

Minutes



Leading learning and skills

Date Wednesday 19 September 2007

Subject Council Meeting

Location 26 Kings Hill Avenue, Kings Hill, West Malling, Kent ME19 4AE

Time 09.15

LSC Office Kent and Medway

Present:

Council Members Sir David Melville (Chair)
Lesley Davies (Area Director)
Graham Badman
Malcolm Bell
Paul Carter
Anne Marie Nelson
Angela Jenkins
Ashley West
John Parsonage

Observers Gordon Bernard

LSC Staff John Ratcliff
Malcolm Staunton
Jane Spurgin
Sarah Makewell

Apologies Chris Hearn
Council Members Vernon Hull
Derek Hunter
Tracy Luke
Michael Wright

Apologies Claire Coday
Observers Rose Collinson
Lynda Russell
Claire Fisher

1.	Welcome and Apologies
	The Chair relayed apologies and welcomed members and observers to the meeting.
2.	Declarations of potential conflicts of interest
	The Chair invited members to declare any potential conflicts of interest. It was concluded that there were none to declare.
3.	Approval of minutes of last meeting (3 July 2007 and progress against actions
3.1	The minutes of 3 July 2007 were approved as an accurate record.
3.2	Action Item 5.1 – Flexible enrolment options throughout year – Malcolm Bell discussed this at recent KAFEC meeting. This is an ongoing action which is constantly under review. Colleges have responded and MKC is planning a January start. This action will continue to be monitored.
3.3	Action Item 6.4 – Train to Gain – for Heather Gray and Gordon Bernard to arrange the training of 7 employer liaison consultants to Promote TtG – This action has been completed and a joint training event held.
3.4	Action Item 6.7 – Train to Gain – This action to update council on Train to Gain performance is picked up in today’s meeting under item 7.
4.	Chairman’s Update
4.1	The Chair reported to Council that since the last meeting there have been a number of changes.
4.2	The delay in Government legislation has resulted in the need for local council meetings to continue for the foreseeable future. The Chair asked that, where appropriate, members consent to a re-appointment until the end of the local council term. The Chair thanked members for their attendance and support during this time and stressed the importance of their continued support at council meetings until the Bill has received Royal Assent.
4.3	Paul Carter added that further discussion is needed on membership of the future body or council that will represent the interests of Kent and Medway.

4.4	Decision: Regionalism and the way forward for 14-25 provision to be an agenda item and discussed at the next meeting on 6 November 2007.
4.5	The Chair informed members that with effect from 15 August 2007 Heather Gray (Partnership Director, West Kent) is on maternity leave. Interviews have been held for a 6 month secondment placement and an announcement will be made shortly.
4.6	The Chair asked members to note that the Hadlow Capital Bid, recommended by the local Council Capital Sub Group on 19 July (minutes included in Council papers), was approved by National Capital Committee on 5 September.
4.7	The final update from the Chair was to inform members that Lesley Davies will be taking up the national role of Director for Business Change, for two days per week, to lead on Framework for Excellence.
4.8	Tony Allen will be returning to LSC K&M to work along side Lesley. This will enable Lesley to combine national commitments with the local area work. Lesley will retain the daily operation, provider liaison and line management responsibility arch. This arrangement will continue until the end of the year.
5.	14-19 Reform
5.1	John Ratcliff directed members to the Council paper on 14-19 Reform and invited an open discussion on how the LSC can best support providers in preparation for future funding arrangements.
5.2	The funding of diplomas and bidding process was discussed.
5.3	Paul Carter expressed his disappointment with the number and range of diplomas secured by Kent. He felt that more choice and diversity is needed in the post 14 curriculum.
5.4	It was noted that Medway had been very successful with its bid.
5.5	It was concluded that a new Learning & Skills Group could be set up to discuss the best course of action for future careers advice within K&M.
5.6	Action: John Ratcliff to prepare a statement on the status of the diploma lines and corsortia arrangements and circulate to members at the next meeting.
5.7	Gordon Bernard updated the council on the future of the Connexions service. KCC re-contracted with Connexions and Medway Council have decided to deliver this service in-house. Changes to the delivery of the

	Connexions service poses a considerable risk.
5.8	After a discussion with regard to the level of careers advice available in schools it was felt that schools and colleges need more in-house careers advice. The importance of this was noted.
5.9	Action: Gordon Bernard was asked to prepare an update on the available careers guidance for the next meeting.
5.10	Action: Lesley Davies and Graham Badman would discuss this with Rose Collinson.
6.	September Guarantee
6.1	Malcolm Staunton directed members to the September Guarantee paper and gave an update on how the LSC is working with the Connexions service in order to ensure all year 11 students are offered a learning opportunity by the end of September.
6.2	Gordon Bernard gave an update on how the Connexions service tracks students to reduce the number who 'slip through the net'.
6.3	In order to engage young people, the LSC has provided additional funding for programmes targeted at potential NEETs. Following a strategy session programmes have been refreshed providing exciting and interesting opportunities in an effort to engage young people.
6.4	The introduction of a new electronic application system allows the connexions service to establish young people who have made no effort to find work or training.
6.5	Paul Carter commented on the refreshing and positive discussion around this and agreed with the need to motivate and excite children from as young as 13 years old. More work needs to be done to ensure young people are more prepared for the real world.
6.6	Paul Carter stated that a choice of schemes need to be funded in order to avoid young people becoming NEETs.
6.7	Action: Gordon Bernard to produce a paper, for the next Council meeting, detailing the types of schemes that needed to be developed and the funding and support required to run schemes of this kind.
7.	Adult Learner Accounts
7.1	Jane Spurgin gave a presentation on the Adult Learner Accounts, highlighting the following points;

