

WIRRAL COUNCIL

HEALTH AND WELL BEING OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE:
18 JANUARY 2011

JOINT REPORT OF THE INTERIM DIRECTOR OF ADULT SOCIAL SERVICES
AND THE DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S DEPARTMENT

TRANSITION SERVICES - UPDATE REPORT

Executive Summary

This report provides an up-date to Committee Members of the Development and Progress of Transition Services following the agreed formation in January 2010 of a joint Social Care Team of both Children and Adult Services staff to improve the experience of young people with learning disabilities as they move from children's into adult services. A previous report was submitted to the Children's Overview and Scrutiny committee on 2 June 2010 on this topic.

The new team, based within the Dept of Adult Social Services at Westminster House, supports joint planning from the age of 14, have taken on the majority of social care casework responsibility from the age of 16, and continue a role until an appropriate point in the young person's life to pass onto a relevant service within the authority.

Significant links have been established and developed with key partner agencies across the authority which is seen as further consolidation of a holistic service for young people with learning disabilities living in Wirral.

This item falls within the Social Care and Inclusion portfolio.

1 Background

- 1.1 Transition for young people with a disability 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 of special educational needs. Transition 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 (NTST) have, over the last three years, been monitoring how the Council, NHS Wirral and other key partner agencies are working together to improve multi agency working, on behalf of the Government.
- 1.4 In December 2009 the Council completed a second Transition Self Assessment Questionnaire which allowed us to illustrate progress this authority had made to extend expectations of partnership working and engagement with parents and young people. It is evident that for disabled young people and their families to experience positive support during transition, a wide range of agencies, departments and processes need to work together effectively. Wirral was placed nationally within the second of three categories of 'satisfactory development' and received a financial support package of £25k in 2010 to further our development, plus a consultative support member from the NTST to assist our work and those of our neighbouring NW Authorities.
- 1.5 Self Assessment Questionnaire 3 has now been completed and submitted in December 2010 but excludes further financial reward ahead of the NTST ceasing to exist as from April 2011. The report was able to portray significant multi-agency developments within this authority and it is hoped will improve our standing nationally at the conclusion of the support programme.
- 1.6 The service development proposals placed before committee twelve months previous were seen as a first step towards a more integrated model and to provide social care support for young people with Learning Difficulties. During this initial year, it is suggested, these aims have been met and surpassed with personnel from Children and Young People's Department, Department of Adult Social Services, Connexions and Health input from Benefits Advisors, Housing and Employment working closely together. It remains a longer term vision for the service to collectively be sited within the new build Special Needs College on the Twelve Quays campus.
- 1.7 The ambition for the service is to aspire to the best support that enables young people to achieve as independent a life as possible as they move into adulthood.

“We are talking about the future, which wasn’t happening before” - parent of a 16 year old attending a Wirral Special School.

2 Current Service Activity

- 2.1 A revised Transition Protocol is to be launched in January 2011. This followed extensive discussion with all agencies working with young people in transition and consultation with young people and their families. The final consultation with Strategic Managers across all partner agencies will complete this process for publication. The new Protocol will aim to reflect the development of Personalisation into the lives of young people. As part of the improved planning contained within the protocol an Operational Group was developed in 2008 to meet monthly, tasked with ensuring young people are being tracked through transition effectively. The success of this group has led to continued reports of significant improved performance within the Annual Performance Assessment.
- 2.2 The strategic planning group, responsible for the protocol publication, has recently extended its membership in line with additional partners suggested by the NTST to include Housing, Leisure Services, young person representation and additional parental involvement
- 2.3 A Pathway Plan has been devised to assist young people and their parents, produced in an illustrative and easy to understand format, portraying the transition process as reflected in the protocol. This has received regional and national acclaim through the NHS North West Inspection Team who have recommended projection nationally and the National Chair of Learning Disability Partnership Boards. Members may wish to view the Plan which will be on display in the Wallasey Town Hall and will be circulated around schools and key venues throughout the year.
- 2.4 Health Action Plans have been revised and developed to be used extensively and act as a health passport for young people with a disability; a roll-out programme of their use for all ‘statemented’ young people is currently being progressed via schools and annual medicals. In addition improved links are now in place within NHS Wirral for adult health support for young people on reaching adulthood with Community Matrons taking case responsibility from 18, a development in recognition to improved health services and life expectancy.
- 2.5 As a consequence a more rigorous appraisal of appropriate responsibility for funding of support packages is now in place across both children’s and adult services with resultant overall savings for Social Care.

