NOTE OF KEY POINTS

- An event celebrating the contribution to the LSC of the non-executives had been held on 7 March. The Secretary of State and Minister Bill Rammell had both spoken at the event and had expressed their continuing support for the LSC and its pivotal role in post 16 learning and skills. Many of the non-executives had expressed their intention to continue to act as ambassadors for the LSC and its vision.

- Regional summaries of local plans had been presented to the Council the previous evening. At the meeting, the exercise of the delegation to Regional Boards to approve local plans was noted, as were a number of areas of commonality that had emerged from the planning process. Common issues were:
  - Provider readiness for a demand-led system
  - Revenue issue surrounding capital and infrastructure
  - Economic development and the link between employment and skills
  - NEET engagement and the 14-19 agenda in more general terms
  - Higher Education
  - Employment and Skills Boards.

- Sir George Sweeney, Special Advisor to the Council and Chair of the Self-Regulation Implementation Group gave a presentation on the proposition developed in response to the Secretary of State’s challenge to the sector to move towards self-regulation. Formal feedback on the first stages of the work had been received from Ministers and a definition of what self-regulation means for the sector had been agreed. A framework to establish accountability lines and the ways in which self-regulation would work in practice was now to be developed.

- In introducing his regular Management Group report to Council, Mark Haysom highlighted the recent success around the Adult Level 2 target. There were a number of issues to be discussed in depth which formed substantive items in their own right. These were:
  - Framework for Excellence – Henry Ball to take on a significant role over the coming months in the management of the Framework and its delivery
  - Leitch implementation – four submissions were to go to Ministers on: Train to Gain and Learner Accounts; Economically valuable skills; Sector Skills Councils and Sector Skills Agreements; Employment and Skills Programme and Commission for Employment and Skills
  - 14-19 update – a national strategy to tackle the NEET challenge was being developed. A green paper was likely to be published soon about raising the compulsory participation age
  - Campaign to promote the value of learning – work was ongoing to integrate the marketing and communication work currently being undertaken by the LSC, DfES and SSDAs on learning and skills. The aim was to have a clear, unifying approach working across all stakeholders.

- The Finance report to 31 January 2007 showed that 81% of the total grant had been spent, which was behind the profile of 83%. Year end forecasts showed a potential under-spend of £80 million, of which £50 million was for capital.

- Council approved a revised capital proposal from Barnet College for 30% grant support.

- Melanie Hunt advised that the Single Equality Scheme was likely to be published on 30 April.