

## WIRRAL COUNCIL

### CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - 2<sup>nd</sup> JUNE 2010

#### JOINT REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN SERVICES AND THE DIRECTOR OF ADULT SOCIAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT

#### TRANSITION INTO ADULTHOOD (SOCIAL CARE)

---

##### *Executive Summary*

This report highlights developments in improving Transition arrangements for young people as they move into adulthood. Transition forms a discrete strand in the wider Aiming High for Disabled Children programme. There is a service improvement framework led by the National Transitions Team which envisages a more integrated strategic approach across a wider range of local agencies, and which now encompasses the needs of disabled young people between the ages of 14 and 25.

The report outlines progress in the development of a Transitions Team with staff co-located from Childrens and Adult Social Care Services, to ensure an integrated approach for the most vulnerable young people.

#### **1 Background**

- 1.1 Transition has been highlighted as an area of concern by the Government over a number of years. Transition will always be a time which provokes anxieties for young people and parents due to the fact that it involves changes in expectations of services and the people who will offer support. There are differences regarding the eligibility of people for services due to the different legislation under which services for children and adults are provided. Without effective transition processes, there is the potential for difficulties to arise as expectations of families exceed the skills and resources available.
- 1.2 Valuing People Now (2008) recommended that each local area has a multi-agency transition strategy. The guidance defines disabled children as including young people with special educational needs in its broadest terms as those young people who receive support at a school action and action plus level besides those in receipt of a statement. Aiming High for Disabled Children also identified Transitions as one of its key strands. New Guidance was produced on behalf of the Government by the Council for Disabled Children in 2008. (Department of Children, Schools and Families/Department of Health transition guides: *(A transition guide for all services and Transition: Moving on Well.)*)
- 1.3 The National Transition Support Team have been monitoring how the Council and NHS Wirral are working together to improve multi agency working, since November 2008. They have done so by requiring the Council to complete a Transition Self Assessment Questionnaire, in both January 2009 and December 2009. The Self Assessment Questionnaire aims to capture a snapshot of how agencies, processes and systems work together at a specific point in time in a local area. Following our initial submission we were rated as requiring a medium offer of support on a 3 tier rating system; which provided for support from a Transitions Support Advisor and an additional £10k of funding.

- 1.4 The Council and partners were required in September 2009 to submit its first Transition Development Plan to evidence its commitment to service improvement.

The National Transition Support Team, produced what it called a Trans Map framework, setting out 5 areas, which should shape our planning :

- Participation of disabled young people and their families.
- Effectiveness of personalised approaches.
- Joint assessments processes within children's trusts and adult services.
- Realistic post 16 opportunities for living life.
- Strategic joint partnership working.

- 1.5 Revised Governance arrangements have been developed to ensure a more strategic and integrated approach to support improved service delivery. The new Transitions Group will need to incorporate planning from across the Special Educational Needs and Health agendas with a wider group of corporate partners including Housing and Leisure. Feedback from the Transitions Self Assessment questionnaire highlights this as a key priority for our local planning.

Members of the previous Transitions Governance Group have now joined the Learning Disability Partnership Board.

Membership and terms of reference for the Transitions Strategy Group has now been widened with an increased strategic remit.

The Transitions Operational Group which was set in place in 2008 continues to meet monthly; tasked with ensuring young people are being tracked through transition effectively.

- 1.6 The second questionnaire completed in December 2009 built on the previous one with an increase in expectations of partnership working between a significantly wider range of agencies; and increased engagement with parents and young people in the planning of services. It being advanced that for disabled young people and their families to experience positive support during transition a wide range of agencies, and that young people need support with transitions over a longer period.

- 1.7 A Transitions protocol was launched in April 2008 between Children and Adult Services to improve Transition arrangements; this followed extensive discussion with all agencies working with young people in transition and consultation with young people and their families. The success of which has led to being able to report significantly improved performance within the Annual Performance Assessment.

The scope of the current Protocol set out arrangements for young people who are in need of the continuity of social care support. Locally we will be expected to review the Protocol to include the role and commitment of all agencies in working with all young people who have a disability as defined by the Disability Discrimination Act 1995.

Specifically the Protocol should also include young people who:

- have long-term health / medical conditions
- have a statement of Special Educational Needs (SEN), or registered as 'School Action Plus' and are identified by the school as requiring support with their transition.

- 1.8 Parents will be involved in considering service design via the Wirral Family Consultation Forum and the Engagement & Involvement Group. Parent representation is in place on the new Adult Learning Disability Partnership Board and the new Transition Strategy Group. Parent representatives are similarly engaged with current key strategic groups within the Childrens Trust Board governance arrangements. Further planning will be undertaken with WIRED and though securing the views of disabled young people via the Engagement & Involvement Group on current transition processes.
- 1.9 A second “Your Future, Your Choice” information event was arranged in October 2009, with close co-operation between staff from Social Inclusion and Social Care within the Council, Learning Skills Council, Connexions and NHS Wirral. In evaluating the last event it was noted that the numbers of parents attending the events continues to rise and that those young people attending have had support sessions from School and Connexions workers to ensure their attendance is meaningful. There is another event planned for November 2010.

