

Notes

London Councils Young People's Education and Skills Board

Date	8 November 2011	Venue	London Councils
Meeting Chair	Cllr Steve Reed		
Contact Officer:	Jonathan Rallings		
Telephone:	020 7934 9524	Email:	Jonathan.rallings@londoncouncils.gov.uk

Attendance:

Members:

Cllr Steve Reed (SR)	– London Councils Lead Member for Children and Young People (<i>Chair</i>)
Frankie Sulke (FS)	– Association of London Directors of Children's Services (ALDCS) (<i>Vice-chair</i>)
Dr Caroline Allen (CA)	– Association of Colleges (AoC)/Association of National Specialist Colleges (NATSPEC)
Victor Farlie (VF)	– London Work Based Learning Alliance (LWBLA)
Peter Lang (PL)	– Association of School and College Leaders (ASCL)
Jill Lowery (JL)	– Skills Funding Agency
Frank McLoughlin (FM)	– AoC (FE College Member)
Munira Mirza (MM)	– Greater London Authority (GLA)
Dr Jane Overbury (JO)	– AoC (Sixth Form College Member)
Mike Pettifer (MP)	– Young People's Learning Agency (YPLA)
Pat Reynolds (PR)	– ALDCS
David Smale (DSm)	– National Apprenticeship Service

Officers:

Yolande Burgess (YB)	– London Councils YPES
Mary Vine-Morris (MVM)	– London Councils YPES Director
Jonathan Rallings (JR)	– London Councils YPES Secretary

Guests and Observers:

Kate Anderson (KA)	– AoC
Peter O'Brien (POB)	– London Councils YPES

Apologies

Cllr Liz Green	– London Councils Liberal Democrat Group Member (Kingston)
Vic Grimes	– National Apprenticeship Service (NAS)
Nick Lester	– London Councils
Jack Morris	– London Skills and Employment Board (LSEB)
Tim Shields	– Chief Executives' London Committee (CELC)
Cllr David Simmonds	– London Councils Conservative Group Member (Hillingdon)

1 Welcome and introductions

1.1 SR updated members on two changes to the Board's composition

- Cllr Liz Green will be stepping down from YPES. She will be replaced by Cllr Patricia Bamford from the next meeting.
- Munira Mirza, Mayoral Adviser on Culture and Youth, has replaced Pam Chesters as representative for the GLA. SR welcomed Munira to YPES, and recorded thanks on behalf of members for all Pam's work on the board during the past two years.

1.2 Members recorded their congratulations to long-standing YPES member Cllr David Simmonds who was recently appointed Lead for Children and Young People for the Local Government Group.

2 Declarations of Interest

2.1 All members declared an interest in the ESF proposals as they may potentially be involved in bidding with their various organisations.

3 Minutes of the last meeting (20 September 2010)

3.1 The minutes of the last meeting were accepted.

4 14-19 Policy/Consultations Update

4.1 FS presented this item. She added to information in the supporting paper around two specific areas:

- *SEND Green Paper*

The 20 SEND pathfinders have been announced. LB Bexley & Bromley, LB Greenwich and LB Lewisham will undertake activity in London. The pathfinders will develop and test the new birth to 25 assessment process and single plan (incorporating education, health and care) and test the use of personal budgets; legislation is likely to be amended to include education spending within these budgets.

The pathfinders will also look particularly at 'transition' points to develop a holistic view of the services available from birth to 25. At present funding streams are fragmented e.g. early years, school age, 16-25, 25 plus etc. and the Department for Education (DfE) is looking at greater alignment. CA noted that the broad spectrum of age groups catered for by special schools and colleges often meant that, at present, these organisations draw funding from three separate education budgets. Government needed to look at funding individuals throughout their education journey either through personal budgets or other means.

- *Raising the Participation Age*

The current policy context of rising youth unemployment, including amongst graduates, is prompting more focus on needing to look at NEET figures up to 25, not just 16-19. YPES should consider how this might be incorporated into its work.

4.2 PL asked whether legislation would be required to enforce the new School Admissions Code. FS replied that this would not be necessary as it is statutory guidance.

5 16-19 Funding and Programme Consultation

5.1 MP and YB presented this item looking at two important consultations which YPES will be responding to in the coming months. YB particularly highlighted the challenge of 'simple' versus 'simplistic' in the new funding methodology and the potential that

the proposed changes to Disadvantage and Area Cost Adjustment could negatively impact London's allocation.

5.2 16-19 Funding Consultation

VF raised the issue of how best to position London's case for retaining a more sophisticated funding methodology - it was important to defend the capital's interests, regardless of how other regions might view this lobbying. FS agreed – it is YPES job to do this, using appropriate evidence. The volume and complexity of poverty in London needed to be reflected in any proposals for the reform of disadvantage funding. Higher wage and living costs in London compared to other areas, means provision is more expensive to maintain in the capital and this must be recognised. MM suggested that one approach might be to present London's case as an 'urban argument' as opposed to a London argument – other large urban areas such as Greater Manchester or Birmingham may have similar issues.

Members commented that the key argument to be made was how critical it is to retain sufficient resources in London to ensure the availability of high quality provision for young people in the capital, rather than about how much money may be removed from London through the proposals. FMc agreed; although London's performance had improved greatly over the last ten years, its new position as a leader in standards was not fixed and further challenges remained.

FS warned there is likely to be some difficulties in transition in the coming years, particularly for London school 6th forms as transitional protection ceases and they learn to adjust to new ways of measuring success in line with FE Colleges.¹

FMc warned that as well as the strategic issues, it would be important for the YPES response to address the detail in the consultation as there were a number of technical changes being proposed which could have a significant impact.

