

9 January 2017

Agenda Item: 5

## **REPORT OF SERVICE DIRECTORS FOR MID NOTTINGHAMSHIRE AND NORTH NOTTINGHAMSHIRE**

### **STRATEGIC UPDATE AND RECONFIGUREMENT OF THE COUNTYWIDE TRANSITIONS TEAM**

#### **Purpose of the Report**

1. To provide an update on the relevant outcomes of the recent Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) inspection, workload and priorities for the countywide Transitions Team.
2. To seek approval to permanently establish 2 full time equivalent (FTE) Community Care Officer posts and 1 FTE Advanced Social Work Practitioner (ASWP) post in order to be able to meet increasing demand for assessments and also to respond to the recommendations of the recent SEND Inspection.

#### **Information and Advice**

##### **Background and context**

3. In 2013, a review was completed of the Nottinghamshire County Council services that support the transition of young people leaving children's services, who require further support from adult social care services. This considered what the best local model should be in order to support emerging findings from the Children's SEND Pathfinder Programme and the development of Education, Health and Care (EHC) planning. The outcome was to bring together and co-locate existing transition workers that were spread across multiple teams, into a single countywide Transitions Team with a dedicated Team Manager. This would share an office base with the Children's Disability Team at Meadow House. As part of creating this team, the overall number of Social Workers dedicated to Transitions reduced from 10 FTE to 7 FTE.
4. Since then, the statutory context for provision has been significantly amended with the arrival of the Care Act 2014 and the Children and Families Act 2014 with an enhanced focus on *Preparing Young People for Adulthood*. The combined impact of these has been to widen the criteria and therefore the numbers of young people for whom a transitions assessment is required. This brought new requirements to work with young people with Autistic Spectrum Disorders (ASD) without learning disability, those with mental health difficulties and other neurological diagnoses e.g. Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) that the original team did not work with. In 2015 an additional 1 FTE Social Worker was added to the team to meet the widening Care Act responsibilities. In addition

to directly line managing 8 FTE Social Workers, the Team Manager has to engage in a particularly broad range of strategic partnerships in order for the team to function.

### **Current scope and remit of the countywide Transitions Team**

5. The countywide Transitions Team works with young people from the age of 14 years who have a permanent and substantial learning or physical disability, young people with significant mental ill health, as well as young people with neurological conditions, which now includes ADHD and Asperger's syndrome. They primarily work to plan for the future, with young people who require social care support that cannot be accessed through universal mainstream services or the targeted support service (the latter is a multi-disciplinary service for young people aged 8-18 years living in Nottinghamshire who are vulnerable, but not at immediate risk of harm).
6. The Care Act (2014) gives young people and carers of children a legal right to request an assessment before they reach 18 years. This is to help them to plan for their future and any potential adult support services that they may need.
7. The Care Act says that if a child, young carer or an adult caring for a disabled child are likely to have needs when they, or the child they care for, turns 18 years, the local authority can assess them if it considers there is 'significant benefit' in doing so. This is regardless of whether the person currently receives children's services. (DOH Factsheet 11 - The Care Bill – transition for children to adult care and support services)
8. The Transitions Team will assess young people who meet the above threshold. However, only young people who meet the eligibility criteria for Adult Social Care will go on to receive a social care service and personal budget. Referrals are accepted from the Council's Children's Services, schools and health colleagues. Where a decision has been made that a young person does not meet the criteria for the Transition Team, they are signposted to other services.
9. The team will do person centred assessments and help young people to create plans that will meet their future needs, goals and aspirations. These can include employment, community inclusion, housing with support (if required) and provision of short breaks to support carers. The team works with the young person and their families/carers to ensure a seamless move to adult provision where appropriate.
10. The work of the team therefore contributes to the Health and Wellbeing Board and the Children's Trust Board shared objectives to have:
  - shared understanding of roles and responsibilities for children in transition to adulthood.
  - an agreed multi-agency protocol around transitions for health, education and social care.
11. The following two brief cases illustrate the type of work that the team does. In both cases the goal is not merely to find services, it is about helping the person be as independent as possible and navigate the journey into adulthood and to find their own place, at their own pace.

