

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

Report to:	<b>Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee</b>
Date:	<b>04 September 2020</b>
Subject:	<b>Progress Report on Transitions Scrutiny Review Recommendations</b>

**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 Disabilities (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 consider 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.**

## **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. The updated Action Plan can be viewed in 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 was identified as a priority in the LA's self-assessment prepared ahead of the Local Area SEND Inspection. It was also identified in the final report produced by Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission, in addition to the Transition Scrutiny Review.

A working group oversees the developments of the Local Offer and the tasks relating to this recommendation. Earlier this year, Children's Services commissioned an external consultant to support an accelerated focus on a number of key areas related to children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND); the Local Offer is included. For a twelve week period the work on the Local Offer was led by Martin Smith, Interim Assistant Director - Education, to provide a targeted focus and to ensure the appropriate resources and capacity to further the development of this work are available. The working group is now chaired by a SEND Team Manager, reporting to the Head of Service for SEND.

The Local Offer working group meets regularly and comprises colleagues from Education; Health; Social Care; Liaise (the SEND Information, Advice and Support service); Early Years; Lincolnshire Parent Carer Forum (LPCF); Performance Team and the SEND service. Improvements and developments since the last report to the Committee include:

- Following feedback from young people that video is the most effect format to access information, videos have been created, starring young people in Lincolnshire, that highlight areas of the Local Offer specifically around preparing for adulthood. These are grouped on one easy access page so that young people can watch the ones they are interested in.

- Sessions at mainstream schools, Special Schools and other education providers have generated feedback to help make the young person's page as engaging as possible and to ensure developments are based on young people's views and their voice.
- The Local Offer team has had a stand at Lincolnshire Parent Carer Forum (LPCF) events and Preparing for Adulthood events to raise awareness of the Local Offer to parents, carers and young people.
- Presentations have been delivered at a wide range of SENCo events including Early Years SENCo briefings, SEND Graduated Approach briefings and at the Lincolnshire SENCo accreditation training.
- There is an on-going audit of the Local Offer to revise the appropriateness of content and to make the pages and information more accessible and user friendly.
- A review of the analytics of each page of content has been undertaken to find out how many people use it, how people get there and whether it is the primary source of this information.
- A new structure which meets users' needs is being developed based on the analytics information and relevant content is being merged, unnecessary content is being removed and, where there is a duplication of third-party content this is being rewritten so that users are signposted to the primary source.
- The 12 week accelerated work on the Local Offer has changed the way in which the information is being presented using the principles of behavioural science to underpin the new approach.
- The new content is being developed to show a more incremental approach to support that provides opportunities for users to self-serve and self-help before the need to involve 'services'.
- The Local Offer now sits within the Digital Engagement Team which has expanded the expertise and knowledge available to support its development.
- The Local Offer will be moving to a new platform over the next six months.

The main work around the Local Offer is expected to be completed by 31 January 2021. The Local Offer should be a 'live' source of information and therefore will be an on-going project.

## **Recommendation 2 – Improved Health Outcomes**

It is acknowledged that health outcomes for children and young people are not always clear in statutory plans and 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 Lincolnshire County Council (LCC) and the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) have been identified to take responsibility for implementing the changes.

The Designated Clinical Officer (DCO) for SEND, employed by the CCG, appointed an Associate DCO last year. They now have a specific 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 was completed by Public Health and the findings were accepted by the SEND Health Committee. The audit provided 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 work has been delayed due to Covid-19 and the original 'go live' date (September 2020) is now anticipated to be January 2021. There is now a Project Lead supporting this work to ensure that the January 2021 deadline is achieved.

**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 has included a refresh of all documents utilised by LCC staff, young people and the Mosaic team.

The Pathway Plan was revised in consultation with practitioners and young people and county-wide training was delivered to relevant staff across LCC to accompany the roll out of the new plan.

The new Pathway Plan is almost a year old and will be subject to a Children's Services audit in September/October 2020 to determine whether it requires any fine tuning.

The action linked to this recommendation is now completed.

**3. Consultation**

**a) Have Risks and Impact Analysis been carried out?**

No

**b) Risks and Impact Analysis**

Not Applicable

**4. Appendices**

These are listed below and attached at the back of the report	
Appendix A	Executive Response to Transitions Scrutiny Review – Updated 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 <a href="http://lincolnshire.moderngov.co.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=553&amp;MId=5304&amp;Ver=4">http://lincolnshire.moderngov.co.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=553&amp;MId=5304&amp;Ver=4</a>  Final report to Executive on 9 July 2019 <a href="http://lincolnshire.moderngov.co.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=121&amp;MId=5284&amp;Ver=4">http://lincolnshire.moderngov.co.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=121&amp;MId=5284&amp;Ver=4</a>

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