

# **Brent and Harrow Education Business Service (BHEBS)**

## **Consultation Pack (Harrow Staff)**

**1<sup>st</sup> May 2012**

1 May 2012

Dear Colleague

**Staff and Trade Union Formal Consultation on the proposed closure of the Brent and Harrow Education Business Service (BHEBS), including formal redundancy consultation**

You will be aware of discussions relating to potential changes and the future of the Brent and Harrow Education Business Service as signalled in staff meetings and with Trade Unions in the joint DJC and Stakeholder Reference Group. Following a research phase with stakeholders, the results of which are summarised in this paper, this formal consultation paper proposes that the current service will cease. The proposal is to close the service from 31<sup>st</sup> August 2012.

I enclose a consultation pack which details:

1. the rationale for the proposal;
2. the process for moving from the current structure to closure;
3. a list of positions at risk of redundancy arising from this proposal (Appendix B).

Also included are Frequently Asked Questions which you may find helpful. These papers will be sent to the home address of any absent employees.

**I would like to invite you to attend a formal consultation meeting to initiate the formal consultation on the proposal at 9.30 a.m. on Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> May 2012 at Harrow Teachers' Centre. I have also invited trade union representatives to attend.**

There will also be the opportunity for you to discuss any concerns on a one-to-one basis, with me or you can contact the HRD Advice Line on 020 8424 1110 for advice on procedural issues.

I confirm the timetable below:-

- Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> May 2012 - Open Consultation meeting regarding the closure of the Brent and Harrow Education Business Service at the Teachers' Centre.
- Tuesday 29<sup>th</sup> May 2012 – Closing date for comments on the consultation.
- Monday 11<sup>th</sup> June 2012 – Meeting with staff employed by Harrow and trade unions for feedback on consultation at Harrow Teachers' Centre.

**The Council has set a standard for managing change which managers must follow called the '*Protocol for Managing Change*'. Copies are available and it is on the Council Intranet site under "Working for Harrow".**

I also confirm that advice and support is available to you from your trade union, the Occupational Health Service on ext 2449 and the Council's Employee Assistance Programme who can be contacted on 0800 716017, quoting reference 71650.

Yours sincerely

Adrian Parker

## **Brent and Harrow Education Business Service (BHEBS) Closure**

### **1 Background**

- 1.1 Brent Council and Harrow Council conducted a review of Brent and Harrow Education Business Service (BHEBS) between 27<sup>th</sup> February and 26<sup>th</sup> March 2012 to inform their planning of the work-related learning services that BHEBS would provide from September 2012. The councils sought the views of: the leaders of local schools, academies, colleges, training providers and businesses; BHEBS staff; elected members and officers with responsibilities for this area of work; young people; other local stakeholders.
- 1.2 From September 2012, BHEBS would have to be a full cost recovery service that exists without local council or central government grant funding. It was therefore essential that the two councils used the review to establish the level of demand from schools and other partners for BHEBS' services to inform their planning of any changes that may be required to its current model of delivery and to allow time for their implementation.
- 1.3 The review took place in the light of the rapidly changing national and local context. The thrust of national policy relating to work-related learning is still evolving with some of the decisions about its statutory place in the 14-19 curriculum still to be confirmed by the Department for Education.

### **2 Factors affecting the future of the service**

#### **2.1 Funding**

On 28<sup>th</sup> March 2011, the Young People's Learning Agency wrote to all local authorities in England to inform them that the Department of Education (DfE) had decided to withdraw the Education Business Partnership Services Grant from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2011. In the financial year 2010/11 the grant had subsidised BHEBS' delivery by £109,310 for Brent and £103,103 for Harrow. The three day notice of the grant's withdrawal put substantial pressure on the service's planned budget for the last financial year. It led to immediate increases in the charges for BHEBS' services and, during the year, cost efficiencies through a reduction in staffing, by natural wastage, and by moving premises. However, in the current academic year the service has not generated enough income from its traded services to cover all its costs.

