

# Minutes



Leading learning and skills

**Date** 3 July 2007  
**Subject** Council Meeting  
**Location** Radisson Hotel, Liverpool  
**Time** 16:00  
**LSC office** Greater Merseyside  
**Publication intent** Internal

**Present** Roger Hoyle (Chair), Helen France, Kath Boullen, Sue Carmichael, John Firr, Martin Carey, Marureen Williams, Elaine Owen, Brian Rourke, Claire Dove, John Swain  
**In attendance** Kieran Gordon (Connexions)  
**LSC staff** Karon Brownbill, Tim Hall, Kevin Mothersdale, Simon Pierce, Nicola Scott,  
**Apologies** Apologies have been received from:  
Martin Carey, Sue Carmichael, Sir George Sweeney, Phil Round

## 1. Welcome and introductions

- 1.1 Roger Hoyle welcomed everyone to the third meeting of 2007 and informed Council of the resignation of Gordon Burns. He then gave an overview of the agenda.
- 1.2 Roger also gave feedback on meetings he had attended since the Council had last met, highlighting the following:-
  - His meeting with The Mersey Partnership and the NWDA regarding the LSC's engagement with employers in the sub-region. John Korzeniewski and Roger would be attending the Merseyside Chief Executives and Leaders Group in August to pursue this issue and would report back to the next meeting.

## 2. Minutes of last meeting

- 2.1 There were two amendments to the minutes:-
  - 2.1.1. Item 3 to be amended from "the Council to give consent" to "the Council agreed to recommend consent".
  - 2.1.2. Item 9.3 "June" to be amended to "October".

### **3. Matters arising**

#### ***South Sefton 6<sup>th</sup> Form College Capital Proposal***

3.1 This proposal had been agreed by the Capital Committee. However, if there was an adjustment beyond 10% it would return to the Committee for approval.

### **4. St Helens Vocational Centre Capital Proposal**

4.1 Nicola Scott updated the Council on developments following the meeting of the Council sub-committee on 13<sup>th</sup> June.

4.2 The total cost of the project was £3.8m, 50% was agreed through ERDF.

4.3 The College submitted the bid on behalf of the St Helens 14-19 Partnership, requesting 35% of the total cost, with the balance coming from College reserves. The proposed development would increase vocational provision capacity and opportunities to young people. It should be able to offer diplomas in engineering from September 2008.

4.4 The sub-committee recommend it be approved for submission to the National Capital Committee.

### **5. Merseyside Council Statement of Achievement**

5.1 Helen France presented the first draft of a Merseyside Statement of Achievement to Council. Helen stressed that this was a work in progress and encouraged members to feed back contributions/comments, which should be sent to Shelagh Page by Friday, 13 July. Paul Holme and Elaine Bowker, had been consulted.

5.2 The following observations were made:-

5.2.1. The document needed more impact;

5.2.2. There should be reference to the Council's championing of equality, diversity, and quality'

5.2.3. The statement was dated 2001–2006 but should include 2007.

5.2.4. The statement should include key imperatives for the future which may be useful in hand-over arrangements;

**Action: Council members to feed back to Shelagh**

**Action: Helen to re-draft**

### **6. Dissolution of Local Councils: future sub-regional arrangements**

6.1 The final reading of the FE and Training Bill was due shortly and should receive Royal Assent, to be enacted in the autumn.

6.2 Appointments to Regional Council: New arrangements could not be progressed until Royal Assent had been given..

6.3 The Regional Management Board would operate pending the change. It seemed likely that present arrangements would cease some time during the autumn.

- 6.4 The Chair had recently met with Roy Morris and was due to meet with Merseyside Chief Executives and Leaders Group to discuss the future city region strategy and sub-regional arrangements.
- 6.5 The Chair briefed the Council on the changes in Government: John Denham was Innovation, Universities and Skills Secretary and 14-19 issues would be devolved to Local Authorities. Mark Haysom had met with John Denham.
- 6.6 There would be capital proposals for Liverpool, St Helens and Knowsley in the coming months and the Council had an important function there.
- 6.7 Roger summed up the discussion by confirming the importance of support employers, learners and staff. He would aim to influence events and would keep members informed.

## **7. Spring Review – June 2007**

- 7.1 Helen France introduced her presentation. Councils were reviewed twice yearly, in Spring and Summer.
- 7.2 Key points to come out of the Review were:-
- Proportion of 16 year olds in FT education now rising;
  - More young people were qualified to at least level 2;
  - More young people qualified to Level 3.
  - Skills for Life interim target had been exceeded;
  - Adult Level 2 interim PSA target had been met;
  - FE College success rates were up 76% in 2005/06;
  - Apprenticeship success rates had increased by 35% in the past 5 years.
- 7.3 The key challenge was that the NEET figure had risen and we were the poorest performing sub-region in this respect.
- 7.4 2006-007 had been a challenging year, funding had been moved from non-priority to priority allocations, Skills for Life and Full Level 2 qualifications.
- 7.5 Kieran Gordon questioned DfES data regarding NEET as Connexions figures showed there was a reduction in NEET
- 7.6 In response to a query from Claire Dove, Helen responded that the impact of ESF had not been fully considered but would be addressed in the future.
- 7.7 Sue Carmichael acknowledged that there was a shift in funding priorities but was concerned about worklessness and how the Council could bring pressure to bear. Karon Brownbill agreed that this was an issue in Merseyside and the City of Employment Strategy had put forward proposals to DWP. LSC had been working with Jobcentre Plus to use discretionary funds (£8m).

## **8. Observer Reports**

### ***Connexions***

8.1 Kieran Gordon had circulated his report which summarised performance at the end of April 2007, particular emphasis given to the achievement of key targets and objectives set out in the Partnership's business plan.

8.2 Key issues at the start of the new business year were:-

- The numbers in the NEET group are significantly lower than a year ago
- NEET rates are reducing in five local areas and increasing in one;
- The Partnership is on course to meet the annual "not known" target;
- "In learning" rates are rising;
- The Activity Agreement Pilot continues to be successful in achieving positive outcomes

### ***Jobcentre Plus***

8.3 Jackie Mason informed Council that Jobcentre Plus now had a new Secretary of State and ministerial team.

8.4 Jobcentre Plus would now be the agency through which co-financing would take place. The LSC was working closely with Jobcentre Plus on this issue.

## **9. Feedback from Advisory Committees**

9.1 Advisory Committees had not met since the last Council meeting.

## **10. Any Other Business**

10.1 Sue Price would be going on maternity leave, Council wished her well.

## **11. Date of next meeting**

11.1 The next meeting of the Council would take place on Tuesday, 18 September at 4.00pm.

**Meeting chair**

Roger Hoyle

**Minute taker**

Shelagh Page

**Date created**

5 July 2007

**Document ref.**

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