- 2.6 A co-ordinated link has been established between Fieldwork Services, Schools and Connexions with Adult Day Service Providers to provide information to parents, young people and staff of the range of service provision available for those entitled to a service. The link co-ordinator, attached to the Transition Team, under the direction of the Team Manager, has been able to organise attendance at young people's annual education reviews and introduce them to potential services. This has been met with huge enthusiasm by schools and parents.

"I was reluctant to go and see what was out there but was encouraged to by my son's Headteacher – brilliant, so glad I did." Parent.

It is hoped to produce a DVD to further aid illustration of services early in 2011 which will open access to many more families as they plan for their future, offering greater choice and control.

- 2.7 Annual education reviews for young people have been significantly developed using a Person Centred Plan approach, involving young people and their families to achieve a much improved system to plan more effectively for their future and deliver improved outcomes around choice and control. Following a training programme financed through the Learning and Skills Council in 2009 of appropriate school and local college staff, there has been a significant roll-out programme across Special Schools during 2010; this has been supplemented this year from the NTST funding to run Parent Awareness Courses that have engaged parents in a better understanding and participation in their child's future planning.

"The course has been really good. I started not knowing what I was coming to and am leaving having learnt so much about planning for child X's future. The six days were just right to fit everything in and I didn't feel it was too drawn out or squashed in. P and T (facilitators) have done an excellent job and I think it definitely made a difference that they are parent carers". Parent and course participant.

- 2.8 Improved communication and consultation with young people has been achieved through our Advocacy Services based with WIRED. Young people have been engaged in consultation both in schools via arranged meetings, the development of School Councils and in local youth groups and club environments. Opportunities are being sought to continue this programme to have inclusion of young people representation at strategic meetings but as a minimum to have advocates attend to represent views expressed.

- 2.9 Active involvement has been achieved through young peoples inclusion in the now established monthly 'Disability Issues Radio Programme' in our association with a local community radio station, which actively highlights transition issues on each programme whatever the subject matter. Topics planned for this year will include housing, employment, training and further education opportunities. Members may wish to listen to recent programmes via the web site of Seven Waves Radio.

- 2.10 Links with our council Housing Dept and Housing Providers has been an encouraging development over this past year and a clear link for transition with the Housing Strategy in development. Tangible outcomes have been achieved with two significant groups of families moving towards implementation of Supported Living with secured properties and providers showing a much greater awareness and willingness to identify suitable properties for young people given early identification through transition.
- 2.11 Transition Services has been given a clear remit in responsibility for those young people attending residential college. As a consequence significant developments have been made with our partner agencies over the past twelve months to an achievement that young people and their families have a clear knowledge and feeling of support from this authority whilst away at college.

Over the past two years all partner agencies have been committed to promote local further education facilities, only supporting independent options when appropriate; the result has seen a dramatic decrease in numbers of our young people going to residential colleges from 16 returnees in July 2010 to a probable 2 to be supported in application for September 2011.

“Having started at Wirral Metropolitan College this year we now have a future where we as parents have a life as well as the young person” – Parent.

For those currently away at college families are aware that Transition Services are there to offer support when necessary having been invited to join professionals in a relaxed meeting during 2010, which will be repeated in 2011. All second and third year students have an allocated Social Worker and a Person Centred Plan is in place for their wishes on return to the Wirral.