#### **2.2 The school curriculum and the delivery of work-related learning**

In November 2010, the DfE confirmed in its schools' white paper, *The Importance of Teaching* its intention to give schools greater autonomy in the design of their curriculum. Following the recommendations made in the Wolf Report in March 2011, the DfE launched a consultation in October 2011 on *Removing the statutory duty to deliver work-related learning at Key Stage 4*. The consultation closed on 4<sup>th</sup> January 2012.

#### **2.3 The role of local authorities**

In October 2010, the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government in a letter to the leaders of local authorities (LAs) stated the government's expectation of

the fundamental re-examination of “*every aspect of the way that councils work*”. The expectation of central government has increasingly been that LAs become commissioners of services and act as champions for young people and their families. LAs, including Brent and Harrow, have been giving greater consideration to which services they provide and, in particular, to those which need to be financially self-sustaining.

## 2.4 Service opportunities

Despite these changes, there have been opportunities to explore potential areas of growth in the services that BHEBS provides. In its consultation on work-related learning at Key Stage 4, the DfE outlined the potential areas it has been considering. At the same time, the DfE ran a consultation on its proposals for *Study Programmes for 16-19 year olds* that stated its intention that “*providers will be free to offer experience of the workplace as part of a programme of study*”.

## 3 The outcome of the review and next steps

- 3.1 For the purpose of the review, Brent Council and Harrow Council treated Brent and Harrow Education Business Service (BHEBS) as one joint service, and sought the views of stakeholders in both local authority areas in the same way. The collection of the views of stakeholders by the councils, in particular the current customers, namely schools and colleges and the businesses that support the delivery of work-related learning, was deemed essential in helping to decide the future shape of the service.
- 3.3 The review period closed on 26<sup>th</sup> March. Brent Council and Harrow Council officers have produced a *Summary of the responses to the review* (Appendix C) which they have distributed to BHEBS’ staff and the organisations that were invited to contribute to the review.
- 3.4 Council officers have used the summary of responses to develop the options for the future of the service from September 2012. A key factor that officers have had to consider is whether the income of the services that stakeholders have confirmed that they will purchase balances with the cost of the current service structure or a revised service structure, and is sustainable in the long term. The confirmed sum for the academic year starting September 2012 is £105,595 and the cost of running the service in 2011/12 was £377,000. The additional amount of income that might be generated from education providers, that were unwilling in their review responses to commit, is in the region of £58,000. However, this would give a shortfall of over £200,000. Keeping the service in its current structure is therefore not an option.
- 3.5 A survey of education business partnership services in other areas provides evidence that:
  - local authority run services are finding it difficult to develop a long-term business model that is self-sustaining
  - some councils have closed the services
  - small scale private providers are struggling to generate sufficient income to cover costs without entering into new areas of business e.g. European Social Fund projects.
- 3.6 It is anticipated that the final decision on the service’s future will be made in June. Harrow Council will implement its *Protocol for Managing Change* for its staff. Both

councils will, where possible, follow the same timetables for change and aim to complete the process by 31<sup>st</sup> August 2012.

#### 4. Proposals for consultation

- 4.1 As a result of the review it is clear that the existing service is not sustainable and that other options for re-organisation are not likely to secure a viable and cost effective service. **It is proposed, therefore, that the Brent and Harrow Education Business Service will cease on 31<sup>st</sup> August 2012** and, in preparation for this, Harrow Council will implement its *Protocol for Managing Change* for its staff.
- 4.2 The Council is required to issue redundancy notices by 8<sup>th</sup> June 2012 in order to give the required 12 week notice for termination of employment on 31<sup>st</sup> August 2012.
- 4.3 As a result of these developments 4 Harrow staff will be at risk of redundancy. The list of current positions and staff at risk of redundancy is shown in **Appendix B**.
- 4.4 The implications for, and entitlements of, staff issued with redundancy notices; details of the dismissal/redundancy process, including voluntary redundancy; redundancy payment arrangements, in line with the Council's redundancy scheme, and support available to staff are set out in the PMOC. This includes arrangements for re-deployment and retraining. **Every effort will be made to redeploy Harrow staff under notice of redundancy.**
- 4.5 Individual advice on these issues is available from the HRD Advice Line (020 8424 1110).
- 4.6 Responses to any of the proposals in this consultation document should be sent to :  
Adrian Parker, Harrow Teachers' Centre  
[adrian.parker@harrow.gov.uk](mailto:adrian.parker@harrow.gov.uk) – by **5.00pm on Tuesday 29<sup>th</sup> May 2012**.

