

REPORT ON THE REVIEW OF LEARNING PARTNERSHIPS

MAY 2002

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Background

1.1 Learning Partnerships were set up in 1999 to improve coherence and collaboration in the local planning and delivery of post-16 education and training. The Learning Partnerships remit letter in 1999 spoke of “a single strategic body...in each area that will bring together all existing local partnership arrangements covering post-16 and lifelong learning.”

1.2 Learning Partnerships are now involved in a whole range of activities designed to widen participation, improve standards and increase attainment in their local areas.

1.3 There are currently 101 Learning Partnerships covering the whole of England. In some cases, their boundaries are coterminous with local LSC boundaries, whilst in others there are two or more Learning Partnerships within the local LSC area.

1.4 Learning Partnerships have a core membership of FE college sector, Careers Service/Connexions, Local authorities and schools. Beyond this Partnerships have discretion to involve other suitable bodies that can respond to local priorities. The network benefits from the engagement of the voluntary & community sector, private training providers, higher education institutions, business sector, Trades Unions, the Youth Service, Education Business Partnerships, faith groups, cultural industries (libraries, museums etc) and other arms of Government such as the Employment Service and health/social services. Recently many Learning Partnerships have forged links with Local Strategic Partnerships.

1.5 The current DfES guidance (dated April 2001) describes three core roles for Learning Partnerships:

- deliver greater provider **collaboration** so learning becomes more coherent, relevant and accessible to local people and employers;
- help ensure that effective mechanisms are in place to provide **feedback** on the quality and accessibility of learning from both young people and adults; and
- encourage providers to work collectively, with users, to identify local learner, community and employer **needs** and to respond to them through their own actions and by influencing local LSCs.

The Review of Learning Partnerships

2.1 Margaret Hodge, Minister for Lifelong Learning and Higher Education, addressed the Learning Partnerships conference on 29 November 2001 and invited delegates and other national partners to express their views on the future development of Learning Partnerships by 15 February 2002. In her address the Minister emphasised that better links needed to be forged with the funding and planning mechanisms now in place and said that successful Learning Partnerships, promoting

provider collaboration, responding to the voice of the learner and contributing to local regeneration formed part of the Government’s vision.

2.2 The following questions were published as a basis for the review and many replies used these as a framework for their comments.

1. To what extent are Learning Partnerships fulfilling their core roles of:
 - promoting provider collaboration;
 - articulating the voice of the learner; and
 - identifying local learner, community and employer needs?
2. Are these core roles still appropriate?
3. What is the right balance between centrally defined core roles and local flexibility for Learning Partnerships?
4. What is the added value of Learning Partnerships?
5. Do the local arrangements for Learning Partnerships work effectively in your area?
6. What barriers get in the way of Learning Partnerships being more effective?
7. How should Learning Partnerships be funded?

2.3 There was a good response to the review and the table below shows the number of responses received. A full list of respondents is at annex A. Given the explanations in the footnotes, we have stated publicly that there were over 200 responses to the review.

| <i>Responses to review of Learning Partnerships</i> | |
|---|------------|
| Learning Partnerships ¹ | 88 |
| LSC (National Office and 19 local arms) | 20 |
| National Advisory Group (e.g. NIACE, AoC ² , CSNA, LSDA, Ufi, Learning Communities Network, church groups) | 8 |
| Government-related ³ (Government Offices ⁴ , RDAs) | 7 |
| Others (e.g. WEA, NASUWT, some individual responses) | 15 |
| Total | 138 |

¹ 80 Partnership responses, 8 joint responses. Where the chair and co-ordinator submitted separate responses we have counted only once in the table. A number of Partnership responses included letters of support from local partners which have not been counted in the total.

² The AoC response included comments from over 70 colleges (not included in total in table).

³ There was also correspondence on the review between Government Departments, not included in the total.

⁴ Government Offices submitted a joint response, although some regions offered separate replies to reflect local circumstances or to offer a personal perspective.

