

# **Children and Young People's Directorate**

**connexions**

HEREFORDSHIRE & WORCESTERSHIRE

# **Herefordshire is Making Connexions April 2010**

# **Consultation Paper June 2009**

## Introduction

Herefordshire Council is reconfiguring the Children's and Young People's Directorate in order to address the range of existing, new and evolving challenges and demands placed upon us. The plans for the development of the Connexions service are set within that agenda and include the developing plans for the locality teams and the aims of the Herefordshire Public Services, which are:

- Improved outcomes
- Excellent Services
- More focus on customer experience
- Efficiency

This paper sets out a proposed model for service delivery of the Connexions service from April 2010 onwards.

Responsibility for funding for Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) provision transferred to Local Authorities across England in April 2008 and Connexions Herefordshire and Worcestershire as the local provider has continued to provide services to date. In April 2010 it is proposed that Connexions Herefordshire and Worcestershire is taken in house in both Herefordshire and in Worcestershire local authority areas.

IAG is high profile on the government agenda, National IAG Quality Standards have been produced, a new bill is in place and new national guidelines are due out.

Local Authorities need to position Connexions services within the context of:

- The reform of 14-19 learning
- The 2005 Education and Skills White Paper
- The 2007 Children's Plan
- Raising Expectations White Paper
- 2008 Next Steps 14-19 Update Paper
- Post-16 funding transfer from the Learning and Skills Council (Machinery of Government)
- The Raising of the Participation Age as set out in the Education and Skills Act 2008
- 21<sup>st</sup> Century Schools

A further information paper is available to accompany this document and a glossary of terms is provided at Appendix A

## What are we consulting on?

Herefordshire Council is seeking to consult on:

1. The future management and delivery arrangements for the range of services currently delivered by Connexions;
2. The priorities for service delivery and outcomes for the new arrangements (within the constraints of the national specification and statutory duties).

## Who is this consultation aimed at?

This consultation is aimed at a wide stakeholder group of those who have an interest in the development of Information, Advice and Guidance and Targeted Services in the county. Stakeholders have been divided into three groups:

### 1. Service users

- All young people aged 11 -19 years
- Those aged 20 -24 with Learning Difficulties
- Specifically young people who are NEET
- And, specifically young people in Transition

### 2. Professional Groups

- Connexions staff
- Children's and Young People's Directorate staff
- Secondary Schools – including governing bodies and Herefordshire Association of Governors
- Colleges
- Independent Schools
- Learning and Skills Council
- LSC funded work based learning providers and other training providers
- Private care providers
- Children's Interest Group
- NHS Herefordshire
- Government Office for the West Midlands
- Chamber of Commerce
- Cabinet and Councillor Members
- Children's Trust including all 5 outcome groups
- Targeted Youth Support Services
- Adult Services

### 3. Wider Community

- Parents and Carers
- Businesses and employers
- Faith Groups
- The Third Sector

Young people have been consulted through the Every Child Matters Survey in February 2009 and will also be invited to take part in specific focus groups. Connexions staff will be consulted through a discrete consultation that is appropriate for employees who are going through a TUPE process. 14-19 Consortium will be formally consulted on through this paper as will schools and colleges through their established meetings. Employers will be consulted through the Chamber of Commerce representative who sits on the 14-19 Consortium. Cabinet and Members briefing will be arranged prior to any decision making process that will be part of a key decision.

## What is the process?

Consultation questions form part of this document, which we would ask you to consider and return. The consultation period will run from Monday 29 June until Wednesday 19 August 2009. A report will be produced within three months of the consultation closing. A timescale for consultations and implementation is detailed later in this paper.

## What is the vision?

Our Children & Young Peoples Plan 2008 – 2011 sets out our vision to improve the lives of children and young people by creating and implementing an integrated set of services.

- We will use the transfer of the Connexions service as an opportunity to enhance and improve the service currently delivered to the young people of Herefordshire.
- We want to hear from young people and other key stakeholders to help us determine the priorities for service delivery and how the Connexions service will work in partnership with other organisations to provide the right support to young people.
- We want to develop the Connexions service as part of the wider plans for locality teams

Two recommendations emerged from the early work of the Connexions Development Group

- Option a: to bring the service wholly in house.
- Option b: to bring the strategic lead and associated services in house and to tender for the front line delivery.

