



14-19 partnerships and plans

Emerging findings from the work
of a group of volunteer partnerships

Improving choice, improving chances



department for
children, schools and families

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Summary

This document aims to support local areas in strengthening their 14-19 Partnership arrangements. It has emerged from the work of a group of 14-19 Partnership representatives who volunteered to help develop enduring partnership models. The work began in September 2007 and is ongoing.

The volunteer partnerships identified a range of issues for further work and felt strongly that the first priority was to clarify the status and definition of a 14-19 Partnership. They have been developing definitions by looking at the different partnership models which exist and the functions which 14-19 Partnerships carry out. The findings to date are that these different partnership models are all equally valid, but that it is helpful to make a distinction between the strategic role (typically of a 14-19 Partnership) and the operational role (typically of a consortium). The volunteer partnerships have also discussed the content of a 14-19 Plan in terms of strategic and operational content. This document sets out the group's thinking about partnership definitions and offers suggestions about the purpose and content of the 14-19 Plan.

Comments on the document are welcome at:

14-19@dcsf.gsi.gov.uk

Introduction

The 14-19 Implementation Plan placed a commitment on local areas to set up 14-19 Partnerships which would be led by local authorities and the Learning and Skills Council. Last summer the Department wrote out to areas to acknowledge the substantial progress made in establishing and consolidating 14-19 Partnerships and to set out an enhanced vision for their future development. We know that 14-19 Partnerships are starting to prepare for delivery of the Diploma entitlement. Now, with the announcement of 3 new Diplomas in Science, Humanities and Languages, and the introduction of legislation to raise the participation age, there is added impetus for 14-19 Partnerships to develop capacity to deliver a broad range of provision. This provision needs to include access to the full range of curriculum choices including the Foundation Learning Tier, general qualifications, Apprenticeships and the Diplomas.

Young people need support to make the right choices through high quality, impartial Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG), and targeted initiatives including the September Guarantee. From April 2008 the funding for IAG services currently held by Connexions will be devolved to local authorities, who will be responsible for commissioning and providing the services. 14-19 Partnerships will want to ensure that there is a smooth transition to the new IAG services and that the quality and availability of provision is appropriate for the needs of young people in their area.

Another important driver is the intention to transfer the control of 16-19 funding from the Learning and Skills Council to local authorities. This will give local authorities responsibility for delivering services to all young people aged 14 to 19. Local authorities will need to build on the achievements and expertise of the local LSC and post-16 providers. Local authorities will look to their 14-19 Partnership for support in planning the range of education services needed across the 14 to 19 age range.

Status of the 14-19 Partnership

The volunteer partnerships have said that they want more clarity about where the 14-19 Partnership should stand in relation to other local bodies, and how much authority the partnership should be able to exert. As 14-19 Partnerships have evolved, they have found their own ways of relating to linked organisations and effecting change by drawing on the authority of core members. There is an emerging sense that 14-19 Partnerships should be closely linked to the local Children's Trust, either acting as a subsidiary group to the Trust or providing plans and/or reports to the Trust on 14-19 delivery.

Several 14-19 Partnerships have a strong working relationship with the local Schools Forum. From April 2008 there will be a requirement for a 14-19 representative to be a member of the Schools Forum. In some cases 14-19 Partnerships have been able to secure the Forum's agreement to the partnership's plans for use of the applied learning element of the Dedicated Schools Grant. These developments have come about through local agreement, with partners buying into joint accountability structures for their area. It is also important for the 14-19 Partnership to develop links with the Local Strategic Partnership, Employment and Skills Boards, Local Children's Safeguarding Boards, Admissions Boards and Youth Offending Teams.

Education and Skills Bill 2007

The Department is looking to strengthen 14-19 Partnerships by introducing legislation about local co-operation on 14-19 education. We are doing this through the current Education and Skills Bill. The Bill aims to amend section 10 of the Children Act 2004, which covers children's trust arrangements, to make it explicit that local authorities need to put in place co-operation arrangements with partners and providers of 14-19 education. Local authorities will be free to set up partnerships for their own area, or they can collaborate with neighbouring authorities in setting up cross-border partnerships.

This legislation gives us an opportunity to raise the profile of 14-19 Partnerships and to signal their importance to local providers and partners.

We will also continue to support Partnerships through development of further guidance and opportunities to share good practice, including learning visits.

Definition of a 14-19 Partnership

The Department has not been prescriptive about the nature of 14-19 Partnerships because of the need to allow room for local flexibility. The volunteer partnerships have found that there is wide variation across the country in the way the 14-19 Partnerships are configured. There are also wide differences in terminology, with partnerships variously calling themselves 14-19 networks; strategic partnerships; 14-19 fora and so forth. The volunteer partnership representatives have told us that, where they have their own local names for the different partnership groups, they are not always sure which group the Department is referring to when it talks about 14-19 Partnerships. There is also uncertainty about the distinction between a 14-19 Partnership and a Diploma consortium: are these separate bodies or can they be one and the same group of partners and providers?

Features of a 14-19 Partnership

Because of these wide variations in local governance structures, it is difficult to arrive at a fully inclusive definition of a 14-19 Partnership. However, in all the available structures there is a need for at least one high level strategic body which takes the lead in determining strategy for 14-19 for a whole area. This body may have other local 14-19 groups or fora reporting into it. It is sometimes sensible for an area to have a number of different collaborative arrangements covering smaller geographical areas, and in some cases these are referred to as separate 14-19

Partnerships. These more local collaboratives are typically a second tier in the local partnerships hierarchy and they have an operational remit.

The 14-19 Partnership can be defined by its **strategic** role in:

- agreeing the local vision for 14-19 that is consistent with the wider Sustainable Community Strategy, Children and Young People's Plan and Local Area Agreement;
- developing and articulating strategies for the full range of 14-19 priorities; and
- supporting Diploma consortia so that they are ready to deliver.

Features of a Diploma consortium

A Diploma consortium is the group of partners and providers which come together to deliver one or more of the new Diploma lines. There may be a number of consortia in an area, each with a different configuration of providers. In some cases the local 14-19 Partnership may opt to act as the Diploma consortium for an area, especially in cities or smaller areas where there is a tightly contained travel to learn pattern. In other areas there may be several distinct Diploma consortia which contribute to the local 14-19 strategy and which are overseen by the 14-19 Partnership. These consortia can only deliver Diplomas if they pass successfully through the Diploma Gateway process.

