

Equality Impact Analysis

Department: Children and Young People (Inclusion Service)

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Status: Screened

Next Review 12 months

Stage 1 Screening Data

1. What are the objectives and expected outcomes of your proposal? Why is it needed?

This Equalities Impact Assessment is in respect of commissioning a Targeted Service to Promote Education, Employment and Training for Young People (Connexions). Under the Education and Skills Act 2008 there is a duty on Local Authorities to secure sufficient suitable education and training provision for young people aged 16 to 19 years old and for those aged up to 25 years old with an Education, Health and Care Plan. Under the Education Act 2011 the Local Authority retains a duty to encourage, enable or assist young people's participation in education or training and is required to assist the most vulnerable young people and those at risk of disengaging with education or work. Local Authorities are also required to lead the September Guarantee process, through which young people are guaranteed a place in education, employment and training after school years 11 or 12.

The Local Authority also has a duty to track all young people's participation, and regularly report on current activity, to identify young people who are not participating in education, employment or training. This information is recorded in the Client Caseload Information System (CCIS). Brent Council currently contracts with Ealing Council who manage access to the CCIS on behalf of 7 West London Boroughs.

The Education Act 2011 places a duty on schools to provide access to independent careers guidance for their students in years 9-11. From September 2013 this requirement was extended to encompass students in year 8 and to young people in sixth form provision to ensure that all young people are supported to make successful transitions. Some schools meet this responsibility through an in-house careers service and others commission an external provider.

Currently, Brent Connexions Service is a combination of contracted out services and an in house team of personal advisers (6 FTE). A contract is in place to deliver Connexions Service until March 2019 with Prospects Ltd. They deliver the Local Authority's main statutory responsibilities to include face to face Careers Information Advice and Guidance (IAG) for 16-19 year olds and up to 25 years old for those with Education Health Care Plan (EHCP), and are delivered across a number of access points in the Borough.

The commissioned service will bring services together into one contract a targeted service to promote Education, Employment and Training for Young People.

Needs Analysis

Under the Education Act 2011 the Local Authority retains a duty to encourage, enable or assist young people's participation in education or training and is required to assist the most vulnerable young people and those at risk of disengaging with education or work.

Data

Brent's NEET (Not in Education Employment or Training) performance (average from December 2017 to February 2018), was as follows: 1.6% of 16-17 year old young people were NEET, compared to 2.7% nationally and 1.8% in London. However, there remains a challenge in reaching some of the most vulnerable groups. Of the 335 young people who were NEET in December 2017, 201 young people were known to council's statutory services, including the Youth Offending Service, Virtual School and the Targeted Inclusion Service. Around a third of the 335 NEET young people had Special Needs and Disabilities (SEND).

The Brent Connexions service is delivered by Prospects and an in-house team of Intensive Personal Advisers who support targeted groups of young people who are either NEET or are at risk of becoming NEET. Their support helps them to make informed choices and to enter and remain in learning or work.

From April 2017 – March 2018, the total number of young people that accessed Brent Connexions Service was 3148.

In addition to this, 646 young people accessed and received support from the Intensive Personal Adviser Service.

Consultation with Young People

Over the past year, young people, service users and other stakeholders, as well as Council staff who work with young people, have been consulted on potential changes to the Council's Connexions offer. This includes: Brent Youth Parliament, Care in Action and Care Leavers in Action; and focus groups with the Somali Youth group, young people in Harlesden and young people using the Roundwood Youth Service. Young people have also been consulted as part of the Council's Outcome Based Reviews related to Gangs and Young People on the Edge of Care.

During the consultation sessions, young people informed the Local Authority of the kind of support that they would like to help young people to be EET. This included face to face advice and guidance, life skills programmes, including training on financial awareness and how to manage budgets, careers coaching and mentoring, support with looking for part-time jobs and training on employability skills. In addition, the Prospects Young People Forum provided feedback on the need for online resources, potentially through an App, and suggested the kind of information that could be included: confidence building, coping with stress and being let down, teen parent tips, the benefits of going to university and apprenticeships, the skills employers are looking for and revision tips.

The development of the specification for the service has been informed by these views.

Expected outcomes of the future model

The expected outcomes of the new service will be to achieve:

- A sustained increase in the proportion of vulnerable young people (SEND, or LAC and Care Leavers, young carers, young parents and young people with mental health needs/ substance misuse) who participate in education or training beyond the end of Year 11.
- A parallel reduction in the number and proportion of young people who are NEET, or who become NEET if they leave provision early.
- A contribution to a reduction in the number of first time entrants to the Youth Justice System, aged 10-17 years old and the number of young people becoming gang affected
- A reduction in school exclusions, especially for vulnerable groups such as Looked After Children and SEND

2. Who is affected by the proposal? Consider residents, staff and external stakeholders.

The targeted service is intended to provide support to reduce the number of vulnerable young people who become NEET and to reduce any adverse impact on vulnerable young people by tracking and identifying those young people not engaging in education, employment or training. The proposal targets all Brent residents aged 16-18 who are NEET or risk of NEET and those aged under 25 years old with an EHCP.

