

# MINUTES OF THE SCRUTINY REVIEW - TRANSITION FROM CHILDREN TO ADULT SERVICES

MONDAY, 8 FEBRUARY 2010

Councillor Adje, Allison and Newton (Chair)  
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Observer None

Apologies Councillor Adje, Lisa Redfern and Chris Chambers (Head of Services, Children in Care). Chris Chambers wish it to be noted that she was unable to attend the meeting due to short notice.

## LC8. ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS

There were no items of urgent business

## LC9. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

None reported

## LC10. REPORT - STRATEGIC & COMMUNITY HOUSING SERVICES RESPONSE TO QUESTIONS FROM THE REVIEW PANEL

10.1 The panel was keen to understand the relationship between Haringey Strategic and Community Housing Services, Children and Young People Service and Adult Services. In addition to receiving written responses to a list of questions constructed by the panel (appendix 1), The Head of Housing Needs & Lettings, Strategic & Community Housing Services (SCHS) was invited to a meeting of the Review Panel to outline the services on offer to this client group. In response to a question on how many young adults in this category were housed by the Council, including a breakdown in terms of gender age, and ethnicity the Panel learned that SCHS did not have precise numbers in this group, however the Special Needs Team had dealt with over 200 cases which included families with young adults. When a young person who was part of a household that was homeless or potentially homeless and to whom the Council had a statutory responsibility under the Housing Act 1996, they could be assisted initially with temporary accommodation and ultimately permanent accommodation. This was dependent on other factors and included an assessment process involving the Council and the Special Needs Team where there are physical or mental health issues.

10.2 The Panel noted that the current lettings policy (under review) awards specific points for medical, mental health, lack of facility or property conditions. This, along with a dedicated housing advice and options team meant that the SCHS could also assist by exploring alternative options such as resettlement in the private sector with support.

10.3 Those young people with physical disabilities needing specific adapted accommodation might prove difficult to house as adapted units were very scarce. The SCHS was working with Housing Association partners to

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increase the supply of this type of accommodation. Whilst the council was looking at increasing supply, it was acknowledged that there were a number of competing priorities and there were less than 100 adapted properties in the borough. It was felt that the Council was reactive rather than proactive in this area, however there were discussions about the possibility of providing a quota system with a number of units set aside to be able to more effectively meet the needs of different client groups with specialist needs. The panel also noted that there was no Service Level Agreement between relevant services

## **Referrals to SCHS**

10.4 The Panel asked SCHS whether they could identify how young people in transition were referred to them, whether the system worked and the possibility that some clients might be in need but were unknown to them. The Panel heard that it was not always easy to identify this client group as there were no specific monitoring arrangements in place in the Housing Service to distinguish them. As a result of the scrutiny investigation, the panel learned that dialogue was to take place with SCHS colleagues in Social Care in order that appropriate mechanisms could be developed to identify and capture this specific need. Only a small proportion of households/young adults were formally referred to the SCHS as most clients were simply informed of the process for applying for housing. Recently the SCHS and Children's Services had put in place pro-active working protocols which had improved the referral mechanisms between the services. SCHS would consider putting a similar arrangement in place for this client group between children, adult and housing services so that access and referrals could be improved and streamlined, this would lead to an enhancement of services provided to this group and minimise the number of clients not benefiting or accessing services. Whilst this information was available through the 16 plus panel it was felt that gaps existed for 14-18 age groups where early identification of housing needs could be mapped to ensure the commission of appropriate accommodation.

## **Learning from other authorities**

10.5 In response to a question as to whether SCHS drew on best practice from other boroughs to inform their processes, the panel learned that SCHS did not fully draw on best practice in this area, however they worked across the North London Sub Region on a range of Housing and Social Care issues, The panel recommended that the remit of the North London Sub-Regional meeting on Housing and Social Care issues should be expanded to include the needs of young people in transition.

## **Equalities and diversity**

10.6 There were overall equalities performance management systems which sought to comply with the local government equalities standards and framework. Specific equalities data on ethnicity, gender, and disabilities is

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captured for clients housed in the Social Housing Sector. SCHC monitoring systems show that the overall allocation of social housing is in line with the diverse communities within the borough.

### **People in transition moving into the borough**

10.7 The Panel learned that there are formal liaison methods between local authorities which enable the exporting boroughs to inform the receiving boroughs where clients with Special Needs move into their locality. In housing, a specific Pan London System called 'Notify' is in place. This is a shared Pan London database that facilitates data and information exchange of households in Temporary Accommodation moving across local authorities. There are also Sub-Regional Supporting People Forums.

10.8 The Panel also learned that the Housing Service, Adult and Children's Services are working together on a number of issues. The Head of Adult Needs also advised that they are currently reviewing their protocols and procedures for young people in transition including vulnerable young people, young people with mental health difficulties with and without learning difficulties and young people with a range of disabilities.

10.9 The steering group from Children and Young People's Service and Adults have been joined to establish a new steering group. A Housing representative will sit on this group and will ensure that it works with housing in the revised protocols.

