

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY SELECT COMMITTEE No.3

Managing Transition Childhood to Adulthood

FINAL REPORT

1. BACKGROUND AND INTRODUCTION

1.1. In March 2001 the Government published a White Paper, "Valuing People: A New Strategy for Learning Disability for the 21st Century". This put greater responsibility on local health and Social Services departments to develop and deliver new and improved services. The Government summarised its position:

"People with learning disabilities are amongst the most vulnerable and socially excluded in our society. Very few have jobs, live in their own homes or have choice over who cares for them. This needs to change: people with learning disabilities must no longer be marginalised or excluded. Valuing People sets out how the Government will provide new opportunities for children and adults and their families to live full and independent lives as part of their local communities".

1.2. The Government acknowledges that it is difficult to produce a precise number of people with learning disabilities. In the case of people with severe and profound learning disabilities, the government estimates that there are about 210,000: 65,000 children and young people, 120,000 adults of working age and 25,000 older people. In the case of people with mild/moderate learning disabilities, some 1.2 million people in England¹. In addition, provisional health and Social Services expenditure on services for adults with learning disabilities exceeded £3 billion in 1999/2000².

1.3. Valuing People defines people with additional and complex needs as people who:

- Have severe and profound disabilities (including those with sensory impairments)
- Have epilepsy
- Have autism spectrum disorder and also a learning disability
- Present with behaviour that challenges their carers and service providers
- Develop conditions associated with old age.

1.4. Transition was described by Fish and McGinty (1992):

"It is a phase or period of time between the teens and the twenties which is broken up educationally and administratively. During the transition phase there are changes of responsibility from child to adult services, from school to further education, and from childhood dependency to adult responsibility".

To put it simply within the context of this review, **transition is the process by which young people with complex needs move from school to adult life.**

1.5. There has been a significant amount of research into the transition process and systems and there is considerable evidence to suggest that there is much room for improvement. The Government acknowledges³ that there are major problems, including:

- Poorly co-ordinated services for families with disabled children especially for those with severely disabled children
- Poor planning for young disabled people at the point of transition into adulthood
- Insufficient support for carers, particularly for those caring for people with complex needs
- People with learning disabilities often have little choice or control over many aspects of their lives
- Substantial health care needs for people with learning disabilities are often unmet

¹ Source: Valuing People page 15

² Source: Valuing People page 18

³ Source: Valuing People page 2

- Housing choice is limited
- Day services are often not tailored to the needs and abilities of the individual
- Limited opportunities for employment.

1.6. Joint research into the transition process by the Home Farm Trust and Norah Fry Research Centre (2002) has found the following:

- Poor co-ordination between the agencies responsible for services for children and adults leading to dislocating experiences for young people and their families.
- Lack of power for young people and their families within transitional planning systems.
- Lack of choice and opportunity at school leaving and after for young people with learning disabilities, particularly with regard to housing and employment. There was a significant discrepancy between issues that families wanted to be addressed (information on leisure and social opportunities, benefits, future housing options and further education opportunities were the topics most wanted) and those which were actually covered in transition planning (only further education, of the above four topics).

Profile 1: John

John is 18 years old and has been diagnosed as autistic. He currently attends a local special school. As he cannot use verbal communication it is difficult to consult with him directly about his future and this is done through parents and staff in school. He may hit out unexpectedly and requires support if he undertakes activities outside. He can wash and dress with support and do other simple tasks around the house. In school he is interested in music, physical activities and craftwork.

John lives at home with his mother, and receives support from home care staff, additional hours from a member of the school staff (financed by direct payments), plus respite nights weekly at the school respite unit.

The transition plan identified that John requires 24-hour support with day activities provided by staff who have an understanding of and training in autism. His mother is concerned that he does not become isolated and therefore wants some of the activities to involve other people.

This is a high cost care package @ approximately £105,000 per annum.

(Source: Social Services Department, Learning Disability Service)

1.7. A number of Best Value reviews considered the transition process before the Select Committee was set up to look at the problem in more depth. The relevant issues from these Best Value reviews, include:

Adults with Learning Disabilities (April 2000 – March 2001)

Consultation was carried out with 33 parents and carers via a questionnaire. A high percentage (97%) said they needed more information about changes and choices in the transition period. 85% of parents and carers would prefer “one to one” advice and 55% felt they would have benefited from having an independent person to support them.

The review recommended that the Social Services Department:

- Develop an information pack for young people with learning disabilities and their parents at transition
- Consider development of an Information Officer post for young people
- Develop a multi-agency strategy in relation to transition to adult services
- Begin a planning process for young people entering adult services from 15+.

Adults with Physical Disabilities (June 2001 – December 2002)

Transition was raised as an issue that needs to be addressed, but it was not reviewed in any detail because it was to be included in the Promoting Independence Best Value review.

Children with Complex Needs (June 2001 – December 2002)

As with the Physical Disabilities review, transition was identified as an issue, but it was to be addressed by the Promoting Independence review.

Promoting Independence (April 2000 – August 2001)

After much debate about the scope of this review, it was decided that it would look at two key areas, one of which was Transition. Due to pressure on existing resources a conscious decision was taken to utilise the scrutiny process as a means of promoting an in depth review of service provision, together with identifying areas for improvement.

Profile 2: Gina

Gina is a young lady with learning difficulties and a hearing impairment who can exhibit challenging behaviour. She attended the Manchester Royal School for the deaf as a day pupil until 2001, when at 18 years of age funding ended. At Gina's assessment she and her family wanted her to attend the Royal School for the deaf as a residential pupil for 3 years on a course which will prepare her to live independently. The funding is provided jointly by Wigan Council and the Learning and Skills Council.

Social Services fund the residential element only. This is a medium / high cost care package @ approximately £18,000 per year and is 1/3rd of the total cost.

(Source: Social Services Department, Learning Disability Service)

1.8. During spring 2002 Wigan and Leigh SCOPE were commissioned by the Social Services Department to undertake a consultation exercise with 450 families of children with complex needs. The product of this consultation was a document entitled 'The Journey for Life'. Whilst this report was not specific to transition, parents and carers of young people with complex needs provided an insight into their experiences of services delivered by multi-agency working. The consultation achieved a 22% response rate and 42% of respondents cared for young people between the ages of 12 and 18. The report highlighted the following views of parents, carers and young people:

| <i>What really bugs you?</i> | |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| Have to argue/struggle for everything | |
| Services not seeing the whole person | |
| No co-ordination/communication | |
| People's attitudes | |
| Feeling isolated | |

| <i>What really bugs your son/daughter?</i> | |
|---|--|
| No friends | |
| Communication issues | |
| Lack of leisure and social opportunities | |
| Equipment | |

| <i>What stops families accessing services?</i> | |
|---|-----|
| People not working together | 16% |
| Had difficulty accessing information | 15% |
| People's attitudes | 13% |
| Finance – equipment too expensive | 12% |
| Nobody seems to listen | 11% |
| Don't know what social workers and other agencies do | 11% |
| Long waiting lists | 9% |
| Physical access | 6% |
| People too tired to look – lost enthusiasm | 4% |
| Nothing – everything is fine | 3% |

| <i>What word best describes your current well being as a carer? The most commonly expressed words were:</i> | |
|--|--|
| Tired | |
| Exhausted | |
| Isolated | |
| Frustrated | |
| OK/ Generally happy | |

As an outcome of the "Journey for Life" report, a multi-agency Improvement Plan was written for Children with Complex Needs. The Select Committee is still awaiting a progress update on the Improvement Plan from the Complex Needs Strategy Group.

