishment of 25 Sector Skills Agencies, and the publication of sector specific action plans. The challenge was to communicate clarity to employers on the details of the employer offer. It was agreed to focus on employer engagement at the next Council Meeting in October.

**J. Ramsbotham/  
T. Crompton/  
A. Jobson**

TC reported that a reduction in funding for EQ8 had created an issue for Colleges, and had a challenging affect on mainstream budgets. The LSC were assisting colleges through the process.

The ED gave a presentation on the LSC Agenda for Change programme (slides attached), referring particularly to Theme 7 which proposes major internal changes to LSC staffing structures.

Decisions on the specific details have not yet been made, although staff will be made aware, during September, on the proposed reduction of staff numbers. The Council acknowledged another difficult period ahead for LSC staff and offered their support.

#### **4 DfES Consultation Papers**

TC talked briefly to the consultation papers from DfES on the 5 year strategy, as a result of the 14-19 White Paper, and also on the LSC documents on 16-19 Competitions and 16-19 Capital Fund. The final detail following the consultation period will be discussed at a future meeting.

**T. Crompton/  
A. Jobson**

#### **5 Update on Capital Projects**

NJ explained that the capital strategy was beginning to make an impact nationally, bridging the LSC role with the wider perspectives. A map was tabled showing capital investments in County Durham.

NJ reported that a regional LSC capital strategy was currently being developed, and expected to be completed by November. Concern was expressed at the lack of collaborative planning on school investments, as a consequence of Building Schools for the Future programme.

#### **6 Response to Regional Economic Strategy**

NJ advised that the second draft of the RES would be available for comment late October/early November. The LSC response to the first draft had included more specific references to rural areas, and the shift from hard-edged infrastructure to themes of leadership, image and enterprise.

PH commented that he expected the second version to be much improved.

#### **7 Draft Response to *Every Child Matters* Consultation Document**

The draft response was made available for information only. The meeting however agreed that it was important that *Every Child Matters* was aligned with the 14-19 Agenda.

#### **8 Any Other Business**

There was no further business to discuss.

#### **9 Date and Time of Next Meeting**

**Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> October 2005, 4.00pm at County Durham LSC  
(re-arranged from 13<sup>th</sup> October 2005)**

**Publication no.**  
**Meeting chair** James Ramsbotham  
**Minute taker** Ann Jobson  
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