

CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

CABINET

Date of meeting:

Report of:

Director of People

Title:

**16-18 Transfer Arrangements – Machinery of Government
& future 14-19 Partnership and Planning**

Contextual summary & links to other corporate functions

Prior to the announcement that the 16-19 provision for education and training would be transferred to Local Authorities as from April 2010, the strategic lead for this key area of work lay with the Learning & Skills Council. This organisation, acting on behalf of Central Government, was responsible for the commissioning of services through a wide range of national and local organisations including employers, Enterprise & Training providers and the Skills Council. Ultimately, the LSC attempted to broker effective education and training opportunities for all young people yet in reality, the system produced a somewhat disjointed infrastructure which lacked clarity, purpose and measurable outcomes for learners. The ability of Local Authorities and its schools and colleges to strategically and operationally plan appropriate provision for young people proved difficult at a time when there were significant changes to the curriculum opportunities for 14-19 year olds. The intended changes outlined within this report are welcomed in order to streamline the system and provide coherence and structure in terms of decision-making processes which will, in the near future, take place at a Local Authority level.

The 14-19 agenda is a key activity within the People Directorate and it is important to integrate this activity from the outset within the wider corporate management functions and in particular, the linkage with Places. The following summary shows the potential opportunities to integrate work across service areas:

- Economic Development – linking future skills activity to our growth and competitiveness agenda. Ensuring learning and skills for young people is targeted towards employers current and future requirements.
- Regeneration – ensuring appropriate interventions in our deprived areas linking with local regeneration activities. Building a neighbourhood approach to tackling long-term deprivation.
- Accessibility – ensuring provision of training links with local sustainable transport solutions to maximise accessibility, particularly for vulnerable groups.
- Capital Investment – ensuring future capital investment fits with regeneration plans and projects are delivered through sustainable methods.

1.0 Purpose of Report

This report summarises two significant issues which are crucial in taking forward the 14-19 agenda and the variety of reforms which are planned during the next 2-3 years. These issues are being considered in the same paper as

they are interdependent upon each other in terms ensuring that there is a coherent, locally owned strategy which delivers the 14-19 entitlement for all young people. The responsibility for the implementation and quality assurance of these two key issues will lie with the 14-19 Strategy Manager within the proposed staffing structure for Cheshire East.

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to recommend to Cabinet that Members be made aware of their duties as originally outlined within the '16-18 Transfer Arrangements Machinery of Government' (MOG). This process primarily relates to the transfer of funding from the Learning and Skills Council to local authorities to create a single local strategic leader for all 14-19 education and training. To enable this to happen, new sub regional groups have been established who have the responsibility to manage this transfer and commission services which deliver improved outcomes for all young people.
- 1.2 The purpose of this report is to also recommend to Cabinet that Members be made aware of their responsibilities in planning for and establishing effective 14-19 Partnerships. (14-19P). Five key areas are identified which include the provision of Connexions services, transfer of 16-18 funding, Diploma entitlement, raising the participation age and strong linkage with Children's Trust legislation.

N.B. Reference to the two issues has been identified in each of the following sections for clarification.

2.0 Decision Required

- 2.1 **MOG:** To note the establishment and duties of the Sub Regional Grouping (SRG) which has been formed with Cheshire West and Chester and Warrington Borough Council.
- 2.2. **MOG:** To endorse the proposed SRG model which sets out that whilst there will be the strategic collaborative structures in place between the three Local Authorities, each Local Authority is responsible for funding/commissioning FE, Sixth Form Colleges and School Sixth Forms in their own area within priorities set by the Employment and Skills Board/and or agreed through the sub regional partnership.
- 2.3 **MOG:** To remit to the Head of Service; Children & Families to take the necessary steps to ensure the Council is ready to take on the commissioning role from 2010.
- 2.4 **14-19P:** To endorse the role of the Lead Member in having a strategic overview of the needs of young people by ensuring that the work on 14-19 transfer links to the priorities for the Children's Trust
- 2.5. **14-19P:** To approve the creation of a 14-19 Partnership to have a strategic role in delivering the 14-19 Plan from September 2009. This includes statutory/legal responsibilities, long term visioning for 14-19 as well as operational delivery.

3.0 Financial Implications for Transition Costs

- 3.1 **MOG:** Within the sub regional group, LSC and Local Authorities will work together to deliver the business cycle using new hybrid structures and processes. A small amount of additional funding will be made available to the SRG for the transition period.

