

Connexions in Brighton & Hove: Equalities Impact Assessment 8th February 2011

Current Context for Equalities Impact Assessment

A service redesign for 2011 – 2012 is currently underway to enable Brighton & Hove City Council to provide a Connexions service to young people which will allow us to achieve our statutory responsibilities while at the same time work within the context of reduced spending on children's services in general. The Secretary of State for Education wrote on 16 June to all Directors of Children's Services and Chief Executives about reductions in government spending on education. The letter set out that it will be for local authorities to manage the reduction in the Area-Based Grant across their funding sources and details the measures taken to protect formula grant and remove ring-fences in order to give local authorities increased flexibility to do so. Funding for Connexions Services falls under the Area-Based Grant and the amount of money available for this service and the priority for the resource will change. It is within this expected context that we are proposing this redesign of the Connexions Service in Brighton & Hove which will allow us to focus on employability outcomes for young people in the city and to meet the saving requirements for 2011/12. It should be noted that this Equalities Impact Assessment is a living document and may evolve as a result of the consultation processes.

Scope of Current Service

Currently, the Connexions Service for Brighton & Hove is an advice and support service for 13-19 year olds (13-25 for young people with LDD - Learning Difficulties / Disabilities), covering careers guidance and other support issues relevant to young people, as outlined in The Education and Skills Act 2008. Mainstream and special schools/colleges have link Connexions Personal Advisers, (both IAG and Intensive PAs) who visit the institution on a regular basis, offering careers Information Advice and Guidance (IAG) and more intensive support such as around sexual health and substance misuse issues.

Support is provided to young people who are not in education via a range of community-based Connexions PLUS Centres. A universal drop-in service is available from 10 until 5 Monday-Friday and runs in a different area of the city each day to facilitate access for young people. Young people can also book a careers guidance appointment at their local Connexions PLUS Centre. Young people who need additional support can be allocated a Personal Adviser (Intensive) to help them address barriers such as homelessness, teenage pregnancy or other more social care issues. In addition, the Connexions grant funds a large part of the IYSS infrastructure, including Connexions PLUS public access buildings and administrative centres, ICT hardware and support, staff training, marketing and publicity materials and careers education support for schools including web-based materials. Connexions PAs also provide help with benefits, finding job vacancies and provide intensive support to young people who cannot make easy progress into employment, training or education.

Statutory Requirements

The statutory duties of Local Authorities in relation to the provision of services currently delivered by Connexions are much narrower in scope than the current provision of services. The actual duties which would remain with the Local Authority even if Connexions itself ceased to exist are:

1. A duty to exercise functions to ensure that children aged 16 -18 who have not obtained 2 GCSEs are participating effectively in education or training. (s10 Education and Skills Act 2008)
2. A duty to identify those children mentioned above who are in their area and are not in work, education or training ("identify the NEETS") (s12 Education and Skills Act 2008)
3. A duty to provide such services as it considers necessary to young persons and relevant adults to encourage, enable or assist them in participating in education or training (s68 Education and Skills Act 2008)
4. A duty to conduct an assessment in the last year of school of any SEN child they believe will leave school at 16, as to the plan for post school education or training. (S139A Learning and Skills Act 2000)
5. A duty to provide all pupils at school aged 14-16 with a programme of careers advice. This duty is only on the LA for Pupil Referral Units. In all other circumstances, the duty falls on the head teacher / governing body. (s43 Education Act 1997)

Proposal for a Redesigned Service

From April 2011 the Connexions service will concentrate on getting young people into education, employment and training when they leave compulsory education. Appropriate web-based software packages will be provided for public access within community settings and which can also be accessed via the web by all young people and their families, at school/college or at home. This will include an electronic area-based prospectus of all the learning options open to young people between the ages of 16 to 19. Personal Advisers will no longer go into schools and colleges to provide face-to-face IAG support and this will become the responsibility of schools and colleges, as indicated by the current government as the direction of travel. However, transitional support arrangements will be put in place through the provision of advisory support for schools to develop their capacity to enable them to carry out their statutory IAG duties and to achieve their responsibilities in terms of the IAG Quality Standards.