## 5. Timetable for Harrow's BHEBS' Staff

Activity	Timing / Date
Consultation Document issued to Harrow staff and trade unions	9.30am Tuesday 1 <sup>st</sup> May 2012
Staff Consultation Meeting	Tuesday 8 <sup>th</sup> May 2012
Open Consultation Meeting, including Trade Unions	Tuesday 8 <sup>th</sup> May 2012
Individual consultation meetings, by appointment with Adrian Parker and/ HRD representatives.	Friday 11 <sup>th</sup> May 2012, or at other times by appointment
<b>Close of Consultation</b>	5:00pm Tuesday 29 <sup>th</sup> May 2012
Decision feedback to Staff and Trade Unions	Monday 11 <sup>th</sup> June 2012

## Frequently Asked Questions and Answers regarding closure of a service

**1. Why does the Brent and Harrow Education Business Service (BHEBS) need to close? Can't things be left the way they are?**

**Answer:** BHEBS needs to close because of significant changes to funding which means a much reduced budget and also changes to national and local expectations of school support. The review phase showed that there would be insufficient funds available to sustain the service into the future.

**2. Does the consultation mean that my views and opinions on the proposals count and a final decision has not been made to close?**

**Answer:** The consultation process means that management are proposing to close the service and also proposing how it will be done. A final decision on how the changes are made have not been finalised yet and your views and those of other stakeholders will be considered before a final decision is made.