Profile 3: Carl

Carl is 18 years of age. He attends Skelmersdale College and is supported at home during the holidays. In 2002 his parents applied for and were granted direct payments so that the family could arrange their own support. Support is now provided by direct payments based on the needs identified in the assessments to cover day support, short breaks and holidays.

This is a medium cost care package @ approximately £15,900 per year for 35 hours per week plus 3 nights respite with day care one weekend in four.

(Source: Social Services Department, Learning Disability Service)

1.9. An Overview and Scrutiny Select Committee (Select Committee No.3) was established to review the current transition process for children with complex needs in Wigan. Councillor F. Walker chaired the Select Committee and was supported by Councillors J. Birch, W. Brogan, A. Bullen, M. Coghlin, A. Collins, E. Smethurst and G. Walsh.

1.10. The Select Committee met formally on seventeen occasions over a seven-month period and a detailed Action Plan/Timetetable was drawn up and is held within the Appendices, Figure 1. The results of the Select Committee's work are described in the following pages. That work has led to a series of recommendations captured within an Improvement Plan with associated actions and timeframes. Implementation of these recommendations will lead to improved management and performance monitoring of the transition process; more effective engagement and support for young people, parents and carers; and increased opportunity and choice for young people post transition.

2. SCOPE AND AIMS OF THE REVIEW

2.1. The agreed scope was to review the transition process in Wigan for all children with complex needs, and identify key areas for improvement.

Children with complex needs are defined as having *severe learning disabilities* or *multiple or profound disabilities*. The vision for an ideal service for children with complex needs is that of a range of supportive provision delivered in partnership with other agencies and with young people, their carers and their families. According to the Strategic Manager (Children in Need), the key principle covering the support of children with complex needs is that ***children with complex needs should be treated as children first, with a right to the same opportunities as any other child of the same age in the community.***

2.2. The agreed aims were:

- (i) To determine the baseline position – Where are we now?
 - A breakdown of the numbers of children involved
 - Trends and future projections of activity
 - Staffing structures
 - Financial Analysis (Costs/Income)
 - Transition Process
 - Information sharing and communication
 - Comments / compliments / complaints
 - Improvements made over the past 5 years
 - Monitoring and reporting arrangements
 - Perception of service provision.
- (ii) To understand the transition process and its effectiveness by consulting with key stakeholders:
 - Identify and consult with key stakeholders
 - Identify any linkages between the agencies involved
 - Evaluate the effectiveness of communication between agencies and with young people and their parents / carers.
- (iii) To compare the process in Wigan with best practice and government guidance by:
 - Identifying areas of best practice
 - Identifying government guidance
 - Identifying and consulting with other local authorities who have reviewed the transition process
 - Consulting with an outside expert on the subject
 - Conducting 'gap analysis' between actual and best practice provision and highlighting any deficiencies.
- (iv) To evaluate the outcomes of the process by:
 - Consulting and interviewing young people, their advocates, and where appropriate, their parents / carers to understand their experiences
 - Identifying strengths and areas for improvement.

(v) To identify outcome measures, which for an improved service may include:

- Increased numbers of young people linked to independent living, education, employment or training
- Increased levels of "customer satisfaction" – parents / young people
- More effective partnerships across sectors, departments / agencies – 'joined up' working
- Standards, policies, procedures and guidance available for the process of transition which are understood by parents and young people.

2.3. The review links into the Council's four political principles as shown below:

| | |
|---|--|
| <p>Place</p> <p>Encourage the development of choice in housing, employment, education and training and ensure that the borough is attractive and accessible for people with disabilities.</p> | <p>Potential</p> <p>Ensure that young people with disabilities are given the best possible opportunity to develop their full potential without discrimination.</p> |
| <p>Performance</p> <p>Ensure that we are providing the best possible services to meet the expressed needs of parents, carers and young people going through transition and monitor performance to ensure we continue to improve.</p> | <p>Partnerships</p> <p>Work together with our partners to provide accessible services and to ensure that young people are able to experience a seamless transition from school to adult life.</p> |

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1. The Select Committee used various research methods to investigate the transition process in Wigan, including:

- Interviewing key stakeholders including young people, parents, carers, voluntary sector and service providers
- Commissioning a voluntary organisation to consult with parents, carers and young people and to facilitate a discussion forum
- Literature review
- Postal and telephone questionnaires
- Sampling of transition plans, Social Services assessments and review forms
- Consulting with other local authorities
- Consulting with the Northwest Advisor from the Department of Health Valuing People Support Team.

In the Appendices, Figure 2 details the Consultation Matrix.

3.2. The review was sub-divided into three distinct phases:

Phase 1 focussed on understanding the transition process. The Select Committee interviewed senior officers from the various provider agencies, collated activity data and examined a sample of transition plans. The committee also studied legislation and guidance, identified best practice by consulting with an expert from the Valuing People Support Team and made comparisons with other local authorities.

Phase 2 focussed on the recipients of joint agency service provision. Consultation was carried out with a broad range of stakeholders to seek their views and shared experiences of the transition process. Using various mediums the following have been consulted:

- Young people currently preparing for transition and those who are post transitional
- All Wigan Council Elected Members
- Parents, Carers and key stakeholders
- Local voluntary sector organisations supporting young people.

Phase 3 explored the options available to young people who have passed through the transition process. This was achieved by interviewing senior officers about:

- Employment opportunities
- Independent living
- Further Education
- Leisure and social activities
- Social Services provision and support.

The Chief Executive informed members of his vision and views with regard to the implementation of the Valuing People White Paper and its relevance to the transition process in Wigan. The Select Committee also undertook a sample audit of the Social Services adult needs assessment and review forms.

4. PHASE 1: TRANSITION PLANNING

4.1. Legislation

4.1.1. Within the Government's Valuing People White Paper, Objective 2: Transition into adult life is defined as follows:

"As young people with learning disabilities move into adulthood, to ensure continuity of care and support for the young person and their family, and to provide equality of opportunity in order to enable as many disabled young people as possible to participate in education, training and employment".

