

Minutes



Leading learning and skills

Minutes of meeting

Date	15 February 2005
Subject	Council Meeting
Location	Board Room
Time	17:00
LSC office	Lancashire
Publication intent	Internal

Present

Nancy Cookson
Jeff Cowburn
Margaret Dudley
Tony Gill
Steve Johnson
Alyson Malach
Clive Memmott
Ray McManus
Greg Turner

LSC staff

Andy Fawcett
Viv King
Steve Palmer
Sandra Whyte

Apologies

Apologies have been received from:

Nigel Burke
Dave Cresswell
Hazel Harding
Malcolm McVicar
Peter Neill
Karen O'Donoghue
Janice Parker
Khalid Saifullah

Item 1. Welcome and introductions

1.1 Tony Gill welcomed all present.

Item 2. Minutes of last meeting

2.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 21 December were accepted as a true record.

Item 3. Matters arising

- 3.1 Steve Palmer informed the Board that now the Blackburn with Darwen Area Wide Inspection was complete he could work on the letter to Ivan Lewis.
- 3.2 Steve Palmer agreed to bring a report to the March meeting with suggested locations for alternate Board meetings.
- 3.3 Steve Palmer reported that he had sent a handwritten note to all 15 local MPs from which 8 had replied and agreed to meetings.

Item 4. Key Themes from Awayday

- 4.1 Steve Palmer talked through his paper and the comments he had received from Karen O'Donoghue giving Board members the opportunity to debate and/or ask questions. The paper was well received from which the following recommendations were agreed.

Decision: There would be two Awaydays each year one in January and one September. The latter meeting to report on progress, issues and dilemmas arising from strategies and actions agreed at the first. The Board felt that having two awaydays would be a good use of resources for forward thinking as long as there were clear issues to be debated.

Progress on issues arising from the Boards consideration of developing provider infrastructure to be reported to the April Board.

Progress on issues arising from the Boards consideration of skills themes to be reported to the May Board.

Progress on issues arising from the Boards consideration of youth themes to be reported to the June Board.

The Board to agree and determine the subjects for the September awayday at the June meeting.

The March Board will be briefed on the membership, remit and current focus of the Lancashire Skills and Employment Taskgroup.

Action: SP

Item 5. Financial issues 2004/5/6

- 5.1 Steve Palmer talked through the paper that Andy Fawcett produced from the Regional Management Team meeting he attended on 24 January.
- 5.2 The paper summarised recent developments regarding the current financial position of the LSC and its implications for the region and the local offices. Three main priorities: -
 - The need to secure, with a focus on non-programme budgets, in year savings of £20m nationally and £3.1m in the North West.
 - The current overspend in relation to the 2004-05 work based learning budget.
 - The need to identify underspends in relation to 2004-05 commitments in order to make appropriate allocations in 2005-06.
- 5.3 Steve Palmer reported that Lancashire LSC is the 4th largest contributor to the regional savings target without impacting on performance.
- 5.4 Concern was expressed with regard to the national overspend of £47m on actual expenditure against profile for work based learning. It was noted that the cause was

a failure in the contract management system which has led to inflated prices being paid to providers.

- 5.5 Steve Palmer reported that Lancashire is ahead of 2004/05 PSA starts profile and is ahead in terms of both outputs and spend. However, there is the need to ensure that those providers who have been overpaid can refund the LSC ensuring that performance and starts volumes are not affected.
- 5.6 Board members expressed their concern regarding the rebasing of further education colleges because to take funds back in year from FE colleges would result in these institutions being put in very difficult financial positions
- 5.7 It was noted that the rebasing exercise would present particular problems in Lancashire as those with the most significant underspends are colleges in category C. The rebasing exercise will be reviewed regionally towards the end of February and the Board will be kept informed of developments.
- 5.8 Steve Palmer agreed to share the Boards concerns with the Regional Management Team on 24 February and report back at the next meeting.

Action: SP

Item 6. Area Wide Inspection – verbal update

- 6.1 Viv King gave the Board an update on the outcome from the Blackburn with Darwen Area Wide Inspection. She explained that as the Lancashire office had been through very few inspections in the past the process had created a very useful platform for the future.
- 6.2 The overall grade for the inspection was satisfactory which was made up of three good and three satisfactory results.
- 6.3 Viv King thanked the valuable support she and colleagues had received from the Board Youth Sub Group. She was pleased to be able to inform the Board that staff had given a significant amount of commitment, conducting themselves professionally being fully prepared and when required had held their ground.
- 6.4 Viv King reported that the LSC and LEA have a good working relationship and have taken shared ownership of the action plan on 14-19 issues.
- 6.5 Tony Gill expressed his thanks to Viv King and the LSC staff involved in the inspection for their hard work.

Item 7. Progress on the 2005/06 Business Plan

- 7.1 Andy Fawcett gave the Board a verbal update on how our local plan is being developed in line with other local LSC Plans. National Office has requested all local office plans to be consistent with each other. This version will be forwarded to John Korzeniewski for his input. Board members were invited to forward their comments through to Andy.

Action: All

Item 8. Audit & Quality Committee – verbal update

- 8.1 Tony Gill informed the Board that this item had been included on the agenda by mistake however it would be discussed at the March meeting.

Item 9. Any other business

- 9.1 Steve Palmer was pleased to report that LSC Lancashire had received good press coverage in the January 2005 report (46 articles). We generated a high volume of on-target messages compared to both regional and national figures. Lancashire

were 1st regionally and 5th nationally for the number of articles generated in the last quarter of 2004.

Item 10. Date of next meeting

10.1 The next meeting of the Board will take place at 5pm on 15 March 2005 at LSC Lancashire.