A Diploma consortium can be defined by its **operational** role in:

- Delivering particular lines of learning including ensuring facilities are fit for purpose and securing employers' involvement;
- Underpinning the collaboration of the member institutions;
- Providing IAG through peer advice and mentoring, opportunities for "tasters" and other "experiential" learning, building on commitments in the Children's Plan;
- Marketing to young people, parents and carers;
- Preparing workforce and deploying them effectively; and
- Logistical planning of learner numbers, timetabling and transport.

"The strength of the Kent 14-19 strategic partnership emanates from shared values, a membership that is representative of both strategic partners and providers and a clarity about the roles and responsibilities of each strategic partner (LSC, Connexions and Kent County Council). Relationships between strategic partners and providers have been consistently developed over several years.

A strong ethos of partnership exists in Kent. Dialogue is based on a commitment to meet the needs and aspirations of all young people in Kent through collaboration. These principles are being realised through an openness, that is developing mutual trust and respect."

Don Garman, Kent

Membership of the 14-19 Partnership

It is generally good practice for the 14-19 Partnership to have a strategic core made up of the key local decision makers including the local authority and LSC. This core group will lead in determining the 14-19 strategy for the area. The strategic core can delegate functions to working groups and/or local area sub-partnerships as needed.

Suggested membership of the 14-19 Partnership will include, but not be restricted to:

- the Director of Children's Services;
- LSC Partnership Director;
- Director of Connexions/IAG services for young people;
- Representative Heads of secondary schools (including Academies and City Technology Colleges);
- representative Principals/Chief Executives of sixth form colleges and FE colleges;
- independent training providers;
- Higher Education Institutions;
- Employers; and
- Voluntary and community services.

The Lead Member for Children's Services for the area will have a close interest in the work of the Partnership. The Partnership should be chaired by someone who has the right level of authority and personal influence to enable the Partnership to reach decisions and who can make the links to the wider Children's Trust and Local Strategic Partnership. This could be an appointee from the local authority or LSC, or an independent chair such as a local employer.

Case Study

Learning City York

Learning City York's 14-19 Partnership is made up of a core 14-19 Strategy and Resources Group, which is supported by a wider 14-19 Partnership Group made up of all local providers and partners.

The Strategy and Resources Group provides overall strategic leadership and quality assurance for the planning, commissioning and funding of education, training and related provision including information, advice and guidance for young people aged 14-19 by schools, colleges and other providers in the City of York. The Group is chaired by the Director of Children's Services and Culture and its membership includes the LSC Area Director, the Connexions Director and representatives of providers including Head Teachers and the FE college Principal. The Strategy and Resources Group contains the key commissioning and funding bodies and ultimately determines the allocation of resources.

There is also a wider 14-19 Partnership Group for York made up of providers and stakeholders which meets to reach a common understanding of city-wide priorities for 14-19 as set out by the

Strategy and Resources Group. It also develops the 14 - 19 Plan, mapping out progress towards the 2013 entitlement, consistent with these priorities.

The work of the Partnership is supported by 3 locality planning forums which will support delivery of elements of the 14-19 entitlement in the main travel to learn areas in the City and align with the broader Directorate of Children's Services support structures. There are also strategy groups for the City's key priorities.

Functions of the 14-19 Partnership

Our aim is that 14-19 Partnerships should drive increases in attainment and participation. They should:

- Provide a stable framework for delivery of 14-19 education so that partners can continue to raise standards in a changing context;
- Ensure that resources held by the different partners are used to best effect, including mainstream budgets for schools and further education held by the local authority and LSC, working with the Local Strategic Partnership;
- Determine the best way to fund capital needs from the sources available such as BSF, local authorities' devolved capital allocation and the LSC making effective links with pre-14 and post-19 strategy and operations. DCSF is in the process of producing guidance to help decision makers invest this capital for Diploma delivery;
- Provide leadership to Diploma consortia, ensuring that their plans for curriculum delivery are consistent with the needs of the local area and clarifying roles and responsibilities;
- Ensure that the framework for delivery of 14-19 supports collaboration across local authority borders so that young people are able to move outside their area to learn where necessary;
- Develop local strategies for delivery of 14-19 education which will support the LA and LSC in their commissioning roles;
- Commission analysis of learner needs and capacity in the system;
- Oversee the development of detailed implementation plans for 14-19 education which show how the needs of learners will be met across the area, working with other Partnerships and local authorities as appropriate;
- Ensure that the area has coherent strategies for:
 - delivery of:
 - the young person's entitlement to Diplomas;
 - the entitlement to Apprenticeship places;
 - the foundation learning tier;
 - secondary curriculum; and
 - changes to general qualifications
 - action to achieve local targets and indicators in line with the LAA on:
 - reducing NEET;
 - raising participation;
 - raising attainment by young people, including narrowing the attainment gap¹;

¹New PSA Targets were announced for 14-19 as part of the 2007 Comprehensive Spending Review. These are that by 2011: 82% of young people should achieve level 2 by the age of 19; 54% of young people should achieve level 3 by the age of 19; and to reduce by 2 percentage points the proportion of young people not in education, employment or training by 2010 (from a baseline of 9.7ppts in 2004).

- improving choice and opportunities for young people through:
 - developing high quality impartial IAG that takes account of the new quality standards;
 - the local 14-19 prospectus;
 - delivery of the September guarantee; and
 - effective use of post 16 progression measure data.
 - Engagement with local employers and Higher Education providers;
 - Delivery of work related learning;
 - Delivery of quality assurance among providers (in a way that complements national inspection regimes), following guidance; and
 - Marketing to young people, parents and carers.
- Delivery of full participation by young people up to the age of 18;
 - Delivery of 17 Diploma lines;
 - Expansion of Apprenticeships;
 - Meeting LAA Targets;
 - Specifying local requirements for work related learning; and
 - In some areas, overseeing the work of City Learning Centres.

Looking ahead, 14-19 Partnerships will lead on:

- Supporting local authorities when post-16 funding transfers across to them from the LSC. The Partnership will have a key role to play in easing this transition by planning future delivery and advising the local authority about the provision which needs to be commissioned;

“The role of the 14-19 Partnership should be an executive body providing leadership, co-ordination, planning, management, accountability, mix of provision, guidance and quality assurance for the local infrastructure. It is right to put the local authority at the heart of everything the partnership does. It is helpful to think in terms of the partnership as a commissioning body.”

