



Open Report on behalf of Andy Gutherson, Executive Director - Place

Report to:	Environment and Economy Scrutiny Committee
Date:	28 November 2023
Subject:	Provision of careers advice to all age groups in Lincolnshire

Summary:

This paper outlines the provision of careers advice to all age groups in Lincolnshire and summarises some of the work underway to fill identified gaps.

Careers advice helps guide people in their educational journey by revealing what careers require specific skills and qualifications. It is the vital ingredient in enabling people to make informed decisions around their own career goals as well as maximising the value of what they study and the qualifications they are awarded.

Careers advice is important as people tend to only know jobs of which they have heard or have family members and / or friends working in those jobs, for example: doctor, bus driver, teacher, YouTuber, or pop star. High quality careers advice helps to introduce students to potential career paths and facilitate the transition from secondary education to further education, higher education, and employment. Careers advice is delivered in Lincolnshire via a number of routes dependent upon age and circumstance.

Analysis of the careers landscape indicates that whilst there is some great practice taking place for young people at school and residents engaged in Adult Education, this isn't consistent across Lincolnshire. There are some clear gaps that include awareness raising for those residents not at school or in Adult Education, as well as patchy information to support career progression within our key sectors.

Work is underway via the Council's Skills Development Fund and the Careers Hub to help fill these gaps.

Actions Required:

Members of the Environment and Economy Scrutiny Committee are invited to:

- 1) Acknowledge the work taking place to deliver careers advice to all age groups across Lincolnshire;

- 2) Discuss the sector approach to developing careers information and identify any contacts that we can approach to give a sector insight; and
- 3) Consider methods we can use to engage the community and showcase the types of jobs Lincolnshire has to offer, including jobs within LCC.

1. Background

Good careers advice is central to social mobility. It is about making sure that people from communities in every part of the county can develop the knowledge and confidence they need to progress. And have a clear plan to help them get there.

The system of careers education, information, advice and guidance (CEIAG) for young people has seen much change in recent years. Since responsibility for CEIAG was transferred to schools and colleges in 2012, the landscape has developed significantly, in particular with the introduction of the Gatsby benchmarks and the 2017 Careers Strategy.

The recent (June 2023) Education Select Committee into CEIAG shows that whilst the right framework is broadly in place, and much progress has been made, the structure of provision is fragmented, causes confusion, and creates gaps and overlaps. That report makes numerous recommendations and takes account of the review undertaken by Sir John Holman in 2022, including that there needs to be much greater alignment and removal of overlap between different government departments and existing organisations.

Of particular interest is a recommendation to fund school careers advisers directly through the national DfE funded Careers and Enterprise Company, rather than requiring schools and colleges to buy in this support from their existing budgets, recognising disparity between schools and the amount spent on CEIAG.

Statutory careers guidance for schools and colleges published earlier this year references education reforms, as set out in the Skills for Jobs White paper 2021.

Links to the Holman Review and the Select Committee report:

[Letter from Sir John Holman to DfE and DWP Ministers re: Careers Guidance System in England \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)

[Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance \(parliament.uk\)](#)

New Statutory Guidance for Schools and Colleges (January 2023) [Careers guidance and access for education and training providers \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)

Skills for Jobs White paper (2021) [Skills for jobs: lifelong learning for opportunity and growth.GOV.UK\(www.gov.uk\)](#)

1.1.1 Careers Education, Information, Advice and Guidance in Schools

The Careers and Enterprise Company (CEC) was set up by government in 2015 and is funded by the Department for Education as the national body for careers education in

England, supporting schools and colleges to deliver careers education. Their work includes:

- a) Training and supporting Careers Leaders*
- b) Bringing employers, educators and providers together through their network of **Careers Hubs**
- c) Sharing practical digital tools and resources

* Careers Leader = A leadership role overseeing a college or school's provision. Careers Leaders implement and quality assure a careers strategy, network with employers and providers and coordinate the contributions of Careers Advisers and subject teachers.

According to research and international review, central to good careers education are the actions covered by the Gatsby Benchmarks. In fact, new statutory careers guidance for schools and colleges published earlier this year states that:

"(...) the department (for education) expects all secondary schools and colleges to use the internationally recognised Gatsby Benchmarks to develop a careers programme that increases opportunities for students to access everything from experiences of the workplace and personal guidance with a careers adviser, to engagement with employers, colleges, training providers and universities.

