



Report

Date: 23 January 2018

To the Chair and Members of the
HEALTH AND ADULT SOCIAL CARE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Transition from Children's To Adult Social Care

Relevant Cabinet Member(s)	Wards Affected	Key Decision
Councillor Nuala Fennelly Portfolio Holder for Children, Young People and Schools Councillor Rachael Blake Portfolio Holder for Adult Social Care	All	No

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. This report provides information from Doncaster Children's Services Trust and Doncaster Adult Social Care in relation to the processes by which young people with disabilities who are in receipt of a service from the Trust are supported on their journey to adulthood in partnership.

EXEMPT REPORT

2. The report is not exempt.

RECOMMENDATIONS

3. That the Panel considers and notes the information provided within the report.

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR THE CITIZENS OF DONCASTER?

4. Children with disabilities and complex health needs are a vulnerable group whose rights are protected under legislation. Under the Children Act 1989 the Trust has a statutory duty to assess and provide services to meet need and to safeguard children and young people from harm arising through neglect, abuse or exploitation. Supporting these young people to move into adulthood safely and with the right support will improve their life chances, help them to reach their full potential and enable families to remain together.

BACKGROUND

The Children with Disabilities Team

5. The Children with Disabilities (CWD) social work team transferred to the Trust from DMBC in June 2016. Oaklands residential short breaks children's home transferred to the Trust in September 2016.
6. The CWD team hold case responsibility for 104 children and young people (as at 1 January 2018). These can be broken down as follows:
 - 28 children subject to a statutory needs assessment under S17 Children Act 1989;
 - 39 children who are receiving support under S17 Children Act 1989 as a "child in need";
 - 6 children who are subject to Child Protection Plans due to significant harm arising through abuse or neglect;
 - 31 children who are in the care of Doncaster Children's Services Trust (including a small number of children who are in care due to being in receipt of short breaks that include more than 75 overnight stays per year).
7. The team's primary purpose is to provide a social care service to children and young people with complex, multiple and enduring disabilities. As a result, the majority will require additional support when they reach adulthood.
8. Not all children with disabilities or additional needs who require social care support are supported through the CWD team. Those with lower levels of disability or need will be supported by social workers in other social work teams, by colleagues in early help or via universal services.

The Journey to Adulthood

9. The majority of the children and young people who receive a service from the CWD team will require additional support after they reach the age of eighteen, to an extent that reflects factors such as their own needs, their relationship with their birth family etc.
10. It is acknowledged that the transition process is a complex one and young people known to the CWDT will have different pathways to adulthood dependant on their circumstances and needs. For example the transition pathway for a child who is in care and will need to be provided with accommodation post-18 is likely to be different to a child who lives with their parents and who can remain with them after eighteen, with the provision of support services. Some young people will be eligible for Continuing Health Care Funding and/or will meet the criteria for support from adult social care services, whereas others will not but will be entitled to support under the Leaving Care Act.
11. The team currently supports 104 children of whom 14 are aged 16 or 17 and therefore require some element of transition planning. Of these:
 - 10 are children in care who will need provision of accommodation and support when they reach eighteen;

- 3 are children in need who will remain with their families when they reach eighteen but who will require additional support;
 - 1 is having his needs assessed by a social worker.
12. The Trust has a policy of updating statutory assessments of need every six months which helps to ensure that there is an accurate and updated picture of current and future need.
 13. Those that are in care will have a statutory Pathway Plan from the age of sixteen that helps to plan for their independence. They will become care leavers when they reach the age of eighteen and the majority will be entitled to a service under the Leaving Care Act which is provided by the Trust's Inspiring Futures Team. Arrangements are in place for Inspiring Futures personal assistants to work alongside Children with Disabilities Team social workers from sixteen to support the transition to adulthood.
 14. However many young people in receipt of a service from the team will also require support from adult social care services if they are to reach their full potential and be able to live as independently as possible. It is essential that for these young people, the transition is as seamless as possible.
 15. The Government's SEND reforms came into force in September 2014 and created the 0 – 25 Education, Health and Care Plan. The key principles that underpin these reforms and this protocol are:
 - That services are delivered based on up to date and where necessary, joint, assessments of need;
 - That services are delivered in a timely way with minimal disruption at the point of transition;
 - That there should be good planning for transition that commences when the young person becomes sixteen;
 - Families who are receiving a service should have access to a single, lead professional who can act as their single point of contact for all social care matters during the transition planning phase;
 - Responsibility for funding post-18 should be agreed early in the transition process.
 16. In order to support good transition, the CWDT team employs two part time Transition Social Workers who can be allocated to work with young people from the age of sixteen onwards, in order to support the transition to adulthood. One of these workers also holds a post within the council's adult services Transition Team, enabling us to provide consistency given that the Children with Disabilities Team will end their involvement when a young person becomes eighteen. One of the main focusses of their work has been identifying those young people who are likely to meet the threshold criteria for adult services as well as attempting to identify the cohort of young people suitable for supported living projects.
 17. Regular Joint Allocation Meetings (JAM Meetings) have been implemented to support transitions to adulthood for disabled children in receipt of a service. They are attended by CWD Team Manager, colleagues from adult social care, health, SEND Education and commissioning services. The JAM agrees pathways towards support in adulthood and identifies key roles and responsibilities. The meeting is both operational (setting

tasks to enable smooth transitions) and strategic looking at longer term needs of individuals and the cohort.

