

Welcome to the second edition of the North East 14-19 Commission Update. We were really pleased at the positive feedback for the first newsletter and are delighted to say we now have 125 people registered to receive these quarterly updates.

This autumn sees the launch of the first diplomas and in the North East there are learners registered to study diplomas in Engineering, Society Health and Development, Creative and Media, Construction and IT across a number of the Local Authorities in the North East. Confirmation of actual numbers is currently awaited from DCSF. This is an exciting opportunity for many of our young people to develop their skills and reach their potential and we look forward to more diplomas coming on stream from September 2009.

The 14-19 Commission has been progressing work on the priorities identified by 14-19 Partnerships where it was felt regional activity could support local delivery. In this edition there are reports on the progress being made by the task groups on Diploma development, Employer Engagement, IAG, NEETs and on the development of the regional 14-19 web portal. We welcome any comments or contributions you may have on the work of these task groups and would encourage you to contact the lead people whose contact details are included in the updates.

We are also delighted to have a report from the 14-19 Commission Youth Advisory Board, including details of their November conference focussed on young people's views of Information, Advice and Guidance. I would strongly encourage anyone with an interest in IAG to attend what will be an innovate young people lead event.

This continues to be a time of change for education for young people – curriculum changes, the raising of the participation age, the transfer of 16-18 commissioning responsibilities from the LSC to Local Authorities; the 14-19 Commission will continue to develop its role to support these reforms to ensure our young people will thrive and grow and be supported to make a valuable contribution to the North East economy.

Finally the Commission would like to thank Karen Brown who represented the Association of Learning Providers for her contribution to the Commission and welcome Robin Casson, Director of Schools and Family Support for Northumberland County Council, representing Northumberland 14-19 Local Partnership and Steve Rutland, Deputy Director of Children's Services and Head of Education, Skills & Innovation for North Tyneside Council, representing Directors of Children's Services



Estelle Morris
Chair of the 14-19 Commission

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14-19 COMMISSION SUB-GROUPS

The following sub groups are looking at areas identified as priorities in the 14-19 agenda.

Updates from the subgroups

Young People not in education, employment or training

Reducing the proportion of young people not in education, employment or training (NEET) is one of the Government's key priorities – it also presents a huge challenge for our region. Whilst the North East NEET figure for July 2008 of 12.3%, had reduced from 13.9% for the same time last year it is still well above the July 2008 national average of 7.7%.

The 14-19 Commission has convened a NEET subgroup to explore what can be done at a regional level to support the work of all local agencies in reducing the percentage of our young people who are NEET. The sub group met on the 7th August and the first action was to set up a meeting of representatives of some of the key agencies responsible for reducing the numbers of young people who are not in education, employment or training.

The first meeting will be held in November and will be attended by lead officers from local authorities responsible for the delivery of the Connexions service, 14-19 Coordinators and the Learning and Skills Council 14-19 Partnership Teams. We want to debate what can be done in our region to reduce NEET numbers, to look at what is working in many areas, to share the learning, to consider the various local and national NEET strategies and to also look at the key actions required to take this work forward.

It is important to remember that this is a first step in a regional process and those attendees are not the only ones working to reduce the numbers of those that are not in education, employment or training. The NEET subgroup decided that as a starting point a focus on a specific aspect of the NEET agenda was required.

If you wish to find out more about the work of the 14-19 Commission's NEET subgroup and how you can become involved, please contact Steve Watson on 0191 2023743 or steven.watson@gone.gsi.gov.uk

Information, Advice and Guidance

The Information, Advice and Guidance sub-group of the 14-19 Commission has met twice and will be presenting a paper on its work so far to the next Commission meeting.

IAG was identified as a priority area through the Commission's consultation process. So far the group has considered what added-value could be achieved by regional activity to IAG. This has entailed looking at current effective practice, 'next' practice, and parent and learner voice. The group will be making recommendations to the 14-19 Commission on a staff brokerage pilot, on capturing and building on the learning being carried out by the Youth Advisory Board, on a scoping exercise to explore the value of a regional observatory function, and commissioning research on how Labour Market Information might be more accessible to planners and practitioners providing IAG. It will also consider what mechanisms, including the development of the IAG area of the website might be best employed to maximise learning from effective practice across the region.

