

LEARNING AND SKILLS COUNCIL GREATER MANCHESTER

Minutes of the sixteenth meeting of the LSC Greater Manchester Council held on Tuesday, 1 July 2003, at Arndale House, Arndale Centre, at 16.00 hrs.

Present:

Members	Anthony Goldstone Rachael Charlton Liz Davis Pauline Green Richard Guy Richard Hurst David Page Kath Rigby Ray Short Michele Sutton Chris Woodcock	Chair Executive Director (ED)
Observers	Mike Hill, for Nigel Burke - GO North West Hannah Roberts – Connexions Service	
In attendance:	Jane Bracewell, Director of Quality Improvement (DQI) Andrew Harrison, Director of Finance and Systems (DFS) Ian Lever, Director of Strategy and Planning (DSP) Debra Woodruff, Director of Operations (DO) Peter Holmes, Head of Chair's Division Clive Dickens, Area Manager for Salford and Trafford (to agenda item 4)	
Clerk to the Council	Jean Johnson	
Apologies	Abdul Jabbar Alan Manning John Merry David Seddon Mollie Temple	
Observers:	Nigel Burke Fiona Mellett – Chamber Business Enterprises Linda Tomlinson – Job Centre Plus	

The chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced Peter Holmes, head of the national chair's division, Mike Hill, representing GO North West in Nigel Burke's absence, and Clive Dickens, Area Manager for Salford and Trafford.

181. Minutes of 6 May 2003 meeting

The minutes of the 6 May 2003 meeting were **accepted** as an accurate record and signed.

182. Paper 39/2003 - Matters arising

182.1 M.172.3 page 3 - Local Intervention and Development (LID) Fund Commissioning – Chair informed Council the cost of proposals received so far exceeded the amount of money available so staff were assessing the proposals. Council would have details once they had been prioritized by the senior management team.

ACTION – SMT

182.2 Other matters arising were dealt with in the circulated paper.

183. Paper 40/2003 Developing Governance in the LSC

183.1 Peter Holmes explained that the purpose of his visit was to get a feel for how local governance was developing. He commented on the current lines of accountability, which left the role of the local Council unclear. There would be an opportunity for a new Chief Executive to review this with the new Minister and this could lead to greater autonomy for local Councils.

183.2 Peter acknowledged the experience and expertise of local Council members and was interested to find out what was rewarding and frustrating about being a local Council member.

183.3 In discussion, Council members:

- Welcomed a reconsideration of how responsibility devolved to local Councils as they felt there was too much central control and too little local influence.
- Acknowledged that they had confidence in the management team but felt there was more to do to distil the two roles of strategy and management to ensure that discussions were on strategic issues.
- Agreed that the word 'Council' was still causing confusion as it was not always clear whether it referred to the non executive or executive roles.
- Considered that there needed to be greater clarity about the function of local councils. There was reference to Annex C of the paper, which illustrated the number of areas that were 'specified by the national Council'. The paper had addressed upwards and downwards reporting but had missed the horizontal accountability across the 47 local LSCs.
- Commented on the difficulty in obtaining data for local target setting, which was important for the responsibility and accountability of local Councils.
- Understood that their role was to take a collective view of education and training in the area rather than representing their own particular 'constituencies'. They recognised the need to continue to develop knowledge of each other's strengths and weaknesses to build a strong team. The Chair encouraged them to attend the Away Day in September.

183.4 PH responded to some of the points raised:

- Current thinking was to move beyond the functions outlined in Annex C to his paper. National targets and priorities would still be set but local Councils might have a say in which of these were a priority for their own local areas. He acknowledged the data problems.
- Regional issues were under consideration and had been the theme of the Chairs' day in May. The creation of Regional Assemblies might change lines of accountability. He had seen how the northwest co-operated when he attended the regional conference.

183.5 PH thanked Council members for their contributions, which would be fed into a paper being presented to the national Council at the end of July.

184. Presentation from Salford Area Team on Their Work

184.1 Council received a presentation from Clive Dickens, Area Manager for Salford and Trafford on the work LSC Greater Manchester was doing in Salford. A copy of the presentation and an associated paper are attached to the minutes.

184.2 Chair thanked Clive for his presentation which had given Council a good insight into what was being achieved in Salford. Council members commented on

- the importance of Salford College in making a difference to the area
- the importance of collaboration not only between employers and providers but also between colleges and work-based learning providers.

185. Paper 41/2003 – The Great Skills Debate

185.1 Director of Strategy and Planning confirmed that the views of employers in Greater Manchester had been fed into the national skills debate.

185.2 Council **noted** the summary of Greater Manchester employer views.

186. Paper 42/2003 – Outcomes of Spring 2003 Performance Review

186.1 Director of Quality Improvement reported that, since the paper had been produced, regional moderation had taken place. This had resulted in Stockport College being moved into the 'some concerns' category, therefore the percentages in para 8 of the paper should be 64% (not 65%) and 36% (not 35%). Annex D had been produced in response to a request from Audit Committee for information on how providers causing concern were dealt with.

