
Decision Maker: CHILDREN, EDUCATION AND FAMILIES PDS COMMITTEE

Date: Tuesday 9 November 2021

Decision Type: Non-Urgent Non-Executive Non-Key

Title: 0-25 PROGRESS REPORT

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Chief Officer: Director of Children's Services

Ward: (All Wards);

1. REASON FOR REPORT

To update the CEF PDS and Adults PDS of the scoping and progress of 0-25 Project.

The Council's [Transforming Bromley roadmap for 2019 to 2023](#) sets out the Children's Services and Education workstream but is cross cutting with Adults, Housing and Health and Commissioning.

This includes the following statements:

Statement 5 - Review transition plans and service pathways and Statement 6 - Explore opportunities for developing an integrated 0 – 25 service offer for children and young people with SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disability).

An initial scoping report was completed in early 2021 for the transformation board which outlined initial findings some of which will be summarised within this report to update Children and Adult PDS.

This report provides a summary of initial key findings, present progress and next steps.

2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

That the Children, Education and Families PDS Committee and the Adult, Care and Health PDS Committee consider the report and endorse the direction of the project.

Following the ongoing consultation and feedback from young people, families and the local area, the viable options will be presented at a later date.

Impact on Vulnerable Adults and Children

1. Summary of Impact:

The project has a significant impact on supporting young people with SEND – the local offer and support and transitioning into adult services.

Corporate Policy

1. Policy Status: Not Applicable:

2. BBB Priority: Children and Young People Supporting Independence Healthy Bromley:

Financial

1. Cost of proposal: N/A:

2. Ongoing costs:

3. Budget head/performance centre:

4. Total current budget for this head: £

5. Source of funding:

Personnel

1. Number of staff (current and additional): N/A

2. If from existing staff resources, number of staff hours:

Legal

1. Legal Requirement: Statutory Requirement: Further Details

2. Call-in: Applicable Not Applicable: Further Details

Procurement

1. Summary of Procurement Implications:

Customer Impact

1. Estimated number of users/beneficiaries (current and projected): N/A

Ward Councillor Views

1. Have Ward Councillors been asked for comments? N/A

2. Summary of Ward Councillors comments:

3. COMMENTARY

Project Focus:

The project's key focus is the consideration of how young people transition from children to adult services and how this offer can be improved. Within this focus, how services are managed/integrated is to be reviewed and the development of services provided for young people of 14-25 is also part of the project scope.

It is widely acknowledged both nationally and locally, that the transition from children to adult services can be a 'cliff edge'¹. In Bromley through collaborative working, we try to ensure that pathways are understood, and families and young people's anxieties are minimised. However, we also recognise that we can do more to improve this. We wish to improve transition with a 'smooth pathway'.

The changes in the Children and Social Work Act 2017 where the Local Authority is responsible for young people up to the age of 25 and the Children and Families Act 2014 establishing the responsibility to support young people with SEND up to 25, together with the improvement journey of children education and families and the realignment of adult services provides an opportunity to shine a light on what we can do better and/or differently.

Within children services, there is a collaborative approach with parent/carers and the child. However, when a young person reaches the age of 18 and accessing adult services the focus rightly moves to the young adult. The project will be considering how this cultural change can be owned by all departments and agencies as the children of today become tomorrow's adults. Planning needs to be developed earlier on in a child's journey collaboratively with adult and commissioning services. It is paramount that we ensure parent/carers are part of this process and work together to support this change, prior to the young person acquiring adulthood status.

Vision:

Our vision is set out in our [SEND Strategic Vision and Priorities for 2019 to 2022](#):

'That our children and young people have their needs met locally, as far as possible, growing up alongside their peers and able to live, learn and work in their local community'

The agreed collective vision for this project was agreed at the 0-25 governance board:

- To recognise the vulnerabilities of our children and young people who have SEND and consider the safeguarding issues when reviewing all aspects of this project.
- To develop meaningful relationships with our children and young people, their parents and carers, our colleagues, and the wider community.
- To have a strength-based approach, identifying the positive contribution our children and young people who have SEND offer to society.
- To be aspirational and to support our children and young people to take appropriate risks to reach their full potential.
- To achieve excellence.
- To embrace the 'Preparing for Adulthood Pathways (PfA)² which are Employment, Independent Living, Community Inclusion and Health.

¹ <https://cerebra.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/transition-in-england.pdf>

² <https://www.preparingforadulthood.org.uk/SiteAssets/Downloads/y1fzx4tn636398691202503873.jpg>

- To address all forms of discrimination and disproportionality, recognising that children and young people with a SEND are likely to need support and empowerment to achieve, without having to deal further with prejudice and discrimination. The project will need to embrace the nine protected characteristics of the [Equality Act 2010](#).

The voice of children, young people and their parents are at the centre of [Children and Families Act 2014](#), clearly set out in the principles in [Section 19](#). This dictates that children, young people and their families should be involved in decision making at every level of the system. These values and requirements are key to the project.