4.1.2. The transition planning process is governed by the Special Educational Needs (SEN) Code of Practice (2002), which is a prescriptive guidance document under the 2001 SEN and Disability Act. An essential part of the transition process is the development of a transition plan. The Code of Practice defines a transition plan as follows:

"A Transition Plan should draw together information from a range of individuals within and beyond school in order to plan coherently for the young person's transition to adult life. Transition plans when they are first drawn up in Year 9 are not simply about post-school arrangements, they should plan for on-going school provision, under the Statement of SEN as overseen by the LEA." (Special Educational Needs Codes of Practice 9:51)

4.1.3. Legislation and guidance directs that the Transition Plan must pay attention to the young person's perspective, and that the views of young people themselves should be sought and recorded wherever possible in any assessment, re-assessment or review during the years of transition (Education Act). Similarly, the Children Act 1989 states that there is a duty for social service departments to involve all children/ young people that they are in contact with in planning their futures... (p.26). In addition, the Children Act 1989 states that *"Even children with severe learning disabilities or very limited expressive language can communicate preferences if they are asked in the right way.. No assumptions should be made about "categories" of children with disabilities who cannot share in decision making"*⁴

4.1.4. Disabled Persons Act - Assessment

Under the Disabled Persons Act 1986 the following procedure for assessment should take place. This process should be parallel to, but linked with the Transition Plan described above.

- The Education Department is required to notify Social Services of all young people aged 13 or 14 years, who are considered to be disabled.
- Eight months before a child with a disability is due to leave full time education the Education Department is required to notify Social Services in writing.
- Once Social Services have been notified they are obliged to co-ordinate a multi-agency assessment of the young person which must be completed no later than three months before the person's school or college leaving date.
- The carers of the young person, as well as the young person, should be encouraged to take a full and active part in this process. This can include the right to refuse an assessment or a particular service if this is their wish. Such a refusal would not bar a person from receiving help in the future.

⁴ Source: "Bridging the Divide at Transition"

- The final report from this assessment should be discussed with the young person. After any agreed amendments have been made the report should be circulated to all relevant professionals, family members and any other carers.
- After the assessment and report have been produced the social worker concerned should organise a review at which the information contained within the report should be discussed and relevant plans for the young person laid out. A member of the Adult Care team should be present at such a meeting.⁵

4.1.5. Stages for the transition plan

Year 9: (academic year of 14th birthday)

- School writes to invite the child to 14+ Transition Review.
- School notifies Social Services.
- 14+ Transition Review meeting takes place.
- Connexions Personal Advisor must attend the transition review.

Year 10: (academic year of 15th birthday)

- Parents are notified of 15+ Review: do you want any changes to the Plan?
- Start to make a visit to local colleges or other post-sixteen services.

Year 11: (academic year of 16th birthday)

- Is Transition Plan still relevant?
- At 16, Social Services children's team will liaise with Adult Care manager about any planning meetings that might be needed.
- 16+ Annual Review should make firm plans about what actual provision needs to be made. Relevant approaches and applications for places to be made. The Connexions Personal Advisor will attend reviews in most cases.
- The Connexions Service and LEA should apply for funding from the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) in England if relevant.
- There are major changes to the young person's benefits.

Year 12: (academic year of 17th birthday)

- 17+ Annual Review: is the Transition Plan in place and still relevant? What changes need to be made?
- At 18, transfer to Adult Care Team takes place. This process may take place at 16 and sometimes at 19.

Once the Transition Plan has been drawn up the school must circulate the plan to the parents, LEA, Social Services, relevant health contacts and any other relevant professionals and carers. Connexions must ensure that all the services identified as necessary in the Transition Plan are available for the young person as they go through the transition period until they leave school. Finally, on leaving full-time education (school or college), the young person is covered by the **Disabled Persons Act** (see 4.1.3. above).

⁵ Source: Contact a Family website

4.1.6. Quality Protects was launched in 1999 with the intention to transform services for vulnerable children, including disabled children, and their families. Quality Protects requires local authorities to review their existing transition planning arrangements and develop joint inter-agency protocols to improve their co-ordination.⁶

4.2. Best Practice

4.2.1. SEN Code of Practice

The Code of Practice covering England and Wales makes it clear that transition planning must include:

- What a young person needs to become more independent and confident
- What practical help or adaptations may be needed at home
- What special health needs require on-going support
- What the young person and family actually wants.

4.2.2. Norah Fry Research Centre and Home Farm Trust Findings

During 1999, research was undertaken by the Home Farm Trust and the Norah Fry Research Centre which resulted in a final report "Bridging the Divide". The report was based on a survey of 283 families, interviews with parents and young people and visits to innovative services. Some of the key messages from this research are outlined below:

- Bridging the Divide identified 5C's of a good transition:
 - **Communication**
Needs to be open, honest and respectful between agencies, and between agencies and families; independent advocacy for young people.
 - **Co-ordination**
Effective inter-agency working; joint training initiatives; joint assessment procedures and a cohesive strategic approach to service provision.
 - **Comprehensiveness**
An effective transition plan for *all* young people; appropriate race and disability equality training for all staff; expectation that young people with learning difficulties will have access to the same opportunities to realise their aspirations as their peers.
 - **Continuity**
Key workers to support individual youngsters and their families throughout the transition process; a seamless transition from children's to adult services; a range of options for young people to move into and between.
 - **Choice**
More and better involvement of young people and their families in the transition process; access to appropriate information on potential options; development of a range of local post-school alternatives in housing and employment.
- Parents and young people were asked what areas transition planning should cover. Most respondents wanted information about leisure and social opportunities, benefits, future housing options, the transfer to adult health and Social Services, opportunities for further college education, independent living skills and how to plan for future goals.

⁶ Source: "Bridging the Divide at Transition"

- The key elements that contributed to the making of successful transitions from school were:
 - Visits, over a period of time, to possible future options;
 - The involvement of the young person in reaching decisions about where they were going to move on to;
 - The early agreement of funding so that there could be a gradual supported introduction to the young person's new environment; and
 - Positive support, encouragement, practical help and information for the youngsters and their families from the school.
- Those parents who reported the most favourable experiences of transition to adult social work teams were those who had worked with their new social workers as a lead-up to the transfer, or who had been supported by a nominated transition worker during the process.
- **What makes for a better transition experience?**
The research suggested the following:

- Work experience / link placements that provided fresh experiences, a sense of the next step, a time to accommodate to new locations and a way to inform choices;
- Young person's involvement in planning;
- Emotional preparation – starting to plan early allowing enough time for incremental steps;
- Commitment, support and flexibility of staff;
- Information pack;
- Parents being actively involved;
- Better preparation for transition planning meetings;
- A named co-ordinator for each family;
- Links with parents who have been through the process; and
- Recognise that people are individuals and they will all have their own pace.

