



**Executive
26 July 2010**

**Report from the Director of
Policy & Regeneration**

For Action

Wards Affected:
ALL

Transitions Services Task Group – Final Report

1.0 Summary

- 1.1 The Transitions Services Task Group report has been considered and agreed by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. This report presents the task group's work to the Executive for approval.
- 1.2 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee established the Transitions Services Task group to look at the services in place for vulnerable young people in Brent aged 16 to 25. The term "vulnerable" can be applied to many different groups of people, but the task group's focus was on the following groups:
- young people who are offenders or at risk of offending
 - care leavers
 - those in contact with secondary mental health services
 - those who have a moderate learning difficulties
 - teenage parents
 - young people who are not in full time education, training or employment
- 1.3 The task group's recommendations can be split into six broad categories:
- Corporate responsibilities
 - Young people that do not meet service criteria
 - Early identification and intervention with young people and their families
 - Focus on prevention
 - Moving to independent housing
 - Bringing transitions services together
- 1.4 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee asks that the Executive agrees these recommendations, which are set out in full below and also in the task group report (appendix 1).

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 To agree the recommendations set out in the report.
- 2.2 To thank the members of the task group for their work.

3.0 Detail

- 3.1 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee had been concerned about the services in place to help young people make the transition from childhood to adulthood and so it established the Transitions Services Task Group. The transition period can be a difficult time for any young person, even those that grow up in a stable family environment with strong parental support. The young people of interest to the task group are among the most challenging young people in Brent. Ensuring they receive the help and guidance they need during transition is crucial. The task group was keen to look at the journey young people go on as they leave the responsibility of children's services and become adults.
- 3.2 During the course of the review it became clear to members that one of the key issues facing vulnerable young people is that the services they have received as children often end abruptly at eighteen when their entitlement to youth provision ends (although different age criteria for services aren't uncommon and can cause confusion). Young people move from services provided for children to services provided for adults, if they are eligible for services at all. During this process it is essential that an effective transition service is in place and the task group's recommendations have been made with this problem in mind.
- 3.3 That said, the task group found that there is much good work going on in Brent to address the needs of vulnerable young people so that they receive the support and guidance they need. However, there are some issues that the task group believes should be addressed to ensure that young people get the best start in life and are able to access appropriate services. It is clear to the task group that addressing the problems associated with vulnerable young people, such as youth offending, teenage pregnancy or homelessness requires far sighted, long term solutions with a focus on prevention and early intervention.
- 3.4 The task group has made the following recommendations:

Recommendation 1 – The task group recommends that officers working with the Children in Care Council, known as Care in Action, develop a range of activities to bring elected councillors and young people in care together to discuss ways of improving council services. This should not just be restricted to services for looked after children, but the range of services provided in Brent.

Recommendation 2 – The task group recommends that steps are taken to weight the criteria for adult social care services and mental health services to better reflect the needs of young people in transition. For example, mental

health assessments for 18 to 25 year olds are adapted to meet the needs of young people to recognise the difference between those in transition and older adults.

Recommendation 3 – The task group recommends that NHS Brent fully re-commissions the early intervention in psychosis service in 2010/11 and that it reports to the Health Select Committee during 2010/11 outlining the work of the service and the commissioning priorities for mental health services in Brent.

Recommendation 4 – The task group recommends that officers develop a proposal for the remodelling of services for vulnerable young people so that there is greater emphasis on early intervention and preventative services. This should build on initiatives such as implementation of the Common Assessment Framework, the development of children's centres and introduction of the Family Intervention Project. The task group believes the development of a fully integrated preventative service is an aspiration the council and partners should be aiming to deliver and see this as a long term project. If implemented, it could ease the difficult transition from children's to adult's services as positive interventions will happen at an earlier stage in a young persons' life. Initial follow up on this recommendation will take place in 12 months time (April 2011) by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to see how it has been progressed.

Recommendation 5 – The task group recommends that Brent Housing Partnership and Registered Social Landlords in Brent change their tenancy management procedures and policies to allow siblings who are leaving care the opportunity to share a tenancy if there is a desire to do so. This will affect a small number of care leavers each year that would benefit from the support provided by living with a brother or sister.

Recommendation 6 – The task group recommends that the Young People in Care Services Team and Housing Services work up a solution to allow young people in care the opportunity to go to university outside of London but maintain a tenancy in Brent so they retain a link with their home area. This will affect a small number of young people each year, but could have a significant impact on their life chances if implemented.

Recommendation 7 – The task group recommends that adult social services makes it clear who is the named contact for organisations working with vulnerable young people to improve the referral process and to assist young people when they are contacting statutory services.

Recommendation 8 – The task group recommends that a prospectus of services for young people aged 16 to 25 in Brent is developed to help sign post young people in transition to the most appropriate services. The prospectus should include contact details for services and referral routes and should be used as a one-stop guide for staff and young people. Statutory services and voluntary organisations should be included in the prospectus.

Recommendation 9 – The task group recommends that officers are instructed to work up proposals for a foyer project in Brent, bringing together a small amount of accommodation plus associated services to deliver a holistic, one stop service to meet the needs of vulnerable young people in transition from childhood to adulthood. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee should consider an update on progress in implementing this in October 2010.

Recommendation 10 – The task group recommends that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee asks officers to prepare two further task group scopes to look at services in place for young people in Brent:

- (i). Transition services for young people with physical disabilities
- (ii). Mental health services for young people in Brent aged 16 to 25.

4.0 Service Area Response

4.1 The following response has been received from Alison Elliott, Assistant Director Community Care in the Housing and Community Care Department:

Working is taking place across Adult Social Care and Children & Families to develop a Business Case to go to the One Council Programme Board. This project will address many of the recommendations contained within the report. However, there are a number of specific comments, as follows:

1. It would be difficult to justify a weighting of service criteria for this client group in terms of equity of access and cost. The Business Case will look at whether this is feasible but in the economic climate it is unlikely.
2. In terms of prevention and bringing services together this is an area being considered with a service model for a service for 14 – 25 year olds across both Adult Social Care and Children & Families. This will form part of the Business Case but again in terms of prevention there will need to be considerations of cost versus any potential savings.
3. Recommendations 1, 2, 4, 7, 8 and 9 will all be part of the project currently in progress.

5.0 Financial Implications

6.0 Legal Implications

6.1 Legal comments have been taken into account in preparing the task group report and are contained in the body of the report.

7.0 Diversity Implications

7.1 None

8.0 Staffing/Accommodation Implications (if appropriate)

8.1 None

Background Papers

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