

Press Release, 8 August 2011
Embargoed until 00.30am on Tuesday 9 August 2011

Government Advisory Group Voices Concerns on Widespread Destruction of Careers Services for Young People

The Advisory Group on the All-Age Careers Service established by the Government has been reconstituted as the National Careers Service Advisory Group. After some discussion at a pre-meeting of the Group where resignation was considered, the lay members present agreed to continue to support this work. But they wish to place their concern in the public domain about the significant reduction in the Group's remit and in the scope of the new service.

The new National Careers Service will include face-to-face services for adults, but not for young people. Instead, its service for young people will be confined to telephone- and web-based services. Responsibility for providing the face-to-face services is being transferred to schools, without any transfer of funding: the previous provision of around £200 million per annum for the service for young people has been allowed to disappear. There are widespread concerns about the destruction of careers services across the country, with heavy staff redundancies. At a time when young people are facing massive changes in further and higher education, and new apprenticeships – as well as high youth unemployment – stripping out the professional help available to them is not only foolhardy: it is potentially damaging to young people's lives and ultimately to the economy.

Further, there are worries about the inadequacy of the quality assurance and accountability measures announced to date.

Members of the Advisory Group have decided to continue to work with the Government, not least because they respect the commitment of the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills to careers services for adults.

They also welcome the promise of Department for Education involvement in the group, and the new Chair's agreement to provide well-researched papers to enable the Group to play a truer advisory role.

But they wish their deep concerns about the services for young people to be publicly known.

ENDS

NOTES FOR EDITORS

1. The lay (non-Government) members of the Advisory Group include:

Vince Barrett, Association for Careers Education and Guidance

Denise Bertuchi, UNISON

Duncan Bolam, ACP International

Ian Borkett, Trades Union Congress

Paul Chubb, Careers England

Linda Gilleard, Next Step West Midlands

Kieran Gordon, Greater Merseyside Connexions Partnership

Helen Gravestock, SKILL

Steve Higginbotham, Institute of Career Guidance

Ayub Khan, National Connexions Network

Brian Lightman, Association of School and College Leaders

Anne-Marie Martin, Association of Graduate Careers Advisory Services

Stephen McNair, National Association for the Education and Guidance of Adults

Joy Mercer, Association of Colleges

Patricia Pugh, UK Qualifications and Skills Team, Learning and Skills Improvement Service

Dame Ruth Silver, Chair, Learning and Skills Improvement Service; Chair, Careers Profession Task Force

Andrew Simmons, Association of Directors of Children's Services

Anne Tipple, British Chamber of Commerce

Julia Tortise, Children's Workforce Development Council

Professor Tony Watts, Academic

2. **For further information**, contact Dame Ruth Silver (ruth.silver@zen.co.uk; 07850-745347) or Professor Tony Watts (tony.watts@zen.co.uk; 01223-363686)