The preferred and recommended option is option A. This brings us in line with our regional partners and allows for greater creativity and improvements in delivery.

We need to consider the non-negotiable targets, statutory legislation and specified non-statutory targets as we plan the service that we will deliver (see supporting information for detail).

**Consultation Question 1: Do you agree with the vision of the proposed changes?**

**Strongly agree / Agree / Disagree / Strongly disagree**

**Comments:**

## What are the priorities and objectives for service delivery?

The Connexions service must be available for all young people 13-19<sup>1</sup> and up to 25 for young people with learning difficulties and disabilities including those young people placed in county by other Local Authorities. In Herefordshire this is approx 15,600<sup>2</sup> total young people.

The current arrangements have ensured that we are making good progress in many areas, and we need to build on this. We are proud of our current achievements:

- The number of young people not in employment, education or training (NEET) has historically been low;
- The number of young people whose current learning destination is unknown is low;
- Participation in education post-16 is high and there are defined arrangements for those who drop out;
- Targeted work is improving outcomes for more vulnerable young people.

The ongoing challenges are:

- Increased emphasis and focus on impartial Information, Advice and Guidance and the importance of ensuring the best outcomes for each individual;
- To ensure best use of resources and capacity to deliver the full range of Connexions services, through an integrated approach;
- To implement the changes brought through the Machinery of Government Transfer of post-16 funding, increased responsibilities around 14-19 and the Integrated Youth Support agenda;
- The development of school curricula, which has reformed Key Stage 4 learning and placed different requirements onto Key Stage 3;
- The continual need to demonstrate value for money, while maintaining current Personal Advisor time, in an arena of increasing demands on limited funding sources.

In Autumn 2008 all schools, colleges and training providers were assessed against the National Standards for IAG. Some specific additional requirements have been identified and we have built up a comprehensive picture of what else needs to be done. Such requirements include:

- Support and training to schools and colleges and post 16 providers in relation to Careers Education and IAG;
- More work with learners at Key Stage 3 and below to ensure that learners have the skills they need to make their own decisions as part of our transformation from 14-19 to an 11-19 service;
- More work at Key Stage 5 to ensure young people make the right choices;
- More support for learners who are undertaking an apprenticeship;
- More support for young people aged 11-25 who require additional support to access post-16 learning. This includes carrying out statutory reviews, Section 139a assessments (formerly known as Section 140 assessments) and applications for out of county residential placements;
- Work with young people placed by other local authorities in residential schools and care homes in Herefordshire and work with Herefordshire students placed outside Herefordshire;

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<sup>1</sup> Although in Herefordshire our strategy is for 11-19 year olds

<sup>2</sup> Source: Office of National Statistics

- New requirements for work with Jobcentre Plus on New Deal for some 18 year olds;
- Successful ongoing implementation of the September Guarantee;
- Improved data analysis and evidence and research gathering to ensure the right provision is commissioned.

We need to consider all of this in a new light to make sure that we take a strategic integrated approach to the future of Connexions services in the context in which we are working.

