THE UNIVERSITY OF HULL

The challenges and resolutions of moving middle curriculum managers on to principalship.

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by

Stephen Lambert,
BA (Nottingham Trent), MA (Kingston), PGCE (Greenwich)

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Abstract

Frearson (2003), Clancy (2005) and Colinson and Colinson (2006) all argue that there is a chronic shortage of suitably experienced candidates pursuing principalship, a situation which is being made worse by an ageing workforce amongst currently serving principals. Hargreaves and Fink (2005) suggest that this is a result of the principals' role becoming increasingly complex and demanding which has deterred potential candidates from pursuing principalship. At the same time Hargreaves and Fink (2005) and Davies (2009) argue that sustainable leadership offers a viable mechanism for developing individuals and organisational capacity resulting in a greater pool of suitably experienced and skilled candidates. This research reviews current literature on sustainable leadership and argues for an alternative framework for further education colleges. It also considers the current challenges faced by principals and middle curriculum managers and the resolutions which need to be put into place in order to develop individuals capable of becoming the next generation of principals.

The research was achieved through a three phase design: phase one was a questionnaire to principals of all general further education colleges in the south east of England, including London; phase two was a series of interviews with principals and phase three were focus groups with middle curriculum managers.

The research demonstrates that the role of the modern principal encompassed three main elements: public; internal private and internal public, all of which need to be balanced by incumbents in order to fulfil their duties effectively to both stakeholders and spectators. The research also suggests that the development of future principals should take place prior to commencing the post and rather than focusing on knowledge as per existing approaches, there is overwhelming support from participants for an evidence based approach.

Chapter 1: Introduction

This introductory chapter discusses the rationale and context for this research and provides an outline of the literature review, main research question and overview of the research methodology.

The research is based on the premise that there is a perceived and impending shortage of individuals wanting to become principals of further education colleges. Fearson's (2003) statistics show that in 1997, 23.6% of college 'leaders' were aged 50 plus, rising to 42.7% in 2002; whilst Clancy (2005) suggests that by the end of 2010, 60% of college principals would have retired. Both the Centre for Excellence in Leadership (2005) and Clancy (2005) suggest that there are shortages of appropriately skilled individuals progressing on to become principals. The Centre for Excellence in Leadership (2005) suggests that this turnover of principals may be as a result of the 'baby boomers' approaching retirement. They go on to state that the age profile of leaders and managers within colleges make this an institution wide issue, which is more acute at senior levels. With this impending shortage coupled with a lack of suitably skilled individuals to step into principalship roles, governing corporations of colleges will have to identify strategies for dealing with the increasing likelihood of not being able to fill these positions.

The reports have highlighted issues surrounding those leaving principalship but in order to get a complete picture one needs to consider whether this is offset by a similar number pursuing principalship. In order to do this the recruitment trends associated with advertised principals' posts need be looked at. This would determine whether there are:

a. not only a significant number of serving principals leaving their posts

but

b. a shortage of applications applying for principalship

If the reports are to be believed that there is a shortage of individuals pursuing principalship then there is a need to develop effective leadership from within colleges to ensure the stability of institutions is maintained. If individuals who are currently in management positions are empowered as leaders then the strategic aims of the organisation would continue to be enacted in the absence of a principal. Part of this

process will be capacity building amongst those individuals which will provide the experiences and skills necessary to seek higher office. In doing so principals need to understand their role and how it is perceived by others within the college if there is to be success in developing future leaders.

My experience within the post-compulsory education sector having originally trained as a secondary design and technology teacher, but making an early career move into the post compulsory sector which subsequently focused entirely in general further education colleges has lead me to gain an understanding of the issues regarding the perceived shortage of suitable candidates pursuing principalship. After spending 4 years as a lecturer at a time when progression routes within the post-compulsory teaching profession had been abolished the only career progression available was into college management. This meant a move into management at a variety of different institutions, from a semi-rural mixed economy college, which are institutions typically delivering a significant proportion of higher education, in this particular case about 35%, to a college which became an early member of the '157 Group' of large influential general further education colleges. A number of different management posts were held over a ten year period including senior management posts. It is this experience in a variety of different institutions and in a number of different roles has given me the understanding of issues facing leadership in further education colleges.

The research will therefore focus on principals and middle curriculum managers of general further education colleges and will consider evidence as to whether there is a shortage of suitably qualified individuals pursuing principalship and if the current literature of sustainable leadership are sufficiently developed and appropriate to the further education sector to enable colleges to continue to implement their strategic plan after the principal who generated these plans has left.

It is worth noting that as there is a shortage of individuals pursuing principalship (Frearson, 2005; Clancy, 2005; Centre for Excellence in Leadership, 2005) the focus of this thesis is on the role of the principal, the rationale being that it is a particularly key role in the organisation. It is the only role within the organisation which is laid down in legislation through the Further and Higher Education Act (1992) and, as chapter four will illustrate there are key functions which only a principal can discharge. But in order to develop sustainability leaders need to be developed from deep within the organisation. However, it is worth reminding ourselves that leadership takes many

forms, both formal and informal and at a variety of different levels within the organisation and critically one could explore where the influence of power and authority is within the organisation and whether this is concentrated formally with the principal. Mintzberg (1990) suggests leaders within an organisation wear different hats, depending on the role which they are 'playing' in a given situation. What will be considered as part of this thesis are the hats which principals wears in discharging their duties.

The main research question which is to be addressed through this thesis is then:

'What are the challenges and resolutions in developing middle curriculum managers in further education colleges on to principalship?'

In order to fully answer this question a number of subsidiary questions needs to be answered:

1. What is the current context of principalship in the selected further education colleges?

2. What is the reported reality of movement into principalship in further education colleges?

3. What elements of current models of sustainable leadership might the selected further education colleges being examined implement in the development of aspiring principals?

4. What are the views of further education principals with respect to the role of the principal?

5. What are the views of middle curriculum managers with respect to the role of the principal?

College principals and middle curriculum managers are pivotal to understanding the issues presented in three of the five subsidiary research questions. The remaining two

questions will be addressed through secondary evidence. The next section of this chapter will look at defining further education.

It is worth at this point acknowledging a potential tension that this thesis raises. The thesis will argue that concepts of sustainable leadership can be used as a means of developing organisational capacity in a holistic manner and that leadership is greater than any one individual within the organisation. Yet the focus of this research is on the role of the principal within general further education colleges and how middle curriculum managers can be develop the necessary skills and experiences to pursue principalship positions. While there appears to be a tension between these two approaches the thesis will demonstrate that leadership theories such as distributed leadership can be implemented under the umbrella of sustainable leadership. The thesis also argues that sustainable leadership is not a replacement to existing leadership theories, but should be seen as a conceptual framework for developing a sustainable organisation and in doing so, institutions will apply individual approaches to achieving the desired outcomes. A limitation of this thesis which will be considered further in chapter eight is that leadership is not confined to any one individual or role within an organisation, yet the resources available to undertake this research do not make it feasible to look at leadership at all levels of the organisational hierarchy.

Phillips and Pugh (2010) list fifteen ways that research can be original and while it is not the intention to go through each of them, this thesis does makes an original contribution to knowledge by looking singularly at principalship as a role within further education colleges, by focusing on general further education colleges in the South East of England and London and by applying the concepts of sustainable leadership to further education.

What is further education?

Prior to trying to understand the leadership challenges facing further education, it is worthwhile establishing what is meant by post-compulsory education and where further education fits into this broader category.

Jameson (2006) defines post-compulsory education as the field of education which is sometimes referred to as ‘Lifelong Learning’ and is concerned with the non-compulsory

phase of education; the statutory age range is from sixteen, with no upper limit. The Labour government proposed through the Apprenticeship, Skills, Childrens and Learning Act (2009) that the compulsory age of education be raised from sixteen to eighteen from 2015. The coalition government in their Education Bill (DfE, 2010) committed to the plan of increasing the age of participation. What the act of parliament is not stating is that young people should stay in school until they are eighteen, instead favouring them to remain in formal training, either through: participation at college; apprenticeships; or employer accredited training. Regardless of age, post-compulsory education focuses on qualifications starting at entry level through to level 3 on the qualification and credit framework (appendix B). Jameson and Hillier (2003) sum up post-compulsory education as:

> *'educational provision for post-compulsory age learners at sub-degree level in a range of post-16, adult and extra-mural education and training institutions'*

There is a fuzziness surrounding post-compulsory education in that whilst higher education is post-compulsory, it is separated out to form a category of its own. Post-compulsory education is large and diverse with total funding being just over £10bn in 2009/10 (LSC, 2008b), however as Baker (2010) points out this represents only 11% of the total education budget in 2009/10. But, within this general category of post-compulsory education, there are specific groups of institutions and they are:

- Further education colleges;
- Independent Specialist Providers (ISPs);
- learndirect/University for Industry (UfI);
- School Sixth Forms;
- Providers of personal and community development learning (PCDL) – usually local authorities;
- Providers of learning and skills for offenders;
- Providers in the voluntary and community sector;
- Work based learning providers;
- Employers holding contracts for public funding directly through the National Employer Service.

The groups of providers listed above are diverse and cover institutions which deliver apprenticeships, those which hold contracts to deliver education to those in custody, online learning through the learndirect brand, and those that provide specialist education

for young people with special educational needs which cannot be accommodated in mainstream schools. The further education category can be additionally sub-divided into:

- General Further Education Colleges;
- Sixth Form Colleges;
- Tertiary Colleges;
- Agricultural Colleges;
- Specialist Designated Institutions;
- Art, Design and Performing Arts Institutions.

These categories of further education are defined specifically in the Further and Higher Education Act (1992) and the Apprenticeship, Skills, Children and Learning Act (2009) and as such are not open to interpretation as to whether an institution is in one of another category. It is possible however for an institution to change designation. The creation of Sixth Form Colleges as a specific category through the Apprenticeship, Skills Children and Learning Act (2009) saw a number of colleges previously designated as general further education institutions re-designate if they met the criteria laid down in the legislation.

What this demonstrates is that post-compulsory education is an umbrella term which has a diverse range of institutions providing a range of different types of education and training.

When colleges were incorporated out of local authority control in 1992 as a result of the Further and Higher Education Act (1992), 492 colleges were listed. By the time Payne (2008) was published the number had reduced to 377. KPMG (2009) note that much of this reduction was as a result of mergers rather than closure without replacement. Table 1 provides details of the number of colleges under the different categories based on the 2008 DIUS data.

Designation	%	Number
General Further education	51%	192
Sixth Form Colleges	26%	98
Tertiary Colleges	13%	49
Agriculture Colleges	5%	19
Specialist Designated Institutions	4%	15
Arts based institutions	1%	4

Adapted from DIUS (2008)

Table 1: Summary of college numbers in England

As a result of the Apprenticeship, Skills, Childrens and Skills Act (2009) sixth form colleges were given their own category of designation; previously they were officially a subset of general further education colleges. This will change some of the numbers as colleges move between designations, possibly resulting in a reduction from the general further education category as institutions move into the newly created sixth form category.

As already mentioned the definitions of the categories of further education institutions such as those listed in Table 8 are defined by legislation. Jameson and Hillier (2003) and Jameson (2006) all provide their own meaning for what further education is, but within this thesis I believe that further education is about providing meaningful and appropriate education for those learners who are beyond the compulsory phase of education. It could be debated as to what meaningful and appropriate mean, and indeed Wolf (2011) does so, but often people attend further education colleges to learn a skills so that they can gain employment, therefore colleges need to have notion central to their mission and ensure that the curriculum they offer does lead to meaningful employment.

Summary of thesis structure

The following section provides a summary of the structure of the thesis as well as an outline of the contents of each chapter.

After this introduction chapter, Chapter Two will be the first of two literature review chapters and focuses on addressing the first of the subsidiary research questions which is about the current context of leadership in further education colleges. It looks at the national policy drivers which are impacting on general further education colleges and contextualises this through the curriculum, finance and funding and performance management.

Chapter Three is the second literature review chapter and it looks at the idea of sustainable leadership in education and considers existing models of sustainable leadership and their suitability for application to further education colleges. This partly links in to the third subsidiary research question which is answered through the collation of data from questionnaires to principals of further education colleges in the South East of England and London. These questionnaire findings will consider whether college principals agree with the ideas of sustainable leadership and also whether they are implementing any aspects of sustainable leaderships within their own institutions.

Chapter Four looks at the structure of further education particularly how it is governed and regulated. It then goes on to look at the selection and justification for the selection of four general further education colleges in the South East, including London, two of which are colleges with an income of over £35m; and two are medium sized colleges, those whose income is between £14m and £29m (Payne, 2008).

Chapter Five is the research methods chapter, and it looks at the methodology used and the justification of the approach taken. It provides details of the epistemological basis for this research and explains and justifies the decisions which have been made regarding the sampling strategy. This chapter also provides a justification as to the methods used along with the types of data sought with each of the proposed tools. The first phase of the research design was a questionnaire to all college principals in the sample cohort; this established to what extent the ideas of sustainable leadership were implemented within their institutions, along with their own understanding of the role of the principal. The research used a Delphi approach (Robson, 2002) where the findings of these questionnaires were fed into the interviews with the selected college principals, which was phase two of the research. The third and final stage was the use of four focus groups, one in each of the colleges. The sessions explored the managers' understanding of the role of the principal, any challenges or influencing factors which they faced in progressing their own careers towards principalship and how these could be removed. Alongside this, the chapter looks at how reliable and valid the data is and issues regarding whether any generalisations for the sector can be made on such a small scale piece of work. The chapter looked in detail at the construction of the instruments used, such as the development of the questions for the questionnaires and their subsequent layout, the piloting of each of the research instruments and the selection of the

participants for the pilot and the outcome of this process. This section also chronicles how the research was conducted.

Chapter Six reports the results obtained and as the research is being conducted in phases, the findings will be reported against each of these..

Chapter Seven provides the analysis of the findings from the previous chapter, specifically in relation to each of the research questions linking both the empirical evidence obtained alongside the secondary data from government reports and journals.

The final chapter (chapter eight) draws together the conclusions, reflects back on the main research questions and suggests a number of recommendations, both for the further education sector to take forward and also personal recommendations as to what I would have done differently if this piece of research had to be done again, along with the limitations of the research.

This chapter has so far considered both the main research question and the subsidiary questions as well as the structure of the thesis with a brief summary of the chapters. The following table provides an overview of the research questions and where they will be addressed within the thesis. While it is common to expect the research questions to be addressed through empirical work alone, this thesis looks to address,in part, some of the questions through the critical examination of literature. Table two identifies research questions one and three where this happens and illustrates that literature is used alongside empirical evidence to address these questions. This has been done for research question one as there is a body of literature both academic and policy based which considers the context in which further education operates, and how policy impacting on further education is informed by globalisation. For research question three only through a critical examination of the literature on sustainable leadership would it be possible to determine whether any of the elements of existing models are applicable to further education.

Question	Summary	Chapters
1	Current context of FE	2,7,8
2	Movement into principalship in FE colleges	7,8
3	Elements of sustainable leadership applicable for FE	3,7,8
4	Perception of FE principals role by principals	6,7,8
5a	Perception of principals role by middle curriculum managers	6,7,8

Table 2: Summary of the subsidiary research questions and chapters

To begin this process of understanding the principal research, which is 'What are the challenges and resolutions in moving middle curriculum managers in further education colleges on to principalship?' the next chapter looks at the current policy context in which further education colleges operate and how national drivers impact on them.

Chapter 2: The challenges of leadership and management

Introduction

This is the first of three literature chapters and it focuses on the challenges of leadership and management in further education colleges. In doing so, the variations in understanding of the term globalisation will be looked at and the way in which they influence national policies. The chapter will then examine a selection of key pieces of national policy and how these have impacted on leadership in further education.

This chapter sets the context for the rest of the research and puts forward the argument that leadership within the further education sector is becoming increasingly complex, exacerbated by the impact of national policy directives informed by global drivers. Chapter two also addresses the first research question of this thesis which is:

1. What is the current context of leadership in further education colleges?

The basis for the empirical work is formed by articulating the challenges faced by the leaders within further education as well as by examining whether they are shared by currently serving principals. Furthermore, the resolutions which need to be put in place will be considered in order to ensure sufficient numbers of individuals progress through further education colleges in the pursuit of principalship.

The second literature review chapter explores the concept of sustainable leadership as a model for developing leadership in further education colleges while the third and final one, centres specifically on further education within South East England including London.
Both of these areas are to be considered as part of this study in order to ensure that there are sufficient numbers of colleges available for selection of the participants.

During the process of writing this thesis there has been a change of government and it is considered important to clarify and discuss accordingly any new changes made by the coalition government which impact on this study. In order to avoid any possible confusion about the policies and which political party they relate to, the term *Labour*

will be used throughout this research to refer to the Labour government between 1997 and 2010; and the coalition government will be referred to as the *current government*, which came into office in May 2010.At the time of writing this thesis the Young Peoples Learning Agency, (YPLA) was the government organisation responsible for funding education for individuals aged 16-18. As a result of the Education Act 2011, the YPLA was replaced with the Education Funding Agency whose prime role remains the funding of education for 16-18 year olds, but also includes the funding of academies. Any reference to sources from the YPLA remains accurate but may not reflect current government policy.

Defining Globalisation

Prior to attempting to look at the way in which global drivers influence national thinking, it is necessary to spend some time considering what is meant by globalisation. This section will therefore consider the work of a number of commentators, critically reviewing their views on globalisation and examining whether there is any synergy between these definitions.

Literature demonstrates that there are considerable variations when trying to define what is meant by the term globalisation, with many of these views changing over time. In order to illustrate this, the views of a number of commentators can be plotted on a continuum, from the holistic approach taken by Lauder et al (2006) to the highly categorised approach taken by Bottery (2006). Figure 1 plots this continuum.

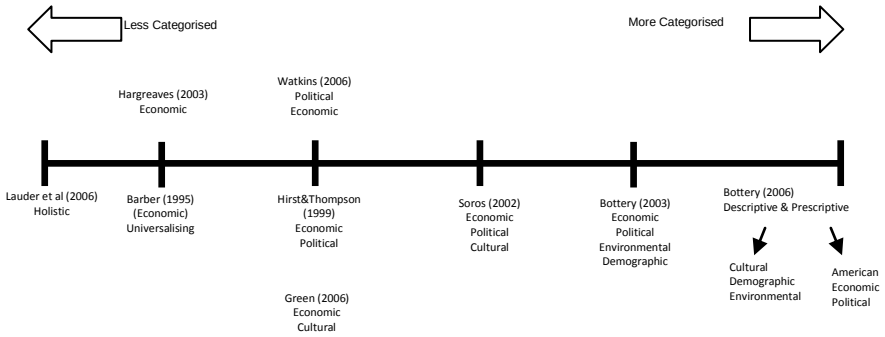

Figure 1: Continuum of globalisation.

On the left of the continuum Lauder et al (2006) suggest that globalisation is holistic and can not be categorised by defined themes but as the spatial transformation of

organisations in terms of their social relations, particularly transnationally. Contrary to this Barber (1995) considers globalisation as economic which encompasses everything, a view which is shared by Hargreaves (2003); however, Steger (2009) argues that Barber (1995) is promoting a simplistic view of globalisation that is nothing more than universalising. This is a view which is shared by Scholte (2002) who describes the notion of globalisation as merely a rebranding of historically used terms, such as internationalisation, or westernisation.

Hirst and Thompson (1999) consider that there is only one principal form of globalisation which is economic, although they also acknowledge the importance of political globalisation. Watkins (2006) acknowledges Hirst and Thompson's (1999) view of globalisation encompassing economic and political forms, but goes on to say that it is more than this although not defining exactly what; and instead promoting a more holistic view akin to that of Lauder et al (2006). Green (2006) agrees with the importance of economic globalisation but also suggests that this brings with it cultural globalisation through the resulting increase in global trade and transnational organisations. This links in with the spatial transformation of organisations and their social relations advocated by Lauder et al (2006). Soros (2002) like others acknowledges the importance of economic globalisation but also highlights the key role which political and cultural globalisation play. What Soros does do is place a caveat particularly around the impact of economic globalisation, warning against the negative impact on developing countries, especially when it widens the gap between rich and poor nations.

At the opposite end to Lauder et al (2006), Bottery (2006) introduces two principal categories of globalisation: *Descriptive*, being based on measurable data noting that these forms will continue to happen regardless of whether nations recognise them, such as cultural, demographic and environmental; and *Prescriptive*, being values based, in that they are linked to the ideologies of an individual or group of individuals which includes political, economic and Americanisation.

What has been provided is a snapshot of definitions by various commentators at a particular time and which will continue to evolve. While Lauder et al (2006) and Bottery (2006) are at opposite ends of the continuum both acknowledge the decline in geographical boundaries, particularly when considering the influence of supra-national

organisation such as the European Union, the United Nations, or the World Trade Organisation.

While it is evident that there is a range of ways of categorising globalisation they are not of equal standing. Economic, political and demographic forms of globalisation are discussed more than others. The continuum described in figure 1 demonstrates that these three forms of globalisation appear more frequently than any other form of globalisation. This is possibly because it is easier to witness their impact on individuals, groups, or nations and in the case of this thesis have a more noticeable effect on the leadership of further education colleges. Therefore any changes in the economic environment are likely to inform political thinking, for example, the Leitch Review (2006) was informed by the need for the UK to have a workforce which enables the country to maintain its global economic competitiveness. Both the previous Labour and current coalition government see economic globalisation as key to the continued economic performance and as a result this will be carried forward to the next section.

Likewise, changes in global movement of the population will see a resulting change in the demographics of a college; for example the next group of countries to join the European Union will be in 2011, and potentially will result in an increase of students from these countries into the UK. There is no evidence currently that this will happen; however, if previous trends are repeated, then this increase is likely (Institute for Public Policy Research, 2010). Koser (2007) states that this is not migration, as many of these individuals are coming to the UK not to permanently settle but to work for a number of years before either returning to their home country or moving on to another country.

Of course, this is not to dismiss the other forms of globalisation such as environmental, although the impact is not immediately so obvious, but has a longer term effect.

What will not be considered is political globalisation. The rationale for this is that global politics impacts less on the work of further education colleges. But it is important to define what is meant by political globalisation and illustrate how national drivers are a theme which runs through the forthcoming analysis.

The argument around political globalisation is not that it does not impact on leadership in further education, only that it impacts less than economic and demographic

globalisation. Bottery (2004) suggests that initially political globalisation was conceptualised through the relocating of political power outside of the nation state, for example through the European Union (EU). Bottery (2004) further proposes that political globalisation be presented in the form of an interconnectedness of interests and ideas alongside the development of international rules which inform political governance within nation states. Some elements of political globalisation might impact on leadership in further education colleges; but this would be as a result of political globalisation informing national policy. For example, the introduction of new employment legislation originating from the EU might through changes to national legislation impact on recruitment procedures in a college. What this illustrates is the way in which political globalisation informs national policy. However, successive governments continue to pursue policies which aim at the UK remaining economically competitive in global economies the effects of economic globalisation have a greater impact than those of political globalisation.

National policy and the role of the state

Globalisation does not directly impact on the leadership and management of further education colleges; rather it informs national thinking and policy which does affect colleges. This section looks at the policy context of further education and the way in which globalisation has informed national policy directives.

It is not surprising that the state has an interest in education, as it is one of main ways in which the government can intervene in family life and the life of individuals. While education does not rely on the state, because it can happen informally at home, between friends or indeed in independent schools; the state does rely on education. Ward and Eden (2009) suggest that governments will define themselves and sustain their cultural identity, promoting their beliefs, ideas and knowledge from generation to generation through a state control of education and therefore education has become a political tool which transcends different political parties.

This has been evident over the past twenty years with changes to the further education sector. Pre-1992 further education was part of local authorities, and so were schools, working collaboratively to deliver an appropriate curriculum to the young people in the local authority area. The Conservative government of the time through the Further and

Higher Education Act (1992) incorporated further education colleges out of local authority control. At the same time, the act also created the Further Education Funding Council, a centralised non-public departmental body, a quango, whose role was to implement a centrally controlled system of funding and performance management. What this meant was that control had been taken away from local government and moved to central government. As such the Further and Higher Education Act (1992) focused on the freedoms which colleges gained as a result of incorporation out of local authority control, rather than the shift in power from local to central government.

Part of the idea behind the incorporations of further education colleges out of local authority control, and a theme of the Thatcher government (Jenkins, 2007) at the time, was for the government to stimulate the market in which colleges operated. By freeing them of local authority control it was believed that colleges would be able to compete for students alongside schools, other colleges and an emerging number of private training providers. Ward and Eden (2009) call this form of competition, which is internal to the state, the 'internal market', whereas Ball (2008) describes this as 'endogenous competition'. Colleges had entered the consumer era whereby they were selling education as a commodity, and only those colleges whose curriculum matched the needs of their consumers would survive. Observers of the Thatcher government had already seen public services privatised, such as the prison services, elements of the health service and the rail infrastructure, so it should have been no surprise that post-compulsory education would go this way.

While there was a move to create a free market for further education which freed colleges from local authority control, at the same time the Conservative government was looking to centralise its control and power over further education colleges through the introduction of a national body whose responsibility was to implement government policy consistency across all further education colleges.
Fukuyama (1992, pg 124) describes this as market orientated authoritarianism whereby there is a high degree of 'discipline' with just enough freedom to encourage innovation. The theory was that by bringing education into a free market system a number of things would happen. Firstly, it was hoped that the education system would bring about efficiencies in the way it operated and in turn ensuring value for money for taxpayers. Secondly, just as competition in the manufacturing sector often drives down prices and pushes up quality, the quality in education would be 'driven up' in the same way.

Finally, Bash and Coulby (1991) argue that the idea of empowering colleges was less about freedom as autonomous organisations and more about reducing the power of local authorities, particularly the Inner London Education Authority. Based on this idea, it is easier to understand why when Labour came to power in 1997 they did not abolish the ideas of centralised control. To New Labour, Fukuyama's (1992) idea of market orientated authoritarianism was simply a way of achieving the best from the further education system. Instead, under Tony Blair's leadership there was an increase in centralised regulation, particularly around inspection and participation targets for young people. It was not surprising that Labour, under Tony Blair, did not undertake a U-turn on previous Conservative policy. Jenkins (2007) remarks that Blair's formative years were influenced by Thatcher's conservative government and, as a young MP he backed various policies including those on employment law and the role of trade unions. Blair also undertook to change the view of the Labour party on areas such as the renationalisation of public services previously privatised by the Conservatives. This started to provide an insight into his values such as having centralised power accessible only to a small and closed group. Blair's ideologies are not dissimilar to the Conservatives of centralising power to Westminster and eroding the autonomy of local authorities.

One of Labour's first major publication was entitled Excellence for All, DfES (1997), which set the tone for the direction in which New Labour was going to take its education policy: increasing the quality and standards to create an education system which provides a workforce which enables the UK to compete in the global marketplace. What Blair was doing was nothing new; Fukuyama (1992 pg123) stated that 'free market capitalism seemed to be the only game in town'. Ward and Eden (2009) remind us that the Labour government introduced greater legislation and regulation in a quest to drive up quality and standards. Many of these pieces of legislation were implemented by an increasing number of quangos and agencies; Ainsley (2004) calls the development of quangos under Labour a 'Quango State'. This move allowed for the outsourcing of key education targets whilst keeping an element of control over the delivery on such targets. Bobbitt (2002) suggests that this exonerates the government if targets are not met, effectively reducing their [government] responsibility.

When Brown came into power in 2007 he continued the state's intervention in education, particularly within the compulsory sector, introducing initiatives such as the National Challenge (DCSF, 2008) for those schools not achieving 30% GCSE grades A*-C of their year 11 cohort. Further education was not exempt from the increase in initiatives under Brown: minimum levels of performance were introduced for underperforming colleges (LSC, 2007). They also committed to ensuring that all sixteen year olds had an offer of a suitable place of learning in the September after they left school. This put a particular strain on the further education system and the agencies such as Connexions who had to track all young people leaving the compulsory sector.

At the end of 2009 the Apprenticeship, Skills, Children and Learning Act (2009) gained royal assent. This piece of legislation has had a significant impact on further education colleges, and reversed Conservative policy implemented under Thatcher. The act gave statutory responsibility back to local authorities for education up to the age of nineteen. This meant that local authorities had responsibility for further education colleges, which included working with colleges to determine an appropriate curriculum to meet the needs of the local market, and also the funding of colleges. The act also created two new agencies, the Skills Funding Agency which is part of the department of Business, Innovation and Skills, and has responsibility for post-19 education and training. The second agency created was a quango, the Young Peoples Learning Agency, whose remit was funding the newly created academies and supporting local authorities in discharging their duties in relation to 16-19 education.

The new coalition government of Conservatives and Liberal Democrats came into power in May 2010 and quickly returned to their centralisation agenda, moving the allocation of money and the paying of further education colleges to the Young Peoples Learning Agency. At the same time, further education colleges are having to deal with three organisations as a result of the Apprenticeship, Skills, Children and Learning Act (2009); local authorities, the Young Peoples Learning Agency and the Skills Funding Agency: the latter two being centralised organisations. This might appear to be a minor shift in responsibilities but as in 1992 this is an erosion of local authority power as the perceived power, associated with money, has shifted to the Young Peoples Learning Agency.

What has been a consistent theme through government since Callaghan in 1976 is the notion that the education system needs to produce individuals which enable the UK to remain economically competitive. So concerned was the Labour government about the rise of the pan-Asian economies that they commissioned Leitch (2006) to undertake a review of the workforce skills needed to ensure economic competitiveness is maintained. The outcome of the report, which was adopted by the government, was that education was key to economic prosperity and therefore the workforce needed to be skilled to at least a level three according to the Qualifications and Credit Framework (Appendix B). The result of this report was that the Learning and Skills Council, the agency responsible for post-16 education and training prior to the creation of the Young Peoples Learning Agency and the Skills Funding Agency, was charged with ensuring that the workforce was up-skilled. Further education colleges were seen as a principal mechanism by which this could be achieved. As a result of changes in global economies, national initiatives such as Train to Gain (LSC, 2008) were developed as the primary method of up-skilling the workforce.

The Leitch (2006) report has recently been criticised by the UK Commission for Employment and Skills (2010) which indicated that there are still a significant number of jobs which require a level 2 qualification and that need for higher level skills, level 3 and above, is not as a great as Leitch (2006) predicted. This is not to negate the work which further education colleges have already done in up-skilling the workforce. Wolf (2004) notes that whilst there is a link between qualifications and economic productivity it is not a linear assumption, and that the social benefits of a higher skilled workforce should not be overlooked.

How has demographic globalisation contributed to the leadership challenges facing further education colleges.

So far the chapter has demonstrated that economic globalisation informs national thinking and in turn affects the way in which further education colleges operate. There is however another consequence of globalisation which to some extent impacts directly on further education colleges and that is the effect of demographic globalisation. Shigeyuki et al (2002) defines demographic globalisation in terms of fertility, mortality and migration. Bottery (2004) suggests that it is widely recognised that an increasing

number of people are living longer which has a consequence on the welfare state system; this is further compounded by a declining birth rate. The final element of Shigeyuki's el al (2002) definition is migration; however, it is worth clarifying that when discussing the impact of demographic globalisation this section will not look at immigration, as defined by Senker (2008), which is where individuals move permanently to a new area either internally or to a country. Rather than immigration this section will concentrate on short term migration because it includes those individuals who come to the UK for a short period of time, for example 3 to 5 years, either to study or as a result of seeking employment.

College leaders are facing an increasing number of challenges resulting from changes in global population movement, the result of which has impacted on the demographics of further education colleges, the curriculum which they offer and the nature of the support services available to students. .

Further education colleges have seen an influx of both European Union and non European Union students entering their institutions. Some of this is as a result of strategic planning and the targeting of non European Union students who are charged the full international fee, which is higher than the government subsidised rate for UK students. The other is the result of the continued influx of migrant workers entering the UK, with estimates from Rowthorn (2007) predicting that extrapolating forward numbers are expected to increase to 20 million by 2050. Sumpton and Sommerville (2010) suggest that the introduction of a points based system has limited the number of migrants entering the UK. New migrants need to have skills which will contribute to the economy before entry can be granted. Sumpton and Sommerville (2010) go on to suggest that this new points based entry criteria was a result of the last groups of countries to gain membership to the European Union in 2004 which saw an influx of 1.5 million people to the UK in one year.

The coalition government made a pledge to reduce the numbers of migrants entering the UK despite the contribution which they make to the economy (The Select Committee on Economic Affairs, 2008), and as a result from April 2011 imposed both limits on the number of non European Union students colleges can recruit and the types of curriculum which they can be recruited on to (UK Border Agency, 2011). This will potentially disadvantage many colleges who are now only allowed to recruit 76% of the total number of non European they recruited the previous year.

Despite the governments commitment to reduce the number of migrants entering the country, internal population movement as well as population movement between European Union countries has contributed to the increasing pressure which further education college face. Samuelowicz (1987) points out that as the demography of a college changes so does the nature of the support services needed, with overseas students increasingly requiring higher levels of language and study skill support. This has caused a particular challenge to colleges as often they cannot offset the cost associated with providing this support by charging international fees. Students coming from European Union countries pay the same tuition fees as those from the United Kingdom. UKCISA (2008) has benchmarked the way in which colleges have responded to the challenges of an increasingly diverse and international student population and suggests that while there is consistency in the types of support services offered to students, they (UKCISA, 2008) suggest that further work is need to be done by colleges in order to increase the quality of the services offered.

Colleges will continue to be challenged by the issues of demographic change if the economy remains strong and migrant workers remain in the UK; however, a decline in the economy compounded by the decreasing value of sterling has made it less attractive to work in the UK. In addition countries are responding to the exodus of workers, by improving pay and conditions and therefore making it attractive for potential migrant workers to stay in their own countries Webb (2008), Taylor (2008). It is currently too early to establish whether the decline in migrant worker along with restrictions on the number of non European Union students allowed to enter the UK will mitigate the challenges colleges face in catering for an increasingly international student cohort.

This section of the chapter has explored two ideas, firstly, that economic globalisation does not directly impact on further education colleges rather it informs national thinking and policies. Secondly, the effect of demographic globalisation on colleges is more observable, and brings about challenges for college leadership teams of how best to support an increasing diverse student population.

The final section of this chapter looks in more detail at the way in which national policy is affecting leadership and management of further education colleges. This will be done by considering what is believed to be the most significant pieces of legalisation in chronological order.

The impact of national policy on leadership of further education colleges

Further education has changed significantly over the past twenty years from a local authority controlled system to one which has been managed centrally by the state. It has also evolved from what was traditionally considered to be 'craft' type provision, typically, construction and engineering, into one which today delivers curriculum in 15 different subject areas, Appendix A, and at different levels, Appendix B. In line with this the leadership of further education organisations has had to transform to accommodate the constantly changing landscape and the impact of this transformation is considered in this section.

Pre 1992 Further education

Prior to 1992 further education colleges came under the auspices of the local authority, and they provided support for finance, human resources, estates and premises; and quality improvement. The principal of a further education college was the chief academic officer whose main function was to ensure that teaching and learning was taking place and that academic standards were maintained. They had limited involvement in the business aspects of the college leaving much of this to the local authority. The Further and Higher Education Act (1992) changed all of this; it incorporated further education colleges out of local authority control into autonomous organisations, no longer reliant on local authorities to provide strategic direction in relation to the curriculum and support with business functions which meant that college principals became chief executives of multi-million pound businesses responsible for the management of both curriculum and support services. Although this provided autonomy to colleges, Bash and Coulby (1991) suggest that the conservative government were to use this act as a means of eroding the power of local authorities and centralising it through the creation of the Further Education Funding Council. This organisation was a national body accountable to parliament whose role was to administer a national funding scheme for all post-compulsory education in England.

The impact of the Further and Higher Education Act (1992) meant that the landscape of further education had changed forever and colleges had to quickly appoint staff with the specialist skills needed to manage a centrally imposed, formula-led funding methodology.

Post 1992 Further education

Following the 1992 Act there has been a piece of primary legislation relating to the education sector every year with the exception of 1995, 1999, 2001 and 2003. While not all of these applied to further education there were many elements which impacted on the role of leadership in further education colleges. The pieces of legalisation which will be focused on in this section are:

- **The Teaching and Higher Education Act (1998)** which introduced tuition fees for the first time for students undertaking higher education courses regardless of whether this was in a further education college or higher education institution, thus introducing competition and market forces in to student recruitment.
- **The Learning and Skills Act (2000)** which created a new centralised planning and funding body to oversee further education and impose a nationally consistent funding formal.
- **Further Education and Training Act (2007)** extended the powers of intervention of the Learning and Skills Council as well as introduced Foundation Degrees as an alternative vocational based route into higher education.
- **Apprenticeship Skills Children and Learning Act (2009)** fundamentally changed the further education landscape by dissolving the Learning and Skills Council and in its place created two new organisations both with the responsibility for funding further education.

All of these pieces of legalisation changed the context in which further education colleges operate and as a consequence of this the government had greater control over the curriculum than the local authority areas which the college serves. This section will explore some of the key elements of these pieces of legislation and how they have impacted on leadership of further education colleges.

The Teaching and Higher Education Act (1998) introduced a number of changes such as granting charitable status to colleges as well as the introduction of higher education tuition fees.

Granting charitable status ensured that colleges did not make a significant profit although legislation never defined what significant meant and any profits had to be reinvested back into the college. This was designed to maintain colleges' status as providing for the 'public good' rather than for profit. Goddard-Patel and Whitehead (2000) highlighted some cases where colleges invested in businesses not related to their core mission of providing education and training.

The second change that the 1998 act introduced also had an impact on the leadership of further education colleges because it meant that for the first time students commencing higher education programmes had to pay tuition fees regardless of whether they were being undertaken in further or higher education institutions. This posed a particular challenge for college leaders as they had to carefully consider their unique selling point when it came to marketing higher education courses in order not to price themselves out of the market. What this did was to push post-compulsory education further into a consumer based market where students made a choice and where they had to pay for higher education. Colleges quickly established strategic relationships with various universities in order to deliver higher education provision under the universities' name, hoping that the universities' reputation and 'brand' would be enough to attract and retain students.

The impact of this upon the leadership of colleges was that they had to establish their position in the market, ensuring that they had a unique selling point which would attract students. College leaders had to ensure that their marketing teams were producing publicity material which attracted their target audience but also the idea of the student experience became more prominent feature amongst leadership teams. No longer could colleges sit and wait for students to enrol on their courses. College leaders had to also consider the financial viability of the courses which they offered, particularly where tuition fees were being charged. Is it acceptable for courses to make a financial loss, or should some courses subsidise others in order to maintain a broad and balanced curriculum? It is questions like these which have to be addressed by leadership teams in an era when consumerism and tuition fees are becoming a more prominent feature of the further education sector.

As it can be seen the Teaching and Higher Education Act (1998) did bring about some changes however it was the Learning and Skills Act (2000) which again shifted the

further education landscape and was possibly the most significant piece of legislation to impact on leadership in further education since the Further and Higher Education Act (1992).

The Learning and Skills Act (2000) abolished the Further Education Funding Council and created the Learning and Skills Council whose remit was considerably wider than its predecessor's. The Learning and Skills Council not only administered the funding methodology previously managed by the Further Education Funding Council, it also had greater powers of intervention when it came to financial assurance, quality and performance management. The Act created schedule 96 and 97 which were two lists of qualifications approved for public funding. This allowed the state the flexibility to determine which qualifications to fund in order to meet the needs of the economy. The impact on leadership of colleges was that their perceived autonomy was nothing more than local delivers of a state run post-compulsory education system. College principals were required to regularly meet with officials of the Learning and Skills Council in order to discuss institutional performance and the organisations' plans for the following academic year, ensuring that there was synergy between the colleges' plans and those of the regional and national Learning and Skills Council. The Act also created a separate body for the inspection of post-19 education, the Adult Learning Inspectorate working alongside Ofsted in carrying out inspections in further education colleges. Further education colleges subsequently had to deal with up to three inspection bodies depending on their curriculum: the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education; Ofsted for 16-18 education and the Adult Learning Inspectorate for post-19 education. All of this strengthened the state's control and regulation over post-compulsory education.

The changes this piece of legislation introduced impacted on the leadership of colleges in that it changed the infrastructure which funds colleges thus providing greater powers to the Learning and Skills Council to determine the curriculum which colleges offered. College leaders had to ensure that the curriculum they offered was financially viable but that it also met the emerging government skills priorities.

The next important piece of legislation which followed was the Further Education and Training Act (2007) which provided greater powers of intervention to the Learning and Skills Council, allowing council officers to become corporation members of failing colleges, or for the council to direct college corporations to dismiss their principal,

individual corporation members or entire governing bodies. Watson (2011) states however that the Learning and Skills Council never exercised its powers of intervention under this act.

The act also allowed for further education colleges to apply to the Privy Council for Foundation Degree awarding powers although only three colleges had applied for such powers up to January 2011 (Hayes, 2011).

The final part of the act was the requirement that college principals had to be qualified either prior to appointment or within two years of gaining employment as a principal, a similar requirement to that of headteachers in schools. The Centre for Excellence in Leadership offered the Principals Qualifying Programme, which was then taken on by the Learning and Skills Improvement Service as a result of a merger. The programme was designed to develop principals' individual strategic leadership skills so that they could sustain improvements in the context of the constantly changing further education environment. The programme also sought to develop leaders as reflective practitioners, critically reviewing and self evaluating themselves within the context of the organisation. Finally the programme looked to develop understanding of leadership theories which would underpin and inform their thinking as they took up their principalship posts. This is the first time that college principals have been challenged about their ability to undertake the role. Shortly after the coalition government came into office in May 2010, they removed the requirement for principals to undertake this mandatory programme of training and no alternative requirements have been suggested so far (Hayes, 2010).

The Apprenticeship, Skills, Children and Learning Act (2009) was the most recent piece of legislation to affect leadership of further education colleges. The act dissolved the Learning and Skills Council and in its place created two organisations: The Young Peoples Learning Agency, which was established as a quango of the Department for Education, and the Skills Funding Agency which is part of the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills. The Skills Funding Agency has responsibility for funding post-19 education and training and the Young Peoples Learning Agency's role was to support local authorities in their responsibility for 16-18 education. What this meant was that further education colleges became the responsibility of local authorities which would fund and monitor their performance for the 16-18 elements of their work. The move was welcomed by local authorities and provided them with greater perceived influence over

further education provision within the local area. Local authorities had gained the expertise needed to manage further education colleges as a result of staff transferring to them following the break-up of the Learning and Skills Council. But this was short lived because in July 2010 the coalition government moved the responsibility for funding and performance management away from local authorities to the Young Peoples Learning Agency; however, local authorities still maintain the statutory responsibility for 16-18 education. The impact on leadership of further education colleges was that until this point college leadership was based on what Turner (1991) calls a pyramid structure, with single points of accountability.