Peter Hawthorne, Wolverhampton

Work related learning

From March 2008, 14-19 Partnerships will have more influence over how work related learning is delivered in their area. Until now, funding for intermediary bodies to support work related learning has been allocated directly through 47 Education Business Link Organisation Consortia without a direct competitive tender. Local areas will be able to tender for the services they require for the start of the 2009/10 academic year. The procurement of services will be the responsibility of the LSC in 2008/9 and, subject to legislation, will pass to Local Authorities in 2009/10. We expect 14-19 Partnerships to play an important role in specifying the requirements for the organisation selected to provide work related learning in the area.

This summer the Department will be issuing further guidance to partnerships about:

- a new framework for work-related learning covering the statutory requirement at KS4 and support for Diplomas, including quality standards for work experience placements;
- the process for procuring the services of intermediary organisations such as Education Business Partnership Organisations (EBPOs);
- how 14-19 Partnerships will need to support that procurement process; and
- arrangements for monitoring and developing the services once they are in place.

City Learning Centres

City Learning Centres provide state of the art ICT based learning opportunities for pupils and teachers at a network of local schools to enhance learning across the whole curriculum. They are open outside school hours to provide opportunities for the local community to access a Centre's facilities. CLCs are a shared resource for the host school and all the other schools in the area.

From April 2008 CLCs will no longer be monitored directly by DCSF but will instead be delivering against agendas agreed with either Becta or their local 14-19 Partnership. Under both of these arrangements the CLCs will continue to be funded through the local authority and there is an expectation that they will provide specialist resource to support 14-19 delivery.

37 CLCs have opted to be managed by their local 14-19 Partnership from April 2008. In practice this means that they will develop an operating plan which will need to be agreed by the 14-19 Partnership before the local authority releases funding to the CLC. The Department has written to 14-19 Partnerships and CLCs about the processes for agreeing plans and monitoring progress.

14-19 Partnership structures

The volunteer partnerships have identified three basic partnership models which are in operation across England. The three models have developed independently in response to the particular needs of different areas.

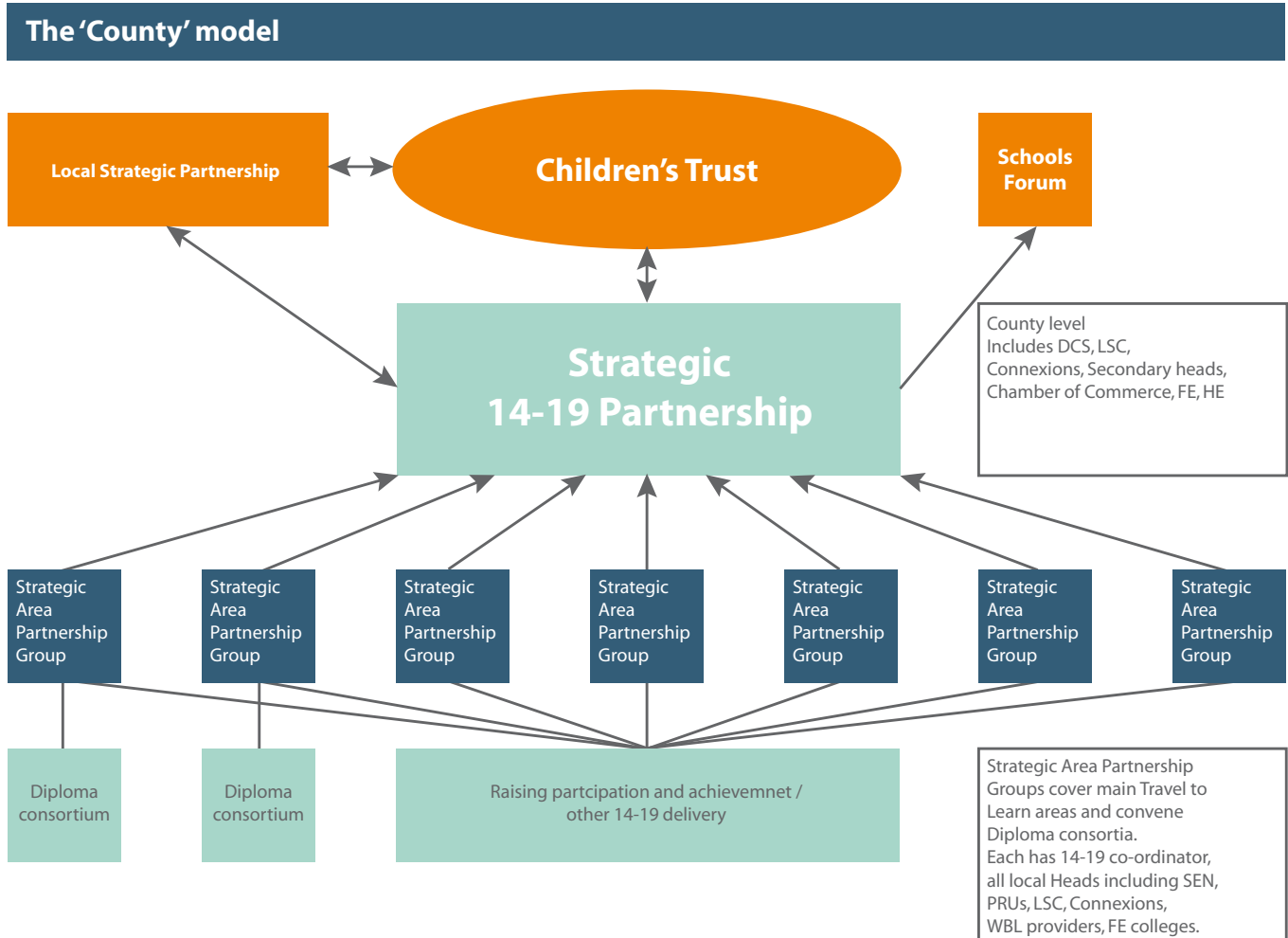
For all of these models there needs to be some capacity and willingness to work across local authority borders to meet the needs of learners.

Within the 14-19 Partnership itself, there is often a strategic core made up of key decision makers, which is supported by wider stakeholder groups.

The three models identified are:

- The 'County' model
- The 'City' model
- The 'Cross-border' model

(i) The 'County' model



Features of the 'county' model

- Formal commissioning role rests with LA and LSC at County level
- Strategic area partnership groups (SAPG)s for each district or travel to learn area develop local 14-19 strategies
- SAPG's local strategies feed into high level strategy for the whole county
- County level strategy informs commissioning by LA and LSC
- Led by a County level strategic 14-19 Partnership

Benefits

- Can see how this model would evolve to support LA having 0-19 responsibilities
- Effective links to post-19
- Works well if whole entitlement can be delivered within a County – this is often the case where partnership covers large geographical area
- Clear separation between strategic partnership which advises on commissioning and the groups of providers delivering services

Concerns

- Resources required by partners to manage and oversee work on different levels

Flexibility is the key to success. It's important not to push a particular model of partnership working: local areas need to be allowed space and time to discover for themselves what needs doing in their own context. They need ownership of the agenda and need space to learn how to deliver it.

