

Committee: Healthier Communities and older People Overview and Scrutiny panel

Date: 5th November 2019

Wards: All

Subject: Scrutiny Task Group Review of Transitions - Action Plan

Lead officer: John Morgan, Assistant Director Adult Social Care Community and Housing

Lead member: Cllr Tobin Byers, Cabinet Member of Adult Social Care, Health and the Environment. Cllr Kelly Braund, Cabinet Member for Children Services

Contact officer: Carmen Gardier, Head of Integrated Learning Disabilities Service Community and Housing & Karla Finikin. Head of SEND Integrated Services Children Schools and Families.

Recommendations:

- A. That the panel considers the initial response and draft action plan setting out how the agreed recommendations of the Scrutiny Task Group Review of Transitions dated 15th July 2019 in Merton will be implemented.
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1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY.

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to provide an initial action plan to the panel to demonstrate how the agreed recommendation of the task and finish group will be implemented by Children Schools and Families (CSF) and Adult Social Care (ASC). The report also details the associated responsible officer's and the timescales within which the recommendations will be implemented.
- 1.2 The task group of the Overview and Scrutiny Commission reviewed the transition arrangements in Merton for young people who have Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) with an Education Health and Care plan moving from Children Services to Adult services in June 2018, and the task group delivered the findings on the 15th July 2019 to Cabinet.
- 1.3 The details of the action plan as set out in Appendix A provides an initial response.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 At their meeting on the 15th July 2019 the Cabinet noted the report of the scrutiny task group review and agreed that the recommendations made by the task group would be responded to through an action plan to be drawn up by officers.
- 2.2 The Children and Families Act 2014 introduced a new special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) system. At the heart of the change is a commitment to ensuring that children, young people and their families are at the centre of decision making in order that they achieve better outcomes.

- 2.3 The Care Act 2014 is the legal framework for adults needing care and support. As part of the process a Transition Assessment to identify eligible needs for adult social care should be started before the young person becomes 16yrs and 6mths and should be completed by their 17th birthday. The Mental Capacity Act 2005 applies from age 16.
- 2.4 The report titled Transitions from Children to Adult services for young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities, submitted to Scrutiny panel by Cllr Rebecca Lanning, Task Group Chair on 15th July 2019, highlights a number of areas where improvements are needed. This ranges from “simplifying the transitions process, to early planning and travel training”.
- 2.5 The recommendations of the task group has resulted in a review of the systems, the pathways and the aspiration of young adults and has subsequently informed the draft action plan drawn up by lead officers from CSF and ASC.
- 2.6 A multiagency working group made up of officers from Child and Adolescent Mental Health service (CAMHS), Adult Mental Health (AMH), Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG), CSF and ASC was convened on 9th September 2019 to define how services will work together to support young people with special educational needs and disabilities to prepare for adult life. The work of this multi-agency group will be supported by the National Development Team for Inclusion.
- 2.7 The group has taken note of the recommendations of the task group and are committed to working together to improve the preparation for adulthood arrangements in Merton. The work that will be undertaken by this group is aligned to other strategies underway in Community and Housing (Strategy Improvement Delivery) and Children Schools and Families. (SEND and Autism Strategies).
- 2.8 The multiagency Transition Subgroup terms of reference amongst other things seeks to alleviate/remove the “cliff edge” experienced by young adults who are moving between childhood and adulthood. The group’s overall objectives are to design a seamless and transparent process for all young adults irrespective of whether they are eligible for commissioned services or not.
- 2.9 Engagement with all stakeholders has already started, with a series of engagement events already held and others planned for the near future.
- 2.10 The task group identified 7 areas that required improvement and a total of 12 recommendations have been made.

3. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

The panel is requested to discuss and comment on the draft action plan

4. CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN OR PROPOSED

In delivering the action plan there will be a number of engagement exercises with young adults, families and carers as well as professionals from health and social care.

5. TIMETABLE.

The timetable for delivery of the action plan is set out in appendix A.

6. FINANCIAL, RESOURCE AND PROPERTY IMPLICATIONS

7. Legal and statutory implications.

7.1 The statutory and legal implication of these recommendations are aligned to the council's duties towards children and adults. The Children and Families Act 2014 strives to improve services for vulnerable children and families.

