

**Meeting of the Cabinet – 9<sup>th</sup> September 2009**

**Report of the Director of Children's Services**

**16-19 funding transfer – operational changes**

**Purpose of Report**

1. To provide information about the changes taking place in Education and Training for young people.

**Background**

2. There are many big changes taking place in education and training for young people. Under the 2008 Education and Skills Act, the age of participation in education or training will increase to 17 by 2013, and to 18 by 2015. Councils, working with colleges, Connexions and other providers are helping to roll out new diplomas. Councils are increasing the numbers of apprenticeships they provide to respond to increased unemployment
3. On 1 April 2010, unitary and county councils will take over responsibility for commissioning education and training for 16-19 year olds. This responsibility is transferring from the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) which is being wound up. This will be a major change. It will affect services for children and young people but also have a major impact on other parts of the council. For Local Government as a whole, this is a major transfer of functions representing £7bn of public spending.
4. This briefing will be of use to Councillors in who will be taking on the new responsibilities and for those who have an interest in the regeneration of the area, in outcomes for young people and in delivering targets set in the local area agreement (LAA).
5. The process of change will be complicated and technical, particularly over the next few months. But it is important not to see this as a purely managerial exercise to be handled by officers. It is a crucial opportunity for local government to show how it can join up opportunities and support for young people; it needs your political leadership and oversight.
6. When Councils take over the lead on 16-19 they will be able to:
  - Bring together provision of all sorts for children and young people right up to the age of 19

- Make sure that education and training for 16-19 year olds meets the needs of all - including the most vulnerable and those who are at risk of becoming NEET (Not in Employment Education or Training)
  - Provide a smoother transition at 16 and at 19 for students with special educational needs
  - Plan education and training that balances learners' choices, employers' needs, and response to economic trends
7. One of the basic building block for 16-19 planning and commissioning is the sub-regional group (SRG). These sub-regional groups have been formed by councils themselves. All the SRGs are now formed and are agreeing between themselves how they will carry out their business. The four Black Country Authorities are forming a sub regional group.
8. The LSC will cease to exist on 1 April 2010. Around 950 staff in total will transfer on this date to unitary and county councils to provide additional capacity to carry out 16-19 work.

Three new organisations are being set up:

**The Young People's Learning Agency (YPLA)** which will:

Set a national framework for 16- 19 commissioning  
 Control the overall national budget for 16-19 and ensure that sub- regional plans work together  
 Provide strategic data analysis to support commissioning  
 Allocate funds to councils to meet their plans for education and training

**The Skills Funding Agency (SFA)** which will:

Fund colleges and other providers for learners aged 19 and over  
 Performance manage further education colleges

**The National Apprenticeship Services NAS** (part of the SFA) which will:

Procure the right number and type of apprenticeship places to meet the needs of each sub region

9. Specific information for Cabinet and Council Members

9.1 **Front line / Ward Councillors**

- Be briefed on the 16-19 changes and what they mean for the young people in your ward;
- Be an advocate for the young people you represent, use your best efforts to understand their wishes and needs;
- Know the providers of education and training in your ward. These could be schools and colleges. They could also be voluntary organisations. Understand what they do;
- If you are a governor find out how the school or college fits into the wider provision for young people in the area and how it meets wider community and economic needs;

- Know your local employers and what their needs are for skilled staff;
- Understand how 16-19 education and training helps to meet the targets in the Local Area Agreement (LAA).

## **9.2 Councillors with responsibility for economic regeneration**

- Understand how 16-19 education and training support regeneration and action on the recession;
- Understand how 16-19 education and training help to meet targets in the Local Area Agreement (LAA);
- Ensure the sub regional group (SRG) has a good understanding of the sub-regional and regional economy and how these are changing;
- Ensure the SRG has a good understanding of employers' views.

## **9.3 Scrutiny councillors**

- Work with colleagues to understand how decisions on 16-19 commissioning are made and what evidence is used;
- Constructively challenge proposals for education and training provision;
- Assess whether the commissioning process is fair to different sorts of learning providers and check that the sub regional group (SRG) is not just commissioning "what it knows";
- Advocate on behalf of young people where there is evidence that they are not getting the support or entitlement they need;
- Think about the needs of learners coming in from other areas as well as learners who live in your local authority area. Do all learners get good information, advice and guidance (IAG)? Is the curriculum offer right to meet their needs?
- Challenge the council and the SRG to make effective links with employers and understand their views.

## **9.4 Lead Members for children**

- Consider sharing the lead for this work with other colleagues, in the interests of spreading workload and raising awareness;
- Talk to your leader and tell other councillors about the changes – particularly those with an interest in skills, employment and economic regeneration;
- Understand how these changes can help you achieve the Local Area Agreement (LAA) targets;
- Consider how you and colleagues from neighbouring councils can work together to lead the sub regional group (SRG);
- Speak up for the needs of the most vulnerable young people: those with special educational needs, young offenders, those who need non-standard provision;
- Think about how to build provision and support for 16-19 year olds into the children's trust, the children and young people's plan, the 14-19 area partnership;
- Ensure sensible links pre and post 19 for young people and providers;

- Build relationships with employers which link to the contacts the council already has. Remember that employers will not care that there are different systems for pre and post 19;
  - Build good relationships with all the providers in your area. Some of these may already be in place through your 14-19 partnership;
  - Think about how you can involve both providers and employers in your SRG;
  - Challenge the SRG to think big about the needs of your area and the sub-region, to commission fairly without favouring one sort of provider over another and to meet the needs of all learners even if this means they go outside your council's area to learn;
  - Make sure learners get good quality, impartial advice about their options for education and training.
10. Information on 16-19 funding transfer – operational changes have already been shared with the Chief Executive and answers provided to the 10 most important questions currently being asked – see Appendix 1 for reference.

### **Finance**

11. From 1<sup>st</sup> April 2010 the funding for the education and training of 16-19 year olds will transfer to the Local Authority who will be responsible for it's distribution.

### **Legal**

12. Under the Education and Skills Act 2008, the age of participation in education or training will increase to 17 years by 2013, and to 18 years by 2015. On 1 April 2010, unitary and county councils will take over responsibility for commissioning education and training for 16-19 year olds. This responsibility is transferring from the Learning and Skills Council (LSC).

### **Recommendation**

13. Cabinet note the new duties that are being passed the Local Authority in April 2010. Further updates will be provided as subsequent Cabinet Meetings.



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**Background Paper: React 16-19 Changes – Don't be out of the loop**