Supporting Young People Approaching Adulthood Strategy 2013-2018

December 2012
Introduction

1.1 This strategy has been developed to ensure that the Council has a strategic approach which encourages partnership working with all relevant agencies. This will ensure that young people approaching adulthood and their families are supported to plan for the future.

1.2 Bracknell Forest Council Department of Adult Social Care, Health and Housing (ASCHH) and Department for Children, Young People and Learning (CYPL) are responsible for providing care and support to many young people as they approach adulthood.

1.3 These services have developed clear policies and procedures to ensure that young people are supported into adulthood.

1.4 For a number of years within Bracknell Forest agencies have worked in partnership to ensure a collaborative and person centred approach is taken to supporting young people approaching adulthood as well as their families.

1.5 Essential to continuing this is developing a strategy informed by an analysis of local needs so that appropriate resources and options are available and developed for young people as they become adults.

Terminology

2.1 The term 'Transition' is often used by practitioners to describe the period from Year 9 (14 years old) to when a child becomes an adult at age 18 and as they develop through young adulthood to 25.

2.2 The phrase “young people approaching adulthood” is now commonly used, when referring to this period in a person’s life.

Young People Approaching Adulthood

3.1 The period from year 9 (14 years old) to when a child becomes an adult at the age of 18 can be a difficult one for a young person and their family. In addition this period can be especially difficult for young people with disabilities due to the changes in services and support that is available for them as adults.

3.2 Parents have to adjust, both practically and emotionally, as their child becomes more independent. For a young adult, there are opportunities and choices in relation to many areas of adult life. For both parent and child this can be a positive, yet challenging time.

3.3 The Council therefore needs to ensure young people with additional needs approaching adulthood are supported to make their choices in planning and developing their future.

The Approach

4.1 A working group was formed during 2012 to commence the work of developing a strategy. The working group has membership from:
Various agencies that support young people in Bracknell Forest (including Mencap, Connexions, Just Advocacy, and the NHS)
Practitioners from Children’s and Adults’ social care services
Parents/carers of young people approaching adulthood

4.3 The group is Co-chaired by the Head of Learning Difficulties and Disabilities (CYPL) and Head of Learning Disabilities (ASCHH) supported by a Joint Commissioning Officer.

4.4 A 12 week consultation was undertaken with feedback from the following groups sought in relation to young people with additional needs:

- Health and social care practitioners from children’s and adults services who are involved in supporting young people approaching adulthood
- Local agencies who are involved with supporting young people approaching adulthood in Bracknell Forest
- Parent/carers of young people who have been, or are being supported as they approach adulthood
- Young people who have been supported, or are being supported as they approach adulthood

The responses to questions have informed the priorities within this strategy.

5 National Context

5.1 There are a number of pieces of legislation and government guidance that shape how services should support young people as they approach adulthood. Whilst not an exhaustive list outlined below contains some of the key developments in recent years.

5.2 **The Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000.** The Act amended the 1989 Children Act providing increased focus on improving the life chances of young people in and leaving local authority care. It included the entitlement to an assessment and pathway plan for young people in preparation and in planning for leaving care.

5.3 **Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001-(DFE).** The Act required schools, colleges, universities, adult education providers, statutory youth services and local education authorities to make 'reasonable provisions' to ensure people with disabilities or special needs were provided with the same opportunities as those who were not disabled.

5.4 **SEN Code of Practice 2001.** The code of practice outlines the roles and responsibilities of those working with children with special educational needs. It provides guidance for supporting young people as they approach adulthood including developing a 'Transition Plan' for young people with statements of special educational needs commencing from their annual review in Year 9 (14 years old) onwards until they leave school.

5.5 **The Children Act 2004 (Every Child Matters).** The Children Act 2004 set out the national framework for delivering children’s services, and identified the Every Child Matters five outcomes for children and young people, which all practitioners must work towards. These are:

- Be healthy
- Stay safe
- Enjoy and achieve
- Make a positive contribution
• Achieve economic well-being

5.6 National Service Framework for Children, Young People and Maternity Services 2004-(DOH). This was and is a ten year program intended to stimulate long term and sustained improvement across all services in children’s health. In particular section 7 of standard 8 focused on the transition to adulthood indicating there should be a person-centred approach to planning for adulthood, there should be multi agency ‘transition’ groups and support for young people to use direct payments.