Adrienne Carmichael, Cumbria

Case Study of a 'County' model Gloucestershire

Gloucestershire has a large 14-19 partnership for the county covering 42 secondary schools, 11 SEN schools, 5 Further Education Colleges and 3 Specialist Colleges. In light of the recommendation for a 14-19 Education Plan it was decided to review the 14-19 Strategy Group and establish a new 14-19 Strategic Partnership, which would report to the Children and Young's Peoples' Strategic Partnership. The purpose of this Strategic Partnership is to:

- agree the vision for the 14-19 Education Plan
- oversee the implementation of the Education Plan
- advise the Schools' Forum on 14-19 funding
- raise participation by commissioning/ de-commissioning 14-19 provision to meet student needs and the 2013 statutory entitlement
- ensure an appropriate infrastructure is developed to support meeting the 2013 entitlement
- monitor the quality of 14-19 provision.

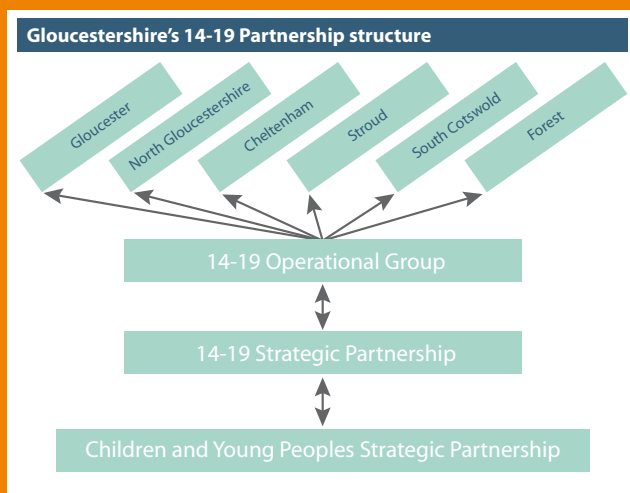
Core membership comprises:

- Director of Children's Services
- Area Director LSC
- Director of Connexions/IAG Services
- Secondary school headteachers

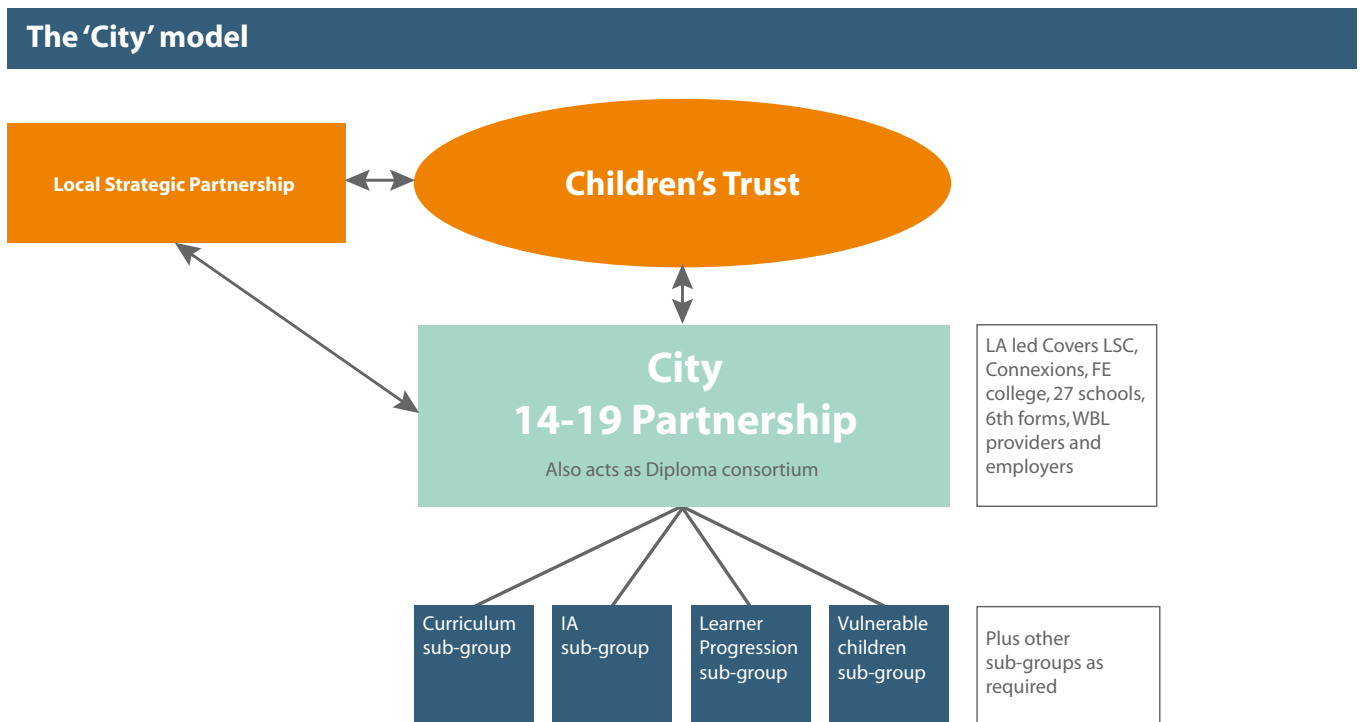
- Representative for special schools
- Representative of FE Colleges
- Representative of independent training providers

Gloucestershire has decided to appoint a 14-19 commissioner (funded jointly by the local authority and LSC) to lead the Strategic Development of 14-19 provision in the county, to raise attainment, increase opportunity and improve outcomes for all 14-19 year olds in line with the National Strategy, Gloucestershire Children and Young People's Plan and the Local Area Agreement.

County 14-19 policy is implemented by the 14-19 Operational Group through local consortia. The operational group includes coordinators of the 6 local consortia plus representatives from LA, LSC and Connexions.



