

LEARNING AND SKILLS COUNCIL CUMBRIA

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 26 NOVEMBER 2003 AT
THE CASTLE GREEN HOTEL, KENDAL, COMMENCING
AT 9.00 A.M.**

Present:

Council:

Rob Cairns
Tricia Calway
Norman Burrow
Anne Diss
Mick Farley
Cath Fare
Chris l'Anson
Peter Irving
Rob Johnston
Mike Smith
Jack Stopforth
Mike Thorpe

Observers:

Mick Carey
Brian Lightowler
Siân Rees

In attendance:

Lindsay Harford
Richard Jewkes
Jon Power
Elspeth Smith
Madeleine Warren

| | ACTION |
|---|---------------|
| <p>1. <u>Apologies and Introductions</u></p> <p>The Chair welcomed Richard Jewkes to the meeting. Apologies – Council – Graham Lamont Observers – Nigel Burke</p> <p><u>Declarations of Interest</u></p> <p>Peter Irving CITB, Sector Skills Council Mike Smith Foundation Governor of Secondary School Nuclear Skills WBL Mike Thorpe TUC, Kendal College Chris l'Anson Youth and Adult Training Cath Fare Kendal College, item 9 Jack Stopforth Kendal College, UCLAN Rob Johnston Nuclear Skills Norman Burrow UCLAN, Kendal College</p> | |
| <p>2. <u>Minutes of the previous meeting held on Tuesday 23 September 2003 and evaluation of the last meeting</u></p> <p>These were accepted and signed as a true record.</p> | |
| | |

| | |
|--|------------|
| <p>3. <u>Matters arising not otherwise on the agenda</u></p> <p><u>Colleges of Further Education</u> – discussed in EDs report.</p> <p><u>Council Self-Assessment</u> – to be discussed at January meeting.</p> <p>3.1 Capital</p> <p>The Executive Director outlined the paper. He reminded Council members that within the current capital rules WBL providers are not eligible for support.</p> <p>The report was duly noted.</p> | |
| <p>4. <u>Minutes of the Audit Committee held on 23 September 2003</u></p> <p>The Chair (Peter Irving) outlined the minutes. He reported that the last meeting had been inquorate again and another resignation had been received.</p> <p>He also highlighted the situation regarding the possible loss of the local PFA team. The Executive Director asked that this matter be deferred to item 11 (Reshaping) on the agenda.</p> <p>The Chair requested that the membership be increased to 7 and also that 50% attendance would be required to ensure that the Committee was quorate. It was agreed that 50% attendance would be acceptable but this would have to be altered if circumstances changed. This was agreed.</p> <p>Any suggestions for new members to be passed to Peter Irving or Madeleine Warren.</p> | All |
| <p>5. <u>Note of Young People’s Learning Committee meeting held on 30 September 2003</u></p> <p>The Executive Director outlined the minutes, as he had temporarily taken over the Chair. He reported that the LSC was to lead the partnership working on Education Maintenance Allowance (EMAs) and he had every expectation that this should help increase participation. Mike Smith asked what impact analysis was being carried out to measure the impact EMAs would have on WBL? The Executive Director said that this would be monitored and reported on in future.</p> <p>The minutes were duly noted.</p> | |
| <p>6. <u>Note of the Equality and Diversity Advisory Committee meeting held on 8 October 2003</u></p> <p>The Chair (Mike Thorpe) outlined the minutes. It was noted that Cath Fare had volunteered to join the committee but this had been missed from the minutes. The Chair confirmed that the work of this group had been linked to the ASP.</p> <p>The minutes were duly noted.</p> | |
| <p>7. <u>Executive Director’s Report</u></p> <p>The Executive Director outlined his report.</p> <p><u>Nuclear Skills</u> – Members agreed that County players must work together to ensure that it does not lose its “preferred status” in the establishment of the NNSA in West Cumbria.</p> <p><u>Search Committee</u> – The recommendations for three new Council members had been sent to National Office for approval.</p> | |