- 2.12 As indicated above, the NTST awarded Wirral a further Transition Budget from the completion of the second Self Assessment Questionnaire. Significant projects funded from this award have included:

- Production of Transition DVD; this will be finalised for circulation in January 2011 and will be embedded in an ‘e-book’ on our web sites of ‘Teen Wirral’ and ‘i-choose Wirral’
- A Directory of Services – this includes case studies and useful additional information for young people and their parents; this has already been placed on our web sites as well as hard copies available for circulation
- Transition Information Packs – these are being circulated to schools and across agencies for wide circulation
- Person Centred Planning – Parent Awareness Training

- Local 'Parent Led' Transition Conference – this has produced significant information directly from parents that is assisting to formulate current and future policy direction and led directly to funding commitments of this budget.

3 The Transition Team

- 3.1 The Social Care Team comprises a Team Manager, two qualified Social Workers from Children's Services plus two qualified Social Workers and one unqualified post from the Department of Adult Social Services. Direct line management responsibility is provided from the DASS Service Manager, where the team is located with management availability from CYPD as necessary. A joint departmental protocol is being developed to ensure that there are robust management and governance arrangements to cover child protection and vulnerable adult concerns.
- 3.2 During this first 12 month period development has progressed to encompass all staff taking case responsibility for both Children's and Adult Transition cases; this means that a young person moving through their transition will not have a change of Social Worker at a key time in their life which previously was the case. To do so training is being provided on key elements such as Child and Adult Protection, Looked After Children and Information Technology and has the support of Senior Management across both Departments.
- 3.3 A further responsibility for the service are those young people with a disability who are in or recently left the care of the Local Authority; a service as part of the Pathway Team for these young people is provided through part time post.
- 3.4 From April 2010 all young people moving through their transition have been assessed using the new Adult Services assessment process as part of the pilot study for Personal Budgets .Now a fully rolled out programme across Adult Services, staff are becoming more skilled in working with families to produce their 'Support Plan'. These plans allow an improved reflection of young people's wishes and ambitions and those of their family with increased opportunities available to them and an ability to deliver improved outcomes, increase choice and control and for young people and their families to make a positive contribution.

"As a parent I really did feel involved and in control of the process working alongside my Social Worker; as a family we all got involved in planning for the future and are all happy with our outcomes". Parent.

- 3.5 It is hoped the experience of this process within the Transition Team will now be used to good effect within Children's Services as initial pilot studies are undertaken; proposals are being considered for all those approaching the service at 16years of age can be assessed for a Personal Budget which would hopefully aid their transition between the two departments.

- 3.6 It should be stressed that in addition to the Social Care element of the team all key partner agencies have identified key staff to participate and contribute to a Transition Service development at both Strategic and Operational level. This has led to an overall improved service for young people moving through their transition.

4 Communication / Activities / Publicity

- 4.1 Transition Services have actively been involved in a range of events, presentations, consultations and support meetings. This has been on both a local and regional basis.

- 4.2 A third “Your Future, Your Choice” information event was arranged in November, held at the Floral Pavilion, with close co-operation between staff from Social Inclusion and Social Care branches of the Council, Connexions and NHS Wirral. The event has been seen as a major success in sharing information to young people and their carers and to assist them in making choices and decisions regarding their futures. Attended by over 600 young people, parents, carers and professionals it is hoped this can continue as an annual event having attracted local, regional and national acclaim for both the event and associated materials produced.

Funding to allow this event to continue will need to be considered; to date funding has been provided by the Learning and Skills Council which ceased to exist in April 2010. It is hoped a financial commitment can be made across all partner agencies despite the current economic climate and will receive committee support.

- 4.3 Regional Transition Programme Event – Wirral was recently asked to present to the regional group as an example of good practice our work as a ‘multi-agency working model of transition practice’. A well received presentation was made by the Team Manager and NHS colleague Co-ordinator. The working model presented was recently recognised and received a national nomination at an awards ceremony held in London run via the NHS in association with a National Health Journal.
- 4.4 Transition Services are now regularly invited to attend the Parents Evenings at all Secondary Special Schools and attend with a range of agency representation. In addition invites are received to attend various parent support group meetings both in school and local community; very positive feedback has been received.