Executive Summary

3.1 On the role of Learning Partnerships, the responses to the consultation showed that:

- Partnerships have been able to make considerable progress in promoting provider collaboration, reasonable progress on identifying local needs but rather less progress on articulating the voice of the learner;
- many respondents attached importance to the potential contribution of Partnerships to local regeneration, including through work with Local Strategic Partnerships; and
- there remains uncertainty among many partners about the role of Learning Partnerships generally, and about the relevance of the current core roles now the LSC is in place. Many Partnerships felt that the Department should review the core roles, and ensure that its approach to implementing its policies is consistent with the new roles.

3.2 On funding, most Partnership responses expressed a preference for current arrangements, whereby Partnerships receive their core funding from DfES channelled through Government Offices, to continue. There was concern about a perceived reduction in independence were funding to be routed through the LSC. Some partners, including the majority of FE colleges, felt that funding through the LSC would ensure a better alignment between Partnerships' activities and the local LSC.

3.3 The responses identified many examples of innovative activity by Learning Partnerships leading to tangible gains for learners and communities. The Department will publish the good practice identified to help Learning Partnerships build on the successful experience of others.

Extracts and summaries of responses to questions

Question 1. To what extent are LPs fulfilling their core roles of:

a. promoting provider collaboration

Key Comments

"Partnerships provide the only forum where providers, purchasers and planners come together to formulate strategy. Collaboration [is] not a quick fix."

"Partners report a body of evidence to support the growing impact and presence of Learning Partnerships in their working with other agencies and strategic bodies, bringing structure to the relationships between partners in the learning market, improving levels of collaboration and

building capacity.”

“There are many examples of Learning Partnerships successfully promoting collaboration - as Partnerships mature this is becoming more evident and we would hope to see more examples of collaboration being promoted with partners who have traditionally been ‘out of the loop’, e.g. private training providers and the voluntary sector.”

“The Association does not believe Learning Partnerships can function effectively without teacher representation, when by far the highest percentage of learning is achieved because of the skills and expertise of the teaching profession.”

“Learning Partnerships have achieved a good deal of success in this area ...but turning collaboration into strategic influence and change has proved more difficult ...”

“The LSC is committed to working in partnership and has no desire for the dismantling of partnerships. The Learning Partnerships role, as independent voluntary bodies, *in adding value by getting key players to work together* is one we would wish to encourage and build upon, rather than diminish.”

b. articulating the Voice of the Learner

Key Comments

“Without exception, Learning Partnerships are also focusing on the voice of potential learners and promoting innovative solutions to breaking down barriers to participation.”

“Learning Partnerships are ideally placed & have put in mechanisms to capture voice of the learner, [the] majority focusing on capturing voice on non-learner.”

“Articulating the voice of the learner is perhaps less well developed but a number of partnerships are developing projects to establish good practice ... this is a complex area of work ... quick wins are too much to expect.”

“The question of whether partnerships of providers are the right vehicle for this responsibility remains a valid one. Are Learning Partnerships sufficiently independent to speak for their consumers? Many Learning Partnerships have made valiant efforts to capture the Voice of the Learner [but] to carry out this role comprehensively and regularly would require significant resources of market research and organisational capacity, which are not currently available to Learning Partnerships. Connexions Partnerships and IAG networks will play an increasingly important part, especially articulating the voice of non-learners, which is arguably of greater relevance for planners.”

c. identifying needs

Key Comments

"Their voluntary status provides a powerful motivation to understand the way the local picture emerges."

"Partnerships do not have the resources to identify the full range of needs within a sub- region – some aspects would be better suited to other partners such as the LSC, e.g. labour market skills analysis, household surveys etc. Learning Partnerships' strength is the identification of needs at "grass roots"/neighbourhood level."

"Yes, by being local, lifelong and lifewide, in contrast to the more specific remits of partners like the LLSCs, LEAs and regeneration bodies (and their poorer performance on employer needs is true of many other public sector organisations)"

"Some Learning Partnerships are developing strong links with sub-regional partnerships and in some cases are becoming the strategic arm of the Local Strategic Partnership as far as education and skills are concerned. Their role in these partnerships is to articulate learner, community and employer needs, setting this against current provision."