| | |
|---|---|
| <p><u>Extended Feasibility Study</u> – to be discussed at the end of the meeting when looking at 17 December special Council meeting.</p> <p><u>Regional EDs</u> – The Executive Director drew Council members’ attention to the article in the Guardian “<i>Coup attempt in North West</i>” – which outlined the thoughts of Steve Broomhead about a possible pilot in the North West which would give the NWDA the funding responsibility for the five NW LSCs in the region. It was agreed that this sort of thing was not helpful to partnership working. Rob Johnston agreed to speak to Steve Broomhead to try to clarify matters. The Executive Director reported that the Department has already said that this sort of pilot is not on its agenda.</p> <p>The Chair said that the NW Chairs had written to the NWDA and that the Chair of the Chairs Group had also written to Bryan Gray to express their concerns.</p> <p>It was suggested that Steve Broomhead be invited to attend a Council meeting – this was agreed by all in attendance.</p> <p>Concern was noted about the introduction of another tier of bureaucracy with the appointment of the regional EDs and also that it showed a lack of trust in the local Councils.</p> <p>The Executive Director reported that the introduction of Regional Executive Directors was largely an internal administration reform as it was not sensible for the new Chief Executive to have line management responsibility for 50+ senior people. Members still felt that answers were required – it might be seen as another tier of management and yet ordinary staff were having to leave the organisation. It was agreed that this would be discussed in greater depth under the Reshaping item.</p> | <p>RJohnston</p> <p>M F</p> |
| <p>8. <u>LSC’s Annual Plan</u></p> <p>The Executive Director outlined the process for planning guidance and added that the draft before Council was very much work in progress. He then invited Richard Jewkes to give a short overview of the plan.</p> <p>Members agreed that the data should be as up to date as possible and rather than re-inventing the wheel why isn’t information from the ASP, for example, used. Richard agreed to check all the figures within the plan. Final version will come to a future Council meeting.</p> | <p>RJewkes</p> |
| <p>9. <u>Alliance for Skills and Productivity (ASP)</u></p> <p>The paper was duly noted and Mike Thorpe (as Chair of the group) offered to take any questions. He congratulated the writing team on their excellent work. It was agreed to check that a representative of WBL has been invited to join the group.</p> | <p>JP</p> |
| <p>10. <u>Carlisle Area Review</u></p> <p>The Executive Director outlined this paper. He thanked all colleagues who had taken part in the recent round of consultation events and invited them to comment.</p> <p>Norman Burrow (Chaired Trinity and St Aidan’s) – he felt that the meeting at Trinity had been staged managed and orchestrated. All present seemed to be in opposition to the proposal. Both school communities came over as being extremely proud of their schools and their achievements. No reference made to the wider issue but only a desire not to change the status quo within the two</p> | |

schools. Demand at Trinity for whole Council to have a meeting with parent representatives.

Jack Stopforth – (Chaired NCTC – attended St Aidan's) – Far more moderate than St Aidan's. Head and Governors made their points forcefully but with appropriate courtesy and moderation. Recent leaver from the 6th Form spoke about continuity.

Peter Irving – (Chaired Carlisle College, Caldew and Morton) – Caldew majority against the proposal, highlighted transport issues. Both schools questioned the lack of involvement of the LEA. Morton – much more positive meeting. Genuine concerns from staff – surplus places issue. Suggested a community school even if 6th Form proposal goes ahead.

Mike Smith – (Chaired William Howard School) – well tempered, civilised meeting. Lots of passion and pride in school. They understood the problem in Carlisle but did not want William Howard to be involved in proposal. Big issue re transport. Teachers asked if they would have to apply for jobs in the new 6th Form College or if they would be eligible for redundancy.

Mike reiterated that the process is as important as the decision itself.

Anne Diss – (Chaired Newman School) – Mind broadening experience. Have to acknowledge the passion felt by parents, teachers, governors and pupils. Definite no to proposal. She added that it would be sad if we didn't acknowledge what people felt. Relationship with LEA serious issue.

