

# SUTTON COLLEGE OF LEARNING FOR ADULTS

## Minutes of the Student Focus Group held on 22 June 2009

Present: Margaret White (Chair); Jenny Sims (SCOLA);

Elsbeth Clarke; Pat King; Maggie Cundy; Michelle Bird; Sue Carless; Elizabeth Rees; David Haslam; June Asbey; Edmund Ignaitus (students from Greenshaw, Sutton, Stanley Park and Wallington centres).

		ITEM	ACTION
1	Apologies	New members were welcomed	
2	Minutes of 2 March	Agreed as accurate	
3	Matters Arising	<p><b>4a.Learner Involvement strategy</b> – adopted by Governing Body. It will need to be revised annually and discussed with the Focus Group.</p> <p><b>4b)Induction Checklist</b> - the Focus Group has been added in order to flag up to every class and seek new members.</p> <p><b>6.Funding 09/10</b> – the college still receives funding from the LSC but the expected fee contribution from students increases each year, and in 2010/11, colleges will be expected to charge 50% of the true cost of running courses. This could raise the standard fee to £5 per hour (currently £3.90). The college will try to minimise the impact of fee increases and seek other funding, but the expected revenue from Train to Gain has not materialised nationally and public sector spending is being reduced.</p> <p>Funding is also affected on exam courses if students do not take the accreditation. This affects the overall success rate and funding is reduced the following year if targets have not been achieved.</p>	MW/SFG

		<p>A question was raised about expanding the curriculum into work-related areas such as engineering, but while we offer short courses in electrical work, plumbing etc. we do not have the facilities to expand further, and would not compete with Carshalton College which holds COVE status for electrical installation courses.</p> <p><b>9.Walkway</b> – a member commented how dangerous the walkway and outside steps were during the snow and ice – these areas are the responsibility of the Civic Offices, and it was reported at the time.</p> <p><b>10d)Pottery Clay Charges</b> – agreed that the termly set charge is fairest way.</p> <p><b>10f)Over-60 Concession</b> – Margaret explained that this was always a local concession for which we received no additional funding. Concessions are available but must be means-tested.</p> <p><b>10n) Coffee Shop</b> – the group suggested that a feedback form should be given out – concerns re timings and prices. Feedback form should invite positive comments as well and inform college management of students’ feelings.</p> <p>It was confirmed that arrangements had been made for LLDD students to have refreshments within the SCOLA building if they wished.</p>	
4	Customer Satisfaction Survey Results	Tabled and discussed	
5	Prospectus and Programme 09/10	<p>The prospectus was well-received by the group – attractive and user-friendly.</p> <p>Programme – comments included the fact that French A2 had not been offered, and that the jewellery short courses should state the ability.</p>	
6	Student Handbook and Charter	The group were asked for suggestions for the Handbook. Agreed that the diary is useful – students like and use.	Group

		<p>Pointed out that Sussex Stationers closed down (re discounts). Suggested approaching The Works.</p> <p>Elizabeth suggested that information should be given about the closure of the crèche and funding available for childcare.</p>	MW
7	Future Developments	There are no plans to close centres or open any new ones, although some savings have been made by closing Stanley Park and Greenshaw by one evening each. Classes have been relocated.	
8	Equality and Diversity	The newly revised Mission Statement and E&D Statements were tabled for discussion. The Group agreed that the reference to social class should be removed from the E&D statement.	Group
9	Health and Safety	<b>Greenshaw</b> – access to the annexe across the car-park is poorly lit.	
10	Any Other Business	<p><b>a) Greenshaw</b> – Elspeth expressed dissatisfaction with the centre – difficult to get to; no welcome upon arrival; class is 6:30-9:30 but told can't come in until 6:30 re insurance; the cleaner was still in the room; tutor did not appear to have access to IWB - Margaret to discuss issues with centre staff and Head of Department.</p> <p><b>b) Prospectus Distribution</b> – Bhuapen offered to take some to her Temple.</p> <p><b>c) Carshalton Beeches Directory</b> – Sue suggested good vehicle for marketing SCOLA – we have a free page once a year in July.</p> <p><b>d) Exams</b> – Bhuapen suggested a 'No Speaking' pictorial sign for the ESOL exams.</p>	MW