

NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

YOUNG PEOPLE'S OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

28 November 2008

Young People with LDD in Transition

1.0 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To brief the Committee on the steps being taken to improve the transition into adulthood for disabled young people

2.0 National Context

- 2.1 In 2007 the Government published "*Aiming high for disabled children: better support for families*" (AHDC) in 2007, which emphasised its commitment to improving the life chances of disabled children and young people. This was followed by the publication of "*A Transition Guide for All Services*", a cross-department guide for professionals that need to work together to make sure that disabled young people get the support they require as they move from child, to young person, to adult.

The Guide recommends that a multi-agency transition protocol should be developed. It expects local authorities to have a strategic planning group for transition linked into the Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership Board and the Learning Disability Partnership Boards (LDPB), and sees this strategic planning group as responsible for developing and producing the protocol.

- 2.2 In December 2007 the Department of Health published "Valuing People Now". This endorses the proposals in AHDC and expects the following actions:
- every local area should have a multi-agency transition strategy, led by a senior officer, and supported by an implementation group involving all key stakeholders – in particular young people and their families
 - involvement in the Person-Centred Transitions programme should be the norm
 - young people in transition should be a focus for all *Valuing People Now* delivery actions (such as jobs, housing, individual budgets).
- 2.3 In March 2008, the Department of Health published a complementary good practice guide for health professionals and their partners "*Transitions: Moving on Well*" on transition planning for young people with complex health needs or a disability.
- 2.4 As part of AHDC a £19m Transition Support Programme (TSP) has been launched which presents a challenge to all local authorities and

health services to have a transition process in place which meets minimum standards. Where identified support will be available to enable local areas to achieve good practice in transition support. The Council for Disabled Children has been contracted to provide a national transition support team and in December 2008 local adult services, children's services and primary care trusts will be asked to complete a self assessment questionnaire to determine how well they are doing. There will also be input from disabled young people and their families.

2.5 A new National Indicator (NI 54) will assess parents' general experiences of services for disabled children (aged 0-19). The indicator will be based on a survey of a sample of parents of disabled children in each local authority and PCT which will be carried out on an annual basis starting in 2009-2010.

2.6 There are moves in some areas of the country towards the development of multi-agency transition teams (14yrs – 25yrs).

3.0 **Local Context**

3.1 Following the Joint Area Review (JAR) of Services for Children and Young People in 2006 the inspection report recommended that for action in the longer term *the Council and its partners should develop and implement an integrated approach to the delivery of services for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and improve the range and coverage of these services*.

3.2 An LDD Strategy Group was established to take forward the JAR Action Plan and in March 2008, The North Yorkshire Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership Board (The Board) received a report from the Corporate Director on a the Strategy for children and young people with Learning Difficulties and Disabilities. This report highlighted the need for a multi-agency transition working group to be established and the requirement to develop a transition strategy in line with Valuing People Now. The LDD Strategy is a priority area for improvement and is located in the Children and Young People's Plan in Section 1.1 with the actions we are taking to improve transition to adult life set out in the Achieving Economic Well being section of the Plan.

3.3 A Think Tank event, involving Adult and Community Services (ACS), the Children and Young People Service (CYPS) and other partners, was held to examine current practice and processes and consider the best models for meeting the needs of disabled young people, as they become adults. This highlighted the need for further joint strategic planning to ensure that appropriate planning could be in place early enough to allow for a smooth transition into adult life without young people and their families experiencing anxiety or unrealistic expectations.

- 3.4 The Children and Young People's Service has identified additional senior management capacity to take forward this work with our partners.

4.0 **Transition Planning**

- 4.1 Disabled children are defined under the Disability Discrimination Act 1995. The Board has endorsed a North Yorkshire Definition of Learning Difficulties and Disabilities which is well aligned to the DDA definition.

LDD (Learning Difficulties and/or disabilities)

The term learning difficulties is used to refer to individuals or groups of learners who have either a learning difficulty in relation to acquiring new skills or who learn at a different rate to their peers. A person has a disability if he/she has a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. Physical or mental impairments can include sensory impairments and learning difficulties. The definition also covers medical conditions when they have long-term and substantial effects on child or young person's everyday lives.

Those designated with Special Educational Needs (SEN) under current legislation (Education) all have learning difficulties and/or disabilities that make it harder for them to learn than most learners of the same age."

- 4.2 There are currently 1800-1900 North Yorkshire children or young people with statements of special educational needs for whom transition planning is a statutory requirement.
- 4.3 Not all disabled children receive support from social services. It is considered that there are around 1000 children and young people with severe and complex disabilities in North Yorkshire of whom approximately 500 are open cases to the Disabled Children's Service in Children's Social Care (CSC).
- 4.4 Nearly all the cases open to CSC have a statement of special educational needs.
- 4.5 It is recognised that transition for those with severe and complex needs poses more challenge to service providers and this is an area where we have the most to do

5.0 **Current Actions**

- 5.1 The transition review process, which begins in the year in which a young person is 14, will be reviewed and effective systems for monitoring the transition plan implemented. Person centred approaches will be encouraged and supported.

- 5.2 Transition pathways for all children with LDD will be developed to improve options for education, training and employment and access to adult health and social care services and leisure/recreational opportunities.
- 5.3 The existing North Yorkshire Transition Protocol needs bringing up to date and setting in the context of the minimum standards set out in the national guidance. This will require multi-agency work involving staff from Adult and Children's Social Care, Health, the Learning and Skills Council, Jobcentre Plus and the District Councils. It will also need to address the difficulties that arise from young people moving from one service to another at different ages. For example young people with a statement may remain in education until they are 19 but transfer from paediatric to adult health services at 16 and to adult social care at 18.
- 5.4 Adult and Community Services have identified the need to review their service especially in relation to the:
- (i) arrangements for dedicated transitions care managers to be hosted within four learning disability teams. This has led to some young people with physical or sensory impairments and their families being reluctant to engage with what they see as a "learning disability" service;
 - (ii) the increasing numbers of young people needing social care as adults, and an expectation that packages funded for young people under 18 will continue unchanged after they are 18. It is essential that adult services are involved earlier in joint work with individuals to develop services which are appropriate to need and cost effective in the long term. Information gained can then inform service development and commissioning;
 - (iii) practice that adult services transitions workers generally do not becoming actively involved until the child is in year 12, or aged 16. Whilst this has been seen as practicable, it may be far too late, both for meeting the needs of individuals and for good long-term budgetary planning for adults services.

6.0 Recommendations

- 6.1 That Members note the work being undertaken to improve the transition to adulthood for disabled young people

Cynthia Welbourn
Corporate Director, Children and Young People's Service
NORTHALLERTON

Author: Maggie Bennett
Contact Details: Tel 01609 2144
E-mail Margaret.bennett@northyorks.gov.uk

Presenter of Report: Karl Podmore

19 November 2008

Background Documents: Aiming high for disabled children: better support for families, A Transition Guide for All Services, Valuing People Now, Transitions: Moving on Well

Annexes: None