4.0 Financial Implications for 2009/10 and beyond

- 4.1 **MOG:** As part of the Machinery of Government process, the formal transfer of responsibility officially takes place from April 2010. It is expected that 5 LSC posts will TUPE over to Cheshire East. Staff that transfer will be engaged to support 14-19 partnership activities. An administration budget will be transferred to cover staff costs although limited detail is available at present in terms of both expertise and availability (further details expected in July)
- 4.2 **MOG:** The level of funding for 16-19 commissioning is related to the numbers of learners within local schools and colleges. In 2008-09, this was £15.3 million for schools and £24.0 million for colleges in Cheshire East. Apprenticeships and Foundation Learning Tier provision will also need to be planned for.
- 4.3 **14-19P:** The 14-19 Partnership will need to have a clear strategic brief for commissioning the requirements of the 14-19 Plan from the Children's Trust

5.0 Legal Implications

- 5.1 **MOG:** As stated in the White Paper (March 2008) , "Raising Expectations: enabling the system to deliver", these reforms make the expectation that all young people will participate in education or training until the end of the academic year in which they turn 17 by 2013 and 18 by 2015.
- 5.2. **14-19P:** The proposals bring together in one place responsibility for the outcomes and achievement of all young people aged 0-19 and to build on the existing role and expertise of Local Authorities as commissioners of a wide range of services which will help support 14-19.
- 5.3 **14-19P:** The 2008 Act requires local authorities to put in place arrangements to promote cooperation between the local authority, its 'relevant partners' and 14-19 providers as part of the Children's Trust. The responsibility to ensure these arrangements are established and effective lies with the 14-19 Strategy Manager. The 14-19 Partnership needs to be a sub-group of the Children's Trust.
- 5.4 **14-19P:** The legal duties of the 14-19 Plan include setting of performance targets, support & challenge to schools, workforce development, transport and curriculum entitlement

6.0 Risk Assessment

- 6.1 **MOG:** There are regional and national arrangements in place to check the readiness of sub regional groupings prior to the transfer of arrangements taking place.
- 6.2 **14-19P:** It will be a statutory requirement that the Local Authority takes on their additional 14-19 responsibilities from September 2010.
- 6.3 **MOG:** The transfer of LSC staff to the Local Authority may bring some potential risk in terms of ensuring that these additional posts are filled with suitably experienced staff.

7.0 Background and Options

- 7.1 **MOG:** In June 2007, the Department for Children, Schools & Families (DCSF) announced, as part of the Machinery of Government changes, that responsibility for planning and funding for 16-18 year olds will transfer from the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) to Local Authorities in 2010. A key part of this structural change would require all Local Authorities to work within Sub Regional Groupings which promote localised collaboration, building upon current successful partnership arrangements. A comprehensive submission has been recently sent to Government Office NW as part of the process for establishing the SRG. (see appendix 2).
- 7.2 **MOG:** The requirement of Local Authorities to establish Sub Regional Groups and to act on the 14-19 reforms prevents alternative options to be considered. The SRG delivery model proposed is seen as the most effective considering the position of two new Authorities to establish effective 14-19 Partnerships in the short term.
- 7.3 **MOG:** Within the Sub Regional Grouping structure, Warrington was initially identified as taking a lead on aspects of this work due to the significant changes taking place within the two new Authorities. As roles and responsibilities are established both within the SRG and within the new Local Authorities, strategic leadership can be reviewed.
- 7.4 **14-19P:** The proposals provide an opportunity to bring together in one place responsibility for the outcomes and achievement of all young people aged 0-19 and to build on the existing role and expertise of Local Authorities as commissioners of a wide range of services which will help support the 14-19 reforms.
- 7.5 **14-19P:** In order to support these changes, the DCSF published Partnerships and Planning guidance in February 2008. This document sets out in more detail the Partnerships strategic role and its ownership of an overarching 14-19 plan and its role in commissioning, monitoring and evaluating progress across all 14-19 priorities. The Partnership will need to be in place to support transition from September 2009 (see Appendix 1)

8.0 Reasons for Recommendation

- 8.1 **MOG:** To ensure that our requirements to establish an effective Sub Regional group are met, in response to the 16-18 Machinery of Government arrangements, to provide improved outcomes for all young people
- 8.2 **14-19P:** Local Authority based 14-19 Partnerships are crucial to ensure that there is a coherent, locally-owned strategy that needs local needs and delivers 14-19 entitlement for all young people.

For further information:-

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Background Documents:-

1. Raising Expectations Staying In Education and Training Post 16 (DCSF)
2. Raising Expectations: Enabling the System to Deliver Update and next steps (DCSF)
3. Commissioning 14-19 Provision through Transition (LSC)
4. 14-19 Partnerships Plans
5. MOG: Phase 2 Sub-Regional Group submission.
6. 14-19 Partnership & Planning (DCSF)

Documents are available for inspection at:

The Kingsley Centre
Middle Lane
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