



**The LMI need of Young people, Parents, Teachers
and IAG Professionals: A report to the Regional 14-19
Commission**

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1 Introduction

The five years, between the ages of 14-19, is probably the time when most young people make some of the most far-reaching decisions about their futures, through subject choices at school and their initial choice of learning pathway at the age of 16. Hence an understanding of the nature of the regional and sub-regional labour market, including the volume of opportunities and emerging trends, along with access to robust careers and learning options information, is vital for each young person, and those who assist them, in making informed choices.

The Centre for Economic Performance at the London School of Economics¹, in their recent review of research on schools' careers and education guidance packages, identified that:

- Only half of 16 and 17-year-olds said the support they had received had been helpful; 58% said they would have liked more
- Another study of university applicants showed 60% of those surveyed had not received enough information, or in some cases no information, about the relationship between higher education courses and employment.

Similarly, a report by the charity, The Sutton Trust, highlights the "inadequate and inappropriate" careers and education advice state school pupils receive, which means "swathes" of young people with the potential to go to university are missing out.

These and other research outcomes highlight the need to support all young people, but particularly those from disadvantaged areas and from families where high aspiration or the experience of going into higher education is unusual. Given the history of lower participation in HE in this region, young people from the North East need strong support to encourage them to aim higher, and to understand the job and career opportunities available in the region.

The 2007 Sainsbury Review of Science and Innovation report is clear about the importance of labour market information:

'Good careers advice is critical for pupils to be able to understand the opportunities available to them and to raise their aspirations. Careers advice should be firmly rooted in the labour market (present and predicted future) and careers advisors should have excellent knowledge of both these trends and of the learning routes to get there.'²

The range of LMI provided must support all routes open to young people with the options of progressing through routes including Apprenticeships, Diplomas, Foundation Degrees, and BTEC, as well as higher education. It is important that robust evidence of all opportunities is provided to make informed decisions.

In recognition of this, the Regional 14-19 Commission asked denishallassociates in November 2008 to initiate a project that:

¹ 'Poor advice hinders university access', Andrea Lipcott, Guardian, October 28 2008

² The Race to the Top, A Review of Government's Science and Innovation Policies, Lord Sainsbury of Turville, 2007. The report can be found at: http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/sainsbury_index.htm

- develops a better understanding of the LMI needs of key stakeholders in the region (including young people, parents, IAG practitioners, teachers and others in the education and learning system)
- explores the extent to which currently available LMI meets these needs, and
- makes recommendations about how the supply of LMI might be improved to meet identified needs.

For the purposes of the research project, the Commission defined LMI in a broad sense as:

- *'Intelligence relating to the labour market which includes data on: current and future employment; earnings and working conditions; required qualifications and standards; career paths and progression routes (including both from education to employment and during employment)'*.

This report therefore outlines the main findings of the research and suggests some ways forward to improve the supply and accessibility of labour market information in the region.

2 The policy context

The Department for Children, Schools and Families has recently announced their intention to publish a national Information, Advice and Guidance strategy for young people. It is anticipated that this will be published in the early spring of 2009.

The strategy sets out 3 key expectations of schools, i.e. that they will:

- embed information about careers into the wider curriculum and provide high quality programmes of careers education within PSHE
- provide a "first line" of information, advice and guidance – at least partly through personal tutors
- develop effective partnerships with external IAG providers.

Clearly, Local Authorities (LAs) and 14-19 Partnerships will be expected to play leading roles in the implementation of the Strategy. Hence it will outline the statutory directions and provide guidance on the LA responsibility for IAG, with an aim to:

- Improve the consistency of provision in different LA area
- Make clear what LAs are expected to deliver
- Make clear how DCSF expect them to do this.

Importantly, the Strategy aims to provide an IAG Guarantee to young people, as:

- Improvements will be underpinned by a clear articulation, for parents and their children, of the services that they can expect from the different parts of the delivery system
- Feedback from young people and their parents will be embedded across the delivery system as the main measure of the quality of provision.

Hence the Commission's timely focus on IAG and the use of LMI in the guidance process should greatly assist the implementation of the National IAG Strategy in the region.

3 The Approach

The research methodology consisted of the following stages:

3.1 Gathering views on the LMI needs of the stakeholders

The research has involved gathering the views and perceptions directly from young people along with those of their parents, teachers and those who provide information, advice and guidance about their course and career choices.

The support and enthusiasm of some of the members of the Commission enhanced the methodology that was initially proposed, as it provided the research team with the opportunity to undertake their interviews and focus groups with each of the key audiences within the same four educational institutions; three schools in Newcastle, South Tyneside and Durham and a sixth form college in Tees Valley.

Hence the team was able to access:

- Young People through:
 - Group work in the four institutions, with around 100 young people in years 9,10, 11 and 13
 - The 14-19 Commission Youth Advisory Board, who provided access to a group of young people who are attending 'Alternative Education' provision away from their school.
- The Education sector through specialist careers staff, teachers, tutors, Aim Higher and Gifted and Talented advisers, Progression Coaches, trainers and lecturers in:
 - 3 Secondary Schools
 - 1 Sixth Form College
 - 1 Work-based learning provider
 - Further Education and Sixth Form Colleges
 - County Durham Children's Services staff with expertise in Learners with Learning Difficulties or Disabilities

In addition, the team also benefitted from the assistance and advice of staff from the Learning and Skills Council North East, FE and HE providers Careers Services, Universities for the North East.