## **Case A**

12. A young woman now aged 18 years, who has Asperger's syndrome and significant mental health difficulties including self-harm, was living in a high cost children's residential placement. She was struggling to maintain her college placement. Through a combination of joint working, led by the Transitions Social Worker and involving the Children's Disability Service Social Worker, Supported Living Co-ordinator, Education Health Care (EHC) planner and her Art Therapist, she now has her own home and tenancy, with a daily package of four hours daytime support and also night-time support. She still has issues to work through but she is now looking at an apprenticeship and she has renewed family contacts. She has been able to maintain continuity for the things that matters most to her: her location, bus routes and access to her youth club. Her outcomes are far more positive than might have been experienced without the EHC planning and early transition planning.

## **Case B**

13. A young man with autism, learning disability and epilepsy was not doing well at college. His parents worked full time and his younger sibling was starting to provide increasing amounts of care and support to him. His Transitions Social Worker persevered with giving him as much autonomy as possible and trying out alternative options. The Social Worker introduced him to a support provider, with whom he engaged well. This provider runs a very small (micro) business and works with him in a very individual way on clear goals. The young man was also referred to the Council's i-work team to support him into employment. His aim is to work in a cinema. It has been crucial to work at the young man's pace and to elicit the trust of his family. He is now described as "blossoming".
14. On 12<sup>th</sup> September 2016, Policy Committee approved a new Nottinghamshire Transitions Protocol and Pathway. This has now been widely rolled out across a wide range of agencies and partners who have pledged support to implement it.
15. The next steps with the Transitions Protocol is to complete an interactive pathway which will be included on the Council's NottsHelpYourself information website ([Nottinghamshire Help Yourself](#)). The pathway is being developed jointly between children and adult services, with input from young people and their parents/carers.

## **The outcome of the Ofsted SEND inspection and implementation of the SEND action plan**

16. Ofsted recently completed an inspection of SEND provision in Nottinghamshire. The findings take a narrative form rather than specific grading and suggest areas for further improvement. In summary, Ofsted found good examples of work and strategic development plans, but recommended the need to speed up the implementation of these.
17. Positive recognition was specifically given to newly developed Transitions Pathway and guidance, however, it was recommended that arrangements to implement it at a faster pace are required.

18. The full inspection report of 3<sup>rd</sup> August 2016 can be accessed at [SEND Local Area Inspection Outcome Letter](#). The areas identified for improvement most relevant to the adult social care Transitions Team are:
- a) 'Preparing young people and their families for adulthood is not given sufficient priority currently in the local area. Not enough information is provided to young people and their parents about adult education, health and care in Nottinghamshire and beyond. The transition arrangements for young people and their parents between being a child and an adult are not as effective as they could be across the local area. Too many young people and their parents spoke about their significant anxieties related to this point of transition in their lives. Local area leaders have produced a transition protocol to address these concerns. The full impact of this protocol is yet to be seen by children and young people'.
  - b) 'The proportion of children and young people who have special educational needs and/or disabilities continuing in education, employment or training at 17 years of age is increasing each year. However, this proportion is below the level found on average nationally'.
  - c) 'Education, health and care plans do not yet reflect enough information about the health and care needs of children and young people. Currently, there is a disproportionate emphasis on education. The plans do not contain sufficient, good-quality, time-limited targets, and this means that progress cannot be checked effectively at specified review points. The integrated children's disability service has set this as a priority area for improvement. Many parents described challenging circumstances in which they believed professionals in the education, health and care sectors did not always take their views into account. Inspectors found that parents and frontline professionals are committed strongly to the co-production (a way of working where children and young people, families and those that provide the services work together to create a decision or a service that works for them all) of provision for children and young people who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. The partners do not currently seize on that sentiment and use it across the local area'.
  - d) 'The local offer website outlines a good range of provision across education, health and social care. However, although many people are using the website each month, too few parents and young people spoken to during the inspection knew anything about this resource.'
19. A SEND Accountability Board has been established to oversee the implementation of the Council's improvement action plan. This will be chaired by Councillor John Peck, Chair of the Children and Young People's Committee. This requires significant additional work from the Transitions Team.
20. Preparing for Adulthood is one of the 5 work-streams of the SEND Ofsted Accountability Board and relates to much of the work of the Transitions Team. It will be co-lead by a Team Manager from the Integrated Children's Disability Service (ICDS) and a Group Manager from Adult Social Care, Health and Public Protection (ASCH&PP).
21. Other work streams will also have a significant impact for the workload of the Transitions Team. The Personalisation work stream will be co-lead by the Transitions Team Manager

and a Children's Social Care Team Manager. They will consider how to share best practice with the use of personal budgets, direct payments and utilising universal services. The EHC Plan and Pathway work stream will also need to include representatives from the Transitions Team to ensure that the revisions to the process are consistent with expectations in adult care.