Project Cohort:

The project's priority will be those young people who will meet 'Care Act' criteria. In April 2021, the numbers of young people open to either the Children's Disability Service or one of the 3 adult service areas (Learning Disability, Physical Disability and Mental Health) from 18-25 was 539. As a Local Authority we know the young people in the system, although the exact numbers are difficult to predict due to the following reasons,

- There are our children looked after who will go on to need services via adult social care. It can be difficult to fully determine if these young people will require adult services, often identifying future 'care and support' needs in late adolescence due to their complex and mixed presentation due to the impact of social issues and sometimes an organic disability. These young people will not neatly fit into the learning, physical or mental health adult teams but have a combination of needs.
- A recent demand management exercise highlighted there are only a very small number of children who access adult services (18-25) who did not receive statutory social care support as a child. The conclusion for those who did not access children's services is surmised that either these young people/families choose to manage without additional support, did not meet the eligibility criteria for a short break or have moved in from other boroughs near to/or post 18.
- In addition, there will be a small number who do not meet the 'Care Act' criteria, but received services from the Children's Disability Services, which might be due to there being family support issues which required children's services to be involved, as well as those young people who move out of borough prior to the age of 18.

In order to have effective planning for young people and strategically commission for future need, an improved system is required. We have systems in place, including previously developing an 'Integrated Transition Register'. However, despite this positive accumulation of information which has supported commissioning, it was a time onerous task to update this manual spreadsheet and difficult for reporting. Therefore, consideration at the time of writing is to use Liquidlogic to predict future need. A new 'transition plan' could be recorded on the system and information updated annually in line with a young person's annual review of Education Health and Care (EHC plan), which would support operational and strategic planning.

The project will also work with the local area to support a second cohort of young people who have SEND, but not meet the criteria for adult services. In August 2021, there were 3144 children and young people with an EHC plan. From our initial demand management work, approximately 539 of these young people are presently known to either the Children's Disability Service or adult services up to the age of 25. There is a third cohort who do not meet the threshold for an EHC plan - but might also be vulnerable adults - who do not meet

'Care Act' criteria, some of whom will be previously looked after children. Many of these young people will need signposting and practical support due to their vulnerabilities.

Commissioners are currently retendering the Primary and Secondary Intervention Services contract which identifies those not meeting 'Care Act' criteria which will benefit these two cohorts. Other projects within the local area are ensuring these young people are supported, such as work through the [Bromley All-Age Autism Partnership Board](#). Although the focus is on individuals with autism, many of the actions are likely to have a positive impact on all children and young people who have SEND.

There are currently 319 children looked after (as of September 2021) of whom approximately 40% will have an EHC plan. Some of these will go on to require adult services, although further work is required to anticipate how many will require support above that of leaving care responsibilities. As corporate parents the project will consider 'Children Looked After (CLA)' who also meet 'Care Act' criteria and how the Local Authority supports these young people appropriately, recognising both responsibilities under the 'Care Act' and 'Leaving Care Act'.

Joint Working/Service Developments:

There is a 0-25 Governance board in place, established on 28th June 2021. Three board meetings have occurred approximately on a monthly basis to track progress. This is jointly chaired by the Director of Children, Education and Families and Director of Adult Social Care Services.

The Council, in partnership with the CCG, is already driving forward developments and improvements for children and young people who have SEND.

A key area is the 'SEND Action Plan' which is scrutinised by the SEND Governance Board. In addition, services, departments and partners have their own action and improvement plans. Some of these have a primary focus on support for children and young people who have SEND, whilst others will also have impact. For example, there will be action plans in place for CLA, which will include the needs of those who have SEND.

Lead officers are also required to respond where necessary to need, expired contracts and changes in legislation. Many of these projects, initiatives and plans will have their own timescale and have obviously not halted with the initiation of the 0-25 project. An understanding of their roles, and work has been key in order to provide input as and when required, but to ensure that the approach is integrated in its thinking as this project overarches a number of services.

There has been recent realignment of the EHC caseworkers, with caseworkers now specialising in working with young people from 14-25 years of age. Workers will therefore have a focus on developing independence and specialist knowledge of provision, services, and common issues for a young person of this age. Consideration will need to be given as to how to further develop the joint working with both children and adult social care teams.

There has been a recent retendering of adult service respite, supported living, day opportunities and day centre provision. Although led by strategic learning disability commissioners, the 0-25 project lead has been on the Learning Disability Partnership Board and visited new provisions to ensure they are considering the needs of younger adults. It is essential that these services reflect the future young people transitioning into adult services and are able to meet their needs to prevent those with the most complex needs requiring

out of borough provision. This is ongoing and immediate work is a working protocol to be agreed between Hollybank short break overnight provision and 118 Widmore Road adult overnight provision.