5.3 Programme Consultation

JO was concerned that the Government was seeking too narrow a focus in the curriculum. There is a large group of students that are not likely to go to Russell Group universities or pursue vocational learning, who are in danger of being forgotten. Government needs to match simplicity of funding with simplicity in the curriculum. MP said that the Government's position is that new freedoms and flexibilities offered to providers will enable a more responsive curriculum offer.

Members agreed:

- the proposal for gathering feedback for the response
- that draft responses should be circulated to members for comment and the final version approved by the Chair for submission by the due date (4 January 2012)

6 YPES Vision and Strategy Consultation

6.1 SR presented this item. After discussion members felt the following concerns needed to be addressed in proceeding to the proposed consultation about a Vision:

- The vision should better reflect YPES' work and demonstrate how it adds value to the sector, preferably by linking to the YPES Review (distributed at the meeting),

¹ School success rates are now be based on the proportion of students passing from those starting the course; not just those taking exams.

and refer more directly to the YPES role in galvanising the sector and calling for action in the interests of young people;

- The draft vision should be clearer on which stakeholders should be engaged and indicate the ways in which they are to be influenced and supported;
- The present draft seemed to imply that staying on in school and going to university was the preferred route and more emphasis should be placed on Apprenticeships and employment both as learning pathways and progression routes;
- There seemed to be insufficient data underpinning the vision and some headline information should be contained in a preface;

6.2 In terms of the consultation process the following points were made:

- The consultation should draw more on existing mechanisms to engage with young people, such as the National Youth Parliament, and borough-based / schools forums of young people;
- There was a level of 'consultation fatigue' in the sector and therefore the process should include new ways of discussing ideas. It should also be more precise in calling for detailed or broad-based responses

6.3 Members also proposed specific changes to forms of wording used in the draft.

Members **agreed**:

- the theme of the consultation and the methodology proposed; subject to the points made in the meeting
- to send any further detailed observations and amendments to MVM by email.
- the Annual Statement of Priorities '*Choices, Support, Success – 2012/13 refresh*'

7 YPES Indicative Budget 2012/13 – 2014/15

7.1 MVM presented this item setting out the proposals for the YPES budget from 2012/13 -2014/15. She informed the Board that the DfE had written to confirm funding for YPES to 2014/15. SR welcomed this news and formally noted the Board's thanks to the DfE for their continued confidence in the ability of the YPES Board to provide leadership for London. MVM highlighted the following key points in the three year budget proposal:

- There will be a reduction in the Special Purpose Grant from the DfE of 25% over the life of the budget planning period to 2015. It is proposed this shortfall will be met by (a) staff and operational cost reductions and (b) utilising a previous underspend during 2010/11 (£195,000).
- In order to achieve the required level of cost reductions for 2011/12 the YPES team complement was reduced to 6.5 through the retirement of one member of staff. It is currently expected that the present staffing complement of 6.5 FTE will need to be reduced by a further 1 FTE over the course of the spending period. YPES will be looking at means of income generation to mitigate reductions in team capacity as far as possible.
- It is proposed that the 2011/12 budget for operational activities (funded at £1,500 per borough) should be absorbed within the staffing and running costs and be subject to efficiency savings from 2012/13 onwards.
- The indicative budget proposes a new membership fee rate for 2012/13 of £4,000 per borough towards regional activity, reduced from £14,000 in 2011/12. The proposed programme of regional activity will be undertaken utilising this money and uncommitted funds from the present financial year (£318,000).

Members agreed:

- to recommend an indicative 2012/13 – 2014/15 budget for YPES, subject to annual approval, to be agreed by Leaders' Committee in December 2011.

8 GLA ESF Proposed Youth Priorities

- 8.1 MM presented this item. She asked the group to agree the four proposed priorities for the GLA's ESF Youth Programme 2011-13, noting that these had been considered and recommended by the ESF Steering Group:

- *Re-engagement Support to Older NEETs (18-19)* (re-engagement support for 18-19 year olds who are NEET);
- *Young People with Learning Difficulties/Disabilities* (re-engagement support for 14-19 year olds with learning difficulties and/or disabilities);
- *Re-engagement for Young People Excluded from School* (re-engagement support for 14 – 16 year olds who have been excluded from mainstream provision);
- *Re-settlement Support for Young People Leaving Custody* (providing enhanced resettlement support to young offenders leaving custody).

Members agreed:

- The youth priorities being taken forward by the GLA under Priority 1.2 for the ESF Youth Programme 2011-13

9 Learner Voice

- 9.1 JR presented this item detailing the work YPES had been making in building an interactive 'learner voice blog' to gather the views of young learners in London.
- 9.2 Members welcomed the developments but suggested that the site needed to better reflect a 'youth perspective' and still looked rather uninviting and too daunting to engage young people actively. JR commented that website is currently being consulted on with young people and young people's organisations. It is hoped that adjustments to the site arising from this process will be made in order for the site to be launched officially early in 2012.
- 9.3 CA suggested a higher visual content and that colleges or Leonard Cheshire may be able to help in providing video content for the site.
- 9.4 SR felt some redesign was necessary and pointed out that boroughs would be important in distributing the site to local young people's groups. KA offered AoC's help in publicising the site to its members. MP suggested that a competition with prizes should be considered to stimulate young people's interest in the site.
- 9.5 FS said it was important the site was young people friendly and a space for young people to talk freely. JR replied that it was understood corporate policies at London Councils could limit how far this can be possible. FS said this was more important and YPES needed to be willing to take risks by allowing freedom for young people to comment – this approach was endorsed by all members.

Date of next meeting: Tuesday 6 March 2012, 2pm - 4pm