Minutes

Date 7 September 2006
Subject Young People’s Learning Committee
Location National LSC, London Office
Time 10:45 - 13:00
LSC office National Office
Publication intent Public

Present
Ian Ferguson
Saif Ahmad
Kath Boullen
Maggie Galliers
Ian Gartshore
Christine Gaskell
Ruth Harker
David McGahey
Lynne Morris
Sue Peacock
Mark Sanders

In attendance
Hilary Anslow
Elaine Hendry (DfES)
Matthew Hopkinson (DfES)
Paul Curry (Ofsted)

LSC staff
Julia Dowd
Stephen Gardner
Jim Minogue
Keith Smith
Debbie Watson

Apologies
Apologies have been received from:
Bob Bischoff
John Rourke
Melanie Hunt

Item 1. Welcome and introductions
1.1 Julia Dowd was welcomed to her first meeting since taking up her post as Director of Young People’s Learning in the Learning Group.
Item 2. Finance Update
2.1 Jim Minogue gave an update on the Comprehensive Spending Review process. The 14-19 baseline review has been submitted to Treasury and the DfES have been asked to complete further work on reducing projected costs. The expected timescale for the settlement is Spring 07.
2.2 The committee recognised that the financial position was likely to be positive in that cuts in funding for young people are not being proposed. However serious concerns were expressed that funding will not be sufficient to deliver current policies.
2.3 The funding package for 07/08 is being discussed with Ministers and includes funding for a growth in volume for young people and an increase across the whole budget for improvements in success rates and retention. This is unlikely to have a negative impact on funding for Adults.
2.4 The funding parameters for 07/08 will be announced in Priorities for Success 2 which will be issued in mid-October along with the Annual Statement of Priorities and Planning for Success 2.

Item 3. Proposed PSA targets for 2007-2010
3.1 Keith Smith presented a paper on the proposed targets for 2007-2010 that will accompany the settlement. The committee agreed that a target for achievement at level 2 will still be of value and also welcomed proposals for a target for achievement at level 3.
3.2 The committee did not feel that a participation target (90%) would be helpful as this may lead to funding only being provided for a percentage of the cohort. It was agreed that a continued focus on the hardest to reach is needed and that a target to reduce the number of young people not in employment, education, or training would provide this.

Item 4. LSC contribution to reducing the number of young people who are not in employment, education or training (NEET)
4.1 Julia Dowd gave a presentation on the LSC’s action plan for working in partnership to reduce the number of young people who are NEET. The presentation highlighted the fact that there is a significant amount of churn in the numbers of young people who are NEET and only 1% of young people are NEET throughout the whole of the period from 16 to 19.

Action: Investigate trends over time in the composition of the NEET group
4.2 The effect of inward migration on employment opportunities was discussed and the need to ensure that young people have the employability skills and motivation to be able to compete for jobs. The importance of modern foreign languages in equipping young people and the opportunity to integrate languages into the development of specialised diplomas was highlighted.
4.3 It is intended that the responsibility for implementing action plans for reducing NEETs should lie with local 14-19 partnerships and it was agreed that it
would be useful at a later date for YPLC to look at the ways in which Ofsted, DfES and LSC will be monitoring the effectiveness of these partnerships.

4.4 The transition of Connexions partnerships to local authorities was discussed and a key recommendation is that local authorities should be required to continue to use the tracking systems already established and should be expected to track young people across organisational boundaries.

4.5 The need for innovative projects to engage ethnic minority young people through their own communities was discussed.

**Action: Identify good practice in engaging young Muslims**

4.6 The Learning Agreement and Activity Agreement pilot projects that were presented to the committee in April were discussed briefly and a further update requested.

**Action: Update on Learning Agreements and Activity Agreements**

**Item 5. Chairman’s report**

5.1 The Chairman asked for further comments following the seminar session on Streamlining Accountability to be sent directly to him, and comments on the Annual Statement of Priorities to be sent to Clare Boden.

5.2 Advice notes will be produced by from each YPLC main meeting and seminar session to be used by both the executive and non-executive.

5.3 The Chairman has had meetings with John Brennan, David Bell and Jim Knight.

**Item 6. The National Director of Learning’s Report**

6.1 Julia Dowd highlighted a number a sections of the report including:

- The improvement in Further Maths ‘A’ level results as a consequence of the LSC Mathematics in Education and Industry project.
- The continuing work on implementing the recommendations of the independent Review of Planning and Funding of Provision for Learners with Learning Difficulties and/or Disabilities.
- Consistent evidence that 14-19 partnerships are beginning to make a difference on the ground.

6.2 A discussion on specialised diplomas and the gateway process identified concerns about timing and the need for providers to have concrete information about costs so that they can start planning. Elaine Hendry highlighted the joint LSC/ DfES regional conferences that are taking place in October to begin a systematic feedback and development process with providers.

**Action: Details of conferences that may be of interest to be sent to members**

6.3 A correction to the report was noted: paragraph 8, first bullet point should read “an increase in the proportion of all entrants achieving five passes at grades A* to C”
Item 7. Minutes of last meeting and matters arising
7.1 Saif Ahmad provided an update on the action point from agenda item 4. Contact had been made with the LSC Offender’s Learning and Skills team but there remains a concern that not enough is being done to engage Muslim-led organisations in developing and offering provision to young offenders.

Item 8. Any other business
8.1 Lynne Morris was congratulated by the committee on being awarded a CBE for services to Further Education.

Item 9. Date of next meeting
9.1 The next meeting of the YPLC will take place on 15/16 November in London.

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Meeting chair Ian Ferguson
Minute taker Debbie Watson
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