Learning and Skills Council Chair strengthens top tier
Chris Banks appoints Frances O’Grady and John Cridland as Vice Chairs of National Council

Date of issue 8 April
Publication number 519
Embargo until 8 April

Further to the Prime Minister’s reappointment of Chris Banks to lead the Learning and Skills Council over the course of the next three years; he has appointed existing National Council members Frances O’Grady, Deputy General Secretary of the Trade Union Congress (TUC) and John Cridland, Deputy Director General of the Confederation of British Industry (CBI) as his joint Vice Chairs on the LSC National Council.

Both Frances and John are strongly committed to the learning and skills agenda and that is why they joined the LSC’s National Council. They are firm believers in the benefits of skills to the individual, and to the employer, and actively promote this message, not just on behalf of the LSC but crucially, within their own organisations.

Given their respective roles on the TUC and the CBI, their input is vital to ensuring that the learner and the employer voice is heard at the highest level of the LSC, to influence the design and delivery of learning and skills provision for the benefit of the learner.

Chris Banks, Chair of the LSC said:

“The LSC has done a great job and made real progress since it was established, and I would like to pay tribute to the people in the LSC: the staff and our non-executive members, nationally, regionally and locally; and all those involved in the Further Education system as a whole, for what has been achieved.

“But we still have a huge job to do.
“The responsibility for the education and training or re-training of literally millions of people rests in the hands of the LSC for the next 2-3 years and the best legacy we can leave is a system which is not only much improved, but which is able to continue the improvements in the years to come.

“More than ever we need professional and committed people to help us take this important agenda forward as we look to accelerate performance and focus on the best possible outcome for learners, employers and our communities. That’s why I agreed to be reappointed as Chair of the LSC, and why I have asked Frances and John to be joint Vice Chairs of the National Council”.

Frances O’ Grady said:

“In this fast paced world, it is vital that individuals, whatever their background, have the opportunity to acquire the skills they need to succeed in work and in life. That is why I am pleased to be playing such a key role on the National Council and working with the LSC on this important agenda. It is vital – particularly as we transition to new arrangements - that we build on the success to date and continue to improve the life chances of individuals, through learning and skills”.

John Cridland said:

“I firmly believe that a skilled workforce is a key component of any successful business. I also believe that we need to put employers in the driving seat of the system that delivers training for them. That is why I am delighted to take on this role as joint Vice Chair with Frances O’Grady and to be working with Chris Banks and the LSC as a whole. This is a crucial time for the LSC as it expands massively key services for employers – such as Train to Gain – whilst dealing with the challenge of moving to new delivery arrangements”.
The LSC is also establishing nine new Regional Councils to ensure that there is strong leadership and governance at the regional level as the organisation moves into new arrangements. It is expected that unions and business will have a key role as members of the Regional Council so that the learner and employer voice is heard throughout the LSC.

ENDS

Notes to Editors

This press release applies to England only.

LSC
The LSC exists to make England better skilled and more competitive. We are responsible for ensuring the availability of high-quality education and training for everyone. We have a single goal: to improve the skills of England’s young people and adults to world class standards. Our vision is that young people and adults in England have knowledge and skills matching the best in the world and are part of a truly competitive workforce. We work nationally, regionally and locally to deliver this ambition on behalf of learners and employers.

Since it was established in 2001, the LSC has overseen a huge increase in the numbers of young people and adults in learning and training and skills and qualification levels have never been higher. In addition the LSC has helped 40,000 businesses equip their staff with new qualifications at a time and a place that suits them through our Train to Gain Service.

Pen Pictures

John Cridland, CBE - Deputy Director-General of the CBI

John joined the CBI in 1982, and was appointed Director of Human Resources Policy in 1995, negotiating the UK's first National Minimum Wage, entry into the EU Social Chapter and the Employment Relations Act 1999. John is a Governor at Leighton Middle School, Leighton Buzzard and has just finished terms on the Low Pay Commission and ACAS. John was awarded the CBE in the New Year Honours List 2006 for services to business.

Frances O’ Grady

Frances became TUC Deputy General Secretary in January 2003, the first woman ever to hold this post. Frances has lead responsibility for a wide range of key areas of policy development across the TUC's work including trade union recruitment and organisation, inter-union relations and TUC services to members. Frances sits on the board of the think tank, IPPR. She is a member of the LSC National Council and chair of the Adult Learning Committee. Frances is a member of the UK Skills Board and the National Employment Panel and in April 2007 was appointed to the Low Pay Commission.
FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

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