- With IAG professionals, through focus groups with Connexions Personal Advisers, LLDD specialist advisers, Training Managers and interviews with management/Heads of Service
- With Parents, through:
 - Attendance at a parents evening in one of the three schools
 - A focus group of parents in one of the three schools
 - Discussions with the Manager of a Tyneside Surestart centre
 - Consultation with young people and teachers about the perceptions and expectations of parents.

(A full list of those consulted is provided in Appendix 1.)

As well as identifying their information needs, the team attempted to assess the perceptions of young people and their parents, in order to develop an understanding of the extent to which they need to be supported to reframe their understanding of the labour market.

Hence the team not only enquired about the current sources that each of the target groups use but also asked participants about their level of understanding about:

- The largest sectors e.g. which sector employs most people in NE?
- Knowledge gaps; for example do they know that 77,000 people work in the NHS in this region, just over 50 per cent of whom are non-clinical staff?
- In which jobs are the top earners?
- How do they find out about employment in the region – press/media, other sources etc.

3.2 Assessment of current LMI

The research into what LMI is currently used, and how it is used, was carried out by desktop research into the sources of LMI that IAG providers currently use and through the interviews and focus groups with the different communities.

The intention was not only to develop an understanding of what young people use to inform their decisions, and to what extent this is through the IAG channels, but also to evaluate their use of other sources such as news, media etc or from other 'key influencers' in their lives.

The team also engaged with regional and national contacts in Sector Skills Councils, the Learning and Skills Council North East, Department of Universities, Innovation and Skills (DIUS), Regional Development Agencies and Local Authority Economic Development Units to assess their current provision of LMI and their capacity to assist in delivering the Commission's vision.

3.3 Identifying the gaps in LMI

The views and evidence collected through Steps 1 and 2, formed the basis for an analysis of where there are gaps in the current provision of LMI for:

- Young people
- Their parents
- IAG practitioners and
- Those working with young people in schools, colleges, other learning providers and other youth support organisations.

3.4 Identifying good practice

The team also researched what LMI is used and how it is used across England, the UK and internationally, through desk research and discussions with national policy bodies and professional organisations including:

- English RDAs and their skills observatories
- Department for Children Schools and Families
- Institute of Career Guidance
- The Association for Careers Education and Guidance
- National Guidance Research Forum
- National Institute of Careers Education and Counselling
- Higher Education Careers Services Unit (HECSU)
- International Association for Educational and Vocational Guidance
- Sector Skills Councils
- Connexions Kent
- Connexions East Midlands
- European Union DG Emploi
- North of England Office, Brussels
- German Embassy London
- Le Centre d'Information et de Documentation Jeunesse in Paris.

In addition, the team was grateful for the support of a number of Education Business Partnership managers and 14-19 Coordinators in the region, who cited websites and other sources of LMI that they have found useful for the research.

3.5 Recommendations for the development of LMI

The views and observations gathered through the first four phases have enabled the team to assess:

- The current perception about employment in the North East
- The information needs of the different audiences
- What is currently available for each of the different audiences,

as well as to identify:

- The need for further research to increase the stock of LMI
- The mechanisms for providing LMI that may be most suitable for the different audiences
- Identify some effective practice in other regions,

in order to inform the development of a regional LMI strategy.

4 The findings

The major findings from the research about the need for, and access to, labour market information are outlined below.

4.1 The information, advice and guidance infrastructure

Though the research did not set out to examine the provision of careers education and IAG in the region, it is important to understand the context in which young people access and develop their understanding about the regional labour market. We observed that:

- A wide range of people are engaged in supporting the choice of pathways for young people in school, Work-based Learning providers and or college. The support infrastructure includes:
 - Aim Higher Coordinators
 - Progression coaches
 - Gifted and Talented Coordinators
 - Careers teachers
 - Year tutors
 - Subject and vocational teachers/tutors/lecturers
 - Community Education staff (teaching those excluded from school or in 'alternative education')
 - WBL trainers and placement assessors
 - Connexions Personal Advisers, etc,

all of whom need at least an overview of the regional labour market

- Few seem to have this - and fewer still have an understanding of, or refer to, the Priority Sectors that are the focus of the Regional Economic Strategy, even though

these are the sectors that employ the largest numbers of people in the region and/or are expected to grow

- Approaches to careers education are very diverse too. Many schools appear not to have a formal careers education programme, and the role in giving advice on subject and course/career choice is given to year tutors (many of whom do not believe that they have a sound knowledge base about careers and employment options)
- Emphasis in some schools appears to be on subject and course choice, and schools recognize that they are better at this than ten years ago. Is it impartial - and comprehensive - in terms of the range of options and pathways that are presented to young people?
- Schools face considerable pressure in delivering a robust careers programme, personal, social and health education, citizenship and a range of other pastoral activities along with the demands of the secondary curriculum
- It is clear that, despite these pressures, staff work hard to provide these programmes. This was particularly noticeable in one of the schools, where many of the young people follow a programme leading to an ASDAN award, resulting in a marked growth in the knowledge about occupations and the labour market between Year 9 and Year 11 pupils
- There is an ambition amongst some headteachers to improve the amount and the quality of careers education for young people
- Some schools are currently reviewing their provision of careers education, as there is a wish to improve the support and status of the careers teams, their access to professional development and the place of careers education in the curriculum
- The take-up of the Connexions services by schools varies across the region, with many schools arranging interviews for all Year 11 pupils, though it seems that some schools only refer those pupils who are not likely, or predicted to do well enough to stay to the sixth form
- In terms of Connexions, the service offer and focus appears to vary across the region; from 'supported self-help for those who can be independent' and a focus on youngsters 'at risk' in Northumberland, to every school in Darlington being offered a Personal Adviser for up to 4.5 days each week
- Not all schools have developed a strong working relationship with Connexions, though there are some very good examples of where it is working well. In one school, for example, there are a large number of posters on display, produced by Tyne and Wear Connexions, showing ex-pupils and how they have progressed into further education, training and jobs. In another of the four schools, the Connexions Personal Adviser is in school for four days each week and is integrated into the school learning support team

- Though not all Personal Advisers may agree, one member of Connexions staff, in commenting on his role in a school with strong subject and course support said, "LMI is surely Connexion's unique selling point' for schools.

