

Report to: Children's Services Scrutiny Committee

Date: 14 March 2007

By: Director of Children's Services

Title of Report: Review of information, advice and guidance services for young people

Purpose of Report: To offer the Committee an opportunity to comment on issues in relation to the review, ahead of consultation with stakeholders in early summer 2007

**Recommendations:
That the Committee**

- (i) Note the outline proposed strategy for information advice and guidance services set out in the report to the Children's Trust 11-19 Partnership attached as appendix 1
 - (ii) Note the timetable for completing the review set out in this paper
 - (iii) Offer comments as appropriate which can be taken into account before proposals are published for consultation with schools and other stakeholders in May 2007
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1. Financial appraisal

1.1 The County Council will become responsible in April 2007 for the management of the Government grant for Connexions services. The level of grant in 2007-2008 has not yet been announced but is expected to be broadly similar to the funding in the current financial year, which is £3.98m. In 2007-2008 the grant will be ring fenced for the provision of information, advice and guidance for young people.

1.2 The funding, currently managed by Sussex Connexions Ltd, supports a set of contracts with providers, of which the largest is with Sussex Careers Ltd, currently worth £2.4m. The County Council Youth Development Service is another provider with a £735,000 contract for the provision of personal advisers to work with the most vulnerable young people, based at secondary schools. There are a number of smaller contracts with the voluntary sector and FE colleges. In addition there are central training, communication and management costs.

1.3 Cabinet agreed in December that the ring fenced grant allocation for 2007-2008, once confirmed, should continue to be used for the pattern of services set out above. It agreed, however, that from 2008-2009 onwards services should be reshaped, following a review of services currently underway.

2. Supporting information

2.1 As part of the development of the first Children and Young People's Plan early this year the partners in the East Sussex Children's Trust arrangements agreed that information, advice and guidance (IAG) services to young people should be reviewed in 2006-2007. The aim was to ensure both that optimum value was obtained from the Connexions resources and that IAG services were planned coherently alongside other key strategic developments, in particular the 14-19 education and training strategy, and the establishment of integrated youth support teams for vulnerable young people.

2.2 The review began in the summer. To date it has involved consultation with parents, interviews and seminars with a range of managers and stakeholders, and discussions with young people, leading to a questionnaire consultation for a much larger group, designed by young people. The questionnaire consultation of young people took place over January and February. The responses are currently being analysed by the survey company SMSR; a report is expected to be available later this month. Over 1000 responses from young people have been received.

2.3 In November last year the Children's Trust 11-19 Partnership considered a report on emerging findings from the review up to that point, attached as Appendix 1. The Partnership agreed, subject to the results of the questionnaire consultation with young people, to recommend to the East Sussex County Council Cabinet, and to the Children's Trust Executive Group, the development for consultation of detailed proposals designed to:

- strengthen and rationalize targeted community based IAG services for young people who have left school and are not attending college
- provide more equitable targeted support for vulnerable young people at school and college, reflecting local needs more closely and integrating IAG services with other local services for vulnerable young people through Youth Support Teams
- ensure all young people can access well publicized sources of information and advice about key lifestyle issues (including health advice) as well as advice about education and training options, taking close account of the views of young people about how this is provided
- allow local 14-19 area partnerships of schools and colleges to influence more directly the use of resources allocated to support universal careers education and guidance in each area, to ensure an integrated approach alongside the investment which schools and colleges already make in careers education programmes.

2.4 Proposals designed to achieve these objectives are currently being developed. To help in that exercise we have detailed discussions with secondary schools through two focus group meetings on 14 and 26 March. The plan is that following these meetings we will prepare proposals for consultation, to issue in early May. In the light of responses to that consultation proposals will be taken to Cabinet and to the East Sussex Children's Trust Executive Group in July. These will clarify what aspects of services and support we recommend are provided directly and which are subject to a tendering exercise. Any tender exercise will take place over the autumn 2007, with new services beginning in April 2008.

2.5 Comments are very welcome from members of the committee on any aspects of the review, in particular the proposed outline strategy set out in the report to the 11-19 Partnership.

MATT DUNKLEY
Director of Children's Services

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Local Members: All
Background Documents:
Report to the Children's Trust 11-19 Partnership on 22 November 2006

Item No: 5

Title of item: IAG Review

Report By: Alison Jeffery

Children's Trust Manager

1 Recommendation

- 1.1 That the Partnership Group endorse the broad strategic framework for IAG services, and the use of Connexions funding, proposed in paragraph 4.2 below, subject to the outcome of further consultation, particularly with young people.

2 Background Information

2.1 As the Group knows, the Children's Services Authority has been reviewing Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) services to young people in East Sussex. Following a project board meeting on 1 November some emerging findings and views from this work were presented to about 45 stakeholders (including a number of members of the 11-19 Partnership Group) at a seminar on 9 November. The presentation slides are attached for information, together with the list of questions used to structure group discussion at the seminar.

