**Minutes**

**YPLA Committee**

**Leading learning and skills**

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<th><strong>Date</strong></th>
<th>21 October 2009</th>
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<td><strong>Subject</strong></td>
<td>Young People's Learning Agency Committee</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Location</strong></td>
<td>Centre Point, London</td>
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<td><strong>Time</strong></td>
<td>09:30</td>
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<td><strong>LSC office</strong></td>
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**Present**

- Les Walton (Chair)
- Pete Birkett
- Ian Ferguson
- David Igoe
- David Pearmain
- Emma Pearson-Winstone
- Ann Robinson
- Mark Sanders
- Malcolm Trobe
- Dan Wright
- Rob Wye
- David Wootton

**In attendance**

- David Jeffrey (DCSF)
- David McVean (DCSF)
- David Way (Deputy Chief Executive - NAS)

**LSC staff**

- Ruth Bullen (Young People’s Learning)
- Geoff Daniels (Director of Funding Policy)
- John Korzeniewski (Regional Director - North West)
- Amy Noonan (Policy Advisor to the LSC Chairman)
- Irene Oliver (Head of Marketing and Communications – South East)
- Sue Randall (Clerk)
- David Russell (National Director of Finance and Resources)
- Paul Williamson

**Apologies**

- Apologies have been received from:
  - Sue Baldwin (DCSF)
  - John Freeman
  - Deian Hopkin
  - Sally Hopson
Minutes

YPLA Committee

John Merry
Cathy Robinson
George Sweeney

Item 1. Welcome and matters arising

1.1 The Chair welcomed all to the meeting, and in particular David McVean who was representing Sue Baldwin as DCSF observer.

1.2 Thanks were extended to Emma Pearson-Winstone who had prepared, presented and facilitated a very useful and thought provoking evening session.

1.3 The Chair reminded members to fill out the meeting assessment questionnaire and hand to the Committee clerk at the end of the meeting.

Deputy Chair Appointment

1.4 Mark Sanders had volunteered to act as deputy Chair for Committee meetings if Les Walton was ever unable to attend. The Committee approved the appointment.

Legislation progress

1.5 Expected to reach report stage in early November.

1.6 The role of Academies was the ongoing issue of debate that most affected the YPLA.

Discussion with Academies

1.7 The Chair had met with Academy Principals and foundation sponsors. It had been a positive meeting with a lot of common ground having been established.

Results of informal soundings about extra learners this year

1.8 The LSC was undertaking a stocktake which had some interesting initial results. This would be discussed later in the agenda.

New YPL Update

1.9 All members should have been receiving this regular emailed update. The Chair hoped members found it useful.

8 December arrangements

1.10 The Committee’s next meeting was on 8 December.

1.11 It was planned to have an afternoon meeting starting with lunch at 12.45pm. Members were to be invited to a Raising the Participation Age celebration event in the early evening. Sue Randall to write out to members with further details.
YPLA website

1.12 This was to be set up shortly, and copies of all meeting papers would be available on it.

Item 2. Minutes of the last meeting

2.1 Rob Wye updated the Committee on his two actions. The Performance Report was being presented to this meeting in its new simpler format. The YPLA glossary remained a work in progress.
2.2 The minutes of the last meeting were agreed as an accurate record.

Item 3. Declarations of Interest

3.1 Members were all given the opportunity to declare any interests in the meeting’s business.
3.2 Two members declared ongoing interests as follows:
   • Mark Sanders – declared as Lead Officer for the Greater Manchester 14-19 agenda. He agreed to be clear on any specific conflicts during meetings
   • Pete Birkett – his organisation was in receipt of LSC income. Again, he agreed to be clear on any specific conflicts during meetings
3.3 Sue Randall to circulate the appropriate declaration of interest form to members in order to capture any ongoing declarations.

Action: Sue Randall


4.1 Peter Lauener presented the paper which aimed to keep members updated on the arrangements for handling and publishing YPLA Committee papers and minutes.
4.2 The key points to note were:
   • Meeting papers would be sent out hard copy at least 10 calendar days in advance of the meeting
   • Minutes relating to the Committee’s Role A (the exercise of functions delegated by the LSC) would be published after the meeting
   • Meeting papers relating to the Committee’s Role A (the exercise of functions delegated by the LSC) would be published after the meeting, unless marked “Protect”
   • All documents remain subject to disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act.
4.3 Where necessary, Committee views would be communicated direct to Ministers. Individual members of the Committee may be asked to review communications before they are sent.
Role A: Delegated functions from the Learning and Skills Council

Item 5. Performance Update for the YPLAC – October 2010 (Paper YPLAC (A) 08/2009)

5.1 Rob Wye presented the paper that provided an update on progress with financial and volume performance of YPL business in 2009-10.

