

# Minutes



Leading learning and skills

**Date** 11 July 2008  
**Subject** NE Region LSC Equality & Diversity Steering Group  
**Location** Bradbury Employability Centre, Northern Counties College, Tankerville Terrace, Jesmond, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE2 3BB  
**Time** 10.00 am – 12.00 noon  
**LSC office** North East Region  
**Publication intent** External

**Present**

David Barker (Chair) – Percy Hedley Foundation  
Pat Whaley (Co-Chair) – NIACE  
Mark Wright – Equality & Human Rights Commission  
Janis Jones – NE Employers Coalition  
Mike Lazzari – ONE North East  
Mohamed Nasreldin – North of England Refugee Service  
Abdul Khan – BECON  
Christina Baker – Construction Skills  
Diane MacTavish – Barnardos  
Suzanne Duncan – City of Sunderland College  
Jenette Connor – Jobcentre Plus  
Pat Winter – TUC  
John Lawson – MESMAC NE

**LSC staff**

Simon Lindsay  
Stuart Linden  
Paula Martin-King  
Mary Revill (Minutes)

**Apologies**

Apologies have been received from:  
Jackie Doughty – GONE  
Rick Brannen – LSC  
Angela O'Donaghue – City of Sunderland College  
(Suzanne Duncan attended)

Liz Reay – Equality North East  
Nadeem Ahmad – NE Strategic Migration Partnership  
Steve Martin – Jobcentre Plus (Jennette Connor attended)  
Elizabeth Kiloran – TUC (Pat Winter attended)

## **Item 1 Welcome and Introduction – Minutes & Actions from Last Meeting**

1.1 David welcomed everyone to the Bradbury Employability Centre and explained that meeting rooms and classrooms could be used by employers with the catering prepared by the students of Northern Counties College.

1.2 Minutes of the last meeting

- Mark Wright pointed out that the wrong company name appeared against his name. The membership list was updated on 14 July 2008 to show the correct details.
- Page 2 – 1.2 Pat announced that a replacement for Neil Kelly had been found.
- Page 4 – Both actions completed

The minutes of the last meeting were accepted as a true record.

## **Item 2 LSC Update**

Simon gave an update on the following

2.1 List of Achievements – an overview of the headline LSC NE Equality & Diversity achievements.

2.2 Simon confirmed that there are 3 Regional EDIMs agreed for 2008 and outlined some of the activities that will address them:

EDIM 1: Stuart gave an update on BME Action Planning which will take forward the recommendations within the Wood Holmes Group Report. Stuart noted that this Plan is in the initial phase of progression and he is happy to give a more formal update on progress at the next Steering Group meeting. Mark mentioned that there is some experimental work being carried out by OMS. Mike stated that there is a BME Report to be published shortly and when this takes place the Report will be distributed to members of this Group.

EDIM 2: Simon stated that £100k has been secured to incentivise apprenticeship framework completions for learners with learning difficulties or disabilities. An extra £1000 will be available to providers for each additional LLDD framework

completion over and above an agreed threshold, between August 2008 and March 2009 inclusive. A condition of funding will be evaluation by providers on the use of the funding and sustainability of action taken.

EDIM 3: Further funding has been secured for Young Parents programmes in each local authority area. Evaluations of last year's programmes will inform those for 2008-09. Also, a web resource is being set up to highlight and showcase good practice in engaging young parents in learning.

**2.3** The Quality Improvement Agency, and the Centre for Excellence in Leadership, have been merged into a single body, the Learning & Skills Improvement Service (LSIS). **A fuller briefing will be delivered at the next meeting.**

**2.4** Single Equality Scheme Support programme. Simon explained that the LSC Partnership Team training had been well received, and that the 6 Action Working projects with providers were progressing well. Pat explained that the Provider Conference event which took place on Thursday 10 July was successful and fully attended. Pat gave an overview of the event and said that there had been lots of very positive responses. Pat also explained the Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) and commented that it was free to join and that funding has been secured for further work. Pat will provide 2 audit tools which will be distributed to members, along with the link to the VLE

**Action - Pat to provide 2 audit tools and VLE link to be distributed to members**

**2.5** Simon made reference to the extensive partnership working taking place in the region between LSC, the Regional Refugee Forum and Jobcentre Plus as part of our strategy for meeting the learning and skills needs of refugees and asylum seekers. **Simon agreed to provide a fuller summary of this work at the next meeting.**

**2.6** Members may be interested in the Dept for Innovation, Universities and Skills consultation on their Single Equality Scheme, which covers skills policy development: [www.dius.gov.uk/consultations/con\\_120508\\_equality.html](http://www.dius.gov.uk/consultations/con_120508_equality.html)

**2.7** The new LSC North East regional council chair has been appointed, and recruitment of other members is under way. The group agreed that the Equality & Diversity champion of this board should be invited to the first of our future meetings after they have been appointed, with a view to chairing our group subsequently.

### **Item 3 LSC NE Equality & Diversity Plan 2008-09**

**3.1** Stuart gave a presentation of the Plan. The final draft had been circulated to members previously, with useful comments received and acted upon.

3.2 A version of the plan with more detail under each activity is available, and will be circulated once improvements had been made to the layout.