This is very much early work in progress and we hope to share the thinking on this more widely. If you wish to find out more about the work of the 14-19 Commission's IAG subgroup and how you can become involved, please contact Jackie McHanwell on 0191 2023742 or jackie.mchanwell@gone.gsi.gov.uk

Employer Engagement

The Employer Engagement Sub-Group of the 14-19 Commission is working to increase the scale and scope of employer engagement in 14-19 education and training. This work consists of two phases:

- Phase 1. Benchmarking research as to the baseline position of Employer Engagement.
- Phase 2. Review and agree activities to stimulate an increase in Employer Engagement activity in the region.

Phase 1 is now complete and the report has been accepted by the Employer Engagement Sub-Group. Key messages emerging from the report include the need to:

- recruit more employers;
- maintain and increase the scope and scale of engagement amongst employers who are engaged;
- raise employers' awareness of the changing 14-19 curriculum and their potential role in it; and more implicitly
- develop effective intermediary structures to manage/broker the relationship between providers and employers.

Phase 2 of the project is now underway the agreed outputs of which are:

- To develop an Employer Engagement Framework setting out: the various market segments and types of employers that could engage in 14-19 learning, their motivations and drivers to engagement, the barriers and opportunities to engagement and the key development needs required to support improved engagement.
- Design of marketing materials through which the Employer Engagement Framework could be delivered. A range of resources and activities to actively promote the offer/opportunities to employers across the region.
- Develop and agree strategic intent and protocol agreements with Employer and Provider Organisations.

If you wish to find out more about the work of the 14-19 Commission's Employer Engagement subgroup and how you can become involved, please contact Gillian Collinson on 0191 229 6371 or gillian.collinson@onenortheast.co.uk

Communications: 14-19 Web Portal

The second phase of the development of the 14-19 Portal has been completed and the latest version can be viewed at <http://www.skillsnortheast.co.uk/page/commission/14-19commissionintro.cfm>

The Commission would like to thank all those partners who have contributed to the consultation process and the development of the Portal.

The Portal is part of the Regional Skills Partnership Website, which is currently being redesigned and improved. The current 14-19 Portal content will be migrated to the new RSP site. The new site will allow for increased functionality within the Portal, in particular the interactive features and resources requested during the consultation.

The Portal will continue to expand and develop. We would welcome any comments or suggestions you might have for the Portal in terms of content and functions. You can comment either through the Portal or directly to Jeff McCloud at ONE NorthEast jeff.mccloud@onenortheast.co.uk

Youth Advisory Board

The 14-19 Commission for the North East established a Youth Advisory Board to collect the opinions and experiences of young people from across the region. The Board consists of 10 young people, all coming from different areas and backgrounds. The work of the Board is facilitated by two youth coordinators who are based in Middlesbrough and Gateshead and who work with the young people to address a wide range of aspects of the 14-19 agenda. To date the Board has designed a virtual portal, collected case studies from young people, undertaken training to become the leaders of the future and are currently planning a regional conference.

The conference entitled **IAG from a Young Person's Perspective** is targeted at all those involved in developing IAG services and advising young people. It will take place on 22 November at Baltic Campus; Gateshead College. The conference offers an excellent opportunity to hear young people's views on IAG from across the region. If you wish to attend the conference please contact [Neil Burke](#) or [Laura Wright](#)

If you wish to find out more about the work of the Youth Advisory Board, please contact Laura Wright on 01642 230555 or laura_wright@wmnt.co.uk or Neil Burke on 0191 440 4410 on neil@rywu.org.uk

Diplomas

The first meeting of the task group took place on 1st September when the aims and objectives of the group were agreed. The group aims to encourage cross border collaboration for future Gateway applications and encourage a good spread of high quality applications for the [DCSF Capital Funding](#) currently available. Delivery of the Diplomas has now started for learners in Durham; Gateshead; Hartlepool; Middlesbrough; Newcastle; North Tyneside and Sunderland. We are hoping to report the experiences of some students studying the diplomas in the next edition of the newsletter.

Preparations for Gateway 3 are now underway with consortia preparing their application for submission to DCSF by the closing date of **26 November**.