Summary and analysis

General agreement that, of their core roles, Learning Partnerships have achieved most in the area of provider collaboration.

Accessing the voice of the learner is less well developed. Some Partnerships do not have the resources to identify the full range of needs within a sub-region – some aspects would be better suited to other partners such as the LSC.

Identifying local needs depends on the positioning of the Learning Partnership. Those best placed to do this are acting as the 'learning arm' of their Local Strategic Partnership.

Learning Partnerships add value where they focus on a smaller number of important areas of strategic importance to their local area (for example, basic skills, disaffected young people).

Most Partnerships are developing an advisory role to LSC.

Many have levered in significant additional funding.

Whether a Learning Partnership is effective or not depends less on structural or organisational issues than the willingness of partners to collaborate.

Question 2: Are these core roles still appropriate?

Key Comments

"Agree core roles still appropriate however where Learning Partnerships are more mature there is a desire to go beyond these & engage in other Government agendas, particularly regeneration"

"All elements of the remit are still vital - although there is still a long way to go, it is hard to see where else the three core roles will be taken seriously. Our impression is that most energy is being expended on provider collaboration and that much less is happening in terms of accessing "the hard to reach"."

"[we believe] the primary aim of Learning Partnerships is to support the development of the learning community and that therefore their central role should be to act as an advocate for local learning needs whilst taking account of national policy frameworks."

"In view of the role of Local Strategic Partnerships in the broad community planning framework, there would be advantages in developing the role of LPs as the 'learning arms' of LSPs."

Summary and analysis

The extent to which core roles are still appropriate depends on the focus of the Learning Partnership within its community and the age range it covers.

The responses, particularly from key partners, suggest that Learning Partnerships have been unclear about roles and modes of operation since their inception. Some effective Partnerships operate as an overarching strategic body dealing quite effectively with a county-wide provision. Others that are equally effective are smaller and more locally based, acting in response to identified needs.

Question 3: What is the right balance between centrally defined core roles and local flexibility for Learning Partnerships?

Key Comments

"Partnerships need a clearly defined core role, which is communicated not only in their own guidance but also in other partners' documentation (i.e. their 'rule books') so that all stakeholders understand their relationship with the Learning Partnership."

"The fit between Learning Partnerships and national policy should be

explicit and published nationally. Learning Partnerships in the region are developing as the local arm of their Local Strategic Partnership."

"Whilst current core roles are appropriate, there are roles of greater importance, including: 'making things work' at a local level, role to deliver results despite complexity, crucial role in achieving joined up thinking, demonstrating that learning & skills is vital to every agenda, contributing to governments learning targets, providing enablement, participation and engagement of non-learners, role & capability in relation to the voluntary sector, role in providing expert support and information on learning matters. Future roles include: stimulating creativity & innovation and bringing learning to the heart of community, social & economic regeneration"

"The core role provides both a clear common remit and provides Learning Partnerships with the flexibility to respond to local issues. [Has] DfES recognised the important role that LPs can play to help deliver its strategy? There is potential for LPs to interface with Local Strategic Partnerships and the neighbourhood renewal agenda (happening already in some areas) - DfES as an independent funder of LPs and responsible for defining a core role could drive that relationship. The LSC has a shared but also a narrower set of priorities than DfES."

"There needs to be guidance to partnerships on membership to avoid exclusivity and provider self-interest."

"There should be a minimal definition of core roles, focussing on the value of local knowledge and collaborative fora so that Ministers can see the return on their investment. Beyond that, there should be maximum local flexibility to address issues which could range from Early Years to provision for the Third Age, but would certainly include those arising from Area Inspection, the 14-19 curriculum and Partnerships for Progression."

"The diversity of Learning Partnerships is not an accident. The extensive debates and arguments that characterised the birth of many Partnerships have now been settled largely because they are carrying out roles and activities with which local partners feel comfortable - they are now accepted because they are not perceived as threatening. A return to a nationally determined strategic role would doubtless cause warfare to break out again in many areas!"

