



Head of Scrutiny and Member Development

Scrutiny Board (City and Regional Partnerships)

Date: 15th January 2009

Subject: Session 3 Inquiry into Skills – The Future of FE in Leeds

Electoral Wards Affected: All

Ward Members consulted
(referred to in report)

Specific Implications For:

Equality and Diversity

Community Cohesion

Narrowing the Gap

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The purpose of this part of the session is to consider any information requested from the previous session and further matters relating to the merger of the 3 colleges and its impact in Leeds.
- 1.2 Members at the last session requested that the Leader of the Council, Councillor Andrew Carter, Roy Thorpe (Principal Thomas Danby College) and a representative from the Yorkshire and Humber National Skills Academy, Financial Services and Education Leeds be invited to attend today's meeting to discuss aspects of the merger including the curriculum for the new Leeds College.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 Members in November heard from the Principals of the Leeds College of Building and Joseph Priestley College who had decided not to participate in the merger of 3 Further Education Colleges (FE) in the city and to remain as independent institutions.
- 2.2 In December the Board heard from the Principals of Park Lane (Leeds and Keighley) and the Leeds College of Technology on the reasons for supporting the merger. Unfortunately the Principal of Thomas Danby College the third FE College supporting the merger was unable to attend this meeting.
- 2.3 The Board was advised that the three Principals were each leading on specific aspects for the development of the new Leeds College as follows:-
 - Maxine Room (Park Lane), Property and Finance
 - Roy Thorpe (Thomas Danby), Curriculum
 - Peter Ryder (Leeds College of Technology), Human resources

- 2.4 Members at both these meetings heard from representatives of the Learning and Skills Council which had led a detailed process of consultation and evidence gathering to consider the future arrangements for Further Education in the city and from college principals what the likely impact on employers, individuals and communities would be as a consequence of the merger and on the plans for:
- the new college,
 - its governance, and
 - ability to respond to skills needs

3.0 Terms of Reference

- 3.1 A copy of the Board's approved terms of reference for this inquiry is attached for reference purposes.

4.0 Witnesses

- 4.1 The following witnesses have been invited to today's meeting

Cristina George, Learning and Skills Council (Re-organisation of FE Colleges)
Roy Thorpe, Principal, Thomas Danby College,
Councillor Andrew Carter, Leader of the Council
Linda Schofield, Regional Director-Yorkshire and Humber, The National Skills Academy Financial Services
Representative from Education Leeds

5.0 Recommendations

- 5.1 The Board is asked to
- (i) Receive the report of the Head of Scrutiny and Member Development and comment on and ask questions of the witnesses present.
 - (ii) Consider what, if any, further information or points of clarification the Board requires to conclude this Session of its inquiry.
 - (iii) Discuss any subsequent issues.
 - (iv) Identify for the Board's next session of its Inquiry on 26th February 2009 the witnesses it would like to hear evidence from.

Background Papers

None used