

**CUMBRIA LEARNING AND SKILLS COUNCIL**

**Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 27 July 2001 at the offices of  
Cumbria Learning and Skills Council WORKINGTON, commencing at 10.00 a.m.**

**Present:** Rob Cairns, Chair  
Mick Farley, Executive Director  
Tricia Calway  
Maggie Chadwick  
Cath Clarke  
Anne Diss  
Cath Fare  
Paul Hafren  
Chris l'Anson  
Peter Irving  
John Nellist  
Jack Stopforth  
Mike Thorpe

**Observers:** Sue Chester

**In attendance:** Trish Cairns (for item 9)  
Craig Ivison (for item4)  
Madeleine Warren  
Elspeth Smith

	<b>ACTION</b>
<p><b>1. Apologies/Introductions/Declarations of interest</b> Apologies - Nigel Burke, Graham Lamont, Brian Lightowler, James Lusty, Jon Power and Mike Smith.</p> <p>The Chair welcomed Craig Ivison, Quality Manager (Audit) to the meeting.</p> <p>Declarations of interest on the agenda:</p> <p>Mick Thorpe – 6 Peter Irving CITB Cath Fare – 6 Paul Hafren – 5,6,7,8,9,11,12 Tricia Calway – 11 Cath Clarke – 6</p> <p>The Chair made a plea to Council members to remain open-minded and to take part in constructive debate. He suggested that the format for future Council meetings could be discussed at the next awayday.</p>	
<p><b>2. Minutes of the meeting held on 30 May</b> These were accepted as a true record and signed by the Chair.</p>	

<p><b>3. Matters arising</b></p> <p>Council Awards – Members were content with the Awards paper and all were in agreement with the IAG Partnership being involved.</p> <p>Role of local Council – The Executive Director explained that Cumbria was not the only Council struggling with this issue. It would be discussed at the September Executive Directors’ meeting and brought to a future Council meeting.</p> <p>Other Training – Chris l’Anson reported that she had received a positive response from the Secretary of State and was glad to report that the national Council was supportive.</p> <p>Foreign Press Event – Jack Stopforth reported that it had been a worthwhile event to organise.</p> <p>Workforce Development – Jack Stopforth reported that James Walker &amp; Co was looking for help with regard to upgrading the skills base of its workforce. He agreed to speak to the Executive Director about this.</p> <p>Quorum for meeting – Council members wanted clarification on what constituted a quorum and also about the non-attendance of members. The Chair and Executive Director agreed to look at this.</p> <p>Those involved informed colleagues that the judging of the National Training Awards had been very illuminating and worthwhile.</p>	<p><b>MF</b></p> <p><b>MF/JS</b></p> <p><b>MF/RC</b></p>
<p><b>4. Minutes of the first meeting of the Audit Committee</b></p> <p>Peter Irving gave a short overview of the first meeting and outlined the minutes. It was agreed that any feedback from the internal auditors visit in mid-August would be fed back to the Council.</p>	<p><b>PI</b></p>
<p><b>5. Targets</b></p> <p>The Executive Director outlined the papers and reported that the targets would be updated at the November Council meeting.</p> <p>A long discussion ensued about the collection of target data and how it can best be interpreted and used.</p>	
<p><b>6. Local Initiative Fund</b></p> <p>The Executive Director outlined this paper and a paper on IAG was also tabled. He informed members that in excess of £1.5M should come from the Treasury from the TEC legacy fund. This could be used to offset the requests for LIF. He added that it was proving quite difficult to actually spend the money. Council members were keen to see an evaluation of how and when the money was spent. The Executive Director said the issue of VAT on the IAG contract (the subject of the tabled paper) was being pursued with HM Customs and Excise. He asked the Council to agree the proposal in the tabled paper so as not to reduce IAG provisions in the County. John Nellist endorsed the Executive Director’s comment and added that the County had fought long and hard to get IAG off the ground. The Chair then</p>	

<p>asked if members could agree with the tabled IAG proposal – all were in favour, albeit with some reluctance. The substantive paper was noted and agreed.</p>	
<p><b>8. Capital Grant Paper</b>  It was agreed to take items 8 &amp; 9 before item 7.  The Executive Director outlined the paper.  Members were not content that an amount as large as £2.5M should be classed as routine business and it was agreed that the figure should be altered to £1.0M. The report was then noted and accepted.</p>	
<p><b>9. Provider Performance Review</b>  The Chair welcomed Trish Cairns, Quality Adviser to the meeting. The Executive Director outlined the paper. He added that the Council would work with all providers to ensure that continuous improvement took place. Members noted that there was room for a great deal of improvement if the Learning and Skills Council was to achieve its targets. The Executive Director said that it had proved extremely useful to have all concerned in the review process at the one meeting. It was early days and progress would be monitored very carefully. The report was duly noted.</p>	
<p><b>7. West Cumbria College – Proposed Name Change</b>  The Executive Director outlined the response from DfES. The Chair did not feel that the word “neutral” had ever been used, although there was some debate over this. It was agreed that the tone of the letter had been unhelpful and that the Executive Director should write to Martin Igoe expressing the Council’s feelings.</p> <p>After much discussion it was agreed to take a vote. It was also agreed to exclude those members with any involvement in any of the County’s FE Colleges.</p> <p>Vote as follows:  Agreed to name change – 5  Against – 2</p> <p>The Executive Director will write to Mr Igoe to inform him of this decision.</p>	<p><b>MF</b></p> <p><b>MF</b></p>
<p><b>10. Cumbria Strategic Partnership</b>  Mike Thorpe asked if there was any representation from the workforce. John Nellist replied that a rep from the TUC was there, although they had unfortunately been missed of the list of attendees. The Executive Director added that the composition of the group would be monitored.</p> <p>The paper was duly noted.</p>	
<p><b>11. School Sixth Form Funding</b>  The Executive Director outlined this paper. It was agreed that this would be an important issue for the Council and would be discussed at future meetings.</p> <p>The paper was duly noted.</p>	

<p><b>12. New Providers</b>  The Executive Director outlined this paper. He added that there was no optimal number of providers, it was all based on the quality of provision.</p> <p>The paper was duly noted.</p>	
<p><b>13. Executive Director’s Report</b>  The Executive Director outlined his report. Tricia Calway requested that this report be put on as the first item (after the standard items) on the agenda. This was agreed.</p> <p>Tricia Calway expressed concern that the national office had indicated that the local Business Plan did not have to be agreed by the local Council. This was endorsed by other members. She said that she would take this up with the CBI. The Executive Director said that Cumbria was not the only Council who had difficulty with this and agreed with the Chair that things would not happen overnight. However, if all the 47 Councils nationwide expressed concern the process could evolve over time.</p> <p>The Chair thanked Mike Smith, in his absence, for hosting the dinner at Sellapark with the College Principals; consideration needs to be given to following this up. He also wished to note his thanks to Tricia Calway for her work and for her agreement to being the “champion” in Cumbria for the NW Skills Festival.</p> <p>The report was duly noted.</p>	<p><b>MF</b></p> <p><b>TC</b></p>
<p><b>14. Any other business</b>  A request was made for the meetings to be held around the County and the Executive Director and Chair said that this would be considered.</p>	<p><b>MF/RC</b></p>
<p><b>15. Date, time and location of next meeting</b>  The next meeting will be held on Wednesday 5 September at 10.00 am in Venture House.</p>	

Signed..... Date.....