(ii) The 'City' model



Features of the 'city' model

- Formal commissioning role rests with LA (and LSC) at City level
- 14-19 Partnership develops strategy for city which informs commissioning decisions
- Partnership also acts as Diploma consortium: all providers are members of the partnership, which applies to the Diploma Gateway

Benefits

- Can work well if whole entitlement can be delivered within the City and there is a strong FE college

Concerns

- Limited scope to commission provision outside City
- Young people in neighbouring areas may need access to the college or other providers in the City: would need protocols between local authorities for transferring funds and data management. Potential for conflicts of interest because the Partnership, made up of providers, advises the LA on commissioning but is also the group being commissioned

Case study of a 'city' model: Sheffield

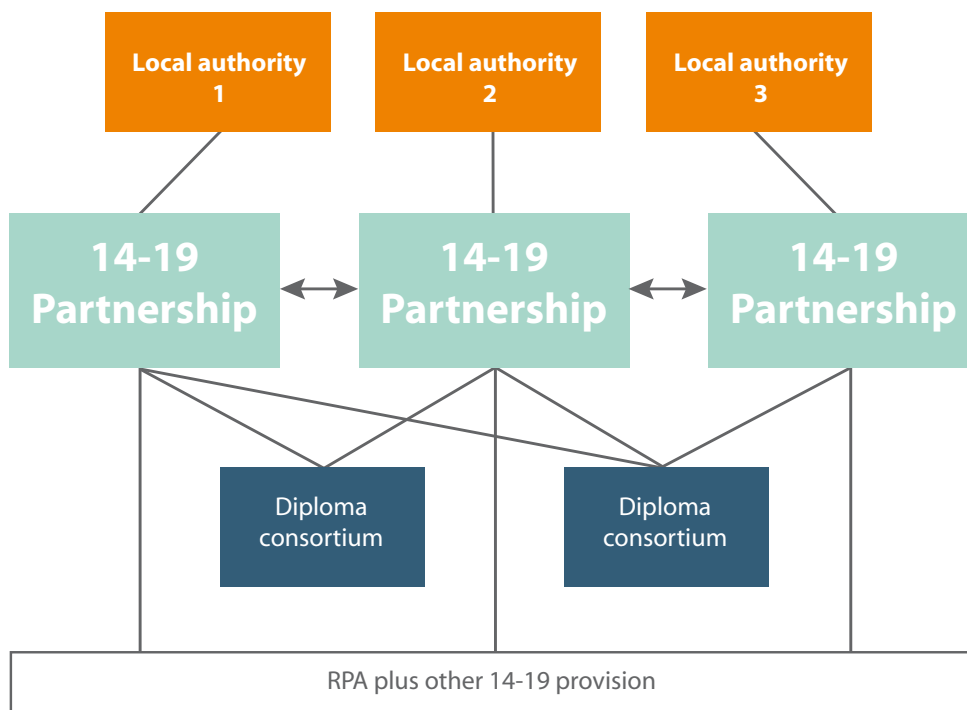
Sheffield has a whole city partnership covering 27 schools, a major FE college, a 6th form, LSC, Connexions, work based learning providers and employers.

The partnership has met weekly for the past 4 years: meetings are the focus for driving planning and development. The partnership is chaired by the Head of Lifelong Learning and Skills in the local authority. It reports to an 11-19 board which includes the voluntary sector, HE and LSC.

Regular meetings are held with curriculum directors in schools and head teachers. The partnership commissions sub-groups to manage particular issues, including IAG; progression; and issues for vulnerable children. Weekly meetings are used for planning. The partnership's plans are based around achievement, participation, economic sectors, overview of capital infrastructure and expected activity. There are also surveys of young people which are used to assess the demand for Diplomas.

(iii) the 'Cross-border' model

Cross border partnership model



Features of the 'cross-border' model

- Each LA retains responsibility for commissioning for young people in its area
- Each LA has its own 14-19 Partnership, but there is joint working between the 14-19 Partnerships to develop compatible delivery systems across the three areas

Benefits

- Diplomas are delivered through cross-border consortia based on travel to learn areas and specialisms. The consortia all serve more than one local authority area
- Local authorities therefore better able to plan provision which fits travel to learn areas, possibly through Multi Area Agreements (MAAs)
- 14-19 Partnerships working together to agree common timetabling and other student management approaches
- Important for the 30% of local authorities which are smaller unitary authorities, where appropriate to local circumstances

Concerns

- Potentially burdensome for providers having to deal with more than one partnership and more than one LA
- Maximum economies of scale not always achieved because areas make separate arrangements with providers
- May be desirable to set up a "sub-regional 14-19 Partnership" covering all three areas (see the alternative model on p21)
- Or, could agree roles whereby each consortium has a lead contact in one of the local authorities

Features of the alternative 'cross-border' model

- Each LA retains responsibility for commissioning for young people in its area
- Local authorities jointly set up a sub regional joint 14-19 Partnership to co-ordinate strategies and plans for the three areas together. The sub regional joint 14-19 Partnership receives local strategies and plans from each area's 14-19 Partnership, or is responsible for producing a joint 14-19 plan covering the whole area served by the different local authorities. Produces a co-ordinated plan setting out what provision needs to be commissioned from each of the consortia and individual providers

Benefits

- Mechanisms are in place that make action to co-ordinate provision across the three areas more efficient
- Less burdensome for providers: can rely on the sub-regional partnership to manage cross border issues
- Economies of scale

Concerns

- LA capacity to manage joint arrangements
- Assurance needed about local accountability (the MAA would be a possible vehicle for this)

