

LEARNING AND SKILLS COUNCIL GREATER MANCHESTER

Minutes of the seventh meeting held on Tuesday, 15 January 2002, at Arndale House, Manchester, at 16.00hrs.

Present

Members	Anthony Goldstone Bill Grady Pauline Green Richard Hurst Abdul Jabbar Jean Llewellyn Alan Manning David Seddon Mollie Temple Chris Woodcock Andrew Harrison	Chair Acting Executive Director
Observers	Steve Brown, Fiona Mellett Hannah Roberts	Employment Service Chamber Business Enterprise Connexions
In attendance	Jane Bracewell, Head of Quality Improvement Ian Lever, Head of Workforce Development and Strategic Planning Jeff Morgan, Head of Corporate Services Penny Sanders, Head of Lifelong Learning Ernie Waller, Independent Assessor Fran Hulbert, North West Development Agency	
Minute Taker	Sarah Garner	
Apologies	Rachael Charlton Liz Davis John Merry David Page Ray Short Nigel Burke, GONW Debra Woodruff, Head of Services to Young People	

The Chairman wished all Council Members a Happy New Year.

Chair welcomed Fran Hulbert from NWDA to the meeting and also Ernie Waller, an independent assessor who had undertaken work with GO North West on the selection of Council members.

61. Minutes of 6 November 2001 meeting

The minutes of the 6 November 2001 meeting were accepted as an accurate record and signed.

62. Minutes of 3 December 2001 meeting

The minutes of the 3 December 2001 meeting were accepted as an accurate record and signed.

63. Matters Arising

Matters arising were covered by paper 1/2002. In addition the following matters were raised.

63.1 Minute 50.1 Skills Show and Festival of Learning – This item was dealt with under item 9 paper 6/2002 of the agenda.

63.2 Minute 50.2 Regional Meetings – This item was dealt with under item 7 of the agenda.

63.3 Minute 50.6 – Consultation on the Strategic Framework – Ian Lever reported that the Strategic Plan had gone out for consultation and included all the amendments and additions made at the meeting on the 3rd December 2001. The final plan would be approved in March before going live in April 2002, the new financial year.

The Chair requested a summary of what the other LSCs in the north west and perhaps some of the larger LSCs out of the region had in their plans on issues like Childcare as it would be interesting to compare views.

AP1/15.1.02 – Ian Lever

63.4 Minute 52.2 – Stockport College – The Chair reported that the Principal of the college has now resigned and Terry Ashurst had been appointed acting principal from 15 January whilst a new Principal was being sought. A permanent principal was expected to be in post by September 2002 at the latest.

63.5 Minute 52.4 - Childcare – This item was dealt with under item 10 of the agenda.

63.6 Minute 54 – Response to consultation on 16 -19 organisation and inspection – The Executive Director had sent a response, a copy of which had been circulated with the minutes of the 6 November 2001 meeting.

63.7 Minute 58 – Search Committee – Council Members Rachael Charlton, Bill Grady and David Seddon had agreed to be members of the Search Committee. The first meeting of this group had been arranged.

- 63.8 Minute 61 – Consultation on the Draft Strategic Plan – Ian Lever reported that, following the 3 December 2001 Special Council Meeting, the plan had been amended and circulated for consultation.

64. Executive Director's Report

The report was taken as read.

The Chair requested that the author of each paper be the Senior Manager in charge of that area.

1.2 Individual Learning Accounts – In answer to a question from the chair as to whether the discovery of irregularities in this programme affected the Greater Manchester LSC, Head of Lifelong Learning replied that LSC Greater Manchester was currently handling queries from the public and provider base who had been affected by this issue, but the DFES were handling the fraud issues which should not affect LSC Greater Manchester. The point that Unions had been hit hard by the programme closing was made, but discussions were underway to find alternative ways of working.

1.5 Modern Apprenticeship Advisory Committee – Mollie Temple asked whether there was any way the LSC could help institutions such as Bolton Institute to make a robust connection with the Modern Apprenticeship Scheme as in many instances it was extremely difficult. The Young People's Learning Committee was currently working across the whole of the provider groups to ensure that no provider group missed out.

65. Chair's Report

- 2 Grant Letter 2002 – The Chair said that it was good news that there would be a 5-6% increase for the financial year 2002 but he hoped that that would not include an administration line. As yet LSC Greater Manchester did not know how what impact it would have on our programme mechanisms. The Chair requested that LSC Greater Manchester keep an eye on this and inform the Council when further information was available.

National Conference – The Chair reported that he had attended the National Conference on 10 December. It had been a good day except the break out session on how to get employer contributions had only lasted 35 minutes which for the subject and amount of attendees had been too little time.

North West Chair's Meeting – The Chair reported that he had attended the North West Chair's Meeting on the 21 December 2001 where the salaries and concerns of staff had been raised.

