

**REPORT FOR: EDUCATION STRATEGY
CONSULTATIVE FORUM**

Date of Meeting: 30 January 2013

Subject: Raising the Participation Age (Update)

INFORMATION REPORT

Responsible Officer: Catherine Doran
Corporate Director of Children and Families

Portfolio Holder: Mitzi Green
Portfolio Holder for Children and Families

Exempt: No

Enclosures: None

Section 1 – Summary

From the summer of 2015 all young people must participate in education or training until their 18th birthday. This information report confirms the duty on local authorities to promote Raising the Participation Age (RPA). This duty is already enacted but comes into force in June 2013. The Education Consultative Forum received an earlier report on 7 March 2012.

This report brings the Education Strategy Consultative Forum members up to date on the latest developments with respect to RPA and they are invited to comment on the ways that their constituencies can contribute to raising awareness of Raising the Participation Age (RPA) and on promoting this objective with the community and local employers.

Section 2 – Information Report

1. Raising the Participation Age (RPA)

- 1.1 The Education and Skills Act (2008) places a duty on all young people to participate in education or training until their 18th birthday.
- 1.2 From summer 2013, young people will be required to continue in education or training until the end of the academic year in which they turn 17. From 2015, they will be required to continue until their 18th birthday.
- 1.3 RPA does not necessarily mean staying in school. Young people will be able to choose how they participate post-16, which could be through:
 - full-time education, such as school, college or otherwise;
 - an Apprenticeship;
 - part-time education or training if they are employed, self employed or volunteering for 20 hours or more a week.
- 1.4 The first year group to be affected by RPA are the current Year 11. They will be required to participate in education or training until they are 17. The current Year 10 will be the first Year that will be expected to participate in education or training until they are 18. Education or training must lead to a recognised qualification.
- 1.5 In July 2012 the DfE published its response to the consultation on Raising the Participation Age (RPA) Regulations. The department is now in the process of drafting statutory guidance to local authorities with respect to RPA. This guidance is expected soon.

2. What does this mean for Local Authorities and Providers?

- 2.1 The Education and Skills Act places duties on local authorities from June 2013, in relation to RPA. Local authorities will be required to:
 - promote the effective participation in education or training of all 16 and 17 year olds resident in their area; and
 - make arrangements to identify young people resident in their area who are not participating.

These duties complement existing duties to:

- Secure sufficient suitable education and training provision for all 16-19 year olds (to under 25 for students with a Learning Difficulty Assessment);
- Encourage, enable and assist young people to participate;
- Put the processes in place to deliver the 'September Guarantee' (i.e. ensuring that school leavers have a suitable offer of a place on a course at a school, college or independent provider or of an apprenticeship or a job with training if the training is at a level equivalent to a 'C' Grade or above at GCSE);
- Track young people's participation.

2.2. Education Providers are required to prepare young people to participate in sustained post-16 education or training activities until the age of 18 and to support the continued engagement of those who continue at the school's sixth forms by:

- Securing independent, impartial careers guidance for their pupils in Years 9-11. It must be:
 - Presented in an impartial manner and promote the best interests of the pupils to whom it is given.
 - Include information on all options available in respect of 16-18 education or training, including apprenticeships and other work-based education and training options.
- Working with the Local Authority to:
 - Provide all relevant information about pupils to the Local Authority's support services
 - Ensure pupils know what support services are available
 - Put in place referral systems to support services
 - Inform the support services when a young person aged 16 or 17 leaves learning
 - Record young people's post-16 plans and the offers they receive (September Guarantee)
 - Record young people's participation, current circumstances and activities
- Promote good attendance of 16 and 17 year olds

3. Current situation

- 3.1 Harrow has one of the lowest numbers of young people who are not in education, employment or training (NEET) after 16. Although we have few NEETs they may often be the hardest young people to reach so our strategy will need to engage with them as a priority. Our strategy will target employers, families, colleges, schools and pupils to ensure that RPA is fully understood by all stakeholders.
- 3.2 From the current Post 16 cohort of 7,149 young people; 132 (1.9%) are not in education, employment or training (NEET). A further 127 (1.2%) are classified as 'not known.' Amongst those who are NEET, 6 are

teenage mothers (of 24 in the cohort), 2 are care leavers (of 4 in the cohort) and 28 (of 526 in the cohort) have a learning need or disability. 63 of the 132 are from White groups (48%) and 67 are male (51%).

- 3.3 Harrow Council has a contract with an external body to deliver non-school Careers Information Advice and Guidance (CIAG) working with vulnerable clients such as: the NEETs, pupils with SEN, Looked After/Asylum Seekers and Youth Offending clients, and to lead on destination tracking measures of young people in the borough. They operate the Youth Stop in Harrow for careers work with NEET young people aged 16-19 (up to 25 if they have special needs) and for multi-agency purposes, e.g. counselling services, homelessness, sexual health clinic, drug and alcohol services and help with legal matters.
- 3.4 The definition of who is NEET may change. More of those currently described as 'not known' would then be classified as NEET. This would increase the NEET figure in Harrow to about 3% of the cohort.
- 3.5 A small steering group of officers, representing Education Strategy and School Organisation, the Early Intervention Service and Economic Development, has been formed to ensure the Local Authority is well prepared to fulfil its statutory duties.

4. Financial Implications

- 4.1 Currently there is no government funding to cover the additional costs likely to be incurred in meeting the new duties placed on local authorities for promoting Raising the Participation Age. Local authorities are expected to meet any costs incurred from existing funding. The government may offer targeted advice and additional support in other forms.
- 4.2 Some external funding may become available and the working group is looking to maximise any potential income source. Harrow has made a bid to the DfE for additional funds to support vulnerable groups and to ensure that they do not become NEET. Other funding opportunities are being pursued with private and voluntary organisations. The work with 'Families First' (Harrow's 'Troubled Families' initiative) complements the objectives of RPA.
- 4.3 The cost of meeting the new duties and any potential income will be monitored. If it results in a budget pressure this will have to be considered as part of setting future years' budgets.

5. Equality Implications

- 5.1 This government initiative will apply to all young people and will serve to promote the educational and economic well-being of all. Providing opportunities for all young people, particularly those most vulnerable, to achieve in their learning and at work will improve their life chances and their personal and financial security. It will enable them to contribute

positively to their own development and that of the community as a whole.

6. Corporate Priorities

6.1 These considerations will support the Council's Corporate Priorities:

- United and involved communities: a Council that listens and leads
- Supporting and protecting people who are most in need

Section 3 - Statutory Officer Clearance

Name:	Emma Stabler	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	on behalf of the Chief Financial Officer
Date:	17 January 2013		

Section 4 - Contact Details and Background Papers

Contact:

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Background Papers:

EdCF Information Report on RPA dated 7 March 2012