

Open Report on behalf of Justin Hackney, Assistant Director - Specialist Adult Services and Safeguarding

Report to:	Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee
Date:	22 November 2019
Subject:	Progress Report on Transitions Scrutiny Review Recommendations

Summary:

The purpose of this report is to provide a progress update on the recommendations made within the Transitions Scrutiny Review final report in April 2019.

A review of the individual experiences of young people with Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) transitioning into Adult Services was undertaken by the Transitions Scrutiny Panel. Three key recommendations were presented and instructions were given to Local Authority (LA) Officers to respond to these recommendations in order to improve the already good practices currently in place.

The Transitions Scrutiny Panel identified the need to undertake improvements in the following areas of transition:

1. Information and advice through the Local Offer,
2. Improve Health Outcomes, and
3. Review Pathway Plans for Care Leavers.

Each recommendation has been allocated to the relevant service area to progress and this report provides an update on activity to date.

Actions Required:

The Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee is requested to review the progress made against the recommendations and to make comment.

1. Background

Establishment of the Scrutiny Panel

On 29 March 2018, the County Council's Overview and Scrutiny Management Board approved a scrutiny review to give consideration to the individual experiences of those young people with more complex educational needs who

receive support through an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan and their journey transitioning into adulthood.

The review also considered the preparations being made towards implementing the Children and Social Work Act 2017 and the impact on transition arrangements for those young people in the care of the Local Authority. On 30 August 2018 the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board endorsed the terms of reference for the 'Transitions Scrutiny Review' as per Article 6.10 of the County Council's Constitution.

The Scrutiny Panel met seven times over the course of the review and undertook a number of visits to special schools and engaged with County Council staff as well as individual service users.

Scope of the review

The purpose of the review was to consider best practice, areas for better working and to identify key findings and recommendations to aid continued improvement of these services in Lincolnshire.

1. To consider and review the experiences of those young people with more complex educational needs who receive support through an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan and their journey transitioning into adulthood. Including the following:
 - To review the experience of young people and their families/carers, and the overarching principles for good transition,
 - Ensuring that arrangements for transition services are robust,
 - To consider processes which are in place to ensure all young people who require transition services are identified and receive services and
 - The planning of transition, support before and after transfer and the supporting infrastructure for transitions.
2. To review the preparations being made towards the implementation of the Children and Social Work Act 2017, increasing the age of eligibility for support to care leavers from the age of 21 to 25.

Outcome of the Review

On 30 May 2019, the Scrutiny Panel presented its findings to the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board.

The Scrutiny Panel made three key recommendations to seek to improve what was already deemed to be a good process.

Recommendation 1 – Information and Advice Local Offer

The Scrutiny Panel recommends that Children's Services and Adult Care continue to develop, promote and deliver consistent and clear communications through greater promotion of the local offer. It is envisaged

this will be achieved as part of delivering the outcomes of the recent Joint local area SEND inspection.

The Scrutiny Panel highlighted the following themes as part of this recommendation:

1. Promoting early engagement with families/young people and an individualised approach to communication.
2. Ensure information on the local offer is sent out to all those involved in the transitions process as part of a clearly developed communications strategy to ensure a clear and consistent message.
3. Enhancing collaborative working with wider stakeholders so that information about criteria and processes is available to all (families and professionals).
4. Support the role of the intake team working within schools to promote the opportunity for parents to discuss options through early engagement.
5. Managing expectations effectively in a supportive and engaging way in order to promote positive outcomes as part of a 'life time journey'.
6. Continuing to ensure families are at the heart of a decision making process.
7. Targeted promotion of Advocacy and Advice services such as the Parent Carer Forum and 'Liaise' the Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Information Advice and Support Service.
8. Ensure the information included in the Local Offer is effectively promoted to families not directly involved with Children's Services.
9. Support the development of a 'Progression to Adulthood' section of the local offer.

Recommendation 2 – Improved Health Outcomes

The Scrutiny Panel recommends that Lincolnshire County Council continues to strengthen positive relationships with CCGs, to develop a proactive approach and to support the implementation of the SEND action plan.

The Scrutiny Panel highlighted the following themes as part of this recommendation:

1. To improve the quality of Education, Health and Care Plans by promoting more outcome focused recommendations.
2. Establish systems of leadership that are effective in ensuring that all managers are held to account for improvements to services and for promoting effective practice.
3. Increase understanding of health data to better plan future services to meet children and young people's health needs.
4. Improve the health offer to include a clear pathway for Autism Spectrum Disorder and neurodevelopment conditions.
5. Developing and promoting an effective and more consistent level of good practice across the County through the SEND steering group.