The opportunity to redesign the Connexions service allows us to focus our efforts and resources on employability issues for the 16 – 18 NEET population in the city. One of the difficulties of previous Connexions support for post-16 young people was that much of it was generic and did not concentrate enough on getting young people into employment or training. As a city, our NEET figures improved steadily from 2005 to 2008. However, over the last year, the percentage of NEETs has begun to rise again, following the national and regional trend, and current economic conditions appear to be contributing to the rise in NEET numbers.

The Connexions service will provide a team of Personal Advisers and Client Advisers working specifically with the NEET group on employability issues. These will include provision of individual careers advice, CV writing, job search and job interview skills. We will also strengthen the requirement on personal advisers to link with employers and other opportunity providers and focus efforts on the job broking element of their profession.

In parallel with this employability team, other agencies within the city will continue to work with young people who have other, more specialist issues. These include RUOK (substance misuse), TAPAS (mental health), YMCA (housing), health-funded teenage pregnancy workers, Youth Offending Services (YOS) and youth workers. Youth workers from both BHCC and the voluntary sector will be tasked with offering more intensive support to young people in terms of employability.

There will be an emphasis on support for young people with learning difficulties / disabilities and special educational needs (LDD/SEN). A team of IAG trained PAs (LDD) will work with schools and colleges to support these young people and their families to get the best possible support and information to make a successful transition to adult life.

The proposed redesigned Connexions service includes the following elements:

- A team of 6.5 IAG qualified Personal Advisers (Employability) with special responsibility to support 16-18 year old NEETs and those looking for work and / or training. This would include careers guidance, CV writing, job search and job placement services.
- Two level 3 qualified Client Advisers (Employability) with special responsibility to support 16-18 year old NEETs. These will work alongside the 6.5 Personal Advisers and be responsible for staffing a dedicated Connexions Plus access point.
- A team of four specialist LDD PAs to provide support to young people with LDD/special needs.
- 1.5 FTE posts to support schools to develop their capacity to enable them to carry out their statutory IAG duties and to achieve their responsibilities in terms of the IAG Quality Standards by 2013. This is in line with feedback from head teachers. The posts will be managed as part of the PSHEE team.
- Web-based, electronic IAG materials and other resources will be developed and maintained for young people. These will be accessible in schools, colleges, community locations or at home.
- Support to allow the service to meet the national requirements for management information returns, including intended destinations and September Guarantee.
- Mainstream Information Advice and Guidance (IAG) services and support to young people under 16 will be the responsibility of schools and colleges.

Posts Affected

The above model will be presented to cabinet for a decision in February. Depending on what is decided, the current team of 35.57 FTE posts employed by BHCC (PAs, managers and other staff) will reduce to between 13.5 FTE posts as detailed above.

This reduction in staffing is accounted for by the change in support to be offered to schools and colleges for pre-16 young people and the corresponding reduction in management and support posts. An Employability team, working with post 16 NEET, and the team working with young people with special needs will remain in place.

Is the service designed to meet specific needs such as the needs of minority ethnic groups, disabled people etc?

Yes. The specification for the service will lay down continuous improvement targets year on year. These targets will specify outcomes in order to improve the life chances of those young people who may be deemed to be more vulnerable to becoming NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training) as well as meeting the needs of the wider population. These targets will reflect the Children and Young People's Plan and the wider council's 'intelligent commissioning' strategy.

What information has been gathered on this function?

Statistics are produced each month via the Aspire database, which are published nationally. Via our Aspire database we collect data on all the groups impacted both in terms of access to the service and specifically on their NEET status. This information is fed into the Children and

Young Peoples Trust Performance Improvement Board and is monitored on a quarterly basis. Reports are also made to key groups such as the 14 – 19 Partnership Board. The statistics show any anomalies in achievement or destinations of specific groups of young people. Any such anomalies are reported back to local delivery teams so that action can be taken to address the problems.

An annual survey of destinations of all year 11 school leavers is carried out at the end of each calendar year. A report is published and disseminated to schools and the local authority. The report contains information on destinations broken down by gender and ethnicity.

