

People and Health Overview Committee

24 October 2022

Birth To Settled Adulthood: Independent Chair's Update

For Review and Consultation

Portfolio Holder: Cllr A Parry, Children, Education, Skills and Early Help

Cllr P Wharf, Adult Social Care and Health

Local Councillor(s): All

Executive Director: T Leavy, Executive Director of People - Children
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Report Status: Public

Brief Summary:

- In 2021, Dorset Council's Children's and Adult Services recognised that the current operating model to support children and young people through the various transitions to adulthood had not been delivering the outstanding service that communities require and the organisation aspired to.
- To address this, a review was commissioned in Spring 2021, led by an independent consultant, which engaged with a range of children, young people, families and professional and stakeholder groups (including the local NHS system). Importantly, Dorset Parent Carer Council was integral to this diagnostic work.
- The report was presented to the People & Health Overview Committee in September 2021, and the Committee made a number of recommendations for

the establishment of workstreams to improve the transitions preparation, planning, pathways and services, under a stronger governance model.

- It was also identified that, as a priority, work to resolve a backlog of assessments needed to be undertaken.
- In December 2021 an independent chair was appointed for two years to provide strategic oversight, support and challenge to local partners – principally Dorset Council, NHS Dorset and the Dorset Parent Carer Council - for the delivery of a new transformation programme, Birth To Settled Adulthood (0-25).
- This report, and the accompanying presentation, give an overview of developments so far.

Recommendation:

1. The Committee is asked to receive the report and provide any advice it considers will support the further development and timely delivery of the programme.

Reason for Recommendation:

The People and Health Overview Committee is already committed to the improvements this programme sets out to secure; and the Committee has provided advice previously to support the initiation of the transformation required.

1. Report

- 1.1 As set out in the Summary, there is a recognition among families and local partners that the transition arrangements for children and young people with a special educational need or disability need improving and, consequently, redesigning.
- 1.2 To support this transformation, and in acknowledgement of the recommendation for stronger governance, a Partnership Board has been established with an Independent Chair, to oversee a two-year improvement programme called Birth To Settled Adulthood.
- 1.3 The Board is focused on addressing the following challenges identified in the 2021 review:

- 1.1.3 The need for stronger collaboration and a vision that helps to articulate the journey of childhood to adulthood, not just for those requiring longer term support from services.
- 1.1.4 The lack of a shared understanding of each partners' role.
- 1.1.5 The lack of a clear vision on what an operating model for transitions would look like, and what it can deliver.
- 1.1.6 Variable definitions across professionals about transitions, and the key points in a young person's journey.
- 1.1.7 Consensus on the need to start each phase of the transition process early in order for children and young people to gain the skills for independence and make the best use of their own and other available resources and community resilience.
- 1.1.8 Communication with families, strengthening young person's voice at the centre of the process with personalised planning.
- 1.1.9 A more clearly defined offer for children and young people with additional needs, including a clearer commissioning model for the provision needed.
- 1.1.10 Training on various elements of the pathway across all teams.
- 1.1.11 A more consistent and uniform approach to recording and reporting activity across teams and partners to enable a 'single view' of a young person.
- 1.4 A vision (ambition and aims) for the programme, drawn extensively from feedback from children, young people and their families, has been agreed among partners and signed off by the Board.
- 1.5 The joint declaration states that:
 - *Our ambition is to be tenacious about enabling Dorset's children, young people and young adults to maximise their potential to achieve good life outcomes.*
 - *Our aim is to implement an inclusive 0-25 service for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities, with targeted support for those who are likely to require ongoing services into adulthood.*

- *We know for some young adults, that by supporting those with additional needs up to the age of 25, they may not require ongoing interventions from adult services as well as some young adults who wouldn't routinely be entitled to services due to the Care Act (2014) but will benefit from support into adulthood (up to 25).*
- *Therefore, we also want to provide services for those young adults who we see as 'falling through the gap'; and*
- *To develop a service that can effectively support young people in their Preparation for Adulthood.*

1.6 The purpose of the role of the Independent Chair is fourfold:

- To support and challenge the partnership to be the best it can for Dorset's children, young people and their parents and carers;
- To act as a strategic adviser to the partners and the partnership: bringing perspectives and experience from elsewhere; acting as a critical friend; and ensuring the voices of children and young people are always central to the programme;
- To test the thinking, planning and implementation of the programme, especially the formulation of the "future operating model"; and
- To monitor and evaluate impact: ie are the changes improving outcomes.