The introduction of the Apprenticeship, Skills, Children and Learning Act (2009) further moved college leadership in to what Fidler (1997) and Sy and Cote (2004) describes as a matrix structure. Table 3 illustrate the funding and accountability of further education colleges and what this demonstrates is that colleges are accountable to two government departments. The impact on colleges is that there are different policies and regulations depending on which government department is funding the student. Typically a class will comprise of some students funded by the Department of Education and some by the Department of Business, Innovation and Skills.

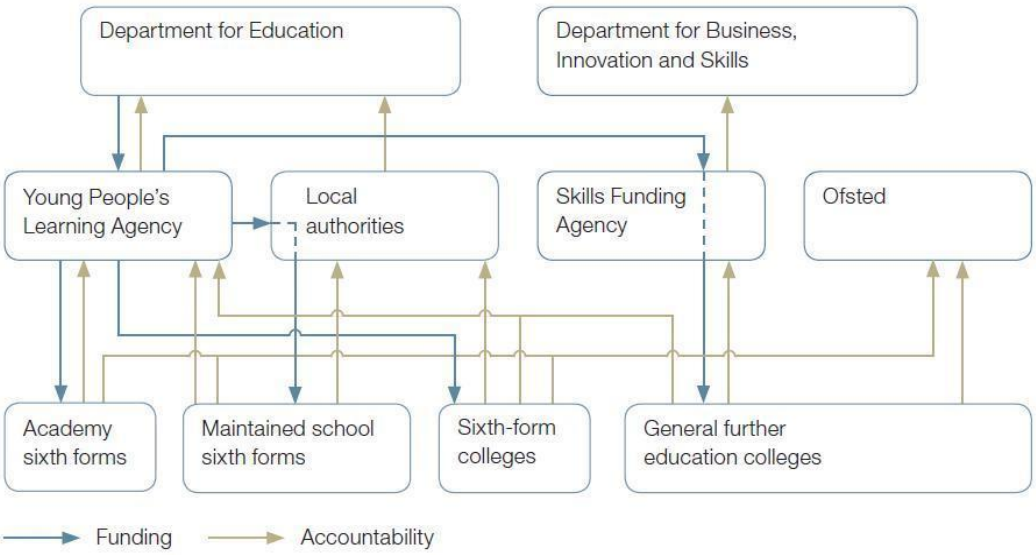

Figure 2: Funding and accountability of further education colleges (NAO, 2011)

Figure 2 illustrates just how complex the environment in which not only colleges but the entire further education sector has to work.

The concluding part of the act is the 'raising of the participation age' which requires students to stay in some form of education until the date of their 18th birthday[2]. The requirement is not that students stay in school, but participate in education at college, or undertake employment based training such as apprenticeships. The challenge for college leadership is less around those who are currently engaged in education and training, but instead on their ability to engage with those individuals who are currently not participating.

Conclusion

The first section of this chapter looked at various definitions of globalisation acknowledging that there are disparities between the views put forward by writers in this area. It was suggested that these views could be plotted on a continuum with Lauder et al (2006) holistic view at one end and Bottery's (2006) highly categorised at the other end.

The chapter then carried forward the ideas of economic and demographic globalisation being the primary forms of globalisation which affect further education colleges.

It demonstrated that economic globalisation informs national thinking which translates into government policy. These impact on further education colleges by requiring senior leadership teams to focus on responding to government led initiatives such as Train to Gain which came about as a result of the Leitch (2006) report which made recommendations about the skills needed for the country to remain economically competitive.

On the other hand, the impact of demographic globalisation is more visible on further education as college support services, particularly language and study skills, are stretched to meet the demands of an increasingly diverse international population.

[2] The requirement is that students stay in education until the date of their 18th birthday, not the end of the academic year in which they are 18, meaning a student could leave part the way through the academic year.

The final element of this chapter chronicled the key pieces of legislation impacting on colleges since they were incorporated out of local authority control in 1992. What was demonstrated was that colleges have been challenged by an increasing amount of state led bureaucracy and regulation contrary to the perceived autonomy which they believed they had gained. There was a clear shift of power from local authorities which were able to respond to local demand from students to an increasingly regulated and centrally managed system. This is exactly what Fukuyama's (1992) idea of market orientated authoritarianism encapsulates.

Recent ministerial announcements from Gibb (2010) following the introduction of the Apprenticeship Skills Children and Learning Act (2009) have signalled a reduction in the centrally imposed bureaucracy and regulation which colleges have had to deal with although it is too early to ascertain the full impact.

The way in which legislation impacts on leadership in further education colleges will form part of the empirical data collated through the interviews with principals and presented in chapter six on this thesis and links to the first research question on the current context of leadership in further education.

The next chapter considers whether sustainable leadership models are appropriate in developing individuals and increasing institutional capacity.

Chapter 3: Sustainable leadership

Introduction

There has been a number of published reports (Frearson, 2003; Clancy, 2005l Colinson and Colinson, 2005) suggesting that there is a chronic shortage of individuals with the necessary skills and experiences pursuing principalship. Chapter two considered the context in which further education colleges operate and in particular how economic and demographic globalisation informs national thinking and subsequently government policy, and the impact on educational leadership.

This, the second literature review chapter, considers what role sustainable leadership can play in addressing the leadership challenges facing further education colleges.

In order to achieve this, the chapter will first look at the current interest in sustainable leadership. Then a critique of current sustainable leadership frameworks from leading contributors in this field will be considered looking at not only their composition, but their suitability for the further education sector. Finally the chapter will consider the implications of sustainable leadership for further education colleges particularly focusing on whether existing models are transferrable to the college sector.

This chapter starts to address the following research question within this thesis:

1. What elements of current models of sustainable leadership should further education colleges be implementing?

The empirical fieldwork presented in chapters six and seven will also look to address this question, by seeking the views of participating principals on the ideas of sustainable leadership as a concept which could be implemented within their institutions. This chapter does not suggest that institutions are not developing leadership capacity of their staff. Indeed, the Learning and Skills Improvement Service (2008) suggest that 44% of all further education colleges (171 institutions) have between 2003 and 2008 participated in some form of management development from the portfolio of programmes offered by the Centre for Excellence in Leadership.

But as the TDA (2006) and Davies and Davies (2011) suggest participation in management development is just one form of development which needs to be part of a wider strategy for organisational development. Both Davies and Davies (2011) and the TDA (2006) propose a range of mechanisms which institutions can use when developing staff, such as mentoring, work shadowing and participation in institution wide initiatives. While it is not proposed that these are explored in detail as Davies and Davies (2011) already do this, it is important to note that leadership development is more than just attendance on a course. Kambil (2010) reminds us that individuals need to be given the time and space to implement newly acquired skills if they are going to be of lasting benefit, and organisations have a responsibility in creating an environment whereby these skills can be honed.

As alluded to already and noted in chapter one, a number of reports have highlighted a chronic shortage of individuals wanting to become principals of further education colleges. These reports included:

- Frearson (2003) who showed that 23.6% of college leaders were aged over 50 in 1997 and by 2002 this figure had risen to 42.7%;

- Clancy (2005) suggesting that 60% of currently serving principals would have retired by the end of 2010 and that there remains a lack of individuals with the necessary skills to fill these vacating positions;

- Colinson and Colinson (2005) who highlighted a series of challenges facing institutions in the post-compulsory sector, one of the concerns being attracting the next generation of leaders;

- The Centre for Excellence in Leadership (2005) who suggested that much of the crisis facing further education colleges is as a result of the 'baby boomer' generation now approaching retirement, resulting in an unprecedented turnover in college principals. They go on to argue that this phenomenon is institution wide, but more acute at senior levels within organisations.

Acknowledging that these reports are becoming slightly dated, the situation does not appear to be getting any better. Bonella's (2011) figures which are based on the 2009/10 academic year show that 64% of college principals were aged 50 or over. This represents a 21.3% increase in the eight years since Frearson's (2003) report. College corporations are facing challenging times, as this looming shortage continues to put a pressure on college recruitment panels to appoint an individual to the vacant principal post. But it is not just the lack of suitably skilled and experienced individuals that are needed, but also how do colleges make the post of principal attractive. Hargreaves and Fink (2006) suggest that increases in job stress, inadequate levels of funding and an increasingly diverse student population are all contributing to a lack of individuals seeking out principalship opportunities. Although principals participating in this study had a slightly different view on how they perceive their role, a theme that will be picked up in chapter seven. Fink (2010) however argues that the shortage of individuals pursuing senior leadership positions is due to the current generation valuing family life over work and their desire to maintain a healthy work life balance. However, from a college corporation's perspective, they need to ensure that they have a strategy in place for managing the increasingly likelihood of not being able to appoint to a vacant principals post.

Attempts have been made by the Labour government to improve the skills of the further education workforce, through the Further Education and Skills Act 2007, by mandating incoming principals to complete the Principals Qualifying Programme, within two years of commencing principalship. The programme was designed to provide a range of skills to enable better governance, which had been seen as a weakness (Foster, 2007). The aims of the programme include developing greater critical awareness amongst principals and developing the necessary skills to enable principals to clearly articulate the vision and mission of the organisation. As mentioned in chapter two the coalition government has since removed this mandatory requirement to undertake the training and the organisation previously responsible for delivering the Principals Qualifying Programme is, at the time of writing, being wound down. But unlike its schools counterpart, the National Qualification Programme for Headship (NPQH), which was a pre-appointment programme, the Principals Qualifying Programme was a post-appointment programme which brought

about its own challenges in terms of timeliness in undertaking such a programme while trying to establish oneself as the newly appointed principal.

As a result of the challenges in attracting appropriately skilled individuals into leadership positions, Hargreaves and Fink (2006) proposed that sustainable leadership could provide a suitable mechanism to enable institutions to continue to deliver their responsibilities to both staff and students during the intervening period resulting from one principal leaving and prior to a new principal being appointed and subsequently commencing in the role. Their model suggests that by adopting the philosophy and principles of sustainable leadership organisational capacity will be enhanced through the development of individuals and an alternative way of working to those currently adopted by schools and colleges.

Why Sustainable Leadership?

Before looking at the detail of sustainable leadership it is worthwhile spending some time looking at how leadership in further education colleges has changed and why there is such current interest in sustainable leadership over other management theories. Only once this has been understood can the process of exploring current thinking on existing models begin.

Leadership of further education colleges has changed significantly with many of the principals who are now approaching retirement commencing their careers at a time when further education colleges were under the auspices of the local education authority, and when principalship was contextualised as the chief academic officer, accountable to the Local Authority. However, as part of the government's desire to stimulate a market principles approach to education whereby colleges were free from the constraints of local authorities and able to respond to the changing needs of the economy, they were incorporated into independent autonomous organisations, as a result of the Further and Higher Education Act (1992). Indeed the process of incorporation was the end product of a series of protracted processes rather than a single event (Simmons, 2009). As a result of the events leading up to incorporation the role of the principal had also changed, reflecting the shift in state policy and

ideology (Ball, 2009). As the role of the principal evolved so did its scope, shifting from chief academic officer to one of chief executive, assuming responsibility for business functions previously undertaken by the local authority, such as finance, human resources and estates.

As a result of this unprecedented period of change, Deem (1998) suggests that principals found solace through the adoption of management practices and values more commonly found in the private sector. The early 1980s had brought about New Managerialism with its assumptions that through the adoption of its ideologies around increased productivity, technological innovation, worker compliance and managers' freedom to manage (Pollitt, 1990), organisations will deliver greater levels of economies and efficiencies. This was believed to be important to the government, at the time, as they wanted to demonstrate that their programme of institutional autonomy – freeing organisations from the state, either through nationalisation or freedom from local authorities created a more efficient and effective organisation. However, the ideas of New Managerialism are not particularly new, as their routes can be traced back to Weber's model of rationalisation (Morrision, 2006) or Ritzer's (1996) McDonalisation theory. But to achieve these efficiencies, colleges had to implement a package of measures which included:

- strict financial management
- efficient use of resources
- extensive use of performance data
- development of the free market economies and consumerism
- creation of a flexible workforce.

In order to implement the ideologies of new managerialism, in colleges, Harper (2000) observed an influx of specialist managers being employed, with skills in finance, implementation of the national funding methodology, quality and performance. Randle and Brandy (1997) suggest that as a result of the external demands placed on institutions these new emerging managers brought with them managerial values, akin to the expectations of new managerial philosophies, which differed from the values of academic staff. This dichotomy Elliot (1996) calls the

clash between ‘students centred pedagogic culture’ versus ‘the managerialism culture of managers’. This dichotomy between the values of academic and managers is also supported by Wilkinson (2007) who argues that the introduction of managerial practices and ideologies into education has eroded the influence and power of the educational professional. This was also reflected by Collinson (2009) who suggested that colleges were ‘branches’ of a national organisation, albeit as KPMG (2009) state that these ‘branches’ were in their own right multi-million pound organisations with the principal being on par to the chief executive. At the same time principals were reflecting on their own development needs having assumed the additional responsibilities which came from incorporation. Lowe and Gayle (2010) note that a legacy of early managerialism, caused principals to perceive their professional development primarily in terms of the acquisition of generic management skills necessary to run the organisation. Although at the time Coopers and Lybrand (1985) work on leadership developing in business found that few organisations saw the value of management development and its positive impact on competitiveness, instead choosing to view it as a cost to the organisation. This perception of development being concentrated around the needs of the principal does perpetuate the idea of the ‘lone leader’ (Harris, 2013) being at the top of the organisational hierarchy. But as leadership of further education colleges has become more complex as acknowledged by Hargreaves and Fink (2006), the need to spread leadership around became greater. Southworth (2009) promotes the idea of distributed leadership as a way of developing capacity within organisations which indirectly provided a means of improving the skills of individuals newly involved leadership through the adoption of distributed leadership practices. This means that leadership skills can be developed at all levels of the organisational hierarchy and does not fixate on one particular role within the organisation. By adopting a culture of distributed leadership it is conceivable that individuals may wish to become more involved in leadership opportunities which helps to create greater capacity rather than focusing on those individuals who have explicitly stated their desire to progress into more senior roles. Therefore distributed leadership potentially has a key role to play in developing organisational capacity and as will be illustrated later this can be extended to sit under the umbrella of sustainable leadership. With this in mind there appears to be a dichotomy: distributed leadership with its ability to contribute to leadership development at all levels of the

organisational hierarchy, and the focus of this thesis which considers leadership at a specific level within the organisation – the principal. While the focus of this thesis is indeed on the role of the principal and middle curriculum managers and particularly how organisations can support those who aspire to principals it is important to acknowledge that leadership is not attributed to one particular post. Leadership happens at all levels of the organisation. However, the constraints of this thesis are that there has to focus on one particular role in this case and as the principal is the accountable officer of the organisation it seems appropriate that the role of the principal be further explored. Harris (2013) highlights the importance of leadership being second only teaching and learning in terms of impact, and acknowledges that leadership can happen at all levels within the organisation, so it is important to acknowledge that in other individuals are involved in leading colleges and that leadership should not be considered solely in terms of a single individual.

What is important is that college leaders need to reflect on and address the challenges they face going forward in order to develop the next generation of leaders ensuring that those who aspire to principalship are adequately equipped with the skills and attributes necessary to be successful in the political context that further education colleges operate. But if government rhetoric is to be believed the current government is sympathetic to the ideologies of new managerialism. This was illustrated by Gibb (2010) who announced new freedoms for colleges, most significantly the removal of the mandatory requirement for newly appointed principals to complete the Principals Qualifying Progamme, enabling institutions to recruit the best person for the post. This appears to be a misnomer as colleges always could recruit the best person for the post and indeed from outside of the sector, acknowledging Thorne and Pellant's (2007) view that institutions should 'hire for attitude and train for whatever'. But the announcements about the Principals Qualifying Programme do nothing towards combating the core issues of how to ensure that there are sufficient individuals with the necessary skills and experiences to become the next generation of principals. Davies and Davies (2011) argue for creating an environment which enables talent, however it is defined, to thrive. In order to achieve this they propose a six stage model, what they define as the 'talent architecture' which enables schools, but possibly colleges, to:

1. Identify key strategic and operational targets
2. Articulate critical staffing implications
3. Indentify talent demands
4. Evaluate talent availability
5. Develop a talent pool
6. Deploy talent to leadership roles and challenges

This proposed talent architecture is to some extent a strategy with largely measureable outcomes and again like distributed leadership it can sit under the umbrella of sustainable leadership. There is nothing in this theory that is incompatible with the ideas of sustainable leadership; the issue is the extent to which Davies and Davies' (2011) architecture actually recultures the organisation, Fullan (2001) or whether this is another top-down policy initiative that institutions need to implement.

Therefore if leadership is not attributed to one particular role within the organisation nor it is particularly advantageous to perceive it as an additional activity that needs to be done, then there is a case that a holistic approach to developing organisational capacity is needed, one which may possibly requires a change in culture. As Hargreaves and Fink (2006) state, sustainable leadership will not bring about quick wins, as it is greater than an one individual within the organisation, instead requiring an investment in time to develop all leaders, at all levels, which 'yields good value for money'.

This part of the chapter has looked at the challenges facing college leadership as a result of changing external pressures on institutions coupled with the need to develop the next generation of leaders. It argued that commonly used management theories such as distributed leadership are encompassed within the philosophy of sustainable leadership. It is also suggests that the development of staff could be a more holistic approach rather than a specific strategy which requires implementation. The next part of the chapter provides a brief overview of current models of sustainable leadership, before looking at potential challenges in implementing these models in general further education colleges.

Current perspectives on Sustainable Leadership

Prior to comparing various models of sustainable leadership currently available, it would be worthwhile exploring a definition of what sustainable leadership actually is.

Horner (2004) suggests that originally leadership was defined by the traits, behaviours and qualities that an individual exhibits, but acknowledges that the flaw in these early notions of leadership was to ignore the environmental factors which can influence the effectiveness of a leader. Therefore as a philosophy one needs to adopt an approach to leadership which involves the complexities of an individual's behaviour against the backdrop of the context in which they operate. This approach is grounded in the area of Trait Theories of leadership such as those advocated by Thorne and Pellant (2007) who suggest that there should be a greater focus on behaviours and attitudes of leaders rather than on technical skills. As chapter two illustrated the further education sector is particularly complex with continued expectations placed on colleges to implement centrally imposed policies as the government seeks to maintain the country's economic prosperity (Leitch, 2006) in a globally competitive environment. This chapter could follow the convention and look at specific models of leadership which encompass change management, or motivational theory or leadership styles, but instead takes a holistic approach to leadership contextualised through the ideas of sustainability rather than the application of a specific leadership theory to principalship. In order to achieve this, sustainable leadership has been adopted for two primary reasons. First, as this chapter will illustrate many of the elements proposed in the various models of sustainable leadership can sit alongside individual leadership theories. Sustainable leadership does not specify how a particular activity is enacted, as this will largely depend on the local context in which the organisation operates, and the individuals involved. Also, this chapter is certainly not claiming that sustainable leadership is a replacement to existing leadership theories. The second are the claims made that sustainable leadership can offer a philosophy which offers a depth, breath and length to leadership enabling institutions to move beyond micromanagement to a position whereby organisations can respond to external challenges and develop leaders who are equipped to lead future schools and colleges while preserving the past and maintaining the institution's purpose.

It is worthwhile noting that sustainable leadership as a concept is in its infancy, with the earliest literature dating back only to 2003 (Hargreaves, 2013) although as already mentioned the elements of sustainable leadership have their origins grounded in existing leadership theory and this will be highlighted throughout this chapter. Existing literature on sustainable leadership focuses solely on the compulsory phases of education and has yet to be applied to the post-compulsory sector; however, the concepts explored in subsequent sections of this chapter will determine the extent to which the elements of and philosophy underpinning existing models are transferable either entirely or in part to general further education colleges.

A challenge also exists in understanding the terminology used: sustainability has connotations more frequently associated with ecology, the environment and conserving resources. There is a considerable body of literature on the ideas of 'leadership for sustainability' which focuses on how the leadership of organisations preserve the natural environment in which they operate, and one should not confuse this with sustainable leadership.

While it is not the intention to go through each model of sustainable leadership in an exhaustive manner, a brief overview will be provided out looking at the key elements of each along with similarities between different models.

Two of the earliest writers on sustainable leadership are Hargreaves and Fink (2006) who argue that schools are failing to attract high quality leaders into key positions. They go onto argue that this is primarily due to increased job stress, inadequate levels of funding and an increasingly diverse student population. What Hargreaves and Fink (2006) do not suggest is whether these issues have been compounded by an aging population amongst current leaders. Although the Centre for Excellence in Leadership (2005) and Magnus (2009) both suggest that an aging population is contributing to this shortage. Fink (2010) offers a slightly different perspective suggesting that the individuals who would form the next generation of senior leaders of education are valuing family life rather than work, favouring to maintain a healthy work-life balance.

Hargreaves and Fink (2006) argue that sustainable leadership can support the development of organisational capacity and the development of individuals, but acknowledges that sustainability of leadership is greater than any one individual within the organisation. Instead they advocate the use of sustainable leadership as a means by which all individuals can be developed, although this requires an investment in time by the organisation. Davies and Davies (2011) note the importance of creating an environment which enables talent to thrive, while Kambil (2010) reminds us that when planning and implementing a strategy to develop individuals, whether explicitly or implicitly, as in sustainable leadership, the responsibility needs to be on both parties, the organisation and the individual and that development cannot be a one way process. Hargreaves and Fink (2006) argue that a sustainable leadership strategy will 'yield good value for money' but caution that it is not appropriate for institutions seeking short term dividends instead seeking to secure the long term trajectory of the organisation. By adopting any model of sustainable leadership, organisations are challenged in terms of their ability to foster a culture which enables sustainability to survive, particularly when it has the potential to be at odds with government policy and the need to have short term measurable success. This is where further education colleges are more likely to struggle with the philosophy of sustainable leadership compared to the compulsory sector. This is mainly as a result from the shift of emphasis from one of pedagogic values to one which epitomises managerialist values more commonly found in the private sector. This does not mean that sustainable leadership is incompatible with further education; it means that colleges are going to have to think about the way they implement sustainable leadership models in order to secure the best outcome for their particular situation.

Hargreaves and Fink (2006) offered a seven principle model for sustainable leadership, Table 3, for institutions seeking to develop a sustainable culture within their organisation. What they propose are a series of elements which together form their sustainable leadership model. All of the elements are predicated on a number of common themes, which will be explored, rather than the individual component elements. These themes seemingly focus on the long term trajectory of the institution rather than short term gratification as well as a moral dimension to leadership.

The first prevailing theme arising from Hargreaves and Fink's (2006) model is around the long term trajectory and security of the institution. This is evident in their first component part of *Depth* which focuses on long-term strategies for achievement. They do not articulate what this achievement might look like and indeed it will possibly vary from one institution to another. This is one of the features of the sustainable leadership models in that they are sufficiently flexible to enable institutions to implement the framework within their own context. Part of securing this achievement is the need to balance the long term objectives of the organisation with the need to maintain a focus on short term strategies such as achieving internally set or externally imposed performance indicators. It is important that the short term strategies contribute to the long term objectives of the organisation otherwise one could question the value of the particular short term target. However, externally set performance measures are often difficult to avoid as they are commonly used as a measure of institutional success (Ashton and Green, 1996) and are published as part of national performance tables. While both Ashton and Green (1996) and Wolf (2004) debate the value of performance targets and whether they are merely a mechanism by which government can measure the impact of their own policies (Bird et. al., 2005). It is important to maintain a focus on how short term strategies contribute to the long term success of the organisation, as particularly Ball's (2007) ideas of consumerism increases expectations of immediate results become the norm and society remains insufficiently concerned with long term achievements of the institution. Neither society nor the government are particularly interested in waiting for long term aspirations of an organisation to materialise and through the creation of a market driven education system have promoted a consumer led mentality whereby short term gratification is sought. It is unclear whether this need for short term gratification is an unexpected consequence of the state's desire to adopt and promote the market in order to drive up quality (Ward and Eden, 2009).

Principle	Name	Summary
1	Depth	Leadership for learning and caring for others. Deep learning, not superficial testing and narrowly defined achievements.
2	Length	It preserves and advances the most valuable aspects of life over time, from one leader to the next.

3	Breadth	It develops and depends on the leadership of others, not just one person at the top.
4	Justice	It does not steal the best students/teachers from surrounding institutions; it does not prosper at the expensive of other institutions. It collaborates.
5	Diversity	Learn from diversity, creating social inclusion and cohesion.
6	Resourcefulness	Recognise, reward and develop talent from early on in an individual's career.
7	Conservation	Honour and learn from the past to create a better future.

Table 3: Component parts of Hargreaves and Fink (2006) 7 principle model

Continuing the ideas of long term security of the organisation, Hargreaves and Fink (2006) propose an element called *Conserves* where they suggest that institutions need to acknowledge and learn from the past, in order to secure the future. The application of this 'conserves' concept can be seen in what Kambil (2010) suggests for developing future leaders. Kambil (2010) proposes that aspiring leaders need to ensure that they cultivate the traits and skills necessary to pursue senior leadership positions and the current generation of leaders assisting those individuals in reaching the top. Albeit in this case acknowledging the present in order to secure the future. The point is further reinforced by Davis and Davis (2011) who propose that leaders model the behaviours they require from others and if one leads well, then success in the present can be assured, while future success will be secured if others are enabled to learn the principles of leading well.

The second theme arising out of Hargreaves and Fink's (2006) model one whereby sustainable leadership is grounded in a moral dimension. In so much as the elements of *Breadth* and *Justice* are predicated on the ideas that leadership is greater than one individual instead favouring to develop others. This could be through the adoption of a distributed leadership strategy as previously discussed. This illustrates a case where an existing leadership theory can comfortably sit under the auspices of sustainable leadership.

Hargreaves and Fink (2006) also discuss the idea of *Justice* which they define as institutions not actively completing for learners or staff from neighbouring institutions. Possibly one of the more difficult elements to implement in its entirety as it relies on others, external to the organisation, subscribing to the same philosophy.

With government promoting a consumer led post-compulsory education system with no prescribed catchment areas for the recruitment of students, unlike local authority maintained schools, financial security is reliant on colleges recruiting sufficient students to ensure the economic viability of courses. This is further compounded by a nationally imposed funding methodology that intrinsically links students to funding: so if a student moves from one institution to another, so does the funding (Linford, 2009). Ball (2007) suggests that the creation of a consumer driven market is not new and has essentially being a product of incorporation, but as Bottery (2000) states that the restructuring of education has been in response to economic and market imperatives. But Bottery (2000) goes on to warn that nation states must not become servants of global markets. This potentially makes the ideas *Justice* incompatible with the further education sector due to the consumerist nature of the environment. To enable *Justice* to be compatible one would be looking to Fullan's (2001) notion of reculturing beyond the boundaries of a single institution to ensure that all organisations adopted the same philosophy.

In 2009 Hargreaves refined his model to add three additional elements to the existing seven (Hargreaves, 2009), these were that sustainable leadership should be; *an Activist; Engaging with the community and Forging Alliances.* These ideas link in with the existing themes already discussed, such as being an activist, which Hargreaves describes as a being vigilant – 'scanning' the contextual environment to monitor any potential signs of deterioration, which links into the ideas around securing the long term future of the institution. Likewise working with the community and forging alliances align to the ideas presented around ideas of collaboration and justice which is becoming increasing important particularly to ensure that the statutory responsibility of local authorities around securing an appropriate breadth of high quality provision are fulfilled. Institutions working together to deliver provision is not only of benefit to the local authority but helps to ensure viable numbers of students for institutions offering minority subjects. But a recent announcement by Hannock (2012) has enabled colleges, from September 2013, to enrol full time learners aged fourteen to sixteen. It is unclear at this stage whether this emerging government policy will force institutions back to an era of competition.

Davies (2009) has also developed a model of sustainable leadership and defines the concept as:

'... being made up of the key factors that underpin the longer-term development of a school. It builds a leadership culture based on moral purpose which provides success which is accessible to all.'

Like Hargreaves and Fink's (2006) model, Davies (2009) model shares many similarities particularly around the long term security of the organisation, and being underpinned by a moral and values based approach to leadership. Both models are considered only in the context of the compulsory sector with no reference made to post-compulsory. It is not the intension to go through each of the component elements but to highlight key themes arising from Davies' model. Table four illustrates the full model.

Principle	Name
1	Outcomes not just output
2	Balancing short and long-term objectives
3	Process not plans
4	Passion
5	Personal humility and professional will
6	Strategic timing and strategic abandonment
7	Building capacity and creating involvement
8	Development of strategic measures of success
9	Building in sustainability

Table 4: Component parts of Davies (2009) sustainable leadership model

Like Hargreaves and Fink (2006), Davies (2009) explores the idea of long term success of the organisation through outcomes not just outputs, alluding to the successive external measures of performance and ensuring that short term strategies contribute to the long term objectives of the organisation. Davies (2009) also identifies the idea of 'building in sustainability' and goes on to argue that far too

much of what happens in education, referring primarily to the compulsory sector is focused on maintainability, instead of promoting a culture of achievement. On the other hand, Fullan (2001) notes that changing culture often necessitates organisations to reculture, whereby the culture of an organisation is transformed from one state to another, which requires a long term commitment from of all those involved. Davies (2009) defines creating a culture of achievement as schools moving from their current position, to an improved state. While Schmoker (2000) states that continuous improvement is of strategic importance to all institutions, Davies (2009) doesn't really articulates this to the same degree as Schmoker, whereas Hargreaves and Fink's (2006) idea of conservation better captures the ideas underpinning continuous improvement, in terms of a preservation of the past, which should be used to inform the future developments of the institution, an idea which is not dissimilar to the philosophy which underpins action research (Bell, 2006). This focus on continuous improvement while there is no doubt it is important in all sectors of education, is possibly more prevalent in further education. While Ofsted remains the key stakeholder in relation to standards, the funding agencies are axiomatically responsible through their Minimum Levels of Performance indicators. This enables the funding agencies to withdraw public funding to a college if the institution's courses continue to fall below the nationally agreed level. This is independent of the institution's Ofsted grade. Therefore the fundamental notion of continuous improvement is, for many institutions, a short term objective (Hargreaves and Fink, 2006; Davies, 2009) as failure of further education colleges to meet these floor standards could financially penalise institutions, a situation that is unique to the further education sector.

In direct contrast to what has been discussed already around ideas of distributed leadership fitting comfortably under Hargreave and Fink's (2006) model, Davies' (2009) identifies a component he calls 'strategic abandonment', suggesting that decisions need to be made, usually by the headteacher, regarding priorities and activities that need to be pursued and those that should be abandoned in order to make way for new ones. The introduction of this idea of strategic abandonment in Davies (2009) model maybe as a result of the model being contextualised in the compulsory sector where the notion of strategic abandonment may be more appropriate for

schools with their smaller workforce, typically averaging 97 staff in secondary and 23 in primary schools (DfE, 2010a) and their perceived lack of autonomy. This is were the post-compulsory sector can afford to adopt a different approach, in part due to the size of the workforce within the organisation, on average 646 staff (LSIS, 2012) and while there is still a role for strategic abandonment, a greater emphasis can be placed on 'strategic distribution' (Fink, 2005; Day and Schmidt, 2007). This is where activities of potential strategic significance are distributed to leaders further down the organisational hierarchy. There are three advantages of this approach: first, a simultaneous number of initiatives can be researched and developed potentially accelerating institutional development and improvement; the second being the development of individual staff capacity and capability while promoting within the organisation a culture of sustainable leadership. The third and in some ways the most important is the idea of developing trust amongst the staff. Senior leaders need to develop and demonstrate that they trust their managers and one way of achieving this is through the use of strategic distribution as a means of empowering individuals and allowing them to take responsibility for and being part of the decision making process within the college. As the findings of the empirical work illustrate middle managers felt that they had very little scope to be involved in the college's decision making process.

This notion of sustainable leadership incorporating the idea of distributed leadership is new and not explicitly afforded in existing models. Embedding strategic distribution as a component element illustrates the concept that sustainable leadership should be a holistic approach to organisational and individual development rather than organisational development concentrated around the leadership team. It also further supports the original claim that while sustainable leadership as a framework remains in its infancy it is grounded in existing leadership theories.

This chapter has thus so far examined models from Hargreave, Fink and Davies, three leading thinkers on sustainable leadership. What these models illustrate is while there are similarities in their component parts, they are very school centric and the idiosyncrasies of the further education sector suggest that there are elements that are not fully compatible with the further education sector. Other models of sustainable

leadership have been developed in the intervening period between Hargreaves and Fink's first ideas on sustainable leadership in 2003 and the subsequent publication of their seven stage model in 2006 and Davies' 2009 model; these include Fullan's (2005) *Leadership and Sustainability* model and Hill's (2006) *Leadership That Lasts* model. Table five details the component parts of both Hills and Fullan's models and what this table illustrates are the similarities in these models with those already considered.

Hargreaves and Fink (2006)		**Hill (2006)**	**Fullen**	**Davies (2009)**
Depth		Believe in the power and purpose of learning	Public Service with a moral purpose	Builds capacity of staff
Length		Want the best for all young people	Commitment to changing context at all levels	Strategic Abandonment
Breadth		Command authority and use it wisely	Capacity building through networks	Consolidates
Justice		Share and foster leadership	Intelligent accountability and capacity building and vertical relationships	Builds long-term objective from short-term goals
Diversity		Build and sustain a learning community	Deep Learning	Diversity
Resourcefulness		Practice accountability	Dual commitment to short and long-term results	Conserves
Conservation		Balance long and short-term goals	Cyclical energising	
Activist	*Additions from Hargreaves (2009)*	Renew themselves	Long lever of leadership	
Engaging with the community		Work closely with governors		
Forging alliances		Communicate clearly and consistently		

Table 5: comparison of the four main writers on sustainable leadership

[a] Additions from Hargreaves (2009)

What table five illustrates is that the models presented are all underpinned by the same themes that have already been explored. Notably, that sustainable leadership is predicated on the idea of morals and values based approaches to leadership, developing the whole organisation in a holistic manner and not focusing on short term gratification through performance indicators. While Ashton and Green (1996) debate the value of performance indicators the government remains committed to their use (Business, Innovation and Skills, 2010). This is going to challenge further education colleges who are rooted in a target driven mentality promoted from central government. This is not to suggest that colleges should not be considering the adoption of a sustainable leadership model, more so schools and colleges operate in differing environments with different political and economic contexts.

So while there might be synergy between the vision of further education and the values promoted through sustainable leadership there is a dichotomy between the target driven culture of further education and the holistic developmental approaches proposed by sustainable leadership. This does not mean that they are not compatible simply that some elements of existing sustainable leadership models will require a longer period of time both to implement fully and to reap the benefits. For example, the shift from a culture of competition to one of collaboration is not insurmountable but may require a catalyst, possibly in the form of the local authority as the organisation having statutory responsibility for ensuring that there is sufficient high quality education for young people under their jurisdiction. Yet this shift from competition to collaboration is going to remain a challenge while the government continues to stimulate a market driven approach to education.

So far this chapter has explored a number of themes arising from existing models of sustainable leadership illustrating the similarities underpinning them while also acknowledging that this is not a replacement to existing leadership theories which can sit under the philosophy of sustainable leadership. This chapter has also highlighted the fact that sustainable leadership is in its infancy and emerging models being an extension of those that already exist.

Implications for the general further education college sector

Many of the ideas already presented by commentators on sustainable leadership are general to education. For example, the contribution that short term goals make to the long term objectives of the organisation and the need to balance the two are important regardless of the phase of education, particularly when developing the vision of the organisation and distilling the strategic plan from it. But there are some aspects of existing models which are role specific such as in Hill's (2006) model who's element '*working with the governors*' is a function more closely associated with the head of the institution. Given the different political and economic context that further education colleges operate in compared to schools, there is a case to suggest an adapted version of existing sustainable leadership models specifically for further education colleges.

Adopting the same guiding principles that others have adopted, any model of sustainable leadership for further education colleges needs to be based on securing the long term future of the organisation while ensuring that the model is underpinned by a model and values based approach to leadership.

Therefore a model will need to ensure, like others, that there is a balance between short term goals and long term objectives. A non phase related element adopting the same position to those of Hargreaves and Fink (2006) and Davies (2009) that all activities should contribute to the long term objectives of the organisation, which should, in turn help the organisation fulfil its vision and mission.

Another element of a proposed framework is *building the capacity of staff* within the organisation. Byham et. al., (2002) and Cohn et. al., (2007) argue for the positive benefits of developing leaders from within the organisation, although caution is needed as there are times when external leadership provides a much needed impetus. But as Kambil (2010) notes the responsibility for developing individuals is both that of the organisation and the individual. Levi (2006) argues that this should not be just individuals doing training on an ad-hoc basis but must be part of an organisations strategic plan and succession plans. TDA (2006) suggest that this development might extend to also include shadowing other colleagues, either internally, externally or

outside of the sector in order to develop new ideas and ways of working. This links into Davies and Davies (2011) idea around a 'talent architecture' for the development of individuals from within the organisation. This would reinforce Thorne and Pellant's (2007) view that institutions should 'hire for attitude and train for whatever' but this would only work if there was a shared responsibility as described by Kambil (2010). Closely linked to this is s*trategic distribution*, encompassing the philosophy of distributed leadership (Southworth, 2009) in order to empower individuals at all levels of the organisational hierarchy so that they can develop their own experience and capability and apply the leadership skills and techniques which have been learnt as part of training programmes. This is a key difference between existing models of sustainable leadership which propose the notion of strategic abandonment (Davies, 2009), whereas the suggestion here is to promote strategic distribution as a means of empowering staff within the organisation in a safe environment. Conceivably this might be achieved through project work either driven by external changes in government policy, or internally through challenges which the institution may be facing. Ellis and Phelps (2000) argue that senior leaders within the organisation must create the necessary conditions so that staff are provided with the time, space and authority to be able to undertake these activities and not simply a 'bolt-on' to an individual's existing responsibilities. King (2004) states that these 'projects' must be based on real challenges which the institution faces if the maximum benefits are to be achieved. With staff feeling empowered to do this work and feeling that the work is valued both, by their managers and by others within the organisation and that they are making a measurable difference to the work of the college. There are institutional challenges in achieving this, in particular facilitating the time necessary for individuals to take on additional projects when institutions have been driven down the route of seeking organisational efficiencies as highlighted by Randle and Brady (1997). One possible solution maybe that groups of staff collaborate on specific initiatives, reinforcing the collaboration rather than competition element of the sustainable leadership model, if it is envisaged that large amounts of time are necessary. The challenge with strategic distribution is balancing aspiration of engaging staff in a range of initiatives with the immediate needs of the college. Maybe a phased introduction could be considered by institutions in order to maintain the

balance instead of every member of the middle and senior leadership team embarking on projects simultaneously.

The next component is *Consolidates* and like Hargreaves and Fink's (2006) element of *Justice* the debate around this has been well rehearsed. The various glimmers of hope that have been afforded to further education around collaboration and strategic partnerships have largely disappeared. The government's diploma programme provided an opportunity for schools and colleges to collaborate in the joint delivery of curriculum but few achieved this effectively and the qualifications were soon withdrawn. The Apprenticeship Skills Children and Learning Act (2009) changed the climate in which further education operates by giving the strategic responsibility for sixteen to eighteen education to local authorities. But after years of the government encouraging free market principles and using competition as a means of improving quality though consumerism, local authorities would have little impact in changing this inherent distrust amongst education providers. While the idea of giving local authorities the responsibility for sixteen to eighteen education seems noble, with all the rhetoric around being able to plan and commission a curriculum to meet the needs of the local economy, the fact is central government gave local authorities no mechanism or resource to enable them to achieve this. It is not as if local authorities fund colleges or increasingly schools or have the perceived influence associated with funding. But as an aspiration it is important that a model of sustainable leadership develops an honest approach to leadership and puts the needs of the learner first.

Colleges are socially diverse organisations, more so than schools, reflecting the variety of diverse backgrounds from which students are recruited and the geographical area served by the institution. As part of the philosophy of moral leadership underpinning Hargreaves and Fink's (2006) model of sustainable leadership institutions should value, acknowledge and celebrate diversity and not use social constructs as an excuse for under performance. Acknowledgement of institutional diversity is becoming increasingly important and Hayes and Ecclestone (2009) argue that the mission of colleges is equally about student welfare as well as education. Indeed national performance measures are used to monitor the performance of a range of ethnic groups and hold organisations to accountable for the attainment of these individuals.

The final element of a model of sustainable leadership applicable for further education is *Conserves*, whereby institutions acknowledge and reflect on the past to inform the future. In the same way that Hargreaves and Fink (2006) use conservation in their model. The challenge for institutions is ensuring that the past is not used as an excuse for not pursuing something in the future. Colleges risk becoming complacent through not participating in initiatives or trying tasks which have previously been unsuccessful. While it is important to acknowledge the past, the post-compulsory education landscape is constantly changing and while an initiative may not have been fully successful previously does not necessarily mean that institutions should not learn from these and try them again. Part of this reluctance could possibly be attributed to an ageing population among senior leaders, taking the perspective that it was tried previously so why bother trying it again and a lack of new managers prepared to take risks. Harris (2009) notes that the next generation of leaders need the ability to take risks and in some cases, standing outside of the usual or accepted frames of reference. Table six summarises the key elements on a proposed framework of sustainable leadership for further education colleges and acknowledging that the implantation and sustainable leadership strategies is not a linear process, table 7 possibly better illustrates the model in a cyclical form.

Principle	Name	Summary
1	Builds capacity of staff	Sustainable leadership provides opportunities and motivates staff to develop their skills in leadership and management.
2	Strategic Distribution	Distribution of strategic initiatives enables individuals at all levels of the organisation to engage in leadership activities which bring about sustainable improvement.
3	Consolidates	Sustainable leadership seeks to enable and foster opportunities to work collaboratively and develop partnerships, ensuring that the learning available meets the needs of the locality.
4	Builds long-term objective from short-term goals	Sustainable leadership should enable institutions to create synergy between the long-term objectives of the organisation and the short-term targets imposed by funding agencies.
5	Diversity	Sustainable leadership should learn from diversity, enabling social inclusion and cohesion to be created.
6	Conserves	Sustainable leadership should enable managers and leaders to honour and learn from the past to create a better future.