22. A joint event run by Preparation for Adulthood National network and the Council is being held in January 2017, to engage staff and key stakeholders in identifying ways that the teams and services can better work together to improve the Preparation for Adulthood journey for young people with SEND and their families.
23. The Council had already completed significant work to develop a more integrated service through Phase 1 of the Improving Outcomes for Disabled Children transformation programme which started in January 2015 and ended in September 2016. Following completion of Phase 1, the following priority areas for further action were identified, some of which will be progressed through the SEND action plan and some of which will be part of the next phase of the Children's Transformation Programme. All will require significant input from the Transitions Team:
  - completion of a multi-agency demand and gap analysis for transitions
  - alignment of short break provision across agencies
  - revision of EHC plans and update of the Nottinghamshire SEND "Local Offer" (public information website listing services for families and young people with special educational needs and disabilities)
  - roll out of the new Transitions Pathway and guidance to key partners
  - development of a monitoring tool for the service to undertake 6 monthly reviews
  - review of Occupational Therapy provision
  - review and alignment of Personal Budgets
  - alignment of Continuing Healthcare processes.

### **Capacity in the Transitions Team and increasing demand**

24. The numbers of pupils in schools with Statements of Educational Needs or EHCPs has risen significantly over recent years, from 1,496 in 2013 (when the countywide team was established) to 1,844 in 2016.
25. Analysis of the May 2015 school census data showed that there was a total of 1,865 young people in year groups 9 to 13 who had received a statement for the eight following specific conditions: Autistic Spectrum Disorder, Hearing Impairment, Moderate Learning Disability, Multi-sensory impairment, Physical Disability, Profound and Multiple Learning Disability, Severe Learning Disability and Visual Impairment.
26. Whilst not every young person with a statement or an EHCP will necessarily require an assessment, case work or Personal Budget from the Transitions Team, the figure of 1,865 represents the numbers of children who are potentially eligible for assessment and transition planning. This figure is higher if the numbers of children with behaviour and social, emotional difficulties were to be included.
27. In 2014 -15 the team completed 150 assessments and reviews. This rose by 15% in 2015-16 to 172. Currently the Transitions Team is actively working with 300 young people,

with a further 38 awaiting allocation. The average caseload per Social Worker in the team is approximately 38 but in some cases has reached 50. This means that the team are starting to work with young people at an older age than the ideal of 14 years, which has been identified in the SEND action plan as providing the best opportunity to support them to plan for an independent future.

28. Current capacity only enables 1% of the team's caseload to be allocated to work with people aged 14-15 years and 9% for ages 15-16 years. The majority of young people that the team work with are aged 18-21 years, with the next largest age groups being 17-18 years (25%) and 16-17 years (19%). This means that the team are starting to work with young people at an older age than the ideal of 14 years, which has been identified in the SEND action plan as providing maximum opportunities to support planning for an independent future.

<b>Ages (years)</b>	<b>% allocation by age</b>
14-15	1
15-16	9
16-17	19
17-18	25
18-21	43
21+	3

29. As part of developing and embedding New Ways of Working that enable staff to increase productivity and maximise staff's assessment time, 2 Community Care Officers (CCOs) were recruited to on a temporary basis until the end of March 2017. The current Transitions Team only contains qualified Social Work staff, so the aim was to test the potential to utilise non-qualified staff for less complex work. This has been successful and has freed up qualified Social Workers to focus on the most complex cases.
30. The CCOs have differentiated the way the team can offer a more tailored and proportionate service that better manages expectations. For example, they are now in the process of establishing clinics in the 11 special schools and colleges. Where appropriate they will seek to meet needs at an early stage through advice and signposting, with the aim of reducing the number of full social care assessments and personal budgets required. The provision of the CCOs has meant that the average caseload has reduced to 30.
31. The CCOs have also been able to undertake reviews, which has enabled quicker and better continuity of young people into the relevant locality care management team. This has historically been a blockage point for the team as workers struggled to transfer cases at the same time as starting work with the new school/college leavers.
32. In the future, staff in the Transitions Team need to work more generically across the whole County. Rather than maintaining an historic focus solely on district and specialisms, staff need to work more flexibly based on a north and south division that would cope better with the peaks in demand and the need to cover when staff are absent. In consultation with staff, job descriptions and specifications will be reviewed to reflect this.

