

Executive

On 20 February 2007

Report Title: **Post Compulsory Discretionary Awards**

Report of: **Sharon Shoemith, Director - Children and Young People's Service**

Wards(s) affected: **All**

Report for: **Key Decision**

1. Purpose

- 1.1 The DfES has reminded all Local Authorities (LA) that they are required to make a determination each year whether to exercise powers to make Post Compulsory Discretionary Awards. This award is usually made to students who are taking a second degree or going on to other HE (Higher Education) and FE (Further Education) courses. These are individuals of **post compulsory school age**.
- 1.2 Previously the LA considered applications for discretionary awards where a student could not get financial help from other funding organisations. There is now a range of other funding sources for low income families. See **Appendix 2**.
- 1.3 Executive to agree that no Post Compulsory Discretionary Awards will be given in 2007/08 financial year.

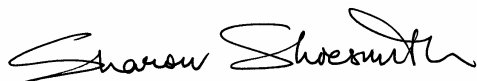
2. Introduction by Executive Member

- 2.1 I support the LA's determination not to take up the power to grant Post Compulsory Discretionary Awards in 2007/08 financial year.

3. Recommendations

- 3.1 That Executive approves the LA's determination not to take up the power to grant Post Compulsory Discretionary Awards in 2007/08 financial year. The notice that will be published on the Council's website, including CONEL, HALS and Sixth Form Centre, is attached as **Appendix 1**.
- 3.2 That Executive delegates powers to the Lead Member for Children and Young People's Service to agree the statement to be published in future years.
- 3.3 Executive to agree Haringey's Post Compulsory Discretionary Awards statement for 2007/08 financial year.

Report Authorised by:



Sharon Shoesmith
Director
The Children and Young People's Service

Contact Officer: **Norma Downer-Powell, Head of Administration**

4. Executive Summary

4.1 The policy, drawn up in 1999, stated that it was the Council's general policy not to offer any new discretionary awards in respect of both the cost of fees and maintenance grants. Potential students were eligible to apply if there were exceptional circumstances. The policy followed the Mandatory award Regulations for ordinary residence in the UK and the grant and fee rates (the law).

4.2 A budget **has not** been allocated for Post Compulsory Discretionary Awards.

4.3 The amounts that were awarded in the past ranged from approximately £1,200 - £1,300 per student per year. In any one year there only 2 – 3 students who applied. Awards were given by application and consideration would be given to applicants' financial background, depending on the income of the household and the extent to which the student could secure funding from other sources.

4.4 The discretionary awards system was established to assist students with gaining **second** degrees, for which little or no other funding was available. That situation has now changed and there are a range of other funding that students may access – see **Appendix 2**.

4.5 No new Post Compulsory Discretionary Awards have been offered since 1998/99 financial year.

4.6 The LA is required to publish the decision as widely as possible. With the agreement of the Executive, Appendix 1 gives the statement that would be used for this purpose. This would be published on the web and information sent to local colleges, e.g. CONEL. Information will also go to HALS and the Sixth Form Centres.

5. Reasons for any change in policy or for new policy development (if applicable)

5.1 There are a range of other funding available, for example, for HE (Higher Education) and FE (Further Education) courses;

5.2 Access to Learning fund, available through Colleges and funded by the LSC (Learning & Skills Council).

- 5.3 EMA (Education Maintenance Allowance) for students aged 16 – 19 from low income families.
- 5.4 Post 16 Transport Funds – for exceptional transport costs – administered by the LA.
- 5.5 Learner Support Fund (LSF) – to assist students from low income families with purchasing special equipment, books/materials and travel– administered by the LA.
- 5.6 Non-designated courses for students aged 18 plus. Career Development Loans are available which are funded in partnership with the Learning and Skills council and three high street banks. Students studying law can apply to the Law Society for a bursary or sponsorship.
- 5.7 Designated courses – where students have previously studied Higher Education and receive financial support, loans and grants are available for eligible students from the Student Loan company. Students will start to repay the loan after they have left Higher Education and earning more than 15K per year.
- 5.8 A desk survey of other LAs, (Enfield, Barnet, Camden, Islington, Hackney and Kensington and Chelsea) has shown they are not taking up their power to grant Post Compulsory Discretionary Awards.
- 5.9 **Appendix 2** indicates other funding that is available and how they may be accessed.

6. Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

- 6.1 The Local Education Authority (Post Compulsory Education Awards) Regulations 1999 (S.I.1999/229)

7. Background

- 7.1 The Post Compulsory Discretionary Awards is for students who are taking **second** degrees or pursuing other HE and FE courses. Given the financial situation and the range of other funding available, students who are taking **second** degrees are not being disenfranchised in anyway.

8. Consultation

- 8.1 No formal consultation has taken place, but the fact that no requests have been made since 1999 coupled with the fact that other LAs are not awarding Post Compulsory Discretionary funds are good indicators.

9. Conclusions

- 9.1 This policy has been out of date for a number of years and the LA has not published a statement. This report seeks to address this issue and get agreement to publish the Council's statement.

10. Financial Implications

- 10.1 There are no financial implications arising out of the recommendations of this report.

11. Comments of the Director of Finance

11.1 The Director of Finance has been consulted in the preparation of this report and concurs with the recommendations.

12. Comments of the Head of Legal Services

12.1 The Head of Legal Services has been consulted on the content of this report. As the report makes clear, the statutory framework for this matter is that of the provisions of the Local Education Authority (Post Compulsory Education Awards) Regulations 1999. An authority should determine whether it wishes to exercise the power given by the 1999 Regulations in any particular year within the 12 month period before the start of the relevant financial year. The matters referred to in the report as reasons for the Council not to exercise this power in 2007/8 are relevant ones for consideration. The Council is under a duty to take reasonable steps to bring the policy it has determined to the attention of those persons it is likely to affect.

13. Equalities Implications

13.1 As the Post Compulsory Discretionary Award will no longer be available, necessitous families may access funding from a range of other sources. Appendix 2 gives details.

13.2 Equalities recommend that as the Council will no longer offer this fund access to other funding sources is effectively publicised, and that all six equalities strands are taken into consideration when doing so, particular attention should be paid to deprived wards in the borough.

14. Use of Appendices / Tables / Photographs

14.1 **Appendix 1** – Council’s Statement – Our intention not to grant Post Compulsory Discretionary Awards.

14.2 **Appendix 2** – Details of the range of funding available.