

14 February 2019

Information, Advice and Guidance

Ward(s) All

Portfolios: Councillor Chris Towe – Education and Skills

Executive Summary:

From September 2012, the Education Act 2011 placed schools under a duty to secure access to independent and impartial careers guidance for their pupils in years 9-11. The Careers Guidance in Schools Regulations 2013 extended the age range to which the duty applies to include all registered pupils in year 8 and years 12 and 13. This change allows young people access to information and advice at more key transition points.

Local authorities retain their duty under section 68 of the Education and Skills Act 2008 to encourage, enable and assist the participation of young people in education or training. In addition, the Education and Skills Act 2008 places two new duties on local authorities from June 2013 in respect of 16-18 year olds in relation to the raising of the participation age which are:

- to promote the effective participation in education and training of young people, and
- to have in place arrangements to identify those who are not participating.

Walsall Council employ a small group of staff who support Information Advice and Guidance (IAG) delivery in Walsall, this includes traded IAG services to schools, IAG Advisers to the Impact project and monitoring Client Caseload Information System (CCIS) official Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) statistics reporting to Department for Education.

Walsall schools deliver their own information, advice and guidance programme with support from the Careers Enterprise Company (CEC) which engages with all secondary schools in Walsall, supporting them to deliver the Gatsby Benchmarks as part of the government's updated Careers Strategy.

Reason for scrutiny:

The Education Overview & Scrutiny Committee has asked for a report on the information, advice and guidance (IAG) services in Walsall, to provide an overview of the services, the challenges that they are facing and/or issues that they are dealing with, together with any upcoming factors that may/will affect these services.

Recommendations:

That:

1. This report be noted.
2. consideration be given to future planning for IAG services following Impact Project cease in 2021

Background papers:

List here any private background papers used in the preparation of this report. This does not include the listing of reports that have already been published.

NB: Any reports or publications listed here will need to be available to be provided to the public, should they be requested, for 4 years.

DCS Briefing Note November 2017

Resource and legal considerations:

There are currently no resource or legal implications until July 2021 when funding for the Impact project will cease.

Council Corporate Plan Priorities:

State here the council corporate plan priorities that this issue links to and supports.

1.1. The Council's Corporate Plan 2018-2021 identifies 5 key priorities:

- Economic Growth-for all people, communities and businesses
- People-have increased independence, improved health and can positively contribute to their communities
- Children-have the best possible start and are safe from harm, happy, healthy and learning well
- Communities-are prospering and resilient with all housing needs met in safe and healthy places that build a strong sense of belonging and cohesion
- Internal focus- all council services are efficient

By supporting young people into positive outcomes, and creating an environment that improves efficiency for those recruited, the Impact programme will actively contribute towards all of the 5 key priorities of the Corporate Plan.

1.2. Walsall Right for Children Inclusion Strategy – mission to secure the very best opportunities for all its children and young people, in the very best settings with the highest quality teaching and learning to enable them to realise their full potential.

- Developing partnerships with employers, universities and health to ensure Walsall's children and young people and families receive the qualifications and skills they need to become active, independent, contributing and positive citizens.
- Ch4 Care leavers are economically active citizens in their community – percentage of care leavers NEET

- Walsall Council's vision for inclusion is one where potential is unlocked for all learners whatever their abilities and needs.
- Review all Transition Panels and groups alongside the development of the All Age Disability Service to ensure single transitions pathway for all young people with SEND from 14-25.

Citizen impact:

Supporting young people into positive destinations and reducing the number of young people who are NEET

Environmental impact:

No current environmental impact identified

Performance management:

State here the potential effect of the scrutiny exercise on the management of the Council's performance in respect of service delivery, policy, etc.

Identify future planning for provision following the cessation of the Impact project in 2021

Reducing inequalities:

How does this issue seek to reduce inequalities?

Both the IAG services in the local authority and the Impact Advisers specifically support vulnerable young people with co-located staff in teen pregnancy, youth justice, transition and leaving care teams.

Has an Equality Impact Assessment been carried out? No
If yes, summarise the key findings here.

Consultation:

State here the organisations/service areas etc, that have been consulted on the preparation of this report or as part of the scrutiny exercise

None currently as report for information at this stage

Contact Officer:

Kerry Wootton – Post 16 Lead
 01922 652828
Kerry.wootton@walsall.gov.uk

1. Report

To update councillors on the current delivery of IAG services to young people across Walsall.