It was also noted that the representatives of the LEA did not identify themselves at some of the consultation meetings.

The Chair summarised by informing Council that when the final decision is reached (and this will be done at a separate Council meeting), the minutes of that decision will be sent to each school.

It had been agreed to hold a further consultation meeting at Lochinvar School and Cath Fare agreed to chair it.

Parents had felt that the whole Council should hear of their concerns. This was looked upon as a slight on the reporting mechanisms.

Several items highlighted as needing to be addressed:

- Issue of choice;
- Find out where the LEA stands in the whole process;
- Council members need to sharpen up on the issues of 6th Form education;
- Competitiveness issue (re inter schools sports);
- Participation issue (with high employment in Carlisle);
- Data – lots of challenges to it. Invite Headteachers to come back with carefully thought out questions re stats;
- Big Picture – Schools should come back with alternative “big pictures”. Get away from emotive stuff – status quo is not possible. Must come forward with a good reason for not having a sixth form college;
- LSC/LEA – have to get into a position to debate whole future of education in Carlisle. We have got to meet with LEA before any final decision made. Not convinced they will engage in a meaningful way;
- Important we don't paint ourselves into a corner, must have genuine consultation;
- Suggestion – timetable for any change over 3 to 4 years to diminish disruption;
- Suggestion – Shadow Sixth Form College;

| | |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Surplus places issue; • Staffing issues; • Any 16+ decision will affect 11+ education; • Must be transparent – suggest publish a process map; • Debate moving on, must reflect this back to parents. Quality of debate has improved significantly. <p>Tricia Calway told colleagues about the success of the Sixth Form College in Blackburn.</p> <p><u>Transparency/Mapping –</u> Ask schools to work collaboratively and come back with options and what data they wanted to challenge. LEA/LSC issue do we want to come out publicly?</p> <p>Suggested that schools are asked for an action plan, similar to those of colleges, to show how they would function in the future.</p> <p>Must be in a position to look everyone in the eye when giving the decision.</p> <p>It was agreed that those who had chaired the consultation events form a group to work out a process map. This will take place on Monday 8 December at 2.30 p.m. at the offices of CIIA, Penrith. The issues worked out by the group will be circulated to the Council before the special Council meeting on 17 December 2003 when it would be discussed.</p> | |
| <p>11. <u>Reshaping</u></p> <p>The Executive Director outlined the paper and one which he tabled. He confirmed that he would meet the allocated savings for this financial year. However with the further savings of £209,000 for next year out of the administration budget, this could seriously affect the way in which LSC Cumbria could function, as well as staff morale. He confirmed that the Department would provide a one off payment for any relocation or redundancies that came out of the revised structure.</p> <p>Peter Irving thought it appropriate for members of the Council to speak directly to staff and it was agreed that the Chair should speak, if necessary, with National Office about the Council's misgivings over the severe cuts and possible detrimental effects it will have on staff. Sian Rees informed Council that Connexions had suffered a similar fate in previous years and that representation had not proved effective.</p> <p>Council still felt that Regional Directors would put a negative slant on any reorganisation/reshaping.</p> <p>Council were unanimous in accepting proposal 6 in the tabled paper:</p> <p><i>Council is asked to authorise the Chair, should it be necessary, to make direct representation to the national LSC about what will be a very serious impact on the local office and impact on our ability to deliver both quantitative and qualitative targets.</i></p> | |
| <p>12. <u>Further Education Participation 2002/2003</u></p> <p>The paper was outlined by Executive Director and it was duly noted.</p> | |
| <p>13. <u>Any other business</u></p> <p>None.</p> | |

| | |
|---|--|
| <p>14. <u>Date of next meeting</u></p> <p>There will be a special meeting held on 17 December starting at 12.30 p.m. with a light buffet lunch and the meeting beginning at 1.00 p.m. The location will be the Castle Green Hotel, Kendal.</p> <p>The next meeting will be held on Wednesday 28 January 2004 – location to be advised.</p> | |
|---|--|

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