33. Extra capacity is required in order to meet increasing demand for assessments and address the SEND recommendations for more timely intervention and planning with young people. It has been shown that having Community Care workers in the team is a more cost effective way of providing additional capacity and therefore approval is sought to permanently establish:
- 2 FTE Community Care Officer posts (Grade 5) at an annual cost of £63,903 including on-costs.

### **Responding to the Ofsted SEND inspection and implementation of the SEND action plan**

34. The existing line management structure has all current 8 FTE Social Workers reporting directly to the Team Manager, who consequently does not have the management capacity to respond to the strategic partnership challenges, whilst at the same time effectively managing the day-to-day operation of the team.
35. The Team Manager is pivotal to the relationships between a range of Children's and Adults services, both internally and externally. As an example, in order to forecast demand and likely financial commitments, requires engagement with 16 different Younger Adult and 13 Children's Team Managers. The Team Manager is also required to lead a SEND work stream, contribute to three others as well as interagency partnerships with health. The operational and strategic level of partnership working for the Transitions Team is extensive and exceeds that of equivalent Younger Adult Team Manager roles.
36. The Team Manager is currently piloting the use of a workload management tool, based on the one used by Children's services. It is starting to assist the Team Manager to analyse the throughput of the team, caseloads, issues raised by service users and carers, as well as staff stress levels.
37. To ensure the initial Ofsted SEND reforms and on-going partnership work are delivered and sustained, additional capacity is required to supplement the operational supervision, oversight and day-to-day management of staff and work flows. This will enhance the knowledge base and expertise of the team to tackle demanding issues such as Mental Capacity Act decisions, Court of Protection processes, Mental Health Act assessments and reports, risk management and requirements under the Care Programme Approach. Therefore approval is requested to permanently establish:
- 1 FTE Advanced Social Worker Practitioner (ASWP) post (Band C) at a cost of £50,781 per annum.

### **Other Options Considered**

38. Reduce Social Worker posts from 8 FTEs to 6.8 FTE and utilise existing vacancies (covered by agency staff) to establish 2 CCO posts on a permanent basis: this would not however, provide sufficient capacity to meet increased demand.
39. Establish ASWP post on a two year temporary basis to implement SEND Inspection action plan: in order to sustain the level of partnership working required by the Team Manager, this capacity is required permanently. In this situation, it is also most efficient to

undertake the partnership work by the manager who is leading the service, rather than external short term project management capacity.

40. Do nothing: demand will continue to outstrip capacity and risk of not implementing the SEND recommendations.

### **Reason/s for Recommendation/s**

41. Following consideration of the above options, the recommendations have been assessed as the best way to meet and sustain increasing demand for assessments and also to respond to the recommendations of the recent SEND Inspection.

### **Statutory and Policy Implications**

42. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of crime and disorder, finance, human resources, human rights, the NHS Constitution (public health services), the public sector equality duty, safeguarding of children and adults at risk, service users, sustainability and the environment and ways of working and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

### **Financial Implications**

43. The costs would be as follows:
- 2 FTE permanent Community Care Officer posts = £63,903
  - 1 FTE permanent Advanced Social Work Practitioner post = £50,781
  - one-off ICT cost of £5,000.
44. The total of £119,684 funding can be met from within current social care budgets for younger adults.

### **Human Resources Implications (SJJ 07/12/16)**

45. The posts will be recruited to using the County Council's vacancy control protocol. The recognised trade unions have been consulted and are in agreement with the recommendation.

### **Implications for Service Users**

46. Improved and earlier planning for the move from Children's to Adult services for young people and their families.

### **Ways of Working Implications**

47. The three additional posts can be located in existing office space.

### **RECOMMENDATION/S**



That:

- 1) the update on the relevant outcomes of the recent Special Educational Needs and Disability inspection, workload and priorities for the countywide Transitions Team be noted.
- 2) the following posts are permanently established:
  - 1 FTE Advanced Social Work Practitioner (ASWP) (Band C)
  - 2 FTE Community Care Officers (Grade 5)
  - all posts to be allocated an authorised car user status.

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#### **Constitutional Comments (LM 20/12/16)**

48. The recommendations in the report fall within the Terms of Reference of the Adult Social Care and Health Committee.

#### **Financial Comments (AGW 16/12/16)**

49. The financial implications are contained in paragraphs 43-44. There is sufficient underspend within the mainstream budget.

#### **Background Papers and Published Documents**

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

Nottinghamshire Transitions Protocol and Pathway - report to Policy Committee on 21<sup>st</sup> September 2016

SEND Ofsted report.

#### **Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected**

All.

ASCH446