

Minutes



Leading learning and skills

Date 26 February 2007
Subject Council Meeting
Location Taunton
Time 16.30-19.00 pm
LSC office Somerset
Publication intent Internal

Present Jane Barrie (Chair), Chris Hyde, Rupert Elliott, Ian Bennett, Peter Hillman, John Broomfield, Judith Richardson, Jon Gray
In attendance Peter Renshaw, Brian Archer, Steve Bone
LSC staff Trish Taylor, Sally House
Apologies Apologies had been received from:
Bryan Leaker, Rhiannon Prys-Owen, Cathy Bakewell, Margaret Luck, Rob Sly

Item 1. Welcome and introductions

1.1 Jane Barrie welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked Peter Renshaw and Connexions Somerset for hosting the meeting. Jane Barrie congratulated Ian Bennett on his OBE in the New Year's Honours list.

Item 2. Minutes of last meeting

2.1 The minutes of the last meeting were approved.

Item 3. Matters arising

3.1 There were no matters arising.

Item 4. Director of Area's Report

4.1 Sally House introduced the report and gave Council Members a brief update on staffing and premises issues. She referred to Higher Education developments and the LSC's work with the Somerset Strategic Partnership. With the demise of the local Council there was scope to align more of our work with Somerset Strategic Partnership, particularly the Economic Leaders Group, Children and Young People's Steering Group and the Stronger and Healthier Communities Group. Jane Barrie asked whether the very successful Champions of Learning Event would continue next year.

Somerset's nominations were being put forward to the South West Learning Awards. It was suggested that Somerset Strategic Partnership might be interested in taking forward Champions of Learning.

Action: Sally House and Peter Renshaw to pursue

Item 5. Annual Plan

- 5.1 Sally House introduced the Annual Plan and explained that the focus group held in January had been very productive. Comments and feedback from the group had been incorporated into this version of the plan. The plan will become more refined by the end of May, but at present is a substantive draft plan.
- 5.2 Jane Barrie invited Sally to comment on the presentation to Mark Haysom on 15 February. Mark Haysom had been very positive about the Regional Commissioning Plan, and how the local plans were developing.
- 5.3 A comprehensive discussion followed, suggesting the plan should incorporate:
- Impact of capital developments
 - Celebration of Somerset's 16-18 overall performance
 - Reference to the demise of the local Council
 - Clear measures of success with more dates and numbers as they become available
 - Clarity about overall intended impact in each of the four priorities
- 5.4 Trish Taylor explained that at this stage the plan was a set of intentions rather than hard targets. The LSC was in a transition year and would be a more persuasive negotiating body in the future.
- 5.5 Jane Barrie summed up the discussion by saying that at this stage the Council could only approve a direction of travel. The plan was agreed with changes as suggested. The Plan was then signed off by the Council.

Action: Sally House to incorporate amendments

Item 6. Verbal feedback from the Regional Audit Committee

- 6.1 Peter Hillman gave feedback to the Council saying he had a number of concerns.
- Minutes were not as rigorous as they should be
 - Role of the Regional Audit Committee and their terms of reference
 - The Regional Audit Committee seemed very regionally focussed and a concern was that local issues would not be reviewed.
 - The Committee has not yet seen the regional risk register and risk management actions.
 - The Chair of the Regional Audit Committee was also a member of the National Audit Committee.
 - Could the Committee meet at local LSC offices to provide a flavour of local activity?

Action: Jane Barrie to raise Peter Hillman's concerns with the Regional Board

Item 7. Taking stock

- 7.1 Jane Barrie reminded Council members of the letter from Chris Banks regarding activity until the end of the term of office. This included taking stock and handing over. Sally House was asked to comment on what the proposed stocktake might include. She referred to the discussion at the January focus group meeting where ideas were:
- Council's headline achievements in terms of targets and data
 - Highlights and achievements
 - How the LSC learning and skills agenda nests with other strategies
 - An overview of the Council's journey
 - Legacy could include cameos, eg Champions of Learning, with visible signs of impact
- 7.2 Jane Barrie, Bryan Leaker and Peter Hillman would like to be involved in a small working group to take this forward. Timeframe for completion would be end of September.

Action: Sally House to arrange

Item 8. Verbal update on Champions of Learning

- 8.1 Peter Renshaw gave feedback on the Champions of Learning event which has been contracted out to Prospects, who had done a very good job. There were 111 nominations this year. Prospects had managed to raise sponsorship for most of the awards that did not clash with the ethos of the event.
- 8.2 Peter Renshaw reminded Council members that the event will take place on 15 March with Andrew Castle as the guest speaker.
- 8.3 The judges (comprising Peter Renshaw, Jane Barrie, Peter Hillman, Bryan Leaker and Rhiannon Prys-Owen) had been engaged in a robust discussion regarding the nominations but were in agreement on the winners and runners up. The panel were however disappointed at the number of nominations this year for the Golden Learner award and agreed that they would not be presenting an award for the Working in Partnership category.
- 8.4 The panel were pleased that the categories had received a good spread of nominations from all sectors of learning.
- 8.5 Jane Barrie thanked Peter Renshaw for being the Chair of the panel and the other panel members.

Item 9. Any other business

- 9.1 Judith Richardson gave some verbal feedback on the Joint Area Review. The formal report will be published on the 13 March. Judith thanked all those who had contributed to the process. Judith commented that it had been a quite difficult inspection, Sally and Judith had questioned some of the conclusions which they did not feel were evidence based. However, the

result was in line with the self assessment which was 'Good'. Judith ran through some of the key issues from the report. Jane Barrie on behalf of the Council thanked Judith for her hard work, and in turn Judith credited Dave Smith.

- 9.2 Jane Barrie felt that a particular feature of Somerset was that all partners worked together to prepare for and respond to the Joint Area Review work.
- 9.3 Peter Renshaw reported that the Impact Theatre group had been performing in schools with funding from the LSC on post-16 choices. Connexions had received very positive feedback regarding their performances. Connexions and the LSC were supporting the 2007 Skills Exhibition and Business Conference which would be taking place in early November. The Education Business Link Awards evening takes place on 6 March, when Trish Taylor will be the key note speaker.
- 9.4 Brian Archer updated the Council on the Business Link tendering process. Six tenders were received and the initial proposals from Business Link Somerset and Serco and from Business Link Devon and Cornwall were the two that had been shortlisted. Business Link is working on the final proposal which needs to be submitted in April. The existing Business Link contract has been extended until the end of September, when the new contract will be issued to the successful company.
- 9.5 Steve Bone referred to action planning for the Olympics. It was noted that Paul Pettigrew of the SW LSC was leading on the Learning and Skills aspects of both the Olympics and the Skills Olympics for Dorset and Somerset.

Item 10. Date of next meeting

- 10.1 There are no further Council meetings arranged at present, however Jane Barrie suggested a whole Council farewell dinner – date to be arranged.
Subsequently a council meeting in late June/early July has been proposed.

Action: Judith Dewar/Debbie Stanley

- 10.2 A Capital Committee meeting is planned to take place on 12 March at Lyngford House, Priorswood 4.30 – 7.00 pm.

Meeting chair	Jane Barrie
Minute taker	Debbie Stanley
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