The materials produced for these events have been extended to form an information pack for use by young people, carers and professionals and are available on the I-choose Wirral website. Plans are in hand to extend this information pack further and produce a DVD. We will also be seeking to use the Team Wirral website to ensure information is better targeted to young people. Continued work in the provision of information on a cross agency basis to provide for a stepped improvement.

## **2 Transitions to Adult Social Care activity**

### **2.1 New Transitions Team**

- 2.1.1 The new Transitions team set out in this report is a further stage of service development towards a more integrated model and seeks to provide social care support for young people with Learning Difficulties at this time. The team was brought together from 1 January 2010, and is located at Westminster House. The longer term vision is for a co-located Transitions Team made up of personnel from Children and Young People’s Department, Department of Adult Social Services, Connexions and Health with input from Benefits Advisors, Housing and Employment. In the longer term it is envisaged that the Transitions Team will work with young people aged 13/14 to 25 years old and will provide support for all young people with Special Educational Needs / Learning Difficulties and Disabilities.
- 2.1.2 The current services provided are to support children in need, aged 14 to 25 years old (and their families) who have severe or substantial disabilities, specifically:
- a severe or profound learning disability
  - a severe physical disability
  - a substantial degree of visual impairment / moderate and severe hearing loss
  - a complex Autistic Spectrum with a Severe Learning Disability
  - a complex medical health condition.
- 2.1.3 Most of the young people will leave school after the age 19 and transfer to the appropriate Adult team in the following year once key transitions are complete in terms of setting up local college provision, work or community based support. The two exceptions to this being where further work is required to:
- establish an appropriate accommodation and support package
  - setting up local support following completion of an out of borough residential college course

2.1.4 Young people with a complex Autistic Spectrum and Social Communication Disorder are currently being supported by the Children with Disabilities Service, and a further commissioning gap is evident within transition and Adult services for this group of young people which will require separate consideration.

2.1.5 Key priorities for this team include:

- Ensuring each young person who may require adult social care / are Fair Access to Care Services eligible have a support plan to guide them through transition
- Supporting young people in receiving personalised budgets and support
- Ensuring joint funding assessments are completed in a timely fashion
- Identifying commissioning gaps in relation to accommodation, short breaks, college, other services ; to enable this support to be provided within Wirral and Merseyside
- Streamlining assessment processes across agencies – both those within the team and with other external and linked partners
- Ensuring that young people and their families receive good quality information on transition and the role of the team within Transition is well publicised
- Developing a lead professional system to ensure young people and parents are guided smoothly through transition
- Promoting the engagement of young people and parents in the processes of reshaping services
- Ensuring service thresholds and resource allocation are consistent with those within Department of Adult Social Services, and expectations are managed effectively in moving into adult provision.
- Supporting the Transition Strategy Group in the implementation of the Transition Development Plan.
- Support brokerage project and employment projects in developing increased local provision

2.1.6 Team membership currently includes:

- Team Manager
- Social Workers – 2 from Children and Young People’s Department and 2 from Department of Adult Social Services
- Support Workers – 1 part time from Children and Young People’s Department and 1 from Department of Adult Social Services
- Administrative Support – Team Support Officer.

Meetings are being arranged to discuss the potential secondment of Connexions staff into this team. There is an in principle commitment to co-location of staff, which will need to be worked out once the service level agreement has been confirmed after the final stages of the commissioning process for the Connexions service has been concluded. Tracking of young people is a clear strength that the Connexions service will add to the team.

The Continuing Care co-ordinator is working closely with the Team Manager in relation to joint funding, future commissioning and support effective health action planning. From a Special Educational Needs perspective the Educational Advisor for Medical and Physical difficulties is similarly supporting individuals on a case by case basis.

2.1.7 Other Agencies are continuing to link into the team

- Housing
- Benefits Advice
- Further Education and Schools input
- 14-19 team for work experience

- Employers and Training for employment

Otherwise links will be maintained with:

- Advocacy
- Brokerage
- Enablement – Home Assessment and Reablement Team service
- Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services 16-19 team
- Voluntary and Community groups for vulnerable young people

## 2.2 Social Care Service Activity

2.2.1 There are currently 29 accommodated or previously accommodated young people with disabilities aged between 16 and 21 years who have a Pathway Plan as directed under the Leaving Care Act and who are allocated a Personal Advisor. These plans are produced at age 16 and reviewed at 6 monthly intervals in conjunction with their Social Worker from either Children and Young People's Department or Department of Adult Social Services. The looked after children population (for this group of young people) continues to reduce given the continued investment in shared care and wrap around family support. However this will create the need for Department of Adult Social Services to review its commissioning arrangements to be able to provide more significant community and family based support packages.

