

Executive Response to the Transitional Safeguarding Task Group Report of the Community and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee

11th April 2022

On 22 February 2022, the Community and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee agreed recommendations to the Cabinet after considering the Transitional Safeguarding Task Group's final report. The Cabinet's Executive Response and decisions against those recommendations are provided below.

Recommendation 1: It is recommended that Brent Council identifies transitional safeguarding as a whole council priority.

Increased pressure on local authorities and partners to respond to complex risks and harms point to the need to consider a new way of working to safeguard young people more effectively. The Task Group believes that providing more effective and fluid support for young people as they enter adulthood not only supports their safety and wellbeing, but may also reduce the need for specialist and statutory services and criminal justice involvement.

Brent Community and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee should be updated on the progress of this recommendation and seek assurance that the development of transitional safeguarding is considered an organisational priority.

Executive Response:

It is supportive that the Community and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee has recognised the work undertaken so far on the development of a Brent transitional safeguarding response and the importance of an approach which meets the increasingly complex risks and needs of the most vulnerable young people and young adults in Brent. The task and finish group recommendations will provide helpful impetus to further develop the transitional safeguarding response which is both council wide and also appropriately engages with partners.

Decision: Agreed

Actions:

- i). The Strategic Director, Community Wellbeing and Strategic Director Children and Young People to convene a Transitional Safeguarding Working Group of officers to oversee the development of a Council wide approach to transitional safeguarding by July 2022. This working group to include Community Safety representation.*
- ii). The Strategic Director, Community Wellbeing and Strategic Director, Children and Young People to organise a Council wide session on the development of transitional safeguarding to identify contributions and to inform the Brent transitional safeguarding approach by September 2022*

- iii). An update on the progress made through the Transitional Safeguarding Working Group on the development of Transitional Safeguarding be presented to Scrutiny Committee by March 2023.

Recommendation 2: It is recommended that Brent Council considers developing a council-wide approach to transitional safeguarding which is evidence-informed, participative and considers equality, culture, diversity and inclusivity.

It is clear that some young people may fall through the gap between children's and adults' services as thresholds for support are not aligned or they fall out of contact with services. The Task Group believes that opportunities for developing multi-agency and integrated models that can better enable a transitional approach to safeguarding should continue to be explored, recognising that the interconnectedness of harms and adversities requires a highly integrated and consistent system of support.

The council-wide approach to transitional safeguarding should be informed by recommendations 3-5. Brent Community and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee should be updated on the progress of this recommendation and seek assurance that work plans across Brent actively consider and address transitional safeguarding.

Executive Response:

The exploratory work undertaken by the Council's Community Wellbeing and Children and Young People Departments as reported to Scrutiny Committee provides a strong foundation to further develop a shared understanding of the needs of young people and young adults at risk, and based on this enhanced understanding, build an inclusive, joined-up multi agency transitional approach to safeguarding,

Decision: Agreed

Actions:

- i). The Transitional Safeguarding Working Group to identify the priority cohort of young people and young adults who would benefit from a Transitional Safeguarding approach by September 2022.
- ii). The Transitional Safeguarding Working Group to explore with safeguarding partners priority actions to establish a partnership Transitional Safeguarding approach by September 2022.
- iii). Assurance to update on the progress made through the Transitional Safeguarding Working Group on the development of Transitional Safeguarding be presented to Scrutiny Committee by March 2023.

Recommendation 3: It is recommended that Brent Council ensures that young people are active partners in the development of its transitional safeguarding approach.

The Task Group believes that transitional safeguarding should be a participative, user-led approach. This means adopting a collaborative approach; respecting young people's expertise and enabling them to coproduce solutions and support rather than being treated as a passive recipient of support. Services should be responsive to the specific needs of the individual young person and as such should to be flexible, integrated and multi-agency. This user involvement will support the development of effective safeguarding practice, informed by young people whose self-confidence, self-esteem and resilience can be developed through that involvement.

Brent Community and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee should be updated on the progress of this recommendation and seek assurance that young people are active partners in the development of transitional safeguarding.

Executive Response:

Both CYP and CWB engage young people in the design of services which affect them. Developments in transitional safeguarding to date have been informed by young people, recognising the challenges of safely engaging young people who may be at significant risk.