The benchmarks are non-statutory but support schools and colleges by providing a framework around which they can develop their careers programme in line with their legal requirements to provide independent careers to pupils throughout their secondary education (11 to 18 year olds) and students aged up to 25 with an education, health and care plan."

There are 8 Gatsby Benchmarks, each covering a range of actions and activities. Full details and resources to support schools are available here: [Gatsby Benchmarks | CEC Resource Directory \(careersandenterprise.co.uk\)](https://careersandenterprise.co.uk/gatsby-benchmarks)

1.1.2 The Greater Lincolnshire Careers Hub

The Greater Lincolnshire LEP began delivery of the Enterprise Adviser Network during the autumn term 2018 with one member of staff supporting 20-30 of Lincolnshire's schools.

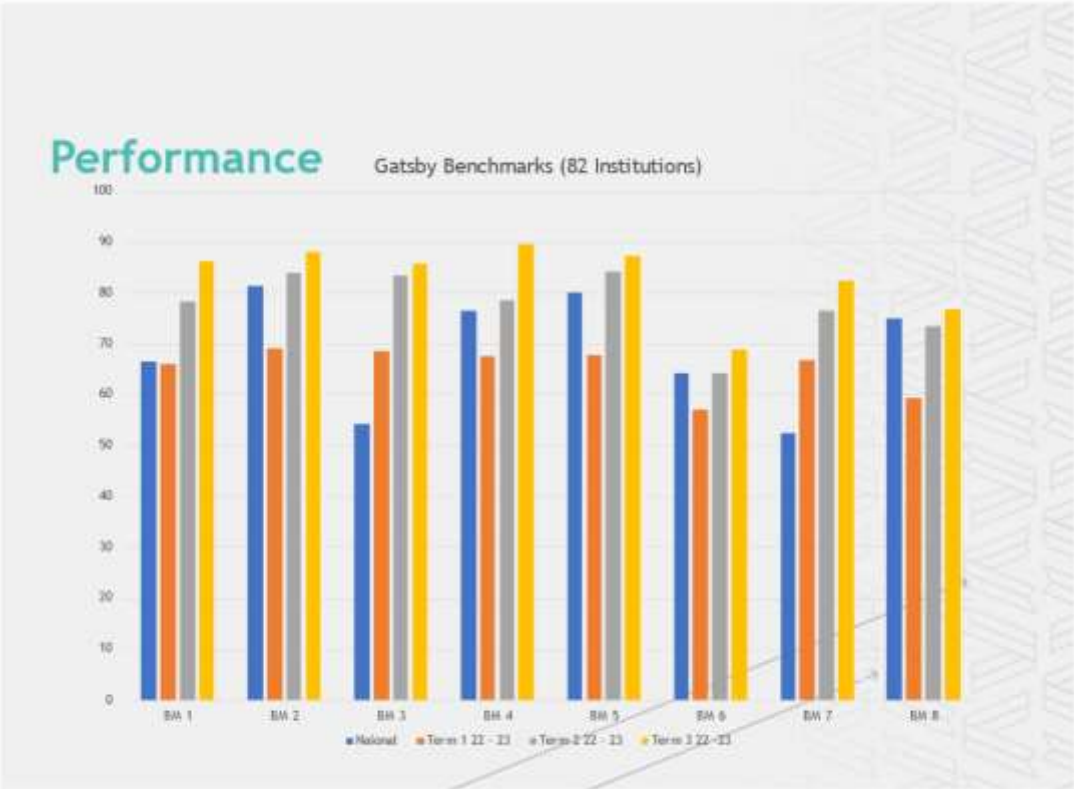
This has grown into the Greater Lincolnshire Careers Hub that supports all of Lincolnshire's secondary schools and colleges including those for Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and Alternative Provision (AP). The Careers Hub is made up of 8 full time staff managed by the Greater Lincolnshire LEP. They each manage a caseload of schools, working closely with Career Leaders and Career advisers. The Careers Hub team provide practical advice and support to schools and colleges to help them achieve excellent Careers Education programmes that support every child, and that can be measured against the Gatsby Benchmarks.