4.2 The LMI needs of Teachers and IAG professionals

- Teachers and IAG professionals use the term 'LMI' to mean a range of things, from long term labour market trends and occupation profiles to information about immediate local employment opportunities
- Overall, as they lack sources of robust and impartial long-term trend information, they appear to be strongly influenced by what they learn from the press and media. Hence they often have a less than positive view of opportunities in the region's labour market
- Both subject teachers and those involved as year tutors or careers teachers are not confident that they know enough about the labour market in order to advise young people
- School staff and IAG providers are particularly aware that the increase in the take-up of the new Diplomas will require a greater understanding of the region's labour market
- Some but not all, teachers are now aware that the new Secondary Curriculum, as it moves into Year 8 and 9 in the next two years may also require a better understanding of the skills, occupations and overall regional economic environment that may relate to school subject teaching
- Virtually all of the school careers and IAG staff are aware of the need to know more. At the same time, they appear under considerable pressure to deliver their subjects and meet school targets. Thus they find it difficult to see where they can steal the time to improve their careers and labour market knowledge unless it becomes a higher priority in school
- Some headteachers recognize this and have expressed a concern that their staff may express opinions that are drawn from their own experience rather than based on robust up-to-date information, as young people turn to them regularly for advice; "Saying you don't know something is difficult for teachers as they are viewed as the experts by their pupils'
- Headteachers want access to robust LMI to assist them in curriculum planning and to reflect the fact that many of their pupils hope to stay in the region to work and study. The inclusion of an item on LMI at the SchoolsNorthEast Board in recent months is testament to this
- Lecturers in Further Education Colleges appear to be more involved in keeping abreast of trends. However, they still seek a better understanding, which they glean from reports published for different audiences like, for instance, the recent Priority Sector Labour Market reports for Inward Investors produced by One North East

- Connexions staff have different LMI needs, depending on their client group. Those whose caseloads are predominantly made up of young people who are not engaged, or at risk of disengagement with learning, seek sources of very local, and often very immediate LMI, whilst those with a broader caseload are interested in longer term trends. Overall, most staff also recognize that there is a need to strengthen their knowledge of the overall occupational and employment patterns in the North East
- Connexions Heads of Service see developing a better understanding of occupational and employment patterns and the ability to use and interpret LMI as a priority for Personal Advisors
- Importantly too, there is a recognition that there is a training need amongst some Connexions staff to improve their skills, confidence and sensitivity in using LMI in the guidance process
- All of these professional audiences feel that there is very little information produced specifically to meet their needs
- In general, they want short, sharp and up-to-date facts that they can use confidently, without having to interpret data
- They prefer to receive this information through pro-active alerts, especially through e-mailed newsletters, along with effectively coordinated LMI events, workshops and conferences
- They would also welcome a central source of more in-depth regional and national sources should they need them.

Overall, the current provision of LMI through school careers education programmes and school-based IAG provision is patchy across the region, and occupational knowledge and LMI does not seem to be a high priority.

4.3 The LMI needs of young people and their parents

4.3.a Young peoples' needs and perceptions

The focus groups and events that were arranged by the four institutions, provided access to the views of over one hundred young people, which are outlined below:

- Young people following the 'academic route' into sixth form and beyond are predominantly focused on course choice in school and at university ('Will decide what I want to do when to get there'). Is this their real focus, or is it as a result of school priorities/pressures?
- The LMI 'needs' vary considerably among young people. Those who are least-well performing, for instance, may have need for a 1-3 year picture, and they are generally more focused on local LMI, while those looking to HE have a need for 5-7 year

projected trends in LMI

- Similarly, they often have different spatial maps; 'walking distance from home', local, sub-regional regional, national and international
- Though the sample was small, those young people currently excluded from school who attended our focus group all expect to work very near to home, confirming the observations of Connexions PAs about this particular client group
- BUT, 'There are no jobs in the North East' is probably the most commonly held view amongst the young people we met, especially those looking to HE before entering the labour market. Even young people considering teaching and nursing reported that there are no jobs in the North East
- Teachers in a number of schools mentioned that young people, including sixth form students, are strongly influenced by the historic picture of industry and employment in the North East, and that the image of working in 'industry' is still one of 'dirty' working conditions and poor prospects
- Young people are very strongly influenced by television. The number of aspiring forensic scientists, and entertainers we met amongst the 100 young people we talked to was very noticeable
- In our focus groups, we were asked lots of questions, like 'Where can I get a job using languages in the NE?'. Hence some young people may be more interested in services that help them consider the region's potential employment and career opportunities related to their strongest subjects rather than one that only provides an overview of the trends in the labour market
- Importantly, many of the young people who took part in our focus groups appeared to be energized/more optimistic after discussions about the opportunities in the North East. Hence they have a thirst for knowledge about where they might eventually start and develop their career
- Despite being excluded from school, the young people in the 'disaffected' focus group all intend to apply to an FE college, as they recognize that they need to get the entry qualifications to follow their chosen path; in most cases, an apprenticeship
- As might be expected, the young people who are following vocational educational routes in school appear to be more knowledgeable about their local labour market
- Many of the students specializing in STEM subjects saw their best prospects in the region to be in university research. Those in Tyne and Wear almost all mentioned 'Science City' as a potential career destination, but few knew of the range of other possible STEM-related sectors and employers
- We were advised by sixth form tutors that young peoples' choices of potential HE institutions often change by the time they are applying for UCAS. By this time, they

are likely to include at least one NE HEI in their choice, due in many cases to financial pressures. This may therefore be a time when they are more open to truthful but positive information about the regional labour market