**Action – Simon to forward a more detailed version of the Plan to group members**

#### **Item 4 Equality & Human Rights Commission (EHRC) Presentation**

4.1 Mark gave an overview of the strategic priorities in the coming year with reference to the Single Equality Bill implications and new responsibilities. The Business Plan was launched in May this year. The Equality & Human Rights Commission are committed to producing a 3 year Strategic Plan, to include poverty and social inclusion. There are 4 strategic priorities for the coming year and 12 areas have been identified as key delivery targets. Mark went on to explain all 12 areas and how everything fits in to narrow the gaps. **Mark's PowerPoint presentation is attached to these minutes.**

There was lots of discussion around Mark's presentation and questions were asked about organisations being vetted, time bound or open ended grants, and funding allocations.

#### **Item 5 Learners with Learning Difficulties and Disabilities (LLDD) Update**

A copy of Paula's presentation is attached to these minutes.

Paula gave an LLDD update of a LLDD Managers Meeting and NE Event which took place on Monday 7 July in relation to the LLDD Funding Reforms. The presentations from this event can be found at [www.glasgows.co.uk/llfw](http://www.glasgows.co.uk/llfw)

Paula also covered the following points:-

- The Regional LLDD Team is currently processing nearly 400 applications for Independent Specialist Provision for the 2008/09 academic year. There has been a noticeable increase in applications for learners with more complex needs this year.
- Mental Health Activity – We have successfully recruited a replacement for Neil Kelly – Ann Creed will start at the end of July. Ann will be line managed by Pat Whaley and will be responsible for co-ordinating activity in relation to the Regional MH Action Plan and linking this into the PSA Targets. The national MH Strategy is currently being revised and will be published at the end of September. A North East Regional Employment Group has been set up in relation to MH. The first meeting was held on 27 June and was attended by ONE, Public Health North East, CSIP, VONNE, LSC, MHNE and JCP. Tim Bird is currently responsible for co-ordinating this group and can be contacted for further information ([Timothy.Bird@jobcentreplus.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:Timothy.Bird@jobcentreplus.gsi.gov.uk))

- DCSF has requested that all development funding for implementing *Learning for Living and Work* within regions is held nationally in 2008/09. There is £16m revenue and £10m capital available nationally for this activity. A bidding process has been carried out across regions with the deadline of 30 June for receipt of bids. 45 bids have been sent from the North East to national office where colleagues in the LLDD and Finance Teams will appraise each proposal. Whilst all of the bids submitted from the region link to the national and regional strategies in relation to developing capacity, workforce development and increasing economic participation, 23 of the 45 bids submitted are considered priority activities. However all bids submitted have been forwarded for consideration.
- LLDD Funding Reform – In *Better Skills, Better Jobs, Better Lives* the LSC committed to implementing a standard funding system covering all learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities in general FE colleges, work based learning provision, Independent Specialist Provision and those with SEN in schools. Activity has been underway at a national level and has recently been reviewed in light of *Raising Expectations: Enabling the System to Deliver*. As a result the DCSF has formally asked the LSC to continue with a number of its proposals, in particular:

- Learning for Living and Work Assessment Framework (attached)
- Resource Allocation System (RAS)
- Provider allocations based on demand-led funding models

The proposals will be implemented for all learners requiring over £5,500 additional support wanting to access GFE, WBL or ISP from 2009 and for SEN in schools from 2010. An event was held on 7 July to discuss the proposals with the sector. Additional events are planned on 15 September and 3 October to train practitioners in the use of the Assessment Framework. These will be followed by training in the RAS once work in this area is finalised. All information is available on [www.glasgows.co.uk/lflw](http://www.glasgows.co.uk/lflw)

Should colleagues wish to comment on the Assessment Framework this can be done by the 31 July 2008 by forwarding to [ALSreform@lsc.gov.uk](mailto:ALSreform@lsc.gov.uk)

Q Mohamed raised an issue that he wasn't surprised that referrals were for people with more complex needs as current provision tends to cater for learners with higher functioning abilities.

A Paula said that the LSC are working with Providers to develop provision and it was hoped the new funding proposals would ensure organisations worked more collaboratively.

Q Mohamed stated that people with autism are not catered for in the region.

A Paula said that the LSC are working closely with the Autism Consortium to target this issue.

Q Suzanne asked if there were any more details with reference to an independent brokerage service.

A Not at this stage but as soon as Paula had any more details it would be distributed to the members.

## **Item 6 Any Other Business**

6.1 Mark mentioned a Report called Refresh Review – Inequality Group and said that this Report had been commissioned by ONE through an Equality and Diversity Partnership. Mark will carry out a Regional launch of the Report which will take place in early September. A summary of the Report is available and a copy of the summary will be distributed to members of this Group

**Action - Mark to forward summary to Mary for distribution to members**

6.2 David announced that Mike had secured a new post and that this would be his last meeting. David wished Mike well in his new post and thanked him for his contribution to the Group.

6.3 Simon mentioned two resources aimed at supporting Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender learners. These will be included in a forthcoming regional E&D newsletter for providers. Simon will send a link to the Provider Newsletter to the Group.

**Action – Simon to send link**

6.4 Simon explained that he and colleagues from other regions in the North of England are meeting with CEL, LLUK and NIACE to discuss workforce diversity in the Further Education sector.

6.5 Pat gave an update on the NIACE Awards events and said that nominations are open for next year's Regional Adult Learners Week. Pat will send link to the nominations forms to be distributed to members.

**Action – Pat to send link**

## **Item 7 Date and Time of Next Meeting**

7.1 The date and time for the next meeting is Friday 11 October 2008 10.00 am to 12.00 noon. The provisional venue is City of Sunderland College – to be confirmed in due course.

<b>Meeting chair</b>	David Barker
<b>Minute taker</b>	Mary Revill
<b>Date created</b>	14 July 2008