4.2.3. Interview with Martin Routledge

Martin Routledge, Department of Health, is NW Regional Adviser for the Valuing People Support Team. He attended a Select Committee meeting to present a regional/national perspective of the transition process and confirmed:

- Nationally, improvements to the transition process to date have focussed on bringing systems together by:
 - Developing joint agency policy and protocols; and
 - Introducing transition workers.
- It is more rare to find:
 - Effective ways to break down boundary problems
 - Ways of strengthening young person/family influence
 - Systematic learning about what needs to change and cross-agency work to achieve service and system shifts.
- The key points about taking the transition process forward are:
 - It is inherently difficult
 - It requires tenacious leadership over time and across boundaries
 - Systems are necessary but not sufficient

- People with learning disabilities and families must be central to solutions – not marginal.
- There is a need to measure satisfaction with experience and changes to services and supports.
- Fundamental challenges will need to be addressed, which include:
 - What is the vision for young people with disabilities moving into adulthood?
 - What are the key elements of a solution to the problem of agency and professional fragmentation?
 - How can young people and their families get a powerful voice in their own transition to adulthood?
 - Specifically how will person centred planning work?
 - How will agencies learn about and act upon what they need to change?

4.2.4. Person Centred Planning (PCP)

One of the key features of Valuing People is the need to shift the emphasis away from planning that fits the convenience of the service to a more person centred approach. Person centred planning (PCP) requires staff to be flexible and responsive to the individual's changing circumstances, and to be constantly problem solving in partnership with the person and their families and carers. There are five key features to PCP:

- (i) **The person is at the centre**
 - The person is consulted throughout the planning process
 - The person chooses who to involve in the planning process
 - The person chooses the setting and timing of meetings.
- (ii) **Family members and friends are partners in planning**
- (iii) **The plan reflects what is important to the person, their capabilities, and what support they require**
 - Discovering what is important to the person
 - Rethinking the role of the professional (to help others make decisions for themselves)
 - Identifying supports
 - Focus on capabilities.
- (iv) **The plan results in actions that are about life, not just services, and reflect what is possible, not just what is available**
- (v) **The plan results in ongoing listening, learning and further action⁷**

Steve Jones, the Chief Executive of the Council, is the Chair of the Regional Task Force for Valuing People. He attended a meeting of the Select Committee, where he discussed plans for a pilot scheme to carry out PCP for young people going through transition. This is discussed further in section 6.12.

⁷ Source: "Person Centred Planning: Key Features and Approaches", Helen Sanderson

4.2.5. Comparison with other Local Authorities

In order to identify areas of good practice in other local authorities, questionnaires were sent out to Social Services departments throughout the northwest, and a review of research papers, including "Bridging the Divide" was carried out.⁸ The results are summarised below:

| Areas of Good Practise | | Other issues raised |
|------------------------|--|--|
| Stockport | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposals for a transition worker based in adult services to be involved from 14+. Proposals that childrens services are linked to available service levels in adult provision. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Need for forward planning, particularly for challenging behaviour / autism, which are difficult to provide for. Equity and consistency in meeting need. Improved co-ordination needed. |
| Knowsley | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Early introduction of young people and carers to adult care managers. A commitment to joint allocation for 6 months post-18 to ease transition. Referral meetings between childrens services, adult services and schools. Identification of children with complex needs to project future service requirements. A health visitor based full time in the team. Dedicated transition worker (funded by Quality Protects). | |
| Rochdale | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Multi agency Transition Management Group to compliment the Transition Operational Group. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A positive outcome would be an increased number of young people who feel in control of their own lives and futures. Person centred planning would help to improve transtion. This would need sufficient resources to permit time spent with young people. |
| Sefton | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide training and awareness sessions on PCP for self advocates and families. "Transition into Adult Life" is a sub-group of the Joint Partnership Board. Sefton has a "Getting Involved" group for people with learning disabilities to raise issues, communicate and support one another and reports directly to the Learning Disabilities Board. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sefton is moving towards ensuring that all documents, agendas and minutes relating to learning disabilities are produced in an easy to understand format (including paper, CD and cassette). |

⁸ (Sources: Questionnaire responses, information from Sefton, "After School – What Next" (NW Training and Development Team, 1998), "Bridging the Divide" (Home farm Trust and Norah Fry Research Centre))

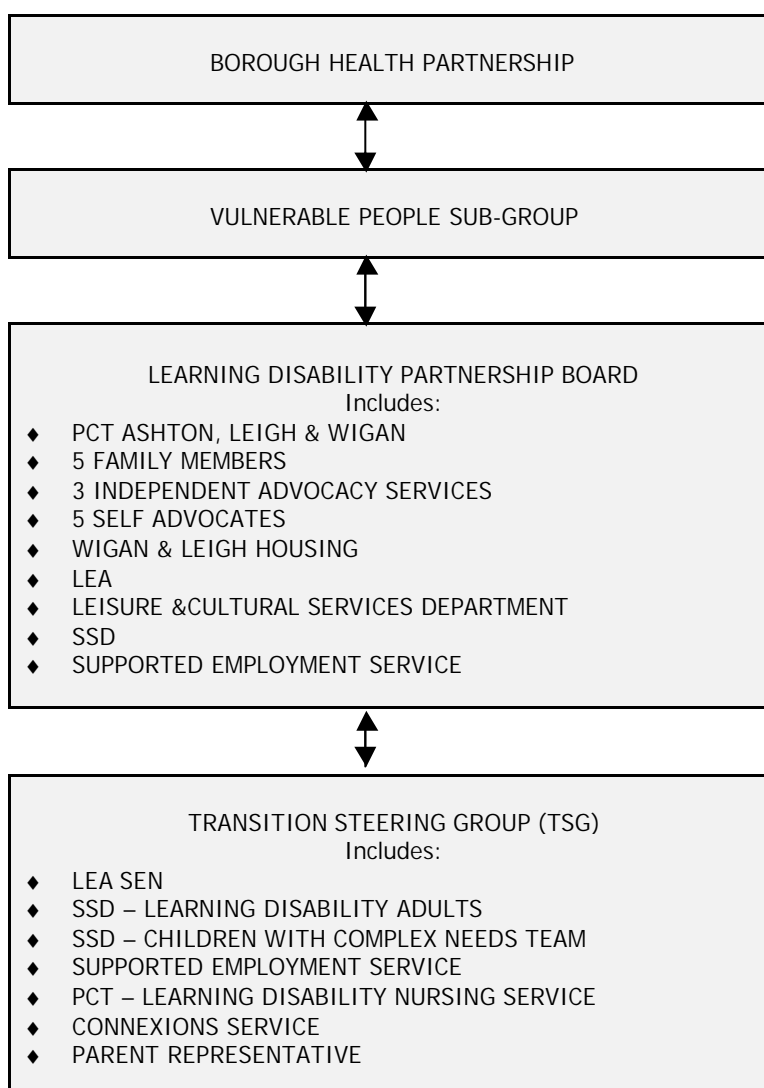
| Areas of Good Practise | | Other issues raised |
|------------------------|---|--|
| Oldham | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have made good progress in introducing PCP, which has enabled support for transition to be more planned and creative. • The focus is shifting from services to supports for people with learning disabilities. • A joint agency transition group has commissioned the production of a video showing the process of transition and the options available to people when they leave school. • Employ a transition co-ordinator in supported employment, developing and supporting work placements for people in transition | |
| Cheshire | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protocol agreed between adult services and childrens services. • Undertaking a 3-year study of satisfaction levels of parents and young people. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need for person centred planning. Clear agreement about charging policies is needed. |
| Lancaster | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Knoll Research Centre and the Loyne School in Lancaster work together to ensure that students who have an interest in a vocational future and are due to leave school in the next 2 years will be given the chance to increase their understanding of the differences between school, college/ training and work situations. They run a joint "Transitions into Work". | |
| Halton | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appointed a Transition Co-ordinator available to young people from 14+. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need for common assessment processes. Transition needs someone for whom the process is their core task |
| Gateshead | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Transitional Support Group has been set up in Gateshead to provide information and support to families going through transition. This is run jointly by a Social Services group worker and a parent partnership officer. Sessions are run over 10 weeks. | |
| Surrey | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identified an "early identification protocol", which aims to identify at 14+ the people who are likely to be significant users of adult services. At 16, this judgement is re-assessed, and if appropriate, an adult care manager will become involved. | |
| Lambeth | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lambeth School Leavers Project was set up to promote self-advocacy amongst young people with learning difficulties in their final years at special school. The project set out to inform young people aged 16-21 of the options available and to support them in making choices. | |
| Birmingham | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peer support, where young people with learning difficulties are paired with their mainstream peers. They spend time working on different topics relating to transition | |

