

# Minutes



Leading learning and skills

**Date** 7 June 2007  
**Subject** Sussex Council meeting  
**Location** Princes House, LSC Sussex  
**Time** 16:00  
**LSC office** Sussex  
**Publication intent** Internal

**Members Present** Norman Boyland  
Deborah Shandley  
Keith Conniford  
Dr Richard Parker

**LSC staff** David Smith  
Wayne Wright  
Aidan Pettitt  
Chris Piper  
Michael Nix

**1. Apologies have been received from:**

Phil Wood, Catherine Vaughan, Lynn Conolly, Michelle Pooley, Nigel Lambe and Chris Andrews

It was noted that despite the disbanding of Connexions, Chris Andrews, is welcome to attend the Council meeting as an observer.

Jenny Barnard-Langston had indicated that she would be late and was unfortunately locked out of the building.

**2. Minutes of the last meeting – 18<sup>th</sup> April**

**The minutes were accepted, with the following amendments:**

- Keith Conniford informed the meeting that his business is no longer called Crowns but is now 'Look Fantastic'.
- Deborah Shandley was also present at the meeting.
- **(Item 5.2) Area B (West Sussex coast)**  
amended to read: 'Capital plans in Area B relate to fewer colleges than in Area D and involve a lower percentage of LSC contribution.'

With these amendments, minutes will be approved when Council is next quorate.

### **3. Formal matters arising**

- 3.1 Council noted that dates had been set for future Council meetings. There would be further discussion in July as to where these will be held.

Michael Nix will attend an exhibition at Varndean as part of their public consultation. Norman Boyland offered his invitation to another member of the Council as he is unable to attend.

### **4. Joint commissioning with Brighton and Hove Council**

Michael Nix presented the Joint commissioning paper which is now available for public consultation. He identified the key areas of focus as 14-19 curriculum, Adult learning and support, development of strategic Learning and Skills and development of an integrated capital strategy for all post 14 education and training in the city (ref. 1.5 of the main document). MN reported that the report had been received without comment at the meeting of the CYPT Board on 4 June.

Council members commented on the proposals as follows:

- Local area agreements will be more important in the future and the LSC need to be seen in a position to be working well with LA's
- It had to be recognised that some actions, such as the allocation of resources to the post – 16 sector, were statutory responsibilities of the LSC and could not be passed on to another body
- The importance of keeping the document revitalised.
- This is a Pilot arrangement exploring closer working. There will be a review in ten months time.
- The paper had a strong bias towards 14 -19 and the diagram on p.14 suggested that skills and employer engagement would be a secondary consideration. The Council would wish to see this imbalance rectified through review during the pilot year

**ACTION MN to ensure that the B&H Partnership Team and Local Authority colleagues were informed of the Council's views and that review of the proposals during the pilot year took these into account**

The council approved the joint commissioning proposals, subject to the issues they had raised being taken into account in their further development.

### **5. Capital plan LSC Sussex:**

The Council reinforced the need to ensure that the colleges do not overstretch themselves but to make use of all their assets.

## **5.1 Hastings College: to endorse application in detail for approval by Capital Committee (presentation from Hastings College senior team)**

MN introduced this item and explained that the report included positive assessments of the education and property cases, but that the financial assessment could not be completed until the negotiations for a Guaranteed Maximum Price (GMP) had been completed. The College expected to conclude negotiations with the developer in the next few days, and the GMP was expected to be in the order of £92m, which would require LSC grant of £72.3m (78.6%). The financial assessment had been commenced on this basis, and no significant concerns had as yet been identified.

The Chairman welcomed the Hastings College senior team; Sue Middlehurst, - Principal of Hastings College, Adrian Gray – Director of Finance, and Tim Hulme – Project Manager. The Hastings team made a presentation in support of the college's detailed application for LSC capital grant. They explained how the project had been developed since the application in principle stage, and the reasons for cost increases.

The following issues were raised and discussed:

- the reasons for cost increases and the apparently high allowance for inflation
- The apparent modest 19 + growth figures
- Numbers of apprenticeships
- the college's approach to working in partnerships (with schools and other providers, A4B network, subcontracting)
- The approach to developing the sixth form centre of 400 6<sup>th</sup> formers and the extent to which these learners did or did not need a separate
- environment within the college
- The provision and use of outside space
- How the identified risks would be managed - in particular those relating to assumptions about VAT exemption
- Employer engagement, and the use of the ground floor retail space
- Achieving and maintaining quality whilst achieving the financial plan's assumptions about more efficient staff costs

The Council offered the following advice

- Capital proposals need to be linked with cultural change. (Council expressed confidence that Hastings College can deliver on both agendas)
- Expressed the importance of using RES related phrases, such as Education led regeneration & Skills escalator and expressions of how the college and other partners could achieve joint objectives.

- In the five minute presentation to the National Committee, Hastings College should focus on reason for changes, explain costs, student number growth from the approval in principle already secured

Council members congratulated the Hastings team on a well thought out presentation, delivered to a very high standard.

Council were minded to endorse the college's application, but agreed to await final confirmation of the GMP and the financial assessment, before seeking formal endorsement from the Capital Sub-Group.

**Action: All members would be sent the final report so that any comments they had could be passed to the Sub-Group ahead of their final consideration of the application.**

**6. AOB**

There was no other business to discuss

**7. Date time and place of next meeting**

18<sup>th</sup> July, LSC Sussex, Prince's House

**Meeting chair** Norman Boyland

**Minute taker** Alison Williams

**Date created** 8 June 2007

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