- Indeed there is evidence of the correlation between success in applications to HE and access to occupational information (Findings from the First Futuretrack Survey of the 'Class of 2006' applicants for Higher Education, 2008)

4.3.b Parents' perceptions

- Parents are very supportive and want to help. As a Stockton sixth former said, "My parents would love to help if they only knew where to start"
- Overall they want to know that their child will achieve 'economic well-being and financial effectiveness' (language used is taken from the Revised Secondary curriculum) and are therefore interested in the labour market
- Their views are currently formed from their own experience, their family and friends and the press - **and these appear to be very influential of the views of their children**
- On the whole, the press presents a negative view of the labour market. For example, a recent Daily Telegraph headline, 'Graduate jobs at an all time low' - and others generally report 'departures - like closures' and 'new arrivals - new inward investors', which gives a very skewed picture of region's labour market
- Thus the press and media report on the turbulence in the regional or national labour market rather than help in growing an understanding of the structure of employment for its audiences in the region
- In a couple of instances, the mothers we talked to are very anxious that their husbands' attitudes to FE and HE. Instead they want their sons to get a job at 16, go into the army etc, like they did. Fathers may therefore be a specific group needing to hear the messages about higher level skills
- Parents think it is the school's job to sort out options and provide guidance on subjects and university courses, but perhaps feel that they should be able to help with choices about employment
- There is clear enthusiasm amongst parents and some learning providers for good information about career/LMI/destination information for those who take up vocational routes so that they can assess the likelihood of their child's success in getting into the job or sector of their choice
- Only one of the 16 parents spoken to so far knows of 'apprenticeships' and work-based learning and she has a nightmare story to tell

- Virtually all of the parents we talked to, and the parents of the young people we have met in focus groups, have an e-mail address and/or access to the internet (or know where they can get it) - including school virtual learning environments (VLEs)

Overall, the young people and their parents are fearful, and do not understand:

- The overall nature and scale of employment in the region, or
- The nature of unemployment in the North East, made up predominantly of low-skilled people, and the impact of employment patterns, including seasonal working, short-term and fixed contracts on the unemployment figures. They think unemployment is higher than it is in the NE but it is important to note that some of the young people we met have parents who have never worked

There are some very powerful positive messages that are not reaching young people and their parents about:

- the increasing levels of employment of graduates in the North East
- the overall need for better qualified new entrants to the regional labour market
- some sectors that predict growth will need more, well-qualified young people in the future
- 'succession planning' issues in some sectors that are due to the age profile of the workforce, that will necessitate employing more young people

Above all, young people and their parents do not want complex, wordy or statistics-laden descriptions of the employment structures in the region, or the rate of change in sectors. However, they do want and need assistance that helps them understand:

- What their strongest vocational or academic subjects, in combination, can lead to make occupational choices. While DCSF/Connexions Jobs4U helps with occupational choice it does not provide regional information
- Where in the region - sectors, towns, cities, areas - are their companies and organisations employing people in those occupations - travel to work LMI
- The range of local and regional (and national) learning pathways to these occupations (E-prospectus)
- The destinations of other young people in the region, for each pathway, and their rate of success in getting the job of their choice (E-prospectus).

Thus, given that most young people currently stay in the region to continue their education and training beyond 18, the provision of accurate, truthful and impartial information about the North East labour market is a fundamental need for all young people and their parents in order to both make informed choices about their education and training pathways and assess the likelihood of achieving their goal.

4.4 Providing labour market information

- The regional, national and international desk research suggests that very little LMI material is written for these audiences
- Sector Skills Councils (SSCs) are, to varying degrees, in the process of improving their provision of sector-specific labour market trend information, as they are increasingly seen by both DCSF and DIUS as the strategic lead on LMI for their sector. Most SSCs have 'Careers' sections of their websites with information for young people on work and entry routes into their sectors. A list of the SSCs with the Careers links within their websites is provided in Appendix 2
- The UK Commission for Employment and Skills have produced a Common LMI format for the SSCs and work is now underway to develop a regional template that all SSCs can use to provide LMI for their audiences
- LA Economic Development departments may be less active now in providing this information - though with the move of Connexions to LAs, this may improve once again
- Local Authority collection, where it happens, is focused on strategy, policy and planning. The data may not therefore necessarily meet the needs of young people, their parents or their professional advisers
- Even if data is available at an LA level, travel to work patterns in the region mean that, in many cases, LMI by individual local area, is not sufficient for these audiences, as they need a picture of sub-regional or regional trends
- In addition, many public sector organisations in the region collect information about the region's workforce and employer needs for their own purposes but are not maximizing its use for other audiences
- Some current providers of LMI may not be around much longer, like the North East Higher Skills Network (NEHSN) for instance
- Many of the region's IAG professionals cited the LMI newsletters that have been distributed until recently by the North East Higher Skills Network as an excellent and welcome source of LMI (commissioned by NEHSN from Focus LMI)
- Some providers (e.g. TDR and Newcastle College) have upbeat messages about industry needs. It is reported for instance that a Tyneside engineering company have a full order book for 35 years for de-mining equipment. If true, this is a very positive STEM message - but who knows this?
- This clearly raises the question about whether or not this kind of intelligence is available in the public domain, and if so, is it being shared within and across strategic organisations? If it is available, why are we not making the most of it and sharing it with young people, teachers, parents and IAG professionals?

