

Preparing for Adulthood (Version 4 - October 2014)
Appendix 1 – 'North Yorkshire Transition to Adulthood
Report'

NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL
CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SERVICE

Transitions to Adulthood Steering Group

IMPROVING TRANSITION FOR YOUNG PEOPLE WITH SEND

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To explore the benefits of implementing a multi-agency integrated transition service across Children and Young People's Service (CYPS) and Health and Adult Service (HAS) and Health which will fully support young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) and their families prepare for adulthood and achieve positive life outcomes.

2.0 BACKGROUND AND STRATEGIC CONTEXT

- 2.1 The transition of young people into adult life is not only about leaving school – it involves supporting young people aged 14-25 in many different aspects of life to achieve positive outcomes. In addition to continuing education and training and moving into employment, young people may need support around housing, transport and developing a social life. They require consistent specialist information, advice and guidance in preparing for adulthood and about the options available to them.
- 2.2 Although significant numbers of young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) successfully make the transition from Children's to Adult services, there is evidence that for some disabled young people or those with complex health needs, the process of transition from Children to Adult services is problematic.
- 2.3 The problems in provision of appropriate services to support transition, and in achieving positive outcomes for these groups of young people, have been acknowledged in recent government policy and guidance. The Children and Families Bill 2013 highlights how the Government is transforming the system for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). These changes will ensure services consistently support the best outcomes for children and young people (SEND). The introduction of this Bill will extend the SEN system from birth to 25, giving children, young people and their parent's greater control and choice in decisions and ensuring needs are properly met. Within the Bill we see the replacing statements and learning difficulty assessments (Section 139a) with a new birth- to-25 Education, Health and Care Plan. This new plan is outcome focused and will ensure that services work together to complete and deliver the plan.

2.4 It is increasingly important that transition planning is considered within the context of the legislative change. Children's and Adult Services currently work along different service models and have different statutory responsibilities and eligibility/entitlement criteria. These models make it particularly difficult for young people and their families to understand. On 11 July 2012, the Government published Draft Care and Support Bill, which consolidates provisions from over a dozen different Acts into a single framework for care and support. One of the provisions in the draft Care and Support Bill looks at transitions to adult services. The draft bill suggests: that

- *“the transition between children's and adult social care is regularly cited as one of the most difficult experiences for young people and their families. We want to use the opportunity of reforming the law for adult care and support to improve this process and the outcomes achieved. These provisions support the transition by giving local authorities powers to assess children, young carers and the carers of children under the adult statute, and so make the transition as smooth as possible. No young person should go without the care and support they need at the point of transition. The draft Bill provides a new protection to ensure that any service being provided under children's legislation must continue to be provided after the individual's 18th birthday, until the assessments and care planning required under the adult statute have been completed, and adult care and support is ready to meet their needs. This will ensure that there is no gap in care and support at this critical time.”*

2.5 Despite these complexities and despite the significant financial constraints and myriad of proposed legislative change in relation to young people with SEND, it is important that services explore more jointed up working practices in order to ensure a smooth transition for young people in their transition to adulthood.

2.6 The future of the Council will require necessarily more focus on the most crucial services and people with the highest level of need. In terms of the council's own services post 2015, there will be a re-evaluation of all services to ensure that what is being delivered is what the council needs in terms of outcomes and that the delivery model is as effective as possible. The creation of an integrated transitions service 16-25 fits within this context.

2.7 Improving the experience of transitions for children with complex needs through the development of an integrated Transitions Team has been highlighted as a priority for the Integrated Transitions Board over the next two years.

3.0 **RESEARCH**

3.1 There are a number of mechanisms in place to support a young person's transition from Children's to Adult services but as discussed above, for a growing number of young people – particularly young people with more severe and

complex needs the transition to adult services can, in some instances, be abrupt, delayed or restricted because of a lack of local options and appropriate planning.