Table 6: Component parts of the sustainable leadership model for general further education colleges

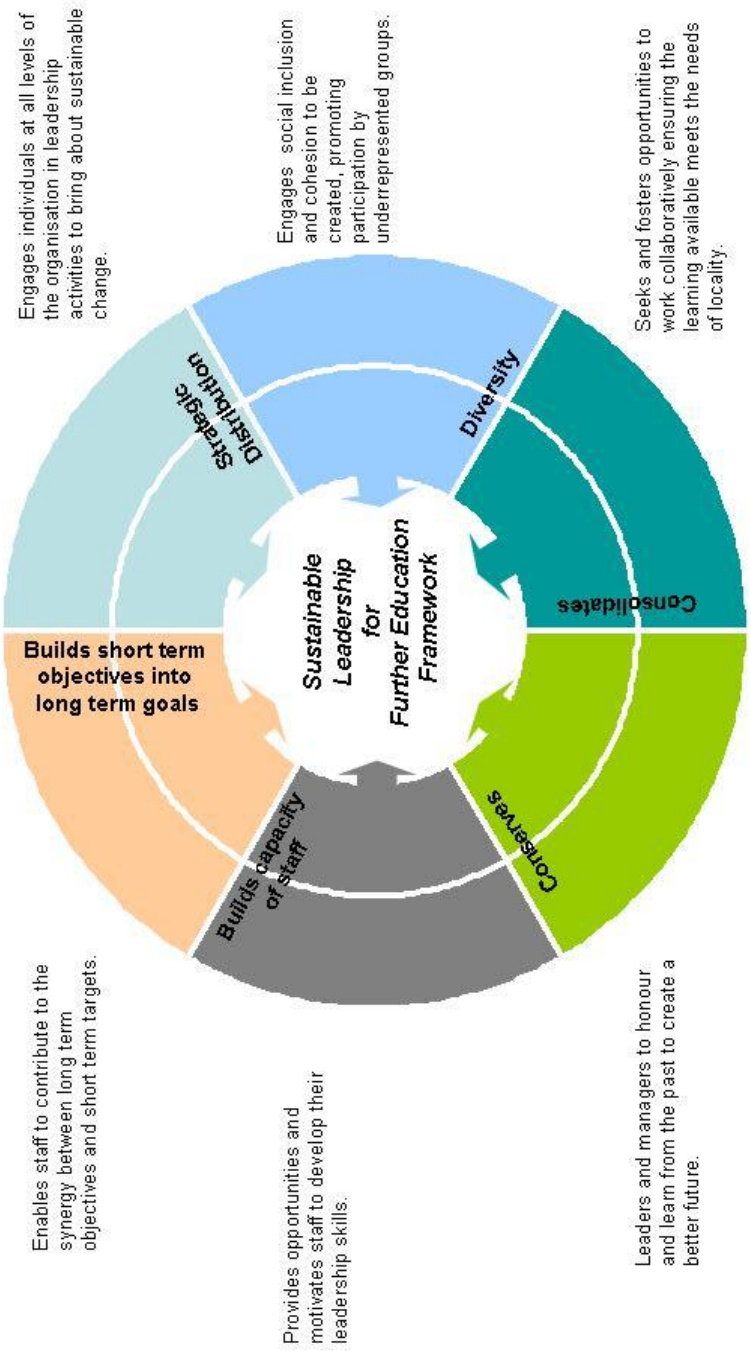

Figure 3: Framework for Sustainable Leadership in further education colleges (Lambert, 2011)

The philosophy behind the proposed model of sustainable leadership for general further education colleges is that it must be implemented in its entirety, it is not a 'pick and mix' model nor is it a one size fits all plan. Institutions should not be selecting individual elements of the model to apply and expect to have the same cumulative impact compared to implementing the entire model. Colleges need to develop their own

plans from each of the component elements of the framework, in a hub and spoke arrangement, with the framework being the central hub, which will allow for differences in institutional contexts to be considered. If sustainable leadership is to have any impact on an organisation commitment is needed from all levels of the hierarchy, including the governing corporation. Sustainable leadership can contribute to the creation of a culture in which leadership skills can be developed from deep within the organisation enabling the development of a pool of individuals ready to become the next generation of educational leaders. This will pay dividends in the long term when organisational stability is tested as a result of key posts become vacant.

Conclusion

This chapter has argued that there is a case for a framework for sustainable leadership within general further education colleges and that Hargreaves and Fink (2006) and Davies's (2009) model, whilst appropriate for the schools sector, is not sufficiently contextualised for general further education colleges. This is a result of operational differences in the compulsory and post-compulsory environment and the impact of a new managerial system advocated by government through the creation of a free market for post-compulsory education. While literature on sustainable leadership is in its infancy, elements of existing frameworks can be linked to existing theories such as culture and change management. The difference with sustainable leadership over existing leadership theories is that the frameworks discussed in this chapter take a holistic approach at an organisational level rather than at an individual level.

This chapter has put forward a case for a sustainable leadership framework for general further education colleges which incorporates some of the transferable elements from existing models combined with some additions specifically applicable to the further education sector. This framework will be used in the development of the research design, which is discussed in chapter five.

Little empirical evidence exists surrounding the implementation of sustainable leadership which is symptomatic of the field and its relative infancy. There is some evidence relating to the specific elements of the models proposed such as distributed

leadership (Elliott, 1996; Harris, 2004; Davis, 2009). The chapter argues that a framework may help in addressing the shortage of suitably skilled and experienced individuals seeking principalship by developing a culture of leadership from deep within the organisation. By implementing the ideas of sustainable leadership there is a positive benefit to the individuals involved as they develop the skills necessary to progress onto more senior roles within the organisation.

Whilst there can be no guarantees of success, this chapter proposes a framework where one does not currently exist and in doing so will open up the discourse on sustainable leadership in general further education colleges. Jameson (2006) notes that for leadership to be effective regardless of 'model' adopted, those in leadership positions need to ensure that they do not have a 'values-bypass'. What Jameson (2006) articulates is an idea whereby some leaders revel in power for its own sake, controlling others for the sake of 'proving' how 'important' they are. As mentioned earlier on in this chapter the case for sustainable leadership is still in its infancy, but the further work which is proposed in the methodology chapters will seek the views of principals of general further education colleges on the components put forward in this chapter and provide empirical evidence in a field where currently none exists.

Chapter Four focuses on the characteristics of the post-compulsory education in more specifically general further education colleges in South East England. The chapter considers categorisations of colleges and the wider role which they play in education landscape.

Chapter 4: the context of leadership in further education colleges

Introduction

Chapter three considered the context of leadership in further education colleges, in particular whether current literature on sustainable leadership could be used as a tool to develop leadership capacity within them. What was established was that current models were not fully compatible between the compulsory and post-compulsory sector. This led to the development of a framework for sustainable leadership specifically for further education colleges as articulated in Lambert (2011).

In this final literature chapter detailed consideration is given specifically to further education colleges, in particular their infrastructure and their characteristics.

This chapter will consider too the role of the principal within general further education college and their relationship with the governing body and funding agencies. Finally, the methods used to select the colleges used within the empirical stage of this thesis will be detailed, followed by a short summary of each of the colleges participating in this research. The chapter also addresses the following research question of this thesis which is:

1. What is the current context of leadership in further education colleges?

It is important to point out that this research question has in part been addressed in chapter two which looked at the global and national drivers and their impact on leadership in further education.

It is worth reminding ourselves that chapter one looked at defining further education and found it to be a very broad category which included: work based learning providers; further education colleges; independent specialist providers, catering for learners with special educational needs; as well as provision for those in custody. It was also demonstrated that further education could be further subcategorised to include general further education colleges, sixth form colleges, arts based institutions and agricultural colleges, all of which are defined by legislation. While literature has provided a number

of definitions of further education such as Lumby (2001), Jameson and Hillier (2003) and Jameson (2006) for the purposes of this thesis the following working definition, suggesting that it is about providing meaningful and appropriate education for those learners who are beyond the compulsory phase of education, but excluding higher education. .

Characteristics of Further Education Colleges

The regulatory framework

Further education colleges operate in a highly regulated framework with specific duties to discharge, in particular ensuring that the public funding they receive is used effectively. This section of the chapter will look the governance and regulatory framework, along with the freedom and boundaries which colleges have, in order to gain an appreciation of the context in which college operate may be gained.

General Further Education colleges were created as a result of the Further and Higher Education Act 1992, which incorporated colleges out of the control of local authorities and into self-governing autonomous organisations, responsible for their own finances, estates and human resource matters. This piece of legislation is still in place, albeit amended by the Learning and Skills Act 2000, the Education and Inspections Act 2006, the Further Education and Training Act 2007 and the Apprenticeship, Skills Children and Learning Act 2009. Although the Further and Higher Education Act 1992 created colleges as a discrete entity, the act required colleges to have Instrument and Articles of Government which established the governance structure and boundaries of operation for colleges.

The Instrument and Articles of Government, required by all incorporated colleges, established a board of governors, often referred to as the corporation, who oversee the work of the organisation and are required to act corporately for a single college. A board of governors then cannot be shared by more than one college, although members can be on multiple governing bodies. The Instrument and Articles of Government identify the statutory duties, powers and responsibilities for governing bodies, such as determining business and financial policy, strategic direction and ethos of the college, and recruitment of senior staff, usually the principal and deputy principal. As an

incorporated organisation the college owns the land, buildings and assets of the college, although, as a recipient of public funding the various funding agencies have considerable powers in terms of buildings and land.

The governing body is collectively responsible for the strategic management of the organisation, with the principal having delegated responsibility for the operational leadership and management of the institution. Governors are also corporately accountable to the Skills Funding Agency for the effective use of the public funding which they receive and for any conditions attached to the use of that funding, such as providing annual accounts. One of the key functions of the governing body is to ensure that the college remains solvent and continues to fulfil its responsibilities to its students. In practice, colleges at risk of becoming insolvent have intervention measures put in place by the Skills Funding Agency to minimise the risk of this happening. In such cases colleges would be encouraged to merge with another institution, although UniversitiesUK (2009) points out this is rarely a solution.

The Instruments and Articles of Government also state the functions that the governing body cannot delegate, mainly:

- the determination of the educational character and mission of the college;
- the approval of the annual estimates of income and expenditure;
- ensuring the solvency of the institution;
- the appointment of or dismissal of the principal or other senior post-holder.

With the changing landscape of further education, more emphasis is being placed on the governance of further education, which has predominantly been based on what Matthews and Shaw (2009) describe as a model of stewardship, where there is collaboration between the executives, the principal and other senior leaders, and the non-executives, the governors. They go on to question whether this model of governance is appropriate for colleges, or whether as a result of Walker's (2009) review of corporate governance resulting from the crisis in the financial sector, a more commercial approach to governance should be taken.
Whichever approach is taken long term, the current focus surrounding governance is about improving the quality of college corporations. Foster (2005) highlighted that

college governance has improved considerably since the early days of incorporation and is now more robust; however, Ofsted (2004) suggested that while there has been an improvement in governance, there is considerable variation in quality amongst colleges highlighting the contribution governance makes to both successful and failing colleges.

All governing bodies will elect a chair and vice chair along with chairs of committees, although the number and function of these committees will vary between institutions. It is the relationship between the chair of the governing body and the principal which is possibly one of the most crucial within the college. The chair also has a responsibility to the principal as their line manager, for which they will undertake an annual performance review of the work of the principal, but also, provide support as a critical friend. It is this psychological support which is as equally important as the practical support which is offered. The chair of the governing body also has a responsibly to the rest of the governors as it through their leadership they will provide confidence to the rest of the corporation in its ability to discharge its responsibilities effectively.

The role of the principal in general further education colleges

Having examined the framework in which college operate and the role of the governing body time needs to be spent looking at the role of the principal. As the subject of this thesis is on the role of principal and the challenges and resolutions of moving middle curriculum managers towards this role, it is important to look at their relationship with funding bodies, their function within the organisation, and the relationship with governors.

The role of the principal has changed considerably since colleges were incorporated out of local authority control. Prior to this the role of the college principals was as chief academic officer for the college, responsible primarily for curriculum matters. Afterwards principals also became chief executives and assumed responsibility for a range of business functions which had previously been provided by the local authority, as already mentioned. With incorporation came great power for the principal such as ability to set the pay and conditions of all staff. Goddard-Patel and Whitehead (2000) examined the role of the principal in the years after incorporation and found that many colleges faced significant challenges when it came to financial planning and the over-

optimistic projection of student numbers, and the ability of colleges to accurately record and report student information. Whilst not directly responsible for errors in financial planning and student data, principals are accountable to funding bodies for the challenges faced by their institutions. But, it is not only the principal who is responsible, governing bodies have a role to play in accepting responsibility for the actions of the principal. Also, the Further and Higher Education Act 1992 made funding bodies share accountability with the principal and governing corporations; if it all goes wrong they are axiomatically responsible, through their failing to

> *'make the most effective use of their [funding bodies'] resources and, in particular, to avoid positions which might give rise to disproportionate expenditure'.* (Further and Higher Education Act (1992) S2 (5))

In 2009 KPMG surveyed a number of college principals on the changes in the role post-incorporation (KPMG, 2009). The report acknowledges that the role has changed significantly and principals are on a par with chief executives of multi-million pound organisations, with colleges frequently operating subsidiary companies too, and offering conferencing facilities to external organisations. Collinson (2009) confirmed that the environment in which principals operate in is becoming increasingly complex, with multiple and, at times, competing pressures, and go on to state that some principals felt that they are operating as branch managers within a national organisation. It was Sy (2004) who highlighted the challenges of this form of matrix structure and chapter two points out that the Apprenticeship, Skills, Children and Learning Act (2009) has further rooted this culture of working to multiple national funding organisations. This feeling which some principals reported in KPMG (2009) provides an insight into the relationship between college and funding agencies who up until the Apprenticeship, Skills, Children and Learning Act (2009) had both a planning and a funding role.

The principal is the 'designated accounting officer', with ultimate responsibility to parliament for the management of the college. As the accounting officer the principal can be called to appear before the parliamentary committee of public accounts on matters relating to the college's use of public funding. They have to ensure that there is effective financial planning and management of the college's business in accordance with the Financial Memorandum with the funding agencies, which is the agreement between the college and the funding agencies.

The principal can only be the accounting officer for one college at the time, but can delegate most activities to other senior staff within the college, although they must not delegate the management of the budget or resources. This is different from the compulsory sector whereby headteachers can be the accountable officer for more than one institution. Stanfield (2010) suggests that the accounting officer boundary is constantly being tested and the college environment is becoming more complex as general further education colleges are now emerging as sponsors of Academies, such as the two sponsored by Barnfield College and the one sponsored by Hull College (DCSF, 2009). As a result of these shifting boundaries Lord Andonis stated that the Labour government's intention was to ensure that further education colleges could collaborate with a range of partners including schools which developed flexible and innovative models of delivery which improved quality across the education system (Hansard Reports, 2007). This was later written into stature through the Further Education and Training Act 2007 which enabled college corporations to:

> *provide further, higher and secondary education, and to participate in the provision of secondary education at a school* (Further Education and Training Act, 2007) S21 (3))

Yet, with the changing role of the principal and the challenges which colleges now face such as working in a matrix environment, as described in chapter two, and an increasingly challenging economic situation, the job description of the principal is largely left to college governors to determine. As independent organisations there can be no centralised approach to the job description of the principal. However, with an increase in professional recruitment agencies being used in the recruitment process of senior leaders there will be some form of standardisation of the role of the principal.

Ultimately it is the role of the governing body to determine the details of the job description for the principal. The temptation is that the existing principal's job description will be used; however, this can be out of date in terms of the way in which the role of the principal has developed since the appointment of the previous principal. It may also not meet the needs of the college, which creates a risk in that they recruit an

individual who fulfils the requirements of the job description but not the needs of the college.

An analysis of a random sample of twenty advertised principals' posts over a 10 week period, with an example of two job descriptions available in Appendices D and E, shows that there are similarities in the job descriptions, but there is no consistency in the level of detail. Examples of common elements include:

- acting as the Chief Accounting Officer for the college;
- advising [the corporation] on the mission, vision, character and culture of the college;
- providing leadership of the staff and the college;
- delivering outstanding education and training, striving to improve the provision.

This core list was further supplemented with other specific points which were institution specific and related to:

- introducing effective strategies for the recruitment of students;
- making the college inclusive and student centred;
- demonstrate prudent financial management and effective financial planning;
- ensure that quality assurance mechanisms are effective;
- set and monitor appropriate targets for overall college performance;
- ensure that the college is effectively represented locally, regionally and nationally.

This is a just a small random sample of functions which are required of a principal. What can be observed is that there is a core group of requirements which are common across all job descriptions, albeit, with slightly different wording. Then there appears to be a group of institution specific requirements which have been identified by the governors. These specific requirements reflect to some extent the concerns or issues which a college is currently facing. For example, taking from above:

- *ensuring that quality assurance mechanisms are effective*, if one looked up the most recent Ofsted inspection report it shows that this particular college was graded inadequate overall, with significant issues identified by the inspection team around the robustness of the college's self assessment processes, its

observation of teaching and learning systems, and the success of students attending the college.

- *prudent financial management and effective financial planning,* one ofthe sampled colleges had recently completed a full college rebuilding programme funded by the Learning and Skills Council, which would have left the college with a considerable loan, as one of the requirements of the capital building programme was that colleges invest significantly in their facilities. This would bring the college to their financial limit and, at a time when the public sector as a whole enters a period of unprecedented financial constraints, one can start to understand why the college's corporation would seek somebody with a good grasp of finances and financial planning.

What these two examples have demonstrated is that outside of the core requirements, the institution specific requirements start to paint of picture of the issues and concerns of the corporation and the college.

The final group of requirements which start to appear in the job descriptions are not institution specific nor could one suggest that they are core, because they are not as explicitly stated as being the responsibility of the 'accountable officer', but are those elements which could be described as thematic issues. Those are issues which are currently in vogue with the current government. In the case of the previous Labour government, issues relating to the 14-19 agenda, diplomas and collaboration were high priority. The coalition government however has prioritised the reduction in state regulation of colleges which provides some parity with institution specific requirements such as ensuring effective internal quality assurance systems are in place.
Therefore one might expect these in the job descriptions of future principals.

Another observation is that of those job descriptions sampled each one has a mixture of skills, as already discussed, and competencies. For example, one job description wants the principal to get national recognition, such as 'Beacon Status', whilst another talks about the principal keeping the college at the forefront of innovation and outstanding achievement. All of these are very aspirational and difficult to measure in a selection

process, and while candidates can give examples of where they have demonstrated these competencies in previous roles it does not mean that they will have the same level of impact in the institution for which they are applying. Then there are the skills in the job descriptions which are measurable, these include qualifications held, number of years as a member of a college senior management team, both of which are easily measurable through the application process.

What has been demonstrated in this section is that governing bodies have considerable freedom when it comes to writing the job description of the principal, and there is no uniformity across the further education sector. Through a random review of job descriptions for currently advertised principal's posts it can be shown that all the requirements sought can be categorised under the following headings:

- *Core Requirements*: either statutory such as being the accounting officer, or establishing organisational ethos and goals.
- *Institutional Specific (skills based):* experience of prudent financial management, ensuring quality assurance mechanisms are effective.
- *Thematic Issues*: current topical issues such as engaging in 14-19 strategic partnerships, working with schools to develop and appropriate curriculum offer.

While the wording differs slightly between them all, the requirements listed in the sample can be attributed to one of these three categories. It could be suggested that these heading can be used as a guide for putting together a job description for the post of principal. The recruitment of the principal is probably one of the most difficult appointments the college corporation will ever have to make and can have a significant impact on the future success of the college. It is therefore even more important that should a college not seek professional support there is at least a guide available for governors to ensure that the job description they put together meets the needs of the college. It is worth noting as Goddard-Patel and Whitehead (2000) point out the principal has a significant amount of power and is responsible for millions of pounds of public funding and the future of the college, therefore it the recruitment of a new principal is critical to the future of the college. Through the empirical work undertaken in this thesis the specific requirements of the post will be explored in more detail to

establish whether these heading are reflective of what current principals see as the key aspects of their role.

The organisational structure of general further education colleges

This brief section will look at the structure of colleges both internally and in the wider national context and will consider the shift in structure from a traditional pyramid structure to a matrix environment.

Colleges organise themselves in a multiplicity of different ways, with Cole (1996) suggesting a number of structures including colleges that are located on a single site to those located on multiple sites with a great deal of delegation from the administrative centre of the college. Some institutions based on multiple sites will adopt separate branding in order to provide a feeling of localisation for the community which the college serves. There is no consistent approach taken to the organisational structure of colleges, and as autonomous organisations they cannot be forced to adopt a centrally derived model. Underpinning these variations of models are two main structures which can be identified, the hierarchical pyramid as described by Turner (1991) and the matrix structure (Fidler, 1997). The pyramid structure is based on Weber's bureaucracy model (Turner, 1991 and Morrision, 2006) which presupposes a chain of command that is hierarchically organised. Weber goes on to suggest that within this bureaucracy model, roles and responsibilities are clearly prescribed in written documents and staff are organised by functional specialism. Hall (1994) noted that the hierarchical pyramid has dominated college structures for over 30 years and in their study in the early 1990s over 70% of colleges had adopted this structure. Colleges will typically adopt this pyramid structure with the principal at the top of the hierarchy; with a senior leadership team comprising functional based activities such as finance, curriculum and quality. Reporting to the senior leaders will be teams of specialists, such as teachers and managers with specific subject knowledge reporting to the senior leader with curriculum responsibility, or accountancy staff reporting to the senior leader with a remit for finance. Marsden and Ritson (2002) point out some of the benefits of the pyramid structure particularly, ensuring that specialist resources such as finance professionals, human resources or subject teachers are used effectively and that these resources are not duplicated throughout the organisation. Also, the grouping of specialist functions

together is both easier to manage and creates a career structure for individuals within the functional specialism. Brannen et al (1981) commented that the popularity of the structure is not without its negative effects, particularly as the feeling of isolation and internal competition between departments and the creation of a narrow focus of specialist interests can all become barriers to co-operation. Marsden and Ritson (2002) also point out that within the pyramid structure it is also difficult to identify profitable and unprofitable products, or in the case of colleges, courses; this is an increasingly important focus for institutions as a result of reductions in college funding.

Fidler (1997) suggest a matrix structure, with Hall (1994) suggesting that this structure is more common in smaller colleges, whereby individuals are still functionally based but will work within another team, thus having two or more managers. A typical example would be learning support staff who are within the learning support team, but are attached to a subject area. This enables the specific members of staff to get to know the courses, the students and the staff and be more effective than being isolated in a purely functional team. Marsden and Ritson (2002) suggest that if implemented successfully the matrix structure can improve decision making involving a wider range of expertise and can assist in the development of leaders by exposing them to organisational wide issues. This last point is linked directly to the *builds capacity of staff* and *strategic distribution* elements of the framework for sustainable leadership in further education which was discussed in chapter three.

Fidler (1997) goes on to suggest that while this structure offers more flexibility and adaptability to change, it is not without its critics. Both Fidler (1997) and Sy and D'Annunzio (2005) comment on issues surrounding the diffusion of accountability when operating in a matrix structure. Marsden and Ritson (2002) also identify a potential clash of priorities individuals have between their functional role and the role they play within project or curriculum based team.

Although these two organisational structures exist as theoretical concepts they are rarely seen in their pure form. Many colleges will adopt a hybrid structure, particularly those colleges operating across multiple campuses, whereby there are complex mixes of the

matrix and hierarchical structure, rather than the signal structure which is possibly more suited to a signal site institution.

In both models colleges will organise themselves with a group of senior staff, although there is no common title for this group, some call it the senior management team or group, senior leadership team, or senior leadership family. Membership of this group varies between institutions, as demonstrated in Appendix F but typically have the principal, and then senior staff responsible for curriculum, finance and human resources. The extent to which other members of the college attend this group largely depends on the organisational structure and the size of the college. Colleges based on multiple campuses will often have campus directors, responsible for operational matters who will be members of the senior leadership group; other members might include Heads of Faculties. Harpers (2000) states the aforementioned senior leadership team forms a second tier of management with curriculum heads forming a third tier of management.

Post incorporation, external pressures such as the need to understand the complexities of the funding methodology and increases in the inspection regime, required specialists such as directors of finance, directors of quality and performance to 'lead' institutions in this new environment. Jameson (2006) notes that organisational structures of colleges have changed from a flat structure pre-incorporation, as described by Powell (2002), to one which is much more hierarchical due to this need to have specialists as described by Harpers (2000). What Randy and Brady (1997) observe is that a new form of manager has emerged within further education with managerial values which differ from those of the academic staff. Elliot (1996) calls the change in further education culture a 'student centred pedagogic culture' versus 'the managerialism culture of managers'. This is supported by Wilkinson (2007) who suggests that the introduction of managerial practices and ideologies into education has eroded the influence and power of the educational professional, and it is these practices which will potentially undermine the purpose of education.

Within this section on the organisational structure of colleges it has been established that while principals cannot be forced to adopt a centralised model of how the institution should be structured the hierarchical pyramid has been the prevalent form. What is becoming apparent is that there is an increasing move to a matrix structure, not

necessarily internally to colleges but certainly externally. This is evident in chapter two which looked at the way in which legislation has impacted on leadership within further education and the Apprenticeship, Skills, Children and Learning Act (2009) which created two funding organisations reporting to two different government departments. The same seems to have happened with respect to the KPMG (2009) report in which some surveyed principals felt that they were operating as branch managers within a national context. What this does show is that while principals may have control internally over their structure, legislation forces colleges to participate in a national structure over which principals have little or no control.

Classification of colleges

The previous section provided an overview of how colleges are regulated, structured and the role of the principal, As mentioned in chapter one the further education sector can be categorised by designation, but this section will look at alternative ways in which further education colleges can be classified, these include:

- by income,
- by student numbers, although there is a correlation between the number of students and the amount of income which a college generates
- by Ofsted grade.

This is by no means an exhaustive list and there are possibly other ways of categorising colleges.

Payne (2008) proposes that colleges can be classified by income, in one of three groups. There are those colleges whose income is less than £14m, those colleges between £14m and £29m, and those with an income in excess of £29m, but one could question whether these categories accurately represent the further education sector. There are a number of colleges with income exceeding £60m per annum, and one could argue that a college whose income is marginally over £29m is very different to one with an income of £60m. Appendix G provides an analysis of college 2008/09 financial data compiled from LSC (2009) and shows the breakdown by Payne's (2008) categories for general

further education colleges nationally, and for the South East, including colleges in London.

Further consideration was given to whether in light of recent mergers which have created some very large colleges with income exceeding £60m Paynes (2008) classification is still appropriate. Gravatt (2010) argues that college size is in the eye of the beholder therefore the Association of Colleges, a representative body for the further education sector, no longer categorise colleges by income. Based on this Paynes (2008) categorises of classification remains the most up to date way of classifying colleges based on income.

So colleges can be classified by income yet one needs to bear in mind that there could be considerable differences between a £29m and a £60m + college in terms of the way they manage their business.

It is also possible to classify college by the number of students enrolled at them, but there is an intrinsic link between student numbers and income. There are discrepancies arising when calculating student numbers, which are demonstrated in Appendix H, and using various methods of counting students does impact on college income, therefore there appears to be no advantage in using student number to categorise colleges.

Any further education college receiving public funds will be subject to inspection by Ofsted. The nature of the inspection will vary in duration and the focus will differ depending on areas of potential concern identified in preliminary work. The result will be an inspection grade for each of the key areas under inspection and an overarching grade for the institution. Appendix I details the number of inspection outcomes, by grade, for colleges in the South East and London.

There are more fundamental issues regarding the use of Ofsted grades as a form of categorisation. Gilroy and Wilcox (1997) identify an issue surrounding the judgements which Ofsted make and the subjectivity of the inspection process, which is a qualitative process. The concern that they identify is the differing views of inspectors as to what constitutes good practice and how the practices of one institution can fit into a

quantitative based system of reporting when the context in which colleges operate varies considerably. Then there is the interpretation of terms used, for example when considering whether provision is 'effective' is it a subjective definition or factual criteria which is being used. If a definitional criterion is being used then the problem of subjectivity has not been overcome; however, if factual criteria are used then measureable evidence is needed to inform any judgements. Lee and Fitz (1997) also comment on these issues and argue that the entire inspection process is not subject to public scrutiny yet the impact which Ofsted has both on the institution and the resulting judgements can be significant, particularly on the perception of the organisation.

What this section has demonstrated is while there is different ways of classifying colleges only by income represents that most robust method; so this is the major criterion which will be used in selecting the sample.

Conclusion

This chapter has focused on the characteristics of further education colleges, the legal and regulatory framework in which further education colleges operate and the extent to which colleges are controlled by the state through a number of funding agencies. While colleges were freed from local authority control and governance in 1992, they have seen an increase in the amount of state regulation. It has been demonstrated that this continual regulation has created a matrix structure as described by Sy (2004) in which colleges participate at a national level and the views of principals through KPMG (2009) and Collinson (2009) has substantiated this. In July 2010, the Academies Bill 2010 gained royal assent that will do for schools what the Further and Higher Education Act 1992 did for colleges and that was to incorporate them out of local authority control, but remaining in receipt of public funding. As part of this process there will be a transfer of existing local authority owned land and buildings, in this case school buildings signing over to the newly created Academy. Only time will tell whether these newly created academies will potentially face the same challenges, which Goddard-Patel and Whitehead (2000) identified, in newly incorporated colleges did back in 1992. Likewise, whether principals of academies will in time feel that they too work in a national matrix structure,

This chapter also considered the responsibility of governing bodies which has accountability with the principal for the use of public funding, although the governors are in a difficult position being volunteers. One of the potential problems faced by the current arrangements of the governing body is the contact the governing body has with the college, which is usually through the principal. This creates an hourglass effect, whereby the governing body is the upper chamber, the principal being at the narrow point in the middle and the college being the lower chamber, Appendix C. This can as Goddard-Patel and Whitehead (2000) state restrict or distort the information being passed to the governing body, potentially masking any difficulties which a college is having until it is too late. This relationship between the college principal and the governing body will be one of the themes explored in the interviews with principals. As well as the relationship between the principal and the governing body, the empirical work will also look at the role of the principal, both from their perspective and also the perception of the role from staff within colleges. By understanding how the role of the principal is perceived the colleges should be able to develop a plan which will start to facilitate more individuals wishing to pursue the post not only of principal of a further education college, but chief executive of multi-million pound organisations.

This concludes the literature review section of this thesis, and the following chapter consider the research methods used. Firstly the methodological aspects which underpin this research and the methods which are to be used in order to collect the data needed to answer the research questions articulated in chapter one. Secondly, the way in which the tools used to collect this data was constructed and piloted prior to deployment.

Chapter 5: Research methods

Introduction

This research methods chapter explores and justifies the selection of the methods involved in collecting the data. It discusses issues of reliability, validity and the ability to make generalisations and how the issues highlighted through literature have been addressed in this research. As well as considering the approach to collecting the data including the piloting process this was carried out.

It is worth revisiting the aim of the research which were set out in chapter one in order to ensure that the methods selected are appropriate for the types of data sought. The purpose of this research is to understand the challenges faced by middle curriculum managers in the pursuit of principalship. In order to address this research question there are five subsidiary questions:

1. What is the current context of principalship in the selected further education colleges?

2. What is the reported reality of movement into principalship in further education colleges?

3. What elements of current models of sustainable leadership might the selected further education colleges being examined implement in the development of aspiring principals?

4. What are the views of further education principals with respect to the role of the principal?

5. What are the views of middle curriculum managers with respect to the role of the principal?

The data obtained from the fieldwork described in this chapter presented in chapter six will be used to address all of the subsidiary questions, one to five. However, question one and three have partly been addressed through the literature review chapters.

It is worth reiterating at this point that the focus of this research is on the role of the principal and as such is examined in isolation. There are a number of reasons for this, first, the post of principal is a statutory post which all colleges must have, as identified in the Further and Higher Education Act (1992) and there are certain functions that a principal cannot delegate (Chapter 4, page 55). Second, it is acknowledged that the principal works as part of a wider senior leadership team and indeed some of the participations of this research makes reference to other senior leaders having a range of skills to complement those of the principal (Chapter 6, pages 145 and 146). Finally as acknowledged in Chapter 8 (page 191), this research could be extended to include the governors, who are actually key to the recruitment of a new principal as well as other members of the senior leadership team. It also worth noting that within the scope of an EdD thesis it is only really possible to explore in depth one particular role and as this thesis looks to how individuals can be supported and encouraged to pursue principalship it seems only right that this is the focus on the study.

The purpose and nature of research

Prior to justifying the selected methods used in each of the phases of this research, it is necessary to spend some time taking into account the purpose and nature of research and the assumptions which underpin the research claims of this thesis.

When considering the purpose of research one needs to be clear as to what constitutes research. This principally concerns the understanding of a phenomenon that is informed by evidence and is trustworthy. The difficultly arises when determining what is meant by trustworthiness. Grix (2004) suggests that there are differing degrees of trustworthiness and these are underpinned by different ontological and epistemological assumptions. At one end there is trustworthiness which is grounded in objective reality, whereby it is assumed that reality exists and will continue to exist independently of humans. It is this form of objective reality which underpins positivist approaches to research which seek out universal laws and principles and seeks to test hypotheses, akin to the natural sciences and is typically associated with quantitative approaches to data

collection. At the other extreme there is trustworthiness which is based on the assumptions of subjective realities where everybody has a different perception of reality, even when observing the same phenomenon. With this approach Matthews (1992) suggests that individuals view reality through a lens, but mentions nothing of the lens adapting and changing as individual experiences influence our understanding. If this is the case then reality is socially constructed through the perceived reality of many individuals, and it could be argued that reality doesn't really exist. This view of the relativity of judgements underpins much of the work located in the social sciences and adopts an interpretive approach to research. Within this approach researchers seek answers to questions, often through the use of qualitative techniques, to phenomenon studied in the natural environment: outside of a laboratory or controlled conditions. The challenge when adopting an interpretive approach to research is not only does one have the issue of the 'lens' which participants view their own reality, in this instance, college principals and middle curriculum managers, but also the lens through which the researcher's reality is also constructed. This limits the ability to make the generalisations and universal laws which are often sought by those adopting a positivist approach to research. What can be identified are general themes arising from the study on the phenomenon. They are not universal, and they only apply to that context and at that particular time: a snapshot of reality, through a lens.

With different approaches to research being underpinned by differing sets of assumptions the debate surrounding whether these approaches can be combined has been ongoing. Guba and Lincoln (1994) and Schwandt (1994) believe that the approaches cannot be combined because of the differing perspectives on reality. Opposing this view, Reichardt and Rallis (1994); Tashakkori and Teddli (1998) and Howe (1998) all suggest that they can be combined and rather than seeking an absolute truth, like positivists, seek truth which works at this moment in time.

The views of the aforementioned who advocate the compatibility of different approaches is helpful in addressing the issues of whether research is trustworthy. Using the idea that research should only seek for truth which works at one moment in time, rather than absolute truth, the results of all research then become provisional. This can be more easily viewed through interpretive based research: one cannot argue that the

findings are definite and will never change. Individual's understanding of reality are constantly changing as a result of experience and are always limited by their perceptions and abilities, so one could realistically expect to obtain slightly different results if the research was replicated after a period of time had lapsed, even with the same participants. This notion can also be applied to research conducted within a positivist framework, as the principles and laws generated can only be provisional as it is unknown at the present time whether in the future new theories will emerge which supersede currently accepted knowledge. The key difference between the views of the positivistic and interpretive notions of provisionality is time. With the positivistic approach to provisionality the timeframe is timeless; the results will last for all time, or until disproved, unlike interpretivism where it is acknowledged that the understanding of the phenomenon being studied is constantly evolving.

Yin (2006) and Creswell and Tashakkori (2007) suggest that the debate on compatibility has been helpful, but it is now time to move on. As a result there has been an emergence of a third approach to research, Pragmatism, which Johnson et al (2007) argue 'bridges the gap' between existing paradigms. Brannen (2005) also advocates the use of a pragmatism suggesting that the only way to obtain a multiple and diverse perspective on the phenomenon is to use an approach which combines existing paradigms. Like those already mentioned Firestone (1987) suggests that approaches to research can be successfully combined as long as the instruments used to collect data are not attributed to a specific methodological approach, a view which is echoed by King et al (1994) and Grix (2004) all of whom argue that the categorisation of instruments is artificial and unhelpful.

Adopting a pragmatic approach to research does allow researchers to acknowledge the limitations of both positivism and interpretivism and the assumptions which underpin both, while firmly placing the research at the core of the debate in terms of the appropriateness of its approach. As a result research can never be absolute as the assumptions underpinning the approaches are different; however, it is the researchers' responsibility to ensure that they acknowledge the differences between approaches and use this to ensure that findings are reasonable. Researchers also need to manage the

expectations of readers ensuring that any claims made can be substantiated within the context of provisionality.

Methods

The design of the research combines techniques traditionally identified with qualitative approaches such as interviews and focus groups, as well as those tools more commonly associated with quantitative approaches such as questionnaires. While these terms are unhelpful as they presuppose that certain tools will be used to collect specific types of data; this research proposes that they could be used in mixed approach, with for example, the questionnaire being used to collect both qualitative and quantitative data.

This research adopts a three phase approach and each of these phases will be looked at in detail below.

Phase One: Questionnaires

Phase one of the research was a questionnaire to principals of all the general further education colleges in the South East including London, followed by phase two, a series of individual interviews which allowed for a rich depth of information to be sought. The geographical area covered in phase one was important due to the number colleges within the sample area and judged to be large enough for the scope of this research. Further research would naturally extend this study to others regions in England or indeed further afield. It could also have been possible to collect the necessary information using a focus group, but it would have been extremely difficult to get such a large number of principals to all meet at the same time, given their work commitments. While both interviews and focus groups have the benefit of being able to obtain detailed responses to questions, this level of information was not necessary as it would be obtained in phase 2.

Therefore the questionnaire was selected as it could be deployed easily to all 65 principals relatively inexpensively compared to interviews and focus groups.

The questionnaire had three purposes: firstly, to test whether there was agreement, from a large number of participants, on the component elements of the framework of sustainable leadership for further education proposed in chapter three, and in Lambert

(2011), and the extent to which their institution were already implementing the aspects of the framework. This collection was done through a quantitative technique using a Likert scale (McNeill and Chapman, 2005; Oppenheim, 1992) and allowed for a comparative set of data to be produced from the findings of the returned questionnaires.

The second purpose of the questionnaire was to develop a greater understanding, through the use of qualitative questions, of the day to day role of the principal, in particular:

- the amount of time which they personally spend on these activities in an average week;
- what they enjoy and don't enjoy about their role;
- the skills they would expect individuals aspiring to principalship to have;
- how effectively they were prepared for their role as principal.

This information, obtained from current principals, provided a valuable insight into their work and would support those individuals who aspire to principalship in gaining greater clarity in terms of the day to day role of the principal and the necessary skills needed to become a principal.

The third and final purpose was as a tool for selecting which colleges would be used in subsequent stages of the research. A decision could have been made to select further education colleges where there was a personal relationship already in place and as Pettigrew (1992) points out, access is often difficult when dealing with leaders of organisations. This would have removed any potential issues surrounding access to individuals and would have been potentially easier; however, it would then leave the research open to questions surrounding the robustness of the sampling technique and questions of bias could have been raised. The final question of the questionnaire asked whether they [the principals] would be willing to participate in phase two of the research, the one to one interviews, and for their middle curriculum managers to be approached to participate in a focus group which was phase three. If they [the principals] were happy to participate and for their staff to be approached to participate in phase three they were asked to confirm this by providing an email address. The final selection of colleges used a convenience sample informed by those principals who had

agreed to participate in phases two and three and was based on geographical location of the individual colleges in relation to the researcher.

A full copy of the questionnaire, covering letter and the ethics permissions form can be found in appendix K.

Phase Two: Interviews

Having selected four colleges to participate in phases two and three of the research (to be explained more fully on pages 82), one to one interviews were organised with each of the principals. This method was selected as it allowed for detailed discussions relating to the responses from the phase 1 questionnaires. It would have been difficult to obtain the level of detail necessary to answer the research questions using a questionnaire due to the probing nature of the questions and the inability to ask additional supplementary questions. The one to one interview provided the least intrusive method of obtaining the necessary information, but also allows for an element of flexibility insomuch as seeking clarification.

Silverman (2005) and Wragg (2002) state that interviews are the most widespread method of data collection in the social sciences and are often seen as a simple procedure for obtaining data. Freebody (2004) argues that this is not the case and that interviews are deceptively complex, with the credibility of the findings relying heavily on the interviewer's management and analysis of the interviews, with Gillham (2004) suggesting that the interviewer is the research instrument. Oppenheim (1992) suggests that interviewers need higher order interpersonal skills which, like everything else, need developing over time and with practice. They need to quickly build rapport with the participant, whilst demonstrating empathy and respect, as well as avoiding any bias and ensuring that leading questions are not asked, particularly when using supplementary questions. Silverman (2005) suggests that non-verbal language needs also to be considered using facial expressions, eye contact and nodding the head to convey interest and prevent the interviewee misinterpreting the interviewer's passivity.

One of the most important aspects of any interview are the kinds of questions which are to be used and in this research semi-structured questions were favoured over closed questions and open-ended interviews. It was important to have a structure to the

interview process and to ensure that the necessary questions were covered in a predetermined order. The semi-structured approach as McNeill and Chapman (2005) point out allows some flexibility and discretion within a framework which is similar on every occasion. The questions used, like the questionnaire before it was piloted and details of the piloting process as well as the outcomes are discussed later in this chapter with a full copy of the interview questions available in Appendix L.

Each of the meetings followed the same format, with participants being asked to sign a consent form, similar to one provided during phase one, and all principals were asked whether they would mind having the interview digitally recorded to aid transcription and to ensure that the focus remains on the discussion rather than trying to take notes during the interview. All participants were sent a copy of the transcript requesting that they check and amend it as necessary. The outcome of these interviews will be discussed in chapters six and seven.

Phase Three: Focus Groups

The third and final phase of the research used focus groups comprising of middle curriculum managers, or tier 3 managers as defined by Harpers (2000), from the colleges which participated in phase two of the study. The group was heterogeneous but with a common element of holding the same position within the organisational and being sufficiently removed from the day to day work of the principal. It is however this group where leadership development needs to be targeted if they are going to progress into senior leadership roles within the further education sector.