- Employers complain that they are constantly being asked about their skills needs but they are still not being met
- Some frustrated employers are 'doing it for themselves'. Laing O'Rourke, for example, have been working directly with some Tyneside schools in an attempt to get the message across that the construction industry needs professionals, like Surveyors, and higher level skills.

4.5 Best practice

The team has attempted to identify current national and international practice that may suggest approaches that may be effective in providing LMI in the North East. Overall, the results of the research have been very disappointing:

- The North of England Office put us in touch with two organisations; European Network of Regional Labour Market Monitoring and the EU's DG Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities, but they were not able to provide any examples of effective or innovative practice. Given that the focus of the EU's Employment Week 2009 in June, 'Europe's Labour Market -ensuring growth through human capital' there may be discussions about how this might be addressed in member states
- The team, recognizing the reach of the Apprenticeship programme in Germany, had discussions with staff in the German Embassy in London. This led to a number of suggested links, but as yet, they have only provided information about the structure and take-up of apprenticeships, rather than examples of effective provision of LMI. The team, however, think this need further investigation
- There is a network of Centre d'Information Jeunesse in all of the large French cities. They provide information about careers and courses to young people and their parents who use the centre as well as through their on-line services
- The Centre in Paris, like the others, also houses an office of The Agence Nationale pour l'Emploi. ANPE handles around ninety per cent of available job vacancies in France and staff are able to provide help to visitors in accessing and interpreting statistics about job availability for their chosen occupation in their town or region, though this is not provided in either a published format or as on-line material
- The Northern Ireland Department for Employment and Skills commissioned a Best Practice Study in 2008. This report examines how labour market information, which includes information on earnings and employment, can be used to understand better the demand for skills in Northern Ireland. It demonstrates how reliable and accessible information on the labour market can help individuals make more informed choices about which careers to pursue and the education and training routes to follow and explores the role of the Economic Development Department in providing LMI for this purpose. DELNI are consequently developing a strategy to address this issue for Northern Ireland. DELNI are keen to collaborate and share their experiences with this region, as they feel that the North East is similar in character. See <http://www.delni.gov.uk/lmireview>

- Contact with all of the RDAs in the regions suggests that there are no strategic approaches in place to provide LMI for these audiences, though a number, like the South West for example, reported that their Regional Skills Partnership are beginning to recognize the need for action
- Education Business Partnerships. Our research suggests that a number of Partnerships have attempted to address this issue and the most innovative website that we have identified is provided by the Humberside EBP. It provides simple, clear and largely graphical and media-rich labour market and related occupational information, with case studies of people and their learning pathways in some of the region's largest employers. Though it provides a level of demographic detail that our research suggests may not be of interest to young people and their parents; for example information about the size of the region's working population and percentage figures about those currently in work, the team agree that it is the best site to have been uncovered through this research. See <http://www.lmihumber.co.uk/>

As we were told that there are some potential issues around intellectual property, we have not as yet spoken directly to Hull EPB or their developers. However, the overall concept to provide an overview of the main employment sectors in a spatial, geographical format is not unique, and it could fit with the emerging city-regions or sub-regional partnerships in the North East and build on the work of the Regional Skills Partnership

- Key Stage 2 Pilot. 'Headstart' is a programme of career-related learning delivered to primary school learners in Gateshead. Co-funded locally by Connexions and Aimhigher, the delivery model attracted national recognition in 2007 when it was shortlisted as a finalist in both the Aimhigher and Children and Young People's Services Awards before securing a National Career Award in 2008 from the Institute of Careers Guidance.

The programme aims to support students in exploring the connection between school subjects and the world of work and increasing their awareness of available opportunities after Year 11 and to improve the knowledge, skills and professional networks of Year 5 and 6 Tutors in teaching career-related learning. An outline of the project is included in Appendix 3.

These are but a few examples of interesting developments in improving access to LMI and the team feel that there must be other examples of good practice that could be identified through a more extensive research process.

5 The emerging issues

So there are issues about:

- Developing an understanding of the main sectors of employment in the region - and linking the RES to IAG activities

- Informing audiences about those that are likely to grow in the next ten years
- Keeping abreast of this information
- Who has strategic lead to provide LMI in the region
- Employer/IAG interface and collection of trends/demand information
- Sourcing regional LMI
- Defining IAG professionals
- Developing services for the different audiences
- Providing simple, uncomplicated messages for each audience
- Engaging with the press and media to help in changing the negative view of employment and educating its audiences about the region's employment structures
- 'Informing and empowering parents'. We need to get Passionate about Parents!

6 A way forward

The evidence suggests that there is a need for a strategic approach to meeting the LMI needs of young people, their parents, teachers and IAG professionals. The strategy must be sufficiently and significantly resourced in terms of:

- money for both the start-up and delivery for a period of 2-3 years
- partnership working, that effectively and meaningfully harnesses the specific expertise of the key agencies for a period of 2-3 years
- professional development time for teachers, head teachers and senior managers and IAG professionals
- strategic activity by key agencies to move this agenda forward, develop consensus working, engage with the media etc.

Such a strategy must recognize that:

Young people need access to:

- School/college subject and vocationally - related local and regional LMI
- An overview of the main employment sectors across the region

- The overall wages infrastructure of the main occupations in these sectors, and how these compare nationally, or with other region
- Information about broad trends over the next 7-10 years.

