

# Minutes



Learning+Skills Council

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## 38<sup>th</sup> BOARD MEETING

**Date:** 18 May 2004  
**Time:** 17.00 hours  
**Venue:** Taylor House, Caxton Road, Fulwood, Preston  
**Chair:** Tony Gill

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**In attendance:**  
**Board Members**

Nancy Cookson  
Jeff Cowburn  
Linda Crabtree  
Alyson Malach  
Ray McManus  
Malcolm McVicar  
Steve Palmer, Executive Director  
Janice Parker

**Apologies:**  
**Board Members**

Neville Chamberlain  
Hazel Harding  
John Oliver  
Greg Turner

**Observers:**  
Phil Burgess

**Observers:**  
Nigel Burke  
Steve Johnson  
Karen O'Donoghue

**Directors:**  
Dave Cresswell  
Andy Fawcett  
Viv King  
Sandra Whyte

## ACTION

1. **Chairman's opening remarks**
  - 1.1 The Chairman welcomed all present including Chris Rogan, Director of the Alliance for Skills and Productivity.
2. **Apologies**

Apologies were received from Nigel Burke, Neville Chamberlain, Hazel Harding, Steve Johnson, Karen O'Donoghue, John Oliver and Greg Turner.
3. **Minutes from previous meeting**

The minutes of the meeting held on 20 April 2004 were agreed as a true record.

#### **4. Matters not arising elsewhere on the agenda**

4.3 June Board meeting to commence at 4.30 pm to allow for one hour training in Equality + Diversity, followed by Board meeting. Any points that members want covered in the training to be forwarded to Steve Palmer. Otherwise, general issues only. **SP**

7.4 An evaluation of exp04 will be sent out with the papers for the June Board. **AF**

#### **5 Alliance for Skills and Productivity (ASP) update - Chris Rogan**

Chris Rogan, Director of ASP, made a presentation on the work of his group to date. Chris's slides are attached. Chris highlighted the following points:

- He informed the Board of how ASP came to be set up and what it has done to date.
- ASP is a unique joint pilot between the NWDA, the Small Business Service and LSC (Jobcentre Plus are also a key stake-holder).
- It aims to provide a total support service to business.
- The Northwest faces a major productivity challenge, as 20% of vacancies are hard to fill because of skills shortages.
- ASP will have funding of £27m for 2004/05 of which £3m has come from LSC, £6m from NWDA and £18m from the Small Business Service/Business Link.
- New ASP activities include:
  - Leadership for small and medium sized enterprises
  - Work with excluded groups
  - Family businesses
  - Work with "big ticket" projects such as resort casinos and Omega.
  - Creation of a regional catalogue of services and products available to employers.

Board members questioned Mr Rogan regarding how the activities of the ASP fitted in with those of other organisations.

#### **6. Employer Training Pilot (ETP)– Dave Cresswell & Clive Duguid**

Dave Cresswell and Clive Duguid made a presentation to the Board. The following points were highlighted:

- Lancashire will be in the third phase of the roll-out of the Employer Training Pilot (Manchester was in the second phase).
- It is hoped that recruitment to the pilot programme will commence before the end of July.

- We have bid for £7.6m to fund the programme for financial year 2004/05.
- In order to get the pilot going as soon as possible, we have 'buddied up' with Manchester to learn from their experience and intend to avoid duplication of contracting and administration.
- The target group are hard to reach employers with workforce development needs for first level 2 qualifications and basic skills. Participating employers must be based in Lancashire and will receive wage reimbursement for employees who attend training. Employees must be 25 and over to be eligible.
- The construction sector will be targeted.
- Partnership arrangements are being constructed with Business Links, FE Colleges, Work Based Learning providers And TUC Learning Services in order to get a fairly large scale programme running quickly.
- Targets have been set for the first year of the ETP – these involve the delivery of 5,500 NVQ2 and 500 Basic Skills qualifications.
- Support for employers depends on their size. Employers with 50 staff or less will receive 130% of wage costs. Those with 50-249 will receive 100% of wage costs and those with over 250 employees will receive 50% of wage costs. Employees should spend not more than 70 hours away from work. Employers can also claim for assessment and accreditation costs.
- In discussion with the Manchester ETP team, a group is being drawn together to market the scheme, explain the offer to employers, check employee eligibility and draw up contracts.

Board members asked for clarification on a number of points – Clive Duguid answered their queries as far as current information allowed.

## **7. Executive Director's Report to the May Board**

### **7.1 Funding Problem**

Nancy Cookson declared an interest.

The Board was extremely disappointed with the implications on the proposed reductions in college funding.

The Board requested that Steve make further robust representation to the Regional Director emphasising the destabilisation of colleges and the damage to valuable infrastructure such actions could result in.

**SP**

The implications on the proposed reductions when 3 year development plans and recent capital investment proposals had just recently approved gave some Board members reason to question

**SP**

their future roles and commitment. Board members asked to be appraised of the specific impact on individual colleges and providers once final allocations were known.

It was also agreed that Steve should communicate the issue with all principals as quickly as possible.

**SP**

Alyson Malach raised the question as to whether Adult and Community Learning (ACL) budgets had been affected and could there be an opportunity of virement from ACL to FE.

**8. Any Other Business**

John Korzeniewski will attend the next Board meeting

**9. Date and time of next meeting**

Tuesday 15 June 2004 at Lancashire Learning and Skills Council