2.2 A number of views were expressed at the seminar. There was a reasonable consensus however around the following broad propositions:

- (i) Community based services, and services for young people aged 16 and above, are very thinly spread
- (ii) Support for young people at special schools is also stretched with support other than from the school focused very heavily around statutory processes
- (iii) The "flat rate" allocation of intensive PAs to schools has led to some inequity with young people in some schools receiving a service while others, despite greater needs, do not
- (iv) Targeted support to individual young people needs to be planned and managed as part of an integrated youth support service. The intensive PA service has worked best, however, when it has been integrated closely with the work of the school inclusion team and where it reflects the ethos and working style of the school. That integration with school operations needs to be retained.
- (v) The universal offer to all young people in schools is not always coherent or delivered in the most cost effective way (with PSHE lessons, careers input, citizenship and enterprise education sometimes planned separately). Young people do not always find it as stimulating, accessible or helpful as we would want

it to be. New models need to be developed, reflecting more closely local needs and circumstances. The 14-19 Partnerships should, over time, be well placed to develop/shape better models for “careers” education and guidance in their areas – promoting impartial advice and guidance while still making the most effective use of resources and ensuring that much support is provided by people who know young people well.

- (vi) Support for young people in making choices at school and college needs to be integrated closely with the planning and delivery of their curriculum pathway. The 14-19 strategy offers the opportunity to take a new approach to this planning, with more emphasis on a personalised approach through individual plans.

Further work

3.1 Further work on the review needs to be done. In particular there needs to be more consultation with a larger, wider group of young people. Dialogue with employers is also planned.

Outline way forward

4.1 Against the background of work to date and the views of stakeholders at the seminar on 9 November, I have set out below a broad strategic framework for the Group to discuss. Subject to the Group’s views, I suggest that the project team, liaising/consulting further with stakeholders, works up proposals for reshaping services within this framework.

4.2 It should be noted that contractual arrangements, and the need to make changes on a considered/evidential and well managed basis, means that changes will generally not take place until the financial year 2008-09 (and in practical terms, for schools, from September 2008). Details about what services will be put out to tender, and how, are all matters which will need to be addressed as part of the development of the proposals. That development – and the framework itself - will also need to take account of the results of the planned further consultation with young people.

Proposed broad strategic framework

- (i) Funding for community based IAG provision to be identified separately – and increased if possible. A site strategy for community based provision to be drawn up, linking with the proposed Youth Access Centres (part of the integrated youth support service being developed by the CSA) and other relevant service developments.
- (ii) If possible, resources for IAG in Further Education Colleges to be increased (contribution of Connexions/CSA funding to be subject to further discussions with the colleges)
- (iii) Targeted county wide services to be maintained for vulnerable groups as now (teenage parents, youth offenders, young people with substance misuse problems); support for young people with disabilities/special educational needs, particularly at special schools, to be managed through integrated county wide services for disabled young people/young people with SEN
- (iv) A new formula (more closely reflecting local need) to be used for allocating resources for intensive, school and college based Personal Advisers (PAs), with those PAs managed jointly by schools/colleges and the managers of local

- integrated youth support teams (YSTs). YSTs to maintain close relations with schools/colleges – extending good joint working across all services represented. The Common Assessment Framework to be used to work with young people and families to identify needs and plan support, drawing on resources across the YST.
- (v) Access for young people to information on key lifestyle (non careers) issues to be reviewed, taking into account the outcome of the consultation with young people. Where central communications/services would offer best value for money they should be maintained/developed with dedicated funding. Opportunities for more local schemes should also be explored, linked to community based IAG provision (see (i) above).
 - (vi) The use of external funding for universal careers education and guidance (probably at a slightly lower level than currently, to allow for more funding for targeted services) should be discussed with 14-19 Partnerships and individual schools and colleges. The expectation should be that providing/commissioning high quality impartial information, advice and guidance to all young people to support their education and training choices should primarily be the responsibility of schools and colleges, and that this IAG should be part of mainstream delivery/funding. Schools and colleges should be encouraged to develop new models of delivery, with expert support, linked to the development of 14-19 education and training in the area and taking careful account of the views of young people themselves about what they would find most helpful. Where local 14-19 Partnerships are in a position to undertake this development on a collective basis they should be encouraged to do so; as a minimum they should be encouraged to scrutinise arrangements within their member schools and colleges.
 - (vii) A local policy framework should be drawn up to support the development by schools and colleges of support for young people in making choices, with an emphasis on the need to reach out and engage young people who need particular support/guidance but may not be either supported through YST or voluntarily accessing resources available (at school/college or in the community). This will need to take account of the new national IAG standards on which we expect information to be made available by DfES soon.

4.3 Views on this broad framework from members of the Partnership Group would be welcome. The intention is to take outline proposals, together with detailed proposals for 2007-2008 (largely steady state) to both the County Council Cabinet and to the Children's Trust Executive Group on 12 December. Following the further consultation and discussions planned over the next few months, more detailed proposals will be developed and brought to the Partnership and to CTEG, covering commissioning/contracting arrangements and timescales.

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