

## LEARNING AND SKILLS COUNCIL GREATER MANCHESTER

**Minutes of the nineteenth meeting of the LSC Greater Manchester Council held on Tuesday, 13 January 2004, at Arndale House, Arndale Centre, at 16.00 hrs.**

### **PRESENT:**

**Council members:** Anthony Goldstone (Chair), Rachael Charlton, Liz Davis (Executive Director - ED), Richard Guy, Richard Hurst, Abdul Jabbar, Alan Manning, Kath Rigby, Michele Sutton and Chris Woodcock.

**Observers** – Emma Maitland (GO North West - for Nigel Burke) and Fiona Mellett (Chamber Business Enterprises).

**In attendance:** Jane Bracewell, Director of Strategy and Quality(DSQ), Andrew Harrison, Director of Finance and Corporate Services (DFCS), Ian Lever, Director of External Relations (DER), Debra Woodruff, Director of Operations (DO), Hilary Peel, Area Manager for Stockport and Tameside and Ruth Wheatley, Area Manager for Wigan (for agenda items 3 and 4 respectively), Derrick Jones and Jacqui Robinson, KPMG (for agenda item 3), Christine Rudge, PA to DFCS.

**Clerk to the Council**            Jean Johnson

### **APOLOGIES**

**Council Members** – Pauline Green, John Merry, David Page, David Seddon, Ray Short and Mollie Temple.

**Observers:** Nigel Burke (GONW), Linda Tomlinson (Jobcentre Plus) and Hannah Roberts (Connexions Service).

The chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Chair introduced Christine Rudge, currently PA to the director of Finance and Corporate Services, who would be taking over as Secretary to the Council when Jean Johnson retired; Ruth Wheatley, Area Manager for Wigan and Hilary Peel, area manager for Stockport and Tameside. He informed the meeting that Derrick Jones and Jacqui Robinson of KPMG would be giving a presentation on the Stockport Preliminary Review.

Chair reported that David Seddon had tendered his resignation from the Council and therefore from his position as Chair of the Search Committee. Council **agreed** that the chair, after consultation with the Executive Director, should suggest a replacement chair for the Search Committee.

**ACTION: Chair and ED.**

### **221. Minutes of 4 November 2003 meeting**

The minutes of the 4 November 2003 meeting were **accepted** as an accurate record and signed.

## **222. Paper 01/2004 - Matters arising**

222.1 **M.208.2 - Skillcity** – Chair asked Council members to let the LSC know when they planned to visit SkillCity so they could be met and taken round.

**ACTION: Council members**

222.2 **M.213.1 – Bolton Area Review** – Chair drew attention to the meeting and asked Council members to let Ruth Wheatley know if they wanted to attend on 13 February.

**ACTION: Council members.**

222.3 **M.214.1 – ASP Business Plan** – Director, External Relations reported that, at the 7 January meeting, it had been agreed that an event should be held on 21/22 January to consider how the sub-regional plans would align and be taken forward. He would report further to the March Council meeting.

**ACTION: Director External Relations.**

222.4 **M.220 – Strategy Day** – Chair commented on the usefulness of the Strategy Day held in December and said he would like to see such days repeated. Executive Director reported that the actions arising from the strategy day were being taken forward: actions within the plan were being prioritized and areas where Council members could play a role were being identified. The plan was due to be approved before the March meeting on Council. She would report back then. Council expressed its thanks to Jean Johnson for organizing the event.

**ACTION: Executive Director**

222.5 Other matters arising were dealt with in paper 01/2004.

## **STRATEGIC ITEMS**

### **223. Paper 02/2004 - Stockport Preliminary Review**

223.1 Chair informed Council members that full copies of the Stockport Preliminary Review were available on request and invited Hilary Peel, Area Manager for Stockport and Tameside to introduce the report.

223.2 HP stressed that, while the report would feed into the Strategic Area Review (StAR), it was not a StAR, but a preliminary review of provision in the Stockport area which had arisen because all four Further Education (FE) colleges in the area had put forward bids for capital projects. She invited Jacqui Robinson and Derrick Jones of KPMG to present the report.

223.3 Derrick Jones and Jacqui Robinson gave a presentation on the report, a copy of which is attached to these minutes. They drew attention to the tabled map showing the location of the four FE colleges.

223.4 Chair reminded Council members that they were being asked to consider the recommendation that further consideration and investigation should be undertaken to consider a possible merger of North Area College and Stockport College. They were not being asked to agree a merger. He invited questions and comments from Council members.

