

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL

ADULT SOCIAL SERVICES POLICY OVERVIEW COMMITTEE

SELECT COMMITTEE: TRANSITIONAL ARRANGEMENTS

MINUTES of a meeting of the re-convened Select Committee on Transitional Arrangements held on Monday, 23 June 2008 in Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone.

PRESENT: Mrs V J Dagger (in the Chair), Mr R B Burgess, Mrs S V Hohler, Mr S J G Koowaree, Mr T A Maddison and Mr M J Northey

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr O Mills, Managing Director, Kent Adult Social Services; Mr M Thomas-Sam, Head of Policy and Service Development, KASS; Mr D Waller, Policy Manager, KASS; Miss T A Grayell, Democratic Services Officer, and Mr G Bridgland, Staff Officer to Mr K G Lynes (Cabinet Member for Kent Adult Social Services).

UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

1. Transition to a Positive Future – Response to the Select Committee Report *(Report by Managing Director, Kent Adult Social Services)*

(1) Members considered a report which set out progress against each of the Select Committee's 12 recommendations, and commented on the progress against each. Where Members disagreed with the symbol denoting the progress made, this is noted below. *A copy of the officers' summary progress report is attached to these Minutes as Appendix 1.*

Recommendation 1 – That KCC work with all providers to increase the availability and choice of leisure facilities for young disabled people and promote and publicise 'taster sessions' to encourage participation

Members noted, and were pleased to hear about, the progress so far and the fact that there was ongoing action on developing partnership working to allocate the £15m of Government funding which had been made available. Feedback on this outstanding work would be reported at a later date to the Adult Social Services POC and the Children's, Families and Education POC. *Members felt that this recommendation should show 'some good progress although more to do'*

Members expressed the wish that examples of good practice should be taken advantage of and rolled out across the whole county. They also emphasised that the way of working needed to be consistent and achieve continuity.

Recommendation 2 - That KCC and schools promote a variety of initiatives to raise disability awareness among peers of young disabled people in mainstream schools and the wider community

Members supported and encouraged signing up to the Charter and expressed the view that the importance of signing up should be emphasised in the text. Members were keen to know what obstacles, if any, there were to signing up. The text should emphasise that

the Sevenoaks scheme quoted was only one example of what was going on and that many different good schemes were running around the county. *Members felt that this recommendation should show 'some good progress although more to do'*

Recommendation 3 - That the Cabinet Members of CFE and KASS are made aware of the Hampshire transition documents and protocols, particularly the new Transition Handbook and Multi-agency guide, with a view to working towards a similar scheme for Kent.

Members noted excellent progress and were pleased at what had been achieved.

Recommendation 4 - That KCC should evaluate the capacity of current data systems to enable strategic monitoring of transition plans.

Members felt this recommendation should show 'complete/advanced progress'. Further evaluation in the future would allow Members to see if the process was working and the information was being well used.

Recommendation 5 - That the Transition Task Group investigates the potential for the increased use of Trans – Active in Kent schools, colleges and other settings.

Members felt that the original recommendation of using the Trans-Active model was too prescriptive as this was not necessarily the best model to use. However, they felt the recommendation had been actioned in that Trans-Active and other models had been investigated (and, in some cases, discounted). Members emphasised that the outcomes were more important than the model used. *Members felt this recommendation should show 'complete/advanced progress'.*

Recommendation 6 - That KCC should identify the source and type of advocacy available for parents and young people to facilitate better transition planning and make provisions to meet any gaps in service.

Members were pleased to note the work done on this recommendation, and noted that, for the first time ever, a contract for advocacy services had been let to a national organisation. Members were keen to hear how well this scheme was working.

Recommendation 7 - To ensure that CFE and KASS commissioning strategies are co-ordinated, including use of jointly resourced budgets where appropriate, to provide a more graduated and consistent approach to service provision for young disabled people in transition from childhood to adulthood. Such strategies should incorporate Transition Worker roles or demonstrate clearly alternative means of providing similar support.

Members noted the progress made against this recommendation.

Mr Mills emphasised there had been clear agreement of the need to have one dedicated person to be a contact throughout the transition process but expressed the view that the first priority was to establish a protocol and identify resources to cover the role/services before deciding how best to deliver it, or what to call it.

Recommendation 8 - That the Managing Directors of KASS and CFE must ensure that information about transition and KASS is available in a range of accessible

formats and is brought to the attention of young disabled people and their parents in advance of meetings to enable them to participate in transition planning

Members noted progress made and were reassured by Mr Thomas-Sam that the KASS/CFE officer team would check that this sharing of information was happening as it should.