1.7 The Chair and the main Partnership Board (B2SA) are supported by a Programme Board made up of senior representatives from the key partners and chaired by the Executive Director for Children's Services. This body oversees the day-to-day delivery of the transformation work which is organised into the following Workstreams:

- Service Redesign;
- Business Intelligence, Commissioning and Finance; and
- A Recovery and Improvement Plan.

1.8 There are detailed delivery plans for each workstream and the Partnership Board, which meets every six weeks, has approved these plans and receives a combination of highlight and exception, milestone and spotlight reports at each of its meetings. It is intended that these reports will be

informed and supported by the introduction of a Balanced Scorecard, the purpose of which is to provide both “lead” and “lag” measures of improvement in terms of:

- a) outcomes for children, young people and families;
- b) the impact of the new service delivery model(s); and
- c) sentiment – ie testing the perceptions both of families and the workforce in terms of whether or not it feel like services are improving.

1.9 Key to the development of the programme in this the preparatory phase has been agreeing its scope. The Board approved the inclusion of the following children and young people at its May meeting:

- a) Children and young people known to services who have a disability;
- b) Children with Special Educational Need who have an Education and Health Care Plan and are likely to have care and support needs into adulthood;
- c) Children aged 14 plus requiring support for mental health who are likely to need care support;
- d) Children with high-cost education packages (>50k/yr);
- e) Young people who are at risk of abuse or exploitation and may not meet Care Act eligibility criteria (contextual/transitional safeguarding); and
- f) Children and Young people who have Continuing Care funding.

1.10 The Board has also noted the following other key developments:

- a) The development of a **Recovery and Improvement Plan** to address the backlog in (18+) transition plans, including a deep dive audit of 36 young people.
- b) A successful Parents and Carers launch event with Dorset Parent Carer Council (June).
- c) A Joint Children’s and Adults Directorate workforce webinar (August).
- d) Mapping and gap analysis of the current training available across Adults and Children’s (ongoing).

- e) A review of the range of commissioned services with a view to identifying gaps (ongoing).
- f) The delivery of the Education, Employment and Training Service moving in-house.
- g) The launch of a new Supported Employment Service with Pluss for people 16 plus.
- h) The appointment of a single Direct Payment support provider for Children's and Adults & Housing.
- i) The offer of a free holiday activities for 16 to 25 year olds as part of the 'Summer in Dorset' programme.

1.11 Looking ahead, the Board is focused on four core areas within the much broader range of activities set out in the workstream plans.

1.11.1 Firstly, providing support and challenge to the development of a “whole system” financial strategy, ensuring that all partners work to an “open book” approach to present and future investment, and any efficiencies and their attribution.

1.11.2 Secondly, providing support and challenge to the pathway and service redesign workstream, especially the co-production aspect of this work (ie ensuring that the voice of children, young people and families is front and centre).

1.11.3 Thirdly, ensuring that workforce awareness-raising and development is proceeding at a pace that will maximise its readiness for the new model(s) of service delivery.

1.11.4 Fourthly, being assured that there is join up (including communications join up) with other relevant Boards and programmes, notably the Dorset Education Board and its work, so that the new pathways and services are seamless and holistic.

2. **Financial Implications**

There are no financial implications associated with this report, however, as the programme progresses it is anticipated that it will deliver cost savings through service delivery efficiencies and more effective whole life commissioning.

3. **Environmental Implications**

There are none associated with this report.

4. **Well-being and Health Implications**

Entering adulthood can be a time of stress and challenge for all young people and their families, but it can be particularly challenging for children and young people with special educational needs, disabilities or poor mental health. It is essential that it is well planned to minimise anxiety and to avoid any gaps in services and support. There is strong evidence those aged 18 to 25 years old may need a different type of service and support than older people and a move towards the extension of services for children and young people, including mental health services, to reach beyond the age of 18 years to address this. We are working with colleagues across the health system to strengthen our services.

5. **Other Implications**

N/A

6. **Risk Assessment**

6.1 **HAVING CONSIDERED:** the risks associated with this decision; the level of risk has been identified as:

Current Risk: Low

Residual Risk: Low

7. **Equalities Impact Assessment**

An equalities impact assessment is not required for this report, however, it will be essential that one is completed as the work on service design is completed.

8. **Appendices**

None

9. **Background Papers**

People and Health Overview Committee 2021: [Birth to Settled Adulthood report September 2021 V2 Final.pdf \(dorsetcouncil.gov.uk\)](#)