

Date of Report	July 2021
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Portfolio Holder (Has the Portfolio Holder been made aware of this topic?)	Cllr Andrew Parry
<b>Subject of Report</b>	to review current practice as part of the Transition to Adulthood Pathway to be known as 0-settled adulthood review
<b>Purpose of Report</b>	<b>Decision</b>

# Birth to Settled Adulthood Review 2021

Jointly commissioned by Adult Social Care, Children and Education Services

## 1. Background

- 1.1. Children and Adult Services recognise that the current operating model to support young people through the transition to adulthood across Dorset has not been delivering the outstanding service that our community require. As part of the Strengthening Services and Adults Improvement Programme, it was agreed to jointly commission a review that will identify how;

services across People and Place are effectively supporting young people in their Preparation for Adulthood as required by the Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice.

Adult services respond to ensure when they reach adulthood the ability to be able to access a range of opportunities that enable them to maximise their potential and independence.

This paper will scope, propose recommendations and develop a high-level implementation plan to embed sustained improvements.

- 1.2 Agreement to prioritise a key piece of improvement and co-production across Adult Social Care and Children Services to
- Reframe the agenda through identifying what problems we are trying to solve
  - Refresh the joint vision and priorities
  - Consider how we engage and test the approach
  - Ensure coproduction across young people, stakeholders and services
  - Identify the people and resources that need to be engaged
  - Identify and build on achievements
  - Maximise opportunities and align with other Strengthening Services workstreams
- 1.3 Dorset Council's (DC) vision is that 'it's the best place to grow-up' for its Children, Young People and Families;
- *Best start in life*; we want Dorset Children to have the Best Start in Life
  - *Young and Thriving*; we want Dorset children to become, happy successful adults
  - *Good Care Provision*; we want Dorset children to be safe and properly cared for
  - *Best Education for All*; we want Dorset children to have a great education and enjoy school
  - *Best Place to Live*; we want to make Dorset the best place to live and grow up
  - *Delivering Locally*; we want to serve Dorset children, young people and families as best we can.

# Birth to Settled Adulthood Review 2021

Jointly commissioned by Adult Social Care, Children and Education Services

In addition DC's 'A better life; Adult Social Care, Housing Transformation Programme' continues the values and vision for the whole life journey throughout its 5 principles:

- *The Individual*: The individual should be at the heart of decision making and service design
- *Strengths*: Outcomes that build on people's strengths
- *Co-production*: When groups of young people influence the way that services are delivered
- *Best value*: Best financial value equally balanced with quality
- *Better for all*: We recognise that better means different things to different people/ organisations

- 1.4 These programmes set an intention for person centred, strengths-based work for Dorset residents.
- 1.5 Children's social workers have a duty to protect the children they support which can be restrictive in terms of preparing young people for adulthood if there is no protected resource to work alongside to enable, facilitate and guide the preparation for adulthood conversation. Young people with learning disabilities or SEN often require long term support from social care, education and potentially health services which can create a culture of dependency. They may have strong advocates in their families who have often had to fight to get the support required, and they may continue to fight for this support as they reach adulthood. That said there are opportunities to see the journey of the young person, with milestones and legislation forming part but not the whole.
- 1.6 In High Needs, decision making is often driven by processes and paperwork rather than outcomes, meaning that young people are not as well prepared for adulthood as they could be. In contrast, adult services have shifted focus on maximising independence and on encouraging individuals to make the most of their strengths, assets and community networks to improve outcomes and enable them to remain as independent as possible.
- 1.7 Best practice would support childhood through to adulthood, a pathway that approaches with a whole-life view, considering all life stages, likely support needs and opportunities to support longer term independence. Allowing those with the highest level of needs to be supported and engaged, the difference in culture between children's and adult services leads to many young people making the transition between services without having their independence maximised (impower 2020).

## 2.0 Legislation & Regulation

- 2.1 Since 2014 there have been many policy changes that affect the lives of young people with SEN, disabled young people and their families, and will impact on the range and quality of support available to them as they prepare for adulthood.
- 2.2 The Care Act 2014: Transition from childhood to adulthood, places a duty on Local Authorities to conduct transition assessments for children, children's carers and young carers where there is a likely need for care and support after the child in question turns 18 and a transition assessment would be of 'significant benefit' at a

# Birth to Settled Adulthood Review 2021

Jointly commissioned by Adult Social Care, Children and Education Services

point in time. This is regardless of whether the child or individual currently receives any services.

- 2.3 The Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan introduced by the Children and Families Act 2014 aims to ensure that professionals work together to support children with special educational needs and that information is shared between them. This is a consistent theme in much of social care practice. The early identification of young people likely to need care and support as adults can effectively begin with:
- Monitoring Education, Health and Care plans
  - Thinking 'whole family'
  - Building relationships with young people and their families and with other professionals
- 2.4 The two pieces of legislation that will have the greatest influence on support for disabled young people preparing for adulthood are Part 3 of the Children and Families Act 2014, which focuses on Special Educational Needs and Disability, and Part 1 of the Care Act, which focuses on the care and support of adults with care and support needs. Legislation can be used to create positive outcomes for disabled young people.
- 2.5 Local authorities have duties under the Children Act 1989 as amended by the Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000 towards care leavers. Under Section 23 of the Leaving Care Act local authorities have duties to allocate a personal advisor and young people from 15 and ¾ must be provided with a pathway plan in preparation for adulthood. The pathway plan should consider the care leaver's need for support and assistance (which have already been identified in the previous assessments) and how best to meet these needs until the age of 21 (or longer if the young person is in education or training or requests an extension of support). Areas covered should include, accommodation, practical life skills including money management, education and training, employment, financial support, specific support needs, contingency plans for support if independent living breaks down.

