

NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL

CHILDREN'S SERVICES CABINET MEMBER

PROVISION OF THE CONNEXIONS SERVICE WITHIN THE COUNCIL

1. OBJECT AND KEY POINTS IN THIS REPORT

- 1.1 To seek permission to provide the Connexions Service within the council.
- 1.2 To seek permission to TUPE Connexions staff in to the council.

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1 From April 2008 the funding for the Connexions Service was allocated to local authorities through the Area Based Grant. Local Authorities were left to decide whether to provide the service "in house" or to commission the service.
- 2.2 Connexions Humber has provided the service for the four unitary authorities in the sub region. All four authorities decided to commission the service for up to two years whilst the development of Integrated Youth Support Services became clearer.
- 2.3 All four unitary authorities have met during this time and discussed service development opportunities and challenges. All four are in agreement that delivery of the Connexions function from within the council presents opportunities for the development of Integrated Youth Support Services.
- 2.4 The issues concerning the council's legal and financial obligations for the Connexions company are being dealt with by Service Directors through the Executive Management Team.

3. OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

- 3.1 To give permission to bring the Connexions Service in to the council and to TUPE Connexions staff.

3.2 To continue to commission the Connexions Service through Connexions Humber.

4. **ANALYSIS OF OPTIONS**

4.1 The preferred option is to bring the Connexions function into the council's management. This presents several potential opportunities:

- Full integration of youth support activity can be more easily achieved through service management than through a commissioned process. This will enable a better service to be delivered to young people.
- To secure funding for re-investment from management savings. The funding can be reinvested in to youth support services such as outreach work and delivering services in the evenings and weekends when young people want them.
- Funding for reinvestment could be secured by appointing one manager with oversight of both the Youth Service and the Connexions service.
- Administration of the Integrated Youth Support Service could be merged and funding for reinvestment made available by only having one administration team for the whole service rather than the three, which exist at the moment.

4.2 The second option would not present the potential opportunities above. There would be a cost in order to meet the requirement to monitor the contract, which would be labour intensive due to the number of quality service standards. It would be more difficult to establish integrated working arrangement through contractual means rather than directly managed means.

5. **RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (FINANCIAL, STAFFING, PROPERTY, IT)**

5.1 There will be a small increase in staffing costs of the basic service due to the council having more favourable terms and conditions. Also, in the first year there may be costs associated with closing the Connexions Humber company. There are ongoing costs associated with current Youth Service provision. However, these will be more than offset by the savings made from the significant management costs we currently pay for the commissioned service.

5.2 The number of staff to be transferred from Connexions Humber to North Lincolnshire Council is 34.

5.3 The Connexions building may not be required in the future as we move to a more locality based delivery model using existing local youth facilities to deliver accessible services. This would represent a saving.

5.4 The database used by Connexions Humber is separate to the council's systems. Information sharing and cross referencing of data within the integrated youth support services is an aspiration for the future so we can start to identify and target young people who are presenting multiple risk factors. There would need to be interim arrangements whilst these information systems are developed.

6. OTHER IMPLICATIONS (STATUTORY, ENVIRONMENTAL, DIVERSITY, SECTION 17 - CRIME AND DISORDER, RISK AND OTHER)

6.1 The national indicator is NI 117. The number of 16 – 18 year olds who are not in Education Employment or Training.

6.2 The council's statutory responsibilities for the assessment of young people with learning difficulties and disabilities can be more easily integrated into current and future arrangements for 14 – 19 provision.

6.3 S17 – Crime and Disorder. The Integrated Youth Support Service has an indicator regarding youth crime: the number of first time entrants in to the criminal justice system. The provision of the Connexions service can have a significant impact upon the youth crime agenda in as much as they target young people at risk of becoming Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET). This group are also at risk of becoming involved in crime and anti-social behaviour.

7. OUTCOMES OF CONSULTATION

7.1 Colleagues from the four unitary authorities have consulted together and are in agreement that this is the preferred delivery option.

7.2 All staff have been involved in the consultation process for the delivery of integrated youth support services.

7.3 Trade Unions have been consulted and no adverse comments have been received.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1 That the future delivery of the Connexions service be provided by the council.

8.2 That the staff are transferred to the council under TUPE arrangements.

8.3 That the report be forwarded to the Corporate Services Cabinet Member for approval of the staffing implications.

SERVICE DIRECTOR LEARNING, SCHOOLS AND COMMUNITIES

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Background Papers used in the preparation of this report: None