5.2 Three key issues were drawn to the Committee’s attention around 16-18 apprenticeships; NEETs and Learners with Learning Difficulties and/or Disabilities (LLDD).

5.3 An LSC stocktake of 16-18 recruitment showed that there had been an increase which exceeded the budget. Although this was good news in terms of participation, there were resulting budgetary issues. Discussions with the Department were underway to look at the most effective ways of utilising available funding.

5.4 Ian Ferguson led the discussion. It was important to ensure that the content of these reports was fit for purpose. Comments were welcomed on this, as were thoughts on what it was appropriate for the YPLA to receive in terms of performance reporting post-April. Other important points were:

- The additional learners were good news, but this did highlight the vulnerabilities of plan led funding
- Was everything possible being done to increase apprenticeship numbers at 16-18? Was it worth re-considering the issue of employer incentives?
- The LLDD cost control issue was of particular concern.

5.5 David Way commented that a reliable figure would be available in the next month for apprenticeships. An action plan was being implemented to increase 16-18 recruitment. Incentives had not been dismissed as an option, and continued to be considered, although design was a challenge in order to avoid deadweight.

5.6 David McVean advised that Ministers continued to lobby the Treasury for additional funds to accommodate the extra learners. It was possible that there may be scope to use some ESF funding, and this option was being looked into.

5.7 It was important to ensure that messaging was appropriate. Some colleges avoided over recruitment in order to manage within the known, available budget. It was important to ensure these institutions did not become disillusioned if additional funding became available for those who had deliberately over-recruited.

5.8 Ian Ferguson agreed to circulated a note giving his views on the papers and performance issues. He invited members to feedback their views to him. It would be useful to have another member working on this area, and volunteers were sought.

5.9 The Chair summarised as follows:

- Ian Ferguson to involve the entire Committee in discussions about the presentation of this information
- A specific report on LLDD budget issues to be brought to the next meeting
- The incentivisation process was a major issue and the Committee would look at it in detail either in December or January.

**Action: Sue Randall**


6.1 Geoff Daniels and Paul Williamson joined the meeting to present the paper that provided an update on progress with the process to agree funding policies to be included in the Annual Statement of Priorities.

6.2 As discussed in the previous item the main issue of concern was the forecast that funding was going to be insufficient to meet demand.

6.3 Required efficiency savings in 10/11 meant that DCSF needed to show a 2% (approx. £140m) efficiency gain across the 16-18 system.

6.4 A number of options were under consideration for funding of the additional numbers. No decisions had yet been made as the options were with Ministers. All options had some impact on learners and institutions.

6.5 Members thanked Geoff and Paul for the update. There were clearly areas of concern, and members commented as follows:
- Efficiency gains could prove detrimental to the funding of “soft skills” which were instrumental in a person becoming a well-rounded citizen (enrichment activity)
- There was also a danger that providers became discouraged from offering courses to learners who may not complete
- Participation numbers must be viewed as a trajectory towards the full introduction of RPA (Raising the Participation Age) in 2013. It must be decided if this is sustainable.

6.6 There was general agreement from Committee members that the preferred option would be to continue to fund all learners, even if funding levels had to be reduced.

6.7 In response to comments, David McVean advised that it was not the Ministerial intention to cut enrichment activity funding.

6.8 In summarising, the Chair advised that Peter Lauener would prepare a letter to send to Ministers setting out the Committee’s thoughts. The letter would be shared with Committee members before being sent.

**Action: Peter Lauener**

6.9 It was also agreed that it would be helpful for Committee members if small seminars on funding rates could be arranged. Geoff Daniels and Paul Williamson felt this was possible, and agreed to look at the possibility.

**Action: Geoff Daniels/Paul Williamson**

**Any Other Business**

There was none.
Meeting Review
The Chair drew members’ attention to the meeting assessment questionnaire that had been provided. He encouraged members to fill it in and hand it to the Committee clerk.
Each member was then given the opportunity to give brief feedback on how they had found the running and content of the meeting.

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Minute taker       Sue Randall
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