

**Open Report on behalf of Debbie Barnes,
Executive Director of Children's Services**

Report to:	Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee
Date:	1 March 2013
Subject:	Information, Advice and Guidance

Summary:

This report sets out the Council's approach and current situation relating to the provision of impartial careers information, advice and guidance to young people.

Actions Required:

The Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee is asked to consider the report and:

- a) Endorse the current approach to working with schools, colleges, providers and other stakeholders to support and encourage the delivery of good quality, impartial, careers information and guidance;
- b) Require a review of the impact of the transfer of the statutory duties (to provide independent careers guidance to schools) on participation in 2014, once the first cohort affected have made the transition to post 16.

1. Background

- 1.1 The Education Act 2011 places schools under a duty to secure access to independent and impartial careers guidance for their pupils (in Key Stage 4) from September 2012.
- 1.2 Once the duty on schools has commenced, there is no expectation that local authorities will provide a universal careers service.
- 1.3 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.
- 1.4 The local authority funded Careers Service currently consists of 37 staff including the manager (32 Full Time Equivalents) of which 34 undertake direct delivery of guidance services to young people. This includes provision for young people aged 16 – 18 who are NEET (not in education, employment or training) and a traded service to schools and academies.

- 1.5 Tracking of young people aged 18 to identify their education and/or employment status is undertaken via telephone and this is delivered by the Council's Customer Service Team under contract to the Careers Service, thereby freeing up careers advisers to work directly with young people.
- 1.6 The role of the Careers Education Information Advice and Guidance (CEIAG) Team is to support providers and organisations working with young people to ensure they make successful transitions from each of key stages 3 to 4, 4 – 5 and 5 to post 18. This is achieved through work to increase the quality of careers guidance delivered in schools, colleges, providers and other organisations. The team consists of 1 manager and 3 advisers. Details of the role of the CEIAG team are included in Appendix A.

2. Current situation

- 2.1 The CEIAG team have been managed by CfBT since the transfer of Connexions into the local authority in 2008. The Careers Service delivery team transferred to CfBT Education Services in September 2012 at the same time as the re-focus of the service to address NEET and Unknowns.
- 2.2 Performance in terms of the number of young people aged 16 – 18 not in education, employment or training (NEET) continues to be good at 3.7% compared to our statistical neighbours at 5.3% (Aspire January 2012). However, there continues to be a higher incidence of NEET among young people with qualifications below level 2 and those who have previously been eligible for free school meals (FSM). Geographically, the incidence of NEET is higher in Lincoln than elsewhere despite the fact that there is more provision available and better transport links. This is due to the fact that there are also more support services for vulnerable young people and therefore is migration into the city. This was confirmed by a recent review into NEET in Lincoln undertaken by Lincoln City Council. The best performance geographically is in North and South Kesteven. Performance to date is summarised in Appendix B.
- 2.3 There has been a slight reduction in performance in the number of year 11 and 12 leavers with an appropriate offer of learning (September Guarantee) from 92.0% in 2011 to 90.2% in 2012. It is now the responsibility of schools to work with young people to ensure they make appropriate applications for post 16 learning.
- 2.4 The number of young people for whom we have no information regarding their education or employment status (unknowns) is unacceptably high (16.2% for 16 – 18 year olds compared to our statistical neighbours at 8.5%), and the concern is that this figure may mask the true NEET figure. This is caused by the high proportion of 'unknowns' aged 18 (25%) and is the result of the fact that for the year to September 2012, there was no resource allocated to tracking activity or work with 16 and 17 year old NEETs. This was due to national guidance at the time which subsequently changed.

As a result we have lost contact with many of them. There have been a number of actions put in place to try to reduce this figure with some success (reduction from 39.8% to 25% in December 2012) including better sharing of data across the authority, improved data sharing with other agencies, and increasing customer service activity.

- 2.5 Once young people not with a learning provider or in employment achieve the age of 18, the responsibility for support and guidance shifts from the local authority to Job Centre Plus and the National Careers Service contractor for the area. However, the performance of the local authority is still measured by the DfE in terms of the percentage of young people in the NEET and Unknown categories from 16 to 18 years of age inclusive. We are working hard to secure from Job Centre Plus the information about 18 year olds that would enable us to reduce the 'Unknown' figure further, but this appears to require national agreements on data sharing that are not yet in place

