

The Third Sector National Learning Alliance (TSNLA) contributes a strong, independent, national 'voice' for Third Sector providers of learning and skills to the development of national policy and programmes. This briefing paper forms part of a series commissioned by the Learning and Skills Council to set out the transition from the LSC to two new agencies, the Skills Funding Agency and the Young People's Learning Agency.

Third Sector Briefing Paper: Young People's Learning Agency

December 2009

Background

In line with the White Paper **Raising Expectations: enabling the system to deliver**¹, the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) will be replaced by the Young People's Learning Agency (YPLA) and the Skills Funding Agency (SFA) from April 2010. The transition marks a key change in the way funding is channelled into learning and skills and separates 0-19 and post-19 provision. This briefing document focuses on pre-19 provision and the YPLA, its role, its relationship with regional and local stakeholders including Third Sector National Learning Alliance (TSNLA), and the significance of that role for third sector learning providers.

¹ The Machinery of Government change announced in June 2007 transfers funding for 16-18 participation to local authorities, See http://www.dius.gov.uk/~media/publications/R/Raising_Expectations to download the White Paper **Raising Expectations: enabling the system to deliver**

Key changes to education and skills for young people: the 14-19 reform

- **The 14-19 Entitlement** means that by 2013 every young person will have an entitlement to choose any one of the 14 new diplomas. These are qualifications that will combine practical skill development with theoretical and technical understanding and knowledge. They will offer all young people different ways of learning and a route into higher education and employment.
- From April 2010 local authorities will control budgets for commissioning education and training and will need to show that plans are in place to secure places for each young person aged 16-18 and for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities (LLDD) up to the age of 25.
- As part of the 14-19 reform, legislated by the Education and Skills Act 2008, the minimum age of participation in education or training will rise to 17 in 2013 and to 18 by 2015, **or** until a Level 3 qualification is achieved, whichever is the soonest.

All of the above will aim to put the needs of children and young people first and to deliver the aims of Every Child Matters. Local authorities will need to access accurate market intelligence to forecast and commission an appropriate quantity, quality and diversity of training places sufficient to meet the needs of 16-18s in their area.

The huge impact on regional and local structures and spending is recognised by DCSF, which has funded a small task and finish unit known as React within the Local Government Association (LGA). Together with the LGA regional networks services and the Association of Directors of Children's Services (ADCS), React will provide support to local authorities and liaise with public, private and third sector stakeholders.

React and the LSC have been working with TSNLA and the LGA to produce a protocol on future working arrangements post April 2010². The purpose of the protocol is to supplement local compact documents where appropriate and to serve as a reminder of the key part the third sector can play in delivering the 14 – 19 agenda successfully.

According to guidance published by DCSF, "it is essential that the Partnership has a fully inclusive membership. Partnerships draw their membership from the local authority, LSC (until 2010), IAG providers, secondary schools, colleges, work-based

² Download the protocol at <http://www.lga.gov.uk/lga/core/page.do?pageId=4045612>

learning providers, HE institutions (HEIs), employers or intermediary bodies, the voluntary and community sector and others.”³

TSNLA is representing third sector interests at national level. The Children’s Trusts and 14-19 Partnerships are key routes for third sector organisations to contribute at local authority level. Third sector representation is important to ensure effective participation in consultation on services to be commissioned, particularly in flagging up services that can add to the range, quality and volume of learning opportunities and qualifications required. The LSC’s third sector unit is collating and updating a spreadsheet that shows every 14-19 Partnership in England and identifies whether there is a third sector representative as recommended by DCSF guidance.⁴

³ **14-19 Partnerships and planning** (January 2009), React/DSCF

⁴ Contact the LSC’s third sector unit on 0247 682 3520 for a copy of the 14-19 Partnership spreadsheet

What is the Young People's Learning Agency (YPLA)?

The Apprentices, Skills, Learning and Children Act 2009 passed into legislation on 12 November 2009 and has established the YPLA as a Non-Departmental Public Body (NDPB) with funding responsibilities for education and training provision for young people aged 16-19 and for 19-25 year olds assessed for a learning difficulty and/or disability and for young people in custody⁵.

The YPLA will:

- produce a **National Statement of Priorities** based on data covering participation, attainment and economic development to guide investment
- oversee a budget of £7 billion being transferred to local authorities for the purpose of commissioning education and training for young people
- give strategic analytical support to the planning and commissioning process
- support the 14-19 **Regional Planning Groups** (RPGs) in aligning regional with national plans
- support local authorities in meeting their new responsibilities of commissioning learning and training for 0-19s, plus the support and guidance services needed to access these opportunities
- encourage collaboration between and clustering of local authorities to develop strategic approaches to provision within the travel to learn area
- check local authority plans for compliance with the concept of 14-19 entitlement
- take over responsibility for all open academies from the Department of Children, Schools and Families (DCSF)
- have dedicated third sector staff and maintain a third sector section on their website

⁵ **Commissioning and Funding 16-19 Education and Training April 2010 to March 2011** (November 2009) React/LGA.

