

LSC APPOINTS ST HELENS' DUO TO REGIONAL COUNCIL

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The Learning and Skills Council (LSC) in the North West has appointed 14 members to form a new Regional Council, with St Helens based Pat Bacon, Principal of St Helens College and Kath Boullen, securing their places on the panel.

Set up as part of the Further Education and Training Act 2007, the new Regional Council will lead the LSC's regional and local presence; informing decision making, guiding progress and ensuring the successful delivery of the LSC's agenda in the North West. The 13 council members will act as guiding voices, translating national and regional strategy into practice and effectively investing the LSC's budget over the next few years.

The Act was introduced to streamline the LSC's 'non-executive tier' following the replacement of 47 Local Councils with the nine Regional Councils in existence today. This move has resulted in a more simplified, less bureaucratic structure, as well as being aligned to the organisation of the LSC executive team. In this way, the new councils reflect both the local and regional needs of learners and employers.

Appointed members are required to have a combination of business, education, training and community experience in order to contribute to the balance of the board. As a result of a successful recruitment drive earlier this year, the LSC in the North West received a significant number of applications for key positions on the Regional Council, including many leading businessmen and women in the region.

Pat's background more than equips her for the role. With 30 years experience in Further Education, she has been the Principal of St Helens College for the last six years. Her contribution to the regional agenda includes membership of the sub-regional partnership,

the Regional Skills and Employment Board, while on a national basis she is a member of the Association of Colleges Skills Group. Pat is also working closely with the Higher Education sector as a member of the Merseyside and West Lancashire Lifelong Learning Network Board and is committed to equality and continuous improvement which is reflected not only in her professional success but also in her professional development.

Throughout Kath's career she has had involvement in learning and skills. She has been a member of Merseyside Local Council from its inception and was also a member of the National Young Peoples Advisory Committee. With a particular interest and belief in the impact that education and skills can have on deprived communities, Kath is heavily involved in trying to improve the economic position of residents and businesses in the most deprived areas of St Helens.

Roger Hoyle, Chair of the North West Regional Council commented, "The appointed council members all demonstrate a strong commitment to learning and skills, and are from a diverse range of sectors and backgrounds. Consisting of representatives from educational establishments, trade unions and from the public and private sector, the new council offers a well balanced perspective of the learning and skills arena."

He concludes, "We are all excited and keen to start making a difference, using our combined skills to strengthen the work already underway – ultimately working to transform the ambitions and life chances of millions of people in the North West."

Ends

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Notes to editors :

The new North West Regional Council consists of the following members:

- Roger Hoyle (Chair), Business Consultant
- Pat Bacon, Principal, St Helens College
- Maureen Boland, Director for HR and Business Development, Conlon Construction
- Kath Boullen, former member of Merseyside Local Council and the National Young Peoples Advisory Committee
- Steven Broomhead, Chief Executive of the Northwest Regional Development Agency (NWDA)
- Claire Dove, CEO of Blackburne House Group
- Christine Gaskell, HR Director, Bentley Motors
- Abdul Hamied, Regeneration and Renewal Manager, Rochdale MBC
- Kate Hollern, Work-based Learning Contracts Manager, Blackburn College
- Graham Lamont, Self employed, Chartered Accountant and the current High Sheriff of Cumbria
- Jenny Martin, Regional Organiser for NUS and is Chair of the newly formed University of Cumbria, Students' Union Shadow Board
- Alan Roff, Deputy Vice-Chancellor for University of Central Lancashire.
- Dean Royles, Executive Director of Workforce and Education in NHS Northwest
- Ray Short, Senior Officer for the Public Sector with Unison
- William (Bill) Rutter, Regional Board member and Chair of the Capital Group

Learning and Skills Council

The LSC exists to make England better skilled and more competitive. We are responsible for ensuring the availability of high-quality education and training for everyone. We have a single goal: to improve the skills of England's young people and adults to world class standards. Our vision is that young people and adults in England have knowledge and skills matching the best in the world and are part of a truly competitive workforce. We work nationally, regionally and locally to deliver this ambition on behalf of learners and employers.

