

**MINUTES OF THE EIGHTH MEETING OF SVUK BOARD HELD AT LLUK, 4th
FLOOR, 36 PARK ROW, LEEDS LS1 5JL ON TUESDAY 24 APRIL 2007**

Present

Professor Derek Fraser (Chair)
Mike Allmond, Director
Sue Brown, Director
Sara Mogel, Director

Also present:

Susan Edge, Chief Officer, SVUK
Francesca Guy, PA to the Director of Corporate Services, LLUK
Jacqueline Turner, Head of Finance, LLUK
Heather Wood, Company Secretary, SVUK & Director of Corporate Services, LLUK

Agenda item 1: Apologies

1. Apologies were received from David Hunter, Clive Linnett and Mary Corbally.

Agenda item 2: Minutes of meeting held 10th January 2007, London

2. Paragraph 6 should state that Dr Michael Goldstein had been appointed as the chair of the selection panel. Subject to this amendment, the minutes were approved as an accurate record.

Agenda item 3: Matters arising

Paragraph 3 of previous minutes: appointment of an additional board member

3. Heather Wood reported that LLUK had already approached the chair of the CLD panel for nominations and would approach other members of the CLD panel. Sara Mogel suggested that if the board was unable to find a candidate from CLD sector with the appropriate level of seniority the board should consider approaching people from TU Learning sector. The board asked for the new board member to be recruited before the next board meeting in October if at all possible.

ACTION: COMPANY SECRETARY & CHIEF OFFICER

Paragraph 4 of previous minutes: Investors in People

4. Heather Wood reported that this assessment had begun in March and that the recommendation for liP status was confirmed before Easter. The HR section would liaise with SVUK over use of the liP logo.

ACTION: SECRETARIAT

Paragraph 18 of previous minutes: strategy for investments, reserves, dividends and gift aid

5. Susan Edge explained that it had not been possible to prepare an outline strategy for this meeting. The strategy would be affected by the outcome of the high level discussions currently under way on relationships between LLUK and SVUK. Jacqueline Turner also explained that she was new to post and needed to gather information about

SVUK's finances as a whole before she could make recommendations. She aimed to send a draft strategy to the board in advance of the October meeting.

ACTION: INTERIM FINANCE DIRECTOR

Agenda item 4: Declarations of interest

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

Agenda item 5: Chair's report

7. The Chair reported that he had met with Professor David Melville, Chair of LLUK, to discuss the restructure of LLUK's governance and the possible impact on SVUK. His intention was to:

- reduce the size of LLUK's Council to around 16 members, whilst ensuring representation of the countries and constituencies;
- ensure that the board dealt with strategic matters only;
- make Country Panels into Committees of the Council;
- implement the restructure by April 2008.

8. The changes in the function of LLUK Council might have an effect on the reporting relationship between LLUK and SVUK. Both chairs agreed that it was important for LLUK to have an arms-length, independent, quality assurance agency with its own board and budget.

9. The board agreed that there was a need to prepare terms of reference for SVUK and its board. Heather Wood and Susan Edge were asked to draft some statements for the board to approve at the next meeting.

ACTION: COMPANY SECRETARY & CHIEF OFFICER

10. The Chair suggested that, David Melville, David Hunter, Susan Edge, Heather Wood and he might meet prior to the next SVUK Board meeting to discuss the role of SVUK and its relationship with LLUK.

ACTION: COMPANY SECRETARY & CHIEF OFFICER

11. Heather Wood reported that the LLUK Council terms of reference were currently being rewritten. Susan Edge commented that LLUK and SVUK had already evolved ways of working together, but that this ought to be formally documented.

12. Susan Edge gave two papers to the board on the Leitch Review of Skills. These had been written by LLUK's Policy Manager. Susan commented that the impact on LLUK and the programmes of work that they were involved in would impact on the work of SVUK as the programmes were implemented.

13. In the discussion that followed the following comments were made:

- LLUK has a unique role in the Skills for Business Network;
- There were currently too many different organisations with overlapping remits;
- SSDA would become the Commission for Employment and Skills;
- Some SSCs had a role in both delivery and monitoring. Therefore SVUK Board had a vital role for LLUK Group in ensuring that standards were met.

Agenda item 6: Chief Officer's report of activities since the last Board

14. Susan Edge introduced paper 10/07 and gave an update on staffing of SVUK. Heather Wood reported that negotiations on the lease for the additional Leeds office space were continuing.

15. Susan Edge introduced paper 11/07 and made the following comments:

- Programme D was complete. It was anticipated that there would be a formal announcement of the award of CETT status on 4th May;
- A supporting activity of Core task 1 was currently showing amber. This was due to the resignation of the Verification Services Manager. A consultant would be working on this activity and further progress would be made following the appointment of a Verification Services Manager;
- A supporting activity of Core task 5 was currently showing amber. This was due to the volume of applications received.

