

CUMBRIA LEARNING AND SKILLS COUNCIL

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 6 NOVEMBER 2002 AT
KENDAL COLLEGE, KENDAL, COMMENCING AT
10.00 A.M.**

Present:

Council:

Rob Cairns
Mick Farley
Norman Burrow
Tricia Calway
Cath Clarke
Anne Diss
Chris l'Anson
Graham Lamont
Jack Stopforth
Mike Thorpe

Observers:

Nigel Burke
Mick Carey
Brian Lightowler

In attendance:

Jon Power
Lindsay Harford
Elizabeth Hodgson (DTI)
Penny Martin (National Office)
John Merry (National Council member)
Elspeth Smith
Madeleine Warren

	ACTION
<p>1. <u>Apologies and Introductions</u></p> <p>Apologies – Council – Neville Chamberlain, Cath Fare, Peter Irving, John Nellist, Mike Smith. Observers – Sian Rees.</p> <p>The Chair then welcomed Elizabeth Hodgson from the DTI who was spending the day with Tricia Calway. He also welcomed Penny Martin from the Support & Liaison Unit at National Office. He informed members that John Merry was due to join the meeting to speak to agenda item 10.</p> <p>2. <u>Declarations of Interest</u></p> <p>J Stopforth – 12 C Clarke – 5,6,7,8 M Thorpe – TUC, 12 C l'Anson – 14 G Lamont - 11</p>	
<p>3. <u>Minutes of the previous meeting held on Wednesday 11 September 2002 and evaluation of the last meeting</u></p> <p>Tricia Calway felt that the minutes had not given a true reflection of the discussions which had taken place at the meeting. She had initiated a discussion about how members would be able to measure how they were performing in their roles on the Council. The Chair replied that he tried to keep the minutes as succinct as possible and reflecting the tone of the meeting.</p>	

<p>They were then accepted and signed as a true record.</p> <p>It was agreed that Observers were welcome to take part in discussions. The issue of parking facilities at meetings was noted.</p>	
<p>4. <u>Matters arising not otherwise on the agenda</u></p> <p>The letter sent to Sir George Sweeney by Mike Smith had not been received. Mike has therefore re-sent the correspondence.</p> <p>TEC Legacy monies – The Chair intimated that he had held discussions with the Executive Director and they had agreed three priorities:</p> <p>Creating a Centre of Excellence for Basic Skills Pushing the HE agenda with the County Incentivisation of learners/achievement of targets.</p> <p>Graham Lamont suggested that Workforce Development be added to the list and all were in agreement.</p> <p>LLDD – Lindsay Harford updated Council. She reported that an Inclusive Learning Coordinator had begun working with Lakes College. The College was then going to provide a paper for dissemination to other colleges.</p> <p>NW Chairs – The Chair reported that these meetings had been extremely long and some issues had been carried forward.</p> <p>Engaging Employers – Jon Power reported that he had communicated with JobCentre Plus; arranged a FRESA meeting on 18 November and was to attend a meeting with the Construction Sector. He would keep the Council apprised of developments.</p> <p>National Training Awards – The Chair and Executive Director were due to attend the awards ceremony on 12 November.</p>	
<p>5. <u>Audit Committee</u></p> <p>It was agreed to defer this due to the late arrival of the Chair, Mr Irving.</p>	
<p>6. <u>Young People’s Learning Committee</u></p> <p>The Executive Director outlined the minutes of the last meeting. He confirmed that the 14-19 Statement was in the process of being updated.</p>	
<p>7. <u>Minutes of the Adult Learning Committee</u></p> <p>Mike Thorpe outlined the minutes. Item 4 Employer Engagement Measure – Tricia Calway felt that this was still too complicated for small businesses to understand and sign up to. It was hoped however that a local spin could be put on it and we could work through FRESA. Small firms would become involved if they were using Government funding.</p>	
<p>8. <u>Minutes of the Equality and Diversity Advisory Committee</u></p> <p>Mike Thorpe outlined the minutes. Council agreed that the case studies included with the minutes had been most illuminating. The Executive Director was able to confirm that the case study highlighting a problem at Kendal College had now been resolved. He was also able to confirm that colleges had received DDA training, along with other training providers.</p>	

