

# Minutes of Learning Partnership Transition Steering Group (TSG)

## Second Meeting: 22 July 2002, Cheylesmore House, Coventry

### Welcome and Introductions

1. Ian Goodwin welcomed those present, especially Tony Belmega, the National Office Learning and Skills Council (LSC) representative who was attending for the first time. Round the table introductions were made (see Annex 1 for attendees).

### Action Points From Last Meeting

2. All actions points from the last meeting were cleared and members agreed the revised Terms of Reference (LPTSG/01(rev)) and Project Initiation Document (LPTSG/02(rev)).

### Project Planning

3. Ian Goodwin set out the project planning arrangements for the transition and tabled two draft papers for comment: Learning Partnership (LP) Transition Project Milestones Network (LPTSG/006) and Learning Partnership Risk Log (LPTSG/007). The following comments were made:

- The proposed product to identify successful partnerships was seen as useful but there might be difficulties in a) establishing common success criteria given the wide agenda covered by some LPs and b) in measuring the added value provided by LPs.
- Tony Belmega pointed out that those products needing LSC endorsement will have to be signed off by the appropriate LSC committees. This needs to be taken account of in the project planning process. **Action point – Tony Belmega to provide dates to the TSG secretariat of LSC meetings.**
- **Action Point – Members to feedback any other comments on Milestone Network and Risk Log to Megan Griffiths by 28 August.** Final versions will be posted on the LP Website [www.lifelonglearning.co.uk/llp](http://www.lifelonglearning.co.uk/llp).

### An Effective LSC/LP Relationship

4.1 Janet Waghorn had been seconded to the DfES to take forward the work to produce:

- an updated LSC protocol setting out a template for the ongoing relationship between the LSC and Learning Partnerships; and
- a model contract and accompanying guidance for contracting for LP services through the Local Initiative Fund (LIF) which the National Office will issue to local LSCs.

4.2 Janet will be working closely with Tony Belmega and other LSC colleagues in carrying out this work.

4.3 Tony explained that he and Janet were yet to initiate this work and they

intended to engage the group in taking it forward. He presented some initial thoughts on possible future contracting arrangements through LIF. He outlined the types of contracts that the LSC use with providers and other organisations and referred to the recent spending review announcement heralding new powers for the LSC to set up contracts for 3 years. Tony pointed out that there may be scope for Learning Partnerships to access extra funding from LIF, over and above their core funding, where the LLSC saw potential in using the Learning Partnership to deliver particular services.

4.3 The group offered a number of comments:

- Given the fundamental change in the relationship between the LSC and the LPs due to the contractual relationship from April 2003, it would be helpful for stakeholders to have early sight of drafts for key documentation.
- The LSC National Office's intention to produce a **revised model protocol** setting out the roles and responsibilities for local LSCs and their Learning Partnerships was welcomed. The group added that the document needed to allow scope for customisation to reflect the agenda that Learning Partnerships tackled outside the post-16 focus of the LSC.
- Partnership representatives were concerned that there would be inconsistencies in the way local LSCs dealt with LPs and recommended that the **model contract and accompanying guidance** should outline a set of core components that local LSCs might buy from LPs.
- Another concern was the need to attract and retain good quality managers and co-ordinators. This was made more difficult because of the present system of funding for one year.

**Action Point - Janet will develop relevant documentation and report on progress at the next meeting.**

Learning Partnerships and GOs were concerned over the loss of the regional support role (funded by a £200k top slice from the current £10m LP fund). The top slice is used by GOs to fund regional networking and buy some consultancy support, which Learning Partnerships have found invaluable. Tony pointed it is the LSC's intention is to keep top-slicing to a minimum

**Action Point: DfES to produce paper on role of GOs with regard to LP activity post April 2003.**

### **Guidance For Learning Partnerships (LPTSG03)**

5.1 Ian Goodwin asked the group for advice on updating the guidance so that it continues to meet Learning Partnership needs.

5.2 The following points were made:

- LP representatives agreed that the guidance was useful and although not comprehensive, serves as a reasonable starting point for new managers. In its present form it does not meet the needs of

experienced Learning Partnership managers and now needs to be developed in the light of the new arrangements. Tony Belmega was content for guidance to be updated by the DfES to cover the period to March 2003.

