

**SOUTH WEST REGIONAL SKILLS PARTNERSHIP  
PERFORMANCE MONITORING GROUP**

**Action Notes**

**Monday 22 September 2008**

**Present:**

AB	Adrian Bailey	RSP
MC	Mark Colton	Jobcentre Plus
CE	Chris Evans	Marchmont/SLIM
PG	Pete Gisborne	LSC
SB	Sarah Beeson	GOSW
DN	Dawn Neale	RSP on behalf of SSC
BN	Ben Neild	Marchmont/SLIM
JW	John Wilkinson	Reports to the CBI on RSP

*Note taker:*

HT	Hilary Todd	Marchmont/SLIM
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**Apologies received from:** Brian Humphreys, Lucy Church, Michael Woodgate

**1. Introductions**

**Action**

Adrian Bailey (AB), Assistant Director, RSP, and Dawn Neale (DN), Sector Skills Manager, RSP, were welcomed to the meeting.

**2. Minutes of the meeting on 30 June 2008**

The minutes were approved.

*2.1 Work by National Cross-Region Research Group:* There was a further meeting today (22.9). 17 core priority indicators had been identified and 27 optional indicators for regions to choose from. How regions measure their own response to Leitch was being discussed, led by W Midlands. The idea of one performance framework for all regions had been judged too sensitive hence the priority indicators.

**BN**

*3.4 HLMR – action points done.* The draft report had been presented to the RSP Board. It was agreed that the report would be the subject of a special Board away day to consider the findings further. The draft was on the SLIM website but needed to be updated to take account of the data in Working Futures III. PG was thanked for providing additional data.

*4. RSP Priorities – indicator updates*

Action on trend data was discussed eg the drop in those taking STEM subjects and it was agreed the relevant Standing Group should be approached.

[Agreed: PMG findings, where relevant need to go to the relevant Standing Groups for information and discussion. Task Groups should be asked for their views on the data and report backs made to](#)

the Board.

5. *Partner Updates*: It was noted that Lucy Church was going on maternity leave and David Noyce was moving to London SE so there was no HEFCE partnership report and there would be a hiatus in representation.

7. *Research Projects*: these had been added to the minutes. All were complete and reports were available from the LSC.

### 3. Update on Unemployment in the SW – Jobcentre Plus

MC presented latest information on claimant inflows and outflows. The major concern was how to deal with the rise in new claimants now and what was likely to happen in the future. JSA claimant count trends showed a sharp increase in the last 2 months, especially among the 18-24 age group, which showed a steeper line than other age groups. The rate for 50+ was low but even that was now creeping up. It was too hard to project trends at this stage. Interestingly, the rises were being seen in the financial and construction sectors, but not retail which is normally seen as low-paid and least recession-proofed.

There was no sign yet of vacancies decreasing, but the number of companies making redundancies was rising.

Not all bad news: £v\$ exchange rate was helping exporters and manufacturers, with China becoming consumers.

Action: provide email address to MC if wish to be added to Key Facts mailing. The briefings are also now available on the SLIM website.

All

### 4. RSP Priorities – indicator updates

BN presented the report.

2.4 *Leadership and Management*: Figure 2: Percentage of employees who have received job-related training in the last 13 weeks, SW and England, 2004-2007, showed a fall in trends in training for managers but it was a small sample.

Action: It was agreed to flag this up to the Leadership and Management group, now that there were three years worth of data.

BN/CE

3.5 *Creativity and Innovation* - disclosures had risen, which is good news, but the number of patents granted had fallen.

AB?

Action: to ask HERDA cc RDA what they make of the data, Gavin Wollacott.

4. *Creativity and Innovation Skills*: Care was needed in terminology, especially over eg Primary school level 4 and NVQ level 4 where there was scope for confusion.

It was noted that Bristol's results were catching up. It was not known what effect private school provision had on the results.

5. *Higher Level skills* – people like studying in SW so figures suggest an increasing proportion of those studying are from outside the region. So there were a number of questions for HEFCE on the effect of CUC, what progress on widening participation was genuinely being made, part-timers, etc.

Action: CE/BN to meet with HEFCE re issues and representation.

BN/LC

5.2 *Foundation degrees*: Noted that the metric had changed. There had been strong growth but it was slowing, especially in terms of the number of part-timers.