[Liberty Protection Safeguards](#) (LPS) will change the processes for when a young person who is 16 or over, who are or who need to be deprived of their liberty in order to enable their care or treatment and lack the mental capacity to consent to their arrangements. Following a rescheduling, the government have stated its aim is for these regulations to come into force in April 2022. The 0-25 project lead will be part of the LPS Working Group, led by Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS) Service Manager and Head of Service Safeguarding, Practice and Quality Improvement to consider how the Council implement these reforms.

The Local authority have completed an initial audit through using a readiness tool in co-operation with the Council for Disabled Children (CDC). An action plan is now to be developed to ensure compliance with the legislation. The Local Authority have been reviewing children and young people where there is a DoLS and establishing what action is required to have the DoLS authorised. We have prioritised those young people who are looked after. In the coming months children in care below the age of 16 are also to be reviewed. We will then be considering those young people who are in residential placements, but solely funded through SEN.

Core to the project is the provision of information and early planning. It is viewed that informing young people and families early will lead to more young people's needs being met locally. We have our inaugural transition event booked for Tuesday 26th October, where we have local providers marketing their services, as well as workshops on key topics. Our aim is that these events will be held on a biannual basis. Alongside this, work has been completed by colleagues to improve the information on the Local Offer. This can be further enhanced by the introduction of the Bromley website being on a new platform. We are also in the initial stages of reviewing an app that can be focussed on transition - to keep young people and their families informed of our services and developments in Bromley.

The project lead is part of a national group, facilitated by the Council for Disabled Children (CDC) reviewing eligibility criteria and thresholds for access to short breaks and considering the links with adult services. This work will build on previous work completed with the CDC, where the Local Authority were part of a social care innovation project which developed an on-line assessment. The aim is to build on this previous work, supporting more streamline access to short breaks, supporting social care professionals to focus on children and families where more support/safeguarding is required.

Children with SEND, especially those young people with a more severe/profound disability, will often have additional health needs - both physical and mental health - which requires productive multi agency work. Work has now been initiated on a keyworking scheme for young people and adults with autism and/or learning disabilities who are at risk of becoming an inpatient in an Assessment and Treatment Unit (ATU) led by South East London Clinical Commissioning Group (SELCCG). The project lead and local area will work closely with SELCCG to identify these young people at risk, who will need to be placed on a 'Dynamic Support Register' and thereafter work together to prevent admission.

The project will also work with the CCG and local providers - Oxleas and Bromley Healthcare - to support a smooth transition into adult services. We are working together with the adult learning disability nursing team to have a better system for identifying young people from 14+ with a learning disability who are entitled to an annual review of their health, due to the increased likelihood of suffering poor health and early death.

The project, as detailed in the 0-25 action plan, will have oversight on many areas that have an impact on these important transition years and will be monitored via the 0-25 governance board.

Co-Production and Next Steps:

From discussions with other Local Authorities who have moved to a 0-25 service, the majority do support the continuation of their service spanning both children and adult services, although do voice caution, i.e. difficulties in recruiting skilled social workers with the right knowledge and skills to work between children and adult services, understanding the legal changes from Children's Act 1989 to the Care Act 2014. In addition, the changing focus in adolescence, from the work with parents to being more young person-centered. Positive feedback is that a service spanning the transition years, leads to workers and managers having more of a vested interest and commitment to the young person and their family during these important years. This in turn leads to better outcomes and there are less inter-departmental issues to overcome.

Integral to the vision of this project is that co-production as the driving force in developing a new offer. We will listen to the young people and their families to produce a new offer which meets their needs. We are now in this process and gaining valuable information from families and their experience where transition has worked well, as well as areas for development. Further feedback will be obtained at our forthcoming transition event on the 26th October 2021.

Work with young people will also be completed through our young person and parent lead, which is being arranged. Not only do we hope this directs our new offer, but also supports what services need to offer going forward.

Since January the project lead has met with all key partners on multiple occasions and shared progress of the ongoing project developments. However, key teams will be offered sessions to share their views on how the transition offer can be improved for the young people in Bromley, which will support any future developments. In addition, there will be a survey to gain professional opinion across the local area.

In November 2021 the feedback will be reviewed, which will be used to consider what design is needed to deliver better outcomes for the young people of Bromley. The project lead views from their experience within the Children's Disability Service, and feedback from all stakeholders, it is clearly evident that a new offer is required, in conjunction with better planning from 14 years of age. It is viewed that planning from 14 is a minimum and that the four Bromley life pathways should be considered from early years. These are;

- Education, Employment and Training
- Health and Wellbeing
- Developing Independence
- Friendships and Community

Any decisions that need to be made will be with the focus of supporting young people locally and achieving the desired outcomes shared through the co-production work.

Consideration will be given as to whether training, development of systems, improved processes and some cultural change will lead to these improvements, or if more significant restructuring is required to meet these outcomes.

Non-Applicable Sections:	Impact on Vulnerable Adults and Children, Policy Implications, Financial Implications, Personnel Implications, Legal Implications, Procurement Implications
Background Documents: (Access via Contact Officer)	