We produce statistics on caller rates to the Connexions Plus Centres and this is used by us for planning purposes. We encourage all callers to the office to complete a 'Have Your Say' questionnaire which is collated quarterly and from which we gather information about issues young people feel need to be addressed in our services. Satisfaction ratings are very high.

Impact on different groups of young people.

Priority Equality Strands:

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Groups Included	Potential Impact on this group	Data/information including relevant policies	Potential actions to minimise negative impact and maximise positive impacts
Age:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ There will not be a team of personal advisers working face to face with mainstream young people in schools or colleges. The capacity and capability of schools to cover this resource gap could potentially impact of the level of support received by this age group. ▪ The impartiality of school-based IAG may be an issue. ▪ Young people post 16 who are NEET or at risk of becoming NEET will receive direct support from PAs (Employability) ▪ Funding is available to continue and increase the PSHEE advisory function to support schools to implement their responsibilities in terms of IAG. This will be a transitional arrangement and will include advisory support, INSET, resources, and help with developments such as Plan-it, Careers Etc, implementing the IAG quality standards etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Data from Connexions Client Information System (CCIS) Aspire ▪ BHCC equalities policy. ▪ Connexions equalities statement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ An employability team comprising 6.5 personal Advisers and 2 Client advisers will work with young people 16 – 18 who are NEET. They will work with young people who are 'work ready' and are looking for EET opportunities. ▪ The service redesign will include provision of electronic, web-based resources which can be accessed by all young people and their families in a variety of settings. ▪ The 14 – 19 Partnership Board and its IAG subgroup will endeavour to ensure that schools take up the PSHEE and support on offer. ▪ Parents and carers will be kept informed of the support their children can access, much of which will be web-based and thus can be used at home with support from the family.
Disability: Young people with SEN / LDD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Brighton & Hove City Council is responsible for transition assessments for young people with learning difficulties/disabilities. The redesigned Connexions service, part of the city council provision, will contribute to this assessment through the drawing up of 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Data from Connexions Client Information System (CCIS) Aspire, 2009 – 2010: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ Number of young people with SEN likely to continue in post 16 education and therefore have had Moving on Plans: 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The proposed service redesign provides a resource of 4 specialist PAs (LDD). This will allow focussed support for this group which will include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ Providing well planned support to enable LDD/SEN learners to choose

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	<p>Moving On plans. This will be achieved by a team of specialist Personal Advisers (LDD) who will work with schools/colleges, SENCOs and the BHCC SEN team plus other support workers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ With the proposed LDD PA resource, there is a risk that PAs would be unable to cover some of the LA's statutory requirements around this area of work such as producing S139A plans, attendance at transition reviews, completing YPLA funding applications and fulfilling the 'Home / Host' reciprocal arrangements with other local authorities. There is potentially a risk to support for LDD students in mainstream schools especially. ▪ Young people who are School Action + / School Action may not be able to get as much support as they have had previously. This could have a potential effect on post-16 NEET figures. ▪ Young people with LDD/SEN are more than twice as likely to be NEET as mainstream young people. This is increasingly an issue for young people with BESD and those on School Action +. ▪ Physical access issues should not be a problem. PAs will work in schools and community-based access points where the needs of young people with disabilities are catered for. However, the reduction in 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Statement = 86, No statement = 129 ➤ Number of young people with SEN not wanting to continue in education: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Statement = 56, No statement = 305 ▪ BHCC equalities policy. ▪ Connexions equalities statement ▪ SEN Code of Practice ▪ Gender and disability: For boys, the most prevalent diagnosis is autism spectrum disorder, followed by moderate learning disabilities and speech and language behaviour; for girls the most prevalent diagnoses are moderate learning disabilities, speech and language disabilities and severe learning difficulties for girls (Amaze, 2010). 	<p>the right course or training post-16</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Assisting with Section 139A assessments and specialist funding applications for young people with statements of SEN. ➤ Developing information, advice and guidance (IAG) for disabled people, including those with learning difficulties, so that they are fully aware of learning, career and work opportunities, and of funding and assistance available to them ➤ The PA Employability team will focus on supporting young people who are NEET including those with LDD/SEN ➤ Accessibility issues for electronic and web-based materials will be looked at as a priority. We will ensure that we work to the required accessibility standards as well as working with specialist providers to investigate producing materials in other formats: Braille, spoken word, widgeit etc.

