

# JOINT SCRUTINY REVIEW OF THE TRANSITION FROM LEAVING CARE TO ADULT LIFE

## PORTFOLIO RESPONSIBILITIES: CHILDREN'S SERVICES AND ADULT SOCIAL CARE AND OLDER PEOPLE

CABINET

20 NOVEMBER 2008

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### Wards Affected

County-wide

### Purpose

To consider the response to the recommendations arising from the Joint Scrutiny Review of the Transition from Leaving Care to Adult Life.

### Key Decision

This is not a Key Decision.

### Recommendation

**THAT the proposed response to the recommendations arising from the Joint Scrutiny Review be approved.**

### Reasons

The Review produced a number of specific recommendations for consideration by the Executive which are ultimately aimed at improving outcomes for young people leaving the looked after system and making the transition to adult life.

### Considerations

1. In 2006, the Adult Social Care and Strategic Housing Scrutiny Committee and Children's Services Scrutiny Committee agreed to conduct a Joint Scrutiny Review on the Transition from Leaving Care to Adult Life. It is acknowledged that there are a number of other vulnerable young people who go through transition, such as those with a disability. However, whilst they were not the focus of this review the two directorates and partners may need to heed lessons learned.
2. The terms of reference for the Review were agreed as follows:
  - To review the Council's approach to transition issues for looked after children with support needs from childhood to adult life
  - To investigate how improvements can be made to the transition process
  - Following the review to advise the appropriate Cabinet Member(s) of the best

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Further information on the subject of this report is available from  
Shaun McLurg, Head of Safeguarding and Assessment on (01432) 261603

policy to put in place to implement the improvements identified.

3. The Review Group also identified a number of desired outcomes from the review, which were:
  - For Members of the Review to have considered the various elements involved in the transition process and how these interrelate with those services performed by the Council's partners
  - To have considered possible areas of improvement to the transition process and make recommendations on improvement for consideration by the appropriate Cabinet Member(s) and the Council's partner organisations
  - For any future service to be capable of implementation in collaboration with partner organisations.
4. The methodology for the Review included consideration of a range of documentary evidence, detailed interviews with key staff from a number of different professional agencies and a meeting with some looked after young people and care leavers at Centre 18 in Hereford.
5. The full report is attached at Appendix 1 for information.
6. The specific recommendations and proposed actions arising from the review are attached at Appendix 2.
7. Since the completion of the review both directorates have been working together to improve these services but acknowledge there is still more to be done if we are to improve the life chances and experiences of our young people leaving care and indeed, improve our practices for all such vulnerable groups.
8. In the past year Adult and Children's social care services have been working together to improve transition arrangements for all young people who are likely to need ongoing social care support in adulthood. We have developed protocols for young people with complex learning and/or physical disability needs, with joint planning in place from age 16. There are 2 transition workers funded by the Council and currently based within Connexions responsible for developing and improving transition arrangements. It will be sensible to review these posts and consider the recommendation from the review for a further transition post focusing on health needs at the same time. This will also be done in conjunction with the Children's Trust in reviewing and commissioning services.

## **Financial Implications**

There are no specific budgetary implications for Herefordshire Council at this stage as all the actions proposed within the Action Plan will be contained within existing budgets.

The establishment of the proposed Transition Health Advisor post for care leavers and vulnerable young people within the Primary Care Trust is subject to the approval of a bid as part of the overall Local Development Plan 2009/10.

## **Risk Management**

There are risks to the reputation of the Council and partner agencies should these recommendations not be acted upon, not least because members of the Review Group met with looked after young people and care leavers and assured them that action would be taken to address the issues they had raised, and the Review Group would feedback on actions taken at a later date.

## **Alternative Options**

Following consideration of a range of alternatives, these recommendations were decided upon by the Review Group as the most appropriate means of addressing the issues raised.

## **Consultees**

Stuart McFarlane	Team Manager, After Care Team
Derek Allen	Change Manager Homelessness
Lynne Renton	Designated Nurse Safeguarding, Primary Care Trust
Anna Cassin	Looked After Children Nurse, Primary Care Trust
Sally Simmonds	Operational Manager for Community Mental Health Services, Primary Care Trust
Annie Bushby	Education Liaison and Support Service Co-ordinator
Yvonne Clowsley	Children's Health Commissioner, Primary Care Trust
Julie Smith	Team Manager, Connexions
Sue Miller	Transitions Lead, Connexions

Looked after young people and care leavers

## **Appendices**

Appendix 1 Report for Adult Social Care and Strategic Housing Scrutiny Committee on 24 July 2008 'Review of the Transition from Leaving Care to Adult Life'

Appendix 2 Proposed Action Plan

## **Background Papers**

Care Matters: Transforming the Lives of Children and Young People in Care Green Paper October 2006

Report to Cabinet 18 January 2007 'Care Matters: Transforming the Lives of Children and Young People in Care'

Care Matters: Time for Change White Paper June 2007

Children and Young Person's Bill November 2007

Report to Cabinet Member 8 April 2008 'The Children and Young Person's Bill'

The Children and Young Person's Bill: Implications for Herefordshire