This work is part funded by the national Career and Enterprise Company (CEC), Lincolnshire County Council and the Greater Lincolnshire LEP.

Part of the work the team does is to introduce local employers to schools so that employer encounters (Benchmark 5) and experiences of the workplaces (Benchmark 6) are increased. These introductions can be to deliver short-term activities directly to pupils or to facilitate long term strategic relationships with the senior leadership team.

Statistics show that the more encounters a young person has with the world of work, the less likely they are to be NEET at 19 (Not in Education Employment or Training). In fact, research shows that four or more *meaningful* encounters with an employer or workplace can significantly improve a young person's chance of realising their aspirations and making an informed choice about the future.

Being part of the Career Hub requires schools and colleges to make an even greater commitment to achieving Benchmarks and they receive additional practical support from the local team to do this.



This year Lincolnshire schools have improved performance against the 8 Gatsby Benchmarks and the chart above shows that improvement term by term. There is still further work to do to ensure that all schools and all young people receive the same level of support. For example, Benchmark 8, Personal Guidance: The benchmark says that professional Careers Advisers (internal or external to the school) should give at least one personal careers guidance interview to a pupil before they are aged 16 and they should be qualified to a Level 6. Over 20% of Lincolnshire schools are not yet achieving that.

Benchmark 2 (providing information about the labour market) has also improved this year and the team have been working closely with schools to link them to relevant information, including to the World of Work website www.theworldofwork.co.uk and developing new sector-based resources for schools (e.g. posters and bookmarks). However, it is recognised that further work is required to ensure our young people have the information they need to make informed decisions about careers in our key sectors.

Statistics are showing that the greater the number of Benchmarks held, the greater the number of GCSE passes at A*-C/9-4 were achieved by each learner, even when gender, ethnicity, SEND status, FSM (Free School Meal) status, looked after status and Ofsted rating were statistically controlled for.

Practically, the team work on a 1-1 basis with Career Leaders, linking them up with local Colleges and training providers, providing them with links to relevant information, and making sense of an otherwise complex landscape. They share local labour market information with schools so that the school can use it in the best way with curriculum leads and pupils. They also bring together clusters of school in local areas so that they can work with each other and share best practice.

The team are trained by the Career and Enterprise Company to assist the schools to audit their careers education and think about how they can improve, which is then measured on the national Compass+ portal that is used to benchmark performance nationally. They advise on how best to create sustainable impact from activities like careers fairs or work experience.

1.1.3 Teacher Encounters

The Careers and Enterprise Company also funds, pilots, and measures other career-related initiatives via the Careers Hub. For example, we have received funding for the local Teacher Encounter initiative and over the summer term provided employer experiences for 78 local teachers by creating bespoke programmes of visits and teacher work experience. Feedback from teachers has been extremely positive *“Having only ever been in the education sector it was really insightful to see how the private sector works and the opportunities available for learners with regards to careers. Really pleased I signed up to the experience.”* and *“I was surprised just how many roles and career opportunities there are available (...).”*

1.1.4 Primary Schools

The CEC is rolling out support to primary schools and Lincolnshire is expecting to be in the next wave starting in the new year (January 2024)

1.2. Careers advice for adults, aged 19/+

1.2.1 The National Careers Service (NCS)

The NCS is the publicly funded careers service for adults and young people (aged 13 or over) in England.

The NCS aims to provide information, advice and guidance on learning, training, career choice, career development, searching for work, and the labour market. It can be accessed online, by telephone, and face to face (for people aged 19 and over). The NCS website contains sections on careers information and help to plan and implement career development activities. This can be accessed independently of careers advisers.

The remit of the NCS to provide "information, advice and guidance to help [customers] make decisions on learning, training and work opportunities." The service offers confidential and impartial advice, supported by qualified careers advisers.

Whilst available to any individual aged 13+, NCS focuses on supporting six priority groups to get into work. These include young people aged 18–24 who are not in education, employment or training (NEET); those unemployed for more than 12 months; low-skilled adults; single parents; unemployed adults over 50; and adults with special educational needs or who have a disability.

1.2.2 Working in partnership with the NCS in Lincolnshire

The NCS contract for Lincolnshire is currently held by The Futures Group in Nottingham and has a remit of carrying out the face-to-face activities outlined above.

