

Minutes



Leading learning and skills

Date 17 September 2007
Subject Local Council Meeting
Location Boardroom, Automotive Centre of Excellence
Time 16:30
LSC office Tyne and Wear
Publication intent Internal

Present Ashley Winter, John Wayman, Carol Barwick, Mike Zarraga, Mohammed Farsi, Gill Hale, David Barker, Peter Slee, and Morven Smith

In attendance Maggi Hunt

LSC staff Chris Roberts, Alan Wallace, Ray Malecki, Barrie Irving, Pauline Piddington, Michael McKie, Helen Beaton, David Johnson, Pauline Watson and John Egan

Item 1. Apologies for absence – received from David Cheetham, Christopher Edwards and Fred Foster

Item 2. Declaration of interest

- 2.1 The Chair 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.
- 2.2 David Barker declared an interest relating to agenda item 11

Item 3. Minutes of the last meeting

- 3.1 Minutes of the meeting held on 23 April 2007 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

Item 4. Chairman's remarks

Dissolution of Local Councils

- 4.1 Subject to the FE bill, Queens Speech and Royal Assent all going through Parliament, from November 2007 National Council will move some of their delegated powers from Local Councils to the Regional Interim Board, namely:

- (i) Proposals for the establishment or dissolution of FE Corporations
- (ii) Making proposals to change the organisation of a school with regard to school sixth form provision
- (iii) Endorsing Capital Proposals for approval

Local Councils by statute will remain until final dissolution.

- 4.2 Recruitment of the Regional Board is likely to commence in early 2008. The Chairs of the 4 North East local councils will act as interim regional board members
- 4.3 If the FE act does not go through there is a possibility that local plans will be required however this will be a succinct document
- 4.4 Unless there is an urgent matter to discuss or proposal to agree the Local Council will not be asked to meet again

Decision: Members agreed to this approach

Item 5. Area Directors update

- 5.1 On behalf of LSC staff the Area Director thanked Council members for their continued support throughout the years
- 5.2 City Region – the launch of the City region has been delayed as a consequence of the Sub National review however the appointment of a City Regional Director is still going ahead. The LSC is well represented on the associated groups including the Chief Executive Officer group
- 5.3 Local Office Performance – no up to date figures are available until mid October. John Wayman will then provide Council Members with a written report outlining the difference the LSC has made since 2001.
- 5.4 Investors in People – recent assessment recommended that the LSC be put forward for the standard. This is to be moderated and confirmed
- 5.5 ESF – the LSC has applied to be a co-financing organisation, along with the 2 City Regions (who have subsequently withdrawn) and Newcastle City Council, whose situation is unclear at the moment
- 5.6 Sub National review – a joint brokerage arrangement between the LSC and the RDA will reduce the duplication of skills provision
- 5.7 Leitch Implementation plan
- 5.8 Skills pledge – 200 employers have signed up to the pledge with 500 employers having expressed an interest

Item 6. Changes to Machinery of Government

- 6.1 Chris Roberts informed members of the recent changes to the Government departments replacing the Department for Employment and Skills.
- 6.2 The Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills (DIUS) is headed by Secretary of State John Denham and responsible for science and innovation along with further and higher education and skills
- 6.3 The Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) is headed by Secretary of State Ed Balls and responsible for all pre 19 funding.

- 6.4 FE funding to colleges will come from both new departments but the mechanisms for doing this are still to be agreed.
- 6.5 LSC Staffing will be an issue and at this stage it is not clear if TUPE will apply.
- 6.6 Throughout these changes learners must not be marginalised and the LSC must maintain its focus on targets.

Item 7. City of Sunderland College Capital Strategy

- 7.1 Angela O'Donaghue (Principal) and Peter Wyness (Vice Principal) gave Council members an outline of the College's property strategy.
- 7.2 City of Sunderland College have won a beacon award for collaborative working with 3 sixth form schools and this successful model is now being used in other Local Authority areas
- 7.3 Many of the College buildings are not fit for purpose which led to a feasibility study being completed, the recommendations of which form the Capital Strategy.
- 7.4 Phase 1 of the strategy was Usworth sixth form centre, the St Peters proposal (agenda item 8) is the next stage with a further proposal for the Hetton/Houghton area being worked up.