5.7 Aiming High for Disabled Children: Better Support for Families 2007. This sets the vision that all families with disabled children should have the support they need to live ordinary family lives. The three priority areas to improve the lives of disabled children and their families were:

- Access and empowerment
- Responsive services and timely support
- Improving quality and capacity

One element of Aiming High for disabled children focused on developing support for young people approaching adulthood.

5.8 Transition Moving on Well, Good Practice Guide for Health Professionals and their Partners 2008. This good practice guide on effective transition of support from children's to adult services for young people with complex health needs published by the Department of Health and the Department for Children’s schools and Families.

5.9 Apprenticeship, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009. This legislation placed additional duties on Local Authorities with regards to commissioning learning and skills for 16-19 year olds and for those up to 25 with a learning difficulty/disability.

5.10 Valuing People Now 2009 (DOH). This sets out the Government’s strategy for people with learning disabilities. It establishes that people with learning disabilities are entitled to the same aspirations and life chances as other citizens and aims to ensure people with learning disabilities have the same opportunities and are treated with the same dignity and respect.

5.11 The National Autism Strategy ‘Fulfilling and Rewarding Lives’ 2010. This sets out a clear agenda of how public services must transform to better address the needs of young people and adults with ASD. It sets out key areas of action to target the root causes of exclusion. This has been closely followed by statutory guidance to ensure implementation of the national strategy and to help local authorities and NHS bodies to develop services that support and meet locally identified needs of people, their families and carers.

5.12 Disability and the Equality Act 2010. The Act aims to protect disabled people and prevent disability discrimination. It provides legal rights for disabled people in the areas of employment, education, access to goods and services. The Act also provides rights for people not to be directly discriminated against or harassed because they have an association with a disabled person. This can apply to a carer or parent of a disabled person. In addition, people must not be directly discriminated against or harassed because they are wrongly perceived to be disabled.

5.13 Think Local, Act Personal: Next Steps for Transforming Adult Social Care 2011. An agreement which draws on learning from implementing ‘Putting People First (2007)’ and which sets out the principles for ‘Personalisation’. Personalisation gives each individual choice and control over how their support is provided and
delivered. ‘Think Local, Act Personal’ focuses on areas where further action is required.

5.14 **Draft Legislation on Provision for Children and Young People with Special Educational Needs (DfE) 2012.** This sets out the new approach to special educational needs and disability in particular:

- A local offer of support outlining education, health, social care and other support available in the area.
  The introduction of a single assessment process and a single education, health and social care plan potentially up to the age of 25
- The option of an individual budget for parents
- Maintaining the right of parents to express a preference for any state-funded school, including mainstream or special schools, academies or free schools
- Promoting the use of mediation
- Extending the right to appeal to and SEN and Disability Tribunal up to the age of 25.
- Giving children the right of appeal

5.15 **Caring for our future: reforming Care and Support White Paper 2012 (DOH).** This sets out the vision for a reformed care and support system. It is intended that the new system will:

- Focus on people’s wellbeing and support them to stay independent for as long as possible
- Introduce greater national consistency in access to care and support
- Provide better information to help people make choices about their care
- Give people more control over their care
- Improve support for carers
- Improve the quality of care and support
- Improve integration of different services

The paper states that support within communities can benefit everyone: volunteering can keep people active, promote physical and mental health and wellbeing, and strengthen local connections.
6 Local Context

6.1 Bracknell Forest Council’s vision is "To make Bracknell Forest a place where all people can thrive; living, learning and working in a clean, safe and healthy environment." The Council is committed to promoting health and achievement in particular supporting younger residents to maximize their potential.