If you wish to find out more about the work of the Diploma subgroup, please contact Brian McCafferty on 07805 601226 or bm.etc@btinternet.com

Further information and dates of future meetings can be obtained from the group leads

Sub group	Lead	Email	Telephone
NEETs	Steve Watson	Steven.watson@gone.gsi.gov.uk	0191 202 3743
IAG	Jackie McHanwell	Jackie.mchanwell@gone.gsi.gov.uk	0191 202 3742
Employer engagement	Gillian Collinson	Gillian.collinson@onenortheast.co.uk	0191 229 6371
Communications	Jeff McCloud	jeff.mccloud@onenortheast.co.uk	0191 229 6856
Youth Advisory Board	Laura Wright Neil Burke	Laura_wright@wmnt.co.uk neil@rywu.org.uk	01641 230555 0191 440 4410
Diplomas	Brian McCafferty	Bm.etc@btinternet.com	07805 601226

MOG UPDATE

'In line with the timetable detailed in the [DCSF 16-18 Transfer Guidance](#), proposals for Sub Regional Groupings have been submitted to Government Office and consultation has taken place with provider representative bodies. Following consideration by Ministers feedback will be provided by Government Office in November. Processes to facilitate the production of more detailed submissions including governance arrangements; decision-making processes: dispute resolution; staffing needs; reporting processes, and financial and performance accountabilities will now commence. The deadline for more detailed submissions is the end of February 2009.

It is anticipated the response to the pre 19 aspects of the [Raising Expectations](#) consultation will be included in the forthcoming 14-19 Implementation Plan which is currently due to be published by DCSF in late October

For further information please contact Jackie McHanwell on 0191 202 3742 or jackie.mchanwell@gone.gsi.gov.uk

MEMBER PROFILES

In every edition of the update we will introduce you to one or more Commission members, so you can find out more about their role and why they are part of the Commission. In this issue we meet Julia Morrison and Lilian Mains.

Julia Morrison, Assistant Director of Children's Services, Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council, representing Directors of Children's Services



Julia Morrison is Assistant Director Children, Schools and Complex Needs in Stockton-on-Tees Children's Services Directorate. She is responsible for a range of services which deal in the main with the 'enjoy and achieve' elements of the Every Child Matters agenda. Julia's area includes school improvement and standards, school and governor support, inclusion, and the provision of services for children with complex and additional needs. She is also responsible for Workforce Development across Children's Services and the Borough's Building Schools for the Future Programme.

Julia explains her role in the 14-19 Commission like this:

"I see the Commission as an opportunity to bring together all partners and stakeholders interested in improving outcomes for children and young people across the region. I joined, on behalf of my Tees Valley DCS colleagues, to ensure that the Tees Valley has a strong voice and to use our place round the table in as constructive and positive a way as possible to improve the opportunities for young people in the region in general, and Tees Valley in particular".

Lilian Mains, Managing Director, Zodiac Training, representing the Association of Learning Providers



Worked for 10 years (1986-1996) for a national training provider, starting as a Training Coordinator, recruiting young people, finding employers and then training the young people in retail and business administration to achieve Vocational qualifications. Progressing to National Operations Director with responsibility for over 80 sites in Scotland and England, over 1,000 staff and a turnover of £28m.

Started Zodiac Training Ltd in October 1996, specializing in Modern Apprenticeships in the North East. With 5 sites across the North East and Yorkshire and 95 staff, Zodiac trains people from the age of 14 upwards in a range of NVQs and apprenticeships.

Currently a member of the management group of Tyne & Wear Learning Providers Association and a governor of Kings Meadow Comprehensive School, Dunston.

Being married with a close family of 3 grown up children and 6 grandchildren ranging in age from 3 years to 16 years keeps her up to date with a wide range of pre 14 and post 14 issues.

Lilian says

"I joined the 14-19 Regional Commission because I feel strongly about the future of our young people and in particular, the young people of the North East.

The commission is in place to consider what is in place already, review what is new and lobby on behalf of the various agencies who represent the interests of 14-19 in the region. The commission helps share

best practices across the region and liaises closely with representatives from all of these agencies to act in the best interest of the 14-19 year olds.

The Commission members are constantly learning about what is available across the North East elsewhere with the view to sharing this knowledge. The commission will be successful if all agencies (including young people) use it as a tool to identify and share best practise, to raise issues, use it as a central research and for central feed back. It is a big task, but the Commission has some very dedicated members who care about the future of our young people and want them to have the best opportunities possible”.

CASE STUDIES

We are hoping to showcase examples of good practice in forthcoming editions of this newsletter and would welcome any contributions. To start us off we have included a case study from Middlesbrough on their KS4 engagement project.