66. Finance Director's Report

The report was taken as read.

Andrew Harrison reported that CODA would be installed as of the 1 April 2002. The figures currently produced were as accurate as possible whilst using the interim system. The administration budget had been reforecast and LSC Greater Manchester was currently working to an underspend. For the financial year 2002/2003 reforecasting would take place again and it was estimated that they would rise.

Bill Grady mentioned the clawback from the Workbased Learning Providers which was estimated between 15 to 20%. He said that for some Training Providers that would unbalance them and some might even close.

The Council requested a report on areas of work that the LSC Greater Manchester was unable to carry out properly and then perhaps money could be vired across to rectify the situation. The Council must have some way of deciding where monies were spent to enhance the work that the LSC carried out.

AP2/15.1.02 – Andrew Harrison

67. North West Development Agency Skills Strategy

The Chair welcomed Fran Hulbert to the meeting and invited her to give her presentation.

Fran Hulbert issued handouts to the Council of her presentation and indicated that the NWDA would be organising a workshop for the LSC in the next two or three months to help with the work of the NWDA. The Chair said that the work that the RDA were carrying out was continuous and that there should be a continuous dialogue with the LSC.

68. Report on Provider Performance Review

The Council took the paper as read and noted the outcomes of the October 2001 provider performance review.

Jane Bracewell commented on specifics in the review and said that there were national concerns regarding the process and that LSC Greater Manchester had a project underway to support national office in addressing those concerns. The project aimed to develop the dialogue between the LSC and providers both before and after the review.

Mollie Temple brought up the issue of College Governors and the fact that, as a Governor of Bolton College, she had not received a copy of the letter sent to the college following the review. Letters to providers causing serious concerns were sent to the Principal and the Chair of Governors in the expectation that they would forward the information on to relevant parties. It was decided that in the future the letter would include a sentence to that effect. In addition there should be a sentence in the letter indicating that the information was placed before the local LSC Council.

AP3/15.1.02 – Jane Bracewell

69. Skills Show and Festival of Learning

The Council took the paper as read and Council members were asked to note the progress that had been made. The Chair informed the Council that the next meeting of the Skills Festival coincided with the next Council meeting and because of this the start time of the Council meeting would be changed from 4.00 pm to 4.30pm.

Mollie Temple asked that HE NW also be included as a key partner.

AP4/15.1.02 – Penny Sanders

70. Reports on Childcare

The Council took the paper as read. The Council were asked to note the LSC's role in supporting childcare development and endorse the proactive role LSC Greater Manchester was taking in forging relationships with partners and identifying and starting to address these issues. Ian Lever indicated that he would be writing out to all LSCs to co-ordinate a workshop in this area.

71. Reports from Advisory Committees

71.1 Minutes of 14 December meeting of the Audit Committee

The Minutes were taken as read.

The minutes of the Equal Opportunities Committee meeting had unfortunately been omitted from the agenda and a copy would be circulated to all Council Members.

AP5/15.1.02 – Jean Johnson

72. Health and Safety Policy

The Council took the paper as read and noted the priority given to health and safety by the LSC. The Council then agreed to sign off the policy which would be reviewed annually.

73. Government Office North West's Role as Observer

As there was no representative from GONW available to attend the meeting the Council took the paper as read and noted its content.

74. Analysis of Further Education Institutions' Strategic Plans and Financial Forecasts.

The Chair asked that the paper be taken as read. The Council were then asked to decide whether or not it could advise National Council that there appeared to be no significant concerns with regard to the FE provision in Greater Manchester being considered 'proper and reasonable', in line with the Council's statutory obligations.

After much discussion the Council proposed to accept the document for what it was but asked that the Young Peoples Learning Committee and Adult Learning Committee look to see if anything should be rolled out and that the officers who wrote the report should look to see if anything should be pulled out of the report to guide the Council in their thinking.

75. Proposed LIF Procedure and Priorities 2002-03

With the paper being tabled at the meeting the Council had not had a chance to read through the document and it was therefore decided that Council Members should comment to Ian Lever once they had had a chance to read the paper. That would enable a more robust document to be issued at the next Council meeting in March. The Chair stated that it was an important issue and should therefore appear early on the agenda. Jean Johnson to note for agenda.

AP6/15.1.02 – Ian Lever/Jean Johnson

76. Any Other Business

Jean Llewellyn asked what the process was for the Manchester Co-financing plans/strategy. Ian Lever replied that LSC Greater Manchester was currently producing a plan. The approval of the process was underway and it would be April before the final draft was approved following which it would be circulated for consultation.

77. Dates of the Next Meetings

5 March 2002 – starting time 16.30 hrs

7 May 2002 – starting time 16.00 hrs

Chair declared the meeting closed at 18.05 hrs.