NOTE OF KEY POINTS

- Council discussed the **Train to Gain plan for growth**, developed in response to the need to grow the service rapidly in order to meet challenging trajectories. In a wide-ranging discussion, points were made about employer contribution to training; the challenge of targets in what is a demand-led system; engagement of small businesses; minimising dead weight (i.e., not paying those employers who would have provided the training themselves anyway); the role of union negotiators; engagement of the FE workforce; promoting the fact that Train to Gain is also for Level 3 and 4; involving the Third Sector.

- Receiving an update paper on **Apprenticeships**, Council noted that most sectors were doing well in terms of recruitment, although it was likely that some areas within certain sectors were performing less well. Since apprenticeship participation is measured in terms of the employer, rather than where the apprentice lives, some geographical areas with fewer employers showed unfairly low participation rates.

- Council noted an update on **Machinery of Government changes**, and that the two Secretaries of State (John Denham and Ed Balls) intended to send a letter to the sector in November outlining the principles behind consultation.

- Council noted some potential good news in terms of investment in a presentation on the **CSR 2007 and the Annual Statement of Priorities**. The details contained in the presentation were still subject to change. The timetable for the CSR had slipped to mid-November which presented challenges in terms of school sixth form allocations which needed to be finalised in December. Any further slippage could have implications for college allocations.

- In a presentation on the **Self Regulation** work being carried out by the FE Sector Project Implementation Team, the Council noted that the deadline for the final submission of proposals to Ministers was 16 November. A key part of the proposals was the creation of a “single voice” representing all providers that could confidently enter into strategic dialogue with government. Council signalled its support for the general direction of the work, and the benefits it would bring, but asked that a clear communication went out to the sector as soon as possible setting out how the work would bring about simplification, and how the benefits would be realised.

- Council approved five in principle **capital** applications (Northampton College, Colchester Institute, College of North West London, Shrewsbury College of Arts and Technology and Shrewsbury Sixth Form College). Council approved one detailed application from Suffolk College.
The **Management Group Report** was mainly noted for information, although Mark Haysom drew Council’s attention to the issue of widespread non-compliance in the FE sector with equality legislation. This serious issue was the subject of urgent senior management discussions, as the LSC – along with other relevant organisations – had been charged with monitoring compliance.

- Council agreed to review the **delegations to the Reorganisations Committee** to enable it to make decisions on the establishment and dissolution of FE corporations in line with the impending transfer of such powers from the Secretary of State to the LSC.

- Council noted an **Information Authority** update paper which detailed three main activities:
  - LSC to set up an FE system-wide Information Standards Agency
  - Setting up of a separate data service as a service to stakeholders
  - Establishment of a Learner Registration Service to provide a Unique Learner Number

- A relatively small under spend (1% of budget) was reported in the **Finance Report**. Admin budget pressures were being managed.