## 3.0 Methodology

- 3.1 Desk top analysis of work conducted by the Transitions Steering Group established in 2020 but ceased during COVID. Data generated by both Children's & Adults Data & Analysis teams and Financial information from both directorates finance teams.
- 3.2 Interviews were conducted across Adult Social Care, Children Services & Education (approx. 46 senior officers, area and team managers and operational staff) and representatives from Dorset Parent Carer Council. Involving representatives from across Children's and Adults Commissioning, Children and Adults Social Care (Child Protection, Child in Need), Early Help, Education, Children with a Disability, SEN and Performance and Data Colleagues.
- 3.3 During each interview individuals were asked for the top 3 critical areas for improvement work, as well as their understanding of the definition of transitions.

# Birth to Settled Adulthood Review 2021

Jointly commissioned by Adult Social Care, Children and Education Services

- 3.4 Research of other local authority operating models was undertaken. This ranged from how Mental Health Services were restructured to developing integrated teams and processes.

## 4. Case for change – Reasons for reviewing the status quo

- 4.1 Dorset Council has recognised the need to focus attention on Young People for some time. The past 4 years has seen a high level of change for the staff across Dorset, improvement work specifically aimed at the young people affected with SEN and improving transition to Adult Social Care
- 4.2 Young people who are likely to require an assessment for Transition to adult social care come from across a number of Children Services (with some never having had any support from CS but will be either direct referral or via health. The largest proportion of young people will come from either the Children with Disabilities (CWD) or Special Educational Needs (SEN) Officers within the Locality teams.
- 4.3 Both the SEN area inspection in 2017 and the Ofsted Children Services focused visit found challenges and issues with consistency of practice, requiring improvements to planning, strategy and recording. A recent peer review for Dorset on SEN and High Needs found the council provides a compelling vision for the future provision of SEN services and High Needs block. These are underpinned by aspirational strategies and an innovative integrated model of delivery. However, Dorset has a very significant challenge, requiring unrelenting monitoring and grip, to make these sustainable in the medium and longer term.

During the Local Area SEND Inspection families told Dorset that:

- They weren't provided with good information about preparing for adulthood
- The transitions assessment wasn't completed in good time
- The move to adult life was not well-planned

(Dorset Parent Carer Council survey for the Local Area SEND Inspection 2019)

- 4.4 In Local Authorities where the transitions pathway has a good Ofsted rating, Children Service's have taken the strategic leadership for transitional planning to adulthood, and strong co-production of plans. The Preparing for Adulthood (PfA) process must be in line with statutory requirements, most importantly the Children and Families Act 2014 and the young people with Education, Health and Social Care Plans and children receiving support from children's social care services and looked after children assessments, to help meet young people/s need when they move from childhood to adulthood. These frameworks present services with the opportunity to reframe its thinking around support provided to young people, in order that they can be as independent as possible when they reach adulthood.
- 4.5 Structurally within Adult Social Care sits the 'Transitions Team', comprising of 3 staff (Manager plus 2 Social Workers) working closely with Transitions Co-ordinator, employed in Adults' Commissioning Team, the Transitions Team do not casework, they complete Care Act assessments for those with 'likely needs' at the point of significant benefit. Assessing likely eligibility and information, advice

# Birth to Settled Adulthood Review 2021

Jointly commissioned by Adult Social Care, Children and Education Services

and guidance. The team works as a gateway to specialist adult services such as Learning Disabilities, Mental Health and Physical Disabilities team.

People with learning disability have also told Dorset what is important:

- Making sure that young people and their families can get the right information
- Supporting access to advocacy services to help people speak up
- Making it easier for young people to move from children's to adult services
- Join up plans for children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities
- Do more to include support for young people when we think about planning and buying services.

(Learning Disability Partnership Board Big Plan Workshop 2020)

- 4.6 Strategically savings have been identified that are connected and are intrinsically linked to this workstream, for example Children Services have a £75k savings target for Direct Payments, which has recently been removed from the 2021/22 budget and therefore forms part of the overall £200k published savings required. The Children Services Transformation workstream is likely to have savings directly linked to Transitions but this is not yet confirmed.

## 5. Performance & Data

- 5.1 The Transitions Team are developing a data set and performance report (this is in the absence of any 'automated' reporting generated through Mosaic) that will be updated quarterly, this is a new development, but informative to draw conclusions included in this report. Across Adults & Children's (inc. Education) a plethora of spreadsheets and systems are used to track and monitor activities. It is not clear that the available data is used to its' full potential across the system to effectively support the customer journey, or to facilitate forward planning to develop and make best use of resources. Access to and support of officers across the system have enabled the information used for this part of the report.
- 5.2 Dorset Council currently supports 922 adults with a learning disability 172 (18%) of whom are aged 18-25. 143 young people (aged 14-18) were identified in 2020/21 as potentially requiring transition support from Children Services to Adult Social Care and support. Around 70-75% of young people transition have a learning disability as a main reason for support. 70-75% of YP who go on to receive a package of care from adults have LD. Referral numbers are roughly 50:50 MH and LD 5-10% of these younger people requiring significant amounts of support. Most people with very significant personal support needs will also require support from the health services.
- 5.3 Since 2019 the Transitions Team have received 273 referrals, of which 6% have were not involved with Children's Services or Education. 231 young people are currently in the transition's pathway across adult services, the Transitions Team are holding 55% (the transitions period is defined as activity carried out by adults from referral to the first care and support plan being implemented). 153 referrals were received between May 2020 and May 2021 (table 2). Adult Social Care undertake care act assessment at a point of significant benefit for young people

## Birth to Settled Adulthood Review 2021

Jointly commissioned by Adult Social Care, Children and Education Services

with likely need for care and support in adulthood. This is care act statutory guidance. In total 78 young people are recorded as having a primary need of ASC. 4 of these were closed, 27 either have had an assessment and were handed over to CMHT's or were handed over to the CMHT to complete the assessment due to age.( e.g. late referrals) and 33 remain open to transitions, and either for review, in the process of assessment or are waiting for an assessment. The remaining 11 have no recorded pathway further work is required to understand the outcomes to those assessment).

