

**Manchester City Council
Report for Resolution**

Report to: Economy Committee - 17 October 2012

Subject: Careers Advice & Guidance

Report of: Strategic Director of Children's Services

Summary

This report looks to outline the situation in relation to all Young People receiving a comprehensive Careers Education Service given the plethora of changes to the current system including changes to statutory duties across partners.

Recommendations

Members are asked to note the contents of the report.

Wards Affected: All

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1. Background

- 1.1 Following the privatisation process embarked upon 1990's what had been the Careers Service was overtime altered and became the national Connexions Service. During the early part of the 2000's Connexions Service became increasingly focused on the delivery of targeted services to those seen as most vulnerable. This period also saw the establishment of 47 Connexions Partnerships across the country to oversee the delivery of the service at a local level.
- 1.2 The Connexions service was originally intended to be made up of a wide range of professionals from a range of backgrounds, careers advisers, youth workers, counsellors, health workers, teachers etc. However, as the funding for and management of those other professions lay elsewhere, the degree to which services integrated fully varied significantly across the country. The result was that the careers service in England was abolished and replaced by Connexions with the Connexions Service being made up predominantly of career guidance professionals, thus meaning Connexions was not really the multi-disciplinary organisation originally envisaged.
- 1.3 The original delivery model for the Connexions Service advocated a **3 tier approach** to the delivery of services based on the needs of the young people engaged;
- **General advice and support** at those key episodes in each young person's life when information, advice and support on educational and vocational issues will be necessary to help them make decisions that affect their future.
 - **In-depth support** - for those at risk of not participating effectively in education and training. This group include those: whose aspirations do not reflect their abilities; who do not attend school regularly, who have learning difficulties or disabilities, who are unlikely to achieve as they should and those who are not undertaking any education or training post-16. Young people in these situations need in-depth guidance and support to help them to address barriers to learning and to enable them to fulfil their potential.
 - **Integrated and specialist support** - for those facing substantial, multiple problems preventing them from engaging with learning, who are likely to be involved with a number of different professionals engaged in education, social welfare, criminal justice, health and housing. Equally, we will integrate support for the especially gifted. They will need Personal Advisers to take effective action on their behalf to help them gain access to a range of more specialist services, to ensure that barriers are overcome in a coordinated way, and keep in touch with their progress. (DfEE 2000: 37)
- 1.4 **From 1 April 2008** responsibility for providing Connexions Services which included the responsibility to **secure impartial Careers Guidance**, was **transferred from Connexions Partnerships** (in Manchester's case Greater

Manchester Connexions Partnership) **to local authorities**. This saw a split in the market across Greater Manchester with 5 local authorities retaining an outsourced model and 5 local authorities bringing their Connexions Service's in-house. Manchester City Council continued to contract out the delivery of Connexions and does so to date.

- 1.5 From **September 2012** responsibility to **secure impartial Careers Guidance** has now **transferred from Local Authorities to Schools**, there is also no longer a statutory duty for Careers Education to be part of a school's curriculum. Local Authorities retain the duty to secure Careers Guidance in relation to Pupil Referral Units if local authority operated.
- 1.6 The changes outlined above, coincide with the introduction of the **National Careers Service** which was **launched in April 2012**. The National Careers Service is available on-line and via helpline/web chat for people of any age, including those of school age. Face to face services are available for those aged 19+ (18+ if claiming JSA).
- 1.7 Schools are free to purchase their Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) services from any provider, including the National Careers Service. Currently the National Careers Service in Manchester is delivered via the providers who previously delivered the now disbanded Adult Guidance Service, Next Steps, namely Manchester Solutions and the Manchester College.

2. Clarification on roles and responsibilities

Schools

- 2.1 *The Education Act 2011 places schools under a duty to secure access to independent and impartial careers guidance for their pupils from September 2012. While complying with the requirement to secure careers guidance from an external source, schools will be free to make arrangements for careers guidance that fit the needs and circumstances of their pupils, and will be expected to work, as appropriate, in partnership with external and expert providers* **Source DfE website 10th Sept 2012**
- 2.2 It should also be noted that the government is planning to consult on extending this down to year 8 and up to age 18 for students in schools and colleges from September 2013 alongside exploring the case for requiring more of providers of work-based learning

Local Authorities

- 2.3 *Once the duty on schools has been commenced, there will be no expectation that local authorities will provide a universal careers service* **Source DfE website 10th Sept 2012**
- 2.4 *The statutory responsibility under section 68 of the Education and Skills Act 2008 requiring local authorities to encourage, enable and assist the*

participation of young people in education or training, remains unchanged
Source DfE website 10th Sept 2012