Working in partnership, the Adult Skills & Family Learning Service (ASFL) offers NCS advice sessions to learners on our directly delivered longer courses in Family Learning, English, and maths courses. For those learners interested in progressing into work or further learning the results from these sessions have been very encouraging. This includes:

1. *'English as an additional language'* (EAL) learner in Lincoln referred to Futures by tutor. As a result of interview with the Adviser, who helped learner improve her job applications, the learner was offered a job in a Pharmacy.
2. Following a group presentation from a NCS adviser, one EAL learner enrolled onto a course with a specialist Employability Training provider.
3. NCS presented to a Functional Skills maths course. One learner requested a 1:1 meeting with an Adviser as she had not had any success getting interviews and was worried about the gap on her CV from time at home with children. The Adviser supported the learner to fill the Parenting 'gap' on CV. Since then, using the improved CV, the learner has successfully secured employment as a Midday Supervisor.
4. NCS took part in a Ukrainian Refugee Information Event in March in Stamford, to which all Stamford Essential English Learners attended and became aware of the service. Following this one learner had an appointment with an Adviser who

helped her present her CV for the professional UK job market. The learner has now been successful in gaining paid employment.

The challenge has been to be able to offer something similar to our learners on shorter courses. In order to better meet our learners needs, for 23/24 a schedule of online and face-to-face careers advice sessions have been timetabled for the academic year so that those learners who need careers information, advice and guidance to help them make informed decisions about training and employment opportunities can plan around these.

1.2.3 Adult Skills & Family Learning – subcontracted provision

The ASFL subcontracts Adult Education funding to learning providers across Lincolnshire to deliver niche provision and fill gaps in Further Education provision. A requirement of the subcontracting arrangements is to ensure good end of course information, advice, and guidance (IAG) is provided to support learners onto their next steps. The service is flexible around how this is delivered, recognising the different needs of the learners involved.

Some examples of how this works in practice are provided below:

Adult Learners studying at one of Lincolnshire's FE Colleges will have access to a wide range of IAG throughout their time at College. Adult Learners will benefit from the established careers framework that is in place to support learners aged 16-19 enrolled on full time study programmes.

Skills365 organise and give IAG to their learners. They speak to each learner to gauge why they are studying and their goal for completing before they start to aid motivation. After the course has been completed, they give them information based on their prior IAG information and signpost them to either further courses (with other adult education providers) or give advice on next steps for work if that was the reason for study.

An example of IAG came from the following:

"Once I had made the decision to retrain I was full of nerves and anxious about what would happen going forward, but as soon as I had spoken to Angela my worries started to fade you made me feel welcome and accepted from the get-go all the way to the final lesson. I couldn't have asked for someone better to help me start my journey so has been so kind and patient with me." - Mr L W - Level 2 Award in Working in Schools and Colleges (Teaching Assistant) L has also gone into employment as a teaching assistant from the programme and help received.

Similarly, Training, Education and Careers (TEC) Partnership Learner Services' careers team have termly sessions at Louth Learning Centre, where the adult education programme is based, to provide support to adult learners. They provide impartial IAG to learners on their next steps and can also refer onto other providers if needed.

Focusing specifically on qualification provision delivered by our learning providers across the county, the qualification awarding body offers careers advice as part of the qualification materials on the e-learning portal that all learners are provided with. This is also available on their qualification information pages and is always a point of discussion before enrolling on a specific course to ensure that the learners aspirations line up with where the qualification can/will take them.

Tutors also make it part of the discussion as part of the pre course enrolment period, to discuss what the learner is aspiring to do so that they can give them the best route of study throughout the materials along with providing up to date scenarios to support the learners end goal.

Examples of good practice at Learning Provider level include staff being suitably qualified and providing professional advice to individuals on the most appropriate employment and educational routes for them. Learners are given appropriate IAG throughout their programme to assist them in making decisions about what might be their possible next steps when they complete the course they are on and considering transitioning to further learning or other activity.

Providers work closely with the NCS and benefit from the resources in place around the county.

1.2.4 Gaps identified in the provision of Careers Advice

The Careers Hub team provide practical advice and support to schools and colleges to help them achieve excellent Careers Education programmes that support every child, and that can be measured against the Gatsby Benchmarks.