3.1 Could the proposal impact on people in different ways because of their equality characteristics?

The targeted service to promote education, employment and training for young people at risk of becoming NEET is commissioned to fulfil statutory duties under the Education and Skills Act 2008, that require Local Authorities to support young people into education, employment or training, securing sufficient suitable education and training provision for all young people aged 16 to 18 years old and for those under 25 years old with an EHCP. It is unlikely to impact on people differently because of equality characteristics. The contract for the targeted Support Service for Brent Young People at risk of becoming NEET is designed to reach out to all young people who are NEET.

Priority for bespoke / targeted projects will be directed by the NEET Reduction Strategy Board to ensure that there is a focus on specific vulnerable cohorts identified through a gap analysis. Intensive Personal Advisers can be deployed to a range of settings including Alternative Provision/PRU as part of an early identification and prevention strategy.

Evidence suggests young people from Black Caribbean, Black African, White British and young people from Other White backgrounds are over represented in the NEET cohort. The aim is to remedy this by working together with the voluntary sector, schools and AP/PRU and statutory services such as YOS, or Troubled Families. Specialist targeted projects will be delivered focusing on specific at risk cohorts.

**3.2 Could the proposal have a disproportionate impact on some equality groups?
If you answered 'Yes' please indicate which equality characteristic(s) are impacted**

Yes, in that the proposal is targeted to reach vulnerable young people (SEND, or LAC and Care Leavers, young carers, young parents and young people with mental health needs/ substance misuse) to encourage them to participate in education or training beyond the end of Year 11.

3.3 Would the proposal change or remove services used by vulnerable groups of people?

The proposal brings bring together a currently fragmented service under one management to enable a coordinated approach to NEET. This will enable effective case management, including the allocation of personal advisers to all NEET young people, working closely with statutory services like YOS, LAC, AP/PRU, SENAS. This will deliver a more cohesive service for vulnerable groups to access. The targeted model will also enable outreach provision to those young people in the NEET cohort who are currently not accessing services.

3.4 Does the proposal relate to an area with known inequalities?

Yes, the focus of the Targeted service is to support the needs of vulnerable young people who are not engaging in Education, Employment or Training.

3.5 Is the proposal likely to be sensitive or important for some people because of their equality characteristics?

The service is not important to some people because of their equality characteristics. It is targeted to reach vulnerable young people (including young people with SEND, LAC and Care Leavers, young carers, young parents and young people with mental health needs/substance misuse) to encourage them to participate in education or training beyond the end of Year 11. The provider will work in partnership with schools and Council's statutory services, including the Virtual School, as part of a co-ordinated approach to NEET reduction in the Borough and to reduce inefficiencies of NEET work across agencies.

3.6 Does the proposal relate to one of Brent's equality objectives?

Yes. This proposal relates to Objective 4: "To ensure that local public services are responsive to different needs and treat users with dignity and respect."

It also relates to equality Objective 2: "involve our communities effectively", with the new model continuing to provide opportunities for young people and other stakeholders to influence service delivery and ensure it responds to young people's needs and preferences.

It also relates to the Council's overarching strategic priorities set out in the Brent Borough plan under Better Lives. One of these priorities is:

“Making sure that our children and young people have access to the best education and training, achieve to their potential and have the best start in life and Youth activities that help young people to gain life skills and successfully go on to further education or work”.

Another strategic priority is “Supporting vulnerable people and families when they need it” which includes the outcome that “Vulnerable children and young people have high quality support when they need it and become more resilient”.

Recommend this for full EA analysis?

Yes

4. Use the comments box below to give brief details of what further information you will need to complete a Full Equality Analysis. What information will give you a full picture of how well the proposal will work for different groups of people? How will you gather this information? Consider engagement initiatives, research and equality monitoring data.

Stage 2: Analysis

5. What effects could your policy have on different equality groups and on cohesion and good relations?

5.1 Age (select all that apply)

- Positive
- Neutral
- Negative

Please give details:

The Targeted Service to Promote Education, Employment and Training for Young People (Connexions) seek to achieve positive outcomes for young people aged 16-18 and up to 25 years old with Special Educational Needs and Needs Disability (SEND) and to offer a balanced programme which meets the need of different targeted groups. The service will ensure that young people will have access to impartial information, advice and guidance services to support them into education, employment and training, and to successfully transition into adulthood.

