

Minutes



Leading learning and skills

Date	8th November 2007
Subject	South West Regional Board
Location	Dillington House
Time	13.30
LSC office	South West Region
Publication intent	Internal

Present

John Savage CBE (Chair)
Jane Barrie OBE
Richard Dimbleby
Malcolm Gillespie
Brian Kemp

Catherine Christie
Paul Lucken
Denis Miles
Marinos Paphitis
Trish Taylor
Mike Davies
Mark Harvey

Apologies

Professor John Bull CBE
Bryan McGinity
John Chudley
John Temple

Item 1. Welcome and introductions

- 1.1 John Savage welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced Mark Harvey who attended for the capital bid items.

Item 2. Declarations of Interest

- 2.1 The Chair reminded members of their responsibility to declare any interest relevant to the agenda. There were no new declarations made.

Item 3. Minutes of last meeting

- 3.1 The minutes of the meeting on the 12th of July 2007 were agreed as a true record.

Item 4. Matters arising

- 4.1 There were no matters arising from the minutes of the last meeting.

Item 5. Delegations to Regional Boards

- 5.1 The Chair said that there was still no news of a date for the appointment of the new Regional Council and referred to the paper detailing the delegated authorities for Regional Boards and the proposed standing orders. Board Members unanimously voted to adopt the proposed standing orders.

Item 6. Merger proposal for Truro and Penwith colleges

- 6.1 Denis Miles explained that the merger proposal for Truro and Penwith colleges would likely be presented at the December meeting and asked the Board to consider the meeting format for the proposal as this would be the first one dealt with under the recently delegated authorities. After some discussion, Malcolm Gillespie proposed the Board receive a covering paper on the merger process and a formal document detailing the actual merger proposal itself. Proponents of the merger from the Colleges should then be asked to present the proposal and then retire from the meeting whilst the Board deliberated. Brian Kemp asked that the local Council members be consulted on the proposal beforehand as well.

Action: The local Area Director for Devon and Cornwall to arrange the presentation of the merger proposal of Truro and Penwith colleges following the process as described above.

Brian Kemp asked that the local Council members be consulted on the proposal beforehand as well.

Item 7. Capital applications

- 7.1 Marinos Paphitis introduced the item with an overview and circulated a map of Gloucestershire which showed the locations of providers. Marinos Paphitis then referred to the covering paper and individual bid documents which described how each bid met all the required criteria. Brian Kemp explained how the bids were part of a longer term strategy to raise the standard of accommodation for post 16 students in Gloucestershire.
- 7.2 The Chair invited questions from members. Jane Barrie referred to the query sent in by email from Bryan McGinity about the bid from Wyedean School which stated that there is a shortfall of 1,877 square meters of teaching space but the proposal is for 755 square meters. Mark Harvey explained the LSC was only required to consider the elements relevant to the LSC capital funding criteria.
- 7.3 The Chair asked members to vote on each of the bids.

The Regional Board unanimously agreed all of the 16-19 capital fund applications from the following schools; St Peter's Catholic High

School (Gloucester), Cheltenham Bournside School, Wyedean School (Forest of Dean) and Downside Sixth Form Centre (Stroud). Each bid to go forward under the usual arrangements for the amounts specified in the respective proposal papers.

Item 8. Regional Directors report

- 8.1 Malcolm Gillespie referred to his report and highlighted the welcome appointment of two new members to the National Council; Malcolm Trobe who is the new link to the South West Regional Board and John Cridland because of his valuable experience with the CBI.
- 8.2 Malcolm Gillespie provided an update on two recent meetings. Firstly a meeting with South West Directors of Children Services which was very positive and provided an opportunity to brief the group on key LSC activities relevant to their role. Secondly the long awaited meeting with Ben Bradshaw Minister for the South West which Peter Cloke also attended. As the time for this meeting was limited by the Minister's diary the LSC will continue to send invitations to future meetings and events as well as providing briefings. In addition Malcolm Gillespie said he will maintain regular contact with other Ministers in the South West.
- 8.3 Malcolm Gillespie referred to the Machinery of Government changes and said that the next stage was a letter from both of the relevant Secretaries of State setting out key principles that will be part of the consultation on implementation. Malcolm Gillespie reassured the Board that the LSC staff in the region have continued to work professionally towards these changes even though the final outcome had not yet been defined in detail.
- 8.4 In response to a question about Train to Gain performance Paul Lucken reported that the region has achieved the re-profiled short term figures but this does not reduce the overall long term target which is a challenge for all regions. However a national improvement plan will introduce some welcome eligibility flexibilities. Malcolm Gillespie said that in spite of the figures there is a very good brokerage service in the region and progress was being made to influence the required cultural changes.

Item 9. Performance, Planning and Commissioning update

- 9.1 Catherine Christie presented the update and expanded on the key points summarised on page 2 of the report.
- 9.2 Brian Kemp said that employers in the South West want more investment in numeracy than literacy. Paul Lucken acknowledged the high level of ESOL training and because it was harder to achieve the required take up for numeracy, the region is working through relevant agencies to increase the number of referrals.
- 9.3 Brian Kemp asked about progress to reduce the numbers of young people who are not in education, employment or training (NEET). Catherine Christie reported that although the south west has the lowest figure of all the regions there is work being done to reduce it further.

9.4 Catherine Christie reported that this years Grant Letter was imminent. This is due to be issued at the same time as the Annual Statement of Priorities, both of which will enable the necessary discussions with providers at a local level. A regional provider briefing has been arranged for the 30th November to support this. The culmination of this activity will be a draft Regional Commissioning plan which will be presented to the Board at the December meeting.

Item 10. Any other business

10.1 Brian Kemp referred to a report from the Public Accounts Committee that criticised Colleges for not taking advantage of the economies to be made through the procurement card process and asked that action be taken if this applied to any of the corporations in the South West.

Action: Denis Miles to investigate and take further action if appropriate.

10.2 Jane Barrie referred to the Board's governance responsibilities as described in the standing orders and asked for a regular report from the Audit Committee.

Action: Mike Davies to report back to the Chair of the Audit Committee.

Item 11. The next meeting of the Board

11.1 The next meeting will take place on the 14th December 2007 starting at an earlier time of 9.30am to accommodate a busy agenda. This includes the Truro/Penwith College merger proposal, the Regional Commissioning Plan and at least one major capital bid.

Meeting chair John Savage

Minute taker Mike Davies