- The A-Z section (which needs updating) is useful in giving a quick overview and background on government policies and initiatives.
- The Guidance should include plenty of case studies on collaboration, basic skills, regeneration etc, showing where LPs can add value.
- Interim guidance on the Partnerships new role in regeneration is needed.
- It was felt that a section informing managers of the LSC requirement now and providing some pointers to the relationship from April 2003 onwards would be useful. This should be met in part by the revised protocol (the current protocol is at annex 3 of the existing guidance).
- Hard copy was still felt to be useful although this should be backed up by a version on the web which could be updated at regular intervals and perhaps in the future in conjunction with the LSC. The future of the two LP websites post April 2003 needed to be agreed.
- On updating the guidance in the future, the group wondered how the wider agenda that many Learning Partnerships tackle beyond the post-16 focus of the LSC might be covered. It was suggested that DfES might still wish to contribute to guidance in this area post April 2003, if it retained a sponsorship role for LP issues and acted as the inter Government Department contact point on LP issues

**Action Point - Secretariat to find out the costs of Learning Partnership website. DfES to develop Guidance, producing interim guidance on regeneration role by September.**

**Action Point: DfES to produce paper on role of DfES with regard to LP activity post April 2003.**

#### **Learning Partnerships Contribution To Regeneration (LPTSG/004)**

6.1 Steve Crocker of the Neighbourhood Renewal Unit briefly introduced the main points of the paper on regeneration.

6.2 The paper was a starting point for guidance to LPs which DfES and NRU had developed jointly. It was acknowledged that regeneration went beyond the LSC and Learning Partnership agendas and LPs have to be prudent in deciding where to focus their attention ensuring that planned activity had a learning focus.

6.3 There are already examples of Learning Partnership contributing to regeneration, positioning themselves as the learning arms' of the LSPs and getting involved in Neighbourhood Renewal.

**Action points – LP and GO representatives to supply good practice examples of Learning Partnerships' contribution to the regeneration and collaboration**

agendas to Luisa Sivori of the DfES Learning Partnership Team ([Luisa.Sivori@dfes.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:Luisa.Sivori@dfes.gsi.gov.uk)). Janet Waghorn will issue papers from a regeneration conference held in the SE region to members of the group.

### **Evaluation and Toolkit Update**

7.1 Georgina Cowen from York Consulting gave an update on evaluation activity planned in the light of the new arrangements, including the development of a toolkit for Learning Partnerships and invited comments from the group.

7.2 The following comments were made:

- The need to avoid overlap between the toolkit, guidance and protocol
- There were concerns over the timing of the final evaluation report. The report was valuable because it gave an independent view, but the group wondered whether December would allow sufficient opportunity to inform and influence the transition process.

7.3 Past evaluation reports and further information on evaluation can be found on the York Consulting Learning Partnership Evaluation website [www.llpevaluation.co.uk](http://www.llpevaluation.co.uk);

**Action Point – Secretariat to arrange LP representation on evaluation steering group to advise on development of toolkit and avoiding overlap.**

### **Professional Development and Support for Learning Partnerships**

8. Peter Mucklow, Ian Goodwin, 2 LP managers and a GO representative met with LSDA on 15 July to scope work in this area and Ian Goodwin will report on progress at the next TSG.

### **AOB**

9.1 The group agreed that meeting face to face should continue to be the format of TSG and that these should alternate between London and Coventry at 8 week intervals. Outside the meeting, Tony Belmega and Peter Mucklow agreed to jointly chair future meetings.

**9.2 The next Transition Steering Group will take place on 26 September at DfES HQ, Caxton House, London (Room LG02). The meeting will run from 1.00pm – 3.00pm and will be preceded by a buffet lunch at 12.30pm.**

**Attendees**

Peter Mucklow	DfES
Ian Goodwin	DfES
Megan Griffiths	DfES
Georgina Cowen	York Consulting Limited
Tony Belmega	National LSC
Sue Yeomans	National LSC – Adult Learning
Norman Atkin	Swindon and Wiltshire LP
Ray Flude	Leicester and Leicestershire LP
Janet Waghorn	Kent LP
Vernon Hull	Chair, Kent LP
Isobel Foster	Rochdale LP
Hazel Blackwell	Government Office North West
Marina McClean	Government Office London
Janice Piggott	South London LP
Steve Crocker	Neighbourhood Renewal Unit
Roy Porritt	Government Office Yorks & the Humber
Dave Johnson DfES	Area Wide inspections
Mick Sheeran DfES	Regional Policy
Maureen Wilcox	Thurrock LP

**Apologies**

Trish Judson	Norfolk LP (Maureen Wilcox represented)
Peter Pledger	Local LSC – London West ED
Barbara Roberts	DfES – Regional policy, Mick Sheeran represented
Hazel Sutton	DfES - represented by Dave Johnson
Graham Chesters	Chair, Hull LP
Jan Bird	Neighbourhood Renewal Unit
Kerry Weager	Neighbourhood Renewal – East Midlands
Dr Helen Gilchrist	Chair, Bury LP

**Papers Copied**

Lynda Lawrence	DfES – 14-19
Chris Rivington	DfES – LSC Unit
Gerry Lynch	Neighbourhood Renewal Unit
Sue Fullard	Walsall LP
Susan Taylor	LSDA