



Councillor L Reason
Cabinet Member for Children's and Adult Services
c/o Members Room, Civic Centre
Dagenham, Essex
RM10 7BN

c/o Glen Oldfield
Democratic Services
Civic Centre
Dagenham, Essex
RM10 7BN

(sent via e-mail)

Reference: Transitions Strategy
Date: 22 February 2011

Dear Councillor Reason,

RE: Response to the Transitions Strategy

At its meeting on 15 February 2012, the Health and Adult Services Select Committee reviewed the draft transitions strategy for disabled young people with support needs (2012/15). Before Cabinet takes its decision on this matter the Select Committee would like to bring to your attention some of the comments and issues that were raised in the scrutiny forum.

The Select Committee was especially pleased with a number of elements of the Strategy, including:

Consultation

- The HASSC was pleased that the experiences of students (and their families) from Trinity School who participated in the "Getting a life" project have been incorporated to develop parts of the strategy.

Helping young people into adulthood

- Members are glad that through this strategy disabled young people will be prepared and supported to have a fulfilling and independent adulthood. The Strategy recognises that early intervention and planning leads to better outcomes for disabled young people. By helping young people to shape their future from the age of 14 they will be given the chance to develop their aspirations and have richer life experiences.

Information and advocacy

- The strategy seeks to improve the quality and volume of information available to families and in the process address inconsistencies about the options available to young adults.
- The HASSC welcomed the idea of establishing some kind of peer brokerage support and training whereby families who have been through the transition period are able to give advice and support to other families at the beginning of the process.

Improving local provision

- The Strategy seeks to address the gaps in local education provision for young people with complex needs avoiding out of borough placements that can result in missed opportunities to make friends and develop local links.

Seamlessness

- The HASSC supports any measures that seek to integrate services better to create a seamless and hassle-free experience for the service user; the Transitions Strategy does this in several ways.
 - Firstly, by nominating a professional to take the overall lead of a person's support package to give consistency, familiarity and stability to a family going through the transition period.
 - Secondly, the Strategy strives to create a single, multi-disciplinary 'transitions plan' that covers all aspects of an individual's future life and support needs, putting an end to parallel plans running concurrently for an individual.
 - Thirdly, data will be managed in a way that creates one resource for use by multiple agencies which will streamline things behind the scenes.
 - Finally, the Strategy recognises that Adult and Children's services must work better together in order to build on 2009's Transitions Protocol. One step towards this goal will be Children's Services having a better understanding of personal budgets.

The key concern that arose during our discussion about the Strategy was that it was not explicit that disabled young people would be able to access the new Skills Centre in Barking Town Centre. Members would therefore like assurances from Cabinet that disabled young people would be able to use, and benefit from, this provision.

Recommendation:

The HASSC recommends that the Strategy takes account of the opportunities the new Skills Centre will bring and the Council ensures that disabled young people's needs are recognised and catered for at the Skills Centre.

The Select Committee supports this strategy and feels that the draft is thorough, the action plan is clear and that considerable thought and effort has been put into the Strategy to achieve the vision outlined in the document. The HASSC hopes that you find this feedback useful in preparation for the Cabinet meeting on 20 March 2012.

Yours Sincerely,



Councillor Evelyn Carpenter

Member, Health and Adult Services Select Committee
Becontree Ward

cc:

Councillor L Smith, Leader of the Council
Members of the Health and Adult Services Select Committee
Councillor L Butt, Chair of the Children's Services Select Committee
Anne Bristow, Corporate Director of Adult and Community Services
Karen Ahmed, Head of Adult Commissioning