223.5 In discussion the following points were raised:

- It was important in the Strategic Area Review to discover the satisfaction levels of learners as well as other stakeholders. Chair of the Stakeholder Advisory Group (StAG) confirmed that this would be the case.
- There should be a process of staff development and familiarization for staff affected by any proposed changes.
- It was important to take travel patterns into account when proposing changes. The consultants confirmed that this had been borne in mind and drew attention to the link along the A6 between Aquinas, Stockport and North Area Colleges. Travel across the east and west of the borough presented problems and meant that there was less scope for rationalization of provision across the east/west axis.
- Stockport's travel to work and study patterns were affected by its closeness to Manchester.
- While Stockport had only a small ethnic minority population, North Area College attracted a large number of ethnic minority students from the Manchester area. It was difficult to get exact data as 60% of North Area College students had declined to answer the question on ethnicity.
- When the full StAR took place it was important to take the whole economic area of Greater Manchester into account and not to base strategy on a local area such as Stockport. It was important that provision fed back into the economy. The Youth Strategy considered at the November Council meeting provided a good collaborative model and it was agreed that a copy of the Youth Strategy should be provided to KPMG. ED confirmed that, as well as local area reviews, a review of economic and employment sectors across Greater Manchester was being undertaken. Economic factors would be included in the StAR.
- While this report focused particularly on mapping provision in FE colleges, it stressed the importance of collaboration between all parties, including schools, work-based learning (WBL) providers and the specialist college in the area. Chair StAG confirmed that schools would be involved in the StARs.
- When considering the various options, it was important not to be constrained by the current locations of the four colleges, though travel patterns had to be taken into account.
- It was important for Council to reach a decision on the recommendations (i) because of the infrastructure implications and (ii) because Stockport was due for an Area Wide Inspection later in the year and the LSC needed to have a strategy in place.

223.6 Chair proposed, Abdul Jabbar seconded and Council **agreed** *nem con* that:

- Further consideration and investigation should be undertaken into a possible merger of North Area College and Stockport College, including consideration of a 'flagship' location for the merged college
- Local partners should work with the LSC and the LEA to develop a vision for 14-19 learning in Stockport and a strategy for implementation that involved collaborative working between all providers.
- Aquinas College should be asked to prepare a capital proposal for consideration by the Capital Committee.

**ACTION: Stockport Area Team and Success for All Theme 1 Project Manager to take forward.**

#### **224. Paper 03/2004 - Presentation from Wigan Area Team on Their Work**

224.1 Council received a presentation from Ruth Wheatley, Area Manager for Wigan, on the work LSC Greater Manchester was doing in Wigan.

224.2 Chair invited questions and comments. In discussion the following points were made:

- Large employers such as Patak's Foods and Heinz also had a good track record of workforce development in collaboration with local colleges
- RW confirmed that issues relating to work-based learning and 14-19 collaborative work had been taken into account in Wigan and Leigh College's capital proposals (which had been approved in principle by national capital committee). The project would be considered by the local capital committee in due course.

224.3 Council **noted** the work being done in Wigan to contribute to the achievement of LSC Greater Manchester's objectives.

#### **225. Paper 04/2004 – Regional Boards**

225.1 ED reported on the appointment of John Korzeniewski as Regional Director for the North West. He would be meeting with the NW EDs and Chairs on 16 January and had been invited to visit LSC Greater Manchester at the end of the month. She confirmed that he would be accountable to the local LSC Council of which he would be Executive Director. He was, of course, accountable to the Chief Executive.

225.2 Chair reported that the regional board, comprising the five local LSC EDs and chairs, already considered regional issues. The changes would not change the role of local Councils or local delivery.

225.3 Council **noted** the developments.

#### **226. Paper 05/2004 – Information, Advice and Guidance Update**

*Richard Guy declared an interest as Chair of Manchester Enterprises (which operates one of the six IAG partnerships)*

226.1 Operations Director informed Council of recent developments. With respect to para 5, the local boards were to be called "Strategic Boards". With respect to the timescale referred to in para 11, slippage had already occurred and it was unlikely that the final tender specification would be published before mid February, resulting in tenders being approved by the end of April and the new IAG lead bodies being notified by mid May. This was not helpful considering the concerns outlined in paras 14 and 15. She confirmed that the tendering process was a national one and that the original appointment of Simon Hughes Consultants had been the result of a tendering process.

226.2 Council members were concerned about the risk to IAG services as a result of the slippage and how that risk was being managed. RW responded that, if Council approved the recommendations of Adult Learning Committee on the re-appointment of the consultants, they would be asked to look at how the current level of delivery could be

maintained and how the partnerships might be supported. The partnerships themselves would also be asked to identify issues.

226.3 Council **approved** the recommendations from Adult Learning Committee that:

- Membership of the ALC should be extended to include representatives of key stakeholders (particularly Connexions and the Small Business Service);
- The committee's terms of reference should be revised to include the extended membership;
- The LSC should tender for a single partnership model which was co-terminus with the Connexions area and contract with one lead body;
- An external consultant should be appointed to support the transition process.

**ACTION: Debra Woodruff/Chair ALC to take forward.**

## **227. Paper 06/2004 – Report on Outcomes of Autumn 2003 Performance Review**

227.1 Director Strategy and Quality introduced the report on outcomes from the autumn 2003 performance review, pointing out that:

- For the first time, the four information, advice and guidance (IAG) partnerships had been included in the review
- LSC Greater Manchester was the 'lead' for eight work-based learning (WBL) providers who contracted with more than one local LSC
- Three providers (Holy Cross, Loreto and Winstanley Colleges) were in the excellent category. The DfES would be announcing on 16 January that Loreto and Holy Cross had become eligible for Beacon status.
- There were serious concerns with three providers. A considerable amount of work had been done with providers in this category.
- As requested by Council, detailed reports were provided at Annex F on providers in the 'excellent' and 'serious concerns' categories
- Outcomes for six local colleges had been considered by the regional moderation panel. Outcomes for five of those had been endorsed. The local LSC had reviewed the outcome for one college at the request of the moderation panel.