4.3. The process in Wigan

4.3.1. The Select Committee consulted with representatives of the four key agencies responsible for implementing transition planning: Children's and Adults Social Services, LEA, Primary Care Trust (PCT) and Connexions (Positive Futures in Wigan) to gather baseline data and a preliminary understanding of the process.

4.3.2. Organisational and reporting structures

Detailed organisational structures for each key service agency/department are located within the appendices. The overall multi-agency strategic management structure for adult services is represented by:



Planning of children's services is co-ordinated by the Children and Young People's Service Group. There is a Children with Complex Needs sub-group which feeds into this.

4.3.3. A breakdown of the numbers of children involved

There is a difference in the criteria used by Social Services and education to determine levels of need or disability. This led to some disparity between the figures provided by the different agencies.

The Social Services Children with Complex Needs Team is currently working with over 180 families, of which 67 young people are between the ages of 14 and 19 and are going through transition at different stages. The following summary was taken from the children in need census of 2001/02:

| AGE | NUMBER |
|-----|--------|
| 14 | 17 |
| 15 | 9 |
| 16 | 6 |
| 17 | 12 |
| 18 | 15 |
| 19 | 8 |

Of the 193 children in the census:

| | |
|-----|---------------------------------------|
| 30 | Were autistic |
| 77 | Had mobility problems |
| 34 | Had hand function problems |
| 115 | Needed help with personal care |
| 69 | Were incontinent |
| 111 | Had communication difficulties |
| 168 | Had some level of learning difficulty |
| 14 | Had hearing problems |
| 20 | Had problems with vision |
| 62 | Had behavioural problems |
| 24 | Had epilepsy |

Many children had more than one disability though some had a single disability.

The LEA provided the following information for transition reviews undertaken during 2002:

| | |
|---|-----------------|
| No of pupils with complex needs in year 9 | 25 |
| No of reviews attended by an LEA officer | 19 ⁹ |
| No of reviews attended by a careers advisor | 23 |
| No of reviews attended by a social worker | 5 |

⁹ Mere Oaks conducted their own transition reviews

The figures provided by LEA and Social Services differ because Social Services data was collated at a single point in time and there may be differing definitions of complex needs being applied.

4.3.4. Trends and future projections of activity

The following table provides a summary of pupils with complex needs who are starting the transition process but may leave school at anytime between 16 and 19 years of age:

| Year Group (When 19) | Y9 2008 | Y10 2007 | Y11 2006 | Y12 2005 | Y13 2004 | Y14 2003 |
|-------------------------|------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Two Porches | 5 | 6 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 1 |
| Tanfield | 5 | 5 | 4 | 3 | 6 | 8 |
| Hope | 6 | 11 | 7 | 9 | 7 | 5 |
| Mere Oaks | 2 | 3 | 4 | - | - | - |
| External LA Schools | 1 | 2 | - | - | - | - |
| Independent Schools | 3 | 7 | - | - | 4 | - |
| Total | 22 | 34 | 18 | 14 | 19 | 14 |

4.3.5. Financial Analysis

The approximate cost of education services to children with complex needs is **£6,476,766** (2003/4 schools budgets). This includes:

- The annual budgets for Hope, Tanfield, Two Porches and Mere Oaks schools
- The cost of extra district fees for Wigan pupils attending schools in other LEA's
- The cost of independent school fees for pupils with complex needs
- The cost of support to mainstream schools

The following table shows the total costs of services for children with disabilities and adults with learning disabilities in Wigan for 2001/02. This information gives an indication of the costs involved, but it is not a comprehensive picture. For example, services for adults with physical disabilities and mental health problems have been excluded. In addition, many of the services listed below are not exclusively for people with complex needs, but could be accessed by people with a range of disabilities. The table is included in the report to give an indication of the scale of the services for children and adults with disabilities in terms of cost and activity.

| | Gross Cost 2001/2 £ | Net cost 2001/2 £ | Number of service users |
|---|------------------------------------|----------------------------------|--|
| Social Services and Education Provision for Children with Disabilities | | | |
| Mary Sheridan Centre Provides continuous assessment and therapies to children with disabilities and support for families (mainly for under-5's) | 18,140 | 18,140 | 19 children assessed in 2002 |
| Children and Parent Support Services (CAPSS) Provides outreach, short term breaks and day care | 344,397 | 343,761 | Outreach = 37 Overnight stays = 13 |
| 98, Ladies Lane Provides outreach, short term breaks and day care | 333,047 | 306,039 | Day care = 1 Outreach = 6 Overnight stays = 30 |
| Tanfield Overnight Stay Unit Overnight stays or evening care Mon-Thurs (term time only) | 88,820 | 58,533 | 451 stays |
| Two Porches Overnight Stay Unit Overnight stays or evening care Mon-Thurs (term time only) | 113,099 | 107,253 | 259 stays |
| Residential Summer Scheme | 21,375 | 21,375 | 49 stays |
| Family Network Scheme Short term breaks with a family | 13,804 | -7 | 246 nights |
| Services for Adults with Learning Disabilities: | | | |
| Supported Employment Scheme | 159,992 | 146,646 | 80-100 people registered |
| Nursing Homes | 418,164 | 299,926 | 18 |
| Residential Care | 1,874,099 | 1,443,813 | 11 |
| Direct Payments | 138,766 | 137,815 | 54 in total 13 adults with learning disabilities |
| Independent Living Supported accommodation | 12,088,275 | 3,333,404 | 72 properties |
| Day Care Day centres and external schemes including gardening scheme, Adult Community Education, Nugent Care and Integrated Day Care | 2,996,555 | 2,725,035 | Approximately 350 |
| TOTAL | 18,608,533 | 8,941,733 | |

4.3.6. Transition Process in Wigan

The Transition Steering Group has documented the transition process in diagrammatic form below:



***Trigger Form**

For closed cases (i.e. those young people without a social worker) a trigger form is a tool which records the current details of the young person and provides a summary of needs. It also provides adult services with an estimated school leaving date. In addition, the Trigger Form provides an opportunity for the young person or their carer to request support from the Primary Care Trust and/or the Local Authority.