6.2 This strategy links to this overall vision via Adult Social Care, Health and Housing Sustainability Community Strategy and Children, Young People and Learning Department’s Creating Opportunities: A Joint Strategic plan for Children and Young People in Bracknell Forest.

6.3 This strategy both informs and is informed by other Council strategies, policies and procedures such as:

- Long Term Conditions Strategy
- Speaking Up, Speaking Out, Taking Action – A strategy for commissioning advocacy in Bracknell Forest
- Carers Strategy
- The Commissioning Strategy for people with Learning Disabilities ‘Making Choices, Being In Control’
- The Commissioning Strategy for Adult Mental Health
- Adult Autism Joint Commissioning Strategy
- Prevention and Early Intervention Strategy
- Sensory Needs Strategy
- Aiming High for Disabled Children Strategy
- Leaving Care Policy and Procedures
- Young Carers Strategy

6.4 In recent years there have been a number of developments within Bracknell Forest to improve and ensure good support for young people approaching adulthood and their families. Some of these key developments are outlined in the following sections and further details can be found on the Bracknell Forest website:

6.5 Approaching Adulthood (Transition) Policy
A clear policy and procedure is in place to ensure practitioners are clear as to their responsibilities when supporting young people approaching adulthood. The Policy provides an overview of the support and planning for young people approaching adulthood that either have a Statement of Special Educational Needs and/or have complex needs.

6.6 Approaching Adulthood (Transition) Panel
Key to ensuring appropriate support is a meeting of managers from children and adult social care and other key agencies, such as the NHS, Connexions and the Local Special School, every term. The meeting identifies those young people approaching adulthood, who will need support. The panel identifies lead practitioners and agencies both in children’s and adult’s services who will co-ordinate support and planning arrangements.

6.7 Approaching Adulthood Strategic Group
In order to further improve provision within Bracknell Forest a strategic group was set up comprising key agencies and parent group representatives. This group builds upon the close and good working relationships within the Council and with partner agencies and stakeholders. The focus of this group has been in identifying needs and developing provision to further enhance the effectiveness of support to young people and their families, such as the introduction of person centred planning at Kennel Lane School.
6.8 **Preparing for Adulthood: A guide for parents, carers and young people**
As part of the development of this strategy it was identified that there was a need for a clear guide as to services, support and options provided for young people, parents and carers. As a consequence this guide was developed. Please see Appendix 2 the guide for parents, carers and young people.

6.9 **Young People in the Care of the Local Authority**
Within Bracknell Forest there are in the region of 100 children and young people in the care of the Local Authority. This group of children and young people are particular vulnerable and there is legislation and regulations in place to ensure they are supported into adulthood including the Leaving Care Act 2000. Key to this is that all young people have a completed pathway plan into adulthood by their 16th birthday. This process is supported by the After Care Team in Bracknell Forest who also support young people aged 18 years old and above. For some young people this support is sufficient to ensure they achieve their potential. However, for other young people needing additional support in adulthood the lead practitioner/agency will be from Adult Social Care, Health and Housing. The Leaving Care Policy and Procedure provides further details.

7 **Needs Analysis**

7.1 As part of the development of this strategy consideration was given to available data. This information allows for planning for the future to meet identified needs.

7.2 The needs assessment identified a number of key factors for the future in particular:

- Actual and predicted increases in the local child population
- Increasing ethnic diversity within Bracknell Forest
- Increased number of young people with Special Educational Needs in Year 9 (14 years old) and Year 10 (15 years old) in particular
- Increase in numbers of children diagnosed on the autistic spectrum
- Increased complexity of needs of children

**Actual and Predicted Rise in Child Population**

7.3 The Bracknell Forest School Places Plan 2012 – 2017 has identified a noticeable increase in the child population and demand for school places resulting in the need to provide additional classrooms and schools, in particular at primary age. The plan noted the increase in the birth rate of 9% between 2005 and 2010 equating to an additional 124 births in 2010. Additionally in the last five years over 2,000 new dwellings have been built and there are plans to further increase the number of new dwellings over the forthcoming years.