7.2 The Care Act 2014 sets out the framework for the provision of services to adults who are in need of care and support and to promote individual's well-being. Local Authorities have a duty to provide or arrange services, facilities or resources to prevent or delay the need for care and support. Authorities also have a duty under the Care Act to assess a young person who is likely to have needs for care and support after becoming 18, if it is satisfied that it would significantly benefit the child.

8. HUMAN RIGHTS, EQUALITIES AND COMMUNITY COHESION IMPLICATIONS

NONE

9. CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

NONE

10. RISK MANAGEMENT AND HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

NONE

11. APPENDICES – THE FOLLOWING DOCUMENTS ARE TO BE PUBLISHED WITH THIS REPORT AND FORM PART OF THE REPORT

12. BACKGROUND PAPERS.

Appendix A: Executive response to the recommendations of the scrutiny task group review of transitions.

1. Simplifying the transitions process for young people and their families			
		Action	Lead officers/ date due
<p>Recommendation one: Continue to embed the Preparing for Adulthood recommendations within the EHCP framework, in collaboration with parents, service users and voluntary organisations</p>	Cabinet	<p>Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Integrated Service (SENDIS) has developed guidance for professionals setting out the PFA outcomes.</p> <p>A series of training will be delivered on a rolling basis to ensure staff know the PFA outcomes.</p> <p>Engagement events with parents are being booked in with first event already scheduled for November 2019.</p>	<p>Karla Finikin (Head of SEND) Carmen Gardier (Head of Learning Disabilities) December 2019</p>
	Children, Schools and Families Department		
	Community and Housing		
	CCG		
<p>Recommendation two: Develop a visual pathway for Merton’s process for transition to children social care to Adult social care to inform parents and young people on what they should expect from transition. This should provide clear, comprehensive and accessible information and support advice about the opportunities that are</p>	Cabinet	<p>A sub group of the Community & Housing Strategy Improvement Delivery Board (SID) has been established to take forward improvement to Transitions arrangements in Merton. This is co-chaired by CSF and ASC. The primary task of this group is to develop multiagency visual pathways and</p>	<p>Karla Finikin Carmen Gardier CAMHS CCG (CHC) Adult Mental Health May 2020</p>
	Community and Housing and Children, Schools and Families Departments		
	CCG		

<p>available.</p> <p>Ideally these would be separated into themes that young people and carers can identify with, such as the four pathways suggested by PfA: Employment, Independent Living, Community Inclusion and Health. This could also be represented in an infographic style, as developed by the BMJ (This is based on NICE Guidance NG43: Supporting Young People in their transition to adults' services.)</p>		<p>processes. Our experience tells us that this is likely to be a large task and therefore interim arrangements are in place via a tracking and data sharing process to identify all young people aged 14 – 25 years of age.</p> <p>3 additional workers are temporarily being recruited in the transitions team to focus on engagement with young people and their families to co-develop the pathways.</p>	
<p>Recommendation three: Clarify the role of local authority officers in relation to the London Borough of Merton's statutory functions and ensure clear staff communication on handovers, in the event of different workers working with a family</p>	<p>Cabinet</p> <p>Children, Schools and Families Departments</p> <p>Community and Housing</p>	<p>The multi-agency sub-group is defining the roles of each partner agency and writing the agreed procedures by a protocol. A panel of multi-agency partners to discuss and handover cases will ensure that all partners fulfil their statutory responsibilities.</p>	<p>CSF ASC CCG Children' continuing care and Adult CHC CAMHS and Adult Mental Health Education settings</p> <p>Immediate and ongoing</p>
<p>2. Clear, comprehensive and accessible information: The Local Offer</p>			
<p>Recommendation four:</p> <p>a) Conduct a wholesale review of the local offer, in consultation with service users, parents and groups such as Merton's Learning Disability</p>	<p>Cabinet</p> <p>Community and Housing and Children, Schools and Families Departments</p>	<p>a-b) Young Merton website provides details of services for all young people in Merton.</p> <p>A series of engagement events have been scheduled and will</p>	<p>Multi-agency as above</p> <p>November 2019</p>