Recommendation 9 - That KCC, Connexions and partners identify how to use available resources more effectively to benefit young disabled people in transition.

Members noted the progress against this recommendation, and the ongoing work.

Recommendation 10 - That individuals identified as Lead Professionals for young people in transition to adulthood have the capacity to undertake the function and are provided by KCC and partners with training and support.

Members were very pleased to see good progress on this recommendation.

Recommendation 11 - That KCC, schools and other partners promote the use of Direct Payments by young people whose social care needs will extend into adulthood, by raising awareness and understanding of DP among CFE staff and ensuring that DP are discussed (with the involvement of a peer-mentor or DP support worker/advisor where possible) as part of the transition planning from Year 9 onwards.

Members were very pleased to see good progress against this recommendation.

Mr Waller explained the problems experienced by profoundly disabled young people when reaching 18 if their parents could no longer claim direct payments on their behalf and the young person themselves could not claim for themselves if they lack sufficient mental capacity. This problem will largely be rectified by the Health and Social Care Bill when it becomes law in 2009.

Mr Mills explained there was also a complex situation for young people placed in Kent by other local authorities. Once they reached 18, if they chose to stay in Kent, Kent would take on the considerable cost of a large number of young people choosing to stay in the county and access its services.

Recommendation 12 - That KCC, through Kent Supported Employment and its partners, explore the potential of a programme to assist with transition planning in schools and elsewhere.

Members noted excellent progress made against this recommendation and noted that the Job Action Group had been established since the Select Committee had completed its work.

2. Next Steps

(1) The Democratic Services Officer explained that the Overview and Scrutiny Team's established monitoring process prescribed the 'one-year-on' meeting to review progress on recommendations, but that the Select Committee was free to decide how it wished to move forward thereafter.

(2) It was RESOLVED that:-

- (a) the Committee express its pleasure with the overall progress made, and that thanks be conveyed to the officers and all those who had contributed to the achievements which had been made in the 12 months since the Select Committee report had been published;
- (b) it be noted that KASS and CFE had worked closely to achieve the good progress outlined in the report;
- (c) the Committee need not meet again but would see updates on progress on the few outstanding threads via Adult Social Services POC and CFEPOC so it could address the monitoring issues highlighted above; and
- (d) these Minutes be submitted to both Adult Social Services POC and CFE POC so both Committee can be made aware of the progress achieved and the work ongoing.

By: Oliver Mills, Managing Director, Kent Adult Social Services

To: Select Committee: Transitional Arrangements – 23 June 2008

Subject: **Transition to a positive future – RESPONSE TO THE SELECT COMMITTEE REPORT**

Classification: Unrestricted

Summary: To advise Members of the implications of the recommendations in the Transitional Arrangements Select Committee report presented in April 2007.

To outline responses to the recommendations and update on the actions taken to date as a result of the report's recommendations.

Introduction

- (1) The Transitional Arrangements Select Committee was formed in October 2006, and reported to Council in April 2007.
- (2) The Terms of Reference for this Select Committee Topic Review were, for young disabled people and those with a learning difficulty, (including those In Care), in making the transition to adult life and services, to:-
 - identify where KCC (through partnership working) could develop or enhance transition policy to improve the experience of transition;
 - incorporate the views of a number of young people aged 14-25 and their parents/carers;
 - consider ways of promoting independence and inclusion in community life for these young people; and
 - make recommendations that will ensure a more seamless transition to adult life and services and contribute to strategic corporate objectives especially those embodied in 'Towards 2010', target 55.
- (3) The Transitional Arrangements Select Committee Report made a total of 12 recommendations for further action. Please see Appendix 1 for the details of these recommendations and the Officer response.
- (4) The Committee received evidence from a wide range of stakeholders, including young people, parents and carers, Parent and Disability Organisations, professionals from special schools, Health, Connexions, Learning Skills Council, academia, other local authorities, as well as both frontline and senior officers from Kent Adult Social Services and from Children, Families and Education. A full list of

witnesses, who attended Select Committee hearings, visits made and written evidence received is shown in Appendix One and Two of the Select Committee report.

- There were a number of reasons for establishing this Select Committee. Primarily it was in response to concerns that some young disabled people, including those with learning difficulties, were having poor or unplanned transitions and that there was a variation across the county. This was coupled with the knowledge that local organisational change in line with national policy developments presented an opportunity for a fresh look at the topic. This Select Committee report will assist Kent County Council (KCC) and partners in improving the lives of young people.