7.2	<p><u>Overview</u> The Adult Learner Account (ALA) trial in the South East and East Midlands will underpin the Regional Economic Strategy. Diamond areas for growth (Thames Gateway and Ashford in the South East) have been targeted in the trial to promote regeneration, address the skills gaps and targets areas with Economic Growth.</p>
7.3	<p>An ALA is a package rather than actual money given to the learner. This package includes access to high quality information, advice and guidance together with wider choice of quality provision.</p>
7.4	<p><u>Objectives</u> The key objectives of the trial are to raise participation and achievement of adults in the learning by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offering a wider choice of providers of full level 3 learning • Supporting learners in making the right learning choices by better access to level 3 IAG on learning work and careers. • Raising awareness among individuals of the support, cost and contributions that the State, employers and individuals are making through learner account statements.
7.5	<p><u>Bidding Process, Delivery & the Provider</u> Providers can be based outside of the area to make a provider bid and can potentially increase income and Work Based Learning allocation by bidding to provide ALAs.</p>
7.6	<p><u>Routes In</u> Learners can either call the national Learn Direct helpline, visit a Next Steps provider or learning provider directly. The learner will receive impartial information, advice and guidance and then a holding account will be opened – the learning provider activates the learner account on enrolment.</p>
7.7	<p><u>Progression</u> On completion of the programme the learning provider arranges for independent IAG for the learner to consider future options.</p>
7.8	<p>ALAs can be promoted as part of the Train to Gain offer. These support 19-25 year old first level 3 entitlement and is in line with the action for communities strategy.</p>
7.9	<p>The Chair thanked Jane for her presentation and opened the discussion.</p>
7.10	<p>Malcolm Bell welcomed the project, particularly the requirement for Information Advice and Guidance. However he felt that the use of the word '<u>Account</u>' gave the wrong message to learners and was misleading. The national marketing material gave cause for concern. Jane Spurgin to</p>

	feed comments back to national office marketing.
7.11	Graham Badman asked why the 40 and 50 plus age groups are not being targeted. He felt that it would be a good opportunity to link its initiative to parents through schools to get parents back into training. John Ratcliff to investigate.
7.12	The Chair concluded that the trial would flag up some issues which could then be incorporated into the national model. The Chair asked for feedback on the evaluation of the trail when this becomes available.
7.13	Action: Jane Spurgin would arrange for feedback to council on the SE Trial of Adult Learner Accounts as soon as this is available.
8.	Train to Gain Performance
8.1	Lesley Davies circulated Train to Gain (TtG) SE league tables for members review.
8.2	Lesley gave an update on the current position of TtG in the workplace and the support given to LSC staff in order to fully promote this brand to providers. Over contracting is being considered to ensure targets are met.
8.3	Action: A breakdown of performance by provider will be presented to members at the next meeting.
8.4	Action: Achievement figures will be reported back to Council when available next quarter.
8.5	Paul Carter asked for a breakdown of providers by sector in order to establish which business providers are engaging in this programme.
8.6	Action: Lesley Davies would arrange for this to be provided to Council members.
8.7	Lesley confirmed that all providers were being reviewed to establish those who are underperforming and to identify ways in assisting these providers increase the numbers of learners on programme.
8.8	Anne Marie Nelson asked for a brief overview of all of the different LSC initiatives and how they link into each other. Members felt that this would be a useful.
8.9	Action: Lesley Davies to arrange for a paper to be produced and circulated to members outlining the LSC initiatives and how they link into each other.

9.	Any Other Business
9.1	The Chair invited Lesley Davies to give a brief update on South Kent College (SKC).
9.2	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Alan Harrison has been appointed as interim Principal and is working closely with the Senior Management Team to implement changes and improvements. 2. Jane Spurgin has regular meetings with the College. 3. A recovery plan is in progress and expected to be submitted within the next week. 4. KPMG have been commissioned to review learner numbers for this year – 2006/07 enrolment numbers for 2007/08. 5. KPMG /are also undertaking a Strategic Options Review, report due he end of October. This will look at the provision offered across the three sites and compare this information with the demand in South Kent. The aim is to provide the best possible FE provision college for learners. A <u>summary</u> of the KPMG report will be distributed to members. 6. Advertisements have been placed in national newspapers for the two Senior Management Team vacancies. 7. Capital projects are also being reviewed.
9.3	<p>Action: Lesley Davies will arrange for a summary of the KPMG report to be circulated to Council.</p> <p>No other items were noted for discussion.</p> <p>The meeting closed with lunch at noon.</p>
	<p><i>Members to note:</i> <i>Date of next meeting: Tuesday 6 November 2007, 09.30 – 12.30</i></p>