4.3.7. **Interagency information sharing and communication**

When interviewed by the Select Committee, the various agencies involved in transition described the processes for information sharing and communication as follows:

- The principle aims of The Transition Steering Group (now a sub-group of the Learning Disability Partnership) are:
 - Clarifying the process and procedure for transition for young people with severe learning disabilities and complex needs
 - Agreeing the role of each department in relation to transition planning and facilitating ongoing departmental developments
 - Providing information to young people and parents about transition from school to adulthood
 - Ensuring those individuals will have equality of opportunity to access further education, training or employment.
- The Trigger Form provides a means of passing on information/service requests to the PCT and Social Services. The LEA receives a reply from SSD/LDT (Learning Disability Team of the PCT) to say they have received the form but the LEA does not check to see if services from the teams are subsequently put in place.
- Agencies are currently working together to develop an agreed transition planning protocol.
- Nationally, the government is working towards an agreed common assessment form.

4.3.8. **External information and communication**

The multi-agency service providers said they have implemented the following:

- A leaflet entitled 'Transition planning - leaving school and moving on' is issued to parents at the 14+Review and presents an outline of the transition process with contact numbers of the key agencies.
- In 2000, Social Services staff met with parents and carers groups in schools to raise awareness of the transition process and explain the input from different agencies. Afternoon and evening information sessions were arranged for parents at Tanfield and Hope schools in 2000 in response to concern about transition.
- An annual Transition event was established in January 2002 to enable parents to find out more about the options available for young people. The second event took place in February 2003.
- Inclusion of parents in planning/working groups and the multi-agency Transition Steering Group, to gain familiarity with service provision.
- A regular Newsletter is produced for children on the disability register and provides information on a variety of topics including items relevant to transition. The families also receive a Disability Directory, which gives information of services, both statutory and voluntary, and how to access these.

- An Information Officer gathers information for families, the social work team and other professionals and works in a number of areas linking with Health, Education and Leisure services.

4.3.9 Internal information and communication

Service managers feel that internal information and communications are improving due to:

- In 2000 all social workers working with children with complex needs were brought together under one manager.
- Stronger links have been established between Children's and Adults services, providing a clearer understanding of each others roles.
- Closer monitoring of cases through supervision and random case file audit.
- Statistical information gathering to inform targets set by government.
- Improved links with Health and LEA through attendance at the Children with Complex Needs sub-group meetings.

4.3.10 Comments/compliments/complaints

The Children with Disabilities team and the Social Services Customer Relation's Unit were consulted about comments, compliments and complaints. There were no formal complaints relating to transition, with the exception of the example given in Profile 4 below:

Profile 4

There is currently one on-going complaint specific to transition. This concerns two brothers, aged 18 and 19, both of whom are autistic and attend a local special school. The brothers were told by the school in May 2001 that they would be able to go to a specialist placement out of the borough when they left school. However, this decision ultimately lies with the adult commissioners. When the time came for the brothers to be independently assessed by the Adult Social Work team, it was decided that they could not go because it would be too expensive and the Council has a policy of reducing the number of out-of-borough placements. It was felt that in-borough provision could be found for the brothers, and the service is currently looking for suitable accommodation for them.

This example highlights a communication issue, where the young men were given conflicting advice by the school and the Social Services department leading to expectations which could not be met.

(Source: Social Services department Customer Relations section)

4.3.11 Monitoring and reporting arrangements

The service manager confirmed that for children with complex needs the following monitoring and reporting arrangements are in place:

- Referrals are received from the Central Duty Team and are allocated in line with the National Assessment Framework. This requires that within 7 working days an initial assessment of the child and families needs must be made. The service records the date of allocation and completion of the assessment; when compliment and complaint forms are issued to families; and the date the family is given a copy of their assessment. Children who are referred for transitional issues are included in this process. Accurate figures against this performance target could not be provided.
- Core assessments are completed when the child's circumstances or disabilities are particularly complex and there is a need for multi agency working (e.g. with PCT and LEA). There is a time scale of 35 working days for this process and again the relevant dates are recorded. Accurate figures against this performance target could not be provided.
- The Quality Assurance team is involved in the review of services the child receives. They enable checks to be made that services are still appropriate to the child and are at the right level. Transitional reviews do not always involve this group of staff. Statistical information is gathered at reviews and monthly reports provided to managers on areas such as:
 - Did the parent attend the review?
 - Were the child's views represented?This is also an opportunity for children, young people and families to comment on the services they receive. This feedback enables both the services and workers to improve their performance and identify service development issues.
- Quality Protects and other national Performance Indicators are monitored and feedback is given to relevant Group and Team Managers to enable services to acknowledge progress and to identify areas for improvement.
- Positive Futures has recently produced a new internal procedure for working with young people with Special Education Needs. This sets out the work needing to be done and the nature of the monitoring, evaluation and review to be conducted. This procedure has formed the starting point for the Transition Protocol.

4.4. Summary of discussions with service managers

Service managers were invited to give evidence to the Select Committee during this phase of the review. They were requested to inform the Select Committee of their roles and responsibilities in the multi-agency approach to managing transition and to identify strengths and areas for improvement.

4.4.1 Perception of service provision

Comments from service managers about how they felt their clients viewed their services covered the following issues:

Communication

- Wigan and Leigh SCOPE were recently commissioned to consult with parents/carers and this raised issues around poor communication and co-ordination, particularly relating to parents having to provide the same information repeatedly.
- Often issues can be resolved with careful listening to service users early on. Complaints progress through the system when communication, negotiation and working in partnership fail. We must also be honest about what we can and cannot do, being clear about our abilities to resolve issues and enable families to help themselves

Perception

- While many young people go through the transition process successfully there is still a negative view of transition. In some cases, while the process is deemed successful there is disagreement about the care plan and this is perceived as a transition failure.
- The views of users are often coloured by the outcome of transition and not necessarily the quality or otherwise of the process.
- Many parents see themselves confined to using current services and we have as yet not been able to achieve a situation where they can imagine services planned individually.
- Complaints and compliments also inform our knowledge and understanding of parents' and young people's perception of services.

4.4.2 Perceived Strengths

- The LEA is transferring funds from SEN to Early Intervention allowing children with learning disabilities to make better progress, more quickly.
- There is multi-agency Early Years meetings to look at which services children with complex needs are currently accessing and to plan for the future.
- Establishing the Children with Complex Needs team under one manager and within one building has helped to improve communication and information sharing.
- Wigan has always held transition reviews in Year 9 although this has only recently become a legislative requirement.