<p>Forum, Kids First and Adults First. This review should improve the quality of information published on the website, and ensure the language used is appropriate, simple and sets out easy-to-navigate information on provision available for children, young people and their families</p> <p>b) Improve the visibility of services available for young people with SEND on the local offer, aligned with the visual pathway above for continuity. Include brief details on eligibility, price, whether there is a waiting list and whether services form part of a universal, targeted or specialist offer</p> <p>c) Include a contact telephone number and / or email address on the local offer website for general information and advice, to aid accessibility and navigation for families</p> <p>d) Improve the comment box on the local offer website to invite young people,</p>	<p>CCG</p>	<p>serve to engage and consult with young people and their families/carers. The first event took place on the 10th September at the Learning Disabilities Forum.</p> <p>Consultation on the SEND strategy is in process.</p> <p>The multi-agency subgroup has identified the need to review the Local Offer. The group has started collating information that will feature on the local offer. The final version will allow all young adults to easily orientate themselves with the content in accordance with accessible information standards.</p> <p>c) This information already exists on the local offer, however it is noted the search parameters do not allow this to be found as easy as it should. All agencies are starting to prepare information about their service this will include contact details and entry criteria for publication on the local offer.</p> <p>d) A recent refresh of the local offer has been</p>	
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<p>parents and carers to provide feedback on the local offer, and create a hyperlink to the homepage to facilitate ease of use. This will not only support the Code of Practice recommendations but also provides an opportunity for continual review, adaptation and improvement of the local offer for families</p> <p>e) Publish a glossary of SEND acronyms and abbreviations on the local offer website, in line with the proposal to publish an FAQs and 'myth buster' page</p> <p>f) Increase the promotion of Merton's Disability Database and M-Card via the local offer website and encourage all local partners, including voluntary groups, schools and the CCG to publish a link to the database and the local offer</p> <p>g) Review and improve signposting opportunities on the local offer, particularly for those who may not</p>		<p>actioned. We are continuing work to develop and improve the content on the local offer.</p> <p>We will connect some of the content pages to the local services. This includes cross agency collaboration and knowledge sharing. The inclusion of a comment box will require some site design, consideration of the need for moderation maintenance and resources.</p> <p>e) A parent's guide to language and terms used in the Special Educational Needs and Disability reforms, will be devised and published on the local offer. Work is underway to collate the relevant Acronyms.</p> <p>f) Multi-agency partners have agreed the need to review and improve the content of the local offer, this includes creating links that contain information about the services they provide.</p> <p>g) Parents and young people are given information about their eligibility for services well in advance of them</p>	
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<p>meet the national eligibility (Care Act 2014) for adult's social care, to ensure they are able to achieve and maintain independence.</p>		<p>moving into adulthood. The national eligibility criteria will be published on the local offer and signposting to voluntary and local groups embedded into practice as part of the adult social care determination of need.</p> <p>My Life my community is already in place for anyone that does not meet the need for services this is a low level preventative service funded via Merton strategic partners grants programme.</p>	
<p>3. Enabling families to better navigate the transitions process</p>			
<p>Recommendation five: Undertake a pilot project whereby a named social worker or 'transition worker' is appointed to the SEND Team to provide expertise and direction to young people in Year 9 and their parents who have been identified as having substantial needs but unlikely to meet the threshold for adult social care services. This would help families better navigate the planning process from the age of 14 years onwards, describe what can be expected to have happened by key stages in the transition process and plan for the future</p>	<p>Cabinet Children, Schools and Families Department</p>	<p>The Adult social care Transions team are reviewing capacity and devising a system whereby a named social worker will be aligned to each young person from age 14, this will ensure that all young adults have a named worker to support their transition between services. The young person will be provided with the details of this person and will have had contact with them from the review at year 9. Additionally we are exploring the possibility of putting in place regular satellite information mornings in schools where information can be given to families and young people about</p>	<p>November - December 2019</p>