7.4 The Office for National Statistics (ONS) produced a mid 2011 population estimate which shows that currently the estimate of the general population is 113,696 people in Bracknell Forest. They predict an increase in the overall population of Bracknell Forest to 128,215 by 2021 with the number of young people aged under 18 set to increase from 26,625 to 28,695 (an 8% increase by 2021).
### Source: Office for National Statistics

**Population Projections - Bracknell Forest**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age group</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2021</th>
<th>% increase</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Under 18</td>
<td>26,625</td>
<td>28,695</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18-64</td>
<td>72,804</td>
<td>79,847</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65-74</td>
<td>7,589</td>
<td>10,613</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>75-84</td>
<td>4,770</td>
<td>6,174</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>85-90</td>
<td>1,245</td>
<td>1,673</td>
<td>34%</td>
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<tr>
<td>90+</td>
<td>663</td>
<td>1,213</td>
<td>83%</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>113,696</td>
<td>128,215</td>
<td>13%</td>
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7.5 This actual and predicted rise in the child population is likely to result in additional demands upon both children and adult services.

### Increasing Ethnic Diversity within Bracknell Forest

7.6 Over the recent years there has been an increase of Black Minority Ethnic (BME) groups in Bracknell Forest. This is demonstrated by the make up of the schools pupils in 2001 which was at 6% and now currently stands at 16.8%.

7.7 This identified increase in BME communities means that the Council will need to understand and respond to the needs of those communities through engagement, and ensure support and services are planned, shaped and delivered in accordance with those needs.
Increased number of young people with Special Educational Needs (SEN) in Year 9 (14 years old) and Year 10 (15 years old)

7.8 Children and young people with statement of special educational needs (SEN) require additional support in education to achieve their potential. Whilst a statement of special educational need does not necessarily mean that additional support will be needed in adulthood, almost all young people turning 18 will receive adult social care services have or have had a statement of special educational needs.

7.9 Within the present Year 9 and Year 10 there is a higher than usual number of young people with special educational needs (SEN). In particular in year 9 there are already 29 young people who have been identified as likely to require additional support. This is higher than the usual numbers of around 20-22 young people per year group. Given this high number of young people who will require support it is therefore expected that there will be an increased demand on resources.

Increase in numbers of children diagnosed with an autistic spectrum disorder (ASD)

7.10 In recent years there has been a noticeable increase in the number of children and young people diagnosed on the autistic spectrum within Bracknell Forest. Whilst there is no exact figure there are 220 young people with statements of special educational needs who are known to have been diagnosed on the autistic spectrum, and Adult Services have noticed increased demand for support for people on the autistic spectrum.

7.11 Work undertaken as part of the Adult Autism Strategy provided estimates as to the numbers of people with a diagnosis and made estimates as to potential increases in numbers in line with the predicted rise in the population of Bracknell Forest.

<table>
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<th>Estimated number of people on Autistic Spectrum in Bracknell Forest:</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>YEAR</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Number of people (all ages)</td>
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<td>Number of people (18+ years)</td>
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7.12 The increase may be more than this as national and local autism strategies raise awareness of assessment and diagnosis pathways, as well as knowledge of how to access support.

Increased complexity of needs of children

7.13 Over the last 3-5 years both the Disabled Children’s Team and Special Educational Needs Team have noted an increase in the complexity of needs of children and young people. This primarily can be attributed to advances in medical science combined with the increase in the population of Bracknell Forest and improved recognition and diagnosis of needs. This is particularly evident at primary age with an increased number of children requiring bespoke education support to enable them to access education.

7.14 All these factors are important in designing, planning and delivering the level of support needed for young people to achieve their potential.
8 Consultation Feedback

The Approach

8.1 A 12 week consultation was undertaken with practitioners, parents/carers and young people who have been, or are being supported as they approach adulthood. The following section summarises the results of this consultation.

What works well?

