Adult Learning Committee Update

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Background and introduction
1 This paper provides an update on the work of the Adult Learning Committee since the last report to Council in November 2005, and outlines our future work programme including a proposed approach to the new policy area of migration and skills.

Purpose
2 The Adult Learning Committee champions adult learning and is committed to ensuring that this agenda remains at the forefront of the Learning and Skills Council’s work.

Recommendation
3 The Council are asked to:
   • note the work of the Adult Learning Committee over recent months and the forward agenda;
   • comment on the new Migration Task Group which will make recommendations on LSC migration and skills policy.

Background
4 Since Autumn 2004 the Adult Learning Committee has worked to increase its impact, its focus has shifted to adult skills and its impact on the economy, competitiveness, productivity and the workforce. This has involved the development of a different way of working, the alignment of the discussion themes with the LSC priorities and the appointment of more employers to its membership.
Work Programme for 2006

5 A work programme for 2006 was agreed in November and, as with the previous year, meetings will be focused on major themes linked to the LSC Annual Statement of Priorities. Major themes for discussion in 2006 are:

- 2012 Olympics;
- Adult Engagement;
- Funding for Skills;
- Upskilling the Public Sector;
- Employer Engagement;
- Economic Development and Regions.

6 Most of these themes are priorities carried over from the previous year reflecting their importance to the LSC and the Committee. This will also provide the opportunity to re-visit policy areas where the Committee have advised LSC officials, and assess where progress has been made.

7 As with the previous year external speakers have been invited to speak on the chosen theme with a view to engaging them in a debate and influence their thinking. External speakers for 2006, that are scheduled or have already take place, are:

- Richard Sumray, Chair of the London 2012 Forum;
- Brendan Barber, General Secretary TUC;
- John Hutton, Secretary of State Department for Work and Pensions;
- John Healey, Treasury Minister;
- Miles Templeman, Director General of IOD;
- Bill Rammell, DfES Minister of State;
- Phil Hope DfES Minister for Skills.

8 Since the last report on the work of the Committee was presented to Council, discussions have been held on wide range of LSC policy and operational areas:

- The role of the National Employer Service and its increased relationship management role with large employers.
- Centres of Vocational Excellence and their links to Skills Academies and the Quality Mark (subsequently included in the White Paper)
- Migration and skills.
- The 2012 Olympics and the impact this will have on the skills needs in London and the important role of the LSC in meeting these needs.
- The bid to host 2011 WorldSkills competition in London.
- Progress of the Skills for Life programme and target, and the outcomes of the Strategic Review.
- The Offenders Learning and Skills Service.
- The Action Plan produced to meet the Adult Level 2 PSA target.
- City-Region developments to establish an integrated and employer led skills and employment framework.
Migration Task Group

9 Over the last year, the issue of migration and skills has become of increasing importance to the Committee, as its impact on other policy areas within the LSC has been highlighted on many occasions.

10 A paper was presented to the Committee which provided a research perspective on learning and skills issues relating to migrants and the Committee was asked to provide a policy steer and identify issues to explore further. It was agreed that given the importance of this work and its wide-ranging impact, a Task Group would be created. The Task Group would be asked to make recommendations to the Committee and National Council.

11 This Group will be chaired by Giles Clarke, National Council and ALC member. Currently members of the Task Group are: members of the ALC, a national employer, representatives from DfES, Home Office, TUC and LSC London region.

12 An in-depth research paper on migration and skills was submitted to the Adult Learning Committee and this paper was well regarded by members. The paper has been updated since its presentation to the Committee to include recent developments, including a recent LSDA research report, and copies can be made available to Council members on request.

Joint Working With Other Committees

13 Shirley Cramer, the Chair of the Equality and Diversity Committee presented at a meeting of the Adult Learning Committee late last year. This was followed by a subsequent presentation by Frances O’Grady and David Way at the Equality and Diversity Committee in March on the work of the Adult Learning Committee and the LSC Skills Group.

14 These discussions have helped identify common areas of interest and shared priorities where collaboration can take place. A member of the Equality and Diversity Committee has been invited to join the Migration Task Group.

Legal implications

15 This paper has no legal implications.

Financial implications

16 This paper has no financial implications.

Risk management

17 There is no risk to the LSC in the recommendations made in this paper.