2. IAG Service

- 2.1. The local authority has retained the services provided by a small group of IAG Advisers providing limited but essential statutory support to young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities, Elective Home Education, Children Missing Education etc. Some of these professionals also deliver traded services to a small number of schools in Walsall including New Leaf, two special schools, academies and an independent school – Emmanuel.
- 2.2. This team is also responsible for monitoring engagement and providing follow up support for any 16-18 year olds who are Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET). Regular monthly updates of EET/NEET data provides the evidence for support with follow up letters inviting young people to IAG interviews where they receive advice and guidance on progression routes and a referral to the impact project if appropriate. Current data for December 2018 has NEET figure of 1.7%, the unknown figure of 4% identifies those young people who may have moved learning provider or even out of borough and for whom we do not currently have a destination recorded and therefore will be followed up with further contact where possible.
- 2.3. Specific support is also available from this team to work with young people with SEND up to the age of 25 if they have an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) to ensure they make a positive progression into adulthood.
- 2.4. Funding for the internal IAG team has been agreed to the end of July 2021 in line with funding arrangements for the Impact project.

3. Impact Project

- 3.1. The Youth Employment Initiative (YEI) known as the Black Country Impact project has been running in Walsall since April 2016 and is targeted at encouraging young people aged 16-29 years into education, employment or training. Four directorates within Walsall Council employ Impact Advisers to work with individuals to develop bespoke packages of support and training to move them into positive outcomes.
- 3.2. Advisers are co-located with youth justice, teen pregnancy, TLC and some of the Sure Start centres along with other community centres. There is also an Impact Hub located in St Paul's The Crossing, which is open on daily basis for interviews to be arranged but also as a 'drop-in' centre for young people looking for advice and guidance.
- 3.3. Funding has been agreed for this project to continue to the end of July 2021.

4. Walsall Association of Careers Professionals (WACP)

- 4.1. Secondary Schools are responsible for providing independent IAG to pupils on their roll and have adopted a number of ways of delivering that service including directly employing staff or engaging consultants on an agency basis.
- 4.2. A group of IAG professionals delivering this service in schools meet regularly for sharing good practice and receiving updates from Ofsted, CEC, Prospects/CCIS

etc.; this includes some of the Walsall IAG Advisers who attend and promote good relationships between school advisers and the local authority.

5. Careers Enterprise Company (CEC) and Black Country Hub

- 5.1. In 2014, the Secretary of State for Education announced the creation of a new careers and enterprise company for schools, to transform careers and enterprise provision for young people and inspire them about the opportunities offered by the world of work. Originally, the core purpose of the company was to broker relationships between employers and schools in order to ensure young people aged 12-18 got the inspiration and guidance they need for success in working life.
- 5.2. Careers strategy: making the most of everyone's skills and talents published in December 2017 provided updated guidance for schools to address the issue of variable quality and introduced the Gatsby Benchmarks. The CEC now took on a more ambitious role, building on progress to date by coordinating support for schools and colleges across the Gatsby benchmarks.
- 5.3. Young people and adults will be able to access the National Careers Service; providing careers, information, advice and guidance, via new improved website. In September 2018 the CEC launched a new investment fund of £5million to support most disadvantaged pupils and all schools would be required to have a named Careers Leader.
- 5.4. The Black Country Careers Hub was approved in 2018 to support schools in Walsall and the wider Black Country to meet Gatsby Benchmarks. All schools involved with the Careers Hub have access to a 'Virtual Wallet' which holds funding available to purchase additional support from the CEC catalogue of provision.
- 5.5. Regular meetings of the Walsall schools and the Black Country leaders demonstrates that Walsall schools are improving across all 8 benchmarks meaning that pupils in Walsall are getting wider experience of and improving access to careers education.

6. Conclusions

- 6.1. There are a range of organisations and agencies working together across Walsall to identify young people who need support, reduce the numbers of young people who NEET or whose destination is not known and re-engage into progression opportunities.
- 6.2. There is a permanent member of staff whose responsibility is to monitor and act upon NEET data received from schools, colleges and National Client Caseload Information System to ensure young people are participating in education to their 18th birthday. The remainder of the IAG team are reliant upon some degree of traded services to supplement council funding to deliver the statutory service and current funding for this has been linked to the Impact project, which will end in 2021 so plans will need to be revisited before then to ensure continuation of services to young people.