Focus groups were chosen over one to one interviews as they are less formal and easier to organise. Trying to organise individual interviews with up to 14 managers within the larger colleges would have resulted in a number of visits to the college and a significant amount of time spent arranging meetings. In undertaking this research, it was important that this research did not impose itself on the work of the organisation and that minimal disruption and inconvenience was caused. It was more convenient for both the college and for conducting this research to use a focus group, and to meet with the managers at the end of one of the colleges existing meetings. In total four focus groups were carried out, one for each of the colleges. Each of the focus group discussions was digitally recorded and subsequently transcribed with the transcript being sent to a nominated

member of the focus group who circulated it among participants to check and amend as necessary.

Robson (2002) lists a number of advantages in using a focus group, particularly around the in-built checks and balances which operate, through other participants' ability to corroborate views and opinions. The dynamics of the group should also bring the most prevalent topics to the forefront quickly which allows for the discussions to focus around themes. Also, focus groups are relatively inexpensive to set up compared to questionnaires whereby the cost increases the more participants take part.

A disadvantage is that it is not always possible to generalise so easily from a focus group as the views might not be representative of the entire group, and care needs to be taken in the discussion chapter (chapter seven) around what generalisations can be made. Also, personalities may conflict between members of the group, and whilst all members will be used to working together this remains an issue although possibly less so than if this was a random sample with members of the public.

In determining the questions to be used in focus groups it was important that sufficient questions were asked in order that the research questions could be answered, with Robson's (2002) suggesting that no more than ten major questions be asked in an hour. Appendix M has a list of the questions used in the focus group.

In order to motivate staff to engage staff in the research, discussions were held with the Institute of Learning, the professional body for further education staff, who require all staff to undertake thirty hours of professional development each academic year. Through the discussions, the Institute agreed that staff participating in this research could record their involvement as part of their professional development hours. This acted as an incentive for staff to engage in the study.

To get the group starting to think about senior leadership an activity was set up so that individuals had to think about what skills are needed to be a good leader and what makes a good principal. Participants were then asked to write on post-it notes and to stick them to the wall under the appropriate heading. This ice-breaker exercise had a

number of purposes, it provided a starting point for discussion, provided an opportunity for members of the group to start to discuss the topics amongst themselves and also allowed others to come into the room if they were a couple of minutes late without having missed any of the more structured discussion.

Piloting

The purpose of piloting

The piloting process acts as a dress rehearsal for the research acting as a reality test in the preparation stage so that when the instruments are used with participants they prove to be as valuable as possible, gathering the necessary data needed to address the research questions. Oppenheim (1992) has a very clear idea about the piloting process stating that what can be, should be piloted, and not confining this to the questions and their order, but extending this to the layout of the questionnaires and even the quality of paper used for paper based instruments. He goes on to state that good piloting will pay dividends when the main fieldwork is undertaken, ensuring that time with participants yields high quality data. Cohen et al (2007) suggest that the purpose of the pilot is to principally increase the reliability and validity of the instruments to be used. In particular the pilot process should eliminate ambiguities in the wording of questions which may lead the respondent to a specific answer. Robson (2002) has a similar view to the aforementioned but suggests that the piloting process can act as an internal check to ensure that as the researcher you have understood the phenomenon sufficiently well to be able to put together an instrument which will capture meaningful data in order to answer the questions being asked.

Pilot participants

From the literature already considered there appears to be a consensus as the purpose of and benefits to piloting. This section provides details of the participants who took part in the piloting process and the outcomes of each of the piloting phases. Two colleges were used for the piloting process, both of which were outside of the sample population of the South East and London. The same individuals were used for the piloting of questionnaire to be used in phase 1 and the piloting of the interview questions for phase 2. As the target audience for both of these methods were college principals it was appropriate that the principals of the two pilot colleges were approached. A convenience

sampling approach was used to identify the two institutions as a pre-existing relationship was in place with the principals of these colleges which made access easier.

Pilot Participant A was recently appointed principal of the college, their first principal's appointment, although they had been an acting principal at a previous college on more than one occasion. The college was medium sized based on Payne's (2008) categorisation and delivered both vocation and academic curricular including elements of higher education in a range of subject sector areas.

Pilot Participant B was the principal of the second college used in the piloting process. A long serving principal who was approaching retirement and one who had been principal of the same college since incorporation. The college is small in size using Payne's (2008) classification and whose curriculum comprised of vocational and higher education including courses within the land based subject sector area (appendix A).

The final phase of the research was the focus group for middle curriculum managers therefore two further participants from the same colleges as participants A and B, were used to pilot the questions for phase 3.

Pilot Participant C was a curriculum manager from the same college as Pilot Participant A and who reported to an Assistant Principal. They had been at the college since graduating from university and started as a technician prior to gaining teaching and subsequently management positions within the college. They had held posts in a variety of curriculum areas which provided a breadth of understanding across a range of subject areas.

Pilot Participant D was also a curriculum manager in the same institution as Pilot Participant B and reported to the Deputy Principal. They had been at the college for about 3 years and managed the foundation learning provision and curriculum for learners with learning difficulties and disabilities.

The final two participants, *Participants E and F,* were experienced education researchers and provided general guidance on the research method and associated

material such as the covering letter prior to deployment. Both Participants E and F work within the University of Hull's Faculty of Education.

Having selected the pilot participants and having already discussed the selection of the participant organisations in chapter four, there are similarities in the characteristics of the principals across both the pilot and the sample group. Within both groups there is a newly appointed principal who is in the early stages of their first principalship and more experienced principals who have been in post in excess of 9 years. The next section will look at the mechanics of the process which was undertaken in order to pilot each of the research instruments.

Piloting process - phase 1

As previously outlined the first phase of the research was a questionnaire to all the principals of general further education colleges in the South East and London. Pilot Participant A was sent a copy of the draft questionnaire as well as the covering letter which explained the background to the research and a time was arranged to discuss the questionnaire.

Pilot Participant A did not disagree with any of the elements put forward in the framework of sustainable leadership and could not suggest any additional elements which needed to be included. They did say that within their institution these elements were not fully implemented and felt that further work was needed to embrace the all elements being suggested.

When it came to the question relating to what aspects of the role they spend their time on, question 8, they suggested that a more logical approach would be to have two groups, internal activities and external activities, and suggested some items which could be included in both of these lists from their personal perspective. This enabled the list to be based on real-world experience rather than purely from secondary sources of information such as literature. The final list used in the questionnaire was a composite of elements from the original list alongside activities derived at the meeting with Pilot Participant A. The option was then added to allow recipients of the final questionnaire to add any other activities not included in the aforementioned list of activities.

Some additional questions were also suggested during the meeting and these focused on how prepared the respondents were commencing their post as principal. In order to

avoid yes-no responses the same internal and external list was used and participants were asked to use a Likert scale to rank how well prepared they were against each of these items. Included was also the option to add additional areas where they felt additional support or preparation would have in hindsight been beneficial. The idea was to establish where there were common skills which serving principals felt should be developed in those pursuing principalship. This could potentially be used to inform national training programmes offered to the sector. Linked to this was a question which asked those completing the questionnaire to consider the experiences of those pursuing principalship should have gained. This was an open ended question which was deliberately used to avoid leading the participants to answer from a determined list.

After incorporating the suggestions from Pilot Participant A, the revised questionnaire was sent to Pilot Participant B who focused more on the individual wording to ensure clarity. Pilot Participant B's only comment was that the wording of one the question was a little aggressive and they believed that their principal colleagues would possibly object to the tone of the question

Both Participant A and B did not have any comments on the layout or question order. They did both feel that this was a valuable piece of work and could inform the further education sector about the development of future leaders.

The final part of the piloting of this particular research instrument was to seek the views of Pilot Participants E and F both of whom provided valuable comments about both documents in particular around the amount of background information which should be provided to the recipients. The comments from both were included to produce the final documents which would be sent to all participants within the sample group, this can be found in appendix K.

Piloting process - phase 2

The second phase of the research was the interviews with four principals selected from those who agreed by indicating so in the questionnaire. As in phase 1 the audience for phase 2 was college principals so the same pilot participants were used and in the same order. This meant that Pilot Participant A was the first to review the questions

Pilot Participant A, agreed with the appropriateness of the questions but felt that there was a question missing. This became questions 9 and concerned the removal in July 2010 of the principals qualifying programme, and rather than merely ask principals for their opinion on the removal of this mandatory element of becoming a principal, to seek their views on what might be included in any subsequent programme if one were to be suggested. The feedback from Pilot Participant A was incorporated in the research instrument and sent to Pilot Participant B.

Pilot Participant B went through the questions answering each one in turn, which provided assurances that the responses which were likely during the fieldwork would address the subsidiary research questions which were identified in chapter one. The final research instrument can be found in appendix L.

Piloting process - phase 3

The third and final phase of the research was the focus groups with middle curriculum managers from the same colleges which participated in phase two.

Pilot Participant C who was from the same college as Pilot Participant A was the first to review the questions and like those who participated in previous piloting phases of the research did so by both reviewing the content and by answering the questions. Their only comment was regarding a potential for ambiguity in one of the questions, which was subsequently amended.

Pilot Participant D went through answering the questions which provided assurances that the likely responses would sufficiently address the subsidiary research questions. Participants E and F then considered the questions, neither of whom had any objections and were happy that the instrument be used. The final set of questions can be found in appendix M.

Validity

Having discussed the methods which were used in this research it is important to ensure that the data collected presents a realistic picture of the phenomena being studied. Validity is an important characteristic to consider when constructing or selecting a test or measurement technique and is generally to be concerned with whether the methods used measure what they were designed to. Burton et al (2008) suggest that validity is

largely governed by the extent to which the findings obtained address the research questions posed. Silverman (2005); however, expresses concerns about the use of the term validity in qualitative research due to the subjectivity of respondents, their opinions and their attitudes all of which together contributes to a degree of bias. Instead Silverman (2005) suggests that the term validity which is commonly applied to all forms of research, be replaced with trustworthiness as a preferred term for qualitative research. The debate around validity when applied to quantitative and qualitative methods is ongoing (Cohen et al, 2007; Guba and Lincoln, 1989 and Maxwell, 1992) and focuses largely on notion of an individual's perspective and understanding of the reality in which they operate. For example ethnographic studies generally provide high levels of validity as the researcher is able to get a very detailed depth of understanding relating to an individual; however, the findings would possible be unrepresentative and unreliable as this is merely one individuals perspective. Conversely purely quantitative approaches to research while being largely reliable and representative are often seen as invalid as they lack the depth of understanding which is obtained from qualitative based research. Therefore there is a case for the adoption of a mixed methods approach to research which combines both quantitative tools, in this study the questionnaire used in phase one, and the qualitative tools, phase two interviews and phase three focus groups, to provide the depth of understanding necessary to ensure that the findings are valid.

McNeill and Chapman (2005) point out that problems arise when the data obtained is a result of the methods used rather than the phenomena being studied. In order to ensure validity of the questionnaire a rigorous piloting process was undertaken with individuals who currently hold the post of principal, the same as those in the target group.

As already mentioned interviews with principals formed phase two and focus groups forming phase 3 of the research and Wragg (2002, pg 143) reminds us that interviews as a research tool are 'riddled with numerous pitfalls', therefore it is vital to put measures in place to minimise any potential sources of bias. In order to increase the validity of the research findings a Delphi technique (Robson, 2002) was used whereby data from the questionnaires used in phase 1, would inform the interview schedules used in phase 2. As with phase 1, phase 2 required a rigorous piloting process with the same pilot participants, which helped to remove any potential issues of ambiguity of questions, a

potential risk to validity highlighted by Appleton (1995). Robson (2003) highlights three threats to validity, reactivity, whereby the researcher's presence may in some way interfere with the setting which forms the study. In this research the setting was the individual colleges, environments in which participants felt comfortable in. The second threat identified is respondent bias whereby participants are obstructive or withholding information. To minimise the risk of this happening all participants, were assured of confidentiality and anonymity throughout the research process. This was further enhanced by not addressing individuals by name during the focus groups and keeping all questions open to the entire group. Indeed it was the first and last time that the participants met in the context of this research. An additional form of respondent bias is when participants either withholding information or become obstructive, to providing responses which they believe the researcher wants to here. One way to mitigate against this is through triangulation to cross check responses. This was done between participants in phase two and within focus groups and between the different focus groups in phase three. All participants in both phases 2 and 3 were given details about the aims of this research and the purpose for undertaking it and that it was not institutionally specific which allowed for the views of individuals to be forthcoming. The third and final risk identified by Robson (2002) was the researcher's assumptions interfering with the research process. The notion of researcher bias is well documented and in order to avoid this open ended questions were used throughout the interviewing process and where appropriate additional questions were used to further clarify points made, avoiding the need to make post-interview assumptions about what was meant. Having taken what is considered to be reasonable steps to reduce the threats to validity, Hammersley (1990) points that there is always tension in the relationship between the opinions, beliefs, knowledge and the values of the participant and reality, which is far from straightforward and that a research instrument cannot reproduce reality, merely represent it.

Reliability

Reliability refers to the degree to which a measuring procedure gives consistent results. That is, a reliable test is a test which provides a consistent set of responses for a group of individuals if it is administered independently on several occasions. Another individual using the same research methods with the same participants should obtain the same results. This is how McNeill and Chapman (2005) describe reliability,

but they imply that some methods are more reliable than others. Likewise they suggest a lone researcher working with participants is in danger of being considered unreliable as the research cannot be replicated. Denzin and Lincoln (1994) suggest that reliability should be considered in terms of replicability and the extent to which the same observations or interpretations would have been made if undertaken at a different time. Bogdan and Biklen (1992) take a slightly different stance in arguing that reliability should be considered in terms of the fit between what was recorded by the researcher and what actually occurred. There are similarities in the descriptions suggested, with McNeill and Chapman (2005) and Denzin and Lincoln (1994) both referring to obtaining consistent responses being obtained on multiple occasions. It is this view which is consistent with one's own interpretation of the literature. Research should be replicable and provide broadly consistent findings acknowledging that not all variables will be the same.

The issue when considering the reliability of data which is based on interpretive values is whether consistent responses can be obtained. Cohen et al (2007) suggest that there are various forms of reliability, such as; reliability as stability – where reliability is measure of consistency over time; reliability as a consistency – whereby a 'test' is done twice demonstrating consistency, and that the same level of reliability seen with quantitative methods may simply be unachievable, with all forms of reliability, when applied to qualitative techniques. This is due to the lack of control in the natural environment in which the research is undertaken and the unpredictability of the outcomes obtained, which should be seen as a strength rather than a weakness. This does not mean that those undertaking qualitative based research should not seek to achieve the highest levels of reliability possible within their control but acknowledging the variables which are outside of the researchers control.

In conducting the fieldwork for this research there is a preference towards Bogdan and Bilken's (1992) view that reliability should be the fit between what was recorded and what actually occurs. Therefore care needs to be taken to ensure a level of accuracy and detail in the recording of research. This research is seeking to obtain information about leadership practice and the skills necessary to pursue principalship, so in order to achieve this, there has to be closeness between the practices enacted by college

principals and what is recorded and reported in this thesis. By using audio recording equipment it was possible for the detail of the interviews to be captured for subsequent transcription. It is for this reason that Bogdan and Bilken's (1992) view is the one which best fits the position taken in conducting this study.

Reliability of postal questionnaires such as those used in phase one of this study, can be a particular problem, in particular whether those who completed the questionnaire did so honestly and accurately. While it is difficult to fully check the level of honest and accuracy of responds, as this goes back to Robson's (2002) view on respondent bias, a level of checking can be achieved by triangulating the findings. This triangulation could be done by interviewing those who responded, but it becomes impractical as the sample size increases, as in this research, undertaking 65 interviews and 65 focus groups would not be possible with the resources available. In order to increase reliability of the findings from the questionnaire it is important to have as large a number of responses as possible, particularly where the findings are being used to inform subsequent stages of the research process. Edwards et al (2002) highlight a number of ways of increasing participation in postal questionnaires. These included monetary incentives, using a short questionnaire, personalised letters to recipients, stamped return envelopes, and providing a second copy when following up non-respondents. With the exception of a monetary incentive all of these were followed, however they did not provide the increases in responses suggested. From the 65 questionnaires which were sent 19 were returned representing a 29.2% response rate which is lower than McNeill and Chapman (2005) suggest. Of those who didn't respond to the questionnaire a number did acknowledge it stating that it was the principal's policy not to respond to requests to participate in research, or that they were too busy to complete it.

Cohen et al (2007) suggest that interviewees and interviewers[3] bring their own agenda into the interview situation (page 121) and this can make the interview unreliable. This can be a particular problem if the interview seeks sensitive or intrusive information; which this research does not. In order to avoid this, the advice of Silverman (2005) is adopted who suggests that this can be controlled by using a structured interview with

[3] In this context interview will be used to mean both the phase 2 interviews with individual college principals and the phase 3 collective interviews (focus groups) with middle curriculum managers.

the same format and sequence of questions for each interviewee. While this research did not seek sensitive or intrusive information, the responses were the personal views of those participating. In order to ensure consistency between the different interviews the same questions were used for all the interviews with principals and a different set of questions was used with all the focus groups. Appendix K details the questions used for all interviews with principals and appendix L, the questions for the focus groups. Silverman (2005) goes on to suggest that reliability of interviews can be increased by careful piloting of the questions used, a view which is shared by Oppenheim (1992) who suggests that every aspect of the research method should be piloted. As with questionnaire a rigorous process was undertaken with pilot participants from the same institutions involved in the questionnaire piloting and of the same target audience. Hill (1995) points to another issue when interviewing 'elites', defined as chief executives or chairmen [sic] or managing directors of organisations, and that is ensuring that they stay on-script: answering the questions asked. This is due to them being accustomed to setting the agenda and those individuals having extensive media experience are wary of what they say. It is therefore not only important to ensure that questions are piloted, but the questions are rehearsed prior to undertaking the interviews in order that the issues which Hill (1995) highlights are not encountered.

The piloting process not only provided an opportunity to consider the appropriateness of the questions, but all provided a valuable opportunity to rehearse the interviews and focus groups with participants who are from those groups. This allowed for a more confident interview to be conducted.

Generalisations

Robson (2002) says that generalisation is the extent to which the findings of a study are applicable outside of the context for the study. Plowright (2011) suggests that in order for this to happen successfully, then the closer the research situation is to the target population, the greater the level of trustworthiness will be in generalisations made. Within a positivistic approach the research seeks universal generalisations, something which is often lacking in interpretive research that seeks a greater understanding through a shared meaning of a phenomena occurring in a natural environment. Simon (1963) suggests that as qualitative inquiry seeks depth of understanding it may lack

generalisability. Therefore in order to understand the extent to which sustainable leadership is being implemented in the college and the role of the principal and the challenges which they face, it is important to have the most informed view, in this case the view of the principal. It is also important to seek the views of those on the receiving end, in that they are working in the college and have to work with the principal either directly or indirectly. A limitation of this study is that only the views of key staff have been included, and a recommendation for further research would be to seek the views of a wider range of staff.

Out of the 65 general further education college principals who were sent questionnaires as part of phase 1, only 19 completed and returned it. This was after following up non-respondents in line with Edwards et al (2002) recommendations. Given that the response rate was only 29.2% of the population it is questionable whether the findings of those who responded represent the population sampled and even more so all further education college principals. This has to be acknowledged as a limitation of this research, and one recommendation or future research is that the study is extended to include all principals of general further education colleges in England, as well as attempting to gain a higher response rate. Another challenge faced by studies similar in construction to this is that it uses a non-probability approach to sampling, principally purposive and convenience, so it is more difficult to make generalisations using such sampling strategies as participants may not be representative of the wider population (Plowright, 2011). Although principals responding to the questionnaire were asked to complete their email address if they were willing to participate in phases two and three and this was factored into the final selection of participants.

Having considered the issues of the questionnaire, thought must be given to the interviews conducted in phases 2 and 3. Knight and Sauders (1999) suggest that one cannot make generalisations from interviews, but they then go on and contradict themselves by suggesting that regardless of sample size it can be assumed that generalisations can be made. One point which they do make is that generalisability comes from the reader, not from the researcher. This can only be the case if an assumption is made, as Knight and Saunders (1999) point out, that the reader is an

expert in the field of enquiry, otherwise it is my opinion that the researcher should be making claims about generalisability.

This can be applied to this piece of work and given the limitations of the number of participants involved in both the phase 2 interviews with principals and the phase 3 focus groups the most one can realistically expect is to identify emerging themes from the analysis of the data obtained. Based on identified themes it would be up to the reader to determine the generalisability wider than the participants involved in the research. Bassey (2001) offers a solution to this, and acknowledges that the ability to encapsulate claims and make generalisations in social science research cannot be as certain as within the scientific community. He goes on to advocate the use of fuzzy generalisations, whereby under certain conditions the resultant claims can be made. It is this notion of fuzziness which I believe underpin most claims which are based on an interpretive approach.

Ethical Issues

Research can have a powerful impact on people's lives; it can alter perceptions and patterns of behaviour. It is important that measures are put in place to ensure that individuals are not exposed to harm, either physically or emotionally. McNeill and Chapman (2005) highlight the obligations which a researcher has, firstly to those participating in the research, and secondly to the research itself. There are a number of measures which the British Education Research Association (2004) have stated are principles which should govern any form of educational research. They are:

- **Voluntary Informed Consent**: researchers must take the necessary steps to ensure that all participants understand the process in which they are engaged. In this research phase 1 participants were sent a postal questionnaire with a covering letter explaining the purpose of the research and in receiving these documents they were not obliged to complete and return the questionnaire. The final question asked whether the respondent would be prepared to participate in subsequent phases of this research. Only those who agreed by completing their contact details were sampled to obtain the phase 2 participants. Those selected to

participate in phases 2 and 3 were required to sign a Faculty of Education research consent form.

- **Deception**: researchers must avoid deception or subterfuge unless the research design specifically requires it. This research does not require any form of deception and the piloting process ensures that the questions were transparent and in the case of phase 2 the selected principals were sent a copy of the consent form and questions prior to the interview. This demonstrated openness and transparency of the interview process.
- **Right to withdraw**: there must be an acknowledgement that participants can withdraw at any time for any reason and the researcher must not use coercion or duress in any way. As participants were self-selecting none of them withdrew although the option was there.
- **Children, Vulnerable Young People or Vulnerable adults**: requires, by law, that the best interests of the child or vulnerable person are the primary concern. No children or vulnerable young people or adults participated in this research.
- **Incentives**: to encourage participation must be commensurate with good sense. While Edwards et al (2002) recommend the use of incentives to increase the response rate to postal questionnaires, they were beyond the available resources for the questionnaires; participation in the focus groups was eligible to count towards the Institute for Learning's annual 30 hours of continued professional development.
- **Detriment**: researchers must make it known if there are likely to be any detrimental effects arising from the research process. The nature of this research did not anticipate any such effects and the piloting process did not highlight any either.
- **Privacy**: confidentiality and anonymity of participant data is considered the norm at all times. All participants were given assurances that their details would remain confidential and that they or their institutions could not be identified in this thesis or any subsequent publication.

It is these principles which have guided this research and through careful planning and piloting have ensured that there have not been any ethical issues arising from the research.

Selection of colleges participating in this research

Having examined the characteristics of further education both the way in which colleges are governed as well as the role of the principal, along with possibly ways of classifying colleges this section will look in detail at the way in the four colleges participating in this research were selected along with their characteristics. While this discussion would normally feature in chapter five, the first of the research methods chapters, it is appropriate that this is discussed in this section having already examined the characteristics of further education colleges.

The quality of research is not only determined by the methods and methodology used, but also the suitability of the sampling strategy. That is the view of Cohen et al (2007) who suggest that sampling decisions should be taken early on in a piece of research and are not only governed by the size of the potential population involved in the study, but also the practicalities of undertaking the research such as time, expense and accessibility to the population. Cohen et al (2007) goes on to say that the sample, once derived from the total population, must be representative of the population being targeted. In this case the colleges participating in the research must be representative of those nationally, which will be discussed in detail in chapter five. This research is based on a cross sectional strategy (Robson, 2002) looking at what the perceived issues are for potential future principals on one occasion only. If time and resources were available then it would be possible to undertake a longitudinal study with a group of individuals and consider the same factors over a period of time and in particular as their careers develop.

The sampling strategy will use a non-probability approach (Cohen et al, 2007; Plowright, 2011), with the population of the sample being general further education colleges, By limiting the population to general further education colleges one can be sure that comparisons can be made as institutions will all be of the same classification.

The sampling unit will be selected based on geography and size, defined by Cohen et al (2007) as cluster sampling, and will focus the sample to the South East, including London. This provides a total of 65 general further education colleges which will form the sampling unit; this represents 34% of the total population. While not as large a

sample as suggested by Cohen et al (2007) when the practicalities such as cost and time are factored in along with all colleges being in the same geographical region, then there is a logical rationale as to why the sample chosen. This will make access to colleges logistically easier with the resources available and ensure that there is a wide range of colleges in terms of size using Paynes (2008) classifications. In addition, the research will incorporate a non-probabilistic purposive approach (McNeill and Chapman, 2005, Pg 50) to obtain the final sample of colleges. In this case the purposive sample will include:

- two colleges large colleges based on Paynes (2008) definition.

plus

- two colleges which are classed as medium sized..

Table 7 summarises the sampling strategies used to select the final 4 colleges to participate in the empirical aspect of this thesis.

Technique	Selection	Note
Population	General Further Education colleges	
Sampling Unit – Cluster	General Further Education colleges in South East England including London	
Purposive	4 colleges: 2x medium sized 2x large	*Convenience sample will also be used to identify the colleges in each of the categories based on questionnaire responses.*

Table 7: Summary of the sampling strategy

The selection of two medium and two large colleges was designed to ensure that not only was there representation of the different colleges within the sampling population, but also to determine whether there were specific issues which were more prevalent in one size of college compared to another. In order to establish the final selection of colleges a questionnaire was sent to all principals of general further education colleges within the sampling unit. The final question in the questionnaire asked the participants

whether they would be willing to participate in the subsequent stages of this research. Only those who expressed an interest in participating further in the research were in scope for the purposive sampling. These participants were then categorised using Payne's (2008) classification of college by income. This enabled two representatives from within the £14-£29m group to be selected and two from the group of large colleges over £29m, the criteria for selection of the final group of participants was access to the college.

Participant College 1

College 1 is categorised as a medium sized college using Payne's (2008) description, yet is the largest college in the county which it serves. The college offers a wide curriculum combining both academic courses such as A-levels and GCSEs, with vocational courses in a range of areas such as engineering, construction, information technology and business. The college is based on two campuses approximately 5 miles from each other. One campus offers predominantly A-level and GCSE courses while the other offers vocational curriculum. The college has approximately 11,000 learners equating to approximately 4700 full time equivalent learners of which about 50% are 16-18 in age and the remaining are 19+. About 60% of the total number of 16-18 and 50% of the 19+ learners are studying at either level 2 (GCSE equivalent) or level 3 (A-level equivalent). The principal has been in post for approximately 1 year having been internally promoted from vice-principal responsible for curriculum. The college was inspected by Ofsted in quarter 2 of 2009, under the leadership of the previous principal, and was graded as good overall. The quality of provision has according to Ofsted improved since their inspection in quarter 1 of 2005, which saw the college graded as satisfactory with one unsatisfactory area, but as quality has improved the number of students has declined, from just over 15,000 to the 11,000 quoted in their most recent report.

Participant College 2

College 2 is also medium sized college using Payne's (2008) definition but whereas college 1 was at the top of Payne's category, college 2 is at the very bottom. The college is in the same county as college 1 but serves a semi-rural area, with significant challenges in travelling to the college. While the college is located on the outskirts and a small town and does provide a free bus service form the rail station many of their

students still face travel issues if their want to attend the college. The curriculum offered is all vocationally orientated in areas including business, health and social care, construction, hair and beauty and motor vehicle engineering. They do not offer any academic based curriculum, GCSEs or A-levels, having decided not continue with them as a response to declining standards. The college has approximately 900 learners aged 16-18 of which 90% are studying full time. They also have about 2000 learners aged 19+ of which 90% are part time. The principal has been at the college for 9 years and came to the post with the college having received an unsatisfactory inspection from the Adult Learning Inspectorate, which later merged with Ofsted. In the colleges last inspection in quarter 4 of 2009 the college was graded overall as good with outstanding features. What is unique about the college is that in 2002 the college relocated to a purpose built site as a pilot to see whether private finance initiatives could be used to build and manage college estates. Ball (2007) points out the challenges which this type of public private sector collaboration presents and since this project no further private finance initiatives for colleges have commenced.

Participant College 3

College 3 is a large college based on Payne's (2008) categorisation, with an income in excess of £50m and is located across two campuses, one in a market town on the south coast, the second being 20 miles further inland. The college courses in all 15 subject sector areas (appendix A) and in 2009/10 had just over 15,000 full time students, with a large number of part time adult learners too. The college had a full Ofsted inspection in 2008 and were graded good overall; however, student achievement was graded as satisfactory and the college had a particular issue with the success of their short courses which were subjected it a Learning and Skills Council notice to improve. In early 2010 the college appointed a new principal, just they didn't take up the post until late 2010, and unlike the other colleges the new post holder did not follow a teaching route, instead coming from a financial services background and entering further education as a vice-principal for finance and resources.

Participant College 4

The final college, College 4, is also a large college further education college, (approximately £43m) and operates across 4 campuses across a large shire county, all

under the same college name. The college also operates another further education institution as a limited company, which was the result of a divestment from a higher education provider. The newly formed institution is a called a college but does not confirm to the requirements of the Further and Higher Education Act (1992), and as a result does not hold its own funding contract, instead all the funding and learner numbers are counted as part of college fours figures. The college offers courses in all sector subject areas (appendix A) with the exception of land-based subjects such as agriculture, horticulture and animal care. The college currently has in excess of 13,500 students with a majority of students studying at their city centre campus. The principal who is currently in their second principalship post, followed a traditional teaching route into senior leadership.

Implementing the research instruments

Phase 1

The first phase of the research involved the use of a questionnaire to the principals of general further education colleges in the South East and London. A list of institutions from the former Learning and Skills Council was used as this lists all publically funding further education institutions along with their designations, such as general further education colleges, sixth form colleges and agricultural colleges (see chapter one for a full list of further education designations). This provided a list of 65 institutions which formed the sample for this phase of the research. The next decision was the method of deployment, which could be either paper based or online. Burton et al (2008) suggests that an electronic questionnaire, either an attachment to an email or a web link to an online questionnaire, might be preferred to a postal questionnaire as it is cheaper to deploy and potentially easier for participants to respond. However, this does limit where respondents can complete the questionnaire, as internet access is required, whereas, paper based questionnaires are not limited in this way. Plowright (2011) like Burton et al (2008) advocates using a web based questionnaire as they are relatively quick and cheap to administer. Cohen et al (2007) however suggest that a postal questionnaire is the most appropriate way of deploying a questionnaire; however, there have been advances since Cohen et al's (2007) article on the availability of and cost associated with web based systems. Despite the arguments put forward for use of a web based system a postal questionnaire was used for the following reasons. While Plowright

(2011) points to the relative cost of a web based system compared to the cost of a postal questionnaire, there is still a cost incurred when using web based questionnaire systems. There are systems which allow users to create a questionnaire for free, but these have two elements which limit their effectiveness. Firstly, they are often limited to ten questions per questionnaire, and presuppose the design of the questionnaire will not exceed this. Should more than 10 questions be required then the user must upgrade their subscription which incurs a cost greater than using a postal questionnaire. Secondly, the free questionnaires which are generated have high levels of advertising to the detriment of the overall look of the questionnaire. This is particularly important when considering Oppenheim's (1992) opinion on the layout of the questionnaire which should be considered during the piloting process. Another element which influenced the decision to use a postal questionnaire was the availability of the email addresses of the principal which are often not publically available compared to college postal addresses.

All the questionnaires sent had a personalised covering letter explaining the purpose of the research and had a randomly generated number which enabled response to be tracked. Those responses not received after the given deadline were followed up using the suggestions put forward in Edward et al (2002). This follow up work did not yield the expected return suggested by Cohen et al (2007).

Phase 2

Prior to conducting the interviews with college principals they had to be identified. A full explanation as to the criteria for selecting colleges was detailed in chapter four, but in summary two colleges were from Payne's (2008) category of medium sized colleges with an income of between £14m and £29m. The remaining two colleges were from the large category of colleges with income over £29m.

Having identified the colleges and principals who would participate in phase two, one to one interviews, the next stage was to contact the principal to confirm that they were still willing to participate and to confirm a mutually convenient time to conduct the interview. As the principals were self-selecting and had provided their email address as part of the questionnaire response then establishing contact with them was a relatively easy process.

With dates confirmed a copy of the interview questions was sent with a copy of the Faculty of Education's consent form which would be collected at the start of the interview. All interviews followed the same format with an overview of the research, reassurances of anonymity and confidentiality before commencing with the questions. All interviews were scheduled to be one hour long and most came to their natural conclusion after about 55 minutes, with the exception of one which lasted for one hour, twenty minutes. All participants were very accommodating both with their time and also their openness in responding to each of the questions, and believed the research to be very valuable and requested that they have copies of any publications arising from this study.

After completing each of the interviews the recording of each were transcribed and checked for accuracy.

Phase 3

In order to set up the focus groups an email was sent to each of the principals participating in phase 2 thanking them for their time and contribution to the research. The email requested that they facilitate focus groups with middle curriculum managers in order to participate in phase 3. The email suggested that the focus group be added to the end of an existing meeting with the curriculum managers in order to ensure the maximum number of participants be available. Principals were prompt in responding and providing the contact details of the senior manager with responsibility for the curriculum who in turn offered a number of possible dates and times which would be convenient to attend.

Having established the dates for each meeting, the same format was used for each of the meetings which were as follows:

- An introduction to the research and its aims, as well as details of phases one and two.
- Explanation of the first two activities which involved responding to questions on the role of the principal and the attributes needed to be a principal using the posts-it notes provided.

- The second part of the focus group was run as a discussion which was recorded and subsequently transcribed and considered the remaining questions.

The focus groups varied in length with the two smaller groups (n=4 and n=5) lasting about forty five minutes and the larger groups (n=11 and n=13) lasting approximately an hour. Demographic data was collected from each of the participants within the groups under the headings of gender, age range, and curriculum areas managed. This would provide some interesting data around the profile of middle curriculum managers, and gender data could be used as a comparator with gender of principals. The curriculum areas question sought to ensure representativeness of the range of curriculum areas across all colleges participating in phase 3.

Conclusions

This chapter has suggested that research is principally concerned with developing an understanding informed by evidence which is trustworthy. The chapter argues that there are differing degrees of trustworthiness and these are underpinned by differing sets of ontological and epistemological assumptions. At one extreme the idea of reality being independent of humans: objective reality; at the other extreme reality being subjective, with Matthews (1992) stating that individuals view reality through a lens and all the lens have a differing view even when observing the same phenomenon. This is as a result of the different experiences individuals have which shape their thinking and understanding of the world in which they live.

From the literature there are those such as Guba and Lincoln (1994) and Schwandt (1994) who argue that the positivism and interpretive approaches are incompatible as they have different assumptions on reality. Arguing that these approaches can be successfully combined Tashakkori and Teddlie (1998); Howe (1998); Reichardt and Rallis (1994) have all put forward a case that rather than seeking absolute truth one should consider a version of truth that works at this moment in time. As a result, the claims arising from the research within this thesis are based within a pragmatist approach which as Brannen (2005) suggests that it is not the only way to obtain a multiple and diverse perspective on a phenomenon as it uses an approach which combines existing paradigms.

Issues relating to validity, reliability and the ability to make generalisations based on the findings of the research were discussed and the chapter articulated the mechanisms put in place during the design stage to mitigate the risks associated with each of phases of the research. The chapter also consider the process of conducting the research, including the selection of the participating institutions, the piloting of the research instruments used and there subsequent deployment.

Chapter six presents the data from each of the three phases of the research prior to the detailed discussion on chapter seven.

Chapter 6: Results

Introduction

This chapter presents the findings from each of the phases of the fieldwork and highlights some of the themes which will be explored in detail in chapter seven. The first set of research data to be presented emerged from the foregoing discussions in chapter three on the use of a framework of sustainable leadership for further education colleges (Lambert, 2011). The second and third sets of data consider the role of the principal and the development of future principals through the reality of current principals and subsequently through middle curriculum managers some of whom will aspire to principalship.

Phase 1 findings

As previously mentioned, phase 1 was a questionnaire which was sent to the principals of general further education colleges in the South East and London. Out of 65 questionnaire sent out, 19 responses were received, representing a 29% return.

In order that the data is presented in a coherent manner, the results will be grouped into three categories:

1. demographic data;
2. responses to the framework of sustainable leadership for further education;
3. principalship: current role and the development of future leaders.

Demographic Data

From the responses received, 9 (47%) were from male principals and 10 (53%) from female postholders, which is broadly consistent with gender divide of the sample involved in this phase, which was 54% male and 46% female and also consistent with national data which demonstrates that 60% of postholders were male and 40% female.

The average age of respondents was between 50 and 59 years old, with 42% falling into this category, which is in line with published data from Frearson (2003) and Clancy (2005) both of whom state that the average age at the time of publication was 52 years

old, therefore between 2003 and 2011, the average age of principals does not seem to have significantly changed.

Respondents represented colleges which were categorised using Payne's (2006) classification and shown in table 15 below.

Classification by income	Respondents	Sample
Less than £14m	21%	18%
£14 to £24m	52.6%	52%
£25m+	26.3%	31%

Table 8: Responses classified by income

What is illustrated by table 8 is that responses are broadly representative of the sample group participating in phase 1 of this study.

Out of all respondents which were in the category of income exceeding £25m per annum, only 2 out of a possible 10 were members of the 157 group; a membership group of large successful colleges formed to greater influence further education policy.

Data collected in the demographic section of the questionnaire considered the geographical location of institutions, using the Skills Funding Agency sub-regions. This was important to ensure that all respondents were not grouped together in one area. Table 9 illustrates the sub-regions and the local authority areas which constitute each sub-region, the number of colleges in the area and the number of responses received.

Sub-region	Total no of colleges[4]	No of responses	% return
Hampshire *Hampshire, Isle of Wight, Southampton, Portsmouth*	11	3	27%
Kent and Medway *Kent, Medway*	6	0	0%
London East *Barking and Dagenham, Bexley, Greenwich, Hackney, Havering, Lewisham, London (City of), Newham, Redbridge, Tower Hamlets*	8	1	13%
London West *Brent, Ealing, Hammersmith and Fulham, Harrow, Hillingdon, Hounslow*	4	1	25%
London South *Bromley, Croydon, Kingston upon Thames, Merton, Richmond upon Thames, Sutton*	5	4	80%
London North *Barnet, Enfield, Haringey, Waltham Forest*	5	1	20%
London Central *Camden, Islington, Kensington and Chelsea, Lambeth, Southwark, Wadsworth, Westminster (City of)*	7	1	14%
Surrey *Surrey*	3	1	33%
Sussex *Brighton and Hove, East Sussex, West Sussex*	8	3	38%
Thames Valley *Bracknell Forest, Buckinghamshire, Milton Keynes, Oxfordshire, Reading, West Berkshire, Windsor and Maidenhead, Wokingham*	8	4	50%

Table 9: Responses by geographical area

[4] Within the sample

While there were only 19 responses to the questionnaire, table 16 illustrates the location of institutions who did respond. All areas returned at least one response with the exception of Kent and Medway, despite using the measures to increase the rate of return discussed by Edwards et al (2002). This shows that there was good coverage of respondents across the South East and London. The range of areas represented by the responses received will provide confidence in any subsequent claims made about the level of agreement surrounding the sustainable leadership framework.

Responses to the framework of sustainable leadership for further education

The second set of results presented within this section focuses on the framework of sustainable leadership for further education colleges. The model, derived from the review of literature carried out in chapter three, found that existing models could not be easily applied to the further education sector, Lambert (2011). The resulting model was an adaption of existing frameworks from Hargreaves and Fink (2006) and Davies (2009). The questionnaire sought the views of principals, by means of a Likert scale, as to the extent to which they agreed on the value of each of the component elements of the proposed framework. The subsequent section will discuss the degree to which they felt that the individual elements appear within their own institutions. Table 10 presents the results pertaining to the degree of agreement to each of elements of the framework with the percentage scores under each of the headings.

	Name	Summary	Strong Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strong Disagree
1	Builds capacity of staff	My organisation provides opportunities and motivates staff to develop their skills in leadership and management. This could be through formal training, work shadowing, mentoring or any other appropriate structured approach.	52.6% n=10	47.3% n=9	0% n=0	0% n=0
2	Strategic distribution	My organisation enables individuals at all levels of the organisation to engage in leadership activities which bring about sustainable improvement through the distribution of strategic initiatives. This might be through leadership of whole college projects which bring about change.	47.3% n=9	47.3% n=9	5.3% n=1	0% n=0
3	Consolidates	My organisation seeks to enable and foster opportunities to work collaboratively and develop partnerships, ensuring that the learning available meets the needs of the locality. This might be through staff working with 14-19 partnerships or curriculum collaboration with schools and other learning providers.	84.2% n=16	15.8% n=3	0% n=0	0% n=0
4	Builds long term objective from short term goals	My organisation enables all staff to contribute to creating synergy between the long-term objectives of the organisation and the short-term targets imposed by funding agencies. This could be achieved through staff working on departmental business or service plans.	31.6% n=6	68.4% n=13	0% n=0	0% n=0
5	Diversity	My organisation enables social inclusion and cohesion to be created. This is done through engaging with stakeholders to promote inclusion of under represented groups participating at the college.	63.2% n=12	36.8% n=7	0% n=0	0% n=0
6	Conserves	My organisation enables managers and leaders to honour and learn from the past to create a better future.	31.6% n=6	63.2% n=12	5.3% n=1	0% n=0

Table 10: Sustainable leadership framework agreement of elements

Table 10 illustrates that there is overwhelming support for the elements of the sustainable leadership framework proposed. As part of the questionnaire participants were given the opportunity to suggest additional elements which they felt should be included in the framework; however, none did. What was highlighted by table 10 was that a number of respondents indicated that they *agree* rather than *strongly agree* with the elements presented. Oppenheim (1992) suggests that this could be due to a lack of understanding towards the subject, but goes on to argue that using *agree* and *strongly agree* provides more precise information about a respondent's degree of agreement or disagreement. The findings suggest that there is further work to be done, particularly in articulating the meaning of the individual elements in order that those participants who selected *agree* from the Likert scale fully understand the framework. There were a minority of respondents (5.3%) who disagreed with the notion that individuals at all level of organisation should be engaged in leadership activities, element 2. Harris (2004) advocates the positive benefits of teacher involvement in leadership leading to sustained organisational improvement as a result of using distributed leadership. Also, a small number of respondents (5.3%) disagreed with the statement that organisations should learn from the past to create a better future, element 6. This is a view which Lamond (2005) argues against, suggesting that organisations need to consider the past more than merely *en passant*, and instead of simply picking out lessons from the past to apply to the present or future, actually analysing in detail the decision making process and then remembering to build on past rather than repeat it.