- The Children with Complex Needs sub-group organised a development day in October 2002 and put together an action plan.
- Inter-agency working is recognised as being good in Wigan.
- The “Trigger Form” was introduced as a means of sharing information between agencies and to help identify health and social care needs and plan for the future.
- Health care support is provided by the Learning Disability Nursing Service, which adopts a holistic approach to health care covering emotional and psychological needs as well as physical needs. The service has been approached by the northwest Training and Development Team and recognised as an example of good practice.
- The annual Transition Event has received positive feedback and gives an opportunity for young people and their parents / carers to obtain information and advice.
- Parents and Carers are encouraged to be involved in decision-making groups, and supported to undertake self-advocacy training which equips them to take part in meetings.
- There is recognition across agencies that Person Centred Planning is a positive way forward.

4.4.3 Providers Perceived Areas for improvement

Information:

- Better transfer of information from Early Years providers (e.g. nurseries) to schools is needed.
- More should be done to ensure people understand the transition review and do not feel intimidated.

Joint Working:

- Better integration of agencies is essential for early intervention.
- Adult Social Services should reach in to children’s services. One possibility would be to have a link person to work across children’s and adults services.
- Consideration should be given to an integrated team for children with complex needs, with therapy, nursing and social input.

Process:

- The key issue is getting the right professionals in the right place at the right time, having a clear view about what is available for young people.
- Tracking of children needs to be improved.
- There is a need for more positive talk about where a child wants to be in 5 years time.
- A means of evaluating the effectiveness of the transition process needs to be put into place. There is no specific evidence that we are good at transition.
- The “murkier” end is the older age group and links with adult services.

Services:

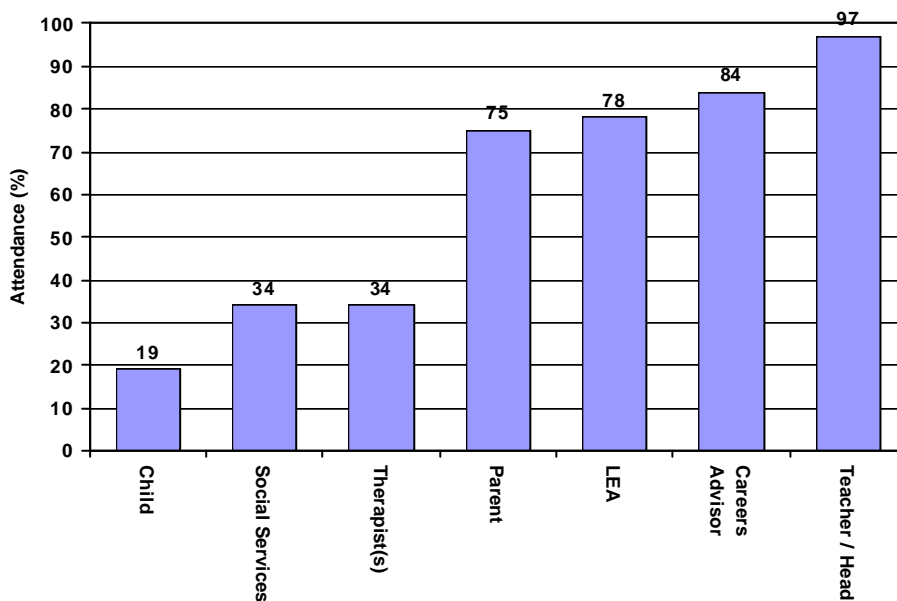
- More local services are needed for children with complex needs.
- Gaps in services need to be identified so that these can be filled.
- Young people need to be given more support to access leisure facilities.
- There are gaps in services for people with challenging behaviour or high dependency.

4.5. Results from sampling of Transition Plans

An individual Transition Plan is produced following the 14+ Transition Review. In order to gain a greater understanding of the implementation and outcome of the 14+ transition review a sample of 32 transition plans were examined. This constituted all of the plans produced for young people in special schools, over the past two years.

The main observations were:

- Attendance levels at the Transition Reviews are shown in the following chart (2001/2):



- There was evidence of "Trigger Forms" (to inform Health and / or Social Services of a need for support) in 19% of the Reviews.
- The Transition Review meetings were scheduled to last for 30-45 minutes depending on the school.

- Many schools used a standard format for the Transition Plan, and in many cases the wording seemed to be standardised. For example, a common paragraph was:

“It is planned that (Name) will continue to attend ___ School throughout Key Stage 4 and may transfer to the Further Education Unit to the age of 19. (Name) and her parents will continue to receive advice and support from the Careers Service including access to training and vocational education, college or employment.”

- In general, the Transition Plans were 2-3 pages long. Attached to the plans were reports from the school, and in some cases a Therapist and / or Careers Advisor.
- The recommendations for young people leaving school were fairly general. In many cases these were listed as:
 - *Further Education Unit*
 - *Full time college*
 - *Residential specialist college*
 - *Supported employment / training*

Some of the other options given included Social Services options and modern apprenticeships.

- Some children had had an initial interview with a Careers Advisor prior to the Transition Review, but in other cases, the Transition Plan stated that they would be given this opportunity in the future.
- At Two Porches School, the Transition Plans were supported by a “Transitional Careers Action Plan” produced by the Careers Advisor, which referred to the child’s interests and aspirations for the future.
- The Transition Plan produced by Peterhouse School (an out of borough school) included a photograph and “pen picture” of the child on the front page. It also included sections on “Perceptions of Future Need” (to record the views of the pupil, parents, Social Services and the school), and a “Pupil Profile” listing likes, dislikes, strengths, needs, behaviours and relevant issues.

Held within the appendices, Figure 4, is a detailed tabulated presentation of the Transition Plan sampling data.

4.6. Key Messages from Phase 1

The table below summarises the key messages identified in Phase 1 of the review, and how these have been addressed.

| Key findings from Phase 1 | Recommendations |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Legislation and guidance directs that the transition plan must pay attention to the young person's perspective, and that the views of young people themselves should be sought and recorded wherever possible (4.1.3). ➤ Nationally there is an increasing emphasis on adopting the principles of person centred planning. Currently the 14+ transition review meetings and the transition plan do not adopt a person centred approach. For example, only 19% of young people and 75% of parents attended their reviews during 2001/02 (4.2.4 & 4.5). ➤ There is no objective evidence that we are good at transition, as the effectiveness of the process is not evaluated (4.4.3). ➤ The provision of management information from the Social Services Department was variable in its availability and timeliness. For example, accurate figures against the National Assessment Framework targets could not be provided (4.3.11). ➤ In Wigan the Transition Steering Group aims to clarify processes, procedures and protocols. At the time of this review these had not been fully documented and communicated to all stakeholders (4.3.7). ➤ Problems with communication and co-ordination between agencies; and between adults and children's Social Services have been recognised (4.4.1). ➤ The main methods of communicating with service users have been by the annual transition event and a leaflet provided which is given to parents and carers at the 14+ transition review (4.3.8). ➤ The individual person has many 'transition' periods in their life when they may need intervention or help from various statutory agencies, not simply in what has been regarded as the 'transitional stages' (4.4.3). | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Adopt a person centred approach to transition planning. ➤ Ensure that 14+ transition review meetings take place when the person can attend and that their views are recorded in the transition plan. ➤ Ensure that there are performance measuring and monitoring systems in place to track the progress of young people and to demonstrate and improve the effectiveness of the transition process. ➤ Formalise and document transition planning policy, procedures and protocols. ➤ Ensure greater integration of services. ➤ Implement more effective ways of communicating with service users. ➤ Develop a Transition Charter. |

