NOTE OF KEY POINTS

- A discussion on the structure and content of the Statement of Priorities 2008/09 yielded a number of comments and suggestions. Since Council did not meet again until after the scheduled publication date, it was agreed that a smaller group of members would be convened to monitor progress on behalf of Council between now and publication.

- Council agreed to the re-delegation of some powers currently held by local Councils to the Regional Boards. This particularly applied to reorganisations and capital proposals. The change was to take place from 1 November 2007.

- Challenges outlined in the Management Group Report to Council included how best to increase volumes in Train to Gain and Apprenticeships. Train to Gain and Apprenticeships would be discussed as specific items at future meetings of the Council.

- The Council approved eight in principle and detailed capital proposals. Four decisions taken by the Chair and Chief Executive under delegated authority were noted. All other decisions taken by the Capital Committee were noted.

- Council authorised the Chief Executive to make minor amendments to the Statutory Intervention Policy as necessary following Commons debates. Major amendments would be referred back to the Council for approval.

- Council welcomed Secretary of State for Innovation, Universities and Skills, the Rt. Hon. John Denham MP to the meeting. The Secretary of State talked about his impressions of office, and his thoughts for the future. He praised the LSC for its successes thus far, and acknowledged that it was a period of immense uncertainty which he was committed to keeping to a minimum. He was particularly passionate about the importance of the skills agenda to social inclusion, as well as being responsive to employer demands. He warned against any temptation to “hit the target but miss the point”, meaning that although targets are important as they are the drivers of action, achievement of them must not become the overriding obsession. A lively debate followed in which members questioned the Secretary of State on areas such as: getting the offer for young people right; the difficulties of splitting some responsibilities across departments; social cohesion and First Steps Learning; remit of the Employment and Skills Commission; self-regulation of FE; the role of RDAs in assisting with skills and integration; volunteering as a genuine pathway into work.

- The Finance Report highlighted emerging under-spends in both the Train to Gain and apprenticeship budgets.
• It was agreed that Council would be kept regularly informed about **Machinery of Government** changes and updates, and in particular about submissions that may need to go to Ministers
• Council noted a paper giving an update on the LSC’s strategy for **sustainable development** called “From Here to Sustainability”. Council member John Taylor agreed to act as National Council member champion
• Council noted an update paper on the **New Standard for Accrediting Employer Responsiveness and Vocational Excellence**
• Council noted an update paper on the work of the **Change Board**.