

Minutes



Leading learning and skills

Date 4 October 2005
Subject Council Meeting
Location Council Room, Tithebarn House
Time 4.00 pm
LSC office Greater Merseyside
Publication intent Internal

Present

Council: Roger Hoyle (Chair), Elaine Bowker (Executive Director), Heather Akehurst, Kath Boullen, Dr Martin Carey, Claire Dove, John Firr, Elaine Owen, Phil Round, Cllr John Swain, Sir George Sweeney, Dr Maureen Williams.

Observers: Peter Morton (BLGM), Kieran Gordon (Connexions).

LSCGM: Sue Wood, Sue Price, Simon Pierce, Marie Brookfield (Secretariat Manager), Joyce Wildman (Secretariat Officer).

Guest: John Korzeniewski.

Apologies

Council: Sue Carmichael, Brian Rourke.

Observers: Nigel Burke (GONW), Mike Scott (JC+).

LSCGM: Kirsty Evans, Mike McDermott.

Item 1. CHAIR'S OPENING REMARKS

1.1 Welcome

Roger Hoyle welcomed members to the meeting and specifically welcomed John Korzeniewski, Regional Director, and the new members of the Senior Management Team, Susan Price, Michael McDermot and Simon Pierce, to the meeting. On behalf of the Council, he congratulated Elaine Owen on becoming a member of North West Strategic Women's Enterprise Steering Group.

1.2 Mark Haysom's visit

Roger reminded members that Mark Haysom, Chief Executive, would be visiting the Greater Merseyside office on Monday, 10 October 2005. During this visit he would be meeting with John Korzeniewski, SMT and also with all staff. He would also be visiting Knowsley Community College.

1.3 Individual meetings with Members

Roger confirmed that he had almost completed his 1:1s with Council members and thanked members for the time and comments. He felt that these had been very useful and interesting sessions. Some of the topics discussed during these sessions had included:

- how do we ensure our work is joined up and effective?
- do we sufficiently engage the Private Sector?
- the impact of Agenda for Change on the Council's business;
- maintaining the morale and momentum of staff during the difficult times ahead;
- scrutinizing the role of the LSC and its impact locally.

1.4 Council Residential

Roger reminded members that the Council Residential would be held on 6 and 7 December at the Radisson Hotel in Liverpool. He advised that the focus of the Residential would be on Council effectiveness and that Simon Nokes (NWDA) had been invited as Guest Speaker and Robert Crawford (new Chief Executive, TMP) had been invited to join members for dinner. He urged members to make every effort to attend the full event, including the evening, as this would be a working dinner and he requested members to advise Marie Brookfield of their preferred start/finish times.

1.5 Themed lunchtime sessions

Roger advised members that the Themed lunchtime sessions were now drawing to an end and he requested members to consider, for discussion at the Residential, whether these should be continued next year.

1.6 External meetings attended by the Chair

Roger informed members that, since the last Council meeting, he had:

- attended the RES Consultation Review held at the Speke Marriott;
- completed his programme of FE College visits;
- attended a meeting of the Directorate of Quality and Diversity;
- visited the Local Solutions Helpline office (with Elaine Bowker);
- conducted interviews for the three new Area Director posts;
- attended RMB on 22 September.

1.7 Performance Assessment Scheme for Chairs

This was a scheme which had been developed and must be completed during October. Questionnaires would be completed by the Executive Director, 2 Council members, 1 Observer and the Chair.

ACTION: Marie to liaise with Council members re completion of questionnaire.

Item 2. Minutes of the last meeting

2.1 Minutes

The minutes of the last meeting were agreed as an accurate record for the Chair to sign.

2.2 Summary

The summary of the minutes of the last meeting were agreed as an accurate record for the Chair to sign.

2.3 Matters arising

There were no matters arising which were not covered on the Agenda.

Item 3. Agenda for Change

- 3.1** Roger Hoyle reminded Council of the purpose of Agenda for Change and passed the meeting over to John Korzeniewski.
- 3.2** John Korzeniewski distributed copies of a presentation on Theme 7, which included proposed regional structures, and addressed the meeting commenting that he understood that Council had already been briefed on the first six Themes of Agenda for Change. He advised that the process had started out with discussions with Principals across the Region on what changes they felt needed to be introduced. In response to Themes 1-6, the LSC would now internally implement Theme 7. This would ensure that the LSC staffing structure would be able to focus on a more strategic relationship with Partners enabling us to deliver with/through them the LSC Priorities. In answer to a question, John explained that a Strategic relationship would ensure that providers/ stakeholders were more closely linked.
- 3.3** The proposed new structure, which was yet to be finalised, would remove duplication whilst enabling key activities to be delivered in local areas to better meet the needs of employers/learners. Functions where delivery was not required at a local level or where duplication occurred across offices would be moved to a Regional centre. Following questions on local issues, John assured members that there would continue to be a strong local base. The aim was to ensure that local plans were driven by local priorities. Roger supported John's comments and stressed to members that the LSC needed to ensure that its business was 'fit for purpose'. John stressed that this was not a cost cutting exercise and that local offices should function more

effectively in the future. Elaine Bowker commented that, a local office would be able to focus more on the local issues - with the support of regional functions. She had been assured that the decision making would remain local.