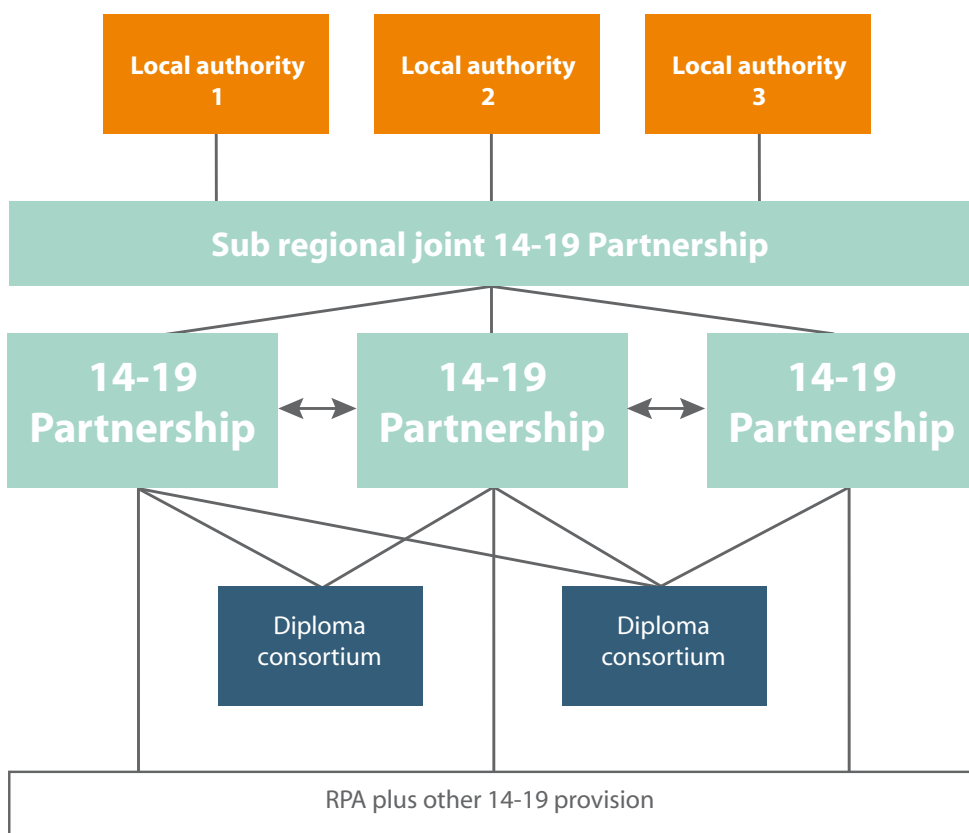
Case study of a 'cross-border' model: Hull and East Riding

The Hull and East Riding 14-19 Executive Group comprises both DCS, LSC Director and Connexions Chief Executive.

This group ensures that strategy and delivery meet the needs of learners regardless of their place of learning. In addition the East Riding 14-19 Strategy Group and 6 Local Area Partnerships reflect travel to learn patterns rather than

LA boundaries which is key in a rural area. There are approximately 3000 16-19 year olds who come into and go out of East Riding to learn.

Alternative cross border model



The 14-19 Plan

Status of the 14-19 Plan

The 14-19 Plan is of fundamental importance to the delivery of education in every area. It is a key driver for local collaboration, setting out how local partners and providers are working together to deliver the 14-19 entitlement and providing a means by which partners can monitor their progress against targets for improvement. When used effectively, the 14-19 Plan can be a helpful tool for communicating with parents, young people and providers about the education opportunities in the area and celebrating success.

The 14-19 Plan is an integral component of the local Children and Young People's Plan. Increasingly, it will shape the commissioning of education provision for young people, setting out the contribution of all local providers. It is therefore crucial that 14-19 Partnerships have suitable mechanisms in place to agree a workable plan with partners and providers.

Recent guidance on the 14-19 Plan

Last summer the LSC and Association of Directors of Children's Services (ADCS) issued joint guidance on the development of local 14-19 Plans. This guidance has been welcomed by many 14-19 Partnerships and used as the basis for generating buy-in to plans at a local level. The volunteer partnerships have said that they would welcome further information which builds on the content of the LSC/ADCS note. Whilst they were not looking for a template for a plan, the partnership representatives wanted to be clear that their plans covered all the essential aspects of 14-19 delivery, and that the plans could be used as the basis for action locally.

Three elements of the 14-19 Plan

In discussions with the volunteer partnerships it has emerged that there tend to be three distinct elements which are covered in the 14-19 Plan and related documents. Some partnerships develop a plan which covers all three elements together, whilst others focus mainly on one or two elements, delegating other elements of the plan to sub-groups or working committees. The three elements are:

- i. The strategy
Sets out the local context and vision for 14-19, describes roles and responsibilities of partners, sets out targets and objectives for improvement, broad approaches to delivery, funding sources and links to local initiatives

ii. The implementation plan

Sets out the action to be taken to deliver the strategy with action owners and timescales. May look like an action plan for members of the 14-19 Partnership

iii. The operational plan

Gives the detail of numbers of learners, expected demand for the different lines of learning, supply of places and other services in the area which need to be delivered through collaboration, including Diplomas, Young Apprenticeships and the September Guarantee. This information will help to inform the commissioning plans of the local authority and LSC.

What follows is a set of suggestions about how to develop a successful 14-19 Plan. These suggestions have arisen from our discussions with the volunteer partnerships group. In addition, the table at Annex 1 gives an illustration of how the content of the 14-19 Plan can be presented in terms of the **strategy** and the **operational plan**.

Case study Hertfordshire

Hertfordshire's 14-19 Strategic Planning Group has reviewed its approach to planning across the county. The Group has concluded that what they need is a very short high level strategy with 2 to 3 pages of text which summarise and cross-refer to the detailed plans which are in place locally for issues including curriculum delivery, IAG and achievement of targets. The Group has used the 14-19 Progress Check indicators as a checklist for ensuring that the coverage of their strategy is comprehensive.

Summary of points in the note from ADCS and LSC: “Guidance for the development of local 14-19 Education Plans”

The local 14-19 Education Plan:

- is an integral part of the Children and Young People’s strategic plan
 - will shape the commissioning of education provision and services for all 14-19 year olds in the area
 - must include a strategic analysis of the curriculum offer and will highlight where new provision is needed, areas of over-supply and gaps in provision
 - should be produced by the local strategic 14-19 Partnership
 - should reflect the views of young people both on content and delivery of the plan
 - includes analysis of the current state of collaborative delivery
 - focuses on qualification reform: Diplomas, Apprenticeship pathways, Foundation Learning Tier, raising the participation age and the full 2013 entitlement
- sets out policies for:
 - Co-ordinated and collaborative curriculum planning and delivery (implicit in this is the need to ensure that provision leads to increases in participation and attainment)
 - Impartial IAG that has regard to quality standards
 - Reduction of numbers of young people who are NEET
 - Targeted and integrated youth support
 - Delivery of entitlement to young people with SEN or LLDD
 - Engagement of young people in care
 - Quality assurance and quality improvement
 - Access and transport
 - Employer engagement
 - Capital and infrastructure development
 - Access to specialist provision outside the area
 - Access to other provision across local authority boundaries