The YPLA will lead on the implementation of the National Planning and Commissioning Framework (NCF)⁶ from 2011 to enable consistent, coherent commissioning and procurement by local authorities. Where local authorities fail to deliver sufficiently wide-ranging, high quality learning opportunities sourced from a diverse pool of providers, the YPLA will have the power to intervene.

The National Commissioning Framework will be discussed in more detail within a separate Briefing Paper in this series. The draft NCF document is currently out for consultation and can be downloaded from the DCSF website.⁷

As an extension to this series of Briefing Papers, the LSC has commissioned a Toolkit from TSNLA to help local authorities responsible for procuring learning and skills to grasp a full and complete picture of the third sector providers as well as a prospectus of what could be delivered by the sector. The toolkit will be available as a download from the TSNLA website by March 2010.

Goodbye Learning and Skills Council, hello YPLA?

The YPLA intends to build on existing resources, not start from scratch. Approximately 500 staff will transfer from the LSC to YPLA, bringing tried and tested management and systems with them. The YPLA will adapt the LSC's good practice where possible. For example, LSC policies and guidance relating to children and young people are currently under review to ensure fitness for purpose.

⁶ DCSF is currently consulting on the **National Commissioning Framework** until 5:00pm 05/02/2010.

⁷<http://publications.dcsf.gov.uk/default.aspx?PageFunction=productdetails&PageMode=publications&ProductId=DCSF-00933-2009&>

How does the YPLA connect the national to local?

The shadow YPLA is already engaged with, and supporting, the local, regional and national tiers. Staff are in the process of transferring to local authorities to establish teams with responsibility for bedding in relationships, processes and systems.

Figure 1 below explains the relationship and flows of these partnerships and their respective remits.