Summary and analysis

There needs to be both a set of centrally defined core roles for Learning Partnerships with the flexibility to allow for them to provide local solutions to local needs. Many responses point out that the core role for Learning Partnerships is only part of the equation, laying great emphasis on the flexibility that Partnerships must be allowed so that they can respond to locally identified needs. It will be important for the outcome to preserve the balance between a defined core role and local flexibility to ensure continued effectiveness from Learning Partnerships.

Question 4: What is the added value of Learning Partnerships?

Key Comments

"An excellent environment to act as a research unit / think tank / ginger group that sits apart from statutory bodies as 'prodger' / 'questioner' of their policies and activities."

"Strategic forum. A base from which to launch projects and relationships rarely if ever before achieved, e.g. voluntary sector able to access funds and joint projects and take risks otherwise untenable."

"Learning Partnerships offer a low cost solution to ensuring local agencies are responsive and able to deliver against national initiatives."

"... ensuring maximum use of resources to benefit the learner [meaning] ... access, curriculum choice, progression and achievement but more importantly, through collaboration, being able to offer students locally an opportunity to continue to study with a faith based provider."

"At best, Learning Partnerships help in the better use of resources, promotion of progression and development of mutual understanding between the members. However, in some cases, original boundary decisions and the growth of partnership overload have limited their effectiveness. "

"There are many examples of Learning Partnerships providing extremely useful and innovative services. Their diversity is their strength but makes it difficult to identify national value added."

"Learning Partnerships are vital – they are likely to be the only forum that will devote due attention to widening participation and social inclusion. Given the context of massive change in the Learning and Skills sector during the life of the Learning Partnerships, they have made an encouraging start. It would be disastrous to undo these relationships."

Summary and analysis

Learning Partnerships add value in the area of provider collaboration. They could be used more for innovation and ideas development.

The original vision for Learning Partnerships has not been realised with any degree of consistency across the country. However, given the legacy of competition, continuing self-interest amongst providers and the voluntary nature of partnerships themselves, it is unreasonable to expect that more could have been achieved.

Question 5: Do the local arrangements for Learning Partnerships work effectively in your area?

Key Comments

"Learning Partnerships play an invaluable role in developing the learning market and if we didn't have them, we would have to reinvent them."

"Created more formal & coherent structures and sub-groups through which local initiatives can be delivered."

"Learning Partnerships are positioning themselves with emerging Local Strategic Partnerships to maximise their impact on learning & skills agenda."

"Yes, on balance, though all regions have some problem Learning Partnerships that need attention. Those that work better are often those that have gained some additional formal recognition (e.g. by becoming involved as the learning arm of a Local Strategic Partnership) and developed their own funding streams for activities – often from the EU but sometimes from the local LSC or RDA."

"Learning Partnerships need to be truly representative of all providers and genuinely represent the voluntary sector. Organisations like WEA are disadvantaged having to deal with potentially 101 Learning Partnerships and 47 LSCs - overstretches resources."

Summary and analysis

A mixed bag of responses. Around two-thirds of Learning Partnerships seem to have established effective working relationships with their local LSCs. Other agencies, especially smaller voluntary organisations, reported resource difficulties in attending the number of Partnership meetings. On the other hand, many smaller organisations welcomed the opportunity to be engaged and involved. Some respondents felt their local Learning Partnership was simply a "talking shop" and in some cases the numbers attending Partnership meetings had declined.

Question 6: What barriers get in the way of Learning Partnerships being more effective?

Key Comments

"It is a real barrier to achieving integrated activity at local level that DfES and other organisations, both national and local, do not use Learning Partnerships as a conduit for progressing (often mandatory partnership) initiatives which aspire to improve learning performance."

"Amongst others: Variable joining up of policy at central level. Lack of Learning Partnership profile centrally. Evaluation of hard targets not process. Short term contracts for Learning Partnership managers."

"The period of uncertainty in which they have operated - which continues; the usual problems of partnership working; the relationship with the LSC; the skills of the co-ordinator; the breadth of the agenda. A better question is 'what might we put in place to break down those barriers?'"