- 5.4 On average the Transitions Team has consistently received 14-17 referrals for assessment a month which have been difficult to complete (and provide good quality information, advice and guidance) within the staffing resource, and so increasingly work is being pushed back out to Locality Teams and CMHTs. Issue with resources in the adult social care team, when transitioned from the Transition team not always capacity to work and support those young people and families
- 5.5 At present 93 Young People (as of June 1<sup>st</sup> 2021) are on the waiting list for an initial assessment, 4 are aged 17, 47 are 16 and 36 are 15 years old. Of those aged 16 and over their current annual costs average £67,284, primarily education costs (Transitions Team quarterly report 2021). 90% of young people waiting for an assessment are aged 15 & 16. Transitions team are being used to give additional resource to specialist Adult Social Care Teams (i.e. Mental Health and Phys Disabilities)

<b><i>Transitions team referrals by source May 2020 - May 2021</i></b>	
Health: GPs, CAMHS, SWIFTS, Psychology	12
Children Social care (Leaving Care, Early Help, LAC)	35
Children with Disability	43
Self-referrals	10
SEN teams	23
Education	2
Ansbury	18
Other, including YOS, You trust. BCP, ASC	10
<b>total</b>	<b>153</b>

- 5.6 Of the new referrals in the last 3 months, 14 were for 17-year (SEN 2, Ansbury 1, CSC-6, CWAD- 3, Self-referral1), they have all been prioritised and at the time of writing only 1 is outstanding. Data tells us that SEN tend to refer before young people are 17, and those over at 17 years old usually come from children's social care often these are LAC. Further work is required to track and analyse this data over a longer period of time, it could be due to lack of knowledge and that often the disability is not clear due to this group of young people having attachment disorder/ or adverse childhood experiences i.e. rather than a defined disability coupled with the panic planning as the young person approaches 18 and thinking about what next.
- 5.7 There are currently 16 high cost Young People who are currently waiting for assessment and are in receipt of packages within children social care / SEN where

# Birth to Settled Adulthood Review 2021

Jointly commissioned by Adult Social Care, Children and Education Services

their placements are currently in excess of £50,000. This is a potential flag for complexity and possible higher costed packages. These Young People are required to have Transition Care and Support assessments as soon as possible to ensure timely and suitable planning for transitions.

Transitions Team March – May 2021 report	
Risks due to identified high cost placements or packages by age	
Age	number
14	1
15	3
16	10
17	2

5.8 There has been a shift in the identified primary need of young people in transition, with greater percentages identified year on year since 2018 as having a mental illness or a physical disability. 'Transitions' may primarily have been seen as a 'learning disability issue' and this data should encourage us to take stock and possibly provide greater focus to those young people who have a mental illness in particular

5.9 In addition, there are 400 children and young people waiting for specialist school placements under 16, a high proportion of this cohort will require future services from ASC. The highest number of referrals come from Children who are Disabled Team (CWAD), followed by Social Care (LAC) and then SEN. Following training and awareness there is potential for increased referrals from SEN particularly pre 16, but that currently the referrals to the Transitions Team would only look to increase their existing backlog of 93 cases (June 1<sup>st</sup>) and may not enable earlier identification or assessment.

## 6. Financial pressures.

6.1 As of November 2020, the total weekly cost for 172 young people aged 18-25 was £188,014. It is the case that the costs of this cohort are likely to increase since a number of these young people remain in education consequently a proportion of their costs are currently being funded by SEN through the high needs budget. Once these young people move out of education, costs for alternative provision may revert to Adult Services, if they remain eligible for social care. These young people do not represent high volume spend, but rather high individual spend. They also represent a long-term commitment in terms of spend, since most of these young people are likely to be in receipt of services of some description for life (so potentially 40 + years).

6.2 The dissemination and understanding of financial monitoring will be critical to the council's ability to reduce the deficit within its adopted model and measures on this are needed now to realise the council's ambition. In short, the council must more closely monitor today to take care of tomorrow. Although there is not a specific savings target identified for services who support transitions, aligning processes and earlier planning will enable greater efficiencies and improved budget management.



## Birth to Settled Adulthood Review 2021

Jointly commissioned by Adult Social Care, Children and Education Services

- 6.3 Generally, in predicting demand for Adult Social Care, data around national and local trends are used to create a forecast that we can apply locally to inform commissioning and financial planning. As an authority, Dorset has detailed information about this cohort, often stretching back over an involvement with them that began in the first years of their life. In a report on PfA in 2018, Dorset conducted a complex piece of Business Analysis in relation to how it might identify children/ young people with disabilities who represent high costs. That work has not been repeated since. As of November 2020, young people aged 18-25 with a Learning Disability were costing the LA just under £10 million per annum (table 7).
- 6.4 Finance information pulled together from across Children Services and Education finance data as an indication of the investment for 77 young people aged 14-17, at an average of £81,387 per person (table 6). Breaking this down further the Children who are Disabled Team are currently supporting 18 young people with short-breaks at an annual cost of £497,167. Short-breaks have moved from internal to external placements. In addition, 6 young people known to the Early Help service are accessing additional funding for bespoke specialist support who do not meet the CWD criteria. It is currently not possible to identify what young person from the group of 77 could escalate to higher costs within Children's Services, Education or Adult Social Care. Further work will be required to look at the young people within this group to understand the potential for longer term support and or alternative pathways.