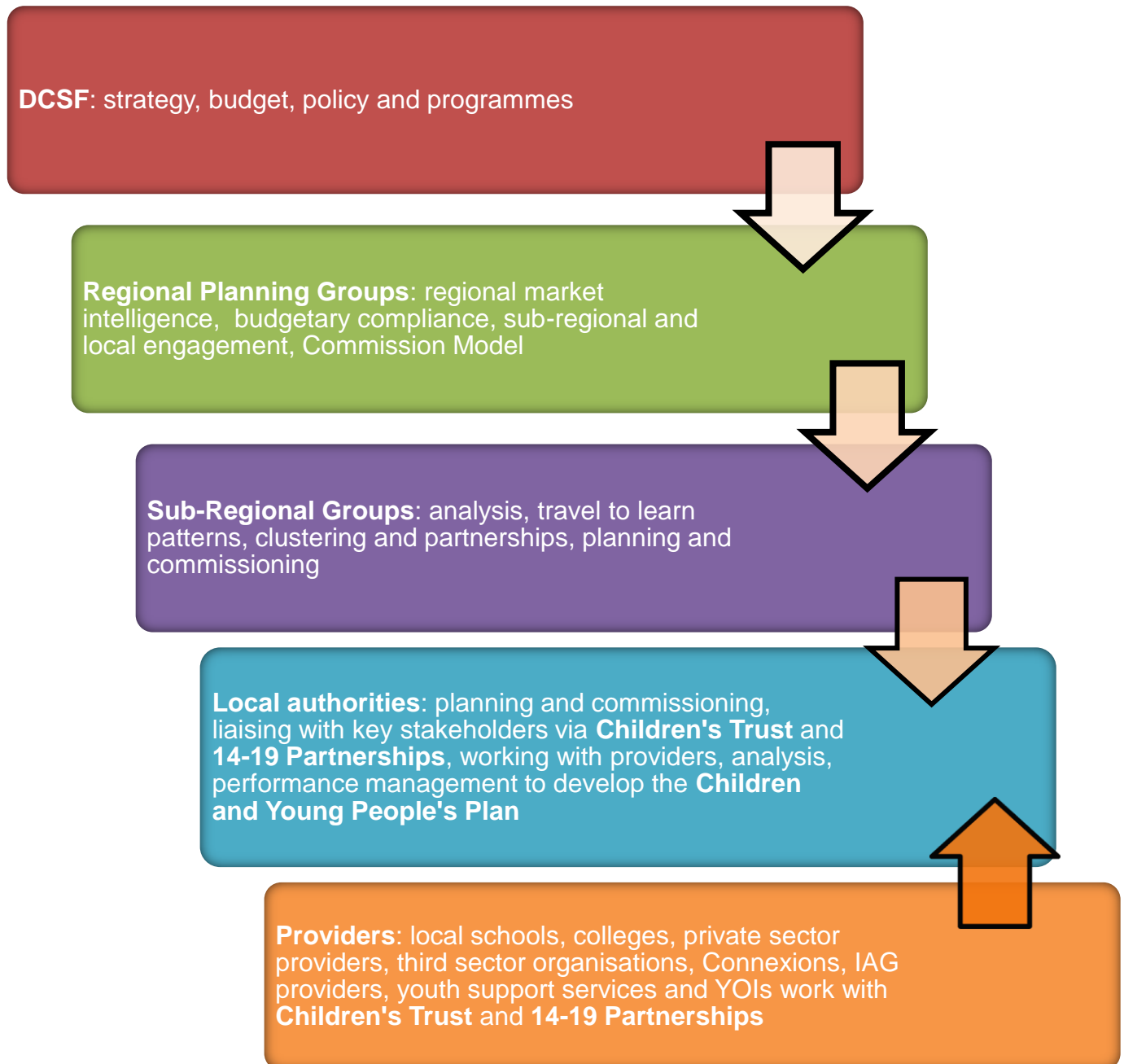


Figure 1 Partnership flows and roles

Where does the third sector fit in?

TSNLA is engaged at a national, strategic level to represent third sector interests. At local level, third sector organisations are usually represented on Children's Trusts and 14-19 Partnerships, both of which link to Local Strategic Partnerships (LSPs). For information about third sector representation on your LSP or Children's Trust, contact your local Council for Voluntary Service (CVS).

Regional Planning Groups have been established in each of the nine Government Office regions⁸ and bring together local authorities with representatives from the RDA and Skills Funding Agency. Their remit is to undertake standardised data collection and analysis, set regional priorities and ensure provision fits national, regional and local budgets. The effective representation of third sector interests is still being established at regional and sub-regional levels and capacity building is a significant issue for the sector. To find out more about how third sector representation is being co-ordinated at this level contact your regional networks, NAVCA or TSNLA — contact details are provided in the **Contacts and References** section.

Local Planning Groups take shape through the Local Strategic Partnership's 14-19 Partnership and the Children's Trust to develop and evaluate area-wide strategies that meet local need in terms of quality, quantity and range of learning opportunities. Third and private sector representation on these partnerships varies; in some areas sub-groups have been established to provide a focus for dialogue between the local authority and third sector partners, but there is no set model for engagement.

What is essential is that local planning groups maintain a fully inclusive membership as emphasised in the React guidance and that third sector organisations play their part in shaping and delivering the training offer. The DCSF is clear that both service users and providers, including those from the third sector, need to be involved in planning and designing services to meet local needs.⁹

⁸ **Delivering 14-19 Reform: Next Steps**

⁹ <http://publications.everychildmatters.gov.uk/eOrderingDownload/00699-2009BKT-EN.pdf>

The countdown...

Target date	Action
September 2009	LSC staff with 16-19 expertise work with local authorities on planning and commissioning
October 2009	Local 14-19 Partnerships prepare Local Area Statement of Need (LASN) outlining commissioning priorities
October 2009 to February 2010	Provider Dialogue
November 2009	National Statement of Priorities published
	Regional Commissioning Statements published
December 2009	Local 16-19 Teams facilitate Provider briefings
	Moderation
January 2010	Invitations to tender issued
February 2010	Shadow Local Commissioning Plans in place
	National affordability check
March 2010	Final allocations to local authorities
	Formal Notices to Improve (NTIs) issued

Contacts and references: who, what and where...

Department for Children, Schools and Families

National Commissioning Framework consultation	http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/furthereducation/
Third Sector Strategy and Action Plan	http://publications.everychildmatters.gov.uk/eOrderingDownload/00699-2009BKT-EN.pdf
Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act	http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/apprenticeshipsskillschildrenandlearningact/

Department for Business, Innovation and Skills

Machinery of Government	http://www.bis.gov.uk
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Learning and Skills Council

“From Here to Entitlement” (self assessment toolkit for 14-19 Partnerships)	http://www.lsc.gov.uk/
Mapping third sector representation on 14-19 partnerships	http://www.lsc.gov.uk/thirdsector

Local Government Association

The Children's Plan, 14-19 Strategy Health Check	http://www.idea.gov.uk/
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NAVCA

Tender Support Project	http://www.navca.org.uk/localvs/lcp/tendersupport/
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Third Sector National Learning Alliance

Transition Bulletins, Briefing Papers, etc	http://www.tsnla.org.uk/content/resources
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For more information please contact the Third Sector National Learning Alliance at: www.tsnla.org.uk

You may also contact the TSNLA Transition Communications Team at: tsnla@llccic.org.uk

This Briefing Paper is one of a series being prepared by TSNLA to help assist third sector organisations through the transition. It has been prepared by Judy Yacoub (Lancashire Learning Consortium CIC) with the kind assistance of Jane Slowey (Foyer Federation), John Harris (NAVCA) and Cheryl Turner (LSC).