Recommendation 3 – Pathway Plan Review

The Scrutiny Panel supports reviewing the format and structure of the current Pathway Plan document for Care Leavers. The Panel recognises that the current document meets the requirements of a Pathway Plan and contains everything required, but believes that the structure of the document needs to be reviewed in order to be more useful to better meet the needs of young people.

The final report from the Transitions Scrutiny Review was presented to the Executive on 9 July 2019 where it was agreed to respond to the report indicating which recommendations had been accepted and where recommendations were accepted, to bring forward an Action Plan for their implementation.

2. Conclusion

In response to the Transitions Scrutiny Review, an Action Plan was formally adopted to summarise the Executive response and monitor progress against the three key recommendations. This Action Plan can be viewed at Appendix A.

Recommendation 1 – Information and Advice Local Offer

The need to develop, promote and deliver consistent and clear communications through greater promotion of the Local Offer has been identified as a key priority following the LA's self-assessment in readiness for the Local Area SEND Inspection and in the final report produced by Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission, in addition to the Transitions Scrutiny Review.

A range of actions have been undertaken to actively promote the Local Offer and ensure all information is clear, concise and accessible. A working group led by Caroline Jackson, Commissioning Manager – Performance Services has been established and a Project Plan developed to oversee the tasks relating to this recommendation.

To ensure the Local Offer is designed to meet the needs of all service users, engagement activities have been undertaken with families, service user groups and schools. These engagement activities have provided useful feedback regarding content and accessibility and suggestions on how to make the site more informative.

This working group has overseen the review of all Local Offer content and structure which concluded the need to refresh existing SEND information and layout to ensure it was streamlined and accessible. A new navigation system has been put in place to improve the service user experience and a new pathway and content specifically for transitions has been implemented. The Local Offer booklet and the Moving On brochure have both been reviewed and refreshed, with the latter being available both online and in print.

Promotional events have also been held with parent groups, schools and other key professionals and further promotion of the Local Offer is planned.

The working group is also overseeing the mapping and review of individual pages within the Local Offer to ensure any link errors are rectified and content is appropriately targeted. This task will have been completed by January 2020.

It is projected that this working group will have completed all tasks relating to the recommendation by 31 March 2020.

Recommendation 2 – Improved Health Outcomes

As it is acknowledged that health outcomes for children and young people are not always clear in statutory plans, there is a need to address this to ensure their health needs are not overlooked. The SEND Steering Group and SEND Health Committee have accepted responsibility for this recommendation and are overseeing the required changes. Organisational Leads from LCC and the Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCG) have been identified to take responsibility for implementing the changes.

Work to address this recommendation is underway and a range of actions undertaken to ensure that children and young people with SEND achieve their health outcomes.

The Designated Clinical Officer (DCO) for SEND, employed by the CCG, has appointed an Associate DCO who will have responsibility for reviewing clinical report writing in order to improve quality of reports and provide clarity on health needs and health outcomes.

An independent audit of the health elements of EHC Plans has been completed and the final report is due to go to the SEND Health Committee. This provides useful evidence of where and how improvements can be made to support clinicians to provide reports that are outcome focused.

The use of the electronic Hub for all EHC needs assessments and Annual Reviews continues to progress; this will provide a clear report/assessment format for all contributors to the needs assessment and review. This is likely to be implemented in September 2020 following an initial pilot.

It is projected that the tasks relating to this recommendation will be completed by September 2020.

Recommendation 3 – Pathway Plan Review

In order to ensure Pathway Plan documentation better meets the needs of Care Leavers, a task and finish group was established to review the related planning processes and paperwork, led by Andrew Morris, Corporate Parenting Manager, Children's Services. This review included a refresh of all documents utilised by LCC staff, young people and the Mosaic team. Pathway assessment tools and planning documents have been redesigned and tested with young people to

ensure they fully meet the needs of Care Leavers. The refreshed documentation was approved by Directorate Leadership Team in September 2019 and a full training package for all practitioners, Mosaic staff and young people completed by the beginning of November 2019. The revised pathway and associated documentation is due to go live on 12 December 2019, ensuring the plan of implementation and this recommendation will be achieved.

3. Consultation

a) Have Risks and Impact Analysis been carried out?

No

b) Risks and Impact Analysis

Not required.

4. Appendices

These are listed below and attached at the back of the report	
Appendix A	Executive Response to Transitions Scrutiny Review - Action Plan arising from Recommendations

5. Background Papers

Document title	Where the document can be viewed
Transitions Scrutiny Review April 2019	Draft report to Overview and Scrutiny Management Board on 30 May 2019 http://lincolnshire.moderngov.co.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=553&MId=5304&Ver=4
	Final report to Executive on 9 July 2019 http://lincolnshire.moderngov.co.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=121&MId=5284&Ver=4

This report was written by Eileen McMorrow, who can be contacted on 01522 552632 or Eileen.mcmorrow@lincolnshire.gov.uk.