### **LC11. EVIDENCE SESSION - CONNEXIONS SERVICES**

11.1 The Connexions Service was established in 2001 in order to provide a comprehensive service to meet young people's need for information, advice and support. Following the publication of Every Child Matters, Next steps, children's trusts were set up in each local authority area. From 1<sup>st</sup> April 2008 funding which had been directly provided to each Connexions Partnerships went directly to all local authorities through the new Area Based Grant with local authorities now having responsibility for delivery. The panel met with the Partnership Team Leader in the Connexions Targeted Service and the Network Areas Team Leader in the Connexions Universal Service and lead for work with young people with Learning Difficulties and Disability in Haringey.

11.2 The Panel was informed that Local authorities must provide all 13-19 year olds and those up to 25 with a learning difficulty or disability with reasonable face to face access to a Personal Advisor, to provide information, advice, guidance and advocacy to targeted support services. Haringey Connexions Service work to Section 139A<sup>1</sup> Assessment in Haringey

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<sup>1</sup> An assessment of a young person with a learning difficulty that results in a written report of their education and training needs and the provision required to meet those needs.

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the person's Connexions Personal Advisor (PA) is responsible for ensuring that the assessment is carried out. The PA works closely with the young person, the parent and/or carers, the current school, Pupil Referral Units, college or work based learning provider, and other professionals involved in supporting the young person, to ensure the assessment of their education and training needs. The transition from school to a new learning establishment can be a difficult time for any person. Those with learning difficulties are at risk of not making a successful transition. As a result young people with learning difficulties are less likely to participate in education, or training post 16 as those without LD, and are twice as likely to be NEET (not in education, training or employment).

11.3 A Section 139A Assessment is an assessment of a young person with a learning difficulty that results in a written report of their education and training needs and the provision required to meet those needs. In Haringey the person's Connexions Personal Advisor (PA) is responsible for ensuring that the assessment is carried out. It is essential that the PA works closely with the young person, the parent and/or carers, the current school, Pupil Referral Units, college or work based learning provider, and other professionals involved in supporting the young person, to ensure the assessment of their education and training needs. The transition from school to a new learning establishment can be a difficult time for any person. Those with learning difficulties are at risk of not making a successful transition. As a result young people with learning difficulties are less likely to participate in education, or training post 16 as those without LD and are twice as likely to be NEET (not in education, training or employment. –who they work with.

11.4 The Connexions Personal Advisor (PA) has to be invited to the 14 panel meeting and subsequent reviews and must attend both the transition review and the final year review. This offers the young person the chance to get to know the PA and for the family and the young person to become familiar with the support services provided by Connexions.

11.5 Connexions are involved in the 14 plus panel where the young person's needs are discussed and identified. During discussions it was acknowledged that there was a need for structured referrals from Haringey Community and Strategic Housing Services in terms of the way in which referrals were made to Connexions. The review panel was pleased to learn that Haringey Strategic and Community Housing Services will shortly be participating on the 14 plus panel.

11.6 Connexions representatives informed the Panel that Connexions is sometimes the first port of call for some young people, who contact them out of normal working hours, for urgent support. A gap in communication and information sharing was identified as Connexions need to be able to readily identify the young person. There were also concerns about the

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needs of clients who do not meet the threshold for adult services but who nevertheless have significant needs.

11.7 Connexions are involved in the 14 plus panel where the young person's needs are discussed and identified; the panel was pleased to learn that Haringey Strategic and Community Housing Services will shortly be participating on the panel.

11.8 Concerns were expressed about the following:

- Connexions work with young people to help them to become efficient adults and where necessary find alternative provisions to help them. However there were concerns about young people who do not meet the eligibility threshold but have significant needs.
- Connexions are involved with after hour's provision with housing and CAMHS and it was important for connexions to know exactly who these clients are.
- Consideration needs to be given to undiagnosed 16+ connexions looking into this.
- A lot of good work needs joining up - Communications and sharing of information – line of communication.
- Assessment overlap up to 20% - too many assessment points need to be in one place – costs around duplication.
- It was important to ensure that all agencies work from the same databases in terms of assessment – Common Assessment Framework would be good
- Need to widen the remit of 14+ panels. Panel pleased to learn that connexions were looking at younger co-hort.
- Adolescence outreach team and the Youth Offending Team should be included in the list of agencies identified in My Service at 18 list.
- Need for more staff only 2 fulltime LDD. PAs in all schools 50 staff altogether
- Identified that more support needed for the 16 and 17 year olds – 16+ panel being set up.
- Customer care charter – all departments should be made to adhere to minimum response standards.

11.9 There was a need for structured referrals from Haringey Strategic and Community Housing Services.

## **LC12. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

11 February 2010

## **LC13. NEW ITEMS OF URGENT BUSINESS**

There were no new items of urgent business

## **LC14. APPENDIX 1**

## **LC15. APPENDIX 1 FOR MINUTES 8 FEB 2010**

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Councillor Martin Newton

Chair

## Scrutiny review – Meeting 8 February 2010

### Transition from Children's Services to Adult Services

#### Answers from Strategic & Community Housing Services.

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1.0 The overview and scrutiny committee commissioned a task and finish review into the transition of young people from children services to adult services.