Young People aged 14-17 with placement costs across Children Services (June 1 <sup>st</sup> 2021) (source Children Services Finance)												
Age	CWD **				CWD/LAC			CWD/Direct Payments		SEN		total forecast spend (June 2021)
	total ind.	yearly short break forecast	total ind.	yearly 'other' forecast	total ind.	weekly average	yearly forecast	total ind.	Yearly forecast	total ind.	yearly forecast	
14	not avail by age		not avail by age		4	£609	£126,724	3	£8999	23	£1,145,488	£1,272,212
15					8	£1103	£8825	5	£32,876	17	£893,016	£901,941
16					7	£2961	£20,727	6	£53,195	27	£1,667,666	£1,688,393
17					7	£2993	£20,952	6	£35,604	29	£1,750,065	£1,771,017
unknown	18	£497,167	13	£136,131								£633,298
total investment												£6,266,861

# Birth to Settled Adulthood Review 2021

Jointly commissioned by Adult Social Care, Children and Education Services

Number of Young People Aged 18 – 25 with a Learning Disability Requiring Care support and Care costs. Nov 2020				
Cost Band	Count	Weekly Cost	Annual Cost	% of total cost
0 - 99	23	£1,328	£69,033	0.7%
100 - 299	43	£7,809	£406,073	4.2%
300 - 499	25	£9,934	£516,552	5.3%
500 - 799	21	£13,054	£678,797	6.9%
800 - 999	6	£5,458	£283,814	2.9%
1000 - 2000	27	£36,736	£1,910,266	19.5%
2000 +	27	£113,696	£5,912,185	60.5%
<b>Totals</b>	<b>172</b>	<b>£188,014</b>	<b>£9,776,719</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

- 6.5 The Children who are Disabled Team staffing budget represents just over £1.5 million in resource (predicted overspend of 150k 2021/22).

Profit Center		Cost Element		Current Budget (2022)
101520	C&S CWAD South	100011	Pay Related Costs	293,200.00
101521	C&S CWAD West	100011	Pay Related Costs	369,900.00
101522	C&S CWAD Prevention	100011	Pay Related Costs	237,200.00
101523	C&S CWAD East	100011	Pay Related Costs	327,300.00
101524	C&S CWAD OT	100011	Pay Related Costs	276,100.00
				<b>1,503,700.00</b>

- 6.6 For adults' services, based on the package split between 18 – 25 and 25+ the proportion of LD/MH staffing equates to 8.01fte at an annual cost of £380,240. This is a proportion of all staffing posts and for clarity, is not dedicated staff so outside the scope of any "dedicated" team for 18-25 currently.

## 7. Findings from stakeholder interviews

- 7.1 The series of interviews not only focused on the internal challenges of what is the transitions offer for Dorset Young People for Dorset Council staff, but also the wider vision of supporting children as they move towards adulthood (beyond requirements for statutory support). Professionals use the description of transitions as a catch all phrase to describe the pathway to Adult Services, however not all young people that require support/ intervention from Children's Services go on to require it from Adults, conversely a few Young People have never been known to Children Services but go on to need support from Adults.
- 7.2 Longer term aims across the partnership are around seeing a rite of passage from Childhood to Adulthood with services maybe being part of this as and when appropriate but primarily redefining the journey to be around the person's life not service offer. Practice suggests that many young people who come to the attention of adult social care at or post -18 are already known to children's services by virtue

## Birth to Settled Adulthood Review 2021

Jointly commissioned by Adult Social Care, Children and Education Services

of social care and/or special educational need. Best practice would support a childhood through to adulthood pathway considering all life stages, likely support needs and opportunities to support longer term independence.

- 7.3 Ongoing work is needed to develop the role of schools, and other education settings (including Dorset Education staff) with greater emphasis on how the Preparing for Adulthood agenda and the education curriculum is woven through “all plans”, work with educational settings and professionals across the education services.
- 7.4 Primarily across both Children and Adult Services representatives discussed the need for collaboration and a vision that helped to articulate the journey of childhood to adulthood, not just for those requiring longer term support from services. Activity led by Dorset has been very stop start, stakeholders are very frustrated and whilst there is understanding about the challenges of capacity, there continues to be energy and commitment to be involved with Dorset bringing momentum, pace and clarity to what is the offer as young people move towards adulthood.
- 7.5 There is confusion across both Children Social Care & Education and Adult Social Care as to what a good operating model for Transitions would look like, what it can deliver, should it be modelled as a 0-25 or a 14-25 service and which directorate is best placed for it to sit within. All models have risk and without a clearly defined offer, Young People could experience inconsistencies and challenge.

*‘the issue of extending the age of our service from 0-18 to 0-25 means that I would work with that child for a really long time...it has to come to an end sometime so what difference would up to 25 make? How would we accommodate the legislation alongside a service age range change?’*  
stakeholder A 2021

- 7.6 The definition of transitions varied, as did the age of which a young person should be identified for a referral to the Transitions team for a Care Act assessment. With representatives citing anything from 14 through to 17 and a half. Since the Transitions team was formed (2018) there has been a year on year increase in young people being identified earlier for the assessments (table 1), however as of the 1<sup>st</sup> June there were 93 young people aged 13-17 requiring assessment. With the current team capacity, the time that it takes to complete an assessment (around 6-8 assessments are finalised per month) allowing for those waiting and no further cases it would take 13 months to clear the current waiting list.

*‘I have made some good contacts with the Adult Transitions Team, who are really helpful, but they don’t work with the family or young person. Families are very anxious when I can’t describe to them what may happen next – I don’t know what might happen next’*  
Stakeholder B 2021

*‘how do we enable the transitions team to be more than an assessment ‘hub’ it is confusing calling them a team.... when they don’t do case work’* Stakeholder D 2021

# Birth to Settled Adulthood Review 2021

Jointly commissioned by Adult Social Care, Children and Education Services

Dorset 'Transition Team' referrals for Care Act Assessment by year			
Year	2019	2020	2021 (1 <sup>st</sup> June)
total number	172	143	50

- 7.7 Without exception feedback focused on the requirement to start the process much earlier to gain the right skills needed for independence, champion increased independence, enabling young people to live, work and be active contributors in their community, making the best use of their own and other available resources and community resilience. Promotion of a person-centred support and outcome focused practices, using strengths-based principles and language, promoting choice and control with shared responsibility and community resilience.

