National Council meeting summary – 4 June 2008

NOTE OF KEY POINTS

- Council formally approved the appointment of John Cridland and Frances O’Grady as Vice-Chairs of the LSC
- In an update on the recent round of regional Machinery of Government stakeholder roadshow events, Council noted that most stakeholders said they knew least about future post 19 arrangements, and consequently most comments and questions were around pre-19 arrangements. Many concerns had centred around maintaining delivery standards, LSC staff motivation and high quality communication
- The Finance and Performance Report detailed a net underspend of 1.6% for the 2007-08 financial year. The use of the underspend was currently the subject of discussion with the Departments, but it was unlikely that the full amount would be returned to the LSC
- The Allocations process was ongoing and was being conducted within the previously agreed and published time frame. Ways to improve the process for future years were being looked at, particularly as far as communication around the process was concerned
- Train to Gain performance overall was going well, although Level 3 starts needed a boost to hit trajectories. A series of flexibilities had recently been agreed with the Department which would help to boost take up. Council noted the influence that economic fluctuations could have on the programme, and John Cridland from the CBI agreed to assist with obtaining robust and up to date economic data
- Apprenticeships performance was going well with starts up 3% on last year and completions ahead of profile
- Development of the National Apprenticeship Service had moved to the implementation stage following a positive consultation period. An organisational model was in the process of being developed, but it was already clear that additional resource would be needed
- Council members endorsed the principle behind extending capital eligibility to qualifying work-based learning providers and supported a project-based approach to capital applications identified through EC competitive processes. It was clear, though, that any extension to eligibility must be in the public interest
- Council agreed in principle capital applications for: Bournemouth and Poole College; Havering Sixth Form College; Rotherham College of Arts and Technology; Dunstable College; Mid Cheshire College; Stourbridge College; College of North West Kent; Bournemouth College; Huddersfield Technical College; Liverpool Community College. Council also agreed detailed applications for Barnet College; Warwickshire College; Southampton College; Aquinas College
- Council delegated authority to the Chief Executive to make any minor amendments required to the Statutory Intervention Policy and then to submit it to the two Secretaries of State
• Council noted a paper detailing implications for the LSC of the introduction of a **National Identity Scheme**. Authority to submit the final response to the consultation was delegated to the Chief Executive and the National Director of Finance and Resources

• Finally, Council took the opportunity to thank Henry Ball (Regional Director of the South East), who was due to retire at the end of July, for his hard work and commitment to the LSC – and further education in general – over the course of his career.