<p>Council felt that this training should be extended to Governing bodies to ensure that matters such as that highlighted in the case study were taken seriously. It was agreed that a case study on a race issue would be useful to see.</p>	
<p>9. Executive Director's Report</p> <p>The Executive Director outlined his report and the two supplementary papers.</p> <p>RDA/LSC/SBS Pilot – He reported that Jack Stopforth and Jon Power were due to attend a breakfast meeting on 8 November with NWDA. An LLSC writing team was being set up and a Consultant was being brought in to help Nigel Couzens, as this would add greatly to his workload.</p> <p>Brian Lightowler reported that Business Link had taken a different approach and had contacted the NWDA to see if they wanted Business Link to be involved. He hoped that the initiative would release more funds to help clients in the local areas.</p> <p>Council were keen to know what the full implications of such a pilot were on the local LSC. It was agreed that this had come straight from No 11 and the desire behind it was to save taxpayers' money. It could add greater pressure on the Administration Budget and ultimately some functions could be reduced.</p> <p>The Executive Director said that we must remain positive although he acknowledged the concerns of Council members and stressed that we must remain watchful.</p> <p>John Merry did not have a definitive view. However, he said that it was a genuine pilot and that members should not read too much into it. Penny Martin said that, to her knowledge, National office did not know any more than that explained by Mr Merry.</p> <p>Norman Burrow stressed that the Council must take every opportunity to influence central government. He feared that the government might be taking a short-term view and basing their ideas of the shortcomings of TECs and FEFC. If the LLSCs are being viewed as too local, central government haven't really given them a chance.</p> <p>Mike Thorpe added that we must demonstrate that we are value for money. We must accept the challenge and get on with the job in hand.</p> <p>The Chair wished Jack and Jon every success for Friday's meeting.</p> <p>CoVE – Rail industry – nationally not thought appropriate to have a national CoVE but rather have several located throughout the country. The National Rail Academy is still ongoing.</p> <p>ILAs – tabled paper. It had been announced that ILA Mark 2 was not going ahead and another announcement would be made next year. Council agreed that this was most disappointing.</p> <p>Higher Education – supplementary paper. The Executive Director informed Council that copies of the HE Statement would be given to Sir Brian Fender and to Janice Shiner when they visited the county in the next few days.</p> <p>He went on to outline the proposed work of the Participation Task Force.</p> <p>Norman Burrow (interest declared) said that Cumbria has already achieved much more than other counties as there is already a high level of collaboration between the HEIs and some of the FE Colleges. However a great deal more</p>	

<p>needs to be done to enable local people to achieve a degree by studying within the County. He also said that Cumbria was good on equality but not on diversity. If the county's educational establishments could work together this would encourage overseas students.</p> <p>Jack Stopforth (interest declared) added that we must not simply look at the local market but must encourage people from far and wide to come and live and study in Cumbria. A single badge (as in Cornwall or Kent) would attract outsiders.</p> <p>Graham Lamont said that the Task Force must also engage with employers to ensure that Cumbria could attract and retain graduates, with specialist industries growing up around the campuses.</p> <p>The Executive Director thanked all those for their useful comments. He felt that a single University of Cumbria was not a practical solution and we must put our energies into improving what we already have in the County.</p> <p>The Chair wished to record Council's thanks to the Executive Director and his team for all their hard work in pulling this initiative together.</p> <p>Assessing Provision – Chris l'Anson (interest declared) asked why another provider was being brought into the County when the Carlisle Area Review stated that we already had too many? The Executive Director replied that the Carlisle Area Review contained the views of the Consultant who wrote the report.</p> <p>College Collaboration – It was announced that Moira Tattersall, Vice-Principal of Carlisle College would take up a secondment for a period of 18 months.</p> <p>RAZ – The Chair had been appointed to the Urban Regeneration Board and the Executive Director had applied to join the Rural Regeneration Board.</p> <p>The report was duly noted.</p>	
<p>10. <u>Cllr John Merry – Functions of Councils</u></p> <p>The Chair welcomed John Merry to the meeting and invited him to say a few words to those present. Cllr Merry outlined the role of the National Council and how this fed into local offices. He also gave a view on the new RDA/SBS/LSC pilots.</p> <p>Council members were disturbed by the resource implications of this pilot. Cumbria's rurality still caused problems. FE Colleges do not have big enough catchment areas to be viable but provision still has to be provided. The tribal culture in certain areas of the County prohibit students/learners travelling to other areas to further their careers.</p> <p>The Chair then thanked John Merry and Council members for the very valuable and enlightening discussion. He added that it was encouraging to know that John Merry was so accessible and eager to listen to local issues.</p>	
<p>11. <u>Carlisle College (confidential)</u></p> <p>The Executive Director outlined the paper. Council was grateful that Graham Lamont had agreed to becoming the LSC representative on the Board of Governors.</p> <p>The paper was duly noted.</p>	