Recommendation


Members are asked to note and comment on the response to the recommendations by officers.

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Director of Commissioning
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Background Documents:

Summary of progress towards each Select Committee Recommendation

Significant highlights	Progress to date	Status
Recommendation 1:		
<p>That KCC work with all providers to increase the availability and choice of leisure facilities for young disabled people and promote and publicise ‘taster sessions’ to encourage participation</p>	<p>KCC is one of only 21 local authorities to have gained Pathfinder Status. CFE has been given an additional £15m over 3 years by central government to increase access to short breaks. Part of the plan for this is to increase the access to leisure activities for disabled youngsters, including those who currently may not be eligible for support.</p> <p>There is a lot of work going on via local Learning Disability groups and the Kent Partnership Board as well as across directorates and with district councils.</p> <p>For example, KASS services in Thanet have built links with the District Council’s Sports Development Officer and with local schools. This had led to greater use of mainstream facilities by people with disabilities.</p> <p>Similarly, the Dartford’s Local District Partnership Board has successfully engaged with the management of Bluewater to improve the disability awareness of the staff. Following this, Bluewater is now investigating installing a Changing Place. This will enable profoundly disabled people and their families to access the shops and facilities more easily.</p>	

Recommendation 2:



That KCC and schools promote a variety of initiatives to raise disability awareness among peers of young disabled people in mainstream schools and the wider community



The Kent Children's Trust is considering whether to sign up to the Charter proposed under 'Every Disabled Child Matters' and is likely to decide on this by the autumn.



However, this recommendation is not specific to transition and the responsibility to promote awareness is wider than schools. As part of wider policy agendas, KCC works with, or part funds, various disability and carers' organisations, such as Partnership with Parents, Parents' Consortium, and Centre for Independent Living Kent. These organisations have a role, and a track record, in raising disability awareness across the county.



A specific example is the "Community for All" project in Sevenoaks. Members of the project include individuals, organisations and businesses such as shops. Members are committed to disability access and display a sticker that signifies that they are disability-friendly. In addition to increasing the confidence of some people with disabilities to access facilities, some shops are saying that it has increased their business.



Recommendation 3:		
<p>That the Cabinet Members of CFE and KASS are made aware of the Hampshire transition documents and protocols, particularly the new Transition Handbook and Multi-agency guide, with a view to working towards a similar scheme for Kent.</p>	<p>Kent's Protocols are now complete. They were informed by best practice from other authorities and developed in partnership with many of the stakeholders who gave evidence to the Select Committee.</p> <p>They have been through extensive consultation with the agencies concerned, as well as with young disabled people and their parents/carers. The Protocols have been edited to achieve the Plain English logo.</p> <p>The Protocols will be signed off by the Children's Trust Board this summer and will be in place by the start of the autumn. There will be a formal launch by The Leader of the County Council on the 6th November 2008.</p>	
Recommendation 4:		
<p>That KCC should evaluate the capacity of current data systems to enable strategic monitoring of transition plans.</p>	<p>The focus has not been upon a technical 'fix' but upon putting a tracking system in place that ensures that no young people fall through the cracks. It is believed that this has been achieved. All agencies have agreed a minimum set of data that, with parental consent, will be shared across agencies.</p> <p>Specifically within CFE, there have, however, been changes to technical systems. With the introduction of Integrated Children's System (ICS) there is now a single system that has key details available to both education and social care staff. This will improve the flow of information about individual young people as well as enabling more strategic monitoring.</p>	

Recommendation 5:		
<p>That the Transition Task Group investigate the potential for the increased use of Trans – Active in Kent schools, colleges and other settings.</p>	<p>Trans-Active is only one of several models and is not generally agreed to be the best. There is a view that Kent should not commit to one model and that it might be better to agree the principle objectives and allow ‘settings’ to achieve them in their own way.</p> <p>For example, a model that has been quoted nationally is the work undertaken at Valence School, Sevenoaks. Person Centred Plans have been used to form the basis of the statutory Transition Plans. This has been very well received by people involved, particularly the young people who have driven the process.</p>	
Recommendation 6:		
<p>That KCC should identify the source and type of advocacy available for parents and young people to facilitate better transition planning and make provisions to meet any gaps in service.</p>	<p>Partnership with Parents already provides independent advice/representation for parents. This has been identified as ‘very good’ in the recent Joint Area Review.</p> <p>Through the work of the 2010 Transition Executive and the Kent Partnership Board, work is being undertaken to identify and train peer mentors to provide independent representation for young people in transition. Young people are being identified through local learning disability (LD) groups.</p> <p>In addition, KASS has let a contract for a county-wide Advocacy Scheme for adults with LD. It might be possible for advocacy to be spot-purchased from this scheme for young people who require it.</p>	