**4. Does the deletion of my post automatically mean that I have been selected for redundancy?**

**Answer:** Yes. The proposal is that BHEBS will close and no posts will exist in future in Harrow.

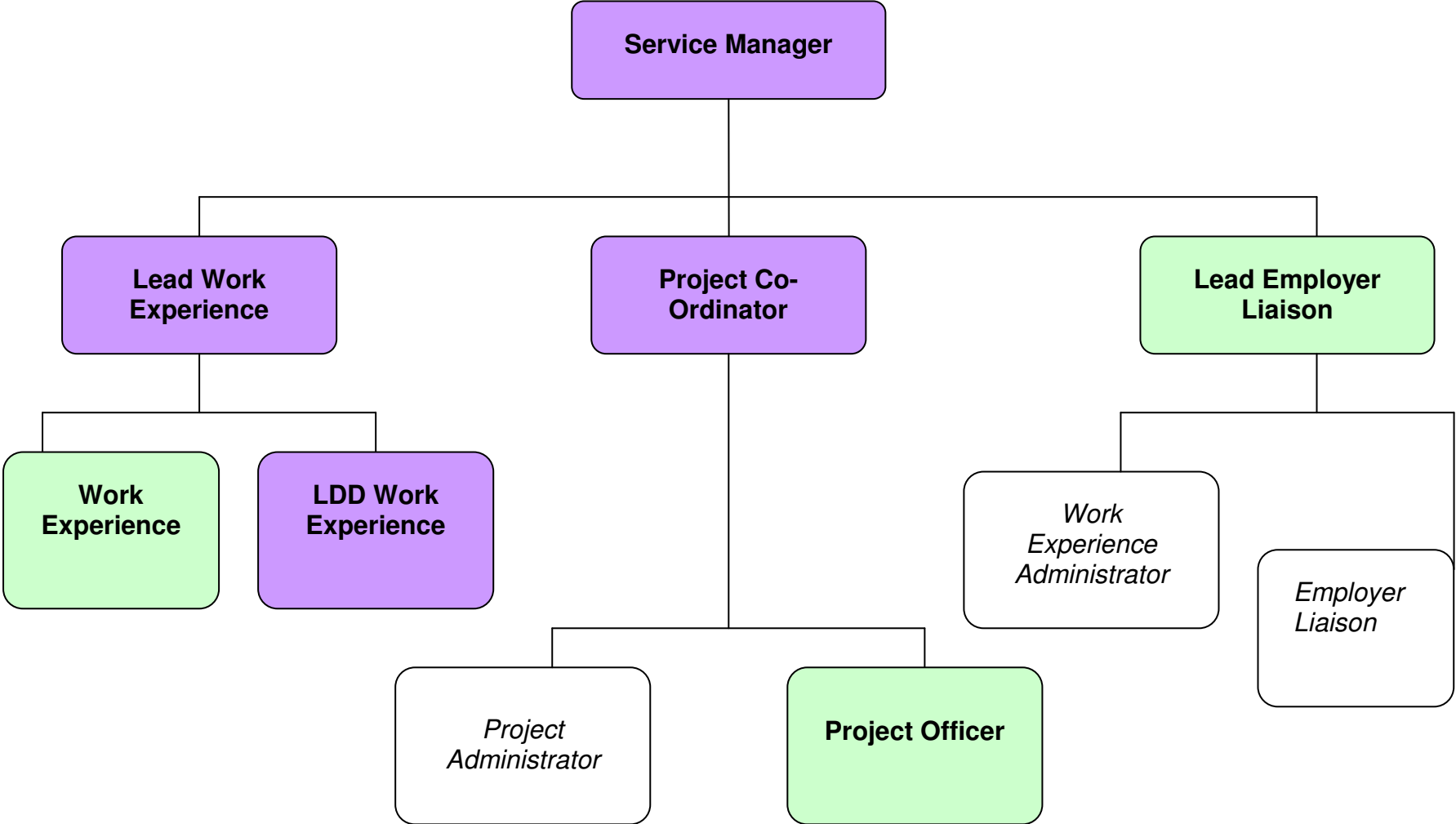
**3. What support will I receive through this process?**

**Answer:** To ensure that staff are well supported and informed throughout the process, support and guidance will be available from your manager and, if you belong to a union, your union representative. Advice and support is also available to you from the Occupational Health Service on ext 2449 and the council's Employee Assistance Programme who can be contacted on 0800 716017, quoting reference 71650.

**4. What if I feel I have been treated unfairly in the process?**

**Answer:** If you feel you have been unfairly treated in the process then you should contact the senior manager leading the closure. If still unsatisfied after this, then you can raise your complaint through the Dignity at Work Procedure and seek advice through your trade union.

**APPENDIX A: Current Structure of Brent and Harrow Education Business Service (BHEBS)**



**Harrow**

**Brent**

*Vacant*



## APPENDIX B: Harrow BHEBS Staff at risk of Redundancy

Name	Designation
Alison Brown	BHEBS Service Manager
Frederica Pratley	Lead Work Experience Officer
Meinir Llewelyn	School Project Co-ordinator
Clare Berry	LDD Work Experience Officer



## **APPENDIX C**

### **Brent and Harrow Education Business Service (BHEBS)**

**A joint review of service provision**

**Brent Council and Harrow Council**

**27<sup>th</sup> February to 26<sup>th</sup> March 2012**

**Summary of the responses to the review**

**11<sup>th</sup> April 2012**

**Brent Local Authority Area**

John Galligan

[john.galligan@brent.gov.uk](mailto:john.galligan@brent.gov.uk)

**Harrow Local Authority Area**

Patrick O'Dwyer

[patrick.odwyer@harrow.gov.uk](mailto:patrick.odwyer@harrow.gov.uk)

