

Council: 26 June 2007

Administration Policy Item: Cllr. Fiona Bulmer

The Future of the Connexions Service

This Council notes the Connexions service, which supports young people in the transition from school to further education, employment and training, and provides advice on problems and day-to-day issues.

From April 2008, responsibility for Connexions will be transferred from the DfES to the London Borough of Barnet.

The London Borough of Barnet already enjoys a good record of work with the Connexions service, and currently works in partnership with Connexions North London in providing youth services in the Borough.

Council believes the best way to provide focussed and relevant services to youngsters is for them to be managed by schools, colleges and other local services, and agrees with the Cabinet report that devolving responsibility for Connexions to our schools will be the best way for LBB to manage the service, when responsibility is transferred.

As lack of funding from Central Government continues to present a problem for LBB, Council is keen that Whitehall provides adequate and ring-fenced grants to this authority to ensure best possible service can be financed and delivered for the young people of this Borough. Council notes that, at present, the DfES has not been able to provide firm guidance on the future levels of funding, and Council is adamant this must be resolved quickly.

Accordingly, Council requests Cabinet:

- Ensures that effective commissioning of Connexions services for young people takes place through a devolved commissioning system via our schools and colleges, as recommended in the report to Cabinet of 18 June.
- Makes representations to the DfES and the Treasury to ensure that adequate, sustainable, long-term and ring-fenced grant funding (separate from the Formula Grant) is provided so that a first-class service can be provided for the young people of Barnet.