

CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

REPORT TO: CABINET

Date of Meeting: 19th June 2012

Report of: Peter Cavanagh – 14-25 Manager

Subject/Title: Information Advice and Guidance (IAG) : Update

Portfolio Holder: Cllr H. Gaddum

1.0 Report Summary

- 1.1 The Government has passed legislation to amend the responsibility for providing careers guidance to young people, which has previously had been provided by Local Authorities via Connexions services. These legislative changes mean that as from September 2012, schools will be responsible for securing access to independent and impartial careers guidance for pupils in Years 9 -11. The Government has also established a National Careers Service for England which will provide information and advice to young people through the use of a helpline and website. Schools will be free to make arrangements for careers guidance for young people that fit the needs and circumstances of their pupils, and will be able to engage, as appropriate, in partnership with external, expert providers.
- 1.2 There will be no expectation that Local Authorities should provide universal careers services once the new careers service is established and the duty on schools has been commenced. Local Authorities still retain their statutory duty to encourage, enable or assist young people's participation in education or training, particularly with respect to the Government's commitment to raise the participation age to 18 by 2015.
- 1.3 Section 68 of the Education and Skills Act 2008 places a duty on Local Authorities to make available to young people below the age of 19 and relevant young adults (i.e. those aged 20 and over but under 25 with learning difficulties) support that will encourage, enable or assist them to participate in education and training.
- 1.4 Local Authorities must support vulnerable young people to engage in education and training, intervening early with those who are at risk of disengagement. It is for Local Authorities to determine what services are necessary to fulfil their statutory responsibility.

- 1.5 Local Authorities must ensure that there is a good mechanism for tracking young people's participation in order to identify those who need support. The local Client Caseload Information System (CCIS) provides Local Authorities with the means of recording young people's post-16 plans and the offers they receive along with their current circumstances and activities. The Local Authority must report monthly to DfE on participation. Information on the number and proportion of young people in each area who are 'not in education, employment or training' (NEET), or whose current activity is not known, will be taken from the data reported to DfE and made available to the public via the Cabinet Office transparency website.
- 1.6 Local Authorities are also required to maintain close links with Jobcentre Plus to ensure that young people who are NEET receive a complementary package of support to find employment or to re-engage in education or training.
- 1.7 Members will be aware that former Connexions staff have been transferred into the Local Authority to provide targeted support to those school pupils identified as at risk of disengagement and to track and monitor participation.
- 1.8 Members need to be aware that the change of status of Connexions staff to now work as part of Local Authority services will require a period of transition before there is real clarity of service delivery. Some Advisors have now left and are no longer available and schools current arrangements where they have purchased additional time from Advisors needs to be reviewed. Management structures within Family Services will be developed to ensure such issues are addressed in the coming months.

2.0 Decision Requested

- 2.1 To note the contents of this report and the national framework within which young people are to be supported in terms of Information, Advice and Guidance.

3.0 Reasons for Recommendations

- 3.1 The reasons for presenting this information are to bring to the attention of members the changing requirements for the delivery of IAG.

4.0 Wards Affected

- 4.1 All

5.0 Local Ward Members

- 5.1 Not applicable

6.0 Policy Implications including - Carbon reduction - Health

- 6.1 The national changes to the delivery of IAG means that Local Authority policies and procedures need to change to incorporate the increasing responsibilities on schools to deliver support to young people.
- 6.2 The recent move to incorporate Connexions staff within Local Authority structures will result in revised policy and procedures through Family Services to ensure that vulnerable young people receive IAG support which helps to reduce the potential NEET population.

7.0 Financial Implications (Director of Finance and Business Services)

- 7.1 Currently, there are still some aspects of grant funding into the Local Authority which is specifically identified to support strategies linked to NEET. There is no information which outlines if such funding streams will continue in the future. In addition, the establishment of a new CCIS recording system has cost the Local Authority additional funding – this investment will need to continue to ensure all records all maintained to the highest standard.

8.0 Legal Implications (Authorised by the Borough Solicitor)

- 8.1 None

9.0 Risk Management

- 9.1 The key risk relates to how schools will interpret their revised expectations to bring independent and impartial information, advice and guidance. Firstly, schools will be able to appoint their own staff to deliver IAG to young people with the risk being how independent and impartial such advice will be. In addition, there is a level of risk relating to how schools identify their most vulnerable young people.

10.0 Background and Options

- 10.1 The recent changes to the Connexions services and the now internal employment of a range of staff who have specific responsibilities to provide IAG means that there will need to be real clarity as to the deployment of these 'Advisors' to schools. The key issue relates to the interpretation of universal compared to targeted support. Schools will receive an agreed amount of Advisor time for targeted support but have the capacity to purchase additional support as required. Such requirements will need to be clarified as from September as currently there are transitional arrangements between previous Connexions contracts and those currently being provided through the Local Authority.

11.0 Access to Information

The background papers relating to this report can be inspected by contacting the report writer:

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