Recommendation 7:		
<p>To ensure that CFE and KASS commissioning strategies are co-ordinated, including use of jointly resourced budgets where appropriate, to provide a more graduated and consistent approach to service provision for young disabled people in transition from childhood to adulthood.</p> <p>Such strategies should incorporate Transition Worker roles or demonstrate clearly alternative means of providing similar support.</p>	<p>This is a longer-term aim. However, Kent's Protocols require KASS to become involved in planning for children with complex needs at an earlier stage. This should promote a more consistent and co-ordinated approach. It also includes an advisory role for CFE staff beyond 18, to ensure consistency of support.</p> <p>Kent's transition strategy does not include dedicated transition workers at this point because the local authority is required to introduce the role of a Lead Professional for children.</p> <p>The need for transition workers is currently under review in both KASS and CFE. Work is being undertaken to produce an "Invest to Save" business case for the development of this role.</p>	
Recommendation 8:		
<p>That the MDs of KASS and CFE must ensure that information about transition and KASS is available in a range of accessible formats and is brought to the attention of young disabled people and their parents in advance of meetings to enable them to participate in transition planning</p>	<p>The Protocols include a section that provides information for families and also includes an 'Easy Read' version for some people with learning disabilities. They also specify the minimum standard for the provision of local information and leaflets.</p> <p>Specific local guides on Transition and support networks and services are being developed or updated. This is being undertaken by KCC staff at a district level. The provision of more locally specific information is felt by young people and their families to be more helpful.</p> <p>For example, the Transition Guide for Thanet has been co-ordinated by KASS staff but has been closely guided by the suggestions of stakeholders, particularly young people and carers.</p>	

Recommendation 9:		
<p>That KCC, Connexions and partners identify how to use available resources more effectively to benefit young disabled people in transition.</p>	<p>KCC now directly commissions Connexions and will be in a position to monitor Connexions' performance in relation to transition. With recently proposed changes to the funding of the Learning Skills Council, KCC is likely to have increasing influence on their resource as well.</p> <p>It is expected that Kent's Protocols will lead to a more effective use of all agencies' resources.</p>	
Recommendation 10:		
<p>That individuals identified as Lead Professionals for young people in transition to adulthood have the capacity to undertake the function and are provided by KCC and partners with training and support.</p>	<p>The Lead Professional role is being rolled out between April – September 2008. The requirements of the Transition Protocol have been included in the guidance relating to Lead Professionals.</p>	

Recommendation 11:

That KCC, schools and other partners promote the use of Direct Payments by young people whose social care needs will extend into adulthood, by raising awareness and understanding of DP among CFE staff and ensuring that DP are discussed (with the involvement of a peer-mentor or DP support worker/advisor where possible) as part of the transition planning from Year 9 onwards.

Direct Payments are not specific to transition. However, DPs are addressed in the Protocol. Work is being undertaken by partnership organisations to raise awareness and the DP Team at Parents' Consortium has been expanded. As part of the Aiming Higher Pathfinder Programme even more staff will be recruited and support given to expand the availability of Personal Assistants. This will further increase the take up of DPs.

Work is also being undertaken between KASS and CFE to ensure that when people transfer to the Adults DP Support Scheme, the transition is as smooth as possible. There are still some legislative barriers to a smooth transition for some people. These should be addressed in the forthcoming Health and Social Care Bill and work is already being undertaken to ensure that as soon as the Bill is passed we can implement the benefits



Recommendation 12:

That KCC, through Kent Supported Employment and its partners, explore the potential of a programme to assist with transition planning in schools and elsewhere.

Kent, along with Medway and South East Transition to Adults Group, has been chosen by the Department of Work & Pensions to become a demonstrator project for "Getting a Life". This will help young people with disabilities to achieve their employment aspirations. Kent supported Employment (KSE) is leading the project in Kent.

A specific example of this is St Nicholas at Canterbury College. The Select Committee identified the development of specialist provision in the mainstream FE college as a good example. This has now been built on with £80k additional funding from the LSC to enhance the employment outcomes of their students. KSE has been involved in supporting taking this forward.

In addition, the Job Action Group is working to increase employment opportunities for people with LD.



STATUS

Key:  = Complete/advanced progress

 = Some good progress although more to do

 = Little/no significant progress yet/high risk (therefore high priority next steps)