"1. Lack of a clear, deliverable and defined remit - LPs have been allocated a national set of roles they simply cannot perform. 2. Geography & boundaries. 3. Less than whole hearted support of key players. 4. Experience, skills and 'clout' of the co-ordinator. 5. Critical role of Chair"

"Because of their responsibilities and influence, Learning Partnerships should be subject to a code of conduct covering meetings, decision making and other processes; composition; relations with learners and their organisations; quality, monitoring and evaluation. We [also] recommend that a serious study is commissioned into the capacity and resourcing requirements of Learning Partnerships."

Summary and analysis

Learning Partnerships have operated in a turbulent and changing landscape since their inception in 1999. As a result many have developed beyond the original core remit and are aiming to make sense of national policy that sometimes appears contradictory, at the local level.

The following barriers to Learning Partnership progress are cited:

- There is a lack of a clear, deliverable and defined remit.
- Geography and boundaries – there is confusion about the best structures - should they relate to LSC sub regions, local education authority areas, travel-to-learn areas, or Local Strategic Partnership areas? There are examples of successful Learning Partnerships operating in each of the structures. Some argue this lack of central control brings depth and diversity, others say it is symptomatic of a flawed concept.
- Less than whole-hearted support from key players who do not see them as prime movers for change; partly a consequence of difficulties around the inception of Learning Partnerships and the prolonged discussions about role, geography, membership, format. The emergence of the LSC has further undermined the position of some Learning Partnerships.
- Other partnership arrangements work more effectively. There are examples where the LSC is making good headway delivering on collaboration and voice of the learner often engaging with partners direct rather than through Learning Partnerships. The original remit letter anticipated a rationalisation of the numbers of partnerships but there is little evidence that this has happened.
- Making the impact envisaged would have required in most cases a Learning Partnership manager/co-ordinator of broad experience at

relatively senior level who could influence Directors of Education, Executive Directors of the LLSC or FE principals. There are some excellent people in post, but the level of remuneration, fixed term contracts and the lack of settled strategic influence have worked against such people applying.

Question 7 How should Learning Partnerships be funded?

Key Comments

"Through Government Office is effective, maintains independence. London LSCs seem to respect current arrangement and feel it would devalue advocacy for learners if LPs tool of LSC."

"Via the Government Office rather than a 'contracting organisation' like the LSC."

"Strong feeling not through LSC - could potentially damage independence and ability to be 'critical friend' to LSC. Feel Government Office South East or DFES most appropriate."

"Any change in the funding mechanisms for Learning Partnerships could be routed through Local Strategic Partnerships [but] given the effectiveness of the support network in this region, the preferred option is to continue funding through Government Office."

"From a national perspective it is considered that the core roles of Learning Partnerships remain valid and relevant ... [but] ... the review will want to ensure a structure is in place which will minimise variances ... this leads naturally to the view that Learning Partnerships should be funded through local LSCs in order to ensure maximum coherence at the local level and clearly define roles for each of the local players..."

"[Whilst] funding through the local LSCs would enable LPs to respond to local needs and circumstances, this would lessen their independence and for that reason the present link to the Government Office should remain. This gives the Government Office a useful means of access to local areas as well as preserving the independence of Partnerships. We would not support the funding of Partnerships through fees from local partners – this would reduce the Partnerships' independence and freedom of action and speech."

"Learning Partnership should bid for their work on a local basis to either the Local or National LSC"

Summary and analysis

The majority view was that funding should continue through Government Offices to preserve the perceived independence of Partnership working.

This option would have been the most popular with Learning Partnerships and was supported by responses from elsewhere, including some local LSCs. Maintaining the status quo with the funding route would not have tackled the LSC / Learning Partnership relationship, and the review showed that there remained confusion over this relationship.

Learning Partnerships cover a wider agenda than that of the LSC. However the current LSC funding arrangements involve instances where recipient organisations have a remit which includes, but is not restricted to helping deliver the learning agenda – some of the LSC's funding to the Voluntary Sector for example.

