

Young People's Education and Skills Board

National Careers Service

Item No: 8

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Summary This paper updates members on the latest developments regarding the proposed National Careers Service

Recommendations Board members are asked to note the information on the National Careers Service.

1 Background

- 1.1 As part of the spending review the Government had previously announced that an all-age careers service would be established by April 2012 and new arrangements for careers guidance would commence from September 2011. Gerard McAlea from the Department for Education (DfE) gave a brief outline of general progress on development of the service to the last RPG meeting on 14 February 2011.

2 National Careers Service

- 2.1 On 13 April 2011 John Hayes, Minister of State for Further Education, Skills and Lifelong Learning¹ announced further details about the proposals. The Department of Business Innovation and Skills (BIS) will continue to fund careers services for adults both online and through helpline services; from September 2011, these will be linked to similar services for young people, so there is a single point of access for all users of each service. The department will also fund a network of public, private and voluntary organisations to provide careers guidance to adults. From April 2012 these services will be known as the National Careers Service.

3 Duty on Schools

- 3.1 From September 2012 the Education Bill will place a new duty on schools to secure access to impartial and independent careers guidance for every pupil in Years 9 to 11, which must also include information on all 16 to 18 education or training options. Schools will have the freedom to decide how best to fulfil this duty, although it is stated that guidance must be provided in an impartial manner and promote the best interests of the

¹ This ministerial portfolio sits jointly within both the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) and the Department for Education (DfE)

person to whom it is given. Additionally some legislation from the 1997 Education Act will be repealed, allowing schools more freedom over how they choose to provide careers education.

- 3.2 Schools will be able to access the National Careers Service for this purpose, although they will not be limited to obtaining services from these providers. The Government intends to promote a national quality standard to help schools make decisions about which provider to use. Schools will be expected to make provision for careers guidance from within the Dedicated Schools Grant.

4 Role of Local Authorities

- 4.1 The duty placed on local authorities by the Education and Skills Act 2008 (Section 68) is to make available to young people support that will “*encourage, enable or assist them to participate in education or training*”. There is no suggestion that this duty is to be repealed; in fact this duty is the basis of Lord Hill’s² letter of 17 February to Directors of Children’s Services to continue the process of ensuring that all 16 and 17 year olds receive suitable offers to continue in education or training (previously known as the September Guarantee).

- 4.2 On 13 April 2011 the DfE issued statutory guidance to local authorities on targeted support services for young people and a communication to schools on changes to the delivery of careers guidance. Boroughs will not be expected to provide universal careers service once the new careers service is established and the duty on schools has been commenced. However, local authorities will still need to support vulnerable young people to engage in education and training particularly in light of the intention to raise the participation age to 18 by 2015. Local authorities will be expected to use the Early Intervention Grant for this purpose.

- 4.3 Local authorities will additionally be expected to track and record young people’s participation post-16 on the local Client Caseload Information System (CCIS) in order to ensure there is reliable data available centrally on young people at risk of being NEET. They will also be required to maintain close links with JobCentre Plus to ensure young people NEET are given appropriate support.

5 Issues and ongoing work

- 5.1 Although schools are being encouraged to think about putting in place new arrangements for careers guidance in advance of September 2012, it is unclear what provision is going to be in place between now and then as universal Connexions services begin to disappear in some areas. Whilst there is a clear duty on local authorities to support vulnerable young people, councils are asked to “consider what arrangements they should put in place to ensure all young people, including those who will complete year 11 this summer, get access to the careers guidance they need in advance of this new duty being placed on schools, and of the establishment of the new careers service”. The Early Intervention Grant is again cited as the main resource to support local authorities’ transitional responsibilities. There does however, remain some concern that changes in services over the coming year may leave some young people without the support they need.

- 5.2 To support schools with their upcoming duty to ensure young people are aware of their 16 to 18 options, the Young People’s Education and Skills Team explored alternative options for a comprehensive prospectus for young People across London following the decision to cease the local authority contributions for the Choice Area Wide Prospectus after July of this year.

² Lord Hill is the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Schools

- 5.3 The team has secured an arrangement with UCAS whereby the Choice prospectus - information on 53,000 courses with 634 schools, colleges and providers across London - will transfer to the UCAS 14-19 prospectus from September 2011.
- 5.4 The team, through the Improving Choices for Young People's Group will be working with the key partners, including DfE and UCAS, to shape the longer term vision for London for the provision of high quality impartial information for all London's young people.

6 Recommendations

- 6.1 Board members are asked to note the information on the National Careers Service.