

CABINET

20 MARCH 2012

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| Title: Transitions Strategy for Disabled Young People with Support Needs 2012 - 2015 | |
| Report of the Cabinet Member for Children and Adult Services | |
| Open Report | For Decision |
| Wards Affected: All | Key Decision: no |
| Report Author: Fran Pitcher, Strategic Commissioning Manager – Learning Disability and Transitions | Contact Details: Tel: 020 8227 2825 E-mail: fran.pitcher@lbbd.gov.uk |
| Accountable Divisional Director: Karen Ahmed, Divisional Director of Adult Commissioning | |
| Accountable Director: Anne Bristow, Corporate Director of Adult and Community Services | |
| Summary: <p>The strategy attached at Appendix 1 is primarily focused on young people who have long-term substantial care and support needs due to a disability or impairment and are therefore likely to require and be eligible for continued funded support when they become adults.</p> <p>For many disabled young people and their families, the transitions process from Children’s to Adults services can be stressful. Good up to date information about future options, co-ordinated timely planning and local services that offer individuals the chance to lead fulfilling lives as local citizens are the key areas that need to be targeted for improvement.</p> <p>The purpose of this local strategy is to set out what will be done in Barking and Dagenham to address these gaps over the next three years. The underpinning vision for the strategy is that all disabled young people and their families will experience a well planned, well informed and seamless transition to adulthood and that they will be supported to develop meaningful lives as young adults.</p> <p>The Strategy has been presented to Children’s Select Committee and HASSC who supported the overall Strategy and commented that the new skills centre should provide additional opportunities for disabled young people. A letter from HASSC supporting the Strategy is attached (Appendix 2)</p> | |
| Recommendation(s) The Cabinet is recommended to agree the draft version of the Transitions Strategy and Action Plan attached at Appendix 1 and make recommendations about the priorities and actions it has identified. | |

Reason(s)

Planning how disabled young people and their families are supported to prepare for the many changes they will face when they turn 18 and become adults is an important issue for local residents, the Council and its partners. The Strategy provides a framework for the Council and its statutory partners for improving the transitions process and, more importantly, the outcomes for young people.

1. Introduction and Background

- 1.1 The Transitions Strategy has been developed with a number of key partners and is based on national models of good practice and local feedback from consultation. The aim of this strategy is to ensure a seamless, well informed transition to adulthood for disabled young people and their families and the provision of local opportunities for disabled young adults to lead fulfilling lives as local citizens.
- 1.2 Government policy in respect of services and support for disabled children and adults over the past ten years has consistently highlighted the specific need for better forward planning for disabled young people going through the transition process.
- 1.3 The actual number of disabled young people who have transferred into funded adult social care services over the past three years has averaged out at approximately 30 per year and the forecasts for the coming three years initially remain at around the same level for up to 2014/15, from which point a reduction to the lower level of approximately 23 is predicted, reflecting the overall reduction in the number of young people turning 18 from around that time.
- 1.4 The numbers of young people turning 18 will increase substantially from around 2020, with a rapid acceleration in this trend beyond 2024, due to the effects of the significantly higher increase in the 0-4 age group locally, compared to the average for London Boroughs as a whole.
- 1.5 A new “Transitions Protocol” was agreed and implemented in September 2009, detailing the roles and responsibilities of all the different professionals from Education, Children’s Services, Adult Social Care and the Connexions Service involved with disabled teenagers and young disabled adults in the transitions process. This now requires review.
- 1.6 This resulted in a greater degree of coordination between the different professionals initially led by a dedicated Transitions Team but since April 2011, led by nominated managers within Adults Services in partnership with Children’s Services, who meet together every month to forward plan the transition process for identified individuals.
- 1.7 The Council has worked in partnership with the Foundation for People with Learning Disabilities on the “Getting a Life” project, part funded through the Government’s Innovations Fund for Transitions and through Children’s Services. This has focused in detail on the transition experience of 6 Trinity School students and their families, to identify gaps and possible improvements. The lessons learnt and recommendations from this work have recently been reported to the Children’s Learning Disability and Disability Board and have lead to further changes and development of the Strategy

2. Proposal and Issues

2.1 Whilst the Council has made good progress in implementing the Transitions Protocol and in embedding Person Centred Planning within the review and planning process the lessons learned from the recent 'Getting a Life' project and recent consultation with parents and young people has evidenced that this process is not working well for all families.

2.2 The key areas for improvement identified within the Strategy in terms of the outcomes for young people and their families are.

- ▶ **Better comprehensive and co-ordinated planning from Year 9 of secondary education.** To consistently apply Person Centred Planning as the tool for young people and their family to plan for their future during and after transition. To ensure that all families and professionals are clear on their roles and responsibilities in the transition process by appointing one overall lead coordinator for each family to be responsible for ensuring a smooth transition process.
- ▶ **Greater choice and control** over the support received by raising the awareness and support to access personal budgets. Increase the availability of advocacy for young people to understand the transition process and plan for their future in person centred ways.
- ▶ **Wider range of local opportunities available for disabled young adults including education and employment.** To ensure that families have access to up to date information on a wider range of flexible local options, including local education for disabled young people with complex needs and autism and support post 18 to live locally in community settings.