1.1 There is increasing national emphasis that children, as well as their carers and families, having appropriate support to enable them to make the transition from children to adult services.

#### **1.2 Terms of Reference**

1.3 "To assess the current transition services available to young people moving between children's and adult services specifically to provide an objective view of these services and whether they provide value for money"

1.4 This will include reviewing:

- How children with special needs, disabilities and mental health issues are transferred from services delivered by children's services to adult services. This will cover planning, consultation and the handover of responsibility.
- What is done for those children who do not meet the eligibility for adult services but who need some kind of lower-level support?
- To consider how the implementation of the National Guidance on transition support programme is ensured in Haringey.

#### **1.5 Membership of the panel**

1.6 The review panel consists of the following Members: Cllr Martin Newton (chair), Cllr Charles Adje, Cllr Emma Jones and Cllr Allison.

1.7 In order to assist the panel with their inquiry we have produced the following list of questions and would be grateful for written responses.

1. How many young adults in this category are currently housed by the Council? Please give a breakdown in terms of gender, age and ethnicity. Are there any gender/age/ethnicity issues that make one group of young people particularly difficult to house?

**Answer** - We do not have precise numbers which specifically identifies young adults by housing category in this group but the Special Needs Team have dealt with over 200 cases which includes families with young adults.

2. What is the current housing provision? Is it adequate? Do you work with any voluntary groups to provide more housing? If so how does this relationship work?

**Answer** – The Council has limited the supply of adapted homes in . In general, the supply of Social Housing is scarce and demand outstrips supply. The Council has a Housing Register of over 19,000 and in 2008/09 housed 896 households and as at the 31 December 2009, had housed 586 cases. In general the supply of adapted/ supported housing is not adequate. The Council is working towards maximising the limited supply and works in close partnership with Housing Associations and Voluntary Organisations who provide supported housing. The relationship with the Voluntary sector and Partners works well. Where suitable supply is available there are adequate assessment and placement policies and procedures in place.

3. Could you identify how this client group are referred to you? Does this system work? Is there a possibility that some clients might be in need but not known by your Department/organisation?

**Answer** – It is not always easy to identify the client group being referred to, as there is no specific monitoring arrangements in place in the housing service to distinguish this. As a result of this query, dialogue is to take place with colleagues in Social Care so that appropriate mechanisms can be developed to identify and capture this specific need.

4. Do you draw on best practice from other boroughs to inform your own processes?

**Answer** – At present we do not draw on best practice in this area but do work across the North London Sub Region on a range of Housing and Social Care issues and can expand this remit to include this client group.

5. Are there any policies identified in the Housing Strategy aimed specifically at supporting this group?

**Answer** – The Housing Strategy has identified a specific need to meet support needs and is working with voluntary sector partners to produce a specific Move-On Strategy which will focus on moving on clients in supported housing to help free up units for new clients. This Strategy will be a Multi-Agency Strategy and will be published later this year.

6. Details of specialist housing support provided – aids and adaptations.

**Answer** – At present the Council works with a range of agencies to provide support and aids and adaptations. Where a need has been established for aids and adaptations, surveyors and occupational therapists work closely to design and commission appropriate works to meet specific needs. A similar process also works for Housing Association Partners who routinely adapt a percentage of their properties for applicants with special needs/ disabilities.

7. Details of partners and link agencies – how diverse and representative are they.



**Answer** – The Council works with a range of partners working within the supported housing sector and making provisions, some of these groups cater for specific communities. At present the Supporting People Team work with a range of providers across the borough. Further work needs to be done to ensure the diverse population in the borough is catered for and represented in the profile of clients who access supported housing.

8. Does the service have any equalities performance management systems and frameworks to assist it to comply with equalities and diversity requirements?

**Answer** – There are overall equalities performance management systems which seek to comply with the local government equalities standards and framework. Specific equalities data on ethnicity, gender and disabilities is captured for clients housed in the Social Housing Sector.

9. Has the Service/HfH set any targets for promoting independent living for people with disabilities and impairments, including those with long term health.

**Answer** – There are no specific targets set for independent living but the Move-On Strategy being devised is seeking to assist those clients in Supported Housing who are ready for independent or semi-independent living to move to more suitable accommodation. This will intern release units for clients waiting to move into Supported Housing.

10. How do you get to know about people in transition moving into the borough? Is there a system in place to pick this up if it is not provided by Special Educational Needs Co-ordinators?

**Answer** – There are formal liaison methods between local authorities which enable the exporting boroughs to inform the reviewing boroughs where clients with Special Needs move into their locality. In housing, a specific Pan London System called 'notify' is in place which is a shared Pan London database that facilitates data and information exchange of households in Temporary Accommodation moving across local authorities. There are also Sub-Regional Supporting People Forums.

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