2.2.2 There was a total of 24 young people who turned 18 years old in 2008 whose package of care and support were forwarded to Department of Adult Social Services. During 2009 18 young people were referred and accepted; 2010 will see that same number progressed.

2.2.3 There were 9 young people returned from college this July who are Fair Access to Care Services eligible. In July 2010 we are predicting an increase of 7, so that there are 16 young people returning to Wirral from college, with a further 11 in July 2011 and another 11 in July 2012.

- The brokerage project last year redirected 9 people who had been previously been considering out of area placements.
- In looking at this cohort of young people returning in 2012 there were 4 young people who had no social care involvement, 2 whose specific needs were not able to be met in local college provision, 1 looked after child and potentially 1 other who may have needed to be accommodated.
- For the 2011 cohort 5 of 11 young people had no social care involvement and 1 was attending an out of borough school.
- In 2010 cohort 8 of 12 young people had no social care involvement, there was 1 looked after young person and 2 others who if they had not gone to college would be likely to have needed to be accommodated due to adverse circumstances.

2.2.4 It is proposed that the new team should take casework responsibility at the age of 16 and support joint planning from 14. In terms of young people.

Aged 14+ there are

- 102 young people
- 14 looked after children

Aged 16+ there are

- 44 young people
- 5 looked after children

The Children with Disabilities Team Manager is retaining all responsibilities for contacts and referral and assessment to ensure a clear accountability for assessment timescales, management of child protection activity and to ensure a family centred approach in cases

where there are elements of family dysfunction and or issues with adolescents. In reviewing referral patterns there were few new referrals post 14 and a degree of stability within support plans is felt achievable by the ages of 15-16 for later referrals. In considering the more complex young people most cases achieve a degree of stability behaviourally in post adolescence. Most of the services that are vital to create this stability are clustered around the children`s team – the risk is that without careful risk management that we may increase the potential for being accommodated.

### **2.2.5 Professional and Management Accountability**

Initially the Team Manager continues to receive joint supervision from the Service Manager Adult Learning Disability and the Service Manager Children with Disabilities on a monthly basis. Within the first year of the service it is proposed to form a Steering Group comprising the Service Managers from Children and Adults Social Care, and the Team Manager, with key partners. They will report into the new Transition Strategy Group who will make recommendations to the Learning Disability Partnership Board.

All cases involving child protection activity and looked after children will remain allocated to a qualified children`s worker to ensure clear professional accountability. Any cases involving adult protection activity or statutory mental health assessment will remain allocated to a qualified adult worker to similarly ensure clear professional accountability.

The team will undertake all assessment activity and care planning after 16 within Department of Adult Social Services formats to facilitate joint working. A key priority for the team will be progressing a lead professional model and developing a joined up approach to assessment – which brings together key information – person centred planning and health action planning.

In relation to our Performance Indicators we are able to report well above 90% of young people have a transition plan that are moving between children and adult services, which evidences increased efforts via the Transitions Operations Group system.

## **3 Financial Implications**

- 3.1 Within this financial year Wirral has received a nominal allocation from the Transition programme of £25k.
- 3.2 A Further bid has been submitted for a further £20k against Innovations Fund, the bid has received the recommendation of the Programme Advisor. The bid will support Employment activity, web site development and consultation activity delivered via the Wirral Family Consultation Forum.

## **4 Staffing Implications**

It is proposed that the Adult Learning Disabilities Service will host the co- located team. Staff from Childrens Social Care will be seconded to the service under a service level agreement for each staff member.

## **5 Equal Opportunities Implications/Health Impact Assessment**

Social care services are provided to the most vulnerable people in the Borough. Services are provided following a fair and open assessment process and improvements in the transition process will enhance the life opportunities of young people with disabilities.

## **6 Community Safety Implications**

Social care services assist in managing risks appropriately and therefore enable people to maintain their independence safely within the community.

## **7 Local Agenda 21 Implications**

None arising from this report.

## **8 Planning Implications**

None arising from this report.

## **9 Anti Poverty Implications**

None arising from this report.

## **10 Social Inclusion Implications**

Improvements in the transition process will ensure that young people's needs to maintain independence and take an appropriate part in their local community are addressed.

## **11 Local Member Support Implications**

People who use social care services live in all parts of the Borough.

## **12 Background Papers**

- **A Transition Guide for all Services** – a view of all the services that need to work together to ensure appropriate support for disabled young people life.
- **Transition: Moving on Well** good practice guide on effective transition from children's to adult services for young people with complex health needs.

Both can be viewed and downloaded from

<http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/everychildmatters/resources-andpractice/IG00322/>.

## **14 Recommendations**

- 14.1 That Overview and Scrutiny Committee note the content of this report, and the formation of a new Transitions Team.

**Howard Cooper**  
Director of Children's Services

**John Webb**  
Director of Adult Social Services