This information can and needs to be delivered through a variety of experiences:

- Innovative and engaging careers education programmes in schools, that use benchmarked materials and lesson plans
- Impartial IAG support
- Self-help services, including a website that provides short, sharp messages for them and their parents (See article in The Independent, 14th April 2008 about the impact of television on the attention spans of young people.
<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/education/education-news/we-cant-compete-with-television-teachers-complain-1668264.html>)
- Links to more in-depth sources, such as SSC websites.

The needs of **Parents** are not dissimilar to those outlined above, and they may also need:

- A guide to helping their children in understanding employment in the region. The Parents who were engaged in the research process highlighted that Year 9 Options in Spring term is when they feel they need most help
- A glossary of terms about changes in educational pathways and their relationship to occupations and employment
- Information provided though direct-mail, school VLE or posted invitations to engage with LMI.

Subject and Careers Education staff need:

- Training events to build their knowledge - and confidence - about the region's employment structures and patterns
- Access to electronic newsletters/e-mailed alerts
- Subject/sector specific regional briefings
- Short, punchy factsheets
- Access to more in-depth curriculum materials - for both careers education and for the new Secondary Curriculum
- Professional Development time allocated specifically for this purpose

- Access to physical and/or virtual networks to share emerging and effective practice in using LMI
- Importantly, trainers, assessors and other professionals in the region Work-based learning providers need to be proactively engaged in training events, networks and in accessing LMI, particularly as more and more of them are delivering vocational learning in partnership with schools
- They also need local, short-term intelligence about which employers and sectors that may increase their take-up of apprenticeships.

Headteachers, Principals and Senior Managers in the region's learning providers need:

- Access to briefings about the regional employment structure (Briefings provided by Redcar and Cleveland Connexions have been welcomed, for instance, by head teachers)
- Long-term LMI trend information for curriculum and programme planning.

Connexions and other IAG professionals need:

- School/college subject and vocationally - related local and regional LMI
- An overview of the main employment sectors across the region
- The overall wages infrastructure of the main occupations in these sectors, and how these compare nationally, or with other region
- Information about broad trends over the next 7-10 years
- Access to immediate/local LMI where it exists
- Local and regional collection methodologies and strategic partnerships to provide travel to work-based LMI
- Training events to build their knowledge - and confidence - about the region's employment structures and patterns
- Access to electronic newsletters/e-mailed alerts
- Subject/sector specific regional briefings
- Professional Development time allocated specifically for this purpose

- Access to physical and/or virtual networks to share emerging and effective practice in using LMI
- Assistance to develop the capacity and capability to support schools and other learning providers in improving careers education programmes and considering the LMI/regional economic needs for the revised secondary curriculum

These proposals clearly link to the work currently underway by GO-NE to examine the feasibility of a Regional Observatory for IAG Professionals. Given the developing enthusiasm for the concept, and the priority being placed by respondents on the provision of LMI, the model could be one in which:

- The Observatory is the gateway
- Skills North East becomes the main repository of information and materials, provider of newsfeeds and alerting services - as this would draw professionals to this site and hence help in broadening their knowledge/engaging them in economic development
- SchoolsNorthEast and other key sites are used to promote these services to schools.

Though this is a challenging menu of activities, it is clearly much needed and if delivered it offers the region the opportunity to not only to prepare itself for the forthcoming national IAG Strategy for Young people from DCSF and the implementation of DIUS' Adult Advancement and Careers Service but also to be the first region to take such a brave and strategic approach.

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APPENDIX 1
Organisations and people consulted

Organisation	Contact	Role
DCSF	Damon Boxer	
Association for Careers Education and Guidance (ACEG)	Sue Barr	Regional lead for ACEG
National Guidance Research Forum	Sally-Anne Barnes	Lead on the development of the LMI section of the NGRF website
National Institute for Careers Education and Counselling	Contacted NICEC who passed on request for help to their members	
International Association for Educational and Vocational Guidance		
Secondary Schools		
Harton Technology College	Chris Braybrook Brian Steele Lynne Culkin Years 9 and 10 students Teachers focus group Parents Focus Group	Deputy Head Head of Careers Curriculum Manager
Kenton School	David Pearmain Val Wigram Wendy Johnson Judith Ogden Lisa Philson Kathryn Zelles Neena Chopra	Headteacher Deputy Headteacher Careers Lead teacher Work-related learning Coordinator Aim Higher Coordinator Gifted and talented Coordinator Connexions secondee to cover Kathryn's maternity leave
Shotton Hall School	Maggie Saxton Helen Marshall Wider Careers and support team Focus groups with Student Years 9,10 and 11	Assistant Head Connexions School PA
Kingsmeadow School	Alternative Education Group Lobley Hill Community Centre	Facilitated by Neil Burke

