LEARNING AND SKILLS COUNCIL
EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY COMMITTEE

Notes of the Induction/ Inaugural Meeting of the Equality and Diversity Committee held on 14 September, at Grosvenor Gardens, London

Present: Shirley Cramer (Chair)
         David Barker
         Jeremy Crook
         Nicola Dandridge
         Patrick Grattan (items 1-3)
         Amir Kabal
         Peter Lavender
         Alyson Malach
         Angela Mason
         Sally McEnhill
         Judith Norrington
         Yvonne Thompson
         Hilary Wiseman

In attendance: Nick Johnson
                Nick O’Brien
                Caroline Slocock

Apologies: Susan Pember
          Alison Kakoura
          Rob Wye

LSC attendees: Kit Roberts
               Priya Gossain
               Lisa White
               Caroline Neville (items 3-4)
               Corinne Angwin (items 1-3)
               Mark Haysom (item 4)
               Chris Banks (item 4)

2004/01 Introduction and Welcome

1.1 Shirley Cramer welcomed everyone to the first gathering of the Learning and Skills Council’s Equality and Diversity Committee. She stated that apologies had been received from Rob Wye, who had been called to attend a Select Committee meeting, and Susan Pember the DfES representative.

1.2 Shirley opened the meeting by outlining the background to the Equality and Diversity Committee and why it had been formed. She commented that there had been a great interest in people wishing to join the Committee and that there had been a good standard of candidates who had applied. There are thirteen members on the Committee, including
the Chair, and 3 advisers from the main equality Commissions. The Department of Education and Skills also have an observer on the Committee.

1.3 Shirley then went on to explain the role of the Committee which would be to advise and monitor the LSC’s progress in promoting equality and diversity. It would take account of the LSC’s statutory duties as set out on the Learning and Skills Act, as well as recent legislation such as the Disability Discrimination Act and the Race Relations Amendment Act. The Council had agreed that the Committee would have parity with its two statutory committees: the Adult Learning Committee and the Young People’s Learning Committee, but without the legal status.

2004/02 Strategic Planning and Development

2.1 As Rob Wye was unable to attend the meeting Kit Roberts talked through his presentation on the LSC’s Business Cycle. She explained how the process linked the Strategic Area Review process and providers’ Three Year Development Plans.

2.3 The Chair thanked Kit for filling in at short notice, and hoped that the Committee would have an opportunity to meet Rob Wye at a future meeting.

2004/3 Learning Group

3.1 Caroline Neville joined the meeting and made a presentation to the Committee on the Learning Group and its key priorities. She explained that the LSC policy was to mainstream equality and diversity internally and externally, and she outlined some of the work being undertaken in the area of equality and diversity.

3.2 Following the presentation the Committee raised the following questions and points:
  - How can the Committee influence local LSCs and ensure they respond to equality and diversity issues?
  - Objectives and targets must be challenging and not just ‘realistic’.
  - What the Committee do between meetings is just as important as attending meetings.
  - Equality and Diversity Impact measures should be at the core of three year development plans, but time must be allowed in the business cycle for them to be implemented.

2004/4 Equality and Diversity Within the LSC Agenda

4.1 The Chair of the Committee welcomed the Chairman and Chief Executive of the LSC, Chris Banks and Mark Haysom, to the meeting.

4.2 Chris Banks opened the session by setting out the mission and vision of the LSC and the importance of equality and diversity in achieving this.
He set out his three areas of focus as Chairman which are:

- Working with employers to promote the demand for quality learning and training.
- Giving leadership to the delivery system in responding to the needs of employers and individuals.
- Taking full advantage of the potential of local Councils and Committees.

4.3 He wanted the Committee not just to be a group of ‘experts’ on equality and diversity, but a Committee that has influence on how the LSC works. The Committee needed to get on the right trajectory early and make an impact.

4.4 Mark Haysom then set out his perception of the LSC before he joined and some of the changes he had made since being Chief Executive, which included the introduction of the business cycle and a new management structure. He also set out four values that the LSC should be famous for which are: trust, ambition, expertise and urgency.

4.5 In response to the presentations, the Committee made the following points:

- There was concern over the lack of diversity of local Chairs as well as at the top of the organisation.
- Increasing participation is just as important as widening participation.
- The work of the LSC goes wider than just learning, and it can influence the products and services that are purchased.
- The importance of the voluntary and community sector, and the expertise they can bring to the LSC.
- Equality and Diversity should feature in the business cycle, and specifically the Equality and Diversity Annual Report.