The principle of engagement and involvement will inform the Councils actions in response to the recommendations of this report, through the identification of where the Council or its partners, including the voluntary sector, have established meaningful relationships with identified young people.

Decision: Agreed

Actions:

- i). The Transitional Safeguarding Working Group to develop a plan to engage young people through relevant Council services, including Housing, the SMART Team and Leaving Care Team, by June 2022
- ii). The Transitional Safeguarding Working Group Work to work with the Young Brent Foundation to identify voluntary sector agencies with relationships in place with identified young people and young adults by June 2022

Recommendation 4: It is recommended that Brent Council considers how it can enhance its support to young people within the transitional safeguarding cohort with needs in education, training and employment (ETE), financial literacy and housing.

The risks young people face are often inter-connected, and a range of risk factors, such as financial difficulties, housing problems, and not being in education, training or employment can co-exist. Strict service criteria or thresholds can generate confusion for young people as the system is complex and it can be difficult for them to work out what support they are able to access. The Task Group believes that some young people therefore need multi-agency support at a more intensive level in order to navigate the complexities of housing, education, training and employment (ETE), finances and further agency support. Brent Council's SMART team offers an example

of good practice within adult social care which can be learned from across services to support young people transitioning to adulthood.

Brent Community and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee should be updated on the progress of this recommendation and seek assurance that there are measures in place to demonstrate practice change.

Executive Response:

Learning from both the pilot project with Care Leavers and the outcomes from the Brent Council's SMART team have already started to inform multi-disciplinary and multi-agency responses for identified young people and young adults. This early work will be used to develop further the Brent Transitional Safeguarding response.

Decision: Agreed

Actions:

- i). The Transitional Safeguarding Working Group to oversee an extension of the pilot with young people leaving care, broadening the cohort of young people being supported to test and develop support for young adults and to explore pathways of support by September 2022
- ii). The Transitional Safeguarding Working Group to review the SMART teams work to explore how this service model could be mobilised to support vulnerable adolescents in the identified Transitional Safeguarding cohort by September 2022

Recommendation 5: It is recommended that Brent Council promotes transitional safeguarding across safeguarding agencies and services working directly with young people by:

- a. ***Ensuring that Brent's strategic partnerships for children's and adults' safeguarding and Safer Brent Partnership offer multi-agency training for officers, local commissioners and service providers to raise awareness of transitional safeguarding.***
- b. ***Commissioning specialist training for elected and co-opted members to raise awareness of transitional safeguarding and empower them to identify gaps and areas for improvement in local safeguarding practice.***

The Task Group believes that the development of transitional safeguarding requires strong, collaborative leadership to enable creative and coherent practice and services for local residents. It is important that officers, local commissioners and service providers develop their knowledge and understanding of transitional safeguarding issues within the local area, share their expertise and support other professionals to develop their practice. The Task Group also sees elected and co-opted members as well placed to lead across boundaries with their experience of working across services, organisations and sectors, as well as their unique knowledge of the communities they represent.

Brent Community and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee should be updated on the progress of this recommendation and seek assurance that training is well attended and informs the development of transitional safeguarding across agencies.

Executive Response:

Brent has strong and effective multi-agency safeguarding arrangements in place which have been at the forefront of developing Transitional Safeguarding arrangements in Brent which have been subject to review at the Community and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee during this Civic Year. These arrangements and the existing strong collaborative leadership of safeguarding for adults and children will be enhanced through the development of a Transitional Safeguarding learning and development offer.

Decision: Agreed

Actions:

- i). The concept of Transitional Safeguarding will be included in the induction for elected members following the elections in May 2022.
- ii). The Transitional Safeguarding Working Group to review training on transition related issues and develop joint Community Wellbeing and Children and Young People-led training for Council officers and appropriate member development for councillors by September 2022.
- iii). The Transitional Safeguarding Working Group to explore opportunities for multi-agency training regarding transitional safeguarding with the Safeguarding Adults Board, Safeguarding Children's Forum and the Safer Brent Partnership.

Cabinet Members: Councillor Farah – Lead Member for Adult Social Care and Councillor McLennan – Deputy Leader and Lead Member for Children's, Safeguarding, Early Help and Social Care

Lead Departments: Community Wellbeing and Children and Young People

Lead Officers: Phil Porter - Strategic Director of Community Wellbeing and Gail Tolley – Strategic Director of Children and Young People