3. Scrutiny report “Improving Access to Post-16 Learning Provision in Lincolnshire 2011”

- 3.1 In the report ‘Improving Access to Post-16 Learning Provision in Lincolnshire’ undertaken in 2011, the Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee (CYPSC) identified concerns regarding access to impartial careers guidance from September 2012 and stated *‘There are serious concerns, both amongst the Task and Finish Group and officers in Children’s Services, where schools elect to not commission the Careers Service (or another service), as to whether schools have the capacity to provide careers guidance and whether this guidance will be independent and impartial with all available options, in particular Apprenticeships and further education routes, being made available to students given that sixth form funding is being reduced.’*
- 3.2 The CYPSC made 2 recommendations relating to the provision of information advice and guidance:
 - 3.2.1 Recommendation 7: The Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance (CEIAG) team should monitor and review the quality and independence of the new careers service provided by schools from September 2012.
 - 3.2.2 Recommendation 12: Schools should be encouraged to promote all learning providers, Apprenticeship providers, and colleges as part of their Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance (CEIAG) to help reduce the NEET figures and unemployment.
- 3.3 In response to recommendation 7, the CEIAG team offered schools and academies a review (at no cost) of their preparedness for implementation of the new duty. 42 (of 54) schools took up the offer and the full findings are attached at Appendix C. At the time of the review, 33 schools identified that they intended to commission face to face guidance. It is our view that the number of schools purchasing independent provision (38 from CfBT Careers Service and a few others from alternative providers) is a direct result of a range of activities undertaken by the authority to inform schools of their new

duties and to encourage and support them to carry them out effectively. These activities included delivering awareness raising sessions linked to the introduction of Raising of the Participation age and the new destination measures.

- 3.4 The Careers Service commenced the offer of a traded service in September 2012 to coincide with the transfer of the statutory duty to provide IAG to schools. To date 38 secondary schools and academies are purchasing 887 days of support. Whilst this is nowhere near the level that they would have received at no cost from Connexions, it does mean that as well as providing some income to the authority it enables us to maintain valuable contact with schools and academies which we would not otherwise have. However, the majority of schools are purchasing a service at significantly lower levels than previously. We are currently in the process of repeating the offer to schools of a review of their arrangements to provide independent advice and guidance, which will enable us to develop an up to date picture.
- 3.5 In response to recommendation 12, the local authority funded Apprenticeship Champions (based with the Work Based Academy) have had significant success in gaining access to schools and report that they have delivered 80 sessions in 53 schools. In addition 40 teachers have attended awareness raising sessions on employers' premises. The picture in relation to schools promoting other providers including further education colleges continues to be mixed, although there is anecdotal evidence that a few schools have allowed FE colleges to visit as a direct result of the transfer of the duty. The 14 – 19 team are working with the Economy and Culture Directorate and linking with the Employment and Skills Board to provide labour market information to schools, young people, and parents and carers, including through the publication of 'Aspirations' 3 times per year which provides details of skills priorities and opportunities in Lincolnshire.
- 3.6 The on-line prospectus has also been re-launched to enable young people, parents and carers, and those professionals supporting young people to access information about the education and training opportunities available to them.
- 3.7 There is an increasingly complex range of provision available to young people, including options additional to mainstream programmes such as the Youth Contract and ESF (European Social Fund) programmes to support NEET, and therefore access to good quality information advice and guidance is increasingly important. These opportunities are included in the prospectus alongside mainstream opportunities. The introduction of additional options to young people at age 14 including University Technical Colleges, transfer to General Further Education colleges and the potential development of Free Schools is one of the reasons that the government have extended the statutory duty to provide impartial independent careers guidance down to year 8 and up to age 18. The team will work with schools and providers to support them to meet the new requirement.

4. Conclusion

Since we received clarity on its duties and responsibilities, Children Services have been very proactive in our approach to working with schools, colleges, providers and other stakeholders to support and encourage the delivery of good quality impartial careers information and guidance. However, it is important that the relationship with schools and academies is sustained as this will assist in ensuring the delivery of high quality careers guidance for young people.

As we have not yet had a full academic year since the duty to provide independent impartial careers guidance has transferred to schools we are unable to measure the impact. There is however a need to continue to work with all schools to help ensure that they recognise the need to deliver high quality guidance and to continue to improve the uptake of excellent guidance services.

5. Consultation

Policy Proofing Actions Required

Not Applicable

6. Appendices

These are listed below and attached at the back of the report	
Appendix A	Role of CEIAG and Careers Guidance Teams
Appendix B	Performance – January 2013
Appendix C	CEIAG/IAG review of schools' careers service in response to Scrutiny Action Plan – Recommendation 7

7. Background Papers

Document title	Where the document can be viewed
Education Act 2011	http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2011/21/contents

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