Key Stage 4 Engagement Project, Middlesbrough

The issue

Middlesbrough has a high incidence of young people leaving school and not making a positive transition to post 16 education, employment and training. The numbers of 17 year olds being classed as NEET in November 2007 was considerably above the National average. The LA has also been focusing on reducing the numbers of 16 year olds who leave school with no recognised qualifications which in 2006 stood at 7.1% as against an England average of 2.2%. Although nationally those falling into the two above categories are predominantly male, there is an additional local issue of young women failing to achieve levels of qualifications at school that promote a positive transition to post 16 activity. This is exacerbated in the case of those teenagers who are mothers or mothers-to-be.

Action taken

The KS4 Engagement project began by identifying in the spring and summer terms of 2007 those in Year 10 who were becoming disengaged from school and consequently putting themselves at risk of leaving with no qualifications and/or becoming NEET in the period after they had completed their compulsory schooling. These young people (a mixed group of 220) were all offered (with the aid of funding from the LSC) an alternative programme for one or two days per week with an accredited work based learning provider where they would work towards a level 1 qualification (or Level 2 in those cases where this was appropriate) in an area in which they had expressed an interest with a view to re-engaging them and putting them in a position to successfully apply for an apprenticeship or a course at a GFE college.

Impact has this had so far

The end of year examination results are still coming in so it has not yet been possible to conduct a full analysis of the results. However there are individual cases where the project has been a considerable success and the young people concerned are already embarked on a worthwhile future career path. For example:-

1. A Special School pupil who attained a full level 1 qualification and was the first pupil at that school ever to have done so.
2. A girl with a very poor attendance record at school who so impressed her employers when on a work placement that not only did she complete a level 1 qualification in Hairdressing in spite of being pregnant but was offered an apprenticeship in the commercial salon for when she was able

return to work after having her baby.

Early indications suggest that the numbers of 16 year olds leaving with no qualifications will be below 4% - around half of the figure two years ago. Although this project has not been the only factor it has certainly made a very considerable contribution to this reduction.

How the above action helps to deliver the vision set out in the Children's Plan

The vision in the Children's Plan includes a clear commitment to increasing the numbers of young people staying in education or employment with training to the age of 18. This project and its outcomes are increasing the numbers of the most vulnerable young people who are able to participate in this way who without the support of the project in their final year of school would not be able to do so.

Contact details of author:

Patricia Miller patricia_miller@middlesbrough.gov.uk or tel 01642 728615

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

October 8 **"You're Welcome"** launch at Assembly Rooms, Newcastle. All places for the event are now filled but for further information of You're Welcome – which is about making health services more accessible to all young people -please contact Mandy Cheetham on mandy.cheetham@gone.gsi.gov.uk or 0191 202 3918 (Wednesdays to Fridays). For further information on the You're Welcome quality criteria see www.dh.gov.uk/publications

November 4 QIA Functional Skills Regional Network, Sunderland. For further details please contact Judy Carrick on northeast@fsmail.net or 07761 278 158

November 5 **Youth 08 Solutions** at Middlesbrough Riverside Stadium – an opportunity to gain an understanding of the value young people can bring as leaders of services in their communities. For further details please see [Youth 08 Solutions](#)

November 22 **IAG from a Young Person's Perspective**, at Baltic Campus; Gateshead College offers the opportunity to hear young people's views on IAG from across the region. It will also give the opportunity to see the newly designed portal in action. If you wish to attend the conference please contact [Neil Burke](#) or [Laura Wright](#) on laura_wright@wmnt.co.uk or neil@rywu.org.uk

CONSULTATIONS AND PUBLICATIONS

The consultation on the Draft Apprenticeships Bill is currently underway at www.dcsf.gov.uk/consultations/conDetails.cfm?consultationId=1571. The closing date for responses is Wednesday 8th October 2008.

Publication of the refreshed DCSF 14-19 Implementation Plan is now expected to be towards the end of October.

Skills Commission Calls For Evidence on Apprenticeships

The Skills Commission Apprenticeships Inquiry, chaired by Sir William Taylor, will be focusing on the progression routes of apprenticeships and the relationship between Apprenticeships and other qualifications. The Commission invites the submission of written evidence relating to learners' entry into Apprenticeships, progression through Apprenticeships, progression from Apprenticeships into Further and Higher Education and the career paths of former apprentices.

If you have any evidence to contribute to the region's response, please contact skillsnortheast@onenortheast.co.uk. This can include data or information on any research you or your organisation has carried out and personal or organisational experiences/views on the issues. The closing date for evidence to Skills North East is 15 October.

For more information on the Skills Commission please visit www.policyconnect.org.uk/content/skills

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