Volunteer Partnerships' Pointers for a successful 14-19 Plan

- Consider who the main audiences for the Plan are and what it will be used for. It could be a communication tool for use with local young people and parents; equally, it could be something to trigger action by providers
- Consider how the strategy can be used to win hearts and minds. Get agreement about the local vision for 14-19
- Put the young person at the heart of the Plan. Show how young people can have an influence on the Plan and what outcomes they can expect from it
- Take care not to concentrate on being strategic, at the expense of sorting out the detail of implementation. A high level strategy without the detail of the implementation could risk disengaging some partners
- Think of it as a plan of action. Provide a plan which supplies the energy to drive the agenda
- Consider how the Plan will be used to hold partners accountable for action. Are there outcomes for the different stakeholders which can be monitored using the Plan?
- Outline all the levers which can be used to make accountability work, involving the Schools Forum where appropriate. Cover progress checks, APAs, hotspots, the National Indicator Set, Framework for Excellence etc. If the Plan does this effectively, it can be used to show providers how they stand to gain from collaborating
- Make explicit how the 14-19 Plan feeds into the Children and Young People's Plan and the Local Area Agreement
- Make sure there is consistency across the piece so that the Plan takes account of local developments on 6th form presumptions, Academies and other policies
- Line up the 14-19 Plan with the local integrated youth strategy – action can be taken on both at the same time
- Celebrate success – show for example improvements in work to reduce NEET
- Involve other departments in local authority (transport, finance)
- Provide timelines and costs
- Capture data on young people's progression.

What happens next

Self-assessment toolkit

The Learning and Skills Council is working with GONW, the LGA & IDeA to develop a self assessment toolkit for 14-19 Partnerships. This toolkit is being developed to help 14-19 Partnerships produce an accurate self assessment of their priorities and it will focus on the indicators used for the 14-19 Progress Checks. The toolkit will be piloted in Summer 2008.

The volunteer partnerships group

Last summer we invited partnerships to volunteer to work together to develop partnership models and good practice. We had an excellent response: around 30 local partnership representatives have contributed to the work through workshops and discussions and exchanges of e-mails. We are grateful to those individuals for their enthusiastic input. This document is the product of our ongoing work with the group. If you are interested in knowing more about the volunteer partnerships group, or want to be added to the mailing list, please contact us at **14-19@dcfs.gsi.gov.uk**.

Annex 2 gives a brief outline of ongoing work on other issues of interest to 14-19 Partnerships.

It has been very useful and helpful to consider the implications for planning and partnerships and share in the experience of others. It has given more clarity to the thinking process and to the relevance of what needs to be included.

Eileen Gordon, Hertfordshire

The volunteer partnership representatives

1. Richard Bates	Stockport
2. Margaret Bell	County Durham
3. Lynda Brown	Sunderland
4. Simon Catchpole	Leicester
5. Adrienne Carmichael	Cumbria
6. Peter Devereux	Wokingham
7. Nick Duggan	Sheffield
8. Sue Dunn	Kent
9. Kath Fitzpatrick	Doncaster
10. Don Garman	Kent
11. Paula Garvey	Hants
12. Eileen Gordon	Herts
13. Mary Graves	Plymouth
14. Jan Greenhalgh	Gloucestershire
15. Nicola Gregson	Swindon
16. Wendy Hamilton	Lincolnshire
17. Judi Harper	Weston-super-Mare
18. Sara Harrop	East Riding
19. Peter Hawthorne	Wolverhampton
20. Ivor James	Solihull
21. Martin Kerrison	North Somerset
22. Sarah Knowles	Enfield
23. Alex McManus	Leicester
24. Chris Meunier	Reading
25. Chris Morton	Bradford
26. Jim Porteous	Islington
27. Dr Liz Porter	Torbay
28. Peter Sale	Hillingdon
29. Dave Smith	Somerset
30. John Thompson	York
31. Meryl White	Barnsley
32. Kate Wilson	Kent
33. Mark Wood	Barnsley

ANNEX 1

Possible coverage of the 14-19 Plan in terms of the separate elements of strategy and operational plan

Nb: this is for the purposes of illustration only. It is not a definitive statement of what the 14-19 Plan should cover.

	Strategy	Operational plan
14-19 entitlement to Diplomas	<p>Statement of the vision for the area</p> <p>Principles underpinning delivery of Diplomas: who is accountable for what</p>	<p>Numbers of learners</p> <p>Detail of provision including analysis of what each provider will offer</p>
Raising the participation age	<p>Statement about improvements to the KS4 curriculum</p> <p>Explanation of how planning and funding cycles will be aligned to ensure an increase in provision</p>	<p>Information on anticipated and the curriculum changes being made to accommodate needs of additional learners</p> <p>Mechanics of IAG to raise participation</p>
Reducing numbers of young people who are NEET	<p>Description of local targets and priorities for improvement</p>	<p>Action plan for achieving targets, including IAG and outreach services</p>
Raising attainment of young people, including narrowing the achievement gap	<p>Description of local targets and priorities for improvement</p>	<p>Action plan for achieving targets, including IAG and outreach services</p>

	Strategy	Operational plan
Curriculum development	<p>Set out strategy adopted in the area for distribution of different curriculum options, and any practical strategies in place to support them eg common timetable</p> <p>Information about any curriculum networks or strategy groups operating in the area to focus on particular issues</p>	<p>Detail of how timetabling works across Diploma and general qualifications provision</p> <p>Information on supply and anticipated demand for the different lines in the curriculum</p>
Information, advice and guidance	<p>Outline the learner's entitlement to to impartial IAG and appropriate access to peer advice and mentoring, opportunities for "tasters" and other "experiential" learning</p> <p>Explain the importance of good transition planning pre and post-16</p> <p>Explain how the local prospectus will support learners</p> <p>Set the quality framework for IAG</p>	<p>Detail of the support offered to young people in each institution and how this will be delivered and funded</p>

	Strategy	Operational plan
Employer engagement	Set out local employer context and approaches being taken to engage with businesses	Information on spread of work based learning including apprenticeships and the details of local employers who offer apprenticeship places
Capital spend and infrastructure development	High level priorities for use of BSF and other capital devolved to the local authority and LSC Local approaches to development of sixth forms, Academies etc	
Workforce development	Overarching statement about priorities for the area in terms of workforce recruitment and CPD	Detail of workforce requirements and skills needs for each line of learning; volume of CPD required and how learning will be sourced
Data management	Contextual information about local employment and economic trends Principles which underpin local approaches to data sharing between institutions Statement about how data will be used to evaluate performance	Data requirements of the partnership and providers

	Strategy	Operational plan
Transport	Local policy on funding transport for young people within the area and across the local authority's borders	<p>Data on learner routes and local transport routes</p> <p>Detail of initiatives needed to meet transport needs of particular learners: what funding is available and how it will be used</p>
Quality assurance and quality improvement	<p>Statement of commitment to deliver high quality</p> <p>Overarching framework, including links to Ofsted and School Improvement Partners</p>	<p>Mechanics of how quality will be assured eg arrangements for peer mentoring, classroom observation</p> <p>Quality standards to be met by each provider</p>

ANNEX 2

Key issues for 14-19 partnerships

Partnership representatives at the 25 October 2007 workshop flagged the following issues as needing further work:

- Funding
- Quality assurance
- IAG
- Data management
- Employer engagement
- Workforce development; and
- Transport.