4.6 The Chair of the Committee thanked Mark and Chris for attending the meeting.

4.7 After the Chairman and Chief Executive had left the meeting, Shirley Cramer requested the Committee provide some feedback on the last session. They made the following points:

- There needs to be a clear vision that can be articulated.
- There is a tension between ‘mainstreaming’ and initiatives/ projects.
- If the organisation is ‘employer led’ how does this link with disability - the focus should be on employment.
- The Committee will have a challenge establishing dialogue locally and regionally.

2004/5 Terms of Reference

5.1 Kit Roberts presented her paper which had two drafts of the proposed Terms of Reference appended to it, which she asked the Committee to
In response the Committee made the following points:

- The terms of reference should link to the Equality and Diversity Strategy.
- One set of Terms of Reference has a clear aim which should feature in the final version.
- The second bullet point at Annex 2 was not relevant.
- The focus was on advising the LSC, but there is no mention of any external influence.
- There should be reference to the Race Equality Scheme and similar duties.

Kit asked that any further comments on the Terms of Reference be sent to her by the end of September, so it can be brought to the next meeting.

Action: Equality and Diversity Committee to send comments on Terms of Reference to Kit Roberts by the end of September.

Action: Kit Roberts to draft revised Terms of Reference for next meeting.

The Committee asked if there was a budget for the Committee to use. Kit responded that once the Committee was clear on its priorities, then a request could be made internally.

Action: Equality and Diversity Committee to agree priorities at the next meeting

The Committee requested copies of internal Regional Business Plans to ensure that equality and diversity was effectively being mainstreamed throughout the organisation.

Action: Kit Roberts to discuss with Rob Wye

2004/6 LLDD Sub Working Group

Kit Roberts outlined her paper recommending that the Committee establish a sub group for Learning Difficulties and Disabilities to support its ongoing work in this area, which would be chaired by Peter Lavender.

The Committee agreed to the formation of a sub group, and David Barker and Judith Norrington volunteered to serve on the sub group if necessary. Additional members, external to the committee may also be co-opted.

The Committee were keen to make sure that the sub-group did not duplicate the work of another group, chaired by Peter Little, who were undertaking a strategic review of the LSC’s work in this area.

Action: Kit Roberts to convene a meeting between Peter Little, Peter Lavender and Beverley Burgess and report back to the next meeting.
2004/7  

**Future Meetings**

7.1  Kit presented her paper setting out future dates for meetings and suggested items for agendas.

7.2  The Committee was keen to have an overnight residential, but preferred these not to take place over a weekend. As it would be difficult to find time in diaries for dates in November, it was agreed that the residential event would take place in January. The meeting in November would be a normal meeting with similar timings to the induction event and would take place in London on 23 November 2004. A note would be circulated to the Committee with proposed dates, timings and locations for the January residential event. Dates for meetings in 2005 would also be circulated.

*Action:* Alison Kakoura to circulate revised list with the minutes of the meeting and members to confirm preferred dates to Alison by 15 October 2004.

7.3  The Committee suggested the following items for future Committee meetings:
- Presentation from Regional Directors on equality and diversity issues in their regions.
- Discussion on data and benchmarks.
- Strategic Area Reviews.
- Equality and Diversity Impact Measures.

The Committee also requested a balance between the task of monitoring and agenda items looking forward.

*Action:* Kit Roberts/ Alison Kakoura to prepare a paper outlining themes for meetings during the next year.

2004/8  

**Equality and Diversity Annual Report**

8.1  Kit Roberts informed the Committee of work taking place to prepare the Annual Equality and Diversity Report for the Secretary of State. A further paper would be brought to the November meeting, and the final report would be on the agenda for the January meeting.

2004/9  

**Equality and Diversity Strategy 2004/07 – Summary Document**

9.1  Kit Roberts presented her paper which included a summary document of the Equality and Diversity Strategy, to be launched at the Association of Colleges conference in November. There was a limited time to comment on the document and Kit asked for any comments to be emailed to her in the next two days.

2004/10  

**Any Other Business**

10.1  There was no other business and the meeting closed at 3.30pm.
10.2 Future meeting dates:
- 23 November 2004 (Grosvenor Gardens 10am – 3.30pm)
- 10/11, 11/12 January (start 5.00pm day one to 4.30pm on day 2)
- 16 March
- 5, 6 or 7 April
- 24 May
- 13 July
- 5 Sept