Questions and Answers

Will data that is sent to the LSC from providers be available back to providers through the new system?

- Yes – the gateway for two way information between the LSC and providers is planned to be running by 2010.

What are the plans for consistency of approach for the VCS?

- Everything the LSC does is intended for all providers, and where that is not the case, we are reviewing the position to see if we can change it, e.g. capital allocations.

Why does the LSC think that consortia are the only way forward for the VCS?

- The Working Together strategy is clear in its commitment to consortia and that strategy was written in consultation with the VCS, though there is still a commitment to work with VCS separately if the case merits a separate response, i.e. the VCS organisation works across sub regional boundaries.

How will the LSC ensure that what is said nationally actually happens locally?

- The LSC is undertaking a series of induction sessions for staff working with the VCS and involving VCS at local level in these. We are aiming to inform all of our staff of the national direction, which is to include the VCS in their plans where it is appropriate to do so. The needs of any local community will determine what the local LSC decide to provide in their locality.

How will the LSC ensure the strategic investment of the VCS as part of their plans?

- We are looking at how this might be done, in collaboration with other investors such as Future Builders and Capacity Builders.

How will the LSC join up their plans for delivery with other Government departments also delivering learning and skills?
We are talking to other departments about their plans, and at local level, we are involved in the Local Area Agreements to identify what is needed and how we will together provide for the needs.

VCS often find themselves writing a number of self assessment reports for the LSC and other funders. Why can’t we just write one for all of you?

- We are working on this, but it will be important for you to feed this into our Framework for Excellence consultation feedback.

How will the LSC measure the soft outcomes of the VCS contribution to the LSC agenda?

- The LSC need to build targets that recognise the wider benefits of learning – any help about how we might do this would be welcome.

How can the LSC help the VCS to build more equal relationships with FE colleges?

- The LSC are working with the AoC and the LEA association to look at how we might together publish good practice for all providers on partnership working for adult learning.

We know the ESF funding is being reduced. This will have a significant impact on the VCS. What is the LSC doing about this?

- The LSC are lobbying for as much of the ESF funding as possible to come through the LSC. VCS organisations might wish to do the same.

If the LSC is moving to an agenda that is primarily about 14-19 year olds, how will those adults who are marginalised in society get provision?

- The LSC are still spending a significant chunk of funding on adult learners, but some of the provision will need to be provided through other agencies, e.g. Department for Health, or Department for Communities and Local Government.

Why does the Train to Gain service not include volunteers?

- This is a Government rule, and not an LSC arrangement. The LSC has made representations to Ministers to ask that this be reviewed.

If the LSC are learner led, what if they don’t want a qualification?

- The Government is prioritising LSC funding to be spent on qualifications. The LSC do still spend its funds on non qualification based learning and safeguards some funds for non progression, non accredited learning, but it
is the Government’s intention that where people can pay for this learning themselves, they should pay.

**The VCS are losing franchises with colleges because of college cuts. Will this change?**

- The decision to withdraw a franchise is with the college, but we are encouraging colleges to partner with VCS organisations wherever it is appropriate.

**Are LSC regional councils to have a VCS representative on them and, if not, why not?**

- The Director of Strategy and Communications committed himself to raising this with the LSC Chair.

**The VCS often train volunteers and can’t recover money from fees. What can the LSC do to help?**

- The LSC are required where appropriate to raise these fees and the VCS will need to talk to other Government departments about how this could be funded. The LSC have raised the issue with the Home Office.

**What funding is going to become available for learners with learning difficulties and disabilities to get employment without a qualification?**

- Each region will be looking at the needs of learners with learning difficulties and disabilities in their region. They will specifically look at three areas: (1) Supported employment opportunities; (2) Getting a Level 2 qualification; and (3) New programmes of learning. Each of these issues will be considered within each region and plans drawn up and published in late November 2006.