186.2 Council **noted** the outcomes of the spring performance reviews.

187. Papers 43/2003 and 43A/2003 – Developing a More Strategic Approach to LearnDirect Provision Across Greater Manchester

187.1 Chair suggested to Council that, as two Council members, Michele Sutton and Richard Guy, had an interest in the papers under discussion, each of them should be invited to make a statement on the issue but should then not be allowed to take part

in the debate or to vote on the issues. Council **agreed**. He invited Executive Director to introduce the papers.

187.2 ED introduced the two papers, which outlined the reasons for moving to create a single Ufl hub for Greater Manchester by 1 August 2004 and the factors that had accelerated the proposal. Discussions were taking place with the hubs as to how the proposals would operate and a meeting of all three hub operators was taking place on 2 July.

187.3 Chair invited Michele Sutton and Richard Guy to make their statements.

187.4 Michele declared an interest as a Director and former Chair of the North East Manchester hub, which had been discussing merger with the Wigan and Leigh hub. She outlined the good performance and inspection records of the two north Manchester hubs. The Chairs of the two hubs had written jointly to the LSC outlining concerns about the decision and the process. Michele felt that there had not been sufficient consultation or communication. The shareholders had made a considerable investment in the development of the hubs.

187.5 Richard declared an interest as Chief Executive of Manchester Enterprises which ran the City Pride and Stockport hub. Ufl in Greater Manchester was something to be proud of and the proposals were about making it bigger and better. The proposed changes would align the boundaries of a number of strategic bodies. Hub staff would have TUPE protection and there would be a commitment to maintaining existing learning centres and to growing provision in north Manchester. CPS hub had a good track record of working in partnership with colleges.

187.6 Council discussed the proposals at length. Points discussed included:

- Licences were given by the Ufl. The Ufi wanted to give one licence for the area in cooperation with the LSC. The proposal had been developed locally and regionally in response to the DfES review of the relationship between Ufl and the LSC and withdrawal of the NE Manchester hub. Similar changes were taking place in other areas and this had the support of the Ufl nationally.
- The need for openness and transparency in the process.
- The need to consult on staff employment issues and ensure that the services would be maintained during the transition.
- Further consideration of the financial implications of the changes for the hubs and the benefits for learners.

187.7 The Chair put the following motion to the council:

- **That the Council should agree in principle to the formation of a single Ufl hub within 12 months**
- **That existing hub licences should be extended until the arrangements for a single GM hub could be put in place**
- **That the process should be transparent, including a tender process if necessary.**

Council agreed the motion with 8 votes for and 1 abstention. Michele Sutton and Richard Guy did not take part in the voting.

188. Paper 44/2003 – Successor to SkillCity

188.1 Executive Director introduced the proposals for a successor event to SkillCity in February 2004. It was proposed that LSC Greater Manchester would support £140K of the costs. There might be some additional cost to the LSC to support and stimulate initiatives and support from Centres of Vocational Excellence (CoVEs) to events around the GMex event.

188.2 Council **endorsed** the proposal.

189. Paper 45/2003 – Corporate Risk Register

189.1 Finance Director reported that LSC Greater Manchester had been commended by national internal audit for its work on risk management. Audit Committee had requested that the risk register should be brought to the attention of Council. Members should consider whether any areas had been omitted or should be dealt with in a different way. He explained that risks would be reported on annually

189.2 Council **noted** the proposed changes to the risk register and **endorsed** the inclusion of risk assessment as an integral part of all papers submitted to Council.

190. Paper 46/2003 – Chair’s Report

190.1 Chair drew attention to para 7 of his report and congratulated all those concerned with the organization of the Modern Apprenticeship Awards Ceremony.

190.2 Council **received** the report.

191. Paper 47/2003 – Executive Director’s Report

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

192. Paper 48/2003 – Finance Director’s Report

192.1 Finance Director informed Council that the allocations/budgets for 2003/04 were not yet on the system. He would give Council an update on the 2003/04 position at its next meeting.

192.2 Council **noted** the final outturn position for 2002/03 and the first indicative reports for 2003/04.

193. Paper 49/2003 – Health and Safety Report

193.1 Council **noted** the report on LSC Greater Manchester’s work on health and safety.

194. Reports from Advisory Committees

- 194.1 Paper 50/2003 - Minutes of 14 May 2003 Meeting of Young People's Learning Committee

Council **received** the minutes.

- 194.2 Paper 51/2003 – Minutes of 3 June 2003 Meeting of Audit Committee

Council **received** the minutes.

- 194.3 Paper 52/2003 – Minutes of 10 June 2003 Meeting of Equality and Diversity External Working Group

Council **received** the minutes.

195. Any Other Business

- 195.1 Joint Pilot Final Strategic Plan

Executive Director drew attention to the Alliance for Skills And Productivity Strategic Plan which had been circulated electronically. There were no questions or comments.

196. Dates of Next Meetings

- 196.1 The next meetings of Council would take place on Tuesday, 2 September 2003 and Tuesday, 4 November 2003. A Council Away Day was being planned for Thursday, 25 September. Chair encouraged as many members as possible to attend.

- 196.2 The calendar of meetings for 2004 was tabled.