BN

Action: BN to write to Frances? On how well the SW was doing

5.3 *Proportion of Working Age Population qualified to Level 3 and Level 4*: the SW was still third behind London.

CE

Action: Table 25: the confidence interval was needed eg 22% give or take 10%. Care was needed with interpretation of the APS because it was a national survey so cutting regionally could give very small numbers.

6.4 *Young People's participation in education*: figures showed the region to be in line with the national average. A section on trends in what the LSC was paying for was required. There was

concern about A levels: should more people participate in A levels instead of directly employer-related training which is needed? Again, careful interpretation was needed. It was also noted that 2006 data was provided and that there had been initiatives since.

Action: PG to provide a section. It would be a topic for the Board Away Day.

PG

## 5. Partner Updates

It was noted that most partners were reporting every 6 months.

BL can report quarterly. The most recent report would be out in 2-3 weeks but could be obtained directly from BERR.

The RDA reporting framework was changing and the next annual report was due shortly.

## 6. ESF Update

On convergence and Competitiveness, GOSW had contracted with DWP and LSC re half of funds. There would be more to report next meeting. This was the formal reporting line to the Board which needed figures and any concerns. Actual monitoring was done by PMC. Useful to see projects contracted.

Action: BN to send out a copy of SB's paper and SB to provide list of contracts to BN.

BN/SB

The Alliance/Learning Theme on 9 December would receive reports from JCP, LSC, RSP and would start the ball rolling with ESBs about what they should be doing and to refresh the process leading to revised frameworks from Sep 2009. It would therefore be useful to know what information there was on the ESF programme, how it was working and the effect of economic change on the next round.

## 7. LSC Strategic Analysis

It is complex this year because it is informing the organisations that will take over from the LSC. It will take a thematic, web-based approach, rather than being a book of facts. The demand-side is not being covered because it is impossible to predict.

Synopsis paper on NEETS should be published on 30 September.

Youth cohort is shrinking and they get first bite. Adult cohort is growing, largely migration driven. T2G is growing. Apprenticeships show good growth in the South West but not enough to meet Leitch targets. Very geographically and sector based. Skills for Life shows a steady upward trajectory on pre-Leitch targets.

Learners with learning difficulties: the South West has more and the numbers are growing faster than any other region. There is poor take-up of Education Maintenance allowance and insufficient data.

Adult participation in adult education has plummeted. Demand-led approach to funding now probably disadvantages rural as opposed to urban areas because the weighting no longer applies and premises costs are greater.

Action: PG to provide summary when published.

PG

(SB left the meeting at this point)

## 8. Discussion among partners on developing the evidence base for regional priorities, set out in:

- **Regional Funding Advice:** very important. Skills included for first time but no money. 4-5 pages required focused on LSC funded priorities, not the wider picture. LSC has its own Strategic Analysis which will be key to feed into this as the evidence base for the SLIM draft of the pages. Letter to RSP Board and ESBs for consultation.

16.10.08: LSC strategic launch;

17.10.08: RDA stakeholder event;

21.10.08: RSP Board;

18.11.08: SLIM formal consultation on skills: Board and Alliance to be there;

25.11.08: LSC launch of strategy;

27.11.08: Board away day – will have to sign off the Advice.

Action: questions to Chris; CE to contact person in GOSW who is master-minding it (Stuart Tarr?). The question of how the RSP would operate alongside the new bodies and local authorities would be considered at the Board away day. **CE**

- **RSP Gaps Analysis / Statement of Priorities** shifted back

- **SW Region ESF Framework update for 2010 – 2013**

- **Single Regional Strategy**

All will be supported by evidence from this group.

Action: The Group has an opportunity to review how they are done and the way they are presented. **All**

#### **9. RSP Board away-day in October Advice from PMG on focus for discussions**

In answer to CE's question to Jim Neilson about how best to bring items to the Board, the advice is to keep it short, with key highlights and messages and issues. The Board will be considering the draft RFA then how it fits into Machinery of Government changes and other priorities.

Action: CE to do paper based on PG's analysis. CE to talk to Paul Lucken. CE also to put together the structure for the day, to be signed off by Jim Neilson. **CE**

#### **10. Future Meetings**

Agreed that with partners reporting 6 monthly, a meeting before the Board 6 monthly would be sufficient. Can also do bilateral consultations as required.

Action: ToR to be updated. HT to sort date. **HT**