Agenda item 7: The year ahead

Business Plan

16. Susan Edge introduced the Business Plan (paper 12/07). In the discussion that followed the following points were made:

- The Business Plan related to the year 2007-8, whereas the strategic plan related to three years from 2007-8 to 2009-2010;
- This year would see the transition from old to new ITTTE qualifications;
- Last year most of the initial teacher training work was maintenance of the legacy qualifications, this year three quarters of the work would be with new qualifications and one quarter maintenance of legacy qualifications;
- Core tasks 1,2 and 3 were part of the first schedule of SVUK's contract from DfES;
- There was currently an issue with the fact that some teacher/tutor qualifications were not formally recognised across all four countries of the UK. This posed problems particularly for cross-border workers. The eventual aim was to have overarching standards in the UK;
- Core task 4 related to the grant from WAG. The long term aim in Wales was overarching all- age teacher standards;
- Core task 7 related to the tariff of legacy qualifications. This would assess how legacy qualifications would map to the new requirements for licensed status;
- Core task 9 related to company support tasks. This core task ensured SVUK could deliver its work programme.

17. The board agreed formally to endorse the Business Plan 07/08.

Strategic Plan

18. Susan Edge introduced the Strategic Plan (paper 13/07). In the discussion that followed, the following points were made:

- Paragraph 2.2. The strategic priorities had changed to reflect the set of work SVUK currently had;
- DfES was the main source of contracts and therefore it was important to maintain their confidence;
- SVUK would carry out the banking function for TVET UK (International Tenders and Contracts). There was a service fee of £5000 for performing this banking service. There were concerns from the board that this function could quickly absorb resource, and Susan Edge agreed to review this after 12 months;
- Paragraph 5.1. For part of this year, SVUK would have 16 employees. The recruitment for these posts was active and the job descriptions were currently being agreed. It was anticipated that the posts would be filled within three months.

19. The board agreed that they would like to be kept up to date on the situation regarding TVET UK, particularly if it made demands on finance or resources. It was noted that a minor amendment needed to be made on page 5 of the plan. Subject to these points, the board agreed to endorse the Strategic Plan.

20. Heather Wood agreed to submit SVUK's Business Plan and Strategic Plan to the next LLUK Finance and General Purposes committee meeting.

ACTION: COMPANY SECRETARY

Budget

21. Jacqueline Turner introduced paper 14/07 on the budget 2007-2008. In the discussion that followed, the following points were made:

- This budget report did not contain information about TVET UK or cost recovery work, which now needed to be included;
- SVUK accounts suggested a surplus of £74,000 for 2007-8;
- Core spend figures should be accurate to within £7,000;
- It would be helpful if in future the reports included notes to clarify figures, eg the difference between core staff and project-funded staff;
- Additional contracts could increase the surplus further.

22. The board approved the Budget for 2007-2008. Jacqueline Turner explained that she intended to issue a revised budget after 6 months and possibly earlier. She would send this to the board for approval in due course.

ACTION: INTERIM FINANCE DIRECTOR

Training Plan and Risk Register

23. The board noted the following papers:

- Training Plan 2007/2008 (paper 15/07)
- Updated Risk Register and Risk Management strategy (Paper 16/07)

Agenda item 8: Financial Reports

24. Jacqueline Turner presented paper 17/07 and raised the following points:

- SVUK continued to report a surplus;
- It had been noticed that expenditure for which no paperwork was generated (ie contribution to core expenditure) had not been recognised in earlier reports, which meant that they understated spend to date. She had made an accounting adjustment for February to take account of this expenditure. This meant that the reports showed a deficit for the month of February;
- Reporting expenditure was more complete;
- Figures included any gift aid contribution.

Agenda item 9: Corporate business

Cost of living pay rise

25. Heather Wood reported that LLUK had implemented a 2.5% cost of living pay rise for LLUK staff and were also undergoing a pay review now taken forward by Claire Livingstone. The aim was to introduce the new pay scheme by 1st September.

26. The board agreed to a 2.5% pay rise for SVUK staff recruited before 12 February, with effect from 1 April 2007, pending the new pay structure.

Review of pay structure

27. Heather Wood agreed to send the outcomes of the pay review to the board before the October meeting. The board might need to convene an additional meeting if necessary to discuss the pay review and in particular the budgetary implications.

ACTION: COMPANY SECRETARY

Extra mile bonus scheme

28. Heather reported that the bonus scheme would be trialled for a year. She explained that any member of staff could nominate another for the extra mile bonus and that SMT would have the final decision for LLUK. Staff would not be able to nominate themselves. This bonus scheme would have no budgetary limit.

29. The board agreed that the bonus scheme should be implemented within SVUK on a trial basis alongside LLUK's scheme. Susan Edge would have final decision with advice from LLUK SMT members.

Staff forum

30. Heather explained that HR was currently setting up an employee forum for the group. So far, they had only received a small number of nominations and therefore the deadline for nominations had been extended. Heather hoped that the forum would be in operation in May/June.

Agenda item 10: Review of previous adoptions

31. The board agreed to extend these adoptions for a further period until amendments were made.

Agenda item 11: Any other business

32. Susan Edge asked the board whether they wished to receive further statistical information eg staff sickness statistics, number of hits on SVUK website. It was felt that the board should only receive information that would inform strategic decisions and that they would trust the CO to decide what information the board should receive.

Agenda item 12: Date and location of next meeting

33. It was agreed that the SVUK AGM and first board meeting of 2008 should be held on 3rd January, venue tbc.

SVUK
April 2007