		what to expect.	
4. Empowering young people and their families through advocacy			
Recommendation six: Invite bids or otherwise explore opportunities to implement an advocacy service with an appropriate provider, akin to Core Assets, to support young people with SEND and their families	Cabinet Children, Schools and Families Department	CSF has expanded the MIAS Service Disabled children may have access to an advocate to act on their behalf. Where this need is identified it is arranged by the Social Worker within Services for Disabled Children or Adult Social Care. Adult Social Care have commissioned advocacy services. All young adults may seek the support of an independent advocate to act on their behalf where necessary.	CSF Commissioners Sep 2019/July 2020 Carmen Gardier
5. Encouraging early planning to assist adult social care			
Recommendation seven: Implement a monitoring and tracking framework for children with SEND with an EHCP who do not meet the national eligibility criteria for adult social care, but are otherwise referred to adult social care between the ages of 14-25 to ensure that no young person does not receive the support they need.	Cabinet Community and Housing and Children, Schools and Families Departments	Tracking systems are developed and the multi-agency sub group have recognised that there are young people who will require information and guidance and signposting. Additional capacity in the Transitions service will ensure assessments and decision about eligibility take place in a timely manner.	Achieved August 2019
6. Actively promoting employment and volunteering opportunities			
Recommendation eight: Collaboration with Merton's Learning Disability Forum, Kids First and Adults First to	Cabinet Community and Housing and Children,	In addition to the existing in house Employment team and Adult Education resources, work is	Carmen Gardier, Andy Ottaway Searle, Karla Finikin and

<p>co-develop marketing and promotional tools for adult education and vocational courses within available resources and link to the local offer</p>	<p>Schools and Families Departments</p>	<p>underway to review these and the offer to young people in regards to adult education, day opportunities and housing.</p>	<p>Anthony Hopkins. Partly achieved April 2020</p>
<p>Recommendation nine: Recognising the value of peer support, explore the expansion of befriending and mentoring opportunities for young people with SEND.</p>	<p>Cabinet Children, Schools and Families Department</p>	<p>The Youth Participation worker is establishing peer support opportunities. Imagine Independence charity that currently provides peer support for people with mental health needs will be approached to extend their services for the benefit of young adults with disabilities and Autism.</p>	<p>Achieved</p>
<p>Recommendation ten: Encourage expansion of work placements, apprenticeships and voluntary opportunities available in the borough through outreach to a wide range of local employers, educational establishments and trade bodies.</p> <p>The SEND team to liaise with the Merton Partnership Economic Wellbeing sub-group to establish links with local employment and training providers. SEND team to work with the Business Rates team to make contact with key businesses in the borough</p>	<p>Cabinet Environment and Regeneration Department</p>	<p>The multi-agency subgroup is reviewing the internship and apprenticeship opportunities. ASC has an employment team to work with young people regarding employment opportunities, In view of the focus on paid employment outcomes Volunteering is not a priority however this can be reviewed as part of the Learning disabilities offer workstream.</p> <p>Youth Inclusion has appointed a SEND worker to work with specific individuals regarding pathways to employment</p>	<p>Carmen Gardier Karla Finikin April 2020</p>

		SENDIS has increased the Project Search Offer	
<p>Recommendation eleven: Strengthen the volunteering opportunities available at the end of all adult education courses by launching a pilot volunteering project across Merton libraries to attract more people with SEND. To ensure these opportunities are accessible for those who need more support, request collaboration with Merton Mencap's job coach to provide training to existing staff and volunteers. This then has potential to evolve into a peer support model, with appropriate safeguards in place</p>	<p>Cabinet Community and Housing Department</p>	<p>This is currently underway and is being built into the 2019/ 2020 curriculum.</p>	<p>Sep 2019- July 2020</p>
7. Empowering parents through travel training			
<p>Recommendation twelve: Expand the travel training offer by equipping parents with the tools to provide the accredited training course. As part of Merton Mencap's travel training programme, introduce a termly initiative whereby travel training is provided to parents, who can become trainers and support their children to travel independently.</p>	<p>Cabinet Community and Housing and Children, Schools and Families Departments</p>	<p>CSF's Mencap's travel training contract has been extended to the age of 25 years and the criteria has been changed to state that the pupil does not require an EHCP. This contract will be reviewed to consider the recommendation to expand the travel training to parents who can themselves deliver the training.</p> <p>Adult Education has</p>	<p>Partly achieved</p>

<p>The ambition of this recommendation is to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Encourage a peer support network for parents; b. Improve resilience for parents and young people; c. Increase the potential for young people to access education, employment and leisure opportunities; and d. Reduce parental fears and anxieties and enable more independent time, for example to continue employment or further study 		<p>launched their travel training offer and Merton continues to make use of the TfL travel training scheme</p>	
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