FE		
Newcastle College	Rob Storey and Gordon Crombie	School of Applied Science
Gateshead College	Mike Burns	Lead Careers Adviser
Sixth Form Colleges		
Stockton Sixth Form College	Lynne Leary	
Work Based Learning Providers		
TDR Group	Ian Young Paul Lund Ken Sutton Linda Croudace	Manager Science Faculty Manager
Barnardos	Liz Jefferies	Childrens Services Manager
LLDD Services		
Newcastle Connexions LLDD Service	Rod Ferguson	Lead Personal Advisor (LLDD)
Children's Services Staff with expertise in LLDD	Anne Morrell	Coordinator of Sensory Support Services, County Durham Childrens Services
Regional Connexions Services		
Connexions Northumberland	Sally Weir Manager Northumberland Personal Advisers Focus group Northumberland LMI Meeting	Chief Executive Personal Advisers
Connexions North Tyneside	Martin Lightfoot Focus group of North Tyneside Personal Advisers	Head of Service
Connexions Stockton on Tees	Terry Frank Andy Hatley 2 Personal Advisor Focus groups	Head of Service IAG Development Manager Personal Advisers
Connexions Middlesbrough	John Keelty (Manager) and Management Team	Joint meeting with Redcar and Cleveland Connexions Management Team
Connexions Newcastle upon Tyne	Sarah Morgan Evans Rod Ferguson Gordon Miller Peter Wilkinson	Head of Service Lead Personal Advisor (LLDD) Personal Advisor Personal Advisor
Connexions South Tyneside	Peter Robertson Matt Joyce	Head of Service Personal Advisor
Connexions Redcar and Cleveland	David Carson Members of Management Team	Head of Service Joint meeting with Middlesbrough Connexions Management team

Connexions Darlington	Deborah Archer Focus Group of Connexions Personal Advisers	Head of Service
Connexions County Durham	Janice Bray Stephen Crass Pam Focus group of Connexion Managers	Head of Service Training Manager Information Manager
Connexions Sunderland	Neil Burlinson	Head of Service
Connexions Tyne and Wear	Tony Welsh Debbie Smith	
14-19 Coordinators		
Darlington	Helen Ellison and Lynne Kilpatrick (IAG Advisor)	
Gateshead	Henry Edwards	14-19 Coordinator
Northumberland	Mark Fox Margaret Fosdick	On secondment from Connexions to develop the 14-19 prospectus including developing LMI 14-19 Coordinator
Stockton	Clare Robinson	14-19 Coordinator
Higher Education		
Sunderland University	Neil Evans Focus group of QCG students	Programme Leader of QCG
North East Higher Education Careers Advisory Services	Anne Burlinson Barbara Phillips Kerr Ann Smart	Sunderland University Newcastle University Northumbria University
Other Contacts		
ONE NorthEast	Liz Robson	LMI Analyst
LSC North East	Helen Radcliffe Andrew Rowell John Taylor	National Apprenticeship Service Information Specialist 14-19 Manager
Government Office North East	Jackie McHanwell	
14-19 Commission LMI sub-group members	Andy Hatelý Peter Robertson	IAG Development Manager Stockton Connexions Head of Service, South Tyneside Connexions
14-19 Commission Youth Advisory Board	Neil Burke Laura Wright	Lead on the Youth Advisory Board for the 14-19 Commission

Regional Sector Skills Councils	Gordon Jackson	Regional lead on LMI All SSC websites used and assessed as part of research
Newcastle upon Tyne Surestart, Sure Start West Riverside Children's Centre	Lin Simmonds	Planning and Commissioning Manager
Schools North East	Rebecca Earnshaw Judith Taylor	Director Researcher
Gateshead Council Children and Young People's Service (Key Stage 2 national Pilot)	Gavin Bradshaw	Over 11 Lead – Central Area
Tyne and Wear Education Business Link Organisation (TWEBLO)	Graeme Miller	General Manager
Tees Valley Education Business Partnership	Amanda Olvanhill	
Universities for the North East	Shona Paul	
North East Higher Skills Network	Sue Stockwell	
North East Regional Information Partnership (NERIP)	Jon Carling	Head of NERIP
Aim Higher (Tyne and Wear/Northumberland)	Sue Blakemore	Coordinator
Northumberland InfoNet	Philip Hamner	Manager
Connexions Northamptonshire	Linda Bristow	IAGS Development Manager
Connexions Kent		David Milton Head of Partnership Development
North of England Office, Brussels	Kim Smouter	EU Skills and Employability Policy Specialist Advisor
European Network of Regional Labour Market Monitoring	Dr. Christa Larsen	
Napier University Edinburgh	Prof. Ronald McQuaid	Member of European Network of Regional Labour Market Monitoring
German Embassy, London	Martina Borgfeldt	Assistant Attache
Centre d'Information Jeunesse Quai Branly, Paris	Nicholas Vasaslim	
Northern Ireland Department for Employment and Skills	Victor Dukelow	Head of Economic Development

APPENDIX 2

Sector Skills Councils

The majority of sector skills councils (SSC) (21 out of 25) have areas of their websites or sub-sites with careers information about their sector.

The SSCs with no specific mention of careers are typically those covering the public sector.

The 25 SSCs are listed below with the web-link to the area of the site that provides careers information.

Asset Skills

Facilities management, housing, property, planning, cleaning and parking.

<http://www.findyourway.co.uk/>

Cogent

Chemicals and Pharmaceuticals, Oil and Gas, Nuclear, Petroleum and Polymer Industries.

<http://www.cogent-careers.com/>

ConstructionSkills

Every part of the Construction industry

No specific sub-site for careers information

Creative and Cultural Skills

Creative & Cultural Skills is the Sector Skills Council for advertising, crafts, cultural heritage, design, music, performing, literary and visual arts.

<http://www.creative-choices.co.uk/>

e-skills UK

e-skills UK is the Sector Skills Council for Business and Information Technology.

<http://www.e-skills.com/careers>

Energy & Utility Skills

Energy & Utility Skills is the Sector Skills Council for the electricity, gas, waste management and water industries.

<http://www.euskills.co.uk/careers/index.php?pageID=202>

Financial Services Skills Council

The Financial Services industry including insurance and accounting.