5 Financial Implications

- 5.1 There are no financial implications associated with the establishment and continuation of the Transition Team; as reported previously these are already Children's and Adult Social Services employees who are now co-located in the Westminster House Office. The Team is delivering an improved joined up service which has improved the efficiency and effectiveness of services for older young people as they transition into adulthood.

6 Staffing

- 6.1 Current staffing continues as previously detailed of Team Manager, 2 Social Workers and 1 part-time assistant from Children's Services, whilst Adult Services contribute 2 Social Workers and 1 Support Officer.
- 6.2 The service is hosted by the Department of Adult Social Services and Line Management Responsibility now lies with the Adult Learning Disability Service Manager.

7 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.

8 Community Safety Implications

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

9 Local Agenda 21 Implications

None arising from this report.

10 Planning Implications

None arising from this report.

11 Anti Poverty Implications

None arising from this report.

12 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.

13 Local Member Support Implications

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

14 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/>.

15 Recommendations

- 15.1 That Overview and Scrutiny Committee note the content of this report, and continue their support of the Transition Services Team and its future development.

HOWARD COOPER
Interim Director of Adult Social Services

Case Studies: Taken from 'Your Future Your Choice' Directory 2011

1. BG

Hi, I'm BG; I'm 16 and I am currently on a Foundation Learning Programme leading to an Apprenticeship in Motor Vehicle Engineering with Rocket Training.

Whilst at Claremount School I did my work experience at Rocket Training in MVE. I worked in the workshop, learning basic skills and also in the classroom, learning about health and safety. I enjoyed this so much I decided to apply for an apprenticeship when I left school. I had my first interview with the recruitment team leader, who advised the best way for me to go forward was through the Foundation Learning route which could then lead me to an apprenticeship in MVE.

The FL Programme gives me the support I require to build up my skills and knowledge in English, Maths, ICT and preparation for work. I can work at my own pace and complete units leading to qualifications that are relevant to MVE.

My basic skills in Maths and English were low but through workbooks I can complete at home and through support in the classroom and the friendly atmosphere at the centre, I have now improved.

I am glad I followed the advice as I am able to study towards my aim, which is to become a mechanic.

2. EL

19yr old E has Down's Syndrome and has just left Special School.

E started at Sainsbury's in 2008 on Work Experience from school; she continued her work experience and grew in confidence, proved herself as a valuable member of the team and was offered employment for two days a week as a Checkout Operator. E attends Wirral Met College 3 days per week. E received Travel Training whilst at school to help her get to and from work independently. Sainsbury's have assigned a member of staff as E's mentor and they get on really well. Sainbury's are exceptionally supportive but treat E like any other employee and say she is a valued member of the team.

3. BJ

BJ is a young man with complex learning and physical disabilities. He attended a specialist school prior to his local college. He and his family require support from a range of providers to enable him to be as physically fit as possible, to access local services and to develop and learn new skills. He has some support at home to get him out of bed and ready for his day. BJ is now also swimming on a regular basis, attending college, accessing transport and is happily living at home. With this range of support in place, his parents are in a stronger position to support him effectively at home. He is encouraged to embrace his cultural background and to undertake new challenges.

4. CS

My name is C; I'm 20 yrs of age and I have just moved into my own flat. Before this I was in care then moved to a supported family placement where I learned lots of skills to help prepare me for living in my own flat.

I learnt how to travel by myself on public transport and this was a massive achievement and allowed me to have lots of choice and control over my life. I have my own bedroom, kitchen and bathroom, I even have my own small garden; I love the garden and I have already bought furniture and a BBQ ready for next summer.

I was a little bit nervous before I moved in as it was such a big step for me but I am really enjoying myself. I have lots to learn and I am always busy. There is always someone on site to help me if anything happens and I have individual support to help me with cooking, shopping and managing my money, but I am being encouraged to become independent and develop important skills for my future.

I have strong links with the local community and I spend lots of time with my family close by.

I go to Wirral Met College three days per week and I travel there myself. I am studying Skills for Working Life, because one day I would like to have a job.