

Social and Health Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Date of Meeting	9 th December 2021
Report Subject	Transition Service for young people with disabilities, aged 16-25 years old.
Portfolio Holder	Cabinet Member for Social Services
Report Author	Chief Officer for Social Services
Type of Report	Operational.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report provides information on the support provided to young people with disabilities in Flintshire, the service known as Transition team within Child to Adult team. This report will provide information specifically on:

- The team
- Statistics relating to the team's work
- Challenges for the future, including Additional Learning Needs changes. (ALN)
- Some examples of the support we provide, including work during the pandemic.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1	Members note the information contained within this report.
2	Members understand the challenges in relation to the support required and work ongoing to help families' expectations as well understanding as the challenges in relation to the Additional Learning Needs Act.

REPORT DETAILS

1.00	EXPLAINING THE TRANSITION SERVICE FOR YOUNG PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES, AGED 16-25 YEARS OLD REPORT.
1.01	The team Transition supports young people with disabilities between the ages of 16 – 25 years and is located within Child to Adult team (C2A), as part of the wider Disability Services. Social Services discharge its functions under Social Services Well Being Act. This team operates under one team manager, however, one half of team focus on children and young people under 16 years of age, and the other half, the Transition team, focuses on supporting young people aged 16-25 years.

	<p>If support is still required beyond the age of 25 years, people are transferred to adult Disability teams for long term support.</p> <p>The C2A team not only supports the child or young person with a disability, it takes a whole family approach and so supports the siblings and parents too.</p>
1.02	<p>The team.</p> <p>Merging what was previously two separate teams has worked well for the young people and has provided continuity of worker, and has built on relationships for young people as they become young adults. The team comprises of Social Workers, Support Workers, OT's and Community Care Officers. The interface between both parts of the service benefits young people by sharing experience and knowledge, and by joint working in the best interest of the young person and their family.</p>
1.03	<p>To help children with a disability and families to become familiar with the staff group, we produced a 'Who's who' of the team which is included as an appendix for information. We have found that being able to see a photo of their Social Worker helps the child become familiar with the worker and it has helped with relationships and conversations about what matters to the young person.</p>
1.04	<p>Support is provided to young people aged 16-25 in a number of areas which include</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leaving school and what the future holds • Moving into independent living/supported living • Going to college and planning the future. • Finding work, or using day services • Long term specialist placements • Support to families • Child and adult protection work • Using Direct Payments to achieve what is important to the young person
1.05	<p>Statistics</p> <p>The Total numbers of children and young people supported by C2A team is 213 with an age range of 0-25 yrs. Siblings of disabled children often receive support from the Transition team, they are not included in the numbers.</p> <p>We support a range of disabilities, a child can be considered to be disabled if he or she has a <u>significant</u> problem with, communication, comprehension, physical functioning or vision and hearing needs, disabled children can have a combination of these disabilities. Most common are learning disability, severe autism, and muscular dystrophies, cerebral palsy to name a few.</p> <p>At the time of writing we support.</p> <p>0-16 years 114 disabled children 16-25 years 99 disabled young people.</p>
1.06	<p>The budget funding is used to fund, services such as specialist residential colleges placements. The cost of these range can from £100,000 per annum to £3000, 000 depending on the needs of the young person and the specialist nature of the placement. The funding follows the young person into adulthood</p>

1.07	<p>Residential colleges and new legislation changes.</p> <p>There are changes being introduced as part of the Additional Learning Needs Act. For some young disabled people, local colleges such as Deeside and Northop are not able to offer places. In these instances, Residential colleges offer additional support and specialist staff. For others, families express a preference for residential college over a local one, this can be for a various reasons.</p> <p>The challenge comes when Social Services rightly assess for what is needed, rather than purely what families want for their son or daughter, social workers are often challenged by families in relation to college and placements and we must manage expectations .</p> <p>The costs for residential placements vary due to the specialist nature of the provision and are currently part funded by Welsh Government (Educational element). Social Services are asked to fund the Social Care element of the package.</p> <p>The planned introduction of the Additional Learning Needs (ALN) Act will change this funding arrangement. Welsh Government will transfer the funding to the Local Authority, the local authority will then be expected to fund the Educational element as well as the Social Care support.</p> <p>It is not yet known what formula will be used to transfer the funding, or how much funding will actually be transferred.</p> <p>The risk to the Local Authority is that the amount of funding transferred may not be sufficient to fund all expectations of assessed needs. Once the detail is announced by Welsh Government, further work will be required. Education and Social Services are prepared for this work and a report could be presented to joint scrutiny committees if appropriate.</p> <p>Early discussions with the ALN co-ordinator based in Education have commenced. Consideration is being given to a pooled budget arrangement which will support both Education and Social Services. This is work in progress and proposals will be presented to Chief Officers on completion.</p>
1.08	<p>Case study 1</p> <p>L is a young man with a learning disability who lived with his parents and was leaving college, making decisions about his future. During this period, his mum sadly died and L and Dad became very dependent on each other. This meant they spent lots of time at home and L became reluctant to leave the house without Dad. The Transition worker supported both of them to look to the future and to help L build a life outside the home. Three years later and after much time invested in this work, L has moved into supported living and is living the life of a young man learning to be as independent as possible. His Dad recently wrote in to the worker and said “Massive thank you. You have really made a difference to L. I know (wife) would be so proud of the young man he has turned into and a lot of that is down to you. He is thriving-you made it easier for me-at times it was really difficult, and with your help and direction, he has finally started to shine”.</p>