8.2 Amongst practitioners:-

- Almost all practitioners felt services worked well together resulting generally in a well co-ordinated and positive approach to supporting young people and families

8.3 Amongst carers

- Most carers felt they and the young person with support provided were given enough time to plan in a person centred way and make the identified arrangements as they approached adulthood

8.4 Amongst people receiving support:-

- Most young people said that the help they got assisted them to access information on what was available, and they felt that they were supported to do things like everyone else

- Almost all young people said they started receiving help and support from adult services in a timely fashion giving enough time to properly plan and make support arrangements for when they became an adult

What could be done better to support young people?

8.5 Amongst practitioners:-

- Many practitioners felt that most young people wanted to do the same things and have the same opportunities as everyone else. In this context many advised opportunities for employment, housing and further education was of particular significance

- Some practitioners noted that there are a growing number of young people approaching adulthood with more complex needs who require services and so future service planning needs to take account of this trend so needs and aspirations can be met.

8.6 Amongst carers:-

- Some parents said more information about the options and opportunities available locally would be helpful so they can better help and advise their son or daughter with developing their support and choices in adulthood

- Consistently parents said that young people generally want to do things like everyone else and so promoting and developing more opportunities in further education, employment and housing was particularly important
Some parents said that better communication and co-ordination between agencies may mean that the right support for their son or daughter would be developed more efficiently and smoothly.

8.7 Amongst people receiving support:-

- Some young people said it would be helpful if more information was made available about local services and how these can be accessed so that they can understand what their options are.

What could be done better to support families/carers?

8.9 Amongst practitioners:-

- Some practitioners said more information about the options and opportunities available locally would be helpful for carers so they can better help and advise their son or daughter with choices and developing their support.
- Practitioners also felt more awareness for parents and young people about certain issues at an earlier stage such as individual budgets, the mental capacity act and what this means for the carer would aid the overall approach to supporting young people.
- Some practitioners suggested more regular engagement and feedback was needed to help the development of how young people and their families are supported.

8.10 Amongst carers:-

- A few parents said that better communication and co-ordination between agencies and with the family would result in a smoother and better experience.
- Some parents were not clear if, when and what agencies were actively going to be involved with supporting them as carers and their son and or daughter.
- Many parents felt information and awareness at an earlier point about for instance the mental capacity act and individual budgets was needed.

8.11 Amongst people receiving support:-

- Many young people felt if they were able to pursue and access opportunities like any other person this would naturally reduce their reliance on their families/carers.
- Young people felt information and awareness about what options and services are available locally would help their families be involved and contribute to supporting them.

Summary

8.12 The feedback from practitioners, parents/carers and young people who have been, or are being supported as they approach adulthood has been positive but did identify some areas for development. In particular it identified the need to:

- Improve communication and information about support available.
- Prepare young people and their families for adulthood well in advance
- Further develop local provision related to employment, education and housing
- Engage families and young people more on how provision is developed

9 Priorities

9.1 As indicated Bracknell Forest has developed a number of effective systems to support young people approaching adulthood and their families, however this strategy has identified five key priorities in the next five years.

- Information - Develop and promote information about the types of services and support available to young people locally
- Engagement – Further engage with young people and their families to inform the development of provision and support
- Planning – With the increasing numbers of young people, level of complexity and change in the ethnic composition there is need to develop provision to meet these needs in consultation with families
- Provision - Promote access and develop additional opportunities for young people in particular in relation to employment, housing and further education
- Legislation - Ensure the implementation of the planned SEN and Disability legislation is consistent with the ‘Personalisation’ agenda in Adult Services

9.2 A detailed action plan will be developed using the Adult Social Care Outcomes Framework (ASCOF) for meeting the priorities of this strategy, which will be developed by the Approaching Adulthood Strategic Group.

10 Governance and Implementation Plan

10.1 The Adult Social Care Outcome Framework (ASCOF) is a set of outcome measures, which have been agreed to be of value nationally and locally for demonstrating the achievements of social care and strengthening accountability to local people.

10.2 The Approaching Adulthood Strategic Group will oversee the implementation of this strategy and action plan.

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