18. The JAM meeting will shortly be merged with the council's Preparing for Adulthood Pathway Group to avoid any potential duplication and to ensure a holistic discussion between all relevant partner agencies.
19. In some cases a young person will not reach the threshold for support by adult social care or Continuing Health Care. In such cases the team still has a responsibility to ensure that whatever support is needed post eighteen is identified and planned for prior to the young person reaching the age of eighteen, so that they and their family know what support will be available to them.
20. The most challenging aspect of transition to adulthood relates to the provision of accommodation post 18 particularly for young people who have been in care, cannot live with their birth family and who are unable to live independently when they become eighteen. It is, therefore, crucial that children's and adult services, as well as health partners, work collaboratively to ensure that plans are in place for when the young person reaches eighteen that will meet the young person's assessed needs. It is acknowledged that whilst many specialist residential placements for disabled children and young people are able to continue to look after them as young adults, this will be dependent on funding decisions based on assessment of need and therefore some young people may experience a change of accommodation when they reach the age of eighteen. Although this can be difficult for them, it is important that people are supported to live as independently as possible insofar as this is safe for them.
21. It is acknowledged that for a family with a disabled child the process of transition to adulthood can be an extremely complex process due to the involvement of education, health, children's social care and adult social care, all of which have their own eligibility criteria or thresholds, assessment frameworks and meetings. In addition, the complexity of funding arrangements and availability of suitable accommodation post 18 for young people who need it does mean that families and professionals will sometimes experience a period of uncertainty about the future arrangements.
22. As a result of this a piece of work is currently being undertaken led by the council to explore ways in which the "pathway" can be simplified for young people and their families. An initial multi-agency workshop was held on 12th December 2017 and this identified a number of key areas in which the system could be made more user-friendly. Further partnership work will now be undertaken.
23. The keys to a smooth transition from children's to adult services are:
 - Early identification of children who are likely to require continuing health and social care support when they are eighteen (even if they have not required social care support before this time);
 - Wherever possible joint assessment of current and future needs;
 - The use of multi-agency groups to share assessments and develop plans alongside young people and parents;
 - Early planning for adulthood, particularly where accommodation will be required.

Transition Team (Adult Social Care)

24. The Transition Team is a recently formed Team (2016) consisting of 2 full time Assessment Officer and 2.6 (fte) qualified Social Workers and 1 full-time Advanced Practitioner. There are also an extra 3 full time qualified workers which are currently working on an agency basis to enable project work to identify the optimum sized team required.
25. Much progress has been made in the work of the Transitions team, currently situated within Adult Social Care. Good links have been developed with the Children's teams within the trust as well as other partner organisations. Every young person 16 plus that is allocated to the Transitions team has an allocated worker.
26. Each Transition worker will have a lead on specific issues faced by young people and we currently have a lead on Autism, employment, benefits and social inclusion. Other leads will be decided at the project plans develop.
27. Negotiations have been held with health colleagues and all young people now have a Continuing Health Care Decision Support Tool completed by the age of 17.3 years to enable awareness of funding stream and give time to support plan effectively before they are 18.
28. Strong relationships have been established with the Children with Disabilities team and work is in progress to improve these, with one Social Worker working across both teams. Regular contact is maintained to ensure the young people due to transition into adult services are known to the teams, who work together to create an appropriate care and support plan in readiness for the move into adult services.
29. The appointment of a new manager in the Aiming High team has significantly improved the information flow between them so there are no surprises and plans can be put in place to ensure continuity of care for the young people involved in that service. The Transitions team is represented by the Advanced Practitioner at their short breaks panel which is enabling adult services to influence and promote a strengths based model for young people as they reach transitions.
30. A support group for young people exploring a move into independent living (TIS) has been developed to create the chance to meet likeminded peers and enable natural friendship groups to form. This now meets weekly with one week being a day time meet and one being a tea time meet to ensure it is open to as many people as possible.
31. A six-bed Transition supported living house, where the focus is on skills building and independent living has been sourced and developed working closely with the providers to enhance independent living skills. Four young people are now settled there with two others identified to move shortly once they are properly prepared.
32. Plans have recently been discussed with commissioners for a new build in Norton that may be ready early next year, consisting of 16 units. This will be a mixture of shared and single person accommodation for young people aged 18-25 offering the opportunity to place our young people who have complex needs and who currently end up out of borough.
33. It is intended to attach workers to schools who will offer a presence at least once weekly in the allocated school to enable the team to identify young people early and to work alongside schools/colleges to ensure both education and social care are considering the needs of young people in a holistic way. Workers will be attending team meetings of

area Children's teams to discuss the TIS group and to advise colleagues on when they should make referrals.