**Consultation Question 2: Do you agree with priorities and objectives?**

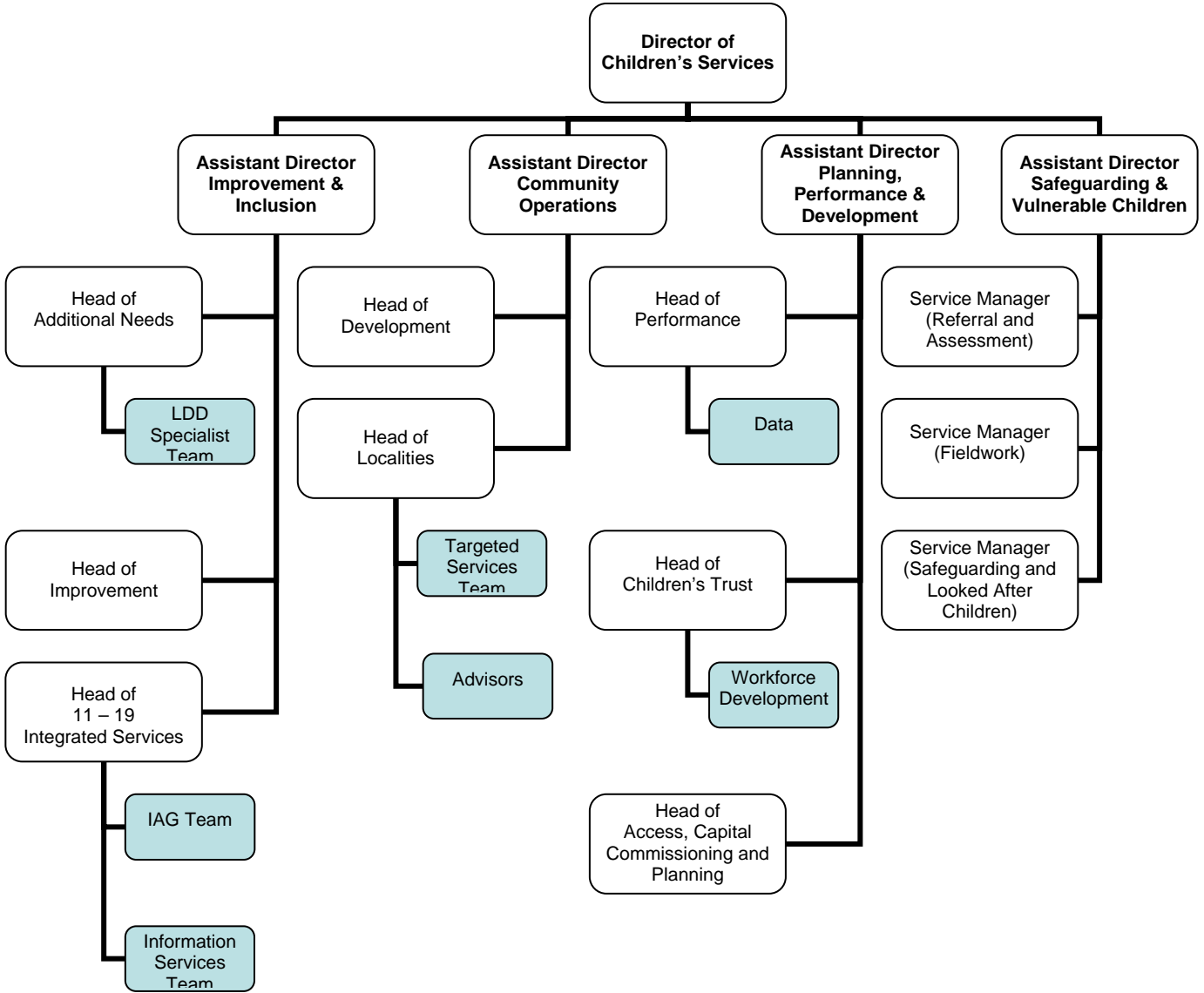
**Strongly agree / Agree / Disagree / Strongly disagree**

**Comments:**

## **Proposals for Service Delivery from April 2010**

It is proposed that the service is brought in house and integrated within the reorganised Children's and Young People's Directorate. Staff will be transferred into Herefordshire Council and sit across three service areas. Strategic leadership and quality assurance functions will come from the Improvement and Inclusion Service area as well as Community Operations. The IAG service area will sit within Improvement and Inclusion where it can maintain independence from targeted delivery work. The targeted service is an excellent example of where front-line locality team support should work effectively. Staff will be managed and supervised by appropriately qualified staff.

A diagram of the proposed Local Authority structure is shown.



Detailed information of the functions of each service is available in the supporting information. The number of posts in each team remains to be established. Connexions PAs will retain their name. There will be administrative support for all sections as appropriate.

