

**MINUTES OF THE FOURTEENTH MEETING OF SVUK BOARD HELD AT
THE CHAMBER OF SHIPPING, LONDON ON WEDNESDAY 21 JANUARY
2009**

Present

Mike Allmond, Director (acting Chair)
Sue Brown, Director

Also present:

Mary Corbally, Standards Verification Manager, SVUK
Susan Edge, Chief Officer, SVUK
David Hunter, Chief Executive of Lifelong Learning UK
Sonia Modray, Interim Finance Director, LLUK from agenda item 6

Agenda item 1: Apologies

1. Apologies were received from:
Professor Derek Fraser, Chair of SVUK Board
Sara Mogel, Director
Steve Drowley, Director
John Clark, Verification Services Manager, SVUK
Dr Tony Holloway, Executive Director, Corporate, LLUK

Agenda item 2: Minutes of meeting held 8 October 2008, Leeds

2. The minutes were approved as an accurate record.

Agenda item 3: Matters arising of 8 October minutes

Paragraph 3, Nominations for a 6th board member

3. The Deputy Company Secretary had received responses from Unionlearn and the Leeds Chamber of Commerce. The Chief Officer has met with the nominee from Unionlearn and this individual's CV will be circulated to the Nominations Committee.

ACTION: Deputy Company Secretary

4. The Chief Officer also met Gary Williamson from Leeds Chamber of Commerce to explain the nature of SVUK's business in order for the Chamber to determine whether or not it wished to make a nomination. A response from the Chamber is awaited.

5. The board indicated it would not be averse to having a 7th board member should the recommendation for the 6th member be accepted.

Paragraph 19, SVUK Skills Pledge

6. The Skills Pledge is listed on the agenda under SVUK paper 03/09.

Paragraph 22, Draft Financial Accounts

7. The final version of the accounts have not yet been received from Tenon.

Paragraph 28, Memorandum of Understanding

8. There have been no material changes and the MoU has been signed by the Chief Officer and the Chair.

Paragraph 30, Stress at work policy

9. The template has been amended by the Head of HR, LLUK

Agenda item 4: Declarations of interest

10. There were no relevant declarations of interest for this meeting.

Agenda item 5: Chair's report and business

11. The Chief Officer presented a report on behalf of the Chair of the Board in his absence. The Chair attended the LLUK Council meeting in London on 23 October 2008 to present his report in person. Item 10 on the agenda has been tabled as a consequence of other business at the Council which the Chair wished to bring to the Board's attention. The Chair attended a seasonal lunch with SVUK staff on 15 December 2008 in Leeds.

Agenda item 6: LLUK update – David Hunter, CEO of Lifelong Learning UK

12. The CEO provided the board with an overview, indicating how the current political and economic situation affects LLUK. LLUK is working with the UK Commission for Employment and Skills where the view is that skills training is still necessary and should continue at the same pace.

13. The CEO met with David Willets and John Hayes from the shadow team for DIUS. The Conservatives view SSCs as having a major role in the future.

14. The CEO reported on concerns from QCA and Ofqual regarding the number of processes currently existing for approving qualifications for use in sectors.

15. The current economic climate is impacting on the number of placements that students are able to obtain. LLUK is working on forming links between universities and businesses to help to address this.

16. The CEO is chairing a joint working group with the Association of Colleges, the Association of Learning Providers, and the Alliance of Sector Skills Councils.

17. The CEO presented an update on the re-licensing process. The report on the first tranche of SSCs to go through the process is due to be released. LLUK will be in the 4th tranche out of 5 to go through re-licensing. The CEO and LLUK's chair Sir David Melville will attend the panel on 7 July for the judgement.

Agenda item 7: Board Members Report

Update from Audit Committee 23 October 2008

18. Mike Allmond reported that the Audit Committee had been a positive meeting.

19. The Interim Finance Director reported that an LLUK surplus is expected for the 2008-2009 financial year. There is also an intention to reclaim VAT payments.

20. The Chief Officer reported that LLUK's Finance & General Purposes committee have agreed new LLUK financial regulations. These will impact on SVUK's financial regulations but changes will not be made until after the ISO9001 stage 2 assessment.

Agenda item 8: Chief Officer's report of activities since the last Board Narrative Progress Report and updated 08-09 Business Plan (October 2009 – January 2009)

21. The Chief Officer introduced paper 01/09 and the report was agreed and accepted by the board.

- **Company Matters** - The heating system in the building has now been fixed. Board members appreciated the commitment of staff during this period

Further information was given on the bid process for the 2009-2010 financial year. SVUK had been asked to provide a further breakdown of the costs included in the bid. A response from DIUS is awaited.

SVUK is looking at developing more generic job roles to mitigate the effects of fixed term contracts tied to specific projects.

22. The Chief Officer introduced paper 02/09; the board received and accepted the report.

Skills Pledge 03/09

23. The Chief Officer presented a copy of the signed Skills Pledge to the board and also informed them that the pledge will form part of the office branding. The board received and noted the pledge and the additional commitments which have been made.

24. The CEO informed the board that LLUK now have a disability pledge (Disability Equality Commitment) that employers can sign-up to.

Previous Adoptions

25. Renewal of Appeal Processes

The Chief Officer introduced paper 04/09 which was approved and adopted by the board for a further 12 months.

26. Panel terms of reference for Quality Mark

The Chief Officer introduced paper 05/09 and highlighted the changes to be made. The board accepted the revised terms of reference and adopted them for a further 12 months.

Agenda item 8: Financial Reports

27. The interim Finance Director advised the board that this would be her last board meeting in her capacity as interim Finance Director. The newly appointed Head of Finance, Sue Louise, will be the Finance representative for future board meetings.

28. The board were advised that bluQube, the new accounting system, will be implemented for the next financial year.

29. The interim Finance Director introduced paper 06/09 and Annexes A and B being the Management Accounts for the 9 months to the end of December 2009. She advised that a surplus was expected for the Group at the end of March 2009. The board noted and accepted these papers.

30. The board wished to record its thanks to Sonia Modray, the interim Finance Director, for her work and contribution to the board.

Agenda item 9: Corporate business SVUK/LLUK Governance Framework

31. The Chief Officer introduced paper 07/09. A proposal was made and accepted to defer discussion of the paper and the options presented to a future board meeting where more board members were present. Additional background information about the governance framework was also requested.

Agenda item 10: Any other business

32. Requirement to hold Annual General Meetings (AGM)

The board is not required to hold an AGM provided all the shareholders agree to this position. However technical matters, such as appointment of auditors, normally covered at an AGM, still have to be covered. Therefore, the board wishes to minute that Tenon have been confirmed as the SVUK auditors for the 2008-2009 financial year.

Date and location of next meeting

33. The next SVUK board meeting will be held on 9 March 2009 at 36 Park Row, Leeds.

SVUK

January 2009