The responses to the questionnaire illustrate that there is support, in principle, for a framework of sustainable leadership for further education colleges, but it is unclear why principals are supportive of the elements proposed. It could be argued that it's not a case of being supportive, rather a matter of compliance, in that there is a requirement imposed by external agencies such as Ofsted to undertake a specific activity, such as ensuring the institution is socially inclusive. The support illustrated through table 10 cannot be considered a general view, due to two factors. Firstly, the sample participating in this research is confined to general further education colleges in the South East and London, 65 in total, and excludes other categories of further education colleges, such as agricultural or specialist art colleges (see chapter one for details of all the sub-categories for further education). Secondly, the response rate was only 29.3%, so it could be

questioned whether these responses can be generalised within the sample group itself. This size of the sample group has been, in chapter five, identified as a limitation of this research, and will be further discussed in chapter eight.

The second question posed used the sustainable leadership framework (as in table 10) but focused on the extent to which respondents felt that the component elements were currently being implemented within their organisations, unlike the previous table which considered the extent to which principals agreed with the elements of the framework. Principals were invited by means of a Likert scale to state the extent to which they agreed that the elements were being implemented. Table 11 presents that framework with the score under each of the headings.

	Name	Summary	Strong Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strong Disagree
1	Builds capacity of staff	My organisation provides opportunities and motivates staff to develop their skills in leadership and management. This could be through formal training, work shadowing, mentoring or any other appropriate structured approach.	31.6% n=6	68.4% n=13	0% n=0	0% n=0
2	Strategic distribution	My organisation enables individuals at all levels of the organisation to engage in leadership activities which bring about sustainable improvement through the distribution of strategic initiatives. This might be through leadership of whole college projects which bring about change.	15.8% n=3	63.2% n=12	21% n=4	0% n=0
3	Consolidates	My organisation seeks to enable and foster opportunities to work collaboratively and develop partnerships, ensuring that the learning available meets the needs of the locality. This might be through staff working with 14-19 partnerships or curriculum collaboration with schools and other learning providers.	52.6% n=10	47.4% n=9	0% n=0	0% n=0
4	Builds long term objective from short term goals	My organisation enables all staff to contribute to creating synergy between the long-term objectives of the organisation and the short-term targets imposed by funding agencies. This could be achieved through staff working on departmental business or service plans.	5.3% n=1	89.5% n=17	5.3% n=1	0% n=0
5	Diversity	My organisation enables social inclusion and cohesion to be created. This is done through engaging with stakeholders to promote inclusion of under represented groups participating at the college.	42.1% n=8	57.8% n=11	0% n=0	0% n=0
6	Conserves	My organisation enables managers and leaders to honour and learn from the past to create a better future.	32% n=6	57.8% n=11	10.5% n=2	0% n=0

Table 11: Sustainable Leadership Framework implementation

Principals were asked two questions relating to the framework presented to them. The first question was the extent to which respondents agreed with the individual elements presented, and these were reported in table 10. The second question was based on the same sustainable leadership model and considered the extent to which individual elements of the framework were being implemented by colleges as judged by the responding principal. Table 10 suggested that there was overall agreement of the individual elements as already discussed, whereas in table 11 a greater number of respondents opted for either *agree* or *disagree* options on the Likert scale, suggesting that there was a belief among respondents that the elements were not fully being implemented within their institutions. It was never the intention to provide specific detail surrounding the individual elements of the framework so that colleges could develop actions relevant to their own organisation. Feedback from the questionnaire suggests respondents would welcome further guidance on the implementation of the framework.

Principalship: current role and the development of future leaders

The third element of the questionnaire focused on the role of the principal, as it is currently, and the development of those who aspire to become the future leaders of further education colleges.

Principals were invited to indicate the types of activities, internal or external, which in a typical week consumed their time. Participants were not asked to log the amount of time spent on specific activities as this was not the purpose of the question. It was believed that respondents would be honest in their responses as the questions were around types of activities undertaken in a typical week and was not a reflection or analysis of their management style. The focus was on the context of the respondent's working week, so responses are open to interpretation: what might be considered a lot to one, would be completely different to another principal.

Under the internal activities the tasks which respondents spent the most amount of time on during the week were:

- **Management meetings**
    - 63.2% said that they spent quite a lot of their time on management meetings;
    - 26.3% saying a lot;
    - 10.5% saying a little.

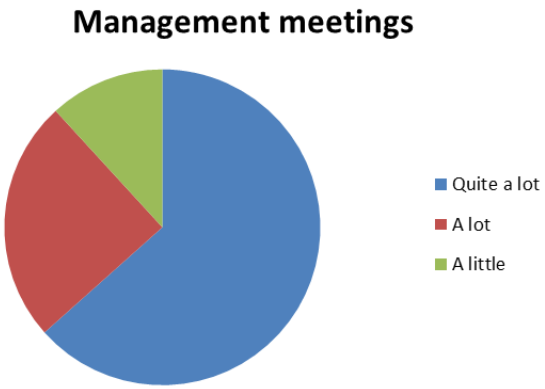

Figure 4: Time spent in management team meeting

It is interesting that 10.5% of respondents suggested that they spent little time in management meetings; this could possibly be due to how respondents classified their meetings or the extent to which principals delegate functions to deputies. In this context management meetings are defined as meeting that the principal would attend with staff, which were not full senior leadership team meetings.

- **Strategic Planning** – principals stated that:
    - 52.6% stated that quite a lot of their time was spent on this;
    - 5.3% said that the biggest part of their week was spent on activities associated with strategic planning;
    - 5.3% said they spent a fair amount of time on this;
    - 26.3% responded saying a little of their time was dedicated to strategic planning;
    - 5.3% said that actually very little time was spent on strategic planning.

Figure 5: Time spent on strategic planning issues

It is surprising that 31.3% of respondents stated that they spend little or very little time on strategic planning, given the importance that Middlewood and Lumby (2004) place on strategy. One explanation could be that as Preedy et al (2004) argues strategic planning and the subsequent implementation of the plan is central to the work of the organisation and therefore is not an isolated function. Pascale (1990) argue that there is no guarantee of success as a result of strategic planning, but success is impossible without a strategic plan. West-Burnham (1994) suggests that strategic planning is a critical part of a principal's role and acts as a map between perceived present situation within an institution and desired future situation.

- **Meeting and dealing with staff issues**
  - 57.9% said that they spend a quite a lot of time on staffing issues;
  - 42.1% said that a little amount of time was spend on staffing.

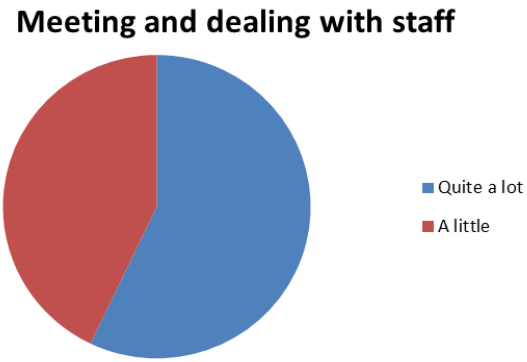

Figure 6: Principals time meeting and dealing with staff issues

Given that typically 64% of a college's income is spent on staffing (Skills Funding Agency, 2011) it could be questioned whether sufficient time is devoted to dealing with staff, both with issues which they face, as stated here, and being visible and approachable to staff generally within the college.

- **Meeting and dealing with student issues**
  - 47.4% of respondents said they spent a little time engaging with students;
  - 47.4% indicated that they felt they spent a fair amount of time with students;
  - 5.3% stated that they spend a lot of time meeting and dealing with students.

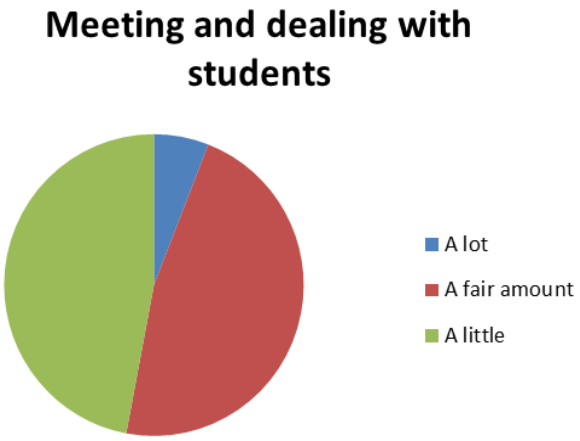

Figure 7: Principals time spent meeting and dealing with students

As colleges exist to deliver a curriculum to ensure that students gain the skills necessary to eventually become economically active members of society (Leitch, 2006) one does question how the principal gains an insight into the needs of the student. It might be through a formal feedback mechanism such as student surveys or through a bottom up approach whereby principals are reliant on information provided to them through the hierarchical structure of the college. As Linford (2009) states there is a direct link between the numbers of students at the levels of income a college receives, therefore it might be considered surprising that engagement with students is not higher on the list of priorities. Principals might argue that they simply do not have sufficient time to engage with students in which case there is possibly a compelling argument that time should be made through effective delegation to deputies. Or that there is a

member of the college's senior leadership such as a deputy or vice-principal that has the specific responsibility for students. Kember (2002) argues that the use of questionnaires and surveys does not improve the quality of the teaching and learning experience which students receive. If this is the case, then it could be argued that it is vitally important that principals do make even the smallest amount of time to engage with students.

- **Board or Corporation meetings**
    - 47.4% said they spend a fair amount of their time in corporation meetings either collectively or individually;
    - 10.5% felt that spent quite a lot of their time with the corporation;
    - 42.1% said that they spent a little time on this.

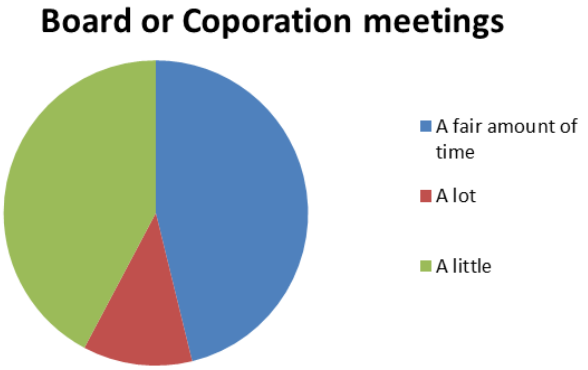

Figure 8: Time spent in meetings with the board or corporation members.

The considerable variation illustrated by respondents might be due to institutional challenges being faced, rather than the wider policy context, but given that the governance framework for colleges, the instrument and articles of government, require corporations to meet fully only once a term, with committees as necessary and that all corporations require a clerk to support the governance process, it appears that in some cases a significant amount is being spent engaging with corporation members.

- **Governance** – this is associated with the above, but not through the meeting of corporation members, but rather ensuring that as the accountable officer the college is complying with both its own governance arrangements and its

statutory duties under the financial memorandums laid out by the various funding agencies. The results are not surprising:

- 5.3% saying that very little time is spent on this;
- 31.6% saying a little time is spent on this;
- 42.1% a fair amount of time is spent on this;
- 10.5% a lot of time is spent on this;
- 5.3% saying that the biggest part of their week is spent on governance matters.

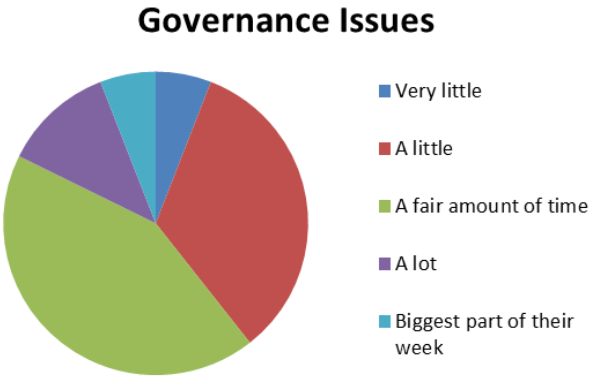

Figure 9: Time spent dealing with governance issues.

One of the principles of good governance as identified by CiFPA (2004) is ensuring transparent systems, processes and procedures in place to enable compliance with the regulatory frameworks which exist for further education colleges. This regulatory framework was described in chapter four, and with Ofsted (2011) placing increasing prominence on governance in the success of colleges, it is unsurprising that respondents spend significant amounts of time dealing with governance matters.

- **Team meeting**
  - 78.9% of principals said that they spent either a lot or a fair amount of time in team meetings with those who directly report to them;
  - 5.3% saying that the biggest part of their week was in team meetings;
  - 15.8% saying they spent very little time in team meetings.

Figure 10: Time spent in team meetings.

The above chart illustrates the percentage of a principal's week spent in team meetings. This is where they are working with the full senior leadership team of the college

What the responses illustrate is that a majority of a principal's internal time is spent in meetings, either staff, management or team meetings, dealing with strategic and governance issues, with proportionally less time being spent with students. If these findings are compared with the analysis of principals' job descriptions conducted in chapter four there is a direct link with the core requirements identified. These requirements were: *providing leadership of the staff and the college; advising the corporation;* acting as the *Accounting Officer* and *delivering outstanding education and training.*

Contrary to this, principal's external time seems to be spent engaging equally with strategic partners, such as funding agencies and local authorities, with community partners, business partners and political representatives.

- **Meeting with other education stakeholders** – given the requirement placed by the previous Labour government on collaboration, and the 14-19 Diploma curriculum which forced institutions from both the compulsory and post-compulsory sectors to collaborate there is little surprise that even though the requirements to offer the 14-19 Diplomas are no longer in place, colleges continue to spend a significant amount of time on meetings with other education stakeholders.

- 63.2% of respondents stated that they spend either a fair amount or a quite a lot of time in externally organised meetings with funding agencies, local authorities or 14-19 strategic partnerships.
- 36.8% of principals responding said that they spend little time engaging with other education stakeholders.

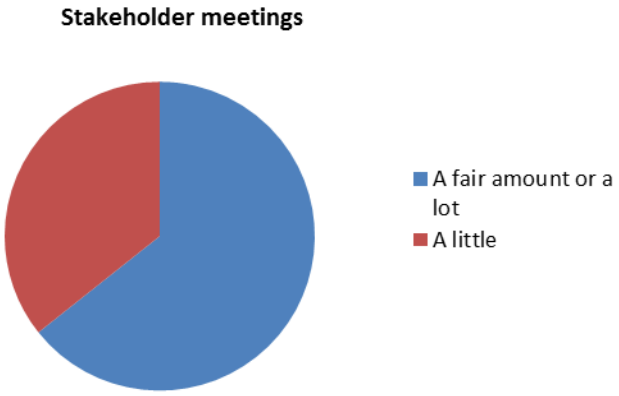

Figure 11: Meetings with education stakeholders.

This is exacerbated by further education colleges serving multiple local authority areas therefore duplicating the number of strategic groups which the principal will attend. With that in mind it is surprising that over a third of respondents didn't spend much time engaging with stakeholders; which might be due to the infrequency of stakeholder meetings.

- **Meeting with community partners** – within the local community colleges are usually the only major provider of vocational education. This tends to put pressure on the college to ensure that its curriculum focuses on the needs of the community it serves. To ensure that this happens and that colleges are informed of the economic needs of the local areas, it is vital that principals engage with the local economic and other enterprise partnerships. Dougherty and Bakia (2000) put forward the positive impact of increased enrolments that colleges experience by engaging with their local community.

  The responses collected were split as follows:

  - 68.4% said that they spent a lot or a fair amount of time engaging with community partners;
  - 26.3% said that they spend a little amount of time dealing with community partners;
  - 5.3% stated that they spent only a very small amount of time engaging with the community.

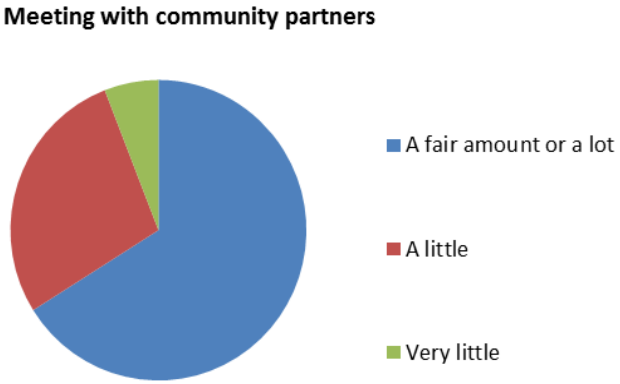

Figure 12: Meetings with community partners.

Given that 31.6% of respondents stated that they spend little or very little time on engaging with the local community doesn't mean that as a college they don't engage; only that this might be the responsibility of somebody other than the principal, for example the community learning manager.

- **Meeting with business partners** – given the emphasis by the government on engaging with businesses, colleges often do this at a variety of different levels. There will be the college business relationship as the provider of education and training to employees of individual companies, but also the strategic relationship which colleges develop in order to deliver a curriculum which is relevant and meets the needs of employers as well as the expectation of young people. College business engagement is reinforced by Dougherty and Bakia (2000) who suggest that not only do these partnerships boost enrolment figures at colleges, but they also help retain as well as attract new businesses to the local area.
    - Over half of the respondents (57.9%) felt that they spent a lot or a fair amount of time engaging with business partners;
    - The remaining (42.1%) said that they spent only a little amount of time on this activity.

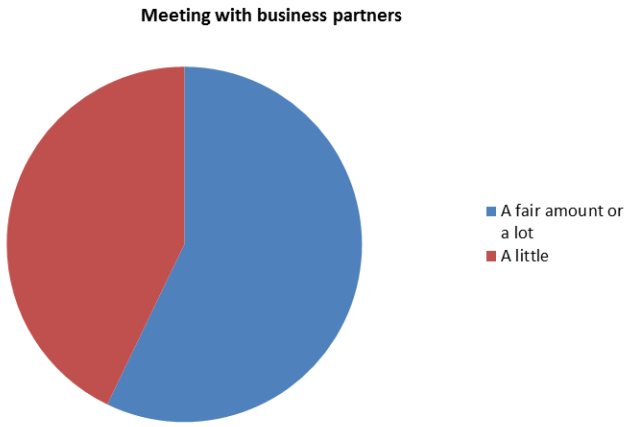

Figure 13: Meeting with business partners.

Like the previous section it is unclear to what extent business engagement is delegated to a business development team, with the principal possibly engaging more so with larger or strategically significant employers.

- **Meeting with political representatives** – the question did not differentiate between local councillors or members of parliament.
    - Nearly half of the principals responding (47.4%) said that they engaged only a little with political representatives;
    - 42.1% suggested a fair amount of time is spent on this activity;
    - the remaining (10.5%) reported that a lot of time was spent meeting with politicians.

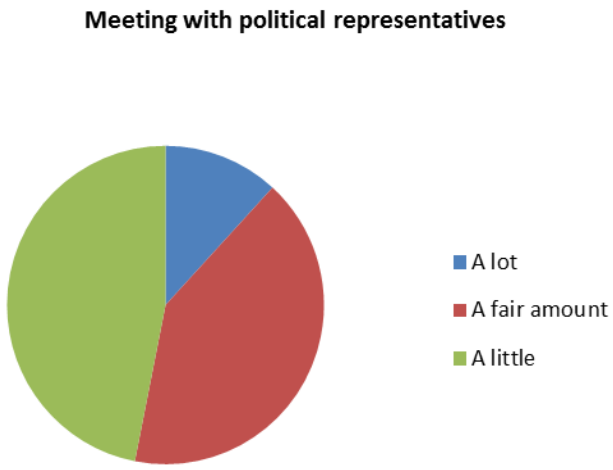

Figure 14: Meeting with political representatives.

There may well be a number of reasons for the range of responses. Within the South East all college principals meet annually with local MPs in parliament for dinner. Also, the profile of the principal and the extent to which they are

involved in regional or national issues will to some extent determine the level of engagement they will have with political representatives.

What the findings of this section show is that a majority of principals appear to spend either a fair amount or a lot of their time engaging with external groups, and the extent to which this happens depends on both the size of the college and the communities they serve. What cannot be determined is the link between the external role and the internal role and how decisions made externally are communicated internally.

The results presented have categorised the work of the principal under the two headings, internal and external activities. Within both groups the work of the principal was dominated with meetings. Internally this was with staff and managers, somewhat surprisingly meeting and dealing with students did not feature highly from the responses received. This is especially concerning as students are customers of the college and given that most leadership decisions will affect students either directly or indirectly, Hallinger and Heck (1996). Likewise externally, principals were meeting and dealing with educational stakeholders such as local authorities, community groups and business leaders. The extent to which principals engage with these external groups will be to some degree based on the designation of the college. For example, general further education colleges serve the local community and will provide courses for individuals aged 16 plus, whereas, a sixth form college will provide aged for those aged 16 to 18 only. Therefore the extent to which a sixth form college engages with local community groups is likely to be less than that of a general further education college. Likewise, engaging with business leaders is likely to be higher for general further education colleges whereby the college will be trying to 'sell' training to employers. There does seem to be a relationship between the designation of the college and the number and nature of the external relationships the college has with the community and businesses. More importantly for the purposes of this thesis the results start to paint a picture as to the role of principal which is the third of the research questions posed in chapter one and which suggests that there are key areas of work undertaken by principals which could form the basis for the development of aspiring principals.

Readiness for principalship

Having considered the range of activities which a principal would typically spend their time engaging with, the next section asked principals to reflect back to when they commenced their first principalship and particularly the extent to which they felt prepared for the role.

It again uses the same internal and external activities discussed in the aforementioned section but invited principals to respond using a Likert scale. Table 12 details the internal activities.

Activity	Fully prepared	Well prepared	Adequately prepared	Not prepared
In meeting with staff and dealing with staff issues	26.32% n=5	47.3% n=9	**26.32%** n=5	0% n=0
In meeting with students and dealing with student issues	42.11% n=8	52.63% n=10	**0%** n=0	0% n=0
In chairing and leading management meetings	52.63% n=10	26.32% n=5	**21.05%** n=4	0% n=0
In participating in board or corporation meetings	26.32% n=5	42.11% n=8	**26.32%** n=5	0% n=0
In managing team meetings	52.63% n=10	36.84% n=7	**10.53%** n=2	0% n=0
In strategic planning	26.32% n=5	52.63% n=10	**21.05%** n=3	0% n=0
In dealing with governance matters	26.32% n=5	36.84% n=7	**36.84%** n=7	0% n=0

Table 12: Readiness for principalship – internal

Table 12 presents data on how well prepared principals felt they were in dealing with key tasks. A majority of principals felt that they were either well prepared or fully prepared in all the items listed, which is testament to the development which they received as a deputy. But it is the adequately prepared column which provides the greatest opportunities for development. While respondents felt that they were

adequately prepared for principalship, questions arise to the extent to which they are confident in undertaking these activities. From table 12 two areas with the highest responses in terms of only being adequately prepared were: governance matters (36.84%) and participating in corporation meetings (26.32%). With these two activities being interrelated there is a case that further development around engaging with and managing both the corporation and governance matters is needed. It is worth noting at this point that in hindsight an addition column such as 'poorly prepared' could have been included on the questionnaire. However, participants did have an opportunity to make additional comments relating to anything they had been asked to answer and none were made.

Moving on from this, table 13 considers the external activities which principals engage in and like; as in table 12 the extent to which they felt prepared to undertake these activities.

Activity	Fully prepared	Well prepared	Adequately prepared	Not prepared
In meeting with other education stakeholders	21.05% n=4	57.89% n=11	**21.05%** n=4	0% n=0
In meeting with community partners	21.05% n=4	63.16% n=12	**15.79%** n=3	0% n=0
In meeting with business partners	21.05% n=4	63.16% n=12	**15.79%** n=3	0% n=0
In meeting with political representatives	5.26% n=1	63.16% n=12	**15.79%** n=3	**15.79%** n=3

Table 13: Readiness for principal's role – external

As with table 12, a majority of respondents felt that they were either well or fully prepared for most of the elements of the principal's role. Table 13 illustrates that 21.05% of respondents only felt adequately prepared in engaging with other education stakeholders. Typically it would be the principal who attends many of the meetings associated with this category, such as the local authority's 14-19 strategic partnership, the secondary heads' group, the local principals' groups and meeting with funding agencies such as the Skills Funding Agency and the Young Peoples Learning Agency. From those principals who responded to the questionnaire there appears to be an opportunity to develop the readiness of those entering principalship to engage and deal

with local political representatives, either local councillors or members of parliament as 15.79% of respondents felt they were not prepared for this aspect of the role.

In the section where they were asked what other activities they felt they would have liked further support on included:

- Public speaking: both internally to college staff and students, but also externally to stakeholders.
- Mentoring and guidance: from an experienced principal, particularly during the first few months in post.
- Working with chairs of governors: which links back into the internal activities issues presented in table 12.
- Handling conflict between staff.
- Understanding the financial aspect of a college: as the principal is the accountable officer as defined by the Further and Higher Education Act 1992.
- Property issues.
- Performance reviews: particularly of senior staff and also their own with the corporation.
- Representation on outside bodies.
- Dealing with the management and governance interface.

Outside of these specific issues which relate to further education colleges was a broader set of skills which current principals felt that those aspiring to principalship should have which are reported in table 14.

Skill set of aspiring principals	% response
• Ability to accept accountability	94.74% n=19
• Change management skills	94.74% n=19
• Self belief	94.74% n=19
• Self awareness	94.74% n=19
• Personal integrity	94.74% n=19
• A drive for results	84.21% n=18
• Ability to empower others	84.21% n=18
• Political astuteness	84.21% n=18
• The ability to influence others	84.21% n=18
• Business acumen	78.95% n=15
• Cultural sensitivity	73.68% n=15
• An ability to work collaboratively	73.68% n=15
• Formal management training	15.79% n=3

Table 14: Skill set of aspiring principals

Top of the list of skills was the ability to be accountable, change management skills, self-belief, self-awareness and personal integrity, although it could be argued that integrity is an attribute rather than a skill; 94.74% of respondents saying that all of these skills were important. Given the constantly changing landscape in which further education colleges operate with its complex accountability structures as discussed in chapters one and four, it is unsurprising that these skills have been identified by respondents. Middlewood and Lumby (2004) heavily emphasize the accountability which principals have, more so than any of the other identified skills, but only discuss formal accountability to stakeholders particularly for the use of public funds. But there must be a moral accountability to the students who are dependent on the college to

provide a quality learning experience and to staff as employees reliant on the college for their livelihood.

Others skills which were considered important included having the ability to influence others, the drive for success and results, the ability to empower others and political astuteness, with 84.21% saying that these were important. Business acumen, cultural sensitivity and the ability to work collaboratively also scored highly. The area which principals felt was not important was the requirement to have formal management training with the emphasis being on skills more than formal accreditation. Only 15.79% of respondents felt it was important to have a formal management qualification. Respondents had the opportunity to suggest other skills which they felt were important and these included:

- *Stamina*
- *Time management skills*
- *Emotional intelligence*
- *Knowledge of the FE sector*
- *Understanding how people learn*
- *The ability to admit mistakes*
- *The ability to deal with the unexpected*
- *A thick skin*

When asked about experience, respondents felt that it would be reasonable to expect somebody pursing principalship to have had the following (table 15).

Future Principals Experience	% response
• Management across teams	84.21% n=16
• Mentoring and coaching experience	84.21% n=16
• Curriculum and quality improvement experience	84.21% n=16
• Management of major college function	57.89% n=11
• Performance Management	57.89% n=11
• Teaching experience	57.89% n=11
• Management of resources and people	57.89% n=11
• Financial and budget control	42.11% n=8
• Senior Management experience	42.11% n=8
• Involvement in strategic planning	42.11% n=8
• Accountability for significant income	26.32% n=5
• Knowledge of the wider educational and political context	15.79% n=3
• Significant experience of working with partners	15.79% n=3
• Attendance at corporation meetings	15.79% n=3
• Dealing with unions	15.79% n=3
• Work shadowing, placement, acting up	15.79% n=3
• Working in more than one college	15.79% n=3
• Communications skills	15.79% n=3

Table 15: Future principal's experiences

Table 15 illustrates that principals highlighted the following key experiences for those pursing principalship: *management across teams; coaching and mentoring; and curriculum and quality improvement*.

Responses suggest that management across teams as well as coaching and mentoring are believed to be important, the latter also being highlighted by principals participating in phase 2, and curriculum managers in phase 3. These two sets of skills are not specific to further education only, but to all organisational settings. This would allow experiences gained by individuals from outside of further education to be directly transferable to a college setting.

Curriculum and quality improvement experience was considered important by 84.21% of respondents, while teaching experience was deemed key by 57.89%. Prior to incorporation of colleges out of local authority control in 1992, principals were recruited from within the teaching community. Given the changes incorporation had on the running of colleges principally around the management of finances, human resources and the college estate, a new and evolving set of skills was needed. Indeed there is no statutory requirement for principals to have progressed to principalship via a teaching route and, as illustrated in chapter four, one of the phase 2 participants came to principalship via a non-teaching route. Regardless of the route to principalship, individuals should have sufficient understanding of the core business of the college so that they could sufficiently sustain and improve standards in teaching and learning. Bottoms and O'Neill (2001) argue that education leaders need to have comprehensive understanding of curriculum and classroom practices in order to implement continuous improvement; however, they do not explicitly state that leaders in education need to come via a teaching route.

Attendance at corporation meetings received one of the lowest scores of 15.79%, which is somewhat surprising given the findings in table 12 whereby principals responding to the question felt that dealing with the corporation and governance matters were the areas where they felt least prepared when commencing principalship. Ofsted's (2011) view is that there is a direct correlation between governance and a college's success.

By using each of the above statements as a basis, an evidence based curriculum for aspiring principals could be developed which incorporates the skills and competencies that have been identified within this research. Further empirical work is needed to

determine whether each of the experiences identified by responding principals should have an equal weighting or whether some are more important than others.

When asked about the advice they, the responding principals, would give to those pursuing principalship, the following quotes were obtained:

> '*You have to be motivated to want to do the job.'*
> *'Understand how to manage and motivate other people.'*
> *'Shadow a principal in another college.'*
> *'Ensure that you do the appropriate management development.'*
> *'Develop your experience in a number of areas of a college.'*
> *'Make sure that you are prepared to take on a large and complex business.'*
> *'Talk to other principals.'*
> *'Be confident and aware.'*
> *'Be prepared to move or relocate.'*
> *'Believe in yourself.'*
> *'Vision yourself in the role.'*
> *'Be clear about what you want to achieve.'*
> *'Get as much experience as possible.'*
> *'Understand the culture and values of the organisation.'*
> *'Have a positive working relation and shared values with the senior leadership team and governors.'*
> *'Develop your emotional intelligence skills and your soft (people) skills.'*
> *'Go for it…it's a great job.'*
> *'Don't keep people in the dark.'*
> *'Don't be doubtful, it's not a mysterious art, it's a job.'*

All of these quotes are from the anonymised questionnaire responses from principals in the south east of England and London.

What is highlighted from the responses is that aspiring principals should try and seeing themselves in the role of the principal, and the *persona* associated with the post of principal. All of the aforementioned quotes relate to the expectation of being a principal

rather than the experiences and competencies associated with the post. For example, '*vision yourself in the role'* and whether one can envisage oneself as the principal of a college; '*be confident'* and '*believe in yourself*' again is about acting and behaving as a leader of a multimillion pound organisation.

From the analysis of job descriptions and person specifications (page 59) and the findings from principals the skills and experiences necessary for principalship can be categorised under the following four headings:

- the technical elements of the post: *managing budgets, curriculum knowledge;*
- experiences: *shadowing, managing teams, dealing with governors;*
- competencies: *emotional intelligence, people skills, coaching and mentoring*;
- persona of the principal: *confident, visioning oneself as the principal, believing in ones abilities.*

From the responses gained so far, it appears that they think technical skills are less important than experience of competencies. For example only 42.11% of respondents felt that financial and budgetary control was an important skill; whereas in table 21, which considered the skill set of aspiring principals, all the responses focused on experiences and competencies such as: *self belief, self awareness, a drive for results,* and the *ability to influence others*. The fourth aspect is 'the presentational or *persona* aspect of the role, seeing oneself in the roleof the principal and behaving in as a principal, for example, *being confident, visioning oneself as the principal, and believing in ones abilities.* From the responses gained so far, it appears technical skills are less important when compared to experience, competency and persona which are considered to be at a fairly equal level of importance.

Job satisfaction

Chapter four focused on the literature on leadership in further education and the challenges which principals faced leading large and complex organisations in a constantly changing policy landscape. The chapter highlighted that the role of the principal was challenging and Frearson (2003) highlights an ageing population of current principals and the shortage of individuals wanting to pursue principalship. The

shortage of principals was also echoed by Hargreaves and Fink (2006), therefore, the questionnaire sought the views of principals regarding what gave them the most and least satisfaction in their role.

The most satisfying aspect of the principal's role, according to anonymised respondents were:

'Seeing good managers develop into great managers.'
'Improving success rates.'
'Staff and student satisfaction.'
'Acknowledgement of success from others, such as Ofsted.'
'Growing popularity – increasing student numbers.'
'Seeing success, both staff and students.'
'Working with students.'
'All of it, it's a privilege to be principal in the FE sector.'
'Results and seeing people work together.'
'Seeing staff develop and gain promotion.'
'Seeing the positive impact of things that have been put into place.'
'Getting strategic matters right.'

The least satisfying aspect of the principal's role, according to anonymised respondents were:

'Making redundancies.'
'Dealing with disciplinary and complaints.'
'Attending external meetings which achieve nothing.'
'Government constantly changing the funding rules and policies.'
'Paperwork require for other organisations which has little benefit for the college.'
'Too much regulation and bureaucracy.'
'Lack of trust from central government.'
'System or financial failure.'
'Not enough funding.'

'Regional meetings.'
'Dealing with disappointed students and their parents.'
'Level of audit and inspection.'

From the list of quotes that bring satisfaction to being a college principal, success appears in the list on 4 separate occasions. Quotes from different principals appear to consider success in different ways, some cite success of students and staff, others suggest it's students achieving their qualifications as measured through the success rate performance indicator, for others it is organisation's success validation by external agencies such as Ofsted or achievement of awards from sector representation bodies.

Conversely from the quotes relating to what is the least satisfying part of being a principal, eight out of the twelve quotes were associated with either externally imposed regulation, inspection and bureaucracy (6 quotes), or attendance at external meetings (2 quotes). This notion of centrally imposed control through regulation and inspections was highlighted in chapter two whereby successive governments have eroded local authority powers through the incorporation of colleges into autonomous organisations. At the same time they increased the levels of regulation and inspection as a mechanism by which colleges could be controlled by the state in order to deliver the skills necessary for the country to remain economically competitive. From the responses received it is evident that principals find the levels of external control the least satisfactory part of being a principal.

The potential exodus of principals

By knowing what elements of the role principals are least satisfied with, the final major question looked to consider the political or institutional constraints which would make principals leave their post. It is unclear whether current government policy relating to further education would indeed 'force' more currently serving principals to leave prior to their natural retirement age. But the main responses received were:

'Significant funding cuts.'
'Unhappy staff who found their [principals] leadership style unacceptable.'
'Greater bureaucracy.'

'When they [the principal] are no longer making a difference.'
'Less autonomy.'
'If or when they become cynical.'
'Erosion of public sector values.'
'Retirement.'
'Nothing which I can think of.'

Analysing the responses received 36.84% (n=7) said that they would only leave principalship when they reached retirement age, while 15.79% (n=3) said that nothing would make them leave. Of the 47.37% (n=9) remaining responses the emphasis was around funding cuts, greater bureaucracy and less autonomy. Current government policy is seeking to reduce the level of bureaucracy and increase the level of autonomy which colleges have, Hayes (2010). However, at the same time government funding for further education is being reduced in real terms, YPLA (2010). The remaining responses: *unhappy staff; no longer making a difference; becoming cynical; erosion of public sector values,* focus more so on a principal's own beliefs rather than on the external drivers which are beyond their control. Policy makers should not become complacent in believing that principals of further education colleges would not leave their post based on the responses received in this study. What is presented here is a snapshot of responding principals' views based on their feelings at the time of completing the questionnaire.

Phase 1 summary

Based on the findings from phase one there is overwhelming support from respondents for the framework suggested in chapter three and in Lambert (2011). However; the responses illustrated that further work needs to be done in articulating the detail surrounding each of the component elements as a majority of respondents felt that their institutions were not fully implementing some of the component elements (see table 11). The final aspect of this section looked at the skills, competencies and experiences which those aspiring to principalship should gain. This was based on the views of currently serving principals, and could provide a framework for the development of future principals.

What this section has also done is to highlight some of the factors that would force principals to leave their post; and policy makers should be mindful of these issues as they provide an insight into the potential pressures within the further education system.

Phase 2 findings

Phase 2 of the fieldwork was a series of one to one interviews with principals who had self-selected, from phase one, to participate in phases two and three. Many of the questions posed to the principals derived from the findings of the questionnaire used in phase 1.

The first question asked respondents to chronicle their career to date and was designed to be both an ice-breaker and also gain an insight into the career paths of those who were currently principals of further education colleges. Three out of four of the principals interviewed had come through a teaching route into principalship, two of the principals came from a school setting, one from a middle school (national curriculum years 4 to 7) the other from a secondary school. One of the other principals had only ever taught in further education. All three had started as lecturers when entering further education, regardless of their previous teaching experiences and went on to hold posts such as head of department, head of faculty, and then assistant or deputy principal posts. One principal had not followed a teaching route and entered further education as a vice-principal responsible for finance and resources after having spent a number of years as an accountant in an investment bank and a finance director in a higher education institution.

This individual felt that this was not an issue as their role was not a teaching role, but managing a £50m organisation.

> *I think that if we were a sixth form college it would be different, as it would be more appropriate to have come through a traditional route, as I wasn't a teacher.*
>
> *But as we are a GFE college with a £50m turnover I think that you can offset the skills that perhaps you don't have by having somebody with those skills to cover curriculum area.*
>
> **Principal C**

None of those interviewed said that they had set out to be principals and indeed three of them only realised when they became heads of faculty that principalship was a realistic option for them.

> *Didn't set out with the aim of being a principal, but while at XXXXX college was promoted… from lecturer, to programme manager, head of school, director and finally Assistant Principal.*
>
> **Principal A**

> *I didn't set out to work in further education therefore never set out to be a principal of the college.*
>
> **Principal B**

This consideration or realisation that becoming a principal was achievable appears to happen when individuals become middle managers and experience a shift in responsibility from being an operational manager such as a head of department and a strategic leader, responsible for budgets, an increasingly diverse curriculum and a larger number of staff.

From the accounts of interviewees it was the comment from the second principal which seems to be key for them in making the decision as to whether pursue senior leadership.

> *When I became a head of faculty I realised I could do it on a bigger scale and then started thinking about it.*
>
> **Principal B**

This particular principal felt that it was when they were a middle manager that they started to think about more senior posts including principalship. This reinforces the notion that middle managers need to have mechanisms put in place to ensure that they are provided with opportunities to develop the necessary skills and experiences to pursue principalship.

Chapter four focused on the way legislation has impacted on the role of leadership in further education. Principals were therefore asked '*What, in your opinion, are the key pieces of legislation or changes in requirements which have most impacted on the environment in which further education leaders work?*' All of the principals

acknowledged that at the time, the Further and Higher Education Act (1992) which incorporated colleges out of local authority control and changed the further education landscape forever significantly impacted on the style of leadership and the responsibilities of those leading colleges.

> *Incorporation was the single biggest thing which has impacted on colleges in the past 20 years.*
>
> *As a result principals had to become business people.*
>
> **Principal A**

> *Having lived through the period from incorporation and given that there has been a piece of legislation every year, I can't think off the top of my head a piece of legislation which has had a bigger impact than what happened in the early 90s.*
>
> **Principal B**

Since then the key pieces of legislation cited by respondents were not education related, such as the Equality Act (2010), the Human Rights Act (1998) and the Employment Act (2008). The principals recognised that while the aforementioned acts had impacted on their work, it was not legislation which had the biggest impact, it was as principal B states, '*government intervention in curriculum*' as well as regulations which are not part of the legislative process, such as those prescribed by funding agencies, government department publications, for example the Wolf Review (2011).

> *Going forward there appears to be a move to relax some of the restrictions which were in place: funding bodies no longer have a planning role only a funding role. This has made the job scarier.*
>
> **Principal A**

> *The coalition's new skills strategy has removed a lot of people who were eligible for fee waivers, therefore taking them out of education.*
>
> **Principal C**

> *I'm not so sure that legislation has the same effect as changes in the funding methodology which has had a greater impact.*
>
> **Principal D**

It is the centralised control which the government exercises over the further education sector which has consequences for both leadership and the students whom colleges serve.

When asked what the principals believed the key aspects of the role were, all implied that their role was not a functional one, they had functional directors to undertake those activities such as finance and human resource; instead suggesting that their role was about setting and implementing the mission and vision of the institution.

> *One of the key aspects of my role as principal is to set the mood music, setting tone and culture is the most important thing a principal can do.*
>
> **Principal A**

> *I believe my role is to always have the vision of the college in sight, and to be continuously updating it, but also ensure that whatever we do meets that mission and vision.*
>
> **Principal B**

> *I spend a lot of 'headspace' thinking about communication, motivation of others and how we can activate or reactivate it in staff.*
>
> **Principal A**

> *A leader is somebody who has a vision and somebody who can be inspirational. My predecessor was certainly a leader and visionary, but lacked empathy with people and there was a culture of blame. The corporation were looking for to move the college away from that.*
>
> **Principal C**

> *One must be setting direction and strategy and in order to do that you must be environmentally scanning, you need to know what is going on, or what is likely to be going on. I think that you need to be clear on your values and principles, otherwise you'll be hit from every pillar to post with every new government initiative that comes in.*
>
> **Principal D**

Respondents felt however that as a principal one was taking the college, the staff and students on a journey, whether improving the quality as measured by Ofsted grades, or providing financial stability and security at a time when funding for further education is being reduced.

> *A lot of our work and focus over the past few years has been about moving to excellent as we came from unsatisfactory to satisfactory and then good. The key focus now is to move to outstanding and once we get there ensure we stay there.*
>
> **Principal B**

> *In these financial times the governors wanted somebody who they could trust with the finances and who understood the business side of the college.*
>
> **Principal C**

More established principals spent significantly more time representing the college externally with two taking an active role nationally.