3.2 National research has shown that families consistently identify the same key points which they feel will improve the transition process and achieve the required life outcomes for their young person. These key points include:

- early and proactive engagement by services that builds in enough time to plan ahead and make necessary arrangements
- clear information about the transition process
- clear information about the options available
- a relationship with a transition support worker who provides information, advice and guidance when necessary, particularly when many different people and agencies and appointments are involved
- continuity of support advice and guidance and consistent messages
- a clear pathway which flags assessment procedures that are coming up and explains why they are necessary
- transparency about any relevant eligibility criteria for services
- a person centred planning and review process
- a holistic approach that considers all aspects of life
- a single transition plan to which all other assessments procedures contribute
- a range of viable and meaningful options to choose between

3.3 A number of local authorities have tried to improve the transition from Children's services to Adulthood by setting up a multi-agency transition team. Research has shown that a dedicated multi-agency transition services could provide a valuable service for young people and their families and have a positive impact on meeting some of their needs and achieving positive outcomes.

3.4 Research has also shown that by bringing together current resources to support transitions has helped to reduce duplication, improved sharing of information, better communication between workers, a greater level of case co-ordination and ultimately better outcomes for young people. They also identified that other key advantages of setting up a multi-agency transition team include:

- colocated services creates opportunities for joint working and improves communication
- makes it easier to establish person centred approaches across agencies
- ensures consistency
- services have a much better picture of the young person coming through and better quality of information informs more timely and cost effective commissioning
- staff have detailed knowledge of the services and opportunities available to young people

- staff have a clear understanding of their role and responsibilities and how they contribute to the transition process

4.0 **CURRENT WORKING ARRANGEMENTS**

4.1 In 2008 the National Transition Support Programme was created by the Government to support local areas improve the experience of young people and their families through the move from adolescence into adulthood. Central to this agenda was improving the transition process for young people from Children's Services, such as school and children social care support, to further education, employment and training and support from adult social care. As a result of this programme North Yorkshire County Council through the Children's Trust established a Multi-Agency Transition Steering Group which included adult services representatives. One of the key purposes of the group was to review the current processes for families and drive improvements. This group developed a multi-agency 'Transitions Protocol'. The commitments made through the Transition Protocol, which provides a framework from which all partners work together are;

- *all agencies supporting disabled young people in their transition to adulthood understand and fulfil their individual responsibilities in a co-ordinated, multi-agency approach, know the young person well and make the transition to adult life for each individual as smooth as possible;*
- *disabled young people and their parents/carers receive comprehensive information, advice and guidance about the specific responsibilities of these agencies at each stage of the process;*
- *disabled young people are actively involved in planning their future and are enabled to grow up and live the lives they want.*

4.2 The LA has a clear Transition Action Plan in place to support the developments in this area of work. The Transitions Protocol and Policy and Procedures documents implemented in 2009 were reviewed in 2012. It has been identified by the steering group that further revisions are required.

4.3 The Transition Action Plan identified the need to review the 'Moving On' Transitions Pack which will further improve the information young people and their families receive during transitions. This is currently underway and will be complete in July 2013. A report will be presented to the Transition Steering Group recommending key changes to the information provided to young people and their families during transitions.

4.4 The Transition Action Plan identified the need to set up a new database to support data sharing arrangement between services and to support the Local Transition's Groups (made up of senior practitioners from Health, HAS, CYPS, Special Schools and Specialist Careers Advisors) which were introduced in 2011. These groups were introduced in the East, West and Central Vale of the County

as a key mechanism in order to assess the future needs of statemented young people in their transition from schools and other settings. They are led by Senior Officers from within HAS and provide a multi-agency platform from which practitioners can discuss the needs of statemented young people (in years 11 to 14) in their transition from school and other settings into adulthood. Terms of reference for the Local Transition Groups (LTG) have been reviewed and further agreed