*'I want to start seeing this as less about the services and more about the right time for our young people, how could we work towards transition at the end of their education setting or when they are 'settled', transitions at 18 is fraught with worry and uncertainty, so much change all at the same time. We are just moving the problem between services, passing the baton rather than thinking about the individual and their family' Stakeholder F 2021*

- 7.8 There is a shared lack of understanding of each Directorates role when working with Young People, with professionals from Children's feeling they could not represent the 'offer' from Adults without understanding the Care Act, and representatives from Adult Social Care feeling that Children Services gave too much support or too bigger care packages with little or no preparation for what adulthood may look like.

*'I have never been trained on how to talk to a parent or young person on what to expect as they enter adulthood or adult services, currently this is their (ASC) responsibility I would need support to do so'* Stakeholder C 2021

*'colleagues in CS do not prepare young people for coming to our services, they are so very different and for this reason we are setting people up to fail'* Stakeholder E 2021

*'CS work to prevent risk, safeguard and work with the family, Adults well they focus on the person – it causes a lot of confusion, is there a way that we could enable a strengths based shared conversation for those approaching this time, its not just the young people that experience this change'* Stakeholder G 2021

- 7.9 Although there are case studies to evidence improvement in practice, they are outweighed by the systematic failure of the transition journey for a number of young people, where they have not been part of a good journey to adulthood. Stakeholders gave examples and evidenced how this can lead to high cost support. One example was given of a Young Person who if earlier support had been given to them and their family may have not required high cost support from Adult Social Care post 18. When discussing with other LA's their approach to Transition those who were more progressed on their improvement journey were offering access to Transitions Officers, specialists based within Children Services who linked closely to the Adults Transitions Team, to work with and alongside families, young people and professionals to prepare for adulthood. Those LAs

## Birth to Settled Adulthood Review 2021

Jointly commissioned by Adult Social Care, Children and Education Services

where they are developed with a 0-25 service offered a wraparound 'early help package' from 14. Working through worries, challenges and helping young people and families to explore the options for adulthood, using different approaches including SEN Annual Reviews, Joint Plans, CYP referrals to Early Help, Specialist Transition Coordinators and Intensive Family Support. No data was available at the time of writing this report from the LAs but they have welcomed the opportunity to share practice and develop learning.

- 7.10 Feedback from Young People, families and stakeholders that focus on communication with families, moving away from the education only focus, and towards the four Preparing for Adulthood pathways, ensuring that the Young Persons voice is centre with personalised planning and a firm understanding of lifelong learning. Extensive work was undertaken to redesign and model the pathways but there is no evidence or understanding across the service that completed or signed off.
- 7.11 Whilst there has been an improvement with the Transition journey specifically between the Children with Disabilities Team and Transitions team, the interviews highlighted the need for training on the Care Act and for SEN staff on Transitions, and how the Preparing for Adulthood outcomes can be reflected within the EHCP, how it is shared, and or built in to care plans. Currently silo working, challenges around practice, recording and understanding of the processes.?? There is a huge risk in doing this without increasing capacity or revising the model for Transitions.
- 7.12 During interviews officers acknowledged that the lack of a clearly defined offer for Children and young people with additional needs- the lack of a defined graduated response, alongside the need for improved collaborative working partnerships with schools, providers, stakeholders, young people and families have resulted in many families seeking the safety and reassurance of an EHCP, to provide the security of provision. Feedback from parents and carers is that coupled with great anxiety, confusion and uncertainty as one moves from familiar through to new services and the 'unknown'. their worry that the only way to secure good future planning is to 'hold on to and secure a SEN plan and assessment'.
- 7.13 Historically Dorset had a Transitions Steering Group, this group chaired jointly between Adults and Children Social Care disbanded in 2020, due to a lack of clarity, governance and strategic buy-in. Education has a Multi-Agency Resource Panel to discuss and agree packages for complex high cost children and young people, this is a recent group and has a terms of reference this group was not fully formed when the Transitions Steering Group ceased, they have / had very different purposes. The steering group was strategic rather than operational. Stakeholders shared that there is a need for a joint forum to discuss complex cases and agree the overall approach around transitions in addition to MARP but for those complex cases they can be escalated to MARP when appropriate.
- 7.14 The use of systems (MOSAIC/ Synergy) and the ability to report on monthly and quarterly activity is different by each team and service area with silo operating and a lack of resources and or development of systems to enable a 'single view of a young person' a number of spreadsheets are in use across, finance, adults, children social care and education. This area has recently been identified as part of the Business Intelligence improvement work. Although this is in its early stages

# Birth to Settled Adulthood Review 2021

Jointly commissioned by Adult Social Care, Children and Education Services

a working group has started working and has been fully engaged in the production of the data for this report.

- 7.15 The NHS are also developing systems for transition between Children's and Adult's services for young people with long term conditions. Challenges around the transition space is not isolated to Dorset Council, Integrated Care pathway, colleagues from the CCG and across the wider health platform are also looking to understand how to align and work closer. For example, work is underway to develop an improved Autism Pathway. This work is in its infancy but is a welcome opportunity for all stakeholders.
- 7.16 The Commissioning-led Transitions 'Towards Adulthood' Pathway, whilst helpful, has remained very high-level. It has lacked sufficient detail to provide clarity about the role and responsibility of individuals, teams and agency.



Towards Adulthood  
Pathway Model\_ June 2

Subsequent attempts to provide detail behind this high-level pathway have been thwarted, probably primarily due to a lack of clear strategy and governance, and the absence of an agreed workplan across partners.

Consequently, we have not been able to provide internal and external stakeholders, and – critically – users, with clarity about what our Transitions offer is in a strengths-based manner. This has caused uncertainty and has contributed to a lack of information about preparing for adulthood information being published on the Dorset website / The Local Offer.

- 7.16 There are multiple hand-offs; children's team → transitions team → adult team. This may result in poor customer experience and lack of ownership by one worker, team or service.
- 7.17 There is an inability of Localities / CMHTs to ringfence practitioner's time for transitions and prioritise incoming transition planning work alongside existing complex / urgent casework
- 7.18 The Care Leavers Service are finding that young people and young adults are not prepared for a settled adulthood within their foster care placement, and there is a low level of 'staying put' take up. Young people entering the Care Leavers service are turning 18 and are struggling with mental health. Referrals to the Transitions team from the Care Leavers Service have increased, which has led to discussions around whether the Care Leavers Service understand Care Act criteria for assessment.