Item 8. City of Sunderland College St Peters Capital Proposal

- 8.1 The Partnership Director for Sunderland explained that this proposal has been to Council before and was approved in principle in 2006.
- 8.2 The rationale remains the same – it is part of the city wide plan for 14-19 provision developed following recommendations from the Area Wide Inspection in 2002, however the original costs have increased due to inflation and design changes required by English Heritage.
- 8.3 Council members were asked to consider the recommendation to approve a grant support from the Council of 20%, which equates to £1,323,000 of total eligible costs

Decision: Members agreed that this project be supported

Item 9. Newcastle College Aviation Academy Capital Proposal

- 9.1 The Newcastle Partnership Director outlined details of this Regional initiative supported and partially funded by ONE-NE
- 9.2 The ONE-NE Board will consider approval for further funding of £1.69 million at its meeting on 20th September
- 9.3 The proposed site at Newcastle Airport will provide a modern and real working environment for aviation students within a busy international airport
- 9.4 Council members were asked to consider the recommendation to approve capital expenditure of £3.3 million and approve a Capital grant on eligible expenditure of £309K at a rate of 10%

Decision: Members agreed that this project be supported

Item 10. Newcastle College Sandyford Capital Proposal

10.1 Following an introduction to this proposal by the Partnership Director, Council Members expressed concern that the College had not followed proper procedure by submitting an application for permission to commit expenditure and requesting financial support some months after building work commenced.

Decision: Following discussion Council members agreed to support the proposal to commit expenditure and agreed in principle to recommend 10% financial support subject to a written explanation from the College with regard to the retrospective nature of the submission and on the undertaking to follow correct procedure in the future.

Action point: Chair and Area Director to follow this up with the College

Item 11. Northern Counties College Capital Proposal

(David Barker left the meeting whilst this proposal was being discussed)

11.1 The Newcastle Partnership Director explained that this is a retrospective proposal as at the time the LSC were unable to consider the Capital application put forward until the outcome Ofsted inspection was known.

11.2 The inspection has now taken place and was deemed satisfactory.

11.3 The project was to improve access, provide a residential care and learning facility and to open an Employability Project.

11.4 These new facilities will allow the college to increase their numbers from 29 to 50 by 07/08.

11.5 Council members were asked to consider the recommendation to approve capital expenditure of £1.1 million and a Capital grant of 35% on eligible expenditure.

Decision: Members agreed that this proposal be supported

Item 12. Train to Gain/Skills update

12.1 Pauline Watson provided members with an update of the work of the Train to Gain and Skills team which includes:

- Leitch - implementation of the complex recommendations and targets
- LSC Priorities – working with JobCentrePlus to collaborate on funding and provision
- Regional Economic Strategy – aims to get people into jobs and drives the Skills agenda forward. The Regional Employability Framework (REF) addresses the RES priorities by getting workless people into training and ultimately into employment
- Train to Gain – NE Region is performing well. 7246 learners are engaged in Tyne & Wear
- Skills Pledge – just under 40 employers have expressed an interest
- Skills for Jobs – nationally there is £17.5 million to support the delivery of Skills for Jobs of that the NE has been allocated £1.65 million which will go to tender shortly

- OLASS – prospectus has recently been published and is open for a six week consultation period. It will explore how mainstream provision can be better used in Offender Learning in the community
- IAG – Next Steps programme working well. Adult Careers Service developing nationally
- Sectors – intelligence is collated and refined about the Sectors and their demands.
- New Standard – this will not be owned or funded by the LSC but builds on the successful work of the COVEs. This independent body will identify what employers value
- Skills academies – currently developing academies in the Financial Services, Food & Drink and manufacturing sectors

Item 13. Any other business

- 13.1 The Chair expressed personal thanks to Council Members for their attendance, input and support to the Executive over the years.
- 13.2 Council event on 20th September will serve as a farewell and celebration evening
- 13.3 The Chair will continue to keep members informed and updated on developments regarding the Regional Interim Board

Meeting chair	Ashley Winter
Minute taker	Susan Milburn
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