<http://www.fssc.org.uk/careers.html>

GoSkills

Passenger Transport industries

http://www.goskills.org/index.php/standards_quals/21

Government Skills

Central Government, all civil service departments and agencies, unaffiliated non-departmental government bodies and Armed Forces.

No specific sub-site for careers information

IMI

IMI is the Sector Skills Council for the retail motor industry.

<http://www.motor.org.uk/careers/index.html>

Improve Ltd

Improve is the Sector Skills Council for Food and Drink Manufacturing and Processing.

<http://www.improve-skills.co.uk/careers>

Lantra

The environmental and land-based sector.

<http://www.lantra.co.uk/young-people-and-parents/>

Lifelong Learning UK

Community Learning and Development, Further Education, Higher Education, Libraries, Archives and Information Services and Work Based Learning.

No specific sub-site for careers information

People 1st

Contract Food Service Providers, Events, Gambling, Holiday Parks, Hospitality Services, Hostels, Hotels, Membership Clubs, Pubs, Bars and Nightclubs, Restaurants, Self-Catering Accommodation, Tourist Services, Travel Services and Visitor Attractions.

<http://www.uksp.co.uk/>

Proskills

The building products, coatings, extractive and mineral processing, furniture, furnishings & interiors, glass & glazing, glazed ceramics, paper and printing industries which make up the process and manufacturing sector.

http://www.proskills.co.uk/proskills_careersv2.asp

SEMTA

The Sector Skills Council for Science, Engineering & Manufacturing Technologies.

http://www.semta.org.uk/careers_qualifications.aspx

Skillfast-UK

Fashion and textiles: design, manufacturing and servicing of clothing, footwear and textile fabrics.

<http://www.skillfast-uk.org/justthejob/>

SkillsActive

The active leisure and learning industry embracing sport and fitness, outdoors and adventure, playwork, camping and caravanning.

<http://www.skillsactive.com/careers/>

Skills for Care and Development

Social care, children and young people's workforces.

No specific sub-site for careers information

Skillset

Creative Media: TV, Film, Radio, Publishing, Interactive Media, Computer Games, Animation, Photo Imaging and Facilities

<http://www.skillset.org/careers/>

Skills for Health

The UK health sector.

No specific sub-site for careers information

Skills for Justice

The justice sector.

<http://www.skillsforjustice.com/careers.asp?pageid=78>

Skills for Logistics

Freight Logistics industries

<http://www.careers.skillsforlogistics.org/>

Skillsmart Retail

Skillsmart is the Sector Skills Council for retail.

http://www.skillsmartretail.com/categories.php?categories_id=1

SummitSkills

Building Services Engineering: Electro-technical, Heating, Ventilating, Air Conditioning, Refrigeration and Plumbing industries

<http://www.summitskills.org.uk/careers/23>

APPENDIX 3

HeadStart

The Headstart project is a programme of career- related learning delivered to primary school learners in Gateshead, Tyne and Wear.

Co-funded locally by Connexions and Aimhigher, the delivery model attracted national recognition in 2007 when it was shortlisted as a finalist in both the Aimhigher and Children and Young People's Services Awards before securing a National Career Award in 2008 from the Institute of Careers Guidance.

The programme aims to support students in:

- exploring the connection between school subjects and the world of work;
- challenging their own perceptions of gender stereotyping;
- increasing their awareness of available opportunities after Year 11.

Furthermore, the project aims to improve:

- the knowledge, skills and professional networks of Year 5 and 6 Tutors in teaching career-related learning;
- the professional practice of staff working in the 'teenage' services and the skills required to work with a younger target group;
- existing models of good practice in the complex and often problematic area of raising learners' aspirations.

Since the pilot phase of 2004, Head Start has covered 18 schools, engaging more than 500 pupils and delivering over 300 workshops.

The delivery is through a combination of activities

- Pupils and tutors and some parents/carers visiting Newcastle University
- Access to a curriculum consultant to help development of lesson plans and resources to support careers related learning
- Workshops using employees (e.g. Proctor and Gamble, BT, Gateshead Council, NHS etc) as facilitators providing role models, challenging stereotypes, linking to HE
- Plenary session - question and answers

Comments from report (from Gavin Bradshaw)

A myriad of research continues to highlight the family as the most potent influence on children's aspirations. While Headstart has been able to involve parents on university visits and in plenary sessions, we are determined to develop these links further. Gateshead is in the process of submitting a final proposal for the DCSF Key Stage 2 Pathfinder, first announced in the Children's Plan in December 2007. New approaches are likely to include an increased use of drama as a medium to engage parents and possibly co-ordinating a Higher Education

presence at school parents' evenings to de-mystify university life and even re-engage adults into learning.

The migration of Connexions services to local authority control from April 2008 has, in some ways, softened the teenage remit, many areas now aligning IAG services to the full 0-19 age spectrum, while the increasing complexity of the 14-19 offer has further galvanised the need for age-appropriate careers education at an earlier stage.

The Headstart approach would appear to chime with the emerging policy context, not least the Every Child Matters emphasis upon early intervention and, more recently, the review of the primary curriculum being led by Sir Jim Rose.

"When learning is relevant to people's lives and circumstances, and they can see the benefits, they are more likely to want to continue. Underlying skills are essential, but pupils cannot develop these in a vacuum. They have to be placed in context. It (the curriculum) must be relevant to young people's aspirations, whatever these may be".

Practitioners working in or alongside the primary school sector are encouraged to embrace the idea that an early experience of careers-related learning can help galvanise a disposition towards learning and bring a 'can do' approach to many other aspects of young people's schooling.

We should reflect that; "Career-related learning is not careers education, nor even pre-careers education. It is helping children to link learning to life".