Many responses suggested that the Learning Partnership role of 'critical friend' to the LSC would be undermined if the funding was routed this way. The LSC National Office pointed out that the LSC's existing role of funding FE institutions, private providers, LEAs and the Voluntary Sector has not prevented these sectors embracing that feedback role.

Other Comments raised

"The permanency of Learning Partnerships needs to be recognised and resources so that structures can be developed and people retained. As voluntary bodies, partners want to see a pay back for the commitment they give."

"The central question [is] "does DfES see Learning Partnerships as having the potential to independently help deliver its strategy?" If so, it is worth committing time, energy and resource to ensuring that they work effectively."

"It is important to note that Learning Partnerships in all regions have worked with their RDA in fields like the consultation on the RES, the co-ordination of HEFCE/FEFC Widening Participation initiatives, the marketing of learning and the establishment of Ufl."

"The Learning Age' vision [was] of a nation of learning communities, promoting lifelong learning for all, from cradle to grave, to meet the needs and interests of individuals, families, communities and businesses. Bringing this about locally requires Learning Partnerships but not necessarily in their current form ... Learning Partnerships potentially are uniquely well placed to reflect the totality of learning needs of a given locality, providing they are inclusive in membership, orientation and operation. They have the potential to link learning providers with the grass roots, and to enable the voice of the learner to be heard."

Summary and analysis

The responses highlighted a number of areas where Learning Partnerships are making an impact within and outside their present core roles.

- Supporting the LSC in its regeneration work, often acting as the learning arm of the Local Strategic Partnership.
- Acting as the scrutineer for local learning plans, ensuring they embrace a cradle to grave view of learning.
- Operating as the feedback arm or critical friend to the LSC.
- Supporting DfES in achieving key policy objectives, e.g. 14-19 proposals, follow-up to Area Inspections, Basic Skills, ICT provision, progression into HE.
- An ideas/ ginger group. Learning Partnership meetings get all the right people together and can be an excellent environment to act as a research unit or think tank. This is the creativity and innovation role, essential to realising the "Learning Age" vision, wherein the origins of the current arrangements lie.
- Keeping the wider Partnership well informed about local, regional and national developments. This role that has not been overstated, but it is one that Learning Partnerships are able to carry out and its value should not be underestimated. Many partners do not have the access to such information and we intend that this aspect of their role is given greater emphasis.

Annex A

LEARNING PARTNERSHIP REVIEW - FULL LIST OF RESPONDENTS

Learning Partnerships (80)

| | |
|---------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| North West London LP | Sheffield LP |
| West London LP | East Riding LP |
| Partners in Learning | City of York LLP |
| Central London LP | Doncaster LP |
| South London LP | Leeds LP |
| East Thames LP | Bradford LP |
| Cross-River LP | Wakefield LP |
| Greater Nottingham LP | Rotherham LP |
| Derbyshire LP | Hull LP |
| Leicestershire & Leicester City | Kirklees LP |
| North Nottinghamshire LP | North Lincolnshire LP |
| Northamptonshire LP | Barnsley LP |
| Isle of Wight LP | North East Lincolnshire LP |
| Southern Strategic Partnership | North Yorkshire LP |
| West Berkshire LP | Knowsley LP |
| Surrey LLP | Warrington LP |
| West Sussex LP | North & West Lancashire LP |
| Buckinghamshire LP | East Lancashire LP |
| Kent LP | Liverpool LP |
| Medway LP | Wigan LP |
| East Sussex LP | Wirral LP |
| Wokingham LP | Cumbria LP |
| Milton Keynes | City Pride Strategic LLP (covering |
| Bracknell Forest LLP | Manchester, Salford, Tameside & |
| Partnership4Learning | Trafford) |
| (Southampton) | Rochdale LP |
| South Essex LP | Bolton LP |
| Norfolk LP | Bury LP |
| Suffolk LP | Cheshire LP |
| Thurrock LP | Sefton LP |
| Peterborough LP | St. Helen's LP |
| North Essex LP | Gloucestershire LP |
| Bedfordshire & Luton LP | Bristol & South Gloucestershire LP |
| Cambridgeshire LP | Wiltshire & Swindon LP |
| County Durham LLP | Cornwall & Isles of Scilly |
| Northumberland LLP | Bath & North East Somerset |
| Sunderland LP | Bournemouth, Poole & Dorset LP |
| Tyneside LP | Devon & Torbay LP |
| Windsor & Maidenhead LP | Plymouth LP |
| Tees Valley LLP | Somerset LP |
| | Wolverhampton LP |
| | Staffordshire LLP |
| | Shropshire LP |

