NOTE OF KEY POINTS

- Members had been appointed to all nine Regional Councils. Most Councils had some gaps but these were currently being filled by regional recruitment. All Councils were quorate.

- The powers to establish and dissolve FE corporations would not be passing to the LSC.

- The regular Finance and Performance Report showed an annual increase in spend on Learners with Learning Difficulties and/or Disabilities of between 15 and 20%. This was set against an annual budget increase of 15%. Train to Gain continued to show an underspend but Adult Apprenticeships had performed well, with an overspend against the budget. Performance on Skills for Life, Adult Level 2 and Adult Apprenticeship completions was going well, although young people’s apprenticeship volumes remained flat.

- It was planned to publish Priorities for Success 4 in October. The overall priorities contained in the document would not change from the previous year, but below these youth and adult priorities would need to reflect the Departmental split.

- Council noted a paper that gave an update on young people’s learning and skills, and in particular recent achievements in this area. Council also approved a schedule of future discussion topics.

- Council endorsed a finalised framework for stimulating growth in the numbers of apprentices. The outline framework had been considered at its meeting in June. Local authorities were keen to start taking on apprentices, but it was clear that a lack of awareness in schools was hampering take up.

- Council approved ten Capital agreements in principle, and five detailed proposals.

- Following a discussion about extending capital availability to additional categories of providers, Council delegated responsibility to the Chair to respond to a letter on the subject from Bill Rammell.

- Each region had developed a plan detailing how they intended to use recent Train to Gain flexibilities.

- Council noted a very successful year for the Equality and Diversity Committee and its advisory groups. The Committee had recruited three new members and the Single Equality Scheme had proved a resounding success, being used as an exemplar for similar schemes within the sector.

- The Low Pay Commission had written to the LSC to request a contribution to its consultation on the National Minimum Wage (NMW). The LSC recommended that the current exemption of apprentices from the NMW should be ended and replaced with a Minimum Apprentice Wage.

- Council passed on its formal congratulations to Mark Haysom following his receipt of a CBE in the Queen’s Birthday Honours list.