## 8. Emergent themes

- 8.1 Findings from the stakeholder interviews grouped in to 6 key themes are detailed in the table below.

Theme	Description
1. <i>Digital Journey:</i>	CS, E and ASC services have a reliance on excel spreadsheets which have been developed and cultivated over the past few years to give them an accurate picture

# Birth to Settled Adulthood Review 2021

Jointly commissioned by Adult Social Care, Children and Education Services

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>how Dorset record the journey from childhood to adulthood</i></li> <li>- <i>One Plan One Story</i></li> </ul>	<p>of their service, case load, and costs (PBs, CHC funding, referrals, unmet need and outcome of last review). The Transitions team are liaising with services to pull together a view of a young person internally (primarily using Mosaic), and then record on a spreadsheet with information from Synergy. The intention is to access Health systems and draw that information too.</p> <p>Gaps in data: Whilst there is a wealth of information held by teams on spreadsheets, as well as recorded on MOSAIC and Synergy it is really difficult to ascertain the data relating to transitions, we don't know if the data is good enough, or if there are challenges in terms of recording or quality. Whilst it is difficult it is not impossible but will take time. One of the top barriers with any transformation work across DC is where services are unable to report on themselves due to lack of monitoring data.</p> <p>Families have told us that with each service comes a new plan, different legislation and regulation. That they want to be more involved with one plan, one plan that has different elements i.e. CP, EHCP but that the core is 'one' that is owned by young person and individual. Opportunities post Covid bring innovation and development possibilities around the use of technology and apps to make this a possibility.</p>
<p>2. <i>Childhood to Adulthood pathway: a vision for Dorset</i></p>	<p>Stakeholders discussed the lack of policy; vision &amp; ambition resulting in a lack of clarity around approach and direction across the partnership. The Local Authority is looked to as the place to set the structure and foundations for preparing children as they move to adulthood. DC has understood there is a need for increased focus on young adults for some time. More can and needs to be done to achieve better outcomes for these individuals and ensure that the financial pressure is managed in the right way.</p> <p>Young people accessing support through CS &amp; E – those with learning disabilities and/or SEND – may transition to AS and we need to prepare for this. Whilst the problem above is understood, the solution is trickier. Close work across the directorates from a strategic level need to drive this change, increasing focus and understanding of responsibilities.</p> <p>Across the country a variety of transitions services are used to prepare young people (aged 14 upwards) for adulthood, however they struggle to manage the fundamental differences in culture and practice between CS, E &amp; ASC.</p> <p>In High Needs, decision making is often driven by processes and paperwork rather than outcomes, meaning that young people are not as well prepared for adulthood as they could be.</p> <p>In contrast, adult services have shifted to focus on maximising independence and on encouraging individuals to make the most of their strengths, assets and community networks to improve outcomes and enable them to remain as independent as possible.</p>
<p>3. <i>What is the operating model for Dorset? Who is responsible for any dedicated resource and what opportunities are there around resources and pooled budgets?</i></p>	<p>There is confusion across both CS,E &amp; ASC around what should an operating model look like, what the current Transitions Team is able to deliver and how alignment/ seamless delivery of services could be achieved when taking in to consideration legislation, need and service delivery.</p> <p>Stakeholders talked about the value and opportunities with Integrated working, and wanting to develop a model that worked through the challenges of each specific team focus (i.e. legislation) and working to support individuals and whole life support. No one clear vision as to where the service should sit, although</p>

# Birth to Settled Adulthood Review 2021

Jointly commissioned by Adult Social Care, Children and Education Services

	<p>professionals felt that a 0-25 service may be possibly easier to manage situated within Children Services. The overwhelming view was that the team structural situation is less important than the model of delivery.</p> <p>Whilst Transitions remains responsibility across Children and Adults, there is a small dedicated Transitions Team situated in adult services. The team does not deliver direct work but completes Care Act Assessments for those with likely needs at point of 'significant benefit'. The team has good links with commissioning colleagues and has established processes in place to track young people with likely need, maintaining data sets for service planning and commissioning activity. The team describes a 'push and pull' approach to identifying young people for referral following assessment to the mental health or Learning Disabilities service.</p> <p>Until recently there was a Transitions Steering group, which struggled to get consistency of attendance due to high turnover of staff, the partnership struggled to focus on the 'offer', what it is, what are the opportunities. The lack of clear vision hindered delivery to vulnerable young people. The challenge is historic and results in circular discussions, a revolving door as opposed to the single front door. The fundamental challenge being that people are not being prepared for the transition to adults or for 'independent living' people are being lost, there are less services available for adults.</p> <p>Strategically there is a lack of clear governance arrangements and strategic direction for Preparation for Adulthood.</p> <p>Leaving care – recent changes to practice around joint working 1-2 years prior to entering LC service, a lot of energy around this practice change 60% of care leavers have an EHCP</p>
<p>4. Budget</p>	<p>It was suggested that looking at current costs early on for this cohort would offer a broad indication of likely needs/complexity and suggest individual cases where effort should be invested – with of course the caveat that high costs will not always indicate high needs in an individual, but instead may reflect specific complexity in their overall situation.</p> <p>Financial information relating to young people who are entering adult services at 18 also contains the financial information for costs in CS and ASC. This is held on a tracker which is monitored and updated by the Transitions Team. Note that the costings relate to internal to DC costs not wider costs such as health, mental health services etc.</p> <p>Information about children/ young people is held on a number of different systems: information relating to SEN provision Synergy; SEN transport costs is held on Trapeze; social care costs for children/young people is held MOSAIC information relating to children/young people known to CAHMS is held on a separate system.</p> <p>The importance of being able to access a "total cost of the child" figure is recognised but further work is required to align costings/details for all placements&gt;</p> <p>Data is currently held across paper and electronic systems in a way that is not organised/uniform and the electronic system is recognised as being poorly populated. Accurate data on this has been outstanding since first requested in November 2015, despite the escalation of requests. Plans have been ongoing to move from a paper system since October 2015.</p>



