

**SUMMARY OF THE GREATER MERSEYSIDE  
LEARNING AND SKILLS COUNCIL MEETING  
HELD ON WEDNESDAY 28 MARCH 2001 AT  
TITHEBARN HOUSE, LIVERPOOL**

**PRESENT:** Jim Michie (Chair), Paul Holme, David Atkin, Gordon Burns,  
Martin Carey, Sue Carmichael, Brian Davies, Mike Doyle, Claire Dove,  
John Firr, Heather Hardcastle, Richard Marbrow, George Sweeney

**(OBSERVERS)** John Flamson (Government Office for the North West)  
Peter Fletcher (Greater Merseyside Enterprise Ltd)  
Keiran Gordon (Connexions Partnership)  
Brian Kearsley (Employment Service North West)

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Rob Burn, Clare Caffrey (Secretary to the Council), Nick Gerrard,  
Richard Merritt

**APOLOGIES:** Kath Boullen, Veronica Laird, Geoffrey Piper

**CHAIR'S OPENING REMARKS**

The Chair welcomed John Flamson and Peter Fletcher to the meeting as Observers from Government Office for the North West and Greater Merseyside Enterprise Ltd (GME).

Local Council Members were pleased to hear that the Local Council's Breakfast Launch that week had been successful and that Claire Dove and Veronica Laird had spoken to members of staff at the launch.

**MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING**

Local Council Members agreed that the minutes of the previous meeting were an accurate record and should be signed by the Chair.

**MATTERS ARISING**

The Chair informed Local Council Members that Declarations of Interests at future meetings were necessary where the interest was material and likely to have an impact on any decision.

**[MARKETING AND COMMUNICATION]**

Local Council Members noted that arrangements were being made to ensure that they were aware of relevant items which appeared in the media.

**[CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S VISIT]**

The Chair informed Local Council Members that John Harwood, Chief Executive of the Learning and Skills Council, would be at Liverpool Community College on 23 May for an Opening Ceremony before joining the Local Council Meeting on that day.

**SUMMARY OF THE LAST MEETING**

The summary of the last meeting was tabled and the Chair asked Local Council Members to inform the Secretary to the Council by Friday if they had any queries regarding the content.

## **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

### **Staffing/Management of Change**

The Executive Director informed Local Council Members that the administrative budget was expected to be allocated from National Office by mid April. The Senior Management Team would consider posts where local vacancies needed to be filled immediately. The majority of TEC wind down activities were currently being undertaken by TEC staff who had opted for Voluntary Severance.

### **Accommodation**

Local Council Members noted the significant alterations made to the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> floors at Tithebarn House in Liverpool.

### **March Launch**

Each new member of staff had received a welcome pack in early March and an induction pack at the Monday launch event.

Local Council Members noted that the Executive Director had undertaken interviews with local media during the last week and it was intended to issue letters to all partners to confirm the Local Council's operation.

### **Work Based Learning**

Local Council Members noted that Letters of Intent had been dispatched to 101 Work Based Learning Providers and that over the next week it was expected that contracts could be finalised.

A national marketing initiative announced by the Minister in which all 47 Local Councils would organise "bitesize" courses locally was noted

### **Further Education**

The Executive Director explained that Further Education institutions had received provisional allocations of funding from the FEFC and would respond to the Learning and Skills Council regarding those allocations.

### **Education Business Links (EBL)**

The interim arrangements to be put in place until final agreement could be reached on the creation of the EBL consortium in Merseyside were discussed. The Local Council asked for a progress report at the next meeting if progress had not been made on the longer term arrangements.

### **Workforce Development**

Local Council Members noted the expectation for the contract with Greater Merseyside Enterprise Ltd to be signed in the coming weeks. The Executive Director explained that the Local Council had direct responsibility for relationships with large employers i.e. over 250 staff. He emphasised the need for the transition to the new arrangements to be managed smoothly.