- 3.4** Referring to the proposed structure, John explained that the exact details were yet to be agreed and advised that Regional Directors were still in discussion with the Chief Executive. He expected that proposals would be finalised shortly to enable discussions with the union to commence. He explained that the North West's 5 Executive Directors, Chairs and himself had discussed resource management at length at the recent Regional Management Board meeting and any decisions made would follow these discussions. Council members expressed concern for staff given the restructure and for their future role and the role of Council Committees and the need for current office roles, specifically in SMT, to be clarified i.e., with regard to the number of secondments. John stressed that Council would still have responsibility for the local plan and, whilst roles may change, Committees would still be required. In response to a question relating to Risk Management, John advised that Chris Sparshatt, Chief Auditor, would be advising Mark Haysom on this.

Heather Akehurst and Sir George Sweeney left the meeting.

- 3.5** In closing, John explained to members that he knew that this would be a difficult time for staff. The LSC would ensure that staff were offered appropriate development opportunities to ensure that they were well placed to apply for posts in the new structure. The LSC would be following Cabinet Office protocol regarding consultation and notice periods. He advised that there would be a National Chairs' Conference on 12 October, which would include Mark Haysom and Chris Banks, where there would be a single agenda item relating to Theme 7.
- 3.6** Roger Hoyle emphasised the need for Council to remain effective and to ensure that staff were treated fairly and equitably. He thanked John for his input.

Item 4. Planning and Performance

- 4.1** Elaine Bowker spoke to the Annual Plan in the absence of Kirsty Evans. She highlighted the main points in the paper as follows:
- finalised budgets for 2005-06 – in response to Council's request for a succinct document, Annex A had been created (this could be found at Appendix 3 to the paper). Elaine summarised Annex A and advised that the Performance, Quality and Audit Committee would now be monitoring this with reports going to SMT and RMT for rigorous monitoring;
 - planning cycle for 2006-07 – this had been much improved and she referred the meeting to the Headline activity.

- 4.2 In response to a question regarding sixth forms, Elaine advised that she felt that Agenda for Change would also include schools at some point in the future but the exact details required ministerial approval. John Korzeniewski commented that he was supportive of EDs and encouraged their involvement with LEAs/sixth forms. Agenda for Change should ensure that all providers are treated equally.
- 4.3 Maureen Williams raised specific issues relating to demography and Gender and felt that consideration should be given to making some priorities Gender specific. Elaine advised that work was ongoing with regard to the Gender Agenda so care would be needed to ensure that priorities did not clash/contradict.

Item 5. ED's Report

- 5.1 Elaine outlined the key issues.
- 5.2 **Halton** – *John Swain expressed an interest in this discussion.* Elaine referred the meeting to her Report and advised that Governors of Widnes & Runcorn Sixth Form College were at that moment considering a merger with Halton College. The outcome of these talks would be known later in the evening and Elaine would bring the decision to the next Council meeting. Merger had already been recommended by Halton College Governors. Members were advised that, if both Governing Bodies put forward for a merger, no competition would be required.
- 5.3 **Sefton** - She also updated members on discussions within Sefton, where support was almost universal for a new sixth form centre. Cathy Robinson, LSC Solicitor, had, however, now advised that the LSC needed to run a competition. Elaine would also bring this back to Council and the Young People's Advisory Committee for further discussion/information. Roger expressed disappointment that the initial process would now not be seen through to the end. Elaine agreed to pursue this further with the Council solicitor.
- 5.4 John Korzeniewski commented on the impressive work which had been carried out by LSC Greater Merseyside with regard to StAR and felt that other areas could learn from this.

Martin Carey left the meeting.

Item 6. Feedback from Advisory Groups

- 6.1 **Performance, Quality and Audit Committee**
The last meeting had taken place on 7 September 2005 and the meeting was advised, in the absence of Heather Akehurst, that the minutes were an accurate reflection of discussions held.
- 6.2 **Young People's Advisory Committee**
The minutes of the meeting held on 2 August were received for information.
- 6.3 **Work Force Development Committee**
John Firr advised the meeting that there had been two sessions since the last meeting, the minutes of which were not yet available. There had been a lunchtime session on Brokerage – where there had been a disappointing

turn out of members. Good discussion had, however, still been held. There had also been a sub-committee meeting with a presentation from Business Link relating to referrals for Work Based Learners. Concerns had been expressed from both sides but some improvements had been agreed. Paul Holme had also made a presentation on the Sector Skills Agenda.

Item 7. Updates from Observer organisations

7.1 Connexions

Kieran Gordon led members through his report which outlined progress made in relation to a number of their key objectives. He circulated copies of the Connexions booklet 'Every Young Person Matters' and advised that this would be sent out to all stakeholders.

7.2 Business Link

Peter Morton circulated copies of the Business Link Annual Plan. He referred the meeting to his report which outlined progress on Workforce Development and Objective One since the last meeting.

Item 8. Any other business

8.1 There was no other business to discuss.

Item 9. Date of next meeting

9.1 Additional meeting

There would be an additional, one item agenda, Council meeting to discuss the Youth Green Paper. This meeting would be held on 24 October 2005 at 4pm.

9.2 Residential

The Council Residential would be held on 6 & 7 December 2005 at the Radisson Hotel, Liverpool. Start and finish times were yet to be finalised.

Meeting chair	Roger Hoyle
Minute taker	Joyce Wildman
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