- 4.5 Progress made through the LTG's is more pronounced in some areas than it is in others and particular progress has been made in the East of the County which has seen a significant reduction in the number of young people going out of County to high cost independent post 16 residential provision. These young people have been accessing more local provision specifically designed to meet the individual needs. This provision is named Personalised Learning Pathways (PLP) and was set up as a pilot project in 2011. The success of the initial pilot led to the expansion of personalised learning pathways to other areas of the County. In July 2012 Executive Members approved the continued and further expansion of the personalised learning offer. The report to Executive outlined the considerable financial savings made as a result of enabling more young people to access local provision.
- 4.6 There are a number of contributing factors to the success of Personalised Learning.
- The model is outcome focussed and is coordinated and developed by a Personalised Learning Coordinator who has been seconded from the local Special School.
 - The structure of the provision has embedded within it local multi-agency groups. Membership of these groups include HAS, Special Schools, Specialist Careers Advisors, FE Providers and Employment Services. These groups are in operation in most parts of the County and meet on a regular basis to discuss developments within each local area, gaps in post 16 provision, current and future learner needs. The groups also play a vital role in supporting the transition of young people from school into local personalised learning pathways.
- 4.7 The Local Authority is committed to further develop more innovative, personalised packages of support through its broader work on the National Pathfinder and is aimed at testing personalisation, joint commissioning and the introduction of individualised budgets all of which fall within the context of the proposed introduction of a single Education Health and Care Plan for young people with SEND in the period from 2013-14. As discussed above, this single plan will ensure agencies work closer together.

4.8 To support the work of the Pathfinder there have also been a number of Preparing for Adulthood events delivered across North Yorkshire in preparation for changes in legislation and practice for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities. CYPS, HAS and Health in partnership with the National Preparing for Adulthood team planned and delivered these events for professionals in education, health, care, employment, leisure and community services, for parents and carers of disabled young adults and for young people themselves. These events focused on

- Personalising Post-16 Options
- Pathways into Employment
- Pathways to Independent Living
- Friends, Relationships and Community Participation
- Health and Transition's

4.9 Feedback during and after these events identified the difficulties young people, their families and agencies face during the transition stages.

5.0 **MOVING FORWARD**

5.1 The problems in provision of appropriate services to support transition and in achieving positive outcomes for these young people (SEND) have been acknowledged in government policy and guidance as discussed throughout this paper. Local knowledge has provided us with evidence that for some young people transitions does not work due to a number of key barriers. As identified within recent government policy it is vital to reduce/remove such barriers and provide a holistic multi-agency approach for young people and their families

5.2 As we move forward and explore the possible implementation of a multi-agency transition team across CYPS and HAS we first of all need to acknowledge and build on:

- the progress made through the work of the Transition Steering Group
- the work of the local Transition Planning and Review Groups
- the role of the local area groups which sit within personalised learning and how these have been used to develop support mechanisms for young people in their transition from school into specialist provision and adulthood.
- feedback from the preparing for adulthood events

5.3 We need to use regional and national evidence, local knowledge and current working practices and fully review transitions across CYPS and Health and Adult Services. This will be achieved through:

- seeking feedback from key professionals involved in the transition process through 1:1 meetings, team meetings and joint staff focus groups

- seek further feedback from young people and their families through focus groups
 - seek feedback from the Flying High Group
 - further review the work of the local transition groups and the impact that these groups have had on the transition process since their implementation in 2011 through discussions with key staff involved in this process
 - seek feedback from key staff and partners involved in the local PLP area meetings
- 5.4 Using this research we need to consider the most appropriate structures/models which will meet the future needs of the service, young people and their families. Considerations will include:
- management and location of an integrated team
 - staff within HAS such as Social Care Assessors and Care Coordinators and their role
 - staff within CYPS such as Specialist Carers Advisors and their role
 - structure of Personalised Learning, staffing and the role of the local hubs to support the increased numbers of young people accessing local provision
- 5.6 To ensure positive outcomes for young people and their families, multi-agency staffing structures must also consider how to include and link into:
- Health Services: and how we can ensure full engagement and commitment to improve outcomes for young people with SEND.
 - Specialist Support Services within CYPS and their role in supporting young people, key staff and internal and external agencies to meet needs
 - Supported Employment Services (HAS) and how this would support young people achieve their life outcomes through a multi-agency transition team, in particular those young people leaving school, accessing a PLP, returning from an Independent Specialist College
 - Independent Travel Training Team and the support provided to young people who are:
 - in school
 - accessing local provision up to 25
 - accessing employment
 - living Independently
- 5.7 It is recommended that the attached work plan should continue to be followed and developed as well supported by all agencies. This clearly outlines key tasks and timelines which incorporate all of the above points. Models of integrated teams will be proposed by the end of October 2013.

Report prepared by: Caroline Applebaum, SEND Development Officer, Children and Young People's Service