> *In my case I do get involved in a lot of things, which are about principals generally as opposed to specific aspects of our work, and I sit on a number of external groups for different things.*
>
> **Principal B**

> *The longer you are principal the more involved you become in the national agenda. My workload as principal, through my own device, has increased so for example, I chair the woman's leadership network and tomorrow I've been asked to speak on Woman's hour about leadership. Things like that only happen if you've been around for a long time.*
>
> **Principal D**

The principals interviewed felt that they had more time, and while they all had pressures on their availability, they believed that in terms of thinking time, they could plan more as a principal than as a deputy or vice-principal.

> *As a principal you shouldn't be rushing around all manic, yes there are busy periods, but if you are like that everyday you are doing something wrong.*
>
> **Principal A**

Principals were then asked '*In your opinion, what do staff within your college perceive the role of the principal to be?*' Both principal A and D felt that staff don't specifically think about the role of the principal – '*The college has 800 members of staff, so their opinion of the principal would vary 800 times*' (Principal A); however, principal D felt that '*Different people think different things'* about the role depending on the context in

which they are either working or as a result of a decision which has been made. Principal A highlights a point which has been touched upon already and will be discussed in detail in chapter seven which is the 'roles' or 'persona' which a principal has, both internally to the college and externally – '*staff within the college won't see the headspace element of the job at all*' Suggesting that staff will only see the visible presence of the principal, for example when engaging with staff or students, not the private contemplation and strategic thought which the principal must do in order to enact the vision and mission of the college. Principal B had a slightly different view.

> *From people's point of view my role is to ensure the long term future of the college; if they are staff the safety of their jobs; if they are students that the college gives them a good deal.*
>
> **Principal B**

If a principal is active externally staff within the college may see very little of them; but all acknowledged, as Principal A did, that if every member of staff was asked about their perception of the role of the principal, a different response would be obtained from each individual asked. In phase three, middle curriculum managers were asked the same question, but principals believe that staff don't think about the principal and what their role is, other than the following:

- somebody who makes decisions,
- ensuring the long term security of the college, its staff and students,
- representing the college externally.

One principal did say that they felt there were two aspects of being a principal, the day to day job, and the public persona of being a principal, such as awards ceremonies and engagement activities with groups of staff and students.

A number of principals interviewed felt that there was a danger, and they had seen it in others, where the principal believed that they were the most important person in the room, and that nobody else's views counted.

> *You have to be wary, of what I call 'principalitus' where you believe that your views are the most important, regardless of who the audience is.*

Principal A

One of the principals who also commented on this subject did suggest that their approach to principalship was possibly an old fashioned, autocratic approach and modern principals generally have adopted a more distributed leadership style.

Interviewees were then asked '*What do you feel should be included in the development of those aspiring to principalship?*' All respondents felt that they had a moral obligation to provide the opportunities required to enable deputies to pursue principalship.

> *From day 1 of being a vice-principal xxx (former principal) exposed me to all aspects of her role and at times physically took me along to meetings. Sometimes you think 'why am I here?', but in hindsight it's about getting that exposure.*
>
> **Principal A**

> *I am very aware that I'm training him [vice-principal] to be a principal and all the time I'm trying to coach him and give him that exposure.*
>
> **Principal C**

What was felt by principals was that many had undertaken higher education courses, with Frearson (2003) illustrating that the Certificate and Diploma in management were the most commonly held management qualifications followed by either a Masters in Education, MEd, or Masters in Business Administration, MBA, degree, therefore respondents felt it was more important to develop the practical skills and exposure to the work of the principal. This included exposing future principals to the groups in which they will have to engage as a principal too, such as local authority strategic partnerships and regional principals meetings, attending the annual sector conferences all of which formed part of the informal development which is being undertaken in colleges.

> *It's important that the deputy or whoever is going to be a principal is at least exposed to some of what a principal would do, whether it is public speaking, dealing with industrial relation problems or budgetary issues. It is important that they have a sense of that.*
>
> **Principal B**

> *From day one this included governors, external partners, networking, as well as all internal stuff, as vice-principal for curriculum you tend to lead on the internal stuff.*
>
> **Principal A**

> *I've been trying to expose him [vice-principal] to the governing body, and we are very good at a distributive leadership so I've encouraged him to do some of that.*
>
> **Principal C**

Equally, becoming a reflective leader was believed to be an important skill; principals felt that as a deputy or vice-principal considerable time was spent responding and 'fire-fighting' whereas as principal B points out:

> '*principal's needs to be able to step back from a situation, reflect and often undo problems which have been created, such as getting it 'wrong' with a parent, or member of staff, or making a 'silly' purchase*'.
>
> **Principal B**

Other key areas of development are the engagement and involvement in corporation meetings and governance matters, which goes back to the issues that newly appointed principals felt they would have liked further support on (see table 12).

Support as a newly appointed principal

When asked about the following areas:

- dealing with the unions;
- working with the chair of governors;
- dealing with political representatives;

all of which were highlighted in the previous section as areas which questionnaire respondents felt further support would have been helpful (table 19), principals interviewed, had mixed views.

None of the interviewees considered dealing with the unions to be a particular challenge which they needed further support or development – '*we're not very unionised here*'

said principal C. Indeed, all of the principals interviewed acknowledged that the unions were not particularly active in their own institutions. Principal D did suggest that while unions might not be particularly active in some institutions it is an area of the principal's role which cannot be ignored.

> *I'm chairing the AoC [Association of Colleges] employment committee and we are looking at giving confidence to principals and to actually look at working with unions.*
>
> **Principal D**

One principal felt rather than support in dealing with unions, time would be better spent learning and honing one's arbitration skills. They felt that as a generic skill it could be applied in a range of contexts from dealing with students, parents and staff, through to unions, which would be more valuable.

> *Years ago in Swansea there was a centre for arbitration and they did a training course on negotiation and arbitration and it was phenomenal and you did lots on the various aspects of how you could go to arbitration and how you deal with two people who are effectively at war. It's about mediating between their aspirations and what you can realistically provide.*
>
> **Principal D**

All the principals interviewed considered that the relationship between the principal and the chair of the corporation is probably one of the most critical, and one which can very easily go wrong. They all acknowledged that both parties need to understand the boundaries surrounding their roles and responsibilities and that these should never be crossed.

> *The relationship with all governors is key; you can know everything there is to know about working with groups of people but the relationship with between the board and the college is really crucial and one which is so easy to get wrong.*
>
> **Principal A**

> *The relationship between the chair and the principal is paramount for the sake of the college and the principal. If that is relationship is wrong and either side overstep the mark then that's where things go wrong.*
>
> **Principal B**

The two experienced principals felt that this can be a critical time in the new principal's career, especially if the chair of governors has a strong view of what the college should be doing and how it should be done – '*governors cannot get involved, they cannot manage and if they do the college is in trouble*' (Principal A). All respondents stated that when boundary between chair and governor and principal become blurred is when problems arise and governors should not become involved in the day to day running of the college.

> *The worse type of relationship is when the chair of the board it too involved and one of the biggest lessons learnt is where the role of the governors ends.*
>
> **Principal A**

Principal B, makes an interesting observation regarding the relationship between new principals and the governing body and how this relationship can quickly break down.

> *A typical example is when a new principal being appointed said [at interview] that they would be able to save the college x amount of money, or perhaps get the college to outstanding in 3 months.*
>
> *Unfortunately for the principal, governors remember what you've said and they remember why they've appointed someone and if you can't do what you've said that you're going to do then that is a real problem.*
>
> **Principal B**

The development of this relationship is something which should be cultivated from early on in a future principal's career, possibly through engaging middle managers in giving regular presentations to governors relating to the managers' area of responsibility. What is often overlooked is the responsibility which the corporation has not only for the appointment of the principal but of the deputy or vice-principal too; so there should be a separate relationship between the deputy or vice-principal and the corporation.

Dealing with political representatives was highlighted by a number of respondents in phase 1, but from the four principals interviewed, three (75%) felt this was not an issue, partly as the meetings which they were attending often had local councillors present,

while engagement with MPs was done either on a one to one basis, or at the annual principals' dinner in Westminster. One principal did feel that they could have benefited with some support as a result of a having a 'bad experience' with their local MP.

> *First time I met [minister and local MP], completely underestimated what she thought about the college pulling out of [specific geographical location]; in my mind it was old news, but in hers it wasn't. I messed up big time and nobody could have prepared me for it.*
>
> *Dealing with political representatives – you can't really get support with that, you just have to do it and then look at your mistakes.*
>
> **Principal A**

Principal A did acknowledge that they were unsure what support they could have sought and in reality, they had to learn from their mistakes and ensure that they never made it again. It might be worthwhile encouraging principals to make informal contact with local MPs to gain experience in dealing with them, so that they develop the necessary level of confidence in order not to feel daunted by the prospect of meeting them in a formal setting. As one respondent commented, principals should not spend too much time thinking about engaging with political representatives, '*I would act with politicians like I would with a marketing campaign*' suggested principal D, in that one is trying to promote an idea or an issue, and like marketing campaigns, some people, if they are interested, will subscribe to the issue or idea that has been highlighted.

> *There is a misconception that if you are a principal and active either locally, regionally or nationally you can change the world. Engaging with politicians is more about timing, and knowing what they are interested in. If the timing is right and the message is well rehearsed, they might listen otherwise it is likely to fall on deaf ears.*
>
> **Principal D**

Simkins et al (2009) suggest that work shadowing is an under-researched area and while the government encourages young people to undertake work placements or shadowing and trainee teachers shadow experienced colleagues, the argument put forward in Simkins et al (2009) is that shadowing should be used as a tool to develop individuals and to aid succession planning. Principals were asked about shadowing in two contexts; firstly, the shadowing of serving principals, and secondly the shadowing of leaders outside of colleges.

Regarding the shadowing of serving principals interviewees felt that as deputies they were already doing that, by working alongside their own principal, but they also felt that there was value in shadowing other principals, '*I think that work shadowing is excellent*' says principal D.

> *I think that there is a value in sitting and seeing how others run their senior management teams and seeing what they discuss and what meetings they have and with whom.*
>
> **Principal C**

> *Work shadowing – to a certain extent I was doing it although I didn't realise that by working alongside [former principal].*
>
> **Principal A**

Interviewees did suggest that shadowing is to some extent dependent on the relationship between the principal and their deputy.

> *Depends on the relationship with the principal, it has to be a close relationship as it should be because you are both senior post holders.*
>
> **Principal A**

> *It does depend on the relationship between the principal and their deputy and whether the current principal gives the opportunity.*
>
> *I see it as part of my job to provide those opportunities.*
>
> *Work shadowing is a good thing, but it is better to get it in your own institution as it is hands on, rather then just looking at what somebody is doing elsewhere.*
>
> **Principal B**

But one Principal D did provide a caveat to this:

> *When I first became a principal, I work shadowed a very high profile, amazing principal, it was the most depressing experience of my life, my style and their style were so fundamentally different, I'd probably put this person on a pedestal. They were really direct, really autocratic and I thought that I would never be able to lead an outstanding college as I could never manage in that way.*
>
> *It is about how you match leadership styles and we've done some work at the Womens' Leadership Group on why women are not going forward into*

> *principalship. Often the role models which they see are so different from them that they give up. So it's about the mix, if you are very reflective and introverted there are some very good examples of leaders in our sector who are introverted and those are ones you should work shadow.*
>
> **Principal D**

As Simkins et al (2009) suggest, shadowing needs to be meaningful and where possible hands-on rather than observational or simulated. All the principals agreed that there was no experience like hands on experience and this should be at the forefront of all shadowing activities.

Regarding shadowing outside of education the principals qualifying programme, the mandatory training programme introduced through the Further Education (Principals' Qualification) regulations 2007 (DfES, 2007) and subsequently abolished by Gibb (2010) incorporated an option to spend time shadowing in the private sector, with one principal who had participated in this saying that they had found the experience very useful. Not only did it give the principal participating in the shadowing experience an insight into another sector and the associated leadership style, but it gave their deputy the opportunity to be 'in charge' for a period of time. The discussions on work shadowing focused on the appropriateness of the organisation and the individual being shadowed. If the principal and chief executive of a college is undertaking a period of shadowing, it is reasonable to expect that they shadow a chief executive of another organisation, with a similar financial turnover, if any value is to be gained from the experience.

When asked whether '*principals should have worked in more than one college*', three of the interviewees (75%) felt that having worked in a number of institutions gave them a broader range of experiences. One interviewee said that they had only worked in the one college; however, this individual was appointed as a vice-principal and prior to appointment had not worked in further education.

One principal commented that having worked in more than one college was useful, it was also important to work in colleges which vary in size, from the very small to the very large.

> *I do think it is helpful, as colleges differ in size. For example, the first college I worked in is probably now a £50m college, the second one was a £25-30m college and now I'm in a much smaller one. As a deputy principal I was probably doing many of the things I'm doing now because of its size.*
>
> **Principal B**

> *It is really difficult, as I can think of somebody who has recently become a principal and she has only ever worked in that college. She is an amazingly talented woman and she will do very well, but I do think that she should have become a principal somewhere else, as it is much more challenging if you've only been in one college. However, I've known people who have been in 4 or 5 different colleges who I wouldn't make principal.*
>
> **Principal D**

Staying within one college does have its advantages and disadvantages, in that moving into new posts is often seamless, but there is a risk of becoming institutionalised. It is important in the changing education landscape that principals do not become complacent and need to remember that colleges operate in a market driven society. Principals need to be able to reflect on their organisation and the interventions needed to enable both sustainability and self-improvement to be sought.

> *You need to be exposed to what an outstanding college looks like, so that you can bring it to another institution. If you cannot do it through the notion of having worked in outstanding colleges; what you could do is a job rotation. We are a good college, not outstanding, and I have visited several outstanding colleges trying to see for myself what makes them outstanding.*
>
> **Principal D**

One way in which principals said that this was achieved was to recruit externally where possible, as this brings in 'fresh blood' and 'new ideas' but this does go against the principle in the framework of sustainable leadership suggested by Hargreaves and Fink (2006), Davies (2009) and Lambert (2011) which is around building capacity of staff.

Having considered the role of the principal and the development needs of those who aspire to the post, interviewees were asked *'What do you think the key personal attributes needed to succeed at being a principal are?'*

All respondents felt that the key attribute was resilience, regardless what happened yesterday, the ability to get up in the morning and bounce back was critical. '*You need*

*to have the resilience to enable other people to bounce back', s*uggests principal A, while principal B agrees saying that '*resilience is the most important thing'.* Two of the principals put resilience in with emotional intelligence arguing that all principals need high levels of emotional intelligence and that they need to be aware of their impact when dealing with others. They also said that as a principal a liking for people was needed and that ability to hold a conversation with anybody is also important: one minute it could be talking to students, to parents, the next minute the local authority's director of childrens' services or the local Member of Parliament.

> *You've got to like people, might be a daft thing to say, but you know how many teachers don't like people.*
>
> **Principal A**

> *You need to be able to hold a conversation with anybody and everybody. You need to be able to relate to all sorts of different people who come through the door.*
>
> **Principal B**

It was also stated that principals need to have drive and be able to challenge mediocrity, particularly when considering standards within the college and more so given Ofsted's announcement regarding satisfactory institutions being reclassified as needing improvement (Ofsted, 2012). Principal A reported that a skill which was useful, was the ability to think around corners. When asked to expand and what was meant they said that

> *The further education landscape is constantly changing and principals need to know what the emerging issues and themes are both within the sector and government as these are likely to become policy. It is not about second guessing the government's next move, but about being informed and positioning the college to best respond to these challenges.*
>
> **Principal A**

It could be argued that this ability to see around the next political corner is akin to the *Building long term objectives* element of Lambert's (2011) framework for sustainable leadership in further education.

When asked about the key personal attributes a principal needed, based on a list which was compiled from the responses to the phase one questionnaire (table 14), all participants agreed integrity was important. They all cited having a 'moral compass' which ensured that the decisions which principals preside over are taken in the best interests of the recipients, whether it's students, staff, or the wider community which the college serves.

> *Integrity is important and the moral compass which you set for the organisation should stop you going down roads which maybe you shouldn't.*
>
> **Principal A**

Self Awareness was one which principals believed was important but acknowledged that this an attribute which is developed on an ongoing basis as one grows into the role.

> *Self awareness grows from when you first start as a principal and you get feedback all the time and lots of it.*
>
> **Principal B**

An interesting discussion arose around the interplay between each of these, and how by not having good self awareness or integrity it becomes more difficult to influence people. One principal suggested that it was a ying and yang situation and individuals should acknowledge that if they don't have a particular attribute which they believe is important, then they firstly try to develop that skill, but secondly ensure that somebody within their senior leadership team does.

> *People who are good at planning and achieving through planning are not always good at influencing people, because they have been doing all the planning and conceptualising. They are often canny and have very good vice-principals who can influence on their behalf.*
>
> *There is a ying and yang and maybe you don't do it as the principal but you do it within your senior leadership team. So if your principal is a planner, then you need somebody in your senior team who is going out, if you are the empowerer and like going out then you need somebody who is really organised and planning back at base.*
>
> **Principal D**

The difficultly faced with personal attributes is how one can effectively measure them. As one participant pointed out, principals are not going to say that they don't have any interpersonal skills, or influencing skills, it's a matter of how they are defined.

> *I think for any leader all of those things are important, the difficultly is how you define them. There are not going to be many leaders who admit to not having any personal integrity or ability to influence others.*
>
> **Principal D**

The next question, *'What structures, policies or legislative barriers have prohibited leadership development?',* is linked to chapter four, and the way in which legislation has impacted on leadership in further education and to the questionnaire which sought the views of principals on the key pieces of legislation which has impacted on their work. There was a feeling amongst participants that legislation and regulation has removed institutional autonomy, a point which was made in chapter two.

> *I think generally the trend of restriction and suppression of institutional autonomy has dampened people's enthusiasm for moving up in an organisation.*
>
> **Principal A**

> *Middle managers are just surrounded by policy and compliance and can probably find it difficult to see through in order to move up.*
>
> **Principal A**

The perceived removal of autonomy has been a consequence of the erosion of local authority control of further education through the incorporation of colleges, in doing so moved to a market oriented culture. The only way of ensuring that power and control was maintained over colleges was to increase the level of state led regulation on them. This, principals believed dampened individuals' enthusiasm for pursuing leadership positions, as colleges were effectively 'dancing to the government's tune'. Hayes (2010) announced a number of measures to reduce the level of state led control and intervention enabling colleges to better respond to the local market which they serve. With perceived autonomy comes an increased level of risk, as there are very few safety nets in place if a college gets into difficulty although the Further and Higher Education Act 1992 places some responsibility for failing colleges onto the funding agencies. It was suggested by participants that this increased the level of risk and also impacted on

the desires of individuals to pursue leadership posts. The irony is, as pointed out by principal A '*The more senior the leadership post occupied the great autonomy one has*'. What principal A acknowledges is that principals are bound only by national legislation and regulation, whereas a member of staff within a college has the addition of institutional policies which they need to work within.

Principals also spoke of the costs associated with developing individuals, both the direct costs incurred through formal training and the indirect costs associated with releasing staff from their normal duties.

> *I think the cost of the training is very expensive. We've currently got somebody on a development programme and it's £6000 and in the current situation where money is tight, it is questionable whether colleges can justify the expense.*
>
> **Principal B**

> *LSIS is very focused on taking people out of colleges which is fine, but it is very expensive, and I think as a sector we'd be better off financing some cheaper training at a local level. I feel that we are a big enough organisation to allow a lot of career development.*
>
> **Principal C**

> *I think leadership training is much more personalised. We start with a grand programme to develop our leaders and when we've done that they move on and get promoted so we get new people.*
>
> **Principal D**

Typically training for senior leaders is grouped into two categories: academic qualifications, which are generic management level qualifications; and the other, training programmes led by sector organisations. The Frearson (2003) survey demonstrates that a majority of senior leaders have management qualifications, either Certificate, or Diploma in Management Studies (CMS or DMS), but these are often superseded by specific training linked directly to roles within the organisation. The challenge which was identified by principals was that many of these training courses required individuals to be taken out of the institution, and while they acknowledge there was merit in using this approach, it seemed to respondents that this was the only model used. Principal D suggested that leadership and management training for staff was an ideology which they held on to, but the reality was that priorities change.

> *When safeguarding for young people and vulnerable adults became the focus of the government and Ofsted, all staff had to undertake safeguarding training. This had a financial impact and colleges need to determine the priority which is placed on leadership and management training.*
>
> **Principal D**

During discussions it was suggested that artificial barriers are often created as a reason not to participate in leadership and management development. These often include:

- Financial: principal B commented on the high cost associated with training; however, principal D suggests it was less about the cost of training but more about how the training was packaged as to whether it was perceived as valuable to the organisation. If an organisation perceives that training, development and support for staff is valuable then finances will not be a barrier.

- Policy: changes in policy and legislation either impact a small number of individuals or an entire organisation. For example, changes in employment legislation will need to be understood by HR staff, but when safeguarding was introduced there was a need to train all staff. Occurrences where all staff need to be trained as a result of policy or legislative changes are few and far between and should not be used as an excuse not to participate in developing future leaders.

- Impact: the perceived need to demonstrate the impact of the training coupled with training needing to be personalised to either individuals or organisational contexts can lead to a dichotomy as to the most appropriate solution for the development need. Off the shelf product such as academic qualification can provide a good foundation in a subject ready for further development, but are seldom the entire package. Alternatively bespoke programmes of leadership development need to be put together to meet the differing needs of individuals and might combine a range of training, mentoring and support from a range of sources. If college leaders know that as a result of a package of development they would get highly skilled, effective and efficient leaders, some of the perceived barriers would probably not be there.

Linked to discussion on leadership development was the question regarding the mandatory requirement to undertake the principal's qualifying programme. There was a split in opinion regarding the programme, not about the idea of a programme for principals, but about the particular one which was offered. Firstly, there was the issue of timing. One of the newly appointed principals wanted to undertake the programme during the intervening stage between being appointed as principal and commencing the role, but was not allowed; now as a principal, she felt that she could not commit the necessary time to fully engage in the programme. Others had a similar view about the timing, in that as a new principal there are other priorities, particularly if appointed to a new institution. Those principals who had been in post for a number of years felt that they could approach the programme with a level of confidence in their own ability allowing them to engage in the programme with a deeper understanding of the demands of principalship, more so than those who were trying to combined the programme with being a new principal.

As with most training programmes delegates take away from it what they want, and the principals qualifying programme is no different, with those participating in interviews all having different views on the value and merits of various aspects of the programme.

> *I felt that the programme was like a doctrine in that there is only one way to undertake a specific task, and it was the way that the course was recommending.*
>
> **Principal A**

One issue of criticism of the programme was lack of external assessment and scrutiny of the programme. Participants attended the training, were required to produce a number of pieces of work in order to pass the requirements of the programme.

Perhaps the programme should be aligned more to the headteacher programme, so that it could be used as a criterion for appointment to principalship.

> *These are the things that principals need and if you don't come up to scratch, you need to do some remedial work to achieve it, and if you can't/don't then you are not able of becoming a principal.*
>
> **Principal D**

Those entering the programme had to be in a position within their careers whereby principalship was a realistic option within a certain period, possibly 12 months, which would focus the curriculum specifically to the needs of individuals attending the programme. Moreover, the programme could be a more evidence based programme with elements which could be passed and failed. If a delegate failed an element of the programme they would then not be able to be appointed as a principal, until they passed all parts of the programme. This does not suggest that the individual is unable to become a principal, only that at this point in their career they need to spend some additional time honing a particular skill, until they had reached a minimum level.

There seems to be some merit in having an evidence based programme, as long as the balance between skills, both operational and strategic, and reflective practice is maintained. It is worth remembering that principals are the heads of multimillion pound organisations, so investing training and developing in future leaders will only bring benefits to the colleges which they go on to lead. While some principals might be reluctant to lose a good deputy principal as they move onto principalship, Smylie et al (2005) note that the only way for institutions to attract good candidates is to ensure that the organisation has the leadership and development programme in place to enable individuals to grow.

This section has provided details of the responses from principals participating in phase two of the research. As outlined in chapter five, a Delphi technique (Robson, 2002) was used so that the responses gained from the interviews were the basis of the questions which were put to the curriculum managers in the focus groups, constituting phase 3 of the research. A copy of these questions can be found in appendix M.

Phase 3 findings

The third and final phase was a series of focus groups with curriculum managers from the same colleges which participated in phase 2.

In total 36 individuals participated in phase 3, of which 16 (44%) were male and 20 (56%) were female, with the average age of curriculum managers participating within the 40 to 49 age bracket (44.4%), while 41% of participants were in the 50 to 59 age bracket. What is illustrated by this is that over two fifths of the workforce participating in this research could retire in less than ten years. College leaders need to consider based on this demographic profile where to target their resources when considering developing future leaders.

Curriculum managers represented 14 out of 15 subject sector areas, the only ones not represented were land based studies, which demonstrates that the views of individuals from a range of subject areas was sought as part of this study.

The initial questions focused on *'the curriculum managers' understanding role of the principal'*. The most frequently cited responses were:

> *'setting the agenda and direction of the college'* (vision, mission and strategy, priorities)
> *'to lead and manage the college'*
> *'ensure the financial stability of the college'*
> *'represent and promote the college both internally and externally'*
> *'demonstrate excellent leadership skills'*
> *'develop partnerships and new business'*
> *'manage the national policy agenda'*
> *'to be the figurehead of the college'*
> *'to lead and be accountable to governors'*
> *'to be a role model to staff'*
> *'strategic planning'* (particularly aligning to government policy and priorities)
> *'understand the needs of the students'*

'to know the role that each group of staff play within the college'
'ensure a safe environment for staff and students'
'to have an overview of the college'

A majority of responses obtained pertained to strategic leadership, such as: *setting and implementing the vision, mission, strategic direction and priorities of the institution; ensuring financial stability; aligning the college to the demands of government policy*, which are internal activities. While there is an argument to suggest that strategic leadership can be both internal as well as externally focused, the responses obtained from participants suggest that these are internal, albeit informed by external factors (Foskett, 2004). Only two of the comments related to external activities, *developing partnerships and new business, and represent and promote the college both internally and externally.* Some of the comments are attributes and competencies which respondents felt that principals should have, such as: *leading staff and the college; being a role model; being a figurehead; demonstrating excellent leadership skills*. Chapter seven will consider whether the activities which principals identified within the questionnaire and the responses to a similar question in phase 2 can be categorised under the two headings of internal and external activities or whether there are additional dimensions to the role of principalship.

Following on from this the focus groups were asked about the personal attributes needed to be a principal. Responses focused on being:

'approachable'
'having empathy' (although it was not clear with whom)
'personable'
'adaptable'
'engenders trust and respect'
'being responsive'
'consistent' (with responses to different individuals)
'independent' (in thought – not bias or easily swayed)
'visible within the college'
'good humoured'

'good communications skills'
'ability to recognise the needs of different levels of learners'
'creative thinker'
'knowledge of the sector'
'confident'
'honest'
'people skills'
'good listener'
'calm under pressure'
'a good arbitrator'

Having gained feedback from respondents on the perceived key attributes that college leaders should have these could be combined with the competencies previously identified by respondents to phases one and two in order to inform a framework for the development of future leaders. Such a framework could then also help inform a personalised development programme to be established for individuals aspiring to principalship, based on an assessment of individuals' strengths and identified areas for development.

The groups were then asked *'What would enable you to become a senior leader within a college?*' The responses focused around the main theme of getting to know the role in which one might move into prior to considering the role on a more permanent basis as well as ensuring that there is a planned career route into senior leadership, '*there needs to be a process whereby those who want to develop as senior managers can do so'* was articulated by focus group C, '*there should be an expectation that you are being trained for the next post*' said focus group B, while others stated that:

> *Managers need training to fully understand what the role of the senior manager really means, particularly in the area that you might like to move into. You need to gain cross college experience in order for you to move to the next level within a college. We need to be given the opportunity to do this, which we're not.*
>
> **Focus Group A**

Curriculum Managers felt that they often lacked a full appreciation of working cross college, as their roles were confined to the curriculum areas which they were managing.

> *Coming from a curriculum area into a cross college role and then back into a curriculum area, you gain a great awareness of what goes on in the college. You are not just looking at the curriculum area, you are aware of everything else that goes on. I think that it is important that curriculum managers shadow those working cross college as it is a very different world to that of the curriculum area.*
>
> **Focus Group C**

> *Having the opportunity or being allowed to make decisions, because as curriculum managers you are still restricted on decision making.*
>
> **Focus Group A**

Curriculum Managers felt that to some extent they were operating in a silo, whereby their actions primarily impacted on the staff and students within their area. Moving into a cross college role where their actions impacted on the entire student or staff population then was a daunting prospect.

> *Our job titles limit us, and don't reflect the size and breadth of what we do. Maybe we could have different titles 'Director of xxxxx'…. There is no consistency of job titles amongst colleges.*
>
> **Focus Group C**

Part of this experience could be developed through being part of cross college working groups focusing on a specific topic or area of development. But as a number of managers pointed out senior leaders need to acknowledge that such development activities increase the workload on often already very busy managers. A possible solution is to advertise when opportunities arise and staff could self select, rather than being approached by senior leaders to participate, thus enabling curriculum managers to maintain a level of control over their workload.

Some participants in the focus groups said that they never set out to become a manager in the college, and their progression into curriculum manager roles had to some extent been accidental.

> *I got to curriculum manager level by default. It's never been made clear that there's an expectation that managers should progress, in which case there should be a pathway, training and development.*
>
> **Focus Group B**

In part the lack of progression opportunities for teachers in further education naturally means that the only option is for staff to pursue management positions. If the reports produced by Frearson (2003), Clancy (2005) and Collinson and Collinson (2006) are to be believed, then there is an argument to suggest that there should be expectation put on staff entering management positions that they will pursue further more senior leadership positions. In making such expectations of staff, one would have to ensure that there are expectations placed on colleges, including ensuring that staff have a clear understanding as to the skills and competencies necessary to pursue the next level of leadership positions, and that colleges support individuals in acquiring these skills, which might include formal qualifications as well as a package of support, mentoring and work shadowing. Curriculum managers participating in focus group D felt that there was an additional challenge around the perceived role of a middle and senior manager:

> *When moving from middle into senior leadership roles there is a shift from being an operational leader, responsible for a curriculum area, to being a strategic leader.*
>
> **Focus Group D**

Curriculum managers within these particular focus groups felt that the jump between operational and strategic was often too great. This was an interesting observation as all of those participating in the focus group were middle leaders and this illustrates how they perceive themselves.

Within all of the focus groups the responses seem to focus on '*the college providing*' for managers. Participants felt that the organisation should be providing management training, mentoring, and the opportunities for work shadowing.

> *It's about gaining experience, it's much more valuable to give somebody the chance to do something new which they haven't done before.*
>
> **Focus Group A**

> *We used to have a management training programme which lasted 2 years and resulted in a Masters degree. I applied to it but it wasn't free and they [the college] wanted you to pay 50% of the fee. This would tie you to the college for so many years and I wasn't happy to commit to the organisation and have to pay half the cost as well.*

Focus Group A

> *It has to come from the senior managers to provide opportunities for development. Senior management should have a responsibility to develop their managers.*
>
> **Focus Group B**

> *Some structured coaching which goes alongside the job, somebody who can meet with you regularly and say over a period of time yes or no, as to whether you are ready to move into the next role.*
>
> **Focus Group B**

> *Some finance training, we all have budgets and we all know that if it goes red it's not good, but when you are pitching an idea to senior management they want a cohesive plan which has been costed, and that is often over our head.*
>
> **Focus Group C**

> *The senior management need to look at what you have done outside of the organisation, as well as what you have done in the college as many of us have managed previously.*
>
> **Focus Group C**

Not once did any of the participants say that without being prompted they undertook any of these activities in order to develop themselves. This might be linked to individuals not knowing what the requirements are which enable them to progress to the next level of management and therefore are reliant on college leaders to dictate what is needed in order to pursue senior leadership.

From the focus groups the feedback suggests that there is a lack of opportunities for curriculum managers to develop the skills and experiences in order to pursue senior leadership posts. Curriculum managers acknowledge that the more senior the role the fewer posts there are within an organisation and competition for these posts is likely to be tough, while others suggested there was a lack of clarity in the job role and the expectations of the post. This links back to a point which was discussed in chapter four, whereby Harpers (2000) stated that there isn't uniformity in the structures which colleges adopt which makes it challenging when trying to place the next career step. This was echoed by comments from focus group C where staff felt that their job titles did not reflect the size and scope of the job; with some curriculum managers having more staff and students within their area than an average primary school. Curriculum

managers from focus group B commented that it was very difficult, to step outside of their current role. For example attending external meetings or professional networking events becomes difficult as a result of the financial pressures which colleges face: a particular issue in smaller colleges. This notion of external engagement has been identified as one of the key elements in various models pertaining to sustainable leadership: *Justice* in Hargreaves and Fink (2006); *Fosters Leadership* in Hill (2006); *Capacity building through networks* in Fullan (2005) and *Diversity* in Lambert (2011). Yet staff from within participant colleges felt that the current economic environment within which they operated, increased competition and reduced funding, makes this external collaboration at best difficult.

The final question to the focus group sought their views on what should be included in the development of aspiring senior leaders within colleges. As previously mentioned curriculum managers felt that finance training would be particularly useful *'as we all have budgets and we know if it goes red it's not good'* (Focus Group C); however, a majority of respondents suggested a number of overarching concepts which they felt were important.

> *A lot of managers have not taught for a very long time and do not know what it is like teaching for 25 hours per week. Some senior managers don't understand how hard it is with all the other pressures on staff, so they need to go back to the floor.*
>
> **Focus Group C**

> *Managing change in a culture of change.*
>
> **Focus Group C**

> *Mentoring, both being mentored and learning how to be an effective mentor.*
>
> **Focus Groups B**

> *We have access to coaching but I'd like to have specific training on being an effective coach as well as mentor.*
>
> **Focus Group D**

> *A track record of success over a period of time. You don't want leaders who leap from establishment to another leaving a trail of destruction behind them. A portfolio of evidence similar to an NVQ would be a good way of demonstrating your ability to move to the next level.*
>
> **Focus Group A**

It was important to acknowledge that there had to be a balance between training, whether formally accredited or informal, and experience; and aspiring leaders needed both elements in order to make decisions which were well founded. The curriculum managers suggested too that there should be an evidence based framework which aspiring leaders should work towards. Such a framework could be used to assess current strengths and areas where additional development is needed.

Mentoring and or coaching were cited by each of the focus groups as a method of developing individuals' ability to deal with specific scenarios. Mentoring was also suggested for newly appointed principals to assist them in their first few months in post, but as the principals who were interviewed mentioned care has to be taken in ensuring compatibility between mentor and mentee.

Other elements which were suggested include basic finance training, whilst acknowledging there are professionally qualified managers within colleges who deal with the day to day financial issues, it is worth remembering that one of the only functions which cannot be devolved is the approval of the budgets. Therefore basic financial management must be a prerequisite of any individual pursuing principalship. Likewise, an understanding of the governance arrangements should be included in a development programme. This should include working with governors and their role within organisation.

One of the focus groups suggested that aspiring principals should spend some time shadowing, and while this was discussed with the principals who participated in phase 2, the curriculum managers suggested that the shadowing should be of teachers. Their rationale was that many aspiring principals have not undertaken a full time teaching commitment for many years and demands of the role have changed significantly since their time in the classroom. This would also assist those who have not come through a traditional teaching route into further education management in developing their understanding of the core business of the organisation.
A majority of participants felt that it was important that there is a form of principal's qualification, indeed as a result of the Further Education Teachers' Qualifications Act

(2007) all further education teachers had to demonstrate a level of competency which included both a theoretical element as well as a practical component.

Summary

This chapter has presented the results of each of the phases of the research: the questionnaire to all the principals of general further education colleges in the South East of England, including London: interviews with 4 college principals, and subsequently the focus groups with the middle curriculum managers. What the findings illustrate is that there is a case for a framework for sustainable leadership for further education colleges as outlined in chapter three. Principals were in agreement with the constituent parts of the framework; although it appears from the findings further work needs to be done in articulating the meaning of certain elements of the framework and how they can be implemented. It was never the intention to provide colleges with detailed actions as to how the framework should be implemented; instead colleges should be developing actions which are appropriate to their own context.

Principals participating in phase 2 of the research were clear in articulating their role as principal and the challenges which they faced when they commenced their first principalship. They were also clear in stating that they had a moral duty to develop those managers who reported directly to them and knew what skills and experiences they felt aspiring college leaders needed to have. The focus, from principals, was weighted towards the attributes and experiences rather than technical skills, possibly because as Principal B put it, '*I have functional directors who know about finance, HR and curriculum*'. The curriculum managers were somewhat drawn towards a number of overarching development needs, some of which aligned with those suggested by principals, such as mentoring and coaching, work shadowing, but also included technical skills such as finance training.

From the results presented in this chapter arise a number of themes which will be discussed further in chapter seven. These are the framework for sustainable leadership as proposed in chapter three; the role of the modern principal; and the development of future leaders of colleges.

Chapter 7: Discussion

Introduction

Chapter six presented the findings from the three phases of the study, the questionnaire, interviews with principals and the focus groups with curriculum managers along with providing some level of discussion. This chapter discusses the key themes arising from the findings and these are presented and discussed under the following headings:

- Framework for Sustainable Leadership of Further Education Colleges;
- The role of the modern principal;
- The development of aspiring principals.

Framework for Sustainable Leadership of Further Education Colleges

Chapter three argued that existing models of sustainable leadership put forward by Hargreaves and Fink (2005), Fullan (2005) and Davies (2009) were not entirely appropriate for further education colleges and instead proposed an alternative form as presented in Lambert (2011).

The questionnaire used in phase 1 of the fieldwork sought the views of respondents on the individual elements of the framework. Respondents were asked to score, using a Likert scale, each of the component elements. What table 10 (page 109) illustrated was that there was broad agreement regarding the appropriateness of the component elements identified within the framework of sustainable leadership which, like other models are used for developing individuals who wish to pursue senior leadership positions and for developing organisational capacity, which are the basis of all existing models of sustainable leadership, Hargreaves and Fink (2005) and Davies (2009). Principals completing the questionnaire were asked to suggest any additional elements which they felt were important to include, but none did. Participants were also asked to comment on the extent to which their organisations were implementing the elements already and the results were presented in table 11 (page 112). It might be suggested that principals would not suggest that their college was or was not implementing any aspects

of the framework in case that was perceived less favourably; however, the responses made were based on judgements of the principals' knowledge of their institutions as well as on the assurances of anonymity. What the findings illustrate is that while there is broad agreement amongst respondents on the elements of the framework, a majority of principals felt that their institutions were not fully implementing the framework in its entirety, rather only elements of it. It is worth noting, as mentioned in chapter three and as Hargreaves and Fink (2003) highlight too, that regardless of which sustainable leadership framework is adopted, it important that institutions do not select individual component elements to implement. The entire model has to be embraced in order to maximise the benefits of sustainable leadership, nor do the models specify individual measures which need to be put in place within an organisation. The findings from phase 1 participants suggest that while specific actions and measures are not included in the models, respondents felt that further articulation of the meaning of each of the components to ensure consistency of understanding amongst those implementing the framework would be helpful. While existing models of sustainable leadership have been proposed by Hargreaves and Fink (2005), Fullan (2006), Davies (2009) and now Lambert (2011), little research has been undertaken on the implementation by institutions of these frameworks. Svensson and Wood (2007) suggest that the outcomes from implementing sustainable leadership frameworks are dependent on both time and context and are not suitable for 'quick wins', a point which Hargreaves and Fink (2005) also agree with. However, Svensson and Wood (2007) argue that outcomes are ultimately dependent on the behaviour and the perceived value of those implementing the framework. They go on to state that the implementation of a sustainable leadership model is a continuous process with no defined start or end point, instead seeking constant improvement. It is this aspect of having no defined start and end point which is highlighted in the model proposed within this research, with the framework being best represented as a cyclical model.

The role of the modern principal

Hargreaves and Fink (2005) identify a shortage of individuals pursuing leadership and suggest that this is a result of declining levels of funding for education and the changing demands of students who see themselves as consumers purchasing education as a

commodity rather than a long term investment. Frearson (2003), Clancy (2005) and Colinson and Colinson (2006) all suggest a shortage of suitably qualified individuals pursuing principalship with the shortage being exacerbated by an aging population of current postholders. This has the potential to result in an increase in principal posts with fewer suitably experienced candidates applying for each post. Data on principal recruitment patterns is not routinely collected as colleges are independent organisations, thus without sending requests to colleges individually surveying them on their recruitment trends, only data from national employment agencies through freedom of information requests could be accessed. An analysis of recruitment trends from the three main organisations used by colleges in the employment of principals illustrates that the number of posts advertised, by these agencies, is broadly the same at 24 per year per agency across a three year period. The data from these agencies suggests that the number of applicants per post remains broadly the same between 2008/09 and 2010/11, at approximately 15 applicants per post, but this dropped to 13 applicants per post in 2009/10, as illustrated in figure 4. Linked to this is the extent to which colleges recruiting new principals were able to make an appointment based on the candidates put forward by the recruitment agencies. This varied considerably between years, ranging from 74% appointment rate in 2008/09, peaking at 96% in 2009/10, dropping back to 94% in 2010/11. What this means is that in 2008/09 out of the 24 advertised posts principals were appointed in only 17 of instances.

