

Wiltshire Council

Children's Services Select Committee
18 March 2010

**Transition Planning – Progress made since Children's Services Scrutiny
Committee 7 May 2009**

Executive summary

This paper outlines the progress that has been made since 7 May 2009 by the Transition Partnership Board in addressing the need to improve Wiltshire's approach to the transition of disabled young people and those with special educational needs (SEN) to adult services. In particular, the Board wishes to bring to the attention of members how it intends to implement the Multi Agency Transition Protocol. In essence the Board believes that the strategic framework is now well advanced and is capable of forming a strong foundation for developing a sustainable operational model of delivery.

Proposal

That the Committee:

1. Notes the progress made by the Transition Partnership Board.
2. Notes the work to improve the transition of young people to adult social care.

Reason for proposal

The Children's Services Scrutiny Committee of 7 May 2009 requested that members be updated on these areas of work.

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Purpose of the Report

1. This paper will outline the progress that has been made since 7 May 2009 by the Transition Partnership Board in addressing the need to improve Wiltshire's approach to the transition of disabled young people and those with special educational needs (SEN) to adult services. In particular the Board wishes to bring to the attention of Members how it intends to implement the Multi Agency Transition Protocol. In essence the Board believes that the strategic framework is now well advanced and is capable of forming a strong foundation for developing a sustainable operational model of delivery.

Background

2. At the Committee meeting of 7 May 2009, it was acknowledged that the Council's policy position on the transition of disabled young people between children and adult services was not strong. This was highlighted in the last JAR (2008), which criticised Wiltshire for then not having a transition protocol in place and for the absence of person centred reviews in its secondary schools. These criticisms were echoed in the CSCi 2007-08 annual performance summary assessment of social care services for adults which stated that "the Council must ensure robust systems are in place to ensure there is effective coordination for young people in transition from children to adult's services". One of the crucial areas identified was the need to develop a comprehensive means of sharing information between departments to enable the projection of budgets and the advance planning of services.
3. For the first time in April 2009 our work was benchmarked nationally which gave us an indication of how we were doing compared to other local authorities and in meeting national guidance. The National Transition Support Programme independently validated transition in Wiltshire as being in their middle band (Tier 2) along with most other authorities. This assessment based on a snapshot in time judged that we were meeting the minimum requirements and guidance but needed to further develop good practice. An action plan was drawn up jointly outlining the areas for development. This included finalisation of the Transition Protocol.
4. A draft of the Multi Agency Transition Protocol was presented to members at the Scrutiny Committee of 7 May 2009. Members stressed that the scope of the Protocol must be extended to include children in care and that the Implementation Plan must aim to meet the highest standards in the following areas -
 - engagement with and participation of young people and their families in the transition process
 - Developing personalised approaches including person centred planning.

- Joint assessment processes
- post 16 opportunities
- strategic partnership working including commissioning

Main Considerations for Members

5. To note the progress made by the Transition Partnership Board
6. To note the work to improve the transition of young people to adult social care.

The Multi Agency Transition Protocol

7. The Board now feels that a key concern of the JAR report has been addressed by the finalisation of the Multi Agency Transition Protocol which provides the strategic framework within which Wiltshire can make the necessary improvements. It outlines our vision to put young people at the centre of a collaborative transition process. It also details the roles and responsibilities of the key agencies involved in transition and what support young people and their families can expect with their transition planning. Since 7 May 2009, the Protocol has been amended to widen its scope following recommendations by members and is now in the public domain. It has been circulated to schools and the key agencies involved in transition. It can be found on the Wiltshire Council website, Wiltshire Pathways and on the website of the Wiltshire Parent Carer Council (www.wiltshireparentcarercouncil.co.uk). Feedback from parents has been positive.

Implementation Plan

8. The focus of the Board's work has been to develop a plan to implement the Protocol over the next 3 years. We have worked closely with the National Transition Support Programme to benchmark this Implementation Plan (see appendix 1) against their key priorities and to meet the recommendations of Members at the meeting of 7 May 2009. The Board has worked hard to ascertain and emulate best practice from other authorities.
9. The Implementation Plan is a working document that the Board will review regularly as work is completed.
10. Key areas of the Plan are detailed in the following paragraphs.

Transition of disabled young people to Adult Services

11. The CSCI report (see paragraph 2) highlighted the transition of disabled young people to adult services as an area of concern. An undertaking was

given to the Scrutiny Committee of 7 May 2009 that the Board would put forward a proposal for a transition team to oversee the transition of young people from children to adult services and that the team would be operational from January 2010. This timescale has proved to be over ambitious given the scale and complexity of the task, and the number of services that are involved in transition. However, progress has been made in developing a new operational model on both a short term and long term basis.