For learners enrolled on publicly funded Adult Education programmes, the provision of IAG, that includes careers advice, is a mandatory element of their programme. The learning provider / tutor will make them aware of careers information appropriate to their individual needs and how to access it. They will also be made aware of the services of the NCS.

Whilst the provision in place should meet the needs of young people and adults on publicly funded programmes, for those who are not in education the picture is not so positive. We recognise there is a piece of work to be done to promote the services of the NCS so that any resident, whatever their circumstance, knows how to access good careers advice.

Similarly, there is some great information available on careers in some of our key sectors. For example, information on a range of career pathways, from working in restaurants, hotels, or for an events agency, to joining a coach company, caravan site, holiday park, pub or bar is available on the Business.VisitLincolnshire website: [Visitor Economy Careers | Industry Support | Business Lincolnshire | Business Lincolnshire](#).

Likewise, the graduate-Lincs website provides great information to help graduates find their dream graduate career in the county of Lincolnshire: [Home - Living and Working in Lincolnshire \(grad-lincs.co.uk\)](https://www.grad-lincs.co.uk)

Furthermore, LiNCHigher, who are dedicated to providing young people and adults with the information, advice, guidance and inspiration they need to make an informed decision regarding their Higher Education pathways, with a view to widening participation. LiNCHigher have developed FutureFocus, a digital hub designed to bring together all aspects of careers, education and training for young people, parents/carers, adults and teaching professionals. [About LiNCHigher's FutureFocus \(thefuturefocus.co.uk\)](https://www.thefuturefocus.co.uk).

Moreover, the World of Work website [The World of Work | Greater Lincolnshire LEP > Be Inspired](https://www.theworldofwork.co.uk), as outlined above, has developed a range of new sector-based resources for schools (e.g. posters and bookmarks). However, it is recognised that further work is required to ensure our young people have the information they need to make informed decisions about careers in our key sectors.

From the research undertaken, it is fair to say that the careers landscape in Lincolnshire is fragmented:

1. There is not a central point to access careers information.
2. Career mapping information to help our residents make informed decisions about accessing a career or promotion in one of our key sectors is patchy.
3. Information on how to access a career in one of Lincolnshire's key sectors isn't particularly well promoted.

1.2.5 Lincolnshire County Councils' response to the fragmented careers landscape

It is our ambition to ensure that all residents of Lincolnshire know where to find good careers advice, whether this is at the start of their careers, changing jobs or working out their next steps. Similarly, it is our aspiration to raise awareness of progression routes in our most important sectors to aid our employers struggling with recruitment issues as well as residents looking to progress in work. We have identified three work streams in response to the gaps in careers advice identified above:

1. Develop the career pages on the ASFL Service's 2aspire website ([Careers and Jobs – Lincolnshire \(2aspire.org.uk\)](https://www.2aspire.org.uk)) as a central point for all careers information relevant to careers in Lincolnshire (including careers within Lincolnshire County Council).
2. Map local progression routes to our most important sectors, namely Agrifood, Agriculture, Engineering & Manufacturing, Construction, Health and Care, Digitalisation, Energy and Low Carbon and Skills for Work (supporting the development of Gatsby Benchmark 2 and in response to the Local Skills Improvement Plan). Once completed, this information will be housed in the careers area of the 2aspire website.

3. Following successful completion of the work outlined above, design a promotional campaign, involving a wide range of stakeholders, to ensure any resident in Lincolnshire who needs careers advice knows how it is provided and how to access it.

2. Conclusion

There is a wealth of careers information available but a real need to collate it in one place, as well as consider how it is used to appeal to different ages.

For maximum impact we have taken a partnership approach that includes the University of Lincoln, Bishop Grosseteste, Greater Lincolnshire LEP and LCC's Talent and Early Careers team. We are at the early stage of collating information and advice and guidance from the committee is appreciated.

This is an exciting time with new and interesting jobs on offer that we are to keen ensure our residents are able to take full benefit of.

3. Consultation

a) Risks and Impact Analysis

N/A

4. Appendices

None used.

5. Background Papers

No background papers within Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972 were used in the preparation of this report.

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