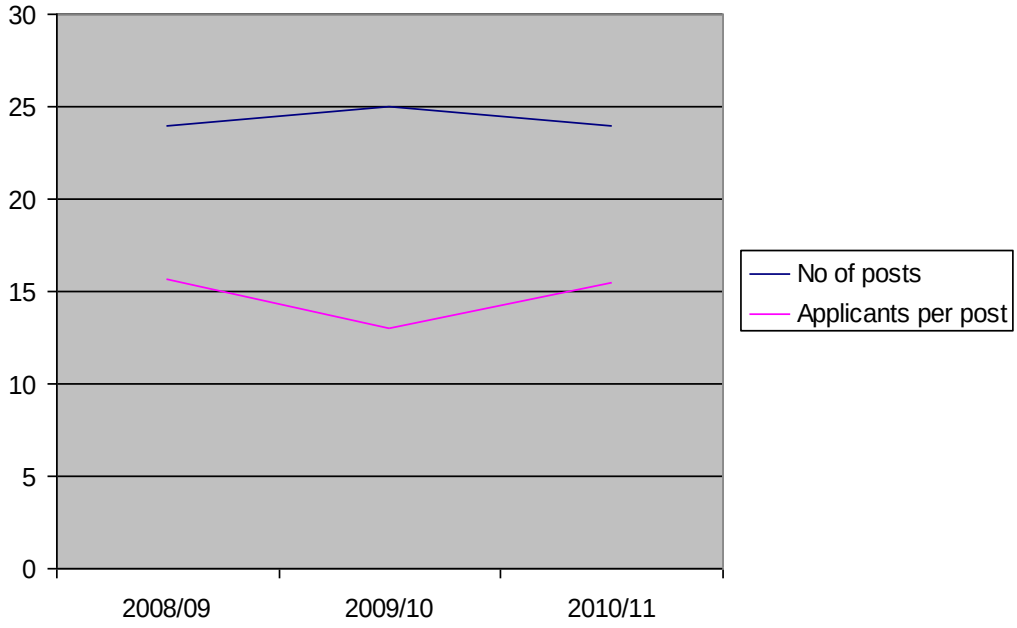

Figure 15: Principal recruitment trends
Source[5]: compiled from Freedom of Information Requests.

What can be inferred from this is that the skills and experiences of those put forward did not meet the requirements of the appointing college. There is an inherent risk in not appointing and colleges become reliant on a deputy principal assuming a temporary acting principal's role, or an interim principal is procured through one of the specialist interim management organisations. Conversely there is also a risk should the appointing college have appointed the best candidate on the day rather than the best candidate for the job, both in terms of reputational risk to the college as well as ensuring that the organisation has the most appropriate 'leader' occupying the more senior role within the college. Starr (2008) states that there are typically 11 categories of risk which principals need to manage with reputational risk being just one. Starr (2008) goes onto suggest that as risk levels become raised, those accountable such as principals and governors become '*pathologically adverse to risk*' (Starr, 2008, pg 5) for either fear of exposure or unplanned consequences such as financial or negative media.

The role of the principal has been considered from two perspectives, firstly from that of the principals', both through the questionnaire and the one to one interviews and

[5] Data compiled from a series of Freedom of Information requests. Individual recruitment agencies were contacted requesting data which was then aggregated together.

secondly, from the perspective of middle curriculum managers. What became apparent are the multiple dimensions to the principal's role. There is the public role such as representing the college locally within the local community, regionally or for a minority of principals, even nationally hence acting as the external figurehead of the institution. On the other hand, there is also the internal role which is visible to staff and students who see the principal as both academic leader and chief executive of the college. Nevertheless, this internal role also has an internal-public element, which is the visual role that the principal plays. This was identified both by the principals and the curriculum managers and it encompasses activities such as leading the college, engaging with staff and students and the ceremonial aspects of the role such as graduation and award ceremonies. There is also the internal-private role, where the principal is the strategic thinker who develops, jointly with the governors, the vision and mission of the organisation, but also synthesises government policy and translates it into a strategic plan for the organisation. It is this internal-private role which is often hidden from a majority of staff internal to the college, as principal A puts it '*staff don't see the headspace, the thinking which you need* '.This could be illustrated, as in figure 5, and is similar to the roles identified in Sala's (2003) study of principals. Sala (2003) puts forward a case for four functions: professional advisor to the corporation; management; accounting officer; and public relations, whereas Leithwoodet. al. (2004) suggest there are three elements to the work of the principal: developing people, setting organisational vision and creating an effective organisation. Even so, Davis et al (2005) argue that there is more to the role than this and say the principals should also focus on supporting teachers and developing the curriculum. All of these views can be aligned to the three elements (public, internal-public, internal-private) which are suggested above, and it is more a matter of interpretation one attaches to the functions. For example, the internal-private role could encompass Sala's (2003) 'professional advisor to the corporation role', or Leighwood et al's (2004) 'setting organisational vision and mission' function.

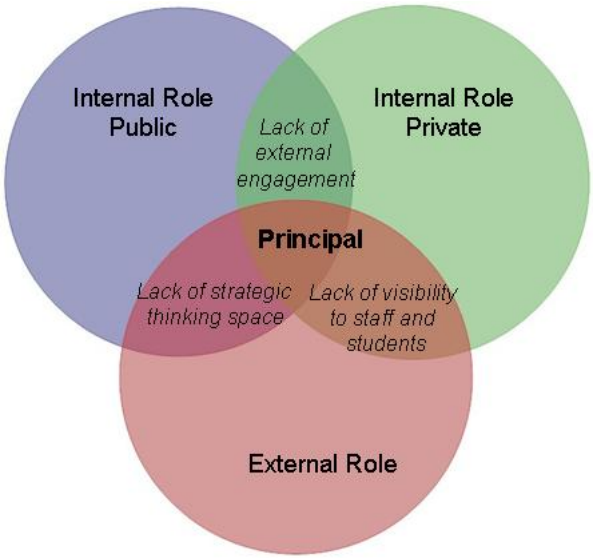

Figure 16: Interrelation of roles executed by a principal

A challenge for principals is ensuring that there is a balance between these elements; if the balance is skewed in favour of the external aspect of the role, there is the potential for principals to become disconnected from the college (Davis et al, 2005). If the balance is focused exclusively on the internal work of the college the risk is that principals are perceived by external stakeholders as not engaging in the local community or being out of tune with the demands of the stakeholders, such as local authorities or indeed spectators like funding agencies, parents and unions.

What was not highlighted by the curriculum managers yet was recognised by the principals, was the internal-private role which principals have; the role where principals are away from the general view of staff and students so that work can be done on setting the tone of their college, described by principal A as '*the mood music of the institution*'. Davis et al (2005) suggest that this is a particularly important aspect of the principals' work as there is an expectation that they will be, on one side, educational visionaries and innovators within their institutions, but at the same time serve the complex and often competing needs of stakeholders and spectators.

The three aspects of the role: public, internal-public, and internal-private link to the findings reported in chapter six whereby participant principals were asked about the activities which typically shape their week. Out of the seven internal activities principals were asked to comment against, four could be construed as internal-private

function: strategic planning; corporation meetings; governance issues; and team meetings, with the other three being internal-public activities: management meetings; meeting and dealing with staff; meeting and dealing with students. Likewise all of the external activities principals were questioned on: stakeholder meetings; meeting with community partners, meeting with business partners and meeting with political representatives were directly related to the public facing role which principals play.

Curriculum Managers saw the role in terms of the public facing element with the principal being the figurehead of the institution, but from an internal perspective they saw the principal as the decision maker, leading and managing the college, and ensuring financial stability while at the same time creating a safe and secure environment, both physically and in terms of long term security for the institution and its staff. Curriculum managers also put a large emphasis on the principal being a role model, somebody who would demonstrate excellent leadership skills, but importantly they wanted somebody how would demonstrate key attributes, including, but not limited to, being a calm, confident person. This then needs to be somebody who is independent of thought, being able to evaluate information prior to making a decision and then consistent in their responses. Curriculum managers also wanted principals who were credible both with staff and students, and externally with other principals, stakeholders and spectators. It is these attributes which curriculum managers felt were at least equal to the technical skills expected from principals. All of the attributes identified by curriculum managers fall primarily within the internal-public role which principals undertake, none of the managers identified elements of the principal's role which could be categorised as internal-private. However, there were a number of tasks such as being accountable to governors and strategic planning which could be categorised as internal-private activities. It appears that curriculum managers see the role of the principal primarily in terms of internal and external activities although this thesis argues for a tri-dimensional approach to principalship.

Sala's (2003) study also considered the characteristics of college principals and found that the style and approach of the principal had an effect on the performance of the institution. The study suggests that good leadership and management, although Sala (2003) does not define what is meant by this, can compensate against some of the

disadvantages which impact on college performance, such as poor levels of funding, unemployment rates and relative deprivation. While the report does not specify exactly what elements of leadership and management impact on performance, they do suggest that principals create a culture whereby high standards are expected, good working employee relations, a motivated workforce and a climate of professional development for staff, are all factors which have a positive impact on college performance.

Acknowledging that the relationship between a principal's leadership and management style and institutional performance is highly complex, Sala's (2003) study identifies a point which was also suggested by curriculum managers, that the culture of the institution, created primarily by the principal appears to be critical in improving college performance and meeting the expectations of staff as an effective role model.

The role of a principal is complex, demanding and within a landscape which is constantly changing (Sala, 2003; Hargreaves and Fink, 2005; Davis et al, 2005; O'Connell, 2005, Davies, 2009) so it was only appropriate to ask principals what motivates them to continue in such a demanding environment. All principals stated that there were good and bad elements to the role, as with any job, particularly citing that making staff redundant is probably one of the lowest points associated with the job. But respondents particularly enjoyed seeing students succeed and leave the college either for employment or university having been equipped with the skills necessary to be successful in the next stage of their life. Principals also found satisfaction in seeking staff achieve and this came in many ways, either through promotion, achievement of a qualification or through recognition from their peers, possibly though presenting knowledge or practice at a conference. Principals also felt that they carry a large moral responsibility both to staff and students, not only as the head of a large employer, on whom hundreds of staff are dependent for their livelihood, but as somebody who is responsible albeit indirectly, for the quality of education and training which will shape the lives of all who receive it. Principal D used a medical analogy when considering the moral responsibility which they felt:

> *the analogy which I use is that we've got to be kind, but if it was your child in the operating theatre and the surgeon wasn't very good, are you going to be kind and let them do just one more operation? So, base your decision on what you would do*

> *with that surgeon, if you keep them and let the experiment on that child, then fine, but if you wouldn't let somebody you are not sure about operate on that child then why let a manager you are not sure about potentially mess the lives of 200 students; that's your constant dilemma.*
>
> **Principal D**

Principals responding both to the questionnaire and as part of the interviews stated that being a further education college principal was the best job which they had and that they gained a great deal of satisfaction from the role. While they painted an idyllic picture of the job, they were probed on what challenges would make them leave the post. Responses were heavily biased towards the role which central government played in further education. Particular examples cited include erosion of institutional autonomy, significant reductions in funding which hampered their efforts to provide quality education and also increases in bureaucracy, contradicting the commitment from the government to reduce red-tape faced by colleges, Hayes (2010). The government is also clarifying the role of national agencies, with funding bodies being responsible only for funding thus detaching the tenuous link of managing institutional quality and performance through the funding mechanism while Ofsted becomes the sole agency responsible for quality. As a result of the Apprenticeship, Skills, Children and Learning Act (2009) local authorities have the statutory responsibility for education from the age of 0 to 19, which adds another dimension within the accountability structure which wasn't there when post-16 education and training was centralised. It is too early to assess whether this further complicates the landscape in which colleges operate. The changes brought about by this act do potentially cause a conflict between the economic needs of local government on one side and those of national government on the other. This could be managed if funding was devolved to local authorities in order to distribute according to their own priorities; however, within a national administered funding system, national priorities will take precedence over any locally identified priorities. The consequence could be, as it was highlighted by principals, that colleges are hampered in delivering quality education which meets the needs of the local community that their institution serves.

The development of aspiring principals

The third and final theme emerging from the findings surrounds the development of those aspiring to principalship. Existing models have primarily focused on development post appointment, and as already mentioned, current training focuses on becoming a reflective leader, with a period of work shadowing. In 2010 the government abolished the mandatory requirement for all principals to undertake the principals qualifying programme (Hayes, 2010), which the government cited as part of their plan to free colleges from the burden of central government. This section will argue a case for a different approach to the development of future principals. Furthermore the section considers what curriculum managers feel should be done to encourage them to pursue senior leadership positions. The combination of these two areas should provide a focus for the development of a curriculum specifically for the development of aspiring principals and provide a number of recommendations which will be reviewed in chapter eight.

From the participants interviewed, two had participated in the principals' qualifying programme and two had not, and the feeling toward the programme was mixed. Principal B felt that it was beneficial once they had been in post for a number of years, while Principal C had not been allowed on to the programme until they had commenced principalship, despite being appointed as a principal nine months earlier. Principal A, however, did not feel that they were gaining much from the course and would rather have been in college. As highlighted by those who had participated in the course an assumption had been made that principals had not undertaken any form of management training and particularly nothing related to strategic management, so they found the course very theoretical and based on academic literature. Frearson (2003) had already identified from their study that senior managers within colleges were likely to have studied at post-graduate level, with either a MEd, or MBA typically being the most common qualifications held (see Appendix N). Principal A felt that the programme was more of a doctrine with the approach 'taught' being the correct way rather than one of a number of different ways; however, this is one participant's view and others will have their own view. There is though a fundamental question surrounding whether the aims of the principals' qualifying programme were to train individuals for principalship, as

the name suggests it is a 'qualifying programme' enabling individuals to be considered for principalship, or whether it was to better equip them to discharge their duties once in post. If it was the former, then there is an argument to suggest that the timing was inappropriate, given that individuals had already been appointed to principalship. In case of the latter and given Frearson's (2003) study of management qualifications held by principals, then the case should be for practical tools to develop a higher calibre of leader. This is particularly pertinent given Sala's (2003) study which concluded that there was a link between the principal and a college's performance, as well as Ofsted continuing to focus on leadership and management as part of their inspection framework (Ofsted, 2009). As reported in chapter six, there were a number of common areas where principals felt that they would have benefited from additional support on. These were:

- dealing with the unions;
- working with the chair of governors;
- dealing with political representatives.

These are all experiential skills, but it was highlighted that rather than specific training on dealing with unions, arbitration training, which is a transferrable skill, was vital when dealing with conflict between staff, students or students and staff. What is not recommended is a specific provider or approach to this training but only a suggestion based on feedback from respondents that this would be a worthwhile skill. Likewise, dealing with political representatives and the media are two skills which could be linked together under the heading of communications, as this requires a specific set of abilities depending on the audiences which is being addressed. This is a particularly useful talent which needs to be developed for when the principal is operating in their public role.

Chapter six highlighted a number of skills and experiences which principals and curriculum managers felt were need to be successful in principalship, with these being evidenced over time through a portfolio. Communications skills including media training have already been highlighted as skills particularly important in the public role, both internally and externally, which principals enact. Similarly, there seems a need for arbitration training, given the constantly changing landscape which colleges operate in

and the prevalence of new managerialism ideologies which expect 'more for less', as principals are increasingly required to negotiate and influence others in order that the vision and mission of the college can be fulfilled. Principals can no longer compensate staff for undertaking additional duties such as remuneration though additional financial payments or reductions in teaching commitments, therefore negotiation and arbitration again are going to be increasingly important.

In light of Sala's (2003) view that the principal is the professional advisor to the corporation and principals themselves cite the relationship with the chair of the corporation as critical, it is only right that future principals are given, over a period of time, increasing involvement with governance and corporation matters. Aspiring principals need to fully understand the role of the corporation, where it ends and where the role of the principal takes over. It is beyond the scope of this thesis to suggest what those developments might look like and a recommendation is that further work is undertaken to develop the detail necessary.

Principal B argued that as they have a finance director, as principal they don't need to know the detail of the college's budget. Yet given that budget approval is one of the only functions a principal cannot devolve, then it must be in the interest of the principal to understand in reasonable detail how the college's funding is calculated and where various aspects of the income come from. While this study is not suggesting that the principal puts together the college's accounts at the end of the financial year, colleges are multi-million pound organisations and principals are accountable to the public accounts committee of parliament for the effective use of public funding, which again is a compelling reason to understand the financial aspects of the college. Curriculum managers, however, stated that they wanted to develop their knowledge and understanding of budgets and finance in order that they could for example put together costed plans and proposals for their areas of responsibility. They also felt there was an assumption made that they knew how to manage a budget, whereas focus group C state '*we all have budgets and we all know that if it goes red it's not good*'. Some of these development needs could be addressed through formal and or accredited training, but equally through a combination of mentoring, coaching and work shadowing. Principals said they had a responsibility to develop their deputies, whilst curriculum managers

suggested that there should be a moral responsibility for all senior managers to actively develop staff reporting to them. This senior management led development could include setting clear expectations and targets relating to their managers' professional development. The role of mentoring and coaching should focus on two aspects, firstly being coached or mentored and secondly, being an effective coacher or mentor. Principals C and D both indicated that there was a strong culture of coaching within the organisation; however, curriculum managers in focus group C felt there were inconsistencies in staff involvement in the coaching process. What they meant by this was that some curriculum managers were actively engaged in being coached, while others were completely unaware that coaching was available. Like other aspects of the development of aspiring principals, coaching and mentoring should be undertaken over an extended period of time, as yet unspecified, with positive outcomes being recorded as a result of that process.

In relation to work shadowing, participants felt that there was value in shadowing, both in terms of understanding the job role which individuals might move into as part of their next career step, but also in order for individuals to gain exposure to other organisations and ways of working. This is particularly important if the college isn't currently graded as outstanding using the Ofsted criteria. Future principals need to understand what an outstanding college looks like, in terms of the way in which they undertake activities, for example, how they performance manage staff in order to improve standards and outcomes for students. Managers need this exposure, so that they can formulate new ideas and ways of working and ultimately improve the life chances of the students who they are providing an education for. Work shadowing either internally within the college or in other colleges or organisations outside of the education sector must be meaningful and with purpose. Those parties participating in the process need to be clear on the purpose of the activity to ensure that maximum benefit is gained by those individuals involved. Groom (2006) highlights the positive benefits of shadowing in gaining '*first hand experience of the role they are to undertake*', with Simkins et al (2009) suggesting where possible shadowing should be hands-on rather than observational or simulated; however, principal D places the caveat that there must be compatibility in terms of leadership and management style between those being shadowed and those shadowing.

Curriculum managers suggested that their role was predominantly an operational role and only when they gain a senior management post would they become more strategic. Bailey and Kempster (2006) argue that this idea of becoming a strategic leader is misplaced and managers are strategic leaders; however, they don't recognise it, instead choosing to perceive it as something which senior managers do. Taking Ireland and Hitt's (1999) idea that in order to become a strategic leader individuals need to develop skills which enable them to '*anticipate, envisage, maintain flexibility, think strategically, and work with others to initiate change that will create a viable future for the organization*' (Ireland and Hitt, 1999) it is difficult to see how curriculum managers could not fit this description by virtue of the work which they do in planning and delivering a flexible curriculum that is viable (financially) for the college. Curriculum managers will be accustomed to working in project groups either internally within their own areas of responsibility or more widely as part of cross college groups, but often these projects are related to a specific task or activity, whereas managers need to understand the wider strategic context and, more specifically, how all the individual projects fit together to create the strategic vision or plan for the organisation. This links back to the framework for sustainable leadership with its element which focuses on building long term objectives from short term goals, with the vision and strategic plan of the institution being the long term objective and the operational plan and its associated projects being the short term objectives. Curriculum managers need to know how their role directly contributes to the short term goals and how this contributes to the long term objectives of the college.

Frearson (2003) indicated that there were a number of management qualifications held by principals (see appendix N), many of which were not specifically related to leadership and management in education. The importance of management qualifications are highlighted by Winterton and Winterton (1997) who particularly noted the extent to which competence-based management development made identifiable improvements to individual and institutional performance while Wilton et. al. (2007) suggested that managers were under-qualified compared to other professions. Wilton et. al (2007) also noted from their study that management qualifications would become an increasingly important way in which individuals could evidence their abilities. Wilton's study also

highlighted that employers participating did not see an increase in staff turnover having offered management training to employees. Smylie et al (2005) argues that the only way to improve colleges and attract staff is to provide leadership development opportunities

If all of the suggested activities which curriculum managers suggested are needed for their development such as mentoring and coaching, change management skills, financial management, shadowing of a manager at the next level up within the organisation are taken and developed and evidenced over a period of time, then individuals pursuing principalship would have a portfolio of skills and experiences which principals have identified as necessary to be successful in the role. It would also provide a framework which puts a level of responsibility on colleges to ensure that opportunities were available to staff, but also on curriculum managers, with an expectation that they would participate in a development programme. For those individuals who sought higher office development this would be on-going process and carried out within a clear and transparent framework.

Principals felt that it was more important to develop the practical skills and to be exposed to the role of the principal rather than the theoretical basis of leadership, as there was training which could be provided through certificate or diploma in management qualifications or masters degrees. Table 15 on page 124 illustrates this with the most important experiences an aspiring principal needed to have. These were more competency based, such as managing teams, mentoring and coaching and quality improvement. It is this approach which is taken in the national professional qualification for headship in the schools sector which is based around individuals demonstrating their competency through work based projects and tasks. The use of a framework, as advocated by curriculum managers too, would allows individuals to evidence their skills and experiences against a set of standards. This would provide a clear framework for individual professional development and have the potential to create a pool of suitably qualified and experienced staff from which college corporations can recruit. This would minimise the risk to colleges, which has been already highlighted, of appointing the best person on the day rather than the best person for the job.

As a result the framework could be used as a recruitment technique, so that only candidates who could demonstrate through a portfolio of evidence that they had met the minimum requirements would be eligible for principalship. This would ensure that candidates had a basic comparable set of qualities. Those individuals who did not meet this minimum standard would not be barred from principalship; it would simply mean that further work is needed in order to meet the standard, prior to being considered for principalship. This would effectively create a 'breed' of professionally qualified principals, and while possibly going against the government's drive to allow greater institutional autonomy there is an argument that if the further education sector is to become more professional as suggested by Foster (2005) and DIUS (2007) then should there not be a professional standard for those leading multi-million pound organisations?

Conclusion

This chapter has put forward a case that there is a place for a framework for sustainable leadership for further education colleges, which is supported by principals responding to the questionnaire as part of phase one. At the same time, there is an acknowledgement that further work is needed to articulate the subtleties of the framework to ensure that there is common understanding of each of the elements. It was never the intention of the thesis to provide details of possible actions which colleges could implement as activities need to be specific to the institution. Any subsequent guidance may need to include some examples or case studies of possible initiatives which could be implemented. The second section of the chapter reflected on the role of the principal and while curriculum managers identified two facets to the role, the external and internal, principals identified a third, an external public aspect to the job. A potential challenge for principals is to balance the competing demands of these elements of the job. This section of the chapter also considered data obtained, over a three year period, from the three major recruitment agencies used by colleges. While the number of principal posts collectively advertised by the agencies remains broadly the same, there is variation in the ability of colleges to appoint to these posts. This could imply that candidates presenting themselves for interview to principalship did not meet the requirements of the recruiting colleges, which links to the third section of the chapter which is around the development of future

principals. This section suggests the use of an evidence based framework which allows aspiring managers to evidence over a period of time the development they have undertaken to ensure that they have the skills and experiences which principals have identified as necessary for principalship. The skills and experiences which managers will work towards have been identified by practitioners, namely principals, but it also included feedback from curriculum managers as to what they felt was important in their development going forward. It must be acknowledged that due to the resources available this study could not be extended to include the views of corporation members as the key decision makers in the appointment of a new principal. Nevertheless, as Winterton and Winterton (1997) note competence-based management development can make identifiable improvements to both, individual and institutional performance.

The final chapter of this thesis reflects on the research questions posed in chapter one ensuring that each of the questions has been answered, as well as identifying a number of recommendations as a result of the study. Finally the chapter considers the process and subsequent learning arising as a result of undertaking this thesis and proposes how to take this research forward in the future.

Chapter 8: Conclusion

Introduction

In this final chapter the main findings are summarised around each of the five research questions. Subsequently a number of recommendations arising from these findings are suggested. The chapter then reflects on the process undertaken in order to complete this research as well as how this work might be taken forward in the future.

Review of research questions

Chapter one presented the main research question for this thesis which was 'what are the challenges and resolutions in moving middle curriculum managers in further education colleges onto principalship?' It argued that in order to address this question the following five questions were needed.

1. What is the current context of principalship in the selected further education colleges?

2. What is the reported reality of movement into principalship in further education colleges?

3. What elements of current models of sustainable leadership might the selected further education colleges being examined implement in the development of aspiring principals?

4. What are the views of further education principals with respect to the role of the principal?

5. What are the views of middle curriculum managers with respect to the role of the principal?

In order to answer these questions a rich mix of data was collected which provided an insight into not only the complexity of the principals' role but also the further education sector as a whole. This data came from a variety of sources, including statistical information from government agencies, departments, and recruitment organisations used by colleges in the recruitment of principals. Empirical data was obtained from questionnaires combining both qualitative and quantitative components as well as semi-structured interviews with serving principals and focus groups with curriculum managers. All these approaches contributed to providing a greater understanding of the complex nature of the environment in which principals of further education colleges operate.

Research question 1: What is the current context of principalship in the selected further education colleges?

Over the past twenty years further education has experienced unprecedented change, moving from a system of local authority maintained institutions where the principal was the senior academic officer, to one where colleges are independent, autonomous organisations accountable to parliament for the use of public monies. Principals cited incorporation as possibly the single most important piece of legislation which changed the further education landscape forever. While local government possibly considered this to be an erosion of their power, colleges had to grapple with their new found freedom and the loss of the safety net formally provided by local authorities. Goddard-Patel and Whitehead (2000) provide an illustration of colleges getting into financial difficulties, due to the lack of financial controls in place within organisations, which was as a result of the freedoms gained by incorporation. This was echoed by one principal who suggested that the current government's drive to reduce bureaucracy and provide increased freedom to institutions makes running a college '*more scary*'. At the same time the emergence of two phenomena started to creep into further education. A first was the ideology of new managerialism through its increases in financial controls necessary to satisfy national funding organisations as well as the drive to become more efficient. This resulted in increases in the number of specialist staff, such as finance managers and human resource professionals required by colleges; however, colleges did not gain financially out of incorporation which increased further the need for financial efficiencies to be found. Principals commented that colleges had a number of specialist

managers, in areas such as finance and HR which removed the need for them to have a detailed knowledge of budgets and employment legislation. Secondly, there was an increase in the level of state regulation which was the only way that colleges could be managed and directed to meet the government's economic and skills priorities. Leitch (2006) points out the need for the country to remain economically competitive in an increasingly globalised economy and suggests that colleges are instrumental in delivering the training necessary to up-skill the nation's workforce. Principals pointed out the importance of the increases in state regulation that forced colleges to deliver the government's skills priorities. This was achieved by financially incentivising colleges to deliver a curriculum which met the skills' needs of the country.

Incorporation and the onset of new managerialism has undoubtedly changed the role of the principal from that of senior academic officer accountable to the local authority, to that of business leader accountable to parliament for the appropriate use of millions of pounds of public money. The modern principal needs to combine the role of academic leader maintaining the quality and standards associated with delivering the curriculum and that of a chief executive who has responsibilities for finance, human resources, the college estate and the strategic direction of the institution. This was illustrated through the analysis of activities which principals undertook in a typical week. Many of these activities were strategically focused, such as strategic planning, governance, and meetings with internal staff, external stakeholders and observers, such as local business representatives.

While the role of the principal has evolved over time, so has the context in which colleges operate. Principals cited incorporation as possibly the single most important piece of legislation which changed the further education landscape forever, but also pointed out the importance of the increases in regulation that forced colleges to deliver a curriculum which was possibly less focused on the needs of the local economy but more on the national economy instead. Such was the level of regulation imposed from the state on colleges that Hayes (2010) announced that the level of bureaucracy was to be reduced freeing colleges from central government control and enabling them to respond to the needs of the local economy. While colleges might have more freedom from the state, the Apprenticeship, Skills Children and Learning Act (2009) gives local

authorities strategic responsibility for education from 0-19, thus making colleges accountable to the local authorities as they were pre-incorporation. The difference is that pre-incorporation the local authority funded colleges as opposed to this being performed now by a central government agency.

As this thesis has illustrated, colleges operate in a highly complex and constantly changing environment where they are balancing the needs of the local economy and the demands of local government. At the same time they are operating within a state led framework for funding, audit, inspection and compliance which has seen colleges move to a market orientated system with students increasingly seen as customers. It is unlikely that this system will change in the near future and colleges will continue to be expected to bridge the gap between compulsory and post-compulsory education providing vocational education for those young people for whom that is the most appropriate curriculum, while at the same time increasingly being seen as a provider of affordable higher education.

Research question 2: What is the reported reality of movement into principalship in further education colleges?

Frearson (2003), Clancy (2005) and Colinson and Colinson (2006) all suggest that there is a shortage of leaders in further education and that those in post at the time of their studies would be approaching retirement. The demographic data collected from the questionnaires shows that the average age of respondents was between 50 and 59, with 42% falling into this category, which is in line with the published data from Frearson (2003) and Clancy (2005). The data illustrates that there remains a need to develop individuals to meet the demand to fill future principalship posts as current post holders approach retirement. Autonomous organisations such as colleges do not have to report their recruitment data to any national agency; however, there are a small number of recruitment agencies operating nationally which are used by colleges when recruiting principals or other senior leaders. Given the importance of appointing the correct individual for the college, these agencies provide professional support from discussing the requirements of the college and the skills needed by the incoming postholder, through to shortlisting and participating on selection panels. Data obtained from these agencies suggests that the number of posts has remained broadly the same over the past

three years, with similar numbers of applicants per advertised post. What has changed, and appears to change annually, is the ability for colleges to appoint from the candidates presenting themselves at the interviews. This suggests that the calibre of potential principals changes year on year and due to the level of variation implies that there is a need for a more consistent approach to the development of aspiring principals. This would provide a level of confidence to recruitment panels that those being considered for principalship have broadly similar skill sets and experiences. This potentially reduces the risk of institutions appointing a less than appropriate candidate to the principal's post. While this research was conducted in the south east of England and London, the statistics obtained from recruitment agencies reflect national data therefore inferring that skills and experiences of candidates' and colleges' abilities to recruit from the pool of candidates was a national issue. The development of aspiring principals therefore is not an issue which is limited to the geographical region of this study.

What the empirical work illustrates is that while the age of principals remains in line with Frearson (2003) and Clancy's (2005) report, the number of principal's posts advertised through national agencies has remained broadly the same too. If the '*timebomb*' which Frearson (2003) proposes happened, one would expect the number of principal's posts to significantly rise as a result of large numbers of them retiring. This does not mitigate against the need to develop those individuals who aspire to principalship.

Research question 3: What elements of current models of sustainable leadership might the selected further education colleges being examined implement in the development of aspiring principals?

Chapter three discussed existing models of sustainable leadership, namely those suggested by Hargreaves and Fink (2006), Hill (2006) and Davies (2009) and proposed that while these frameworks were not inappropriate for further education, they were not entirely appropriate either. Not to be confused with leadership for sustainability or ecology on which there is a considerable body of literature, sustainable leadership is in its infancy and is concerned with building organisational capacity through the investment of developing leaders at all levels within the organisation. Hargreaves and Fink (2006) acknowledge that the education sector is failing to attract quality leaders,

while Magnus (2009) suggests that an ageing population is contributing to this shortage. Hargreaves and Fink (2006) argue that sustainability is greater than any one individual within an organisation, instead suggesting that investment is needed in developing leaders at all levels within the institution. Existing models of sustainable leadership are predominantly focused on schools, but the operating environment for colleges is different, particularly with the new public management approach advocated by the government which had impacted on further education and created a market orientated approach to post-compulsory education. As a result of reviewing existing models an alternative framework for sustainable leadership in further education was proposed. This included transferrable elements such as *Converses* and *Builds Capacity of Staff* from existing models and also encompasses elements which are specific to the further education sector, such as *Strategic Distribution*, not to be confused with Davies' (2007) *Strategic Abandonment*. Underpinning all of the existing models was a moral dimension, because leadership should be concerned with developing the entire organisation in a holistic manner, and not entirely focused on performance indicators. This moral dimension arose in the discussions with principals who all felt that they had a moral duty to develop their deputies; however, curriculum managers felt that this moral obligation should be extended to include all managers developing their staff.

The framework proposed in chapter three was used in phase one of the fieldwork with respondents being asked to score, using a Likert scale, the appropriateness of each of the component elements and subsequently the extent to which their organisations were implementing the elements already. The results illustrated that there was broad agreement among the respondents that all of the appropriate elements had been included in the framework; however, further work was needed to ensure that individuals considering implementing the framework have a consistent understanding of the meaning of each element. The results of the work indicate that principals believed that their institutions were not fully implementing all the elements of the framework, and chapter seven discussed in greater detail the extent to which that was done. There is little empirical evidence surrounding the implementation of sustainable leadership, and this is symptomatic of the field and its relative infancy. Chapter three and the subsequent publication (Lambert, 2011) along with the evidence collected in this thesis add to this body of literature.

Research question 4: What are the views of further education principals with respect to the role of the principal?

Principals were asked both through the questionnaire and the interviews about their role, particularly focusing on what consumed their time during a typical week as well as the skills, attributes and experiences needed to become a principal. Following that they were also asked about the role which the principals qualifying programme has in developing effective leaders of further education.

As a result of the empirical work three dimensions of the principal's role were highlighted, which were:

- the public role: the figurehead of the organisation, representing the college in the business and local communities;
- the internal-public role: being visible within the college, engaging with staff and students and participating in ceremonial roles such as award and graduation events. This meant leading the college both as the business leader and as the senior academic officer;
- the internal-private role: as a strategic thinker, developing the vision and mission of the college, engaging with the corporation, translating and incorporating government policy into the institution's strategic plan.

All of the activities which principals undertook as part of their role could be categorised under one of these three headings. But as part of the research, principals highlighted key areas where they felt they would have appreciated additional support upon commencing principalship, and these focused around liaising with unions, working with the corporation and chair of governors and engaging with political representatives. These were common themes arising from the questionnaire and would seem useful potential developments. If these areas are not addressed, then the implication could be an increased risk, both to the college, in that the incoming principal does not have the necessary skills and experiences to be effective in the role, and to the individual who could feel ill-prepared for principalship. This deficiency in an individual's ability to be adequately prepared for principalship was identified by Foster (2005) and as a result, the government introduced the principals qualifying programme (BIS, 2007 and The Further Education (Principals Qualifications) (England) Regulation 2007). However, in

a bid to reduce the central regulation and to free colleges from unnecessary bureaucracy, the mandatory requirement was removed (Hayes, 2010). It is unclear whether the removal of the mandatory principals qualifying programme is likely to impact on the level of ad hoc, unplanned leadership development, something Levi (2006) warns against and instead advocating that leadership development is part of the organisation's strategic plan. Principals interviewed provided a mixed review of the programme, some felt the timing of the programme was not appropriate, given that newly appointed principals were grappling with establishing themselves, often in a new and unfamiliar college. Others felt that they benefited most after having been in post for 3 to 4 years. By having the principals qualifying programme post appointment to principalship, the programme cannot prepare individuals as they are already in post. The programme then becomes a post appointment development programme, rather than a qualifying programme for principalship. Questions were also raised about the delivery of the programme, with one principal feeling that it was rather too dogmatic, instead of providing a range of tools which a principal could use depending on the context.

The challenge for the further education sector is to develop an effective way of ensuring that those who aspire to principalship are adequately prepared over a period of time so when they are being interviewed they can demonstrate relevant skills and experiences. Principals did not doubt the value of having a principals qualifying programme which could address many of the challenges highlighted, but questioned the value of the former programme. As Frearson (2003) points out senior leaders have usually undertaken a programme of post-graduate study in management providing them with general management skills and theory. In that case the suggestion would be that any subsequent programme could focus on the specific skills needed for principalship.

Research question 5: What are the views of middle curriculum managers with respect to the role of the principal?

Linked to the development of aspiring principals was the view of principalship from the perspective of curriculum managers, who are sufficiently removed from the day to day work of the principal to fully appreciate the extent of the principals' role.

Curriculum managers articulated the attributes of a principal which they felt were important, but unlike the principals, they only identified two of the three dimensions to the principal's role: the public and the internal. Instead of these two dimensions principals suggested that internal role needed to be further subdivided into internal-public and internal-private representing the work which they undertook in private, either individually, with senior colleagues or members of the governing corporation.

The managers participating in the focus group were of the belief that it was the responsibility of the college to provide opportunities and not the responsibility of individuals to actively seek out opportunities to progress. Kambil (2010) argues that responsibility has to be a two-way process, because current leaders cultivate the desired traits and skills of aspiring leaders. Despite this expectation of colleges providing opportunities, curriculum managers articulated on a number of occasions that these opportunities should be undertaken prior to appointment. This could include work shadowing so that decisions could be made by managers on whether the perceived expectation of a post reflected the actual reality of the role. Managers pointed out that often it is too late to decide if the post to which one has been appointed is appropriate, after the event. Providing opportunities for work shadowing prior to interview would ensure that candidates presenting themselves for interview were fully aware of the expectation of the post and of the successfully appointed individual. Curriculum managers also felt that they wanted to better understand some of the functional areas of the organisation, particularly finance, which contradicted the views of Principal B who felt that principals did not need to know the detail of the finance because the college had finance managers. This is one case where there has to be a balance between the immediate development needs of those whose appointment to principalship is imminent and those individuals such as curriculum managers whose development is planned over a longer period of time.

This reinforces the idea presented in chapter seven that there is a case for an evidence based curriculum for the development of aspiring principals. Participants in the research felt that there should also be an expectation placed on both senior managers to develop the staff who report to them, out of moral duty, and curriculum managers felt that this duty should extend to all managers. However, there should be an expectation that if entering a management post within a further education college, individuals will

participate in a structured development programme which could lead to principalship. This would address the second research question concerning the calibre of the candidates presenting themselves for principalship and providing corporations with a greater pool of individuals from which colleges can recruit and thus help to reduce the risk to the college.

The five questions which have been answered as part of this thesis provide the evidence in answering the main research question which is 'what are the challenges and resolutions of moving middle curriculum managers in further education colleges on to principalship?' The following sections consider what the challenges and resolutions are as a result of the evidence presented in this thesis.

What are the challenges?

The first challenge facing middle curriculum managers as they aspire to principalship is the constantly changing economic, political and managerial background that managers in further education have to operate. This was explored in chapter two and in particularly in the way that demographic globalisation has impacted on institutions through an increasing number of European Union and non European Union students. Economic globalisation, while not directly impacting on institutions, rather informs national policy which subsequently shapes the post-compulsory landscape, leading colleges into a consumer era where education is increasingly seen as a commodity.

As a result of the turbulent environment which further education leaders operate in, those who aspire to principalship need to develop strategies to cope with the constantly changing economic and political landscape while remaining focused on delivering education and training.

The next challenge facing middle curriculum managers as they aspire to principalship is the lack of a conceptual framework for colleges to develop both the capabilities of staff and organisational capacity. Hargreaves and Fink (2006) acknowledge that the education sector is failing to attract quality leaders and that sustainable leadership offers a way forward for institutions to build capacity through developing leadership at all levels of the organisation hierarchy. Chapter three considers existing models of sustainable leadership and identifies that while a number of approaches to sustainable

leadership exist they all focus solely on the school sector. While elements of these models are applicable to the further education sector, the chapter presents evidence to suggest that current models are not mutually exclusive. Chapter four further emphases the need for a conceptual framework as it puts forward the case that leadership in further education is constantly changing, mainly as a result of changing policy, and that the role of those who lead colleges has evolved from academic to business leader. This evolving role of the principal and of the positioning of colleges within the post-compulsory sector has been primarily a reaction to the succession of government initiatives rather than an evolution undertaken within a conceptual framework.

This leads onto the final challenge which middle curriculum managers face, the absence of a structured development programme for managers and particularly those who aspire to principalship. Through the empirical data collected from the three phases of this research a picture started to build of the three aspects to the role of the principal along with the skills and experiences participants felt were needed by future principals. In developing those who aspire to principalship Kambil (2010) suggests that individuals need to be provided with space, time and mentoring in order to develop the traits and skills necessary to become future leaders.

What are the resolutions?

The first resolution is for those who aspire to principalship to develop strategies to cope with the constantly changing environment that further education operates in, as well as mechanisms by which individuals remain informed about changes that potentially will impact on their leadership.

The next resolution is for colleges to adopt a model of sustainable leadership such as one of the existing models from Hargreaves and Fink (2006), Hill (2006) or Davies (2009) or else the one specifically for further education as proposed in chapter three and in Lambert (2011). The adoption of a sustainable leadership model would enable colleges to critically review, at an organisational level, elements of their work and develop the necessary actions in order to develop a holistic approach to building organisational capacity.

The final resolution is the implementation of a structured development programme for middle curriculum managers. Chapters six and seven proposed a number of skills and experiences that those who aspire to principalship need to develop, but as Kambil(2010) suggests the development of future principals is not a quick win but rather an investment. In order for the development of middle curriculum managers into future principals to be successful a commitment is required by both the college, to provide development opportunities for all curriculum managers, and the individual managers to fully participate and seek out opportunities to develop. The discussion in chapter seven puts forward the case for an evidence based programme completed over a period of time which enabled participants to evidence their skills and experiences on an on-going basis. This portfolio of evidence could be assessed and certificated to demonstrate that individuals had met a minimum standard, conferring eligibility to be considered for principalship. By developing the skills of curriculum managers, colleges should increasingly be able to appoint candidates with the necessary skills, experiences and attributes needed to fulfil the role of principal and chief executive and stem the reported decline in individuals want to pursue principalship as suggested by Frearson (2003) and Clancy (2005).

As a result of this study and in order for these three resolutions to be implemented by institutions a number of recommendations have been made and these are outlined in the following section.

Recommendations

From the evidence gained as a result of this research, a number of recommendations will be made here which will support middle curriculum managers in their move on to principalship within further education.

1. **Framework of sustainable leadership for further education colleges: providing an implementation toolkit**. From the evidence presented there is support from respondents for the elements of the proposed sustainable leadership framework for further education. The framework would enable colleges to develop organisational capacity while at the same time developing individuals within the institution. Although the framework does not propose

specific actions which colleges should undertake as part of its implementation, it would be useful as part of a supporting toolkit to include examples or possible case studies of what could be done.

2. **Framework of sustainable leadership for further education colleges: definitions**. From the responses collected, there was evidence to suggest that clarification around some of the elements of the proposed sustainable leadership framework would aid the understanding of those individuals responsible for implementing the framework and ensure consistency of implementation. Therefore a recommendation would be that the elements should include an explanatory note to ensure consistency of understanding.

3. **Programme alignment.** There seems sense in mirroring development programmes for principals with equivalent programmes for headteachers which are usually undertaken prior to appointment and provide a level of confidence to recruitment panels that individuals possess a basic and necessary set of skills. Such a programme would then effectively provide a 'license to practice' register of individuals similar to those seen in other professions such as law and medicine. This would help to address the weaknesses identified by Foster (2005) as well as help in the government's desire to professionalise the further education workforce, BIS (2006).