## Birth to Settled Adulthood Review 2021

Jointly commissioned by Adult Social Care, Children and Education Services

	<p>Strategically both directorates have budget savings linked to improvement work of which the transitions workstream is a part of.</p>
<p>5. What is Dorset's Joint Commissioning Strategy</p>	<p>Lack of preparation for adulthood can result in too many young people who require purpose built/ adapted independent living accommodation are finding the planning starts too late and its not ready on time. Limited joint commissioning is taking place internally (as well as with health) with a requirement for a joint commissioning strategic response.</p> <p>The existing transitions protocol is out of date, was not signed off, across both CS, E &amp; ASC there is inconsistency around roles and responsibilities. With multiple handoffs within the local authority; children's team – transitions team-adults team. This can result in a poor experience towards adulthood, and from a service perspective can result in a lack of ownership by one worker, team or service.</p> <p>The CCGs CHC transitions procedure is not well-aligned to the Local Authorities pathway, there are new opportunities to approach and address this with the New Dorset Integrated Care System, but in order for the LA to become an equal partner it needs to understand its internal offer.</p> <p>generally officers felt that commissioning could happen earlier with earlier access to data and resources, allowing the opportunity to work to support independent living and access to opportunities earlier.</p> <p><i>Adults Commissioning, Children's Commissioning and the Integrated Care Pathway all present an opportunity for a joint commissioning strategy towards a whole life service?</i></p> <p>What are the model possibilities – integrated working – looked at Wiltshire etc</p>

## Birth to Settled Adulthood Review 2021

Jointly commissioned by Adult Social Care, Children and Education Services

### 9. What other authorities do

- 9.1 Nationwide each LA operates its transitions model those with the 0-25 integrated pathway have approached this as a staged improvement journey. Moving from a traditional 18+ transitions team model, to one that offers joint case work 'coaching' Children Services and Education colleagues , a sample of statistical neighbours contacted shows .....

Statistical neighbours	Situation of team	team size	summary	Website
Devon	Adult Social care	Countywide 7 SW 2 OTs and business support.	<p>PfA is an Adult Social care Team, the PfA team engage from academic year 10 – 18 when they transition to adult services.</p> <p>about to relaunch resources and website.</p> <p>Case work alongside Children’s Teams &amp; SEN. Will complete a CSA early on and determine likely eligible or not likely eligible. If likely eligible will follow through and at 16 will up interventions working with independence tool kit.</p> <p>Reaching for Independence Service (ACS) engage @17. To facilitate as much independence as possible from 18 onwards.</p> <p>Web-based referral process &amp; escalation process for complex stuck cases. Will casework for those as and when appropriate.</p> <p>SEND team is 0-25, operate to the principles of 0-25 across the services even within team specifics.</p> <p>Average 1 week to complete CS Assessment with around 150-200 per year group.</p>	<p><a href="http://devon.gov.uk">Preparing for Adulthood update - Education and Families (devon.gov.uk)</a></p>

## Birth to Settled Adulthood Review 2021

Jointly commissioned by Adult Social Care, Children and Education Services

<p>South Gloucester</p>	<p>0-25 Integrated Service</p>	<p>waiting for information</p>	<p>The team sits within Integrated Children’s Services in the 0-25 social care service, consisting of a 0-18 disability team and an adults’ team 18-25 with a smaller Occupational Therapy Service covering the teams within the 0-25 social care service</p> <p>PfA is staffed by non-social workers, who will attend ECHP review with SEND colleagues and offer advice to young people (normally at Y9) and their families particularly if not open to social care. they may do a Transition Assessment similar to that of the (form of Early Help) social workers, and will aid those open to social care or otherwise to access things such as travel training, work experience or apprenticeships, find social opportunities or support them looking into colleges. their remit is really to encourage independence and use of the local offer. They work with YP aged 14 – 25.</p> <p>The rest of the service consists of a children’s social care team, an adult social care team and children’s OT. All 4 strands sit within our children’s’ services under 0-25 Social care service manager. Most young people transfer from children’s to adults at 18 , but for those open the CA assessments start prior to ensure they don’t fall off the cliff. Currently reviewing to start looking and considering cases moving at 16 so that families aren’t faced with all the changes in one go. In addition reviewing the transitions assessment by children’s social workers from 15 to 14 with a slightly different approach.</p>	<p><a href="#">Preparing for adulthood team   South Gloucestershire (southglos.gov.uk)</a></p> <p>07712506782            Email: <a href="mailto:lorraine.lawson@southglos.gov.uk">lorraine.lawson@southglos.gov.uk</a></p>
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## Birth to Settled Adulthood Review 2021

Jointly commissioned by Adult Social Care, Children and Education Services

North Somerset	Adult Social care	no response so far	limited information on the website relating to the Transitions offer	<a href="#">Adult Transition team   North Somerset Online Directory (n-somerset.gov.uk)</a>
Gloucestershire	Adult Social Care	no response to enquiries	limited information on the website relating to the Transitions offer	<a href="#">The Gloucestershire Multi Agency Transitions Pathway - Gloucestershire County Council</a>
Worcestershire	Adult Social Care		The Young Adults Team work with 16-25 year old young people who have additional needs and require support to plan and co-ordinate their transition to adulthood. This is known as Transition Planning.	<a href="#">My journey into adulthood (SEND Local Offer)   Worcestershire County Council</a>

# Birth to Settled Adulthood Review 2021

Jointly commissioned by Adult Social Care, Children and Education Services

## 10.0 Draft Recommendations and next steps

### - Recommendation 1 – Deliver a Change Process (Hearts & minds)

- Undergo a Preparation for Adulthood change process delivering 7 suggested workstreams each led by a Head of Service ensuring cross sectional membership from all stakeholders and coproduction. The change process will deliver the implementation plan and work towards creating collaborative working where beneficial.