Partnerships might be interested to see the QCA's report on "Insights from Diploma Pathfinders". This report looked at a number of these issues in depth and can be viewed at: http://www.qca.org.uk/qca_13922.aspx

Funding

The volunteer partnerships were interested in further guidance on:

- How to operate a pooled fund for the partnership, including models of good practice in holding back funds from schools and other providers;
- How the partnership should manage the flow of 14-19 funding so that funds follow the learner; and

- The process the partnership should follow for ensuring that supply of learning places matches demand and vice versa.

There has already been a certain amount of progress on these issues, for example by areas participating in the Funding and Organisation pilots which have been running since March 2006. An interim evaluation of the pilots is now available on the 14-19 website at : <http://www.dfes.gov.uk/14-19/index.cfm?sid=43&pid=363&ctype=TEXT&ptype=Single>

Transport

We recognise that for certain areas, transport comes high on the list of delivery challenges.

We know that this is especially an issue in rural areas:

- Distances travelled by people living in rural areas exceeds 10,000 miles per person per year compared to 6,000 miles in Metropolitan areas;
- Use of public transport is lower in rural than urban areas;
- Only 29% of children of secondary school age living in rural areas are within 15 minutes of a secondary school compared with 66% in large urban areas with 4.5 miles being the average distance travelled to school;

This has implications for diploma delivery as greater distances to travel between Consortia institutions is likely to lead to greater costs of delivery and more time spent travelling. This has important consequences for learning where this travel might need to take place during the school day.

We are therefore producing guidance on rural delivery. Initial findings are already available at: <http://www.dfes.gov.uk/14-19/index.cfm?sid=27&pid=360&ctype=TEXT&ptype=Single>

If you have any comments on this report, please contact: jayne.turner@dcsf.gsi.gov.uk

York Consulting is carrying out a 14-19 research project into transport issues in all areas, urban and rural. This report will be published in Spring '08.

Quality assurance

The Department's 14-19 website contains some examples of good practice in quality assurance. Please see:

<http://www.dfes.gov.uk/14-19/documents/08%20surreyGOSE06final%20QLF.doc>

and:

[http://www.dfes.gov.uk/14-19/documents/07%20Quality%20Framework%20\(6\).doc](http://www.dfes.gov.uk/14-19/documents/07%20Quality%20Framework%20(6).doc)

The Kingswood 14-19 Partnership in South Gloucestershire has made substantial progress in developing quality assurance principles and processes. They have hosted a focussed learning visit for other areas and are happy to offer advice on good practice. To find out more, you might like to contact David Turrell, Head teacher, The Sir Bernard Lovell School, South Gloucestershire (Kingswood Partnership). Tel: 01454 868 022; email: david.turrell@sblonline.org.uk

Employer engagement

The Department published its report on the review of work-related learning in October 2007. This report sets out what we will do, working together with our partners and stakeholders, to raise standards in the delivery of opportunities for work-related learning so that the best possible outcomes are secured for young people. The document can be viewed at: http://www.dfes.gov.uk/14-19/documents/14-19workrelatedlearning_web.pdf

We will be opening a conversation about the new vision for work related learning at the NEBPN conference and looking to the network for input.

A key point for 14-19 partnerships is their readiness to play a role in commissioning WRL services to meet the needs of young people in their area including the statutory requirement at KS4. The LSC is establishing a working group to develop guidance on this.

IAG

New quality standards setting out what good-quality IAG for young people should consist of are now available on the 14-19 website. As well as outlining expectations of the IAG services that local authorities will commission and manage after they assume responsibility for these in April 2008, they are also for use by all managers/providers of IAG.

Data management

Rigorous use of data is crucial for tracking the progress of young people and reducing the risk of them becoming NEET. Over recent years we have made improvements to the Client Caseload Information System (CCIS), which have reduced the proportion of young people whose activity is not known from 13.6% in 2003 to 4.9% in 2006. To strengthen this system further we are introducing the post-16 progression measure which will make information on the destinations of former pupils available to schools.

There has been good progress in some areas on the management of data in support of planning. For example, Suffolk has used a data model to determine relevant provision for young people. This draws on LA, LSC and Connexions data to help analysis and direct local 14-19 planning.

We recognise that there is more to do in this area, and we have asked BECTA to do some work with us on local data management issues. If you are interested in getting involved in that, please let us know via the 14-19 mailbox and we will forward your contact details to BECTA.

Workforce development

In response to feedback from some consortia that the support on offer needs to be delivered as a more coherent and co-ordinated package, a small sub-team within the 14-19 Group has been set up to lead a three-pronged programme of work:

One: Getting a comprehensive understanding of the issue:

- Interview selection of consortia to understand detail of the issues being faced
- Interview workforce partners, ABs, DDPs, QCA & NEBPN to build picture of communications with consortia
- Conduct a priority review of workforce development support
- Consolidate feedback on consortia support from workforce partners, local intelligence unit, twins etc

Two: Identifying and implementing solutions for Delivery 2008 consortia (a mix of local support and national reassurance).

So far:

- Better internal join up among all central support partners
- Refresh consortia support milestone chart for Jan – Sep 08 to help consortia planning
- Introduce an interactive web-based support calendar (January 08) and a refreshed website that simplifies the approach around key themes
- Develop detailed roles and responsibilities at a partnership and consortia level and test with 14-19 partnership volunteers
- Communicate and test how the Diploma Grant will work, particularly for schools
- Link DCSF regional advisers with partner regional presence
- Ongoing work around the national communications campaign, stakeholder engagement e.g. with universities

Three: Learning lessons to help planning for Delivery 2009 consortia, and considering the implications for wider Diploma/FS delivery 'model' e.g.:

- Phase 2 Diploma workforce support to be better 'joined up' from the start
- A more tailored, 'personalised' approach for consortia, that defines what is essential/desirable from the start
- Linking this work to developing wider role of 14-19 partnerships, entitlement planning and progress towards Raising Participation Age