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	<p>the number of action points could make it more difficult for young people with mobility issues to access support locally.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Accessibility to materials, especially web-based materials, for some young people may be an issue. 		
Ethnicity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The connexions service works with young men and young women from a wide range of backgrounds and this is reflected in the data on young people we collect. Any impact of the service redesign is on young people as a whole and will not disproportionately affect any of these groups. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Data from Connexions Client Information System (CCIS) Aspire <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➢ City-wide ethnicity – white British = 83.4% ➢ City-wide NEET – white British = 91% ▪ BHCC equalities policy. ▪ Connexions equalities statement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Curriculum support and materials will be developed for use with all young people. This will take account of the need to challenge and eradicate direct and indirect discrimination. ▪ Employability teams will support all young people regardless of ethnicity. ▪ More research needs to be carried out on the extent to which different ethnic and faith groups access the service. This is not clear from our current data. This analysis should build on the work recently undertaken under the Preventing Violent Extremism project.
Faith / belief	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ This is difficult to assess as the information held on faith and beliefs of young people is not extensive. However, no specific equalities impact envisaged other than issues affecting the population of young people as a whole. ▪ 		See ethnicity above
Gender (including	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Connexions support for young people is not gender specific. However, there are 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Data from Connexions Client Information System (CCIS) Aspire 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The advisory support to schools and colleges will allow us to work with them to

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transgender)	<p>issues concerning:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Stereotyping in terms of IAG given ➤ Young men being more likely to be NEET than young women ➤ Connexions Support to young parents, school based health drop-ins and TP3 programs will be reduced so young women may be disproportionately affected. ➤ There is a potential gender issue concerning the Connexions staff. The Connexions workforce is predominantly female so any staff reductions are likely to affect women disproportionately. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ BHCC equalities policy. ▪ Connexions equalities statement ▪ Nationally: More young men than young women are not in education, employment, or training (NEET). At the end of 2005, 12 per cent of male 16-18 year olds were NEET compared with ten per cent of girls. (SFR 21/2006) ▪ Brighton & Hove: There is little significant difference in gender between young people who are NEET 	<p>tackle gender stereotyping and segregation in education and training through information, advice and guidance (IAG) in relation to subject choices and careers, and through ensuring that work experience and work-related learning give both girls and boys an opportunity to expand their horizons by trying out non-traditional work</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Employability team will focus on 16-18 year old NEETs of both genders and actively work with them to find appropriate EET opportunities ▪ Support for teenage parents and pregnancy preventative programmes will continue to be provided by some school or health professionals. However, it is unclear how this gap will be bridged completely.
<p>Young people who are NEET including the following groups:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Young offenders ➤ Young 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The key focus of the Connexions service is employability for 16-18 year old young people. This includes support for the groups of vulnerable young people listed. Connexions is not a specialist service and is funded to deal with employability issues. ▪ One risk may be the reduction in intensive PA support offered to these groups. Intensive PA support contributes to the implementation of key policy areas including raising achievement, increasing participation, addressing child poverty, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Data from Connexions Client Information System (CCIS) Aspire. The Aspire database captures the individual circumstance of young people who are NEET. In April 2010 the situation was as follows, showing numbers and the % of the 16-19 NEET cohort. Young people may be under more than one of these categories: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ YOS (currently / previously) 182 28% ➤ In care / care leaver 81 13% 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Connexions Employability service sits within the tiered approach to Children and Young People's Services outlined in <i>Supporting Families in Brighton & Hove</i> and will utilise the Family CAF approach to assessment of need. ▪ The Employability Team will offer a 'specialised' service, for NEETs and young people looking for work and training, developing links with the apprenticeship strategy within the Brighton & Hove City Employment and Skills Plan (CESP) and