- 2.5 The introduction of the Raising of the Participation (RPA) age to 17 in 2013 and 18 by 2015, places a clear duty on Local Authorities (LA) to support the circa **10% of young people who either do not make and or do not retain a positive destination post Key Stage 4 (KS4)**
- 2.6 *The Education and Skills Act places duties local authorities, in relation to RPA. LAs will be required to: Promote the effective participation in education or training of all 16 and 17 year olds resident in their area; and make arrangements to identify young people resident in their area who are not participating. These complement the existing duties to secure sufficient suitable education and training provision for all 16-19 year olds and to encourage, enable and assist young people to participate and the processes in place to deliver the 'September Guarantee' and to track young people's participation. LAs will be supported by duties on learning providers to notify them when a young person leaves learning. Source DfE website 10th Sept 2012*
- 2.7 As highlighted earlier in this report, the government has clearly signalled its intention to move accountability for the positive progression of young people post 16 away from Local Authorities, outside of those defined as NEET. Further evidence of this shift can be found in the introduction of the post 16 destination measures. Two destination measures are being introduced which show the destinations of young people the year after KS4 or taking A level or equivalent qualifications, with schools and colleges being given responsibility for the reporting of these measures.

3. Manchester Context

- 3.1 Following the move to transfer the Careers Service out of local authority control, the Careers Service and subsequent Connexions Service has been delivered in Manchester by Better Choices, now trading as Careers Solutions, a member of the Manchester Solutions family of organisations. Representatives from Manchester Solutions will be in attendance at the meeting and can talk through their experiences of delivering both the Careers Service and Connexions.
- 3.2 During the period Connexions has been in operation in Manchester the City Council has seen significant changes in the behaviour of young people post 16;
- A significant increase in the number of young people leaving school at 16 and entering post 16 education, **90% in 2011** compared to below **50% in the late 80's early 90's**
 - Significant reductions in the number of young people leaving school and becoming NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training) and or Unknown (often a hiding ground for NEET. Down from a combined figure

of **over 30% in 2002** to a combined figure of below **9% as at 1st November 2011**

- A reduction in the number of young people entering the labour market on leaving school

- 3.3 As reported previously, given the change in statutory duties in relation to the delivery of Information, Advice and Guidance Services, the initial strategy in Manchester was as follows;

To ensure that those most in need of support receive it and therefore we will continue to commission IAG services through our existing contracting arrangements with Connexions (Manchester Solutions). However a contract variation has formally been signed off which refocuses the contract particularly on the 5000 most vulnerable young people across the City. The contract value has been reduced by £1m per annum and we will retain a £4m per annum contract with Manchester Solutions until 2011/13 **MCC Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee 21 June 2011”**

- 3.4 To that end a contract variation was agreed with Manchester Solutions, the objective of the variation was to ensure that vulnerable young people are able to achieve and sustain personal, social and economic independence.

4. Current Picture – City of Manchester

- 4.1 The current picture is one of transition as the local authority, schools, colleges and training providers begin the process of moving to potentially many and varied delivery models given the governments philosophy of in many respects, wanting to allow the market to shape delivery methods.

Local Authority targeted contract

- 4.2 The current local authority targeted contract charges the service provider to deliver the following outcomes;
- Retention in education, training and employment between the ages of 16-19 for all intensively mentored clients.
 - Retention in employment for intensively mentored young people with an assessed disability or additional learning need from age 19 to 24.
 - An annual NEET figure below 5% for Manchester residents in every Ward at ages 16, 17 and 18.
 - No Manchester secondary school with a persistence absence figure above 5% in each year group from Y7 through to Yr11.
 - 100% record of the personal and contact details of Manchester residents aged 11 – 19 and the destination and qualifications details of all 15 – 19 year old Manchester residents.

Strengthening the Universal Offer

4.3 In a bid to address some of the obvious gaps in provision arising from the need to move to a more targeted approach, alongside the need to ensure we meet our statutory duties in relation to The Raising of The Participation Age (RPA) alongside our wider duties to ensure all young people achieve their full potential, become economically active and have the transferable skills necessary in what is becoming an ever changing future labour market. Manchester is looking to establish the Manchester Youth Support Service comprising of the following elements;

- Move to an intensive targeted face to face mentoring service for the most vulnerable young people furthest from the labour market
- Neighbourhood based delivery
- Carry out s139a LDA assessments – A statutory duty of the local authority
- Age range to increase to 24 for all vulnerable young people who are engaged with the service by their 18th birthday as opposed to the current cut off point of 20th birthday
- Support and advocacy in order to enable access to mainstream services
- Potential supported employment model for 200 young people
- Services available to targeted young people underpinned by the Youth Fund
- and wider commissioning
- Establish a new universal on-line information service for all young people
- Establish a triage based universal guidance offer from the new Town Hall Complex
- Support to schools around the quality assurance of the services being provided by external providers via the promotion of quality assurance frameworks such as Inspiring IAG

Partnerships with schools

4.4 Given the changing role of local authorities, it is vital that the City Council establishes effective working relationships with schools going forward if the City Council is to ensure young Manchester residents receive Information, Advice and Guidance that is not only impartial but aspirational, enabling all to achieve to their full potential.