4. **Development of future principals:** The finding presented in chapter six and the discussion which followed in chapter seven argued a case for an evidence based framework for the development of future principals. Suggestions were made by both principals and curriculum managers regarding the development needs of those aspiring to principalship. These included arbitration and communications training, coaching and mentoring, finance development, and work shadowing. The argument was made that this development should be over an extended period of time with managers working within a framework where they could evidence skills and experiences in a portfolio. This could then be assessed and certificated to demonstrate that individuals had met a minimum standard, conferring eligibility to be considered for principalship.

5. **Moral responsibility to develop staff:** Principals stated that they felt that they had a moral responsibility to provide opportunities for their deputies to develop the skills necessary to become a principal. Curriculum managers participating in the focus groups believed that this was not the case of other senior managers and that this moral responsibility should be extended to all managers. A recommendation is that all managers should be expected to develop those individuals who report to them, as well as actively participate in the evidence based framework suggested above. This might be achieved through amending existing documentation such as employment contracts and monitoring through the organisations appraisal system.

Future Research

This is not the end of this study and there are areas, principally arising as a result of the limitations identified, where this research could be taken in the future. Given the resources available it was viable only to distribute the questionnaire to college principals in the south east of England and London. Out of a possible 65 responses only 19 were received which limits the ability to generalise from the finding. As a result future research should look at distributing the questionnaire to a greater number of categories of colleges in the region, but also nationally and further consideration should be given to the mechanisms which would generate a greater level of response. This would enable more reliable generalisations to be made.

As mentioned in chapters one and three there remains this tension between the ideas put forward that sustainable leadership is a holistic means of developing an organisation, particularly with the notion that leadership is greater than any one individual within the organisation and the approach taken in this thesis which has looked at the role of the principal. It is important to acknowledge this tension, but also note that it would be impractical within an EdD thesis to consider leadership at all levels of the organisation. It was therefore felt that if an understanding of the challenges facing middle managers in their pursuit of principalship were to be gained then it would be prudent to concentrate upon the role of the principal. Similarly it was not possible to involve vice or deputy principals or indeed the chair of the governing corporation in the study. The research presented in this thesis also provides opportunities to develop the ideas around principalship being primarily categorised under the headings of *public*, *internal-private*

and *internal-public* to determine whether this approach to leadership is limited to the principal or whether it may be applicable to all leadership roles.
Phase 2 involved interviewing principals while phase 3 was a series of focus groups with curriculum managers from the same colleges. Future work should extend to include governors, because as the employer and line manager of the principal, it is important to know what they are seeking when appointing a candidate. By factoring in their expectations candidates presenting themselves for principalship would have a better understanding of what recruitment panels are expecting, which might well increase the appointment rate as discussed in chapter seven. There is also scope to include middle managers who are in business functions such as finance and human resources to understand whether they consider principalship to be a realistic option, or whether they perceive this to be only open to teaching staff.

Arising from the study was the idea of an evidence based development framework for middle curriculum managers; however, further work needs to be undertaken to develop the detail surrounding the framework. If individuals have already met the standard for a particular element they would not have to repeat the development activity, but would have to continue to demonstrate competency against the standard. This could lead to a national set of occupational standards which individuals aspiring to principalship have to meet, and a license to practice register which, like in other professions, would require mandatory continued professional development to be undertaken.

Conclusion

Five recommendations have been suggested as a result of the research undertaken in this thesis which provides the next steps for this study in order to contribute to the government's agenda of professionalising the further education workforce (BIS, 2006). This research also adds to the body of literature in the development of middle curriculum managers ensuring that there are sufficient adequately skilled and experienced individuals to become college principals. The recommendations also enable the limitations identified to be overcome thus allowing for a greater reliability in future outcomes based on this study.

This research has made an original contribution to knowledge by furthering the discussion around sustainable leadership, in itself an area which is still in its infancy,

and proposed an alternative model (Lambert, 2011). The study has also contributed to the body of research relating to further education which is an under researched sector of the education system. At a time when the government has removed the mandatory requirement for a principals qualifying programme (Hayes, 2010), this research has put the case forward for a development programme for aspiring principals and proposes an evidence based approach.

The result of this thesis is that a way forward has been proposed for developing individuals who are better skilled and experienced and who can take on the mantle of principalship, while contributing to the building of organisational capacity through the adoption of a model of sustainable leadership.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Subject Sector Areas

ID	Name
1	Health, public services and care
2	Science and mathematics
3	Agriculture, horticulture and animal care
4	Engineering & manufacturing technologies
5	Construction, planning & the built environment
6	Information & Communication Technology
7	Retail & commercial enterprise
8	Leisure, travel & tourism
9	Arts, media & publishing
10	History, philosophy & theology
11	Social Sciences
12	Languages, literature and culture
13	Education & training
14	Preparation for life and work
15	Business administration & law

Appendix B: QCF

Qualifications and Credit Framework – the national framework in which all qualifications need to fit

Appendix C: Hour glass model

Hour Glass Model - The diagram represents the role the principal has as the interface between the college and the governing corporation.


Corporation
Principal
College

Appendix D: Sample one:principal's job description

Job Description for Principal

1 Purpose

Working for the Corporation of xxxxxxxxx College:

- To lead and direct the College in the successful achievement of its Mission, Strategic Aims and Objectives.
- To create an ethos and inclusive culture of high quality and continuous improvement to develop the College to be the major provider of learning, education and training for the communities it serves.
- To create a single responsive College that will provide improved access to a range of outstanding provision for adults, young people and business whilst promoting social inclusion and supporting economic prosperity for stakeholders within Croydon and beyond.

2 Functions

2.1 To act as Principal of the College.

2.2 To ensure that all aspects of the College are managed effectively and efficiently.

2.3 To be the Accounting Officer of the College.

2.4 To be a member of the Corporation.

2.5 To line manage the Strategic Leadership team.

3 Key Accountabilities in relation to:

Governance and Management

3.1 To advise the Corporation in their determination of the educational character, vision and purpose of the College and to lead strategic planning processes within the framework set by the Board.

3.2 To ensure that Governors receive regular updates on progress towards the fulfilment of the College's mission and aims, and the achievement of its strategic plan.

3.3 To be responsible for the implementation of the policies set and decisions made by the Board of Governors and for reporting regularly upon their impact and consequences.

3.4 To ensure that the College fulfils the various statutory and other requirements of the DIUS and DCSF, the local and national Learning and Skills Councils, local authorities and other Government agencies as appropriate.

Academic and Business Development

3.5 To determine the academic and vocational provision of the College.

3.6 To encourage and support the development of a cohesive curriculum geared to meeting learners' needs across the communities served by the College.

Quality Management

3.7 To develop the College as a responsive provider of high quality provision.

3.8 To ensure that the College's internal quality assessment and assurance mechanisms are effective.

3.9 To ensure that the College meets or exceeds the requirements for external quality assessment and inspection.

3.10 To ensure clear procedures are adopted and consistently applied for the maintenance of student discipline and academic performance.

Human Resource Management

3.11 To provide dynamic leadership of all staff, to create a culture that encourages debate, rewards innovation and fosters inclusiveness and productive team working.

3.12 To ensure that all staff and third party providers are working efficiently and effectively and to take action if standards are not met.

3.13 To approve and oversee the implementation of effective and equitable procedures within the framework set by the Board of Governors for the recruitment, selection, appointment, grading, appraisal and discipline of all staff, and for the determination of the pay and conditions of service of staff other than those designated as senior postholders.

Physical and Financial Resource Management

3.14 To take personal responsibility, which may not be delegated, for the proper and effective operation of all financial, planning and other management controls whilst ensuring efficient utilisation of physical and financial resources that safeguards public funds.

3.15 To oversee the development and implementation of appropriate systems, within the College's policies, for deploying public funds efficiently and for checking that they are being used for their intended purposes. To ensure that the Financial Memorandum, as applied to the post, is adhered to and that the College's Financial Regulations and Procedures are understood and complied with at all times.

3.16 As Accounting Officer, to ensure timely and accurate preparation of estimates of income and expenditure for consideration and ultimate approval by the Board of Governors, and that appropriate arrangements are made for the management and accounting of the approved budget including its regular reporting to the Board.

3.17 To advise the Board if, at any time, any action or policy under consideration by them is incompatible with the terms of the Financial Memorandum, and to inform the appropriate authority in writing, if the Board still proceeds.

3.18 To develop and maintain health, safety and security policies, strategies and mechanisms which meet legislative and other best practice requirements and which provide a welcoming and safe learning and working environment in all College premises.

External Links and Partnerships

3.19 To develop and strengthen supportive partnerships and alliances with the local community, stakeholders, other education providers, employers, professional bodies and appropriate Government departments.

3.20 To instil and develop a dynamic, innovative and entrepreneurial culture in the College to enable it to adapt to external changes, respond to opportunities, maximise income generation and maintain a position at the forefront of emerging education strategies and initiatives.

4 Other Duties

To undertake such other duties as the Board of Governors may, from time to time, determine in consultation with the post holder to ensure the continued existence, viability and progress of the College.

5 Reports

Reporting to the Chair of the Corporation
Posts reporting to the Principal:

- Vice Principal Student Services
- Vice Principal Curriculum and Quality
- Finance and Resources Manager
- Personnel Manager

Appendix E: Sample two: principals job description

Principal

JOB DESCRIPTION

The role of the Principal and Chief Executive of xxxxxxxxxxx College is to develop a vision and strategy which keeps the College at the forefront of educational innovation and outstanding achievement and which maintains its position within its local community as a key and valued partner committed to excellence.

The Principal will be expected to lead, inspire and develop the management team and staff, maintaining at all times that ethos of partnership and shared decision making which has been so fundamental to the College's success.

The Principal will be expected to develop strong and purposeful working relationships with the Chair and Corporation, whose role it is to agree the educational character and strategic priorities of the College. It will then be the Principal's role to implement these policies and to provide leadership to College staff, ensuring that they share and reflect the College's mission, values and aspirations.

Key Areas of Responsibility

1 Leadership

The Principal will:

1.1 Provide effective leadership to the College in fulfilling its mission as determined by the Corporation

1.2 Make proposals to the Corporation regarding the educational character, activities, and mission of the College, developing a suitably ambitious vision to inspire and motivate

1.3 Ensure that the Corporation is fully engaged in all strategic decisions which affect the mission and character of the College and implement the decisions of the Corporation

1.4 Determine the College's academic and other activities

1.5 As the Chief Accounting Officer for the College, ensure that the Corporation is advised if its actions or policies are incompatible with the financial memorandum, with the College's financial regulations and procedures or with the Instrument & Articles of Government

1.6 Organise, direct and manage the College and lead the staff, providing inspiring and motivating leadership to those engaged in teaching and training

2 Students

The Principal will:

2.1 Introduce effective strategies for the recruitment of students
2.2 Ensure high quality arrangements exist for teaching, learning and student support and that the College delivers high quality education and training

2.3 Strive to make the College an inclusive, student-centred organisation and an effective learning environment for all College users

2.4 Maintain student discipline and, within the rules and procedures provided for within the Articles, suspend or expel students on disciplinary grounds or expel students for academic reasons

3 Policies

The Principal will:

3.1 Lead and contribute to the development, implementation and monitoring of College plans and policies

3.2 Ensure the effective review of policies and procedures which involve the Corporation, staff, students and other College users

4 Staff

The Principal will:

4.1 Provide the organisation, direction and management of the institution and leadership of the staff

4.2 Ensure the appointment, assignment, grading, appraisal, suspension, dismissal and determination, within the framework set by the Corporation, of the pay and conditions of service of staff

4.3 Provide management and leadership of staff which will ensure that the College discharges all of its legal responsibilities and that good employee relations are maintained and developed

4.4 Promote discipline and good conduct and encourage commitment of staff, leading by example

4.5 Contribute to the training of staff to ensure the effective implementation of policies and systems agreed by the senior management team

5 Finance and Management Information

The Principal will:

5.1 Prepare annual estimates of income and expenditure for consideration and approval by the Corporation and manage the budget and resources within the estimates approved by the Corporation

5.2 Demonstrate prudent and effective budgetary management

5.3 Ensure that there is proper and effective operation of financial, planning and management controls

5.4 Ensure that information systems are in place which provide robust data to support the management of the whole College

6 Management and Quality

The Principal will:

6.1 Co-operate with colleagues in the senior management team to ensure that the College offers the highest quality service to its clients and foster a culture of excellence and innovation

6.2 Directly line manage and monitor the work of the senior management team

6.3 Develop an ethos of teamwork throughout the organisation

6.4 Ensure the dissemination of information about, and examples of, best practice in the sector as well as information on relevant national and local policy developments

6.5 Ensure that appropriate targets are set and agreed throughout the College, that performance against them is monitored and that the College meets or exceeds them

6.6 Make certain that the College at all levels is committed to the development and personal growth of all the individuals it employs or serves

7 Partnerships and Communication

The Principal will:

7.1 Seek out development opportunities for the College, including business and community partnerships

7.2 Ensure that the College is effectively represented and promoted in local, regional and national forums and that information from external sources is disseminated widely throughout the College

7.3 Contribute to the development and maintenance of effective communication within and beyond the College and act as an ambassador for the College and an advocate of its interests

7.4 Work closely with local high schools to develop the most effective local response to the Government's 14-19 agenda

7.5 Maintain and develop the College's partnerships with higher education institutions to meet the higher education needs of students

7.6 Develop effective partnerships with local employers to provide a wide range of education and training opportunities

8 Health & Safety

The Principal will ensure that the College's health and safety policy is implemented

9 Flexibility

The Principal will adopt flexible working methods to meet the changing needs of the College

10 Equality of Opportunity

The Principal will adopt and encourage a positive attitude towards equal opportunities and ensure the development of equal opportunities throughout all aspects of service delivery and employment

11 Professional Standards

The Principal will:

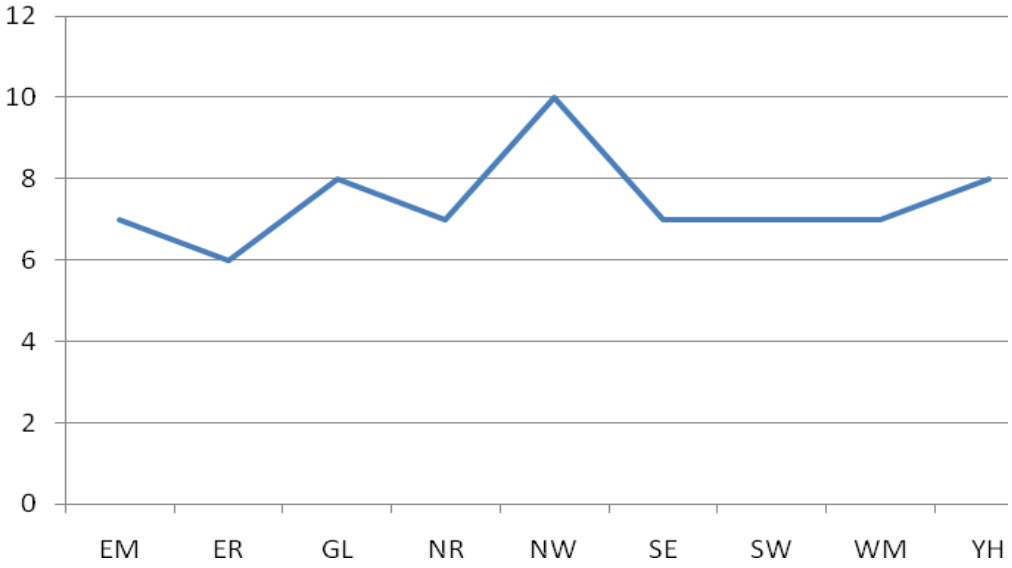
11.1 Develop and maintain quality standards appropriate to the post

11.2 Develop and maintain professional standards and expertise by undertaking relevant professional development

NB: This is not a complete statement of all duties and responsibilities of this post. The Principal may be required to carry out other duties in keeping with the nature of the post as directed by, and agreed with, the Corporation.

Appendix F: Composition of senior leadership teams

The composition of senior leadership team varies in size with the average for all general further education colleges in England being seven, and for the participant group of the South East and London there are seven members. The data presented in the graph below is the average number of members in the senior leadership team by geographical region. This is extracted and summarised from Learning and Skills Council finance data (LSC, 2009).



Appendix G: classification of colleges by income

An analysis of college 2008/09 financial data compiled from LSC (2009) shows the breakdown by Payne's (2008) categories, for general further education colleges nationally, and for the South East, including colleges in London.

Analysis of college income based on Payne's (2008) categories – nationally.

Total Income	No of Colleges	%
Less than £14m	32	17%
£14m-£29m	90	47%
Over £29m	70	36%

Analysis of college income based on Payne's (2008) categories – South East and London.

Total Income	No of Colleges	%
Less than £14m	9	15%
£14m-£29m	30	48%
Over £29m	23	37%

Appendix H: classification of colleges by student cohort

Classification of colleges by student cohort.
The calculations shown below are based on the following assumption.

- A full time student studying 3 A-levels aged 17 and receiving a full programme of pastoral support.
- A part time student studying 2 A-levels aged 17 during an evening and not eligible for the programme of pastoral support.

	Number of students	Total number of hours taught (per student)	Headcount	Full Time Equivalent	Funding based on Full Time Equivalent	Standard Learner Numbers	Funding based on standard learner numbers	Variation
Full time	1	480	1	1	£2,920.00	1.066	£3,112.72	£192.72
Part time	1	300	1	0.6	£1,752.00	0.66	£1,927.20	£175.20
Total	2	780	2	1.6	£4,672.00	1.726	£5,039.92	£367.92

What this data demonstrates is that for the same number of students, headcount totals 2; full time equivalents 1.6; and Standard Learner Numbers 1.726. With a fixed national

funding rate of £2920 then the variation between the different methods of calculating learner numbers can be established.

Appendix I: Classification of colleges by Ofsted grade – South East

Classification of colleges by Ofsted grade.

These figures are only for inspections conducted during the academic years identified.

	2008/09[6]	2009/10	10/11 (to March 2011)	**Total**
Outstanding	1	1	0	**2**
Good	9	3	2	**14**
Satisfactory	5	10	6	**21**
Inadequate	1	0	0	**1**
Total	**16**	**14**	**8**	**38**

Adapted from a Freedom of Information Request to Ofsted

[6] Inspections carried out during academic year 2008/09 where done so under the 2005 Common Inspection Framework. From 2009/10 onwards the 2009 Common Inspection Framework was used.

Appendix J: 16 experiences future leaders will encounter (McCall, 1998)

Assignments	Hardships and setbacks
• Early work experiences • First time supervision • Building something from nothing • Fix it/turn it around • Project/task force • Increase in job scope	• Ideas failure and mistakes • Demotions/missed promotions • Subordinate performance problem • Breaking a rut • Personal traumas
Other people	**Other events**
• Role models (superiors with exceptional qualities) • Values playing out (snapshots of senior leadership behaviour that demonstrate corporate values)	• Coursework (formal courses) • Purely personal (experiences outside of work)

Appendix K: Questionnaire pack

1. **Covering letter**
2. **Questionnaire**
3. **Consent Form**
4. **Ethics form**

Address 1
Address 2
Address 3
Address 4

e: s.lambert@2007.hull.ac.uk

Dear

The challenges and resolutions of moving middle curriculum managers on to principalship

I am currently undertaking a doctor of education (EdD) degree at the University of Hull and would like to invite you to take part in the first stage of my research. The research looks at the challenges and resolutions of moving curriculum managers on to principalship.

There have been a number of reports highlighting the shortage of principals in the further education sector. My research considers whether ideas around sustainable leadership, as a solution to the shortage of further education leaders, are being implemented by the sector.

The research will be carried out in three stages:

1. A questionnaire will be sent to all college principals in the South East and in London on the ideas of sustainable leadership and the role of the principal in further education.
2. A small selection of principals will be invited to participate in a one-hour interview based on the results of the questionnaires.
3. A number of focus groups with middle curriculum managers in further education colleges to consider perceptions of leadership from within colleges.

Participation in the first stage does not commit you to further stages of the research. In line with the British Educational Research Association (BERA) 2004 ethical guidelines and also the University of Hull's ethics committee regulations, all responses to the questionnaire will be treated in confidence In addition, the research will take into

account the Data Protection Act 1998 and no individual or organisation will be identifiable in the final thesis and/or any future publications.

The questionnaire will take no more than 10 minutes to complete and comprises of 16 questions. A more detailed summary of the background to this research is available prior to commencing the questionnaire, along with a copy of the ethical statement relating to the research. I would also be grateful if you would complete the enclosed consent form and return it with the questionnaire.

If you would like further information relating to the research, then please do not hesitate to contact me. The research is being supervised by Prof. Mike Bottery (m.p.bottery@hull.ac.uk) and Dr. David Plowright (d.plowright@hull.ac.uk) and if you have any concerns relating to the research then please contact them directly.

I hope that you can participate in this research as it is anticipated that the outcome will have a wide-ranging impact on the future development needs of managers within further education colleges.

I appreciate you will be very busy at the moment, but I would be very grateful if you could return the completed questionnaire using the enclosed SAE by xxx xxxxx 2010.

In anticipation, thank you for your interest in the research and I'll look forward very much to receiving your questionnaire.

Yours sincerely

Steve Lambert
Research Student

Enc. Questionnaire
Consent Form
Reply Envelope

The role of sustainable leadership in further education colleges

Phase 1

Questionnaire

Information about this questionnaire

This questionnaire seeks to collect information on the extent to which the ideas of sustainable leadership, as a solution to the shortage of leaders within further education, are being implemented.

Alongside this; the questionnaire has a number of questions relating to the role of principals in further education colleges.

Please complete this questionnaire providing as much information as possible and return it in the SAE by xxxxxxxxx 2010.

Part 1 – About your college

This section collects some basic quantitative data about your institution. This will be used for statistical purposes only.

Question 1:

Based on the Skills Funding Agency sub-regions, please select the area where your college is located:

Please tick only one

Hampshire	☐	London North	☐
Kent and Medway	☐	London Central	☐
London East	☐	Surrey	☐
London West	☐	Sussex	☐
London South	☐	ThamesValley	☐

Question 2:

Based on the DIUS 2008 indicators for college size, please select the one which best fits your college.

Total income from all sources, per annum, is:

Please tick only one

a) less than £14m ☐
b) £14m – £29m ☐
c) above £29m ☐

Question 3:

Is your college a member of the 157 group of colleges?

a) Yes ☐
b) No ☐

Part 2 – About sustainable leadership

The ideas of Sustainable leadership were developed as a way of institutions developing leadership capacity from deep within their organisation. This creates a greater pool of leadership talent to recruit from, and should key individuals leave, the capacity of the institution is not significantly impacted.

This section is about the extent to which sustainable leadership is applied in the further education sector.

The rest of this page is intentionally left blank.
Please turn over for Question 4

Question 4:

Please indicate the extent to which you personally **agree** or **disagree** with each of the principles of sustainable leadership.

Circle only one:

	Name	Summary	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	Builds capacity of staff	My organisation provides opportunities and motivates staff to develop their skills in leadership and management. This could be through formal training, work shadowing, mentoring or any other appropriate structured approach.	1	2	3	4
2	Strategic Distribution	My organisation enables individuals at all levels of the organisation to engage in leadership activities which bring about sustainable improvement through the distribution of strategic initiatives. This might be through leadership of whole college projects which bring about change.	1	2	3	4
3	Consolidates	My organisation seeks to enable and foster opportunities to work collaboratively and develop partnerships, ensuring that the learning available meets the needs of the locality. This might be through staff working with 14-19 partnerships or curriculum collaboration with schools and other learning providers.	1	2	3	4
4	Builds long-term objective from short-term goals	My organisation enables all staff to contribute to creating synergy between the long-term objectives of the organisation and the short-term targets imposed by funding agencies. This could be achieved through staff working on departmental business or service plans	1	2	3	4
5	Diversity	My organisation enables social inclusion and cohesion to be created. This is done through engaging with stakeholders to promote inclusion of under represented groups participating at the college.	1	2	3	4
6	Conserves	My organisation enables managers and leaders to honour and learn from the past to create a better future.	1	2	3	4

Question 5:

Please indicate the extent to which your institution currently implements the individual components of sustainable leadership.

Circle only one:

	Name	Summary	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	Builds capacity of staff	My organisation provides opportunities and motivates staff to develop their skills in leadership and management. This could be through formal training, work shadowing, mentoring or any other appropriate structured approach.	1	2	3	4
2	Strategic Distribution	My organisation enables individuals at all levels of the organisation to engage in leadership activities which bring about sustainable improvement through the distribution of strategic initiatives. This might be through leadership of whole college projects which bring about change.	1	2	3	4
3	Consolidates	My organisation seeks to enable and foster opportunities to work collaboratively and develop partnerships, ensuring that the learning available meets the needs of the locality. This might be through staff working with 14-19 partnerships or curriculum collaboration with schools and other learning providers.	1	2	3	4
4	Builds long-term objective from short-term goals	My organisation enables all staff to contribute to creating synergy between the long-term objectives of the organisation and the short-term targets imposed by funding agencies. This could be achieved through staff working on departmental business or service plans	1	2	3	4
5	Diversity	My organisation enables social inclusion and cohesion to be created. This is done through engaging with stakeholders to promote inclusion of under represented groups participating at the college.	1	2	3	4
6	Conserves	My organisation enables managers and leaders to honour and learn from the past to create a better future.	1	2	3	4

Part 3 – About you and your role

The final section of this questionnaire collects some demographic information about you and also some data about your working week.

Question 6:

Are you:

a) Male ☐
b) Female ☐

Question 7:

Please select age:
Tick only one:

a) 30 to 39 ☐
b) 40 to 49 ☐
c) 50 to 59 ☐
d) 60 + ☐
e) Prefer not to say ☐

Please turn over for Question 8

Question 8:

Please indicate the amount of time which you personally spend on these activities in an average week:

Circle only one:

	Activity	a very small amount	a little	a fair amount	quite a lot	biggest part of the week
Internal	Meetings with staff and dealing with staff issues	1	2	3	4	5
	Meetings with students and dealing with student issues	1	2	3	4	5
	Management Meetings	1	2	3	4	5
	Board or corporation meetings	1	2	3	4	5
	Team meetings	1	2	3	4	5
	Strategic Planning	1	2	3	4	5
	Governance	1	2	3	4	5
External	Meeting with other education stakeholders: funding agencies, 14-19 partnerships, local authorities	1	2	3	4	5
	Meeting with community partners	1	2	3	4	5
	Meeting with business partners	1	2	3	4	5
	Meeting with political representatives	1	2	3	4	5

Other activities: Please indicate in the box below:

Question 9:

Bearing in mind the activities and associated responsibilities required to carry out the role, how effectively were you prepared for your role as principal?

Circle only one:

	Activity	Not prepared	Adequately prepared	Well prepared	Fully prepared
Internal	In meetings with staff and dealing with staff issues	1	2	3	4
	In meetings with students and dealing with student issues	1	2	3	4
	In chairing and leading management meetings	1	2	3	4
	In participating in board or corporation meetings	1	2	3	4
	In managing team meetings	1	2	3	4
	In strategic planning	1	2	3	4
	In dealing with governance matters	1	2	3	4
External	In meeting with other education stakeholders: funding agencies, 14-19 partnerships, local authorities	1	2	3	4
	In meeting with community partners	1	2	3	4
	In meeting with business partners	1	2	3	4
	In meeting with political representatives	1	2	3	4

Other activities where you felt you needed further preparation, *For example: formal training; access to mentoring/peer support; opportunities for shadowing of existing principals; personal effectiveness*:

Please indicate in the box below:

Question 10:

What skills would you expect individuals pursuing principalship, as the next stage of their career, to have?

Tick all that apply:

Business acumen	☐	Self belief	☐	Formal management training	☐
A drive for results	☐	Self awareness	☐	Cultural sensitivity	☐
The ability to influence others	☐	Personal integrity	☐	An ability to work collaboratively	☐
Ability to accept accountability	☐	Ability to empower others	☐		
Change management skills	☐	Political astuteness	☐		

Other skills: Please indicate in the box below:

Question 11:

What experiences would you expect individuals pursuing principalship to have had?

Question 12:

What advice would you give to individuals pursuing principalship?

Question 13:

What gives you most satisfaction in your role and why?

Question 14:

What gives you least satisfaction in your role and why?

Question 15:

What would make you leave being a principal in further education colleges?

Question 16:

Is there anything else you would like to add?

Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire. Please indicate below whether you would be willing to participate in a short interview, no more than 1hour, to discuss the findings further.

Please tick one:

☐ Yes, I would be willing and my email address is ……

☐ No, thank you.

Thank you for participating.

The IFL ETHICS COMMITTEE
CONSENT FORM: SURVEYS, QUESTIONNAIRES

I, of

Hereby agree to participate in this study to be undertaken

By Steve Lambert

and I understand that the purpose of the research is

- Understand the extent to which sustainable leadership models are being implemented in further education colleges.
- Understand the role and work of college principals.
- Assess the extent to which the published crisis in leadership exists.

I understand that

1. Upon receipt, my questionnaire will be coded and my name and address keptseparately from it.
2. Any information that I provide will not be made public in any form that could reveal my identity to an outside party ie. that I will remain fully anonymous.
3. Aggregated results will be used for research purposes and may be reported in scientific and academic journals.
4. Individual results **will not** be released to any person except at my request and on my authorisation.
5. That I am free to withdraw my consent at any time during the study in which event my participation in the research study will immediately cease and any information obtained from me will not be used.

Signature: Date:

The contact details of the researcher are: Steve Lambert (S.Lambert@2007.hull.ac.uk) c/o Prof. Mike Bottery, Centre for Education Studies, University of Hull, Cottingham Road, Hull, HU6 7RX.

The contact details of the secretary to the IfL Ethics Committee are Mrs.J.Lison, Centre for Educational Studies, University of Hull, Cottingham Road, Hull, HU6 7RX.
Email: J.Lison@hull.ac.uk tel. 01482-465988.

A PROFORMA FOR

STAFF AND STUDENTS BEGINNING A RESEARCH PROJECT

I n s t i t u t e f o r L e a r n i n g

Research Proposer(s): **Steve Lambert**

Programme of Study **Doctorate of Education (EdD)**

Research (Working Dissertation/Thesis) Title: **The challenges and resolutions of moving middle curriculum managers in to principalship**

Description of research (please include (a) aims of the research; (b) principal research question(s)
(c) methodology or methodologies to be used (d) who are the participants in this research.

The research looks at the perceived reported shortage of individuals pursuing principalship posts in general further education colleges. The research considers what mechanisms need to be put into place to ensure that there are sufficient numbers of suitably experienced and skilled individuals aspiring to principals' posts. The main research question is:

> What are the challenges and resolutions of moving middle curriculum managers in to principalship?

This will be addressed through the following five subsidiary questions:

6. What is the current context of leadership in further education colleges?
7. What is the reported reality of movement to leadership in further education?
8. What elements of current models of sustainable leadership should further education colleges be implementing?
9. What are the views of further education leaders with respect to the role of the principal?
10. What are the views of middle curriculum managers with respect to the role of the principal?

The research will be carried out in three phases. The first phase will be a questionnaire to all principals of general further education colleges in the South East of England, including London. This will collate data on the role of sustainable leadership in further education along with demographic data and data on the role of the principal. The final question will ask the respondents whether they wish to participate in subsequent phases of the research. This information will be used to select four colleges, to be involved in phase 2 which will be one to one interviews with the principals of these colleges which will look in more detail at the college of the principal and the challenges faced in their day to day work. The final phase will be a number of focus groups in the participating colleges with middle curriculum managers considering their perceptions of the role of the principal and the challenges which they face and the resolutions which need to be put in place in pursuing principalship.

Proforma Completion Date:… 30th July 2010
……....

This proforma should be read in conjunction with the IfL research principles, and the IfL flow chart of ethical considerations. It should be completed by the, researchers. If it raises problems, it should be sent on completion, together with a brief (maximum one page) summary of the problems in the research, or in the module preparation, for approval to the Chair of the IfL Ethics Committee prior to the beginning of any research.

Part A

1. Does your research/teaching involve animal experimentation? **N**

   If the answer is 'YES' then the research/teaching proposal should be sent direct to the University Ethics Committee to be assessed.

2. Does your research involve human participants? **Y**

   If the answer is 'NO', there is no need to proceed further with this proforma, and research may proceed now. If the answer is 'YES' please answer all further relevant questions in part B.

Part B

3. Is the research population under 18 years of age? **N**
   If yes, are you taking the following or similar measures to deal with this issue?
   (i) Informed the participants of the research?
   (ii) Ensured their understanding?
   (iii) Gained the non-coerced consent of their parents/guardians?

4. Will you obtain written informed consent from the participants? **Y**
   If yes, please include a copy of the information letter requesting consent
   If no, what measures will you take to deal with obtaining consent?

5. Has there been any withholding of disclosure of information regarding the research to the participants? **N**
   If yes, please describe the measures you have taken to deal with this.

6. Issues for participants. P*lease answer the following and state how you will manage perceived risks:*

   a) Do any aspects of the study pose a possible risk to participants' physical well-being (e.g. use of substances such as alcohol or extreme situations such as sleep deprivation)? **NO**

   b) Are there any aspects of the study that participants might find humiliating, embarrassing, ego-threatening, in conflict with their values, or be otherwise emotionally upsetting?* **NO**

   c) Are there any aspects of the study that might threaten participants' privacy (e.g. questions of a very personal nature; observation of individuals in situations which are not obviously 'public')?* **NO**

   d) Does the study require access to confidential sources of information (e.g. medical records)? **NO**

   e Could the intended participants for the study be expected to be more than usually emotionally vulnerable (e.g. medical patients, bereaved individuals)? **NO**

   f Will the study take place in a setting other than the University campus or residential buildings? **YES – at FE colleges.**

   g Will the intended participants of the study be individuals who

are not members of the University community? **YES – FE managers and principal.**

*Note: if the intended participants are of a different social, racial, cultural, age or sex group to the researcher(s) and there is **any** doubt about the possible impact of the planned procedures, then opinion should be sought from members of the relevant group.

7. Might conducting the study expose the researcher to any risks (e.g. collecting data in potentially dangerous environments)? **N**

8. Is the research being conducted on a group culturally different from the researcher/student/supervisors? **N**
If yes, are sensitivities and problems likely to arise?
If yes, please *describe how you have addressed/will address them.*

9. Does the research/teaching conflict with any of the IfL's research principles? (please see attached list). **N**
If yes, describe what action you have taken to address this?

10. Are you conducting research in the organisation within which you work? **N**

11. If yes, are there any issues arising from this .e.g. ones of confidentiality, anonymity or power, because of your role in the organisation **N/A**
If there are, what actions have you taken to address these?

12. If the research/teaching requires the consent of any organisation, have you obtained it? **N**
If no, describe what action you have taken to *overcome this problem.*
Consent will be sought from the principal of the identified colleges prior to commencing the focus groups.

13. Have you needed to discuss the likelihood of ethical problems with this research, with an informed colleague? **N**
If yes, please name the colleague, and provide the date and results of the discussion.

If you've now completed the proforma, before sending it in, just check:

a. Have I included a letter to participants for gaining informed consent? ☑

b. If I needed any organisational consent for this research, have I included evidence of this with the proforma? ☑

c. If I needed consent from the participants, have I included evidence for the different kinds that were required? ❒

Lack of proof of consent attached to proformas has been the major reason why proformas have been returned to their authors.

This form must be signed by your supervisor and the IfL Ethics Committee representative for your area. Once signed, copies of this form, and your proposal must be sent to Mrs Jackie Lison, Centre for Educational Studies (see flow chart), including where possible examples of letters describing the purposes and implications of the research, and any Consent Forms (see appendices).

Name of Student/Researcher **Steve Lambert**…….

Signature …… Date ……30th July 2010……..

Name of Supervisor/Colleague …**Prof. Mike Bottery**…….

Signature …… Date …….....

Name of Ethics Committee member …….

Signature …… Date ……...

Appendix L: Interview pack with college principals

1. **Covering Letter**
2. **Interview questions**
3. **Consent form**

Address 1
Address 2
Address 3
Address 4

e: s.lambert@2007.hull.ac.uk

10 January 2011

Dear

The challenges and resolutions of moving middle curriculum managers on to principalship

Thank you for recently returning the questionnaire looking at the ideas of sustainable leadership and the role of the principal in further education. I would like to invite you to take part in the second the third stage of my research.

The second stage is an interview, lasting no more than one hour, which is based on the collective results of all the questionnaires. The third stage will be a focus group, lasting approximately one-hour, with the middle curriculum managers of the college and looks at their ideas on leadership within the further education sector. To ensure consistency across the participant colleges these individuals should meet the following criteria:

- Be managers of academic departments;
- Being line-managed by a member of the college's senior management/leadership team.

To facilitate as many middle curriculum managers attending as possible, it would be helpful if my meeting could be organised to coincide with an existing college meeting or activity, such as a college wide management meeting, or a staff development activity.

Confirmation has been obtained from the Institute for Learning, IfL, that staff participating in the focus groups are eligible to claim the hour as part of their mandatory continued professional development time which needs to be logged on an annual basis.

In line with the British Educational Research Association (BERA) 2004 ethical guidelines and also the University of Hull's ethics committee regulations, all participantresponseswill be treated in confidence.In addition, the research will take into

accountthe Data Protection Act 1998 and no individual or organisation will be identifiable in the final thesis and/or any future publications.

If you would like further information relating to the research, then please do not hesitate to contact me. The research is being supervised by Prof. Mike Bottery (m.p.bottery@hull.ac.uk) and Dr. David Plowright (d.plowright@hull.ac.uk) and if you have any concerns relating to the research then please contact them directly.

I hope that you can participate in this research as it is anticipated that the outcome will have a wide-ranging impact on the future development needs of managers within further education colleges.

I appreciate you will be very busy at the moment, and I will contact your office to arrange a suitable time to meet with you.

In anticipation, thank you for your interest in the research and I'll look forward very much to meeting you.

Yours sincerely

Steve Lambert
Research Student

One to One interviews with further education college principals

	Question
1	Can you please outline your career to date which has led you to becoming a college principal
2	What, in your opinion, are the key pieces of legislation or changes in requirements which have most impacted on the environment in which further education leaders work?
3	In your opinion, what are the key aspects to the role of the principal?
4	In your opinion, what do staff within your college perceive the role of the principal to be?
5a	What do you feel should be included in the development of deputy principals aspiring to principalship?
5b	The following were highlighted from the phase 1 questionnaire as areas which serving principals felt they would have liked more support on. What is your view on each of these individually? 1. Working with the chair of governors; 2. dealing with unions; 3. having an experienced principal as a mentor; 4. meeting and dealing with political representatives.
6	What do you think of the idea that future principals should spend time work-shadowing serving principals?
7	What do you think of the notion that principals should have worked in a number of different colleges or public sector organisations prior to principalship?
8a	What do you think that the key personal attributes needed to succeed at being a principal are?
8b	The following were highlighted from the phase 1 questionnaire as key attributes or characteristics which are needed. What is your view on each of these individually? 1. personal integrity 2. ability to influence others, 3. ability to empower others 4. self-awareness
9	What structures, policies or legislative barriers have prohibited leadership development
10	The government removed the license to practice programme (Principals Qualifying Programme); what are your views on this, and what would you want to see in such a development programme.
11	What do you believe the future holds for future leaders of further education?

The IFL ETHICS COMMITTEE

CONSENT FORM – For Institutions/Organisations

I, ... of .....
.....
Hereby give permission for *the Principal and Middle Curriculum Managers*

to be involved in a research study being undertaken by
Steve Lambert

and I understand that the purpose of the research is

- Understand the extent to which sustainable leadership models are being implemented in further education colleges.
- Understand the role and work of college principals.
- Assess the extent to which the published crisis in leadership exists.

and that involvement for the institution means the following:-

- Participation by the principal in a 1 hour interview at a mutually convenient time.
- Participation by middle curriculum managers in a focus group lasting no more than 1 hour at a convenient time.

I understand that

1. the aims, methods, and anticipated benefits, and possible risks/hazards of the research study, have been explained to me.
2. I voluntarily and freely give my consent for the institution/organisation to participate in the above research study.
5. I am free to withdraw my consent at any time during the study, in which event participation in the research study will immediately cease and any information obtained through this institution/organisation will not be used if I so request.
3. I understand that aggregated results will be used for research purposes and may be reported in scientific and academic journals.

I agree that

4. The institution/organisation MAY / MAY NOT be named in research publications or other publicity without prior agreement.
5. ***I / We DO / DO NOT require an opportunity to check the factual accuracy of the research findings related to the institution/organisation.***

6. ***I / We EXPECT / DO NOT EXPECT to receive a copy of the research findings or publications.***

Signature: Date:

The contact details of the researcher are: Steve Lambert (S.Lambert@2007.hull.ac.uk) c/o Prof. Mike Bottery, Centre for Education Studies, University of Hull, Cottingham Road, Hull, HU6 7RX.
The contact details of the secretary to the IfL Ethics Committee are Mrs J Lison, Centre for Educational Studies, University of Hull, Cottingham Road, Hull, HU6 7RX.
Email: J.Lison@hull.ac.uk tel. 01482-465988.

Appendix M: Focus Group questions

1. **Focus group questions**
2. **Demographic data collection sheet**

Questions

1. In your opinion, what do you believe the role of a principal in a FE college to be?
   Ice-breaker question – post it note
   Possible subsidiary question:
   Do you think that it is possible for them to do all this?

2. What do you think are the key personal attributes needed for a principal to succeed in their role?
   Ice-breaker question – post it note

3. What would enable you to become a senior leader within a college?

4. What would prohibit you from pursuing a senior leadership post?
   a. Professionally (legislatively and environmental)
   b. Personally

5. What do you feel should be included in the development of aspiring senior leaders within colleges?

6. What policies or legislative barriers have prohibited you from developing as a leader?

7. If the government was to introduce a new programme, similar to the principals qualifying programme, what would you like to see included in it?

Demographic Data Collection

This information is for statistical purposes only. Individuals will not be identifiable in any way through the completion of this form.

Are you:

a) Male ☐
b) Female ☐

Please select age:
Tick only one:

a) 30 to 39 ☐
b) 40 to 49 ☐
c) 50 to 59 ☐
d) 60 + ☐
e) Prefer not to say ☐

Curriculum area which you manage: _____

Thank you for completing this form.

Appendix N: Management qualifications of principals

Management qualifications of principals, adapted from Frearson (2003)

Management qualifications held and highly rated (colleges)	%	
	Rated	Held
NVQ4 (management)	15.3	5.4
NVQ5 (management)	23.3	4
CMS	17.2	6.6
DMS	36.2	10.8
MBA	55.1	5.6
MEd (management)	33.8	4.6
PhD/EdD (management)	26.7	0.8