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<p>people leaving care</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Teenage parents ➤ Young people with substance misuse issues ➤ Homeless young people ➤ Young people with mental health needs ➤ Refugees & asylum seekers ➤ LGBT young people 	<p>reducing inequality and tackling worklessness. It is also a key source of data and intelligence about the most needy young people, upon which Intelligent Commissioning will depend. Under these proposals, intensive PA support will be significantly reduced, and will be dependent not upon those who have built up expertise in this area, but upon other colleagues widening their role. There is an opportunity to ensure that young people have as far as possible a single point of support from the various teams that provide support to them at present, but this will require significant planning and training, especially where staff in future may be drawn from different Delivery Units.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ For example, PAs being able to give support and advice to young women who 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Pregnant 77 12% ➤ Teenage parent 73 11% ➤ Substance misuse issues 26 4% ➤ Accommodation issues 19 3% ➤ Refugee / Asylum seeker 4 1% <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ BHCC equalities policy. ▪ Connexions equalities statement ▪ Youth Matters Green Paper 2005: To ensure young people get the support they need, the Green Paper Youth Matters set out a vision that, by April 2008, every young person at risk of not achieving the five Every Child Matters outcomes should be able to access the following TYS from their local children's trust: single point of contact to support and challenge: a lead professional / support package that draws on mainstream and specialist services of sufficient quality and quantity / single route of referral to extra support from different agencies as soon as risks emerge/ help to access support earlier on / support to live in a stronger family environment. / Improved outcomes for young people are assessed by annual performance assessments and joint area review 	<p>other agencies like Jobcentre Plus and Cityjobs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Support for the NEET group will be delivered through 1 to1 work, screening and addressing individual needs and barriers, and/or programmes of group work. This work will be provided by a team of employability PAs, based in the community, who will offer a time-bound programme of employability skills including careers guidance, CV writing, job search and job placement. The team will also offer outreach opportunities at a number of council and community venues across the city. ▪ For young people who present with more specialist issues and barriers to progression, PAs will link in with specialist Tier 2 and 3 agencies and will refer to and accept referrals from them via CAF and other assessment processes, when young people are considered ready to access employability support. These specialist agencies include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Youth Offending Services (YOS) ➤ TAPAs – teenage mental health support ➤ RUOK – substance misuse support ➤ Central Sussex YMCA Housing support ➤ Teenage pregnancy preventative support

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	<p>are pregnant / young parents through reduction in in-house Intensive PA team. IPAs will no longer provide preventative work in schools and will be unable to provide TP3 and Reflect training and support sexual health clinics.</p>	<p>inspection frameworks, all of which are reflected in national public service agreements (PSA) targets and embedded in local area agreements and children and young people's plans</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Teenage mothers have three times the rate of post-natal depression of older mothers and a higher risk of poor mental health for three years after the birth; children of teenage mothers are generally at increased risk of poverty, low educational attainment, poor housing and poor health, and have lower rates of economic activity in adult life (14 Teenage Parents Next Steps, DCSF 2007.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ 16+ Team – a special 16+ (leaving care) PA post will be created to support young people leaving care. ▪ Support for teenage parents and pregnancy preventative programmes will continue to be provided by some school or health professionals. However, it is unclear how this gap will be bridged completely. ▪ There will continue to be liaison between Connexions PAs and Allsorts support for LGBT young people. ▪ Youth workers and other deliverers of youth work will offer more individualised support to post-16 young people, working towards a single point of contact for support for individual young people from across the various teams that may be supporting them at present. This will require multi-disciplinary training. ▪ Youth work teams from BHCC (qualified youth workers plus a number of youth support workers) and from the voluntary sector will form 'access points' of centre-based delivery across the city, which are supported, by detached work and the mobile unit. ▪ Depending on the outcome of the current Youth Review, youth workers and other deliverers of youth work will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Provide support, information or

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			<p>signpost information to young people and those working with young people about opportunities for learning and progression.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Provide support, information or signpost individuals and groups of young people to enable them to effect change through personal and social development. ➤ Provide support and information and/or signpost individual and groups of young people on issues that are important to them.