## **A Consultation scope**

Brent Council and Harrow Council invited 156 education and training providers, 55 business partners and 15 other stakeholders to contribute to the review of Brent and Harrow Education Business Service. The two councils received a total of 32 responses from:

### **Education and training providers**

- Alperton Community School
- Avigdor Hirsch Torah Temimah Primary School
- Bang Edutainment
- Brent Education Tuition Service
- Brondesbury College for Boys
- Capital City Academy
- Claremont High School
- College of North West London
- Harrow College
- Hatch End High School
- JFS
- Kingsbury High School
- Newman Catholic College
- Park High School
- Poplar Grove School
- Preston Manor School
- Queens Park Community School
- Sacred Heart College
- Salvatorian College
- Shaftesbury High School
- St Gregory's Catholic Science College
- Whitmore High School
- *Anonymous*

### **Business partners**

- Artemis Coaching
- Greenbee.net
- IET London Region
- Leslie Ann Hair and Beauty Salon
- MG Hairdressing
- Stemnet
- Wembley Plaza Hotel

### **Other stakeholders**

- Brent Youth and Connexions Service
- Cllr Ann Hunter, Brent

Brent Council and Harrow Council officers will use the responses to the review to develop options for the future of Brent and Harrow Education Business Service from September 2012. A key factor that officers will consider is whether the financial sum of the services, that stakeholders confirm that they will purchase, balances with the cost of the current service structure or a revised service structure.

## B Summary of answers

Under each question, the number of responses that make similar points is given in brackets.

### 1. Does your organisation (school, college or other stakeholder) want to purchase services from Brent and Harrow Education Business Service (BHEBS) in the academic year 2012 to 2013?

23 education and training providers responded to this question. Their answers were:

#### Yes (19)

##### Reasons

- The reliable, professional and efficient service provided by the BHEBS' staff team. (8)
- The quality of support for work experience planning, placements and evaluation activities. (5)
- Benefit of work-related learning for students' development. (4)
- Specific service packages offered by BHEBS. (3)
- Employer liaison and BHEBS' large employer database. (3)
- Ensures that the legal requirements are met including health and safety. (2)
- Provides a tailored service to meet needs. (2)
- Placements and support for students with special educational needs and/or disabilities. (1)

#### No (4)

##### Reasons

- The service's provision is not relevant to the organisation. (2)
- The education provider has an in-house team. (1)
- BHEBS did not find the placements that were required by the provider. (1)

### 2. Which activities from BHEBS' current service menu will you purchase?

19 education and training providers stated that they wanted to purchase BHEBS' services. 15 providers stated the amount of funding that they are committing to purchase work experience placements and work-related learning activity sessions from BHEBS in the next academic year. The total amount committed is:

	No. providers committing funding	Total funding committed	No. providers wanting to purchase but not committing funding
Work experience placements	15	£85,109	4
Work-related learning activity sessions	6	£20,486	2
Total		£105,595	

**3. Are there any service activities that BHEBS does not currently provide that your organisation would purchase?**

No (7)

Five organisations stated that they would consider purchasing other service activities:

- Apprenticeship placements (2)
- Work experience to support the raising of the participation age (1)
- Engineering and science-based activities (1)
- Longer-term placements for students on applied and vocational courses pre and post-16 (1)
- Specific provision for student with special educational needs and/or disabilities. (1)
- Other activities if offered (1)

**4. What do you think the vision and direction of BHEBS should be from September 2012?**

23 organisations made suggestions. Two organisations stated that they were unable to comment and one stated that the vision and direction of BHEBS depends on the financial commitment from education providers. The following points were made:

- Retaining the current service model and maintaining the high level of its provision. (10)
- Supporting partnerships between schools and employers. (3)
- Supporting young people's continued participation to the age of 18. (3)
- Developing young people's employability skills that are centred on the effective use of communication. (2)
- Providing high quality work experience placements that meet students' needs pre and post-16. (2)
- Effectively marketing BHEBS' services including the use of face-to face meetings and each council's communication channels. (2)
- Making closer links with Brent Youth and Connexions Service to ensure synergy between all local careers information and guidance related activities for young people. (1)
- Providing the framework for coherent centrally organised work-related learning. (1)
- Supporting schools with strategic planning for this area of the curriculum. (1)
- Continuing to support curriculum development and staff professional development.
- Providing briefings about national policy on work-related learning. (1)
- Preparing young people for work in the current economic climate. (1)
- Being flexible to respond to changing customer needs. (1)
- Increasing the number of employers on the database and the opportunities for work experience within Brent Council and Harrow Council. (1)
- Working jointly with other council services to bid for funding to deliver projects. (1)
- Increasing the type of work experience opportunities available. (1)
- Making the notification period for placements longer (three weeks). (1)
- Moving towards providing health and safety checks with students finding their own placements. (1)
- Supporting apprenticeship placements. (1)
- Organising volunteering activities. (1)
- Delivering science-related activities, manufacturing and software activities and wealth creating enterprise activities. (1)

- Brokering data gathering missions including investigations into the delivery of council-run services. (1)
- Supporting businesses with their delivery of National Vocational Qualifications. (1)

## 5. Do you have any other comments that would inform this review?

18 organisations answered this question. Three stated that they did not wish to make any other comments and 15 made the following points:

- BHEBS provides very good materials for its activities and delivers the activities efficiently and smoothly. BHEBS quickly responds to feedback and is an excellent partnership organisation. (6)
- Education providers and businesses praised the service, and the BHEBS' manager and team for their professionalism and dedication. (5)
- Business partners stated that they want a single point of contact. They would not welcome multiple approaches from schools. BHEBS has strong relationships with employers and a successful track record. One of these business partners stated that BHEBS is the most efficient London organisation that it deals with in this area of work. (3)
- The partnership between BHEBS and local businesses helps students, including those from disadvantaged backgrounds to develop employability skills. (3)
- The service is good but reductions in budgets have made delivery difficult. There should therefore be a move towards supporting work places and training at work. (1)
- One education provider stated that it had to reluctantly reduce the amount of work-related learning activities that it purchases because of tighter funding constraints. (1)
- BHEBS provides value for money. (1)
- The service must be kept affordable without compromising its quality. (1)
- The councils should encourage more local businesses to offer work experience. (1)
- The service should place greater emphasis on delivery post-16 and providing placements of up to a month for the unemployed. (1)
- Employability skills are vital in current economic climate. The service's continuity is therefore very important for the longer-term. Its closure would be an "ill-thought through short-term decision". (1)
- Students could benefit from greater contact with employers in the school curriculum to develop their employability skills. (1)
- BHEBS' work on employability skills helps to reduce welfare payments. (1)
- Businesses and their employees benefit from participating in activities with students. (1)
- One provider stated that because BHEBS could not provide the number of work experience places that it required for its students in July it had switched to another provider of placements. (1)

## C Next steps

Brent Council and Harrow Council officers will use this summary of responses to the joint review of Brent and Harrow Education Business Service to inform an options paper on the future of the service for each of Brent Council and Harrow Council's directorates of children's services. A key factor that will determine the options is whether the financial sum of the services that stakeholders confirmed that they will purchase in their answers to question 2, balances with the cost of the current service structure or a revised service structure. It is

anticipated that the decision on the service's future will be made in May. If the option chosen requires changes that affect staffing, Harrow Council will implement its *Protocol for Managing Change* for its staff and Brent Council will implement its *Managing Change Policy* for its staff. In this event, both councils will, where possible, follow the same timetables for change and aim to complete the process by 31<sup>st</sup> August 2012.

#### **D Contact details**

<b>Brent</b>	<b>Harrow</b>
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