4.5 A recent review carried out by Dr Jo McKinnon, Deputy Head at Parrs Wood Head School highlighted the following key points from the perspective of Head Teachers;

Key areas for Local Authority influence/role going forward

- *Sharing intelligence*
- *Facilitating sharing effective practice & partnership working*
- *Employer/business links – including securing employer understanding of what they can contribute*
- *Specialist support for vulnerable students*
- *Families in need*

With particular reference to CEIAG

- *Schools are keenly aware of the diversity of their students and the need for high quality IAG (KS3-5) which can both raise aspiration and offer appropriate pathways/choices*
- *Schools are confident that their provision has not been diminished by recent changes and several feel that their review of IAG and developments in school provision to complement commissioned services has actually brought about improvement*

Head Teachers/Principals consultation; June-July 2012 Dr. Johan MacKinnon, Parrs Wood High School (Deputy Head Teacher)

- 4.6 Given the views expressed by Head Teachers and the change in statutory duties, it is clear the local Authority role going forward will be one of influence and support rather than one of direct action and or control in relation to the delivery of CEIAG within schools.
- 4.7 It is encouraging to note that at present mainstream schools and academies bar 2, have bought in CEIAG services for this academic year at a recommended level from the current Connexions Service provider. It should however be noted that as schools are free to purchase services from a provider/s of their choice, the buy-back of services from the current Connexions Service provider is not necessarily a full picture of the level of commissioning activity undertaken by Manchester Schools.

Quality assuring service delivery going forward

- 4.8 Whilst the Local Authority clearly has a vested interest in ensuring the quality of IAG its young residents receive, it has no statutory power or duty to do so. The local Authority will therefore need to use its ability to support and influence providers, a key to this will be the establishment of a strong and trusted working relationship with schools, colleges and the wider provider family going forward. One way in which the local authority is looking to ensure the quality of provision is via the promotion of "Inspiring IAG" a quality award which recognises good quality careers education, and / or information, advice and guidance.
- 4.9 It is for all organisations that work with young people, schools, colleges and other learning providers as well as voluntary and community sector organisations. Inspiring IAG is a three stage process. Organisations first commit to achieving the Bronze Standard and once completed they can move onto Silver and then Gold. Careers Solutions lead on the promotion of Inspiring IAG across Greater Manchester, further detail in relation to the number of Manchester organisations currently active within the scheme can found at appendix one.

5. Conclusion

- 5.1 The changes to the provision of CEIAG in the City have to be seen in the wider context of Public Sector Reform, the establishment of a Youth Employment Board for the City alongside the existing Work and Skills

Partnership Board and are reflective of Children's services stated priority areas going forward, namely;

- ***Championing the needs of young people*** through the development and application of a Valuing Young People Strategy based consulting with young people;
- ***Strategically influencing*** the type of activity and intervention being offered to young people by **external universal services** so that they are of sufficient quality and coverage to improve outcomes for all young people and contribute to aspiration and well-being and to the economic growth of the City. Schools and extended services from schools will be a key part of this approach
- ***Integrated commissioning*** of local positive opportunities in particular for the most **vulnerable young people** to enable them to be fully engaged within their neighbourhoods and within society
- ***Commissioning the provision of high quality Information, Advice and Guidance*** in particular to the most **vulnerable young people**

6. Youth Employment Board

- 6.1 National Government has responded to rising youth unemployment principally through the recent launch of the Youth Contract. Greater Manchester has supplemented the national response by launching the GM Commitment to Youth Employment which aims to maximise the value of national incentives in Greater Manchester and potentially pull more funding into the sub-region for young people and local employers. The Commitment also puts employers at the heart of the response.
- 6.2 Manchester has recently established a Youth Employment Board, drawing together key partners from across the City. This board met for the first time in July and meets again in October at which point the Board it is hoped, will sign off on a Youth Employment Action Plan for the City, building on recommendations made from various commissions that have and or are taking place across the City. Central to the Board is the recognition that a multiagency approach is required with no-one organisation having either the resources and or the answers to what is currently (and likely over the next few years to become ever more) a challenging task of ensuring all of our young people achieve to their full potential and become economically active.
- 6.3 As the breadth and depth of areas covered under the term CEIAG are many and varied, so our response and future plans are varied and inextricably linked to other areas of reform and service redesign across the council and its partners.