2.3 The following are the key actions in the Strategy for 2012/13 to address these gaps.

- ▶ Review accessible information available to families of young disabled children.
- ▶ Transition planning driven by requirements of the special educational needs review process, leading to a single multi disciplinary 'Transitions plan', based on Person Centred Planning process..
- ▶ An identified lead professional responsible for each young person and their families transition planning agreed at Year 9
- ▶ Prioritise the support available for the young person and their family in the person centred planning process and the offer of an Individual Budget as part of their transition plan.
- ▶ Review the existing Transitions Protocol to ensure that it is being effectively implemented and that the roles and responsibilities of all those involved in the transitions process are clear.
- ▶ Develop capacity of third sector to deliver creative and flexible services for young people, to support access to leisure, work and other community activities.
- ▶ Develop the capacity of local education and support facilities to cater for young people with complex needs to avoid the need for out of borough residential placements.

3. Options Appraisal

- 3.1 The development of an overarching Strategy and Implementation Plan is considered to be the best vehicle for delivering these improvements. No other options have been considered.

4. Consultation

- 4.1 The Strategy has been developed through the Transitions Steering group composed of senior officers across Children's and Adults Services as well as colleagues from Health, Education, voluntary sector partners and carer representatives.
- 4.2 The Strategy has received feedback from the Learning Difficulties and Disability Children's Board, and carer's representatives of parents groups and networks.
- 4.3 The Strategy has also been consulted on with young people through Youth Clubs and Consortium of young disabled adults, through advocates and voluntary sector partners.
- 4.4 The 'Getting a Life' project has recently reported. The lessons learnt from working intensively with a small group of families through transition at Trinity School have been incorporated into the recommendations of the Strategy.
- 4.5 The outcomes of consultation events organised on the draft Transitions Strategy with young people and parents who are going through the transitions process has been incorporated within the Strategy.

5. Financial Implications

Implications completed by: Ruth Hodson Group Manager of ACS Finance

- 5.1 There is already significant financial pressure within Adult Social Care. This is being managed within the budgets of Adult Community Services at the present time.
- 5.2 Increased pressure is being experienced in the transition from Children's area due to the increasing number of children with care packages/ arrangements turning 18. Also in common with other boroughs and nationally learning disability budgets are also experiencing demand for more services.
- 5.3 Any change in services will have to be managed within the Adult Community Services budget as no additional funding is forthcoming to cover this growth in transition cases.

6. Legal Implications

Implications completed by: Shahnaz Patel, Senior Solicitor, Safeguarding

- 6.1 The statutory provisions relating to children who are in need of social care support [including children who are 'looked after'] which includes accommodation and/ or services are contained in the Children Act 1989, and the Chronically Sick and Disabled Persons Act 1970. However upon reaching 18, the duty on local

authorities to provide accommodation and services for those who have reached 18 and who require social care support cease under the Children Act 1989. From 18 and onwards social care support is met through various provisions, which includes the National Assistance Act 1948, and section 2 of the 1970 Act. The Transitions Strategy will further reinforce the need for a smoother seamless 'transition' into adulthood.

7. Other Implications

7.1. Customer Impact

An EIA (Equality Impact Assessment) has been completed on the Transitions Strategy which has been based on data from the JSNA, and SWIFT as well as consultations undertaken with service users and providers.

The EIA found that:

The current social services information system for young people in transitions, as well as adults, is not set up with sufficient information categories about a person's needs and disability, to capture overall needs analysis and demographic data for a range of disabilities for example identifying the local population of people with Autism. This is a problem that every boroughs faces.

The young people who are placed in out of borough services often have complex needs and are in very high cost residential services, which indicate that there are not sufficient services or education support systems available locally.

The actions to be taken:

The purpose of the Strategy is to improve the experience for all young people and their families when they move across from Children's to Adults Services.

The actions in the Strategy are aimed at providing better systems for advice, information and planning which will help ensure that different equality groups within the overall set of people with support needs known to the Council have equal access to all services, with no sub-group facing barriers in accessing any support opportunities.

The actions in the Strategy for developing local services are aimed at ensuring that local services are developed to avoid the need for people with complex needs to be placed out of the Borough.

7.2 Safeguarding Children

Both nationally and locally, consultation with young people and their families who are facing the transition from Children's to Adults Services shows that, despite progress made over the last few years to improve the transition process, local authorities and their statutory partners still need to work together to improve the transitions process.

For many disabled young people and their families, the key elements that need to be in place to ensure a good outcome from the transitions process are having; reliable information about future options, good forward planning and support to lead fulfilling lives as local citizens.

The purpose of this local strategy is to set out what will be done in Barking and Dagenham to ensure that these elements are in place over the next three years.

7.3 Health Issues

One of the key outcomes of the Strategy is to ensure that disabled young peoples' specialist and general health needs are fully addressed in the transition planning.

A key action in the Strategy is to have a single, multi-disciplinary "Transitions Plan" covering all aspects of the individual's future life and support needs, including their health as well as social care support needs

A new system of Health Action Planning and Annual Health Checks for disabled young people (aligned with the system already established for adults with a learning disability) will be developed and implemented. This will tie into the implementation of personal health budgets

7.4 Crime and Disorder Issues

Disabled, vulnerable young people can be targeted within the community and find themselves the victims of Hate Crime. It is one of the Council's key objectives to keep people safe. This Strategy will help and support the existing work programmes that are involving the local voluntary sector, service users, their advocates, and community policing to implement proactive measures to prevent people from being the victims of crime.

Background Papers Used in the Preparation of the Report: None

List of appendices:

- **Appendix 1** - Draft Transitions Strategy for Disabled Young People with Support Needs 2012 - 2015
- **Appendix 2** - Letter to Cllr Reason from HASSC in support of Strategy