## **FINANCIAL BUDGETS 2001/2002**

Rob Burn highlighted a number of areas in the paper which Local Council Members had received. Local Council Members noted that the figures provided had been based on

allocations made in March and further information was awaited. Information had been received on programme budgets but not on administrative budgets and Local Council Members noted that within the national context Greater Merseyside Learning and Skills Council was the eighth largest local Council, in financial terms.

The Executive Director confirmed the importance of increasing participation in learning and that the budget allocation reflected lower levels of participation than elsewhere in the country. He confirmed that analysis would take place to compare population and budgets.

Local Council Members noted the background information they had received, set within a national context and that full details would be provided when they had been received.

## **ADVISORY COMMITTEE FEEDBACK**

The Executive Director confirmed that all three Advisory Committees had now met during March. Each of the Advisory Committees had discussed their Terms of Reference and then had individual debates relating to their areas of responsibility.

### **Adult Learning Advisory Committee**

Local Council Members received a short presentation from Mike Doyle, Chair of the Adult Learning Advisory Committee, during which they noted that the presentation received had highlighted important work for the Committee to concentrate on during the coming months, including baseline statistics for Merseyside. The Committee had agreed the need to ensure the involvement of employers and the voluntary sector in any future considerations. A number of areas had been highlighted for consideration at the next meeting, in addition to the work to be completed between now and September/October.

### **Young Peoples' Advisory Committee**

Local Council Members received a short presentation from Richard Marbrow, Chair of the Young Peoples' Advisory Committee, during which they noted that useful statistical information had been provided at the meeting and Committee Members had requested further robust information to allow comparison to take place.

### **Equal Opportunities Advisory Committee**

Local Council Members received a presentation from Sue Carmichael, Chair of the Equal Opportunities Advisory Committee, during which they noted the need for Equal Opportunities to be intrical to all Learning and Skills Council activities, the intention for the Committee to ensure that good practice from other organisations was utilised, and Committee Members wishes for the Local Council to be seen as an exemplar employer.

## **CORPORATE PLANNING 2001/2002**

Local Council Members had received a copy of the draft Corporate Plan for consultation and Nick explained the need for the National Strategic Framework to be finalised in order to provide a framework for the Local Corporate Plan to be produced. The Local Plan was required by March 2002 and the intention was to emulate the brevity of the National draft Plan.

During discussion Local Council Members agreed:

- that appropriate targets in each of the areas listed in the draft Corporate Plan should be prepared, to be worked towards locally,
- the need for a shared agenda and to work with other agencies effectively, possibly considering workshops to enable different sectors to become involved,

- that a draft response to the National draft Plan would be provided for Local Council Members to consider at their May meeting and that the Advisory Committees should be asked to make recommendations to the Local Council on the parts of the response relevant to their responsibilities,
- that partner organisations with Observers at Local Council meetings should be consulted regarding the response to the draft National Corporate Plan, in addition to any views expressed in response to a recent letter sent to all partner organisations, including a reference website address and invitation for comments,
- consideration should be given to ensure the engagement of employers and an invitation should be extended to the existing Employment Service New Deal Employers Coalition for them to consider this issue at the next meeting,
- the importance of the Local Plan to be innovative and challenging.

### **STANDING (VERBAL) REPORTS**

Local Council Members received short presentations to update them on developments at The National Council, the North West Development Agency, Greater Merseyside Enterprise Ltd and The Connexions Partnership.

### **MINUTES FOR ACCEPTANCE**

Local Council Members agreed to accept the Minutes of the Adult Learning Advisory Committee Meeting held on Tuesday 6 March 2001 and the Young Peoples' Advisory Committee meeting held on Tuesday 13 March 2001.

### **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

The Chair advised Local Council Members of National Office's wish for the Local Council to form an Audit Sub-Committee and requested volunteers to become members.

### **DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting of the local Council was scheduled to take place on Wednesday 25 April 2001 at 4pm.