1.09	<p>Case study 2</p> <p>G is a young man with learning disability, epilepsy, some challenging behaviours and couldn't live with his family. He was in a residential placement some distance away from Flintshire which made family contact difficult. Life was quite restricted for G and his world tended to be limited to within the placement and grounds, his challenging behaviour meant going out and about was difficult, and didn't happen very often. .</p> <p>The Social Worker wanted to find him something much closer to home, and with a more appropriate provider, his family supported this move. Social Worker supported by Brokerage team sourced a local provider and worked with G's family to progress this move.</p> <p>He moved back into Flintshire where his family can now see him regularly. He lives with a small number of other young people and the provider has worked really hard with G, offering a homely place to live and support to be able to go out socially. For the first time ever, he recently went to the swimming baths and was supported by two staff to go in the water (staff though he would refuse but to their delight he went in and loved it). The staff took photos and video of the occasion so his family could see how far he has come. This may seem like a small step but it is a massive leap for G. He now has a safe way of exercising and reducing his challenging behaviour. He has a regular outing to look forward to and his behaviour has improved at home.</p>
1.10	<p>During the pandemic, families have found themselves in real difficulties with young people having to stay at home. Parents report increases in challenging behaviour, boredom, loss of routine, stress on parents and siblings. The Transition team have worked tirelessly, working within Covid regulations, to make life easier for families. Support has been difficult to arrange, has involved creativity, and includes</p> <p>The team worked really hard during the first school closure to get children places in the school hub. This involved presenting the need for this provision to a panel from Education and Social Services, managing the high expectation of parents for full time provision, and arranging the agreed attendance.</p> <p>Creative use of Direct Payments. An example of one application for funding came from a family who had recently booked and paid for a family holiday on the West coast of Wales. They wanted to take the young person on a boat trip but his challenging behaviour (grabbing people and pulling them) would have been a risk to others on the boat. Direct Payments was used to fund the difference between a shared boat trip and a private hire. The family were able to safely spend time on the boat for relatively low cost.</p> <p>The team have worked to find whatever support has been available and includes the Theatre Clwyd schemes (which includes siblings of disabled children), and referrals to the Action For Children Creative and Flexible respite. This scheme is funded by Social Services and offers support to families in ways which they decide will work best. One example is that Action For Children can fund a support worker to accompany a family on a trip out and provide one to one support for the disabled youngster, allowing the family to enjoy their time together.</p> <p>Day to day support for families. One mother told us how invaluable her regular phone calls were with the Social Worker: calls from Social Worker were a lifeline</p>

	<p>to me, having someone just there listening to how I was feeling made a real difference to me. She didn't need to do anything, just be there for me, I don't know how I would have coped without it:</p> <p>The affect the pandemic has had includes an increased request for residential placements amongst families who have found it really difficult to cope with having the person at home.</p>
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2.00	RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS
2.01	<p>The Transition to Adulthood budget pressure currently included within the MTFs for 2022/23 is £0.943m. At this time the Local Government financial settlement for 2022/23 is not known, however the Council's budget pressures are significant and there is a possibility of a funding shortfall. To be prudent any controllable or partially controllable pressures are being reviewed and consequences for any reduction or deferment of these pressures explored. There is therefore a chance that should the Welsh Government settlement not provide sufficient funding, the 2022/23 transition pressure may be partially deferred until 2023/24.</p>

3.00	IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND RISK MANAGEMENT
3.01	<p>In order to support the budget planning process we hold a multi-disciplinary panel consisting of Social Workers, Education and Health colleagues. The panel identifies all our young disabled people aged 14, and considers in detail their likely future needs, these are then tracked through on going panel process and costs attributed, according to need.</p>
3.02	<p>Young people attending Residential College are not included in Charging Policy and therefore no income is received. Social Services could introduce a charge for services as contribute to cost of placement. Any changes to the current system would need careful consideration and consultation. This need further exploration.</p>
3.03	<p>Risk assessment in place as part of the ALN work with education colleagues.</p>

4.00	CONSULTATIONS REQUIRED / CARRIED OUT
4.01	<p>Any changes to current practice will have to be shared with young people, families, schools and wider stakeholders.</p>
4.02	<p>Education colleagues have appointed full time ALN co-ordinator. Both services are working closely on new process.</p>

5.00	APPENDICES
5.01	None

6.00	LIST OF ACCESSIBLE BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS
6.01	None

7.00	CONTACT OFFICER DETAILS
7.01	Contact Officer: Jo Taylor Telephone: 01352 701341 E-mail: jo.taylor@flintshire.gov.uk

8.00	GLOSSARY OF TERMS
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