

## **SCRUTINY BOARD (CITY AND REGIONAL PARTNERSHIPS)**

**TUESDAY, 12TH MAY, 2009**

**PRESENT:** Councillor S Bentley in the Chair

Councillors B Atha, C Campbell, G Driver,  
J Dunn, C Fox, V Kendall, J Lewis, R Pryke  
and A Shelbrooke

### **76 Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillor Harington.

### **77 Late Items**

In accordance with her powers under Section 100(4)(b) of the Local Government Act (1972), the Chair consented to the submission of the following late items of business:

- Agenda Item 6 – Minutes – The minutes of the meeting held on 23 April 2009. These were not available at the time of agenda despatch.
- Agenda Item 7 – Skills Inquiry – Draft final report, external partners comments not received by time of the agenda despatch and additional paper including comments from Directors and Executive Members with a deadline of receipt for 11 May 2009 and was subsequently not available at the time of agenda despatch.

### **78 Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

**RESOLVED** – That the minutes of the meeting held on 23 April 2009, be confirmed as a correct record.

### **79 Skills Inquiry**

The Head of Scrutiny and Member Development submitted a report regarding the Board's recently completed Inquiry into Skills. The final draft report of the Inquiry which detailed the Board's conclusions and recommendations was also submitted. In accordance with the Scrutiny Procedure Rules Members attention was also brought to the advice which had been received from the Directors of Children's Services and City Development on the Board's proposed report and recommendations.

In response to the draft final report, the following issues were discussed:

- The role of Elected Members in the 14-19 Strategy Group and how they could become more involved.

- Recommendation 1 – it was suggested that this be amended to include reference for the proposals for an enhanced estate for the Leeds City College.
- Recommendation 2 – it was suggested that this be amended to read that the development of the curriculum is responsive to the needs of Leeds as opposed to local needs.
- Recommendation 3 – That this be amended to read relevant Directors and not just the Director of Children’s Services.

Members having considered the advice from the Directors of City Development and Children's Services

**RESOLVED –**

- (1) That the final draft report be agreed as submitted subject to the minor amendments to recommendations 1, 2 and 3 detailed above and to the changes being circulated by email to all Members of the Board for ratification.
- (2) That the relevant public sector partners and specified Directors in consultation with their Executive Board Members formally respond to the Scrutiny Board’s recommendations within 3 months of receipt of the Board’s report.

**80 Annual Report**

The Head of Scrutiny and Member Development submitted a copy of the Board’s draft annual report which would form part of the composite Scrutiny Board’s Annual Report for 2008/2009. The Board made a number of minor changes to the draft report.

Specific reference was made to the Board’s previous consideration of Regional Governance Arrangements and it was suggested that further information be included in the annual report to take account of the Board’s previous concern regarding the democratic accountability and scrutiny of regional arrangements.

**RESOLVED –** That the Board’s contribution to the composite be approved subject to amendment as discussed.

**81 Work Programme, Executive Board Minutes and Forward Plan of Key Decisions**

The report of the Head of Scrutiny and Member Development outlined the Board’s Work Programme. It also gave a progress report on the Board’s Working Groups, included the Forward Plan of Key Decisions and minutes of the Executive Board held on 1 April 2009.

It was suggested that the role of Yorkshire Forward and the balance of their involvement in Leeds and across Yorkshire could be an item of future consideration for the Board.

Draft minutes to be approved at the meeting  
to be held on Date Not Specified

**RESOLVED** – That the report be noted.

## **82 Response to the Statement of Scrutiny Board on University Fees**

The report of the Chief Executive of Education Leeds, provided a response to the statement of the Scrutiny Board (City and Regional Partnerships) on University Fees and gave a response to the recommendations outlined in the statement.

The Chair welcomed Andrea Cowans and Gary Milner of Education to the meeting.

In brief summary, the following issues were discussed:

- Support for 14-19 year olds in accessing higher education.
- Provision of information, advice and guidance in schools.
- It was reported that a localised Connexions service had been established and part of their specification was to provide support directly to schools.
- Provision of careers advice for young people from Year 7 onwards.
- Support for those with disabilities.
- How to target areas where participation rates in Higher Education were low and how participation could be encouraged in these areas. Members were informed of programmes that included school and parental involvement in an attempt to address some of these issues.
- How to target young people who were out of the education system.
- Concern regarding the level of personal debt incurred by students.
- Employment opportunities for those leaving Higher Education.

**RESOLVED** – That the report be noted.

## **83 Chair's Closing Remarks**

The Chair passed on her thanks to all Members of the Board and officers for their contribution to the Scrutiny Board (City and Regional Partnerships) during the 2008/09 Municipal Year.