5.2 Disability (select all that apply)

- Positive
- Neutral
- Negative

Please give details:

Less than 7% of adults with SEND are in paid employment. The Targeted Service to Promote Education, Employment and Training for Young People (Connexions) seeks to achieve positive outcomes for young people aged 16-18 and up to 25 years old with Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) and to offer a balanced programme which meets the need of different targeted groups. The service will ensure that young people will have access to impartial information, advice and guidance services to support them into education, employment and training in the form of supported internships, work experience and to successfully transition into adulthood regardless of age. The targeted model will also enable outreach provision to those young people in the NEET cohort who are SEND and not accessing services. Impact will be Monitoring of % of the NEET who are SEND and destinations of SEND who are EET.

5.3 Gender Identity (select all that apply)

- Positive
- Neutral
- Negative

Please give details:

The service is fully inclusive and aims to improve outcomes for young people regardless of gender identity.

5.4 Marriage and civil partnership (select all that apply)

- Positive
- Neutral
- Negative

Please give details:

The service is fully inclusive and aims to improve outcomes for all young people who are NEET (Not in Education, Employment and Training).

5.5 Pregnancy and maternity (select all that apply)

- Positive
- Neutral
- Negative

Please give details:

The service is fully inclusive and aims to improve outcomes all young people who are NEET (Not in Education, Employment and Training).

5.5 Race (select all that apply)

- Positive
- Neutral
- Negative

Please give details:

The service is fully inclusive and aims to improve outcomes for all young people who are NEET (Not in Education, Employment and Training).

5.7 Religion or belief (select all that apply)

- Positive
- Neutral
- Negative

Please give details:

The service will impact equally upon all for all young people who are NEET (Not in Education, Employment and Training) regardless of religion or belief.

5.8 Sex (select all that apply)

- Positive
- Neutral
- Negative

Please give details:

The changes will impact equally upon all young people regardless of their gender.

5.9 Sexual orientation (select all that apply)

- Positive
- Neutral
- Negative

Please give details:

The changes will impact equally upon all young people who are NEET (Not in Education, Employment and Training) regardless of sexual orientation.

5.10 Other (please specify) (select all that apply)

- Positive
 Neutral
 Negative

Please give details:

This proposal will not have any socio-economic impact upon families. Interpreters will be provided for young people and their parents and carers with limited English language skills.

6. Could any of the impacts you have identified be unlawful under the Equality Act 2010? Prohibited acts include direct and indirect discrimination, harassment, victimisation and failure to make a reasonable adjustment.

- Yes
 No

7. Please provide a brief summary of any research or engagement initiatives that have been carried out to formulate your proposal.

- The focus of the new service model has been shaped by consultation with service users, potential service users, providers of youth services and other stakeholders. This included participatory budget sessions for young people and service providers and an online survey and Young people have also been consulted as part of the Council's Outcome Based Reviews related to Gangs and Young People on the Edge of Care.
- The approach to consultation included one to one meetings, focus groups with a range of young people, a market engagement session, visits to other local authorities and telephone interviews over the period from November 2016 to April 2017.
- Young people also fed back that social media strategies would be a good way of engaging and communicating with young people

The development of the specification for the service has been informed by young people's view (see section 1).

STAGE 3: ACTION PLANNING

Now, you will respond to your findings from the analysis stage and complete an action plan. At this stage you need to think about how to remove or reduce all the negative impacts that you have identified and how to maximise any opportunities to promote equality. This might mean making changes to your proposal or to the way that it is implemented.

8. What actions will you take to enhance the potential positive impacts that you have identified?

Any new provider will be required to maintain and improve diversity monitoring arrangements in order to increase the levels of declaration. This will in turn provide an improved evidence-base to inform future equalities analysis in planning service development.

Activity will ensure that the voice of young people and feedback from stakeholders continues to inform provision, helping to ensure that the new service offer meets identified local needs and responds swiftly to changing trends and issues.

The findings from our work demonstrate that:

- Bringing together Connexions Service, Intensive Personal Advisers and Bespoke Targeted projects under one management will have greater productivity, value for money and enable Brent Inclusion service to place more stringent monitoring processes in place.
- Reaching out to all NEET young people by effective case management, allocation of PA to all NEET young people, working closely with statutory services like YOS, LAC, AP/PRU, SENAS, will deliver a more cohesive service.
- Developing a strategy for targeted outreach provision to those young people in the NEET cohort not accessing services, will effectively target those groups.
- Effective tracking and undertaking destination and activity survey will ensure young people are at less risk of dropping out at 18.
- Including face to face Careers Information Advice and Guidance (IAG) for 16-19 year olds and up to 25 for those with SEN in the NEET group, to be delivered across a number of access points in the borough, will address access.
- Schools also have statutory responsibilities to provide IAG services. The expectation is that schools will offer a package of Careers IAG services in line with statutory responsibilities.
- Development of the youth offer website development should enable and inform signposting to the range of youth services in the borough, helping to raise the profile of what is on offer and increase take-up, with the aim of improving EET outcomes.

9. What actions will you take to remove or reduce the potential negative impacts that you have identified?

N/A

10. Please explain how any remaining negative impacts can be justified?

N/A