

COMMERCIAL IN CONFIDENCE
MINUTE NUMBER 03/297 TO 03/307

LEARNING AND SKILLS COUNCIL GREATER MERSEYSIDE
MINUTES OF THE
MEETING OF 25 JUNE 2003

PRESENT: Roger Hoyle (Chair), Paul Holme (Executive Director), Geoffrey Piper, Richard Marbrow, Maureen Williams, Sue Carmichael, Martin Carey, David Atkin, George Sweeney, John Firr, John Swain, Heather Hardcastle, Kath Boullen

APOLOGIES: Gordon Burns, Claire Dove

OBSERVERS: Peter Fletcher (GME), George Maguire (Job Centre Plus), Kieran Gordon (GM Connexions)
Apologies from Nigel Burke (GONW)

IN ATTENDANCE: Richard Merritt, Dave Brennan, Sue Wood, Bob Cooney and Vicky Sinclair (Facilitators).

03/296 CHAIR'S OPENING REMARKS

The Chair welcomed Members to his second Council Meeting. Congratulations were recorded to Claire Dove upon her recent marriage and the Chair advised that a card had been sent on Members' behalf. The Chair also welcomed George Maguire as Job Centre Plus Observer. George advised Council that Brian Kearsley had now been appointed Deputy Field Director at regional level. Bob Cooney and Vicky Sinclair were also welcomed to the Meeting as the Council Support Team.

03/297 MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL WORKSHOP 14/15 MAY

The minutes of the Meeting were agreed subject to a few grammatical amendments. The Summary of the Meeting was also agreed subject to similar minor amendments.

03/298 MATTERS ARISING

[03/282] Overview of Achievements

Members noted that a full HR Update would be discussed at the 30 July Meeting.

[03/290] Area Wide Inspection

Members noted that the AWI Plans for both Wirral and St Helens had been signed and despatched to National Office and DfES within deadline.

03/299 NWDA/SBS/LSC PILOT

Members noted the progress report and paper outlining proposed arrangements introduced by Paul Holme.

Kath Boullen arrived at this point.

There was a general discussion in particular regarding the need for a separate Board for the Pilot. Members were concerned at the possible perception of such a body as another layer of bureaucracy. Members, however, did recognise the NWDA's wishes to remain strategic and at a distance from delivery (which would be the concern of the proposed Regional Board.) Council **AGREED** that a response should raise the issue of the need for a separate Board, and stating that LSCGM would be happy for the NWDA Board to fulfil this role. If a new Board was set up then, in the interest of close linkages, a range of appropriate organisations should be involved, including employers and possibly including non-executive members of partner Boards.

Kieran Gordon arrived at this point.

The Chair thanked Paul and Members for a useful discussion noting the significant progress made since Paul Holme's part-time secondment leading the Pilot development.

03/300 HALTON AREA WIDE INSPECTION PLAN

Members noted the paper as presented by Sue Wood. Council discussed areas for improvement as covered in the Action Plan and areas of good practice which could be built upon. Council also noted the timescale for the Plan and the deadline for submission to National Office and DfES.

Major issues:

- Widening provision
- Increasing curriculum offered
- Accommodation facilities for learning.

Members were assured that the range of appropriate stakeholders would continue to be involved in the process (eg including the Learning Partnership and the EBP).

The Chair thanked members of the Executive for their work thus far, understanding the process was not yet completed. Members **AGREED** their endorsement of the development areas cited in the Report and to delegate responsibility for the sign off of Plan to the Chair and Executive Director.

Council requested that a booklet be circulated concerning definitions of acronyms. **AGREED** that Bob Cooney would consider best way of addressing issue of acronyms in papers.

Sue Wood left the Meeting at this point.

03/301 EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS REPORT

Members noted the report and the new format as delivered by the Executive Director.

LSC Employee Perception Survey

Council were advised of the current staff presentations on the Employee Perception Survey noting that whilst the results were generally disappointing there were areas of good practice. The Executive Director advised that Focus Groups would be set up in the near future to address any areas for improvement.

Performance Outturn

Council noted current budget position and recorded their pleasure with results.

Advisory Committees

There was also some discussion on the frequency, timing and structure of Advisory Committees. Discussion also covered the request for Committees to be more task orientated.

It was **AGREED**:

- that the Adult Skills and Pilot work should be covered under the Workforce Development Committee agenda
- Meeting dates should be diaried 12 months in advance

03/302 STRATEGIC AREA REVIEW

Dave Brennan presented a paper setting out proposals for conducting local Strategic Area Reviews covering also the possible implications for the process in the context of the recent announcement of LSCGM as a Test Bed LSC. The Test Bed approach was based on the rapid implementation of 'Success for All' including the testing of different operational approaches. There was lengthy discussion on the Test Bed pilot proposal and its fit with current LSC projects such as the NWDA/SBS/LSC Pilot and Success for All. Council acknowledged that selection as a Test Bed office reflects confidence in the Executive Director and his team but noted also the extra work and time that it would entail.

Members expressed some concern about the need to agree some elements of the 'Success for All' plan in sequence before the whole picture was clear but there was recognition that early progress would need to be made (and be seen to be made) on some issues.

Council **AGREED** that:

- a) Dave Brennan would produce a list of the likely key decision issues, in so far as these could be ascertained at this point.
- b) proposals and conclusions would be brought to Council as they emerge and Council would give a decision (or conditional approval pending further information being available)
- c) the broad outline of the recommended segmentation approach be used for the Strategic Area Reviews
- d) a more detailed paper would be submitted to the September Council
- e) long term future input will be required from Council Members

Peter Fletcher left the meeting at this point.

03/304 FEEDBACK FROM ADVISORY COMMITTEES

Audit Committee

Members were notified that the Statement of Internal Control had been agreed; also that the Committee had changed its name to Audit, Performance and Quality Advisory Committee and that meetings had been productive with good attendance. The Committee would be meeting again in August.

George Sweeney left the Meeting at this point.

Young Peoples' Committee

A Meeting was not due to take place until 11 July. A report will be given to the next Council Meeting.

Adult Committee

Martin Carey updated the Council on a recent presentation given to the Committee by Liverpool Community College who are developing proposals to train volunteers taking account of the Liverpool Capital of Culture context. The Committee expressed interest in the programme and invited the College to develop its projects further on a wider partnership basis to cover Greater Merseyside as a whole and to serve the wide range of volunteer opportunities.

John Swain left the Meeting at this point.

03/305 UPDATES FROM OBSERVER ORGANISATIONS

Greater Merseyside Connexions

Members discussed and noted the paper presented on key issues and observed that the numbers of Young People not in Education, Employment or Training had been reduced via intensive work with partner agencies. Noted 'not known' levels reduced to one of the lowest in the country.

Heather Hardcastle left the Meeting at this point.

Jobcentre Plus

Members noted the rollout of JobCentre Plus in the Wirral, Knowsley and Sefton boroughs with St Helens and Halton to follow in Autumn 2003. The date for Liverpool rollout has not yet been finalised.

03/306 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There was no further business discussed.

03/307 NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will take place on **30 July 2003** at 4.00pm at Tithebarn House.