She invited questions and comments.

*Michele Sutton declared an interest as Principal of Hopwood Hall College*

*Chris Woodcock declared an interest as a member of the board of Rathbone Training*

227.2. In discussion the following points were made:

- The fact that all the providers in the excellent category were sixth form colleges raised issues as to whether the performance review process favoured providers of that type. It was important that the performance review process was fair to all types of provider as the result had funding implications. DSQ said that such providers tended to have a narrower focus. Criteria for premium funding would take into account overall inspection outcomes, widening participation and the diversity of provision to ensure that the review process was as fair as possible.
- In relation to providers contracted with more than one local LSC where LSC Greater Manchester was not the 'lead', LSC Greater Manchester fed information into the lead LLSC performance review. DSQ agreed to provide information on providers within LSC Greater Manchester where LSC Greater Manchester was not the lead LLSC
- Council requested regional and national comparisons for the outcomes of LSC Greater Manchester performance review

**ACTION: DSQ to provide (i) information on providers where LSC Greater Manchester was not the lead LSC and (ii) national and regional comparisons.**

227.3 Council **noted** the outcomes of the review and the action being taken.

### **ITEMS TO NOTE**

#### **228. Paper 07/2004 – Local Government Review**

228.1 Council **noted** that, if the recommendations on the review of two tier authorities were accepted, the area covered by LSC Greater Manchester might expand to cover Rossendale and possibly West Lancashire.

### **ITEMS TO RECEIVE**

#### **229. Paper 08/2004 - Chair's Report**

229.1 Chair introduced his report and asked Council members to consider whether their organizations could offer £1K sponsorship for the Modern Apprenticeship Awards to be presented at a ceremony on 29 April 2004.

#### **ACTION: Council members**

229.2 He drew attention to para 15 on the conduct of Council meetings. He took note of the comments received. Council members were broadly content with the *status quo* so no changes to the timing of Council meetings would be made at present.

229.3 Council **received** the chair's report.

#### **230. Paper 09/2004 – Executive Director's Report**

230.1 Executive Director introduced her report and reported on the outcomes of college inspections mentioned in para 52. The grades were still provisional and confidential until the inspection reports had been published. Council noted the excellent results.

230.2 ED reminded Council members that the Annual Stakeholders' Meeting would take place on 11 February at Manchester City Stadium. Stakeholders would hear about LSC Greater Manchester's achievements so far and the way forward.

230.3 ED drew attention to a tabled e-mail from LSC Chief Executive, Mark Haysom, setting out changes to the LSC's national structure. Three national directors would leave the LSC by the end of January. Rob Wye, Executive Director of LSC Northamptonshire, had been appointed as Director of the Chief Executive's Division.

230.4 Council **received** the Executive Director's report on national, regional and local developments.

#### **231. Paper 10/2004 – Finance Director's Report**

231.1 Director Finance and Corporate Services drew attention to

- the £0.75 million reduction in the administration budget for 2004-05 and
- the £0.3 million rebasing adjustment.

He invited questions and comments.

231.2 In response to a request for detailed information on how ESF funds had been disbursed, Director, Strategy and Quality, said that this would be published on the website. She reported that bids for 300 projects worth £67 million had been put forward for the £15 million funds available under the first prospectus. Fifty-five providers were being contracted with for 84 projects. Feedback was being included in letters sent to unsuccessful bidders. A second prospectus would be published in mid February. A clarification event would be held for providers expressing an interest in bidding for funds. An External and Discretionary Funding Manager had now been appointed after three months without one and this would lead to improvements in timescales for ESF-related activities.

### **ACTION: Director Strategy and Quality**

231.3 Council **noted** the report on expenditure against allocations for the first 8 months of the 2003/04 financial year and the 2004/05 administration budget, and congratulated DFCS on his management of the difficult situation over the past 12 months.

### **232. Reports From Advisory Committees**

232.1 Paper 11/2004 - Audit Committee – Council received the minutes of the Audit Committee and noted that Ray Short would take over as chair from the next meeting.

232.2 Paper 12/2004 and Paper 13/2004 – Equality and Diversity External Advisory Group – Council received the minutes of the 16 September and 9 December 2003 meetings and noted that the annual report on Equality and Diversity had been circulated.

232.3 Paper 14/2004 - Capital Committee – Council received the minutes of the 4 November meeting.

232.4 Paper 15/2004 – StAR Advisory Group – Council received the minutes of the 15 December meeting. Chair congratulated the Chair of the StAR Advisory Group on the work done so far.

232.5 Paper 16/2004 – Adult Learning Committee – Council received the minutes of the 24 November 2004 meeting.

### **233. Any Other Business**

None raised.

### **234. Date of Next Meeting**

Tuesday, 2 March 2004, preceded by a small tea party to acknowledge Jean Johnson's retirement.