Learning Partnerships Regional Responses (8)

London Chairs
West Midlands Chairs
East Midlands LP Managers
South East LP Managers
East of England LP Managers
North East LP Managers
Yorkshire & Humberside LP Managers
South West LP Managers

Learning and Skills Council (20)

LSC National Office
Suffolk
Norwich
Derbyshire
Sussex
Berkshire
North Yorkshire
Leicestershire
Somerset
Gloucestershire
Lancashire
Staffordshire
London South
Hampshire & Isle of Wight
Herefordshire & Worcestershire
Cumbria
Tees Valley
Greater Merseyside
London Central
Northampton

National Advisory Group members (8)

Learning & Skills Development Agency (LSDA)
Careers Service National Association (CSNA)
University for Industry (Ufi)
NIACE
National Ecumenical Agency in FE (Church of England)
Catholic Education Service
Learning Communities Network
Association of Colleges (AoC)

Government related (7)

GOs' joint response
GO North East
GO London
GO South West
GO Yorkshire & Humber

Regional Development Agencies (RDA's joint response)
Northwest Development Agency

Others (15)

Workers Educational Association (WEA)
National Association of Schoolteachers/Union of Women Teachers
(NASUWT)
Kingston Upon Hull CC Learning Services
Lancashire County Council
Chester & Warrington Voluntary Sector Forum
Chamber of Commerce East Lancashire
Groundwork Blackburn
Hounslow Community Education
Blackburn College
Cirencester College
St Mary's College
Accrington & Rossendale College
Nelson & Colne College
Cornwall Business School
5S Consulting Ltd

Annex B

TRANSITIONAL ARRANGEMENTS IN THE LIGHT OF THE OUTCOME

Transition to the new arrangements will be managed by the DfES Learning Partnerships team. The contact is Ian Goodwin 0114 2594224 or by email Ian.Goodwin@dfes.gsi.gov.uk;

We discussed the following outline plans with the Learning Partnerships National Advisory Group on 3 May 2002 and will produce monthly updates for that group on how transition is progressing. These updates will be published on the Learning Partnerships website <http://www.lifelonglearning.co.uk/llp/>

The National Advisory Group will oversee the arrangements and meets next on 3 October 2002.

The day-to-day aspects of transition will be managed by the DfES Learning Partnerships team through a Transition Steering Group that will meet for the first time around the middle of June. The membership of that group is currently being decided and will include, amongst others, representatives of all key stakeholders e.g. Learning Partnerships, LSC, Government Offices, DLTR. We will expect members to act as a conduit for the views of their organisations. The group will use video-conferencing facilities between Sheffield and London to ease the burden on time and travel. We will again use the website to advertise and report on its meetings. We also intend to publish on the website an outline transition plan setting out deliverables and major milestones. We will also update the question and answer brief that is already there to respond to new queries raised.

A number of themes have already been identified which the Transition Steering Group will ensure are addressed.

- a) How to ensure a continuing regional dimension for Learning Partnerships; the roles that we might expect GOs and RDAs to play.
- b) How to respond to an identified need for professional development and support for partnership managers.
- c) How DfES can promote Learning Partnerships within the Department and across Government, given the new emphasis on regeneration.
- d) The importance of drawing up protocols and codes of practice, setting out roles and responsibilities of the LSC and Learning Partnerships in the transition and beyond.
- e) The need for workable, non-bureaucratic, contracting arrangements between the LSC and Learning Partnerships that will take effect from April 2003 onwards.