<p>12. <u>Kendal College (confidential)</u></p> <p>The Executive Director outlined the paper and added that this was a particularly sensitive matter because of the imminent inspection.</p> <p>Council were anxious about the extent of the mis-management of the college before the arrival of the present Principal. Jack Stopforth recorded thanks and support for Graham Wilkinson for all the great work that he had done to improve the College since his arrival.</p> <p>Mike Thorpe added that the College must look to the future and it was crucial that all must be done to keep levels of provision up. Chris l’Anson said that the loss of support from local businesses has been a blow to the College. Jack Stopforth said that local schools/parents mindset has to change so that students will be keen to come to the College. Anne Diss added that this was not the time to take away pieces of the infrastructure and that a long-term cultural change was necessary. Tricia Calway said that students would be willing to travel if transport is free and they will be assured of excellence at the establishment they are travelling to.</p> <p>Council then noted the position and the both the Chair and the Executive Director stressed that the discussion and the papers must remain confidential.</p>	
<p>13. <u>Education Act 2002</u></p> <p>Acronym NYPLC – National Young People’s Learning Committee</p> <p>All were in favour of the Council exercising new powers. The report was noted.</p>	
<p>14. <u>Performance Review</u></p> <p>The paper was duly noted.</p>	
<p>15. <u>“Success for All” Area Reviews</u></p> <p>The paper was duly noted.</p>	
<p>16. <u>Partnership for Progression</u></p> <p>The paper was duly noted.</p>	
<p>17. <u>Planning</u></p> <p>The paper was duly noted.</p>	
<p>18. <u>Any other urgent business</u></p> <p>Audit Committee – there were no comments and Council was content to note the minutes as the next meeting was due to take place after this Council meeting.</p> <p>Congratulations were recorded for the excellent work carried out by Craig Ivison and his team in the recent financial audit as they had received a grade 1 marking. The Chair to write to Craig expressing the Council’s thanks.</p> <p>Tricia Calway asked why, when it had been decided that the term “Basic Skills” was derogatory, was it still being used? The Chair replied that we would use “Lifeskills” internally but documentation coming from National office would still be branded “Basic Skills” as this was government policy. This issue had been</p>	<p>RC</p>

<p>raised with National office and with Ivan Lewis. The Executive Director agreed to re-send the letter from Tony Belmega of National office to Tricia Calway.</p>	<p>MF</p>
<p>19. <u>Evaluation of Meeting</u> The Chair encouraged members to complete and hand in their forms.</p>	
<p>20. <u>Date of next meeting</u> It was agreed that the next meeting would be held on 7 January 2003 to consider the operational and business plans. A decision would be taken near the time to see if the meeting scheduled for 23 January still needed to take place. Post meeting note: The 7 January meeting was cancelled and the 23 January meeting will stand.</p>	

Signed..... **Date**.....