#### **Workstream 1: Governance**

- Establish a Strategic Transitions Board with an independent chair, Board membership to include Director for Adult Social Care and Children Services Director, CHOS, Health and Voluntary Sector representation. Including Parent Carer Council (ensuring the connectivity with the Education for All Board, Health and Wellbeing Board & Strengthening Services)
- To provide strategic governance and management of the improvement journey through the delivery of the implementation plan developed on the findings in the May 2021 review of Transitions.

#### **Workstream 2: Vision and policy**

- What does it mean for Dorset's Children, Young People & families
- Bringing to life the reality that this is not about services but about young people moving to adulthood and what are their opportunities
- Be ambitious for our residents and drive improvement to the lived experience
- What is the transitions vision across the multi-agency partnership
- How can Dorset Council create a platform of opportunities and innovation through this vision
- To provide strategic connections across systems and organisations
- A need to develop a culture and processes setting the ambition to support people to develop Skills, to gain employment and or Volunteering opportunities.

#### **Workstream 3: Finance**

- Understanding future demand
- Modelling savings against targets
- Keeping an overview and clear line of sight on spend

#### **Workstream 4: Resource**

##### **Phase one**

- Establish a Transitions Panel (chaired by CHOS) operational focus as an interim measure with clear terms of reference (particular regard to legislation for Children's services and Adults)

# **Birth to Settled Adulthood Review 2021**

Jointly commissioned by Adult Social Care, Children and Education Services

- Sitting alongside the Education Multi Agency Panel (as dispute resolution if required) to discuss, monitor and manage referrals to transitions (future recommendation to review panels as potential to streamline)
- Agree packages of care
- Identify blockers to escalate to the Transitions Board
- Monitor the transitions tracker and developed dashboard
- To develop a case work model on the high need young people as a joint approach with Children services and / or Children Services to explore Transitions Co-workers to be attached to each CWAD team to facilitate conversations at annual reviews and when young people reach year 10
- To develop an approach to engage with services outside CWAD i.e. CAMHS, LAC, SEN
- Ensure timely completion of assessments
- Develop a definition of high cost, and risk indicators to enable earlier identification

## **Phase two**

- To consider next steps with regards to the operational resources and delivery model
- Develop a full options paper further for strategic consideration at the Transitions Strategic Board which considers:
  - Future aspirations
  - Models of delivery i.e. 0-25 model
  - Demand management modelling
  - Training across all services in transitions, Care Support assessments, children's and adult's legislation etc

## **Workstream 5: Business Intelligence**

- Using a transition tracker of all young people with a trajectory to adult services, including financial information
- Improvements to recording and reporting making better use of the MOSAIC and Synergy system
- Developing KPIs for reporting
- Introducing triggers for caseworkers i.e. transitions questions on MOSAIC at CP conference etc
- Learning from quality and audit reviews of EHCPs

## **Workstream 6: Commissioning**

- To develop a commissioning plan that works to understand the future demand, current demand and opportunities for provision
- The accommodation offer needs to include a wider set of housing options, e.g. increase people in tenancies through general housing and work to promote independent living

# Birth to Settled Adulthood Review 2021

Jointly commissioned by Adult Social Care, Children and Education Services

- Commissioning role to be developed within the Transitions Panel

## Workstream 7: Pathway mapping

- what is the experience and journey of a young person across the multi-agency partnership?
- Fundamental misunderstanding of how EHCPs can enable a smooth transition to adult life, what are the gaps and what are the opportunities with cultural change
- What gaps are emergent
- How can systems and processes be aligned better
- Support the work with Children's to influence education so that clear targets and goals are set for people in childhood that will equip them for adulthood and independence

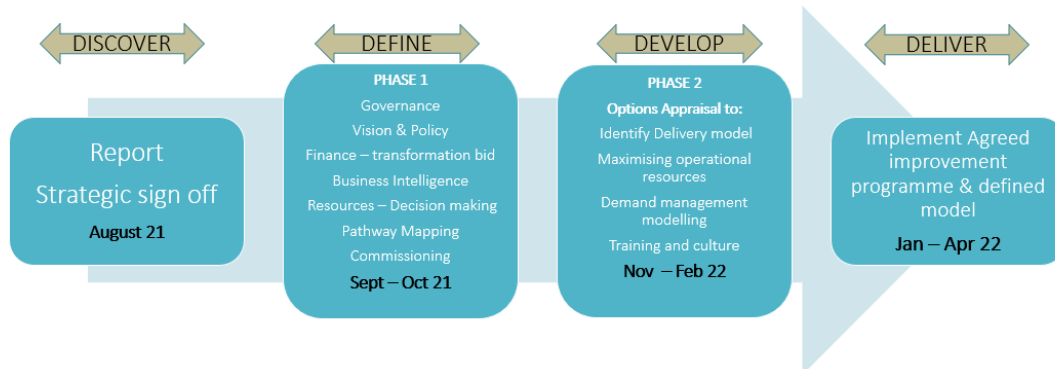
## Recommendation 2 - priority action with immediate activity

- To approach backlog of 93 assessments outstanding and target the additional 77 Young people identified via the finance work to look at early help planning
- To review capacity within Adult Social Care and understand the risks of not ringfencing capacity for work with young people.

## Recommendation 2 - priority action

- To approach backlog of 93 assessments outstanding and target the additional 77 Young people identified via the finance work to look at early help planning
- To review capacity within Adult Social Care and understand the risks of not ringfencing capacity for work with young people.

## Visual timeline



**APPENDIX 3 – Detail on operating models in other authorities**

**North Yorkshire**

**Bath & North East Somerset**

**Devon – (statistical neighbour)**

**Gloucestershire County Council (statistical neighbour)**

**South Gloucestershire**