

SCRUTINY SUB-COMMITTEE FOR LIFELONG LEARNING

MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES IN COUNTY DURHAM

Notes of the Meeting about Modern Foreign Languages in County Durham held at the County Hall, Durham on 1 September 2005 at 1.00 p.m.

Present:

Councillor A Cox (in the Chair)

Councillors Armstrong Lethbridge Myers Pye and Walker

Margaret Bell, Inspector for Modern Foreign Languages

Peter Cradock, Learning and Skills Council

Ian Mackenzie, Head of Overview and Scrutiny

Richard Sice, OneNorthEast

Brian Stobie, International Officer

Jeanette Trafford, Lifelong Learning Partnership Manager

Georgia Tommasin, Italian Work Placement

Modern Foreign Languages

The Chairman welcomed all those present to the meeting.

The Head of Overview and Scrutiny explained that the changes in the national curriculum had led to a rapid decline in the number of 14-19 year olds studying modern foreign languages.

There was a lengthy discussion about the ways in which the study of modern foreign languages could assist the Council in achieving its aims to improve the economy as well as Lifelong Learning.

The Group considered the initial draft strategic plan that had been prepared by Margaret Bell. In addition to the study of GCSE qualifications it suggested that there be a more flexible approach to language teaching.

There was general agreement that a new approach was required in this area, and the Members of Scrutiny supported the Action Plan as the way forward.