**Consultation Question 3: Do you think the overall delivery model with a separate IAG service and targeted work in locality teams is appropriate?**

**Strongly agree / Agree / Disagree / Strongly disagree**

**Comments:**

**Consultation Question 4: What do you value from the current Connexions Service?**

**Comments:**



**Consultation Question 5: What else would you like the Connexions service to deliver?**

**Comments:**

**Consultation Question 6: How might Connexions contribute to Key Stage 3 as part of an integrated 11-19 Strategy?**

**Comments:**

## Managing the change

A Connexions Development Group has been in place since October 2008, charged with the business of establishing how the service will look from April 2010. Membership includes the Children's and Young People's Directorate, Local Authority HR and Finance, Connexions and Schools and Colleges who feedback and gather views from colleagues. We would now like to consult with all partners on the proposals, including young people.

**Staffing** - All Connexions Herefordshire staff have been identified for transfer into Herefordshire Council. There are a small number of Head Office staff who have not been identified to transfer as their work is not predominantly on the Herefordshire Connexions contract. We will identify who will carry out their functions. Dialogue with staff is taking place about issues to do with transfer: job roles, terms and conditions, working hours and pay, and a formal consultation period will take place with Connexions HR and Unison. The Local Authority HR Team is carrying out detailed analysis and comparisons of posts. There will be changes to ways of working and for some staff the move to the Local Authority will be a big change. We will manage this through open communication channels with transferees and by using the time between now and April 2010 as an opportunity for directorate staff and Connexions staff to start to work more closely together.

**Finance** - The service is currently funded through the Council's Area Based Grant and we know indicative budgets between now and April 2011, although the actual amounts are to be ratified through the Area Based Grant processes with the Children's Trust. Detailed costings and estimates are being considered. Through economies of scale and reducing duplication of service delivery we intend to achieve the challenges, priorities and new ways of working identified at the start of the document, while maintaining frontline delivery.

**Accommodation** – We are exploring locality working across the Children's and Young People's Directorate, and the accommodation that will be required. The Connexions Building is based in the centre of Hereford and is currently owned by the Herefordshire and Worcestershire Connexions company. It has a high footfall and is well known by learners. Herefordshire's vision is to further develop Connexions accommodation in the heart of the city and localities.

We are now inviting responses to this consultation document, the timeline for the transfer is as follows:

Month	Date	Activity
June 2009	18 29	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development Group Meeting</li> <li>• Consultation Begins</li> </ul>
July	2 20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 14-19 Consortium Board meeting</li> <li>• Development Group meeting</li> </ul>
August	5 19 24 25 27	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DLT update on responses to date</li> <li>• Consultation Closes</li> <li>• Development Group meeting</li> <li>• DLT Approval</li> <li>• Chief Executive Approval</li> <li>• Changes to proposals based on consultation results</li> </ul>
September	10 21	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cabinet meeting for approval of key decision</li> <li>• Development Group meeting</li> </ul>
October		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ongoing development</li> </ul>
November		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Final staffing transfer lists agreed</li> </ul>
December		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Transfer of Data from Connexions for 3 month shadow before go live</li> <li>• Recruitment to staff vacancies</li> </ul>
January 2010		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Locality teams implementation</li> </ul>
February		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ongoing development</li> </ul>
March		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ongoing development</li> </ul>
April	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Connexions staff formally transfer to the Local Authority</li> </ul>

**Consultation Question 7: Have you any other ideas or comments you would like to make about the proposals?**

**Comments:**

## Appendix A: Glossary of Terms

EET	in employment, education or training
HR	Human Resources (sometimes called Personnel)
IAG	Information, Advice and Guidance
LLDD	Learners with Learning Difficulties and Disabilities
LSC	Learning and Skills Council (the body which plans and funds post-16 education until April 2010)
PA	Connexions Personal Advisor
PRUs	Pupil Referral Units
NEET	Not in employment, education or training
Section 139a	Assessment Transition assessment for young people who have been identified as requiring extra support
TUPE	The Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations (the protection arrangements for employees' terms and conditions when a business is transferred to a new employer)
UNISON	A public sector union
WBL	LSC funded work based learning providers

**Please return to this form by 10am on Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> August 2009 to:  
Anne Hayde, Herefordshire Council, PO Box 4, Plough Lane, Hereford, HR4 0XH  
or email to [ahayde@herefordshire.gov.uk](mailto:ahayde@herefordshire.gov.uk)**