12. In the short term the Board has established multi agency transition panels. The aim of these panels is to identifying young people from year 9 who are likely to require an adult social care service and to monitor their transition up to the age of 25 if required. The panels will provide advance information to adult care commissioners about likely budget implications and service requirements. Adult social care services have given an undertaking that a nominated adult worker will be allocated once a young person reaches 16 to help plan their transition. The first panel met on 27 January 2010. Appendix 2 gives details of the membership of these panels and how they will operate. In the first instance the Panels will be chaired by the Strategic Manager for Aiming High from DCE and the Head of Commissioning for Learning Disabilities from DCS. .
13. A part time Transition Panel Coordinator has been appointed to support the work of the panels and she is setting up a database to monitor the details of these young people as they go through the transition process, as well as providing information for commissioners. A multi agency information sharing protocol has been drafted by the Legal team to enable the required sharing of sensitive information.
14. We plan to evaluate the effectiveness of the panels and this review will be integrated into developing a longer term operational model. In December 2009, Adult Services appointed Charteris, a firm of consultants who are experts in process management and have already been involved in change managing their service delivery (Focus Project). Charteris will work with the key partners and parents to examine how young adults going through the transitions period can best be supported by the key agencies. This may mean the introduction of a transition team or another model. However, any organisational change will need to show improved efficiency and effectiveness by considering and implementing aspects of a lean review. The Transition Partnership Board will become the Project Board. Part of the initial process will involve holding a scoping meeting on the 26 April. How long it will take to implement any organisational changes will become clearer once this work commences
15. There is whole service involvement for these changes. The Lead Members for both Adult Social Care and Children's Services have been informed of the work of the panels and the involvement of Charteris .A commitment has been given that they will be kept up to date with developments.

Person Centred Thinking and Reviews

16. The second area of concern highlighted by the JAR was the absence of person centred reviews in Wiltshire Schools. This is a complex area of work to implement requiring a change of practice and procedures, and coordination between a significant numbers of agencies each having their own input into planning a young person's future. Wiltshire is by now means alone in not having achieved full implementation.
17. We are working with a firm of consultants called Helen Sanderson Associates who are already working with adult services to develop a culture of person centred thinking and planning amongst the professionals involved in the transition process. Helen Sanderson is also working with other authorities in the south west and act as government advisers on person centred planning. They have run training for our special schools and key professionals. All of our special schools are now working with us to implement person centred reviews. Our next step is to engage with the mainstream schools and encourage their Special Needs Coordinators to participate in the required training.

National Transition Support Programme

18. We have met all the objectives for the second year of the Programme as outlined in the action plan and our regional NTSP Adviser has informed us that the progress we have made has been noted at a national level. We have now been allocated a further £25,000 for the third and final year of the programme with the opportunity to bid for a further £20,000 for innovative transition projects. The Board will be deciding which projects to bid for at it next meeting in time to submit an application for the 30th April 2010 deadline.

Financial Implications

19. The cost of recruiting Charteris is being met by Adult Services. Any recommendations for a future model of delivery will be fully costed in the context of a lean review to ensure that current resources allocated to transition work are deployed in the most effective and efficient way.
20. In the short term there are financial costs required to implement the protocol are being met by the National Transition Support Programme funding. The main costs are for person centred thinking and review training for staff, producing the necessary transition information to young people and their families (including a transition event in May and a handbook for parents), Additional costs can be met directly by the relevant services where the work forms part of their service requirements.
21. The cost of the Transition Panel Coordinator (£10,000 a year) is being met jointly by Children and Adult Services.

Risk Assessment

22. As noted above successful implementation of the Protocol will require changes to operating procedures from all key agencies. This will inevitably require a commitment of personnel, resources and training time from colleagues already facing other competing challenges. The Board is pleased to have secured commitment at a strategic level. However the key challenge now is how consistently and completely these changes are rolled out at an operational level.

Conclusion

23. The feedback from the National Transition Support programme gives the Board confidence that over the last year considerable progress has been made at a strategic level and we have responded and dealt with the concerns raised by the JAR and CSCI. Implementing a full transition programme and person centred planning process is a complex and evolutionary process. However, the Board has confidence that the building blocks are in place to provide a firm foundation for an operational model which will provide real and sustainable benefits for disabled young people and their families across Wiltshire.

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Background papers

None

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Implementation Plan June 2009 – November 2011

Appendix 2 – Transition Panels