34. A working criteria has been created to enable better identification of the transitions cohort which has identified a significant increase in the number of Direct Payments provided to enable young people to have more choice and control over their lives:
 - In 2016 – there were 173 young people allocated to the team and 36 in receipt of a direct payment
 - In 2017 there were 129 young people allocated to the team with 64 being in receipt of a direct payment - almost 50% of our young people now receive a direct payment. Of the other 50% there will be a number of young people receiving no budget but will continue to receive professional support until they have transitioned out of education and into adult life.
35. Transitions staff are working alongside the Travel Training Team to enable young people to be upskilled prior to them leaving education and thus promoting and increasing independence.
36. The team's Advanced Practitioner attends the Joint Resource Panel and the SEND panel, which, along with the JAM meetings helps the identification of young people, making links and influencing decision making to avoid dependency and over-supporting.
37. The Team currently has a caseload of 142 young people. These referrals come from a variety of sources including but not exclusively the Children With Disabilities Team. The majority of the caseload will come from referrals made by Education colleagues including schools and SEN Officers.
38. The Transition Team work with young people who are in full time education and who have identified needs in line with the Care Act 2014 or if it is assumed that they will have such needs once reaching 18 years old.
39. The age group of the young people that the Transition team work with is 16-25 years old and the team will have full case and funding responsibility for young people following their 18th birthday. The team will work in an advisory capacity until such time to ensure a smooth transfer.

OPTIONS CONSIDERED

40. None. This report is for information.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDED OPTION

41. None. This report is for information.

IMPACT ON THE COUNCIL'S KEY OUTCOMES

- 42.

	Outcomes	Implications
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<p>All people in Doncaster benefit from a thriving and resilient economy.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Mayoral Priority: Creating Jobs and Housing</i> • <i>Mayoral Priority: Be a strong voice for our veterans</i> • <i>Mayoral Priority: Protecting Doncaster's vital services</i> 	<p>Good transition into adulthood will help to maximise the life changes of young people or adults with disabilities and help them to achieve their full potential including in respect of education and employment, thus helping them to make a contribution to the community and economy of Doncaster.</p>
<p>People live safe, healthy, active and independent lives.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Mayoral Priority: Safeguarding our Communities</i> • <i>Mayoral Priority: Bringing down the cost of living</i> 	<p>A high quality transition from children's to adult services will mean that young disabled adults are safeguarded and protected as they enter adulthood. The care and support needs of young disabled adults and their families will be met. It will maximise life chances and help young people to move into adulthood in a way that helps them to achieve their full potential including education, employment etc.</p>
<p>People in Doncaster benefit from a high quality built and natural environment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Mayoral Priority: Creating Jobs and Housing</i> • <i>Mayoral Priority: Safeguarding our Communities</i> • <i>Mayoral Priority: Bringing down the cost of living</i> 	<p>A high quality transition from children's to adult services will mean that the care and support needs of young disabled adults and their families are met. It will maximise life chances and help young people to move into adulthood in a way that helps them to achieve their full potential including education, employment etc.</p>
<p>All families thrive.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Mayoral Priority: Protecting Doncaster's vital services</i> 	<p>In providing social care services to disabled children, we are required to consider the impact on the whole family of looking after a child with additional needs. Some services, such as short breaks, are specifically designed to give carers a short break for caring responsibilities, whilst also providing children with a positive experience. A smooth transition to adult services with no delays in provision will inevitably have a positive impact on the whole family.</p>
<p>Council services are modern and value for money.</p>	<p>Joined up working is crucial to avoid unnecessary duplication of work. Joined up assessment is also crucial because of the need for all planning decisions, including financial ones, to be based on up to date multi-agency assessment of need.</p>
<p>Working with our partners we will provide strong leadership and governance.</p>	<p>High quality transition from children's to adult services is entirely dependent on strong partnership working both strategically and operationally. The current project on transition pathways will be the starting point for any future service developments.</p>

RISKS AND ASSUMPTIONS

43. The primary risk is to disabled individuals and their families if they are left without appropriate support or safeguards when a disabled young person becomes an adult. In addition there are also risks in relation to adverse publicity, inspection outcomes, complaints and litigation in respect of a perceived failure to adhere to our statutory responsibilities.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

44. The statutory requirements in respect of the transition from children's to adult services are set out in statute in the Children Act 1989, The Care Act 2014 and the Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

45. For children's social care and Doncaster Children's Services Trust the legislation and guidance in respect of transitions has no additional financial implications. At the current time, requirements can be met within the existing financial envelope that governs operating costs for the Children with Disabilities Team.

HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS

46. None

TECHNOLOGY IMPLICATIONS

47. None

EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

48. The vulnerable groups included within this report are protected from discrimination by virtue of the nine protected characteristics defined in the Equality Act 2010. It is expected that children's social workers and associated professionals such as foster carers and Independent Reviewing Officers will act as advocates for their young people and will take appropriate steps to challenge discrimination. In addition, young people who require or wish for an independent advocate are provided with one by Doncaster Children's Services Trust.

CONSULTATION

49. None

BACKGROUND PAPERS

50. None

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**Learning and Opportunities: Children and Young People/Adult Health
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