5. PHASE 2: THE VIEWS OF SERVICE USERS AND CARERS

5.1. During Phase 2 of the review the Select Committee concentrated on consulting with service users and carers to obtain their views, aspirations and shared experiences of transition planning. People involved in this consultation ranged from young people approaching school leaving age to those who have been through the transition process. In addition, the voluntary sector was consulted. The table below is a summary of the consultation that was carried out.

| Stakeholders | Method of Consultation |
|---|--|
| Parents and Carers | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Press release • Local radio advertisement • Flyers sent out to parents of children on the "Children's Disability Register" • Telephone Questionnaire (5 responses) • Postal Questionnaire to parents (3 responses) • Postal questionnaire to young people who had recently left school (20 responses) • Meeting with young people attending Hawkley Brook Further Education Unit (9 young people attended) • "Reach for the Stars" seminar (approx 50 people attended) • Parents and Carers Forum (6 parents attended) |
| Young people who have been through transition | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Press release • Local radio advertisement • Post Transition Forum (2 adults with physical disabilities attended) |
| Voluntary Groups | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Postal Questionnaire (4 responses) • Voluntary Group Forum • Consultation with SCOPE |

5.2. The Select Committee identified three stages of transition planning, which are:

- (i) Preparation for the 14+ transition review
- (ii) The 14+ transition review
- (iii) Post transition.

Parents, carers and young people informed the Select Committee of their experiences in each of the aforementioned areas. In addition, they raised a number of other issues relating to service provision, and they questioned whether transition planning started early enough.

The following views were expressed at the Parents and Carers Forum and the Post Transition Forum held in January 2003 in Wigan Town Hall. Six parents attended the Parents and Carers Forum, and two adults with physical disabilities attended the Post Transition Forum. Most of the views expressed are those of the parents.

5.2.1. Parents, carers and young people offered their views about their preparation for the 14+ Transition Review:

The following comments were made:

- Parents felt they had not been adequately prepared so that they were not able to ask the right questions at the review meeting.
- Prior to the review, the professionals write reports and share them with one another but they are not shared with the parents, so they have no opportunity to comment or to correct any errors.
- There seemed to be no importance attached to the meeting. It was different from the other annual reviews only in the fact that different people were there.
- Parents did not know who was going to be at the review, and some of the key professionals did not attend. Attendance by the professionals should be mandatory rather than just being invited.
- It would be useful to have a meeting a year before the transition review to inform and prepare parents, and talk them through the process and what the 14+ review is about.
- Parents are bombarded with information at the review meeting (phone numbers etc), and it is too much at one time.
- Parents said they were promised a "mentor" to take them through transition, but they did not have one. This would be a definite improvement to the process.
- The Education Department attends the review, but they do not have a vested interest in the child. Also the teacher is not an expert on the child. They only see them in school hours and during term time. The parent and the children themselves are the experts.
- There should be regular holistic reviews throughout a child's life. The 14+ review would then not need to be such a big deal.
- The transition process could be improved by involving people who have been through transition to help and support other young people.

Profile 5

One young person went to residential college but decided she wanted to come home. She now lives in her own home with support from Social Services and she attends Fourways day service. She shares her house with another person who has more complex needs, and she feels that this person seems to get priority over the care. She also feels restricted in what she is allowed to do.

(Source: testimony given at Parents Forum)

5.2.2. Parents, carers and young people described their perceptions of the transition review meeting:

The following comments were made:

- The review meeting was just like an informal chat.
- Nothing was discussed about employment, leisure etc. Parents are given phone numbers at the review meeting, but these are not always correct. There is no mapping of services, and parents said they had found out about leisure opportunities by chance (e.g. one parent said they had seen a notice advertising a youth club for young people with disabilities).
- The review meeting can be intimidating for parents, who may not understand the professional language used.
- There was a view that the professionals had already formulated an opinion before the parent walked through the door.
- Why can't parents have access to the information held about their child by Education and Social Services?
- A mentor would know what should happen at a review meeting and explain this to the parent in plain English.
- The transition review was described as "insipid". It is more a view of what the child has done with no forward thinking.
- One parent said there was no structure to the meeting. Nobody chaired the meeting or explained the purpose and what would happen.
- Not enough time is allocated to the meeting. It lasts for about 20 minutes and there is a queue of other people waiting outside.
- The professionals often said it was too early to start planning for the future, but parents felt there was a need to start early because of the lack of services available. It takes time to put a package together.
- Despite the problems, parents did not feel the review was "bad". They received an understandable report at the end of it, although this is a prescriptive statement, not consultative.

5.2.3. Parents, carers and young people felt there were some Education issues:

The following comments were made:

- It is assumed that everyone with a learning disability goes to a special school but this is not the case. They are not a discrete group. This will become more of an issue as special schools are closing and there is more integration.
- It is assumed that children with learning disabilities who are in mainstream schools are more able than those who attend special schools. This is not always true.

- We should not assume that all children want to leave school at 19. Some may want to leave at 16.

Profile 6

One young person who attended a special school was told that he could not take GCSE's because they were not accommodated in his school. However, he persisted and finally achieved GCSE's and an "A" Level in Spanish. He is now a qualified travel agent, but he was not able to become an interpreter, which is what he really wanted to do. He is an active member of SCOPE and runs a training course for people who have had a stroke.

(Source: Personal testimony)

5.2.4. Parents, carers and young people felt there were some Social Services issues:

The following comments were made:

- It can be difficult to get hold of a social worker due to staff shortages and lots of staff changes (one parent said they have had 3 social workers in a short space of time, and others had similar experiences).
- One parent felt that there was a lack of communication between adults and children's services. It was left to the parent to chase the social worker.
- There was a view amongst the group that relationships between Education and Social Services were an issue.
- Few parents have a copy of the care plan for their child. They may not know that they can ask for this.
- It is assumed that parents who do not have a social worker do not want one but this is not the case. There was a perception amongst the parents that most children at 14 do not have a social worker.
- Parents want services that are appropriate for their child, but they need to know what options are available.
- Education provides a blanket service. They do everything for the child whilst they are in school. However, at transition this changes and you are alone. The young person is not known to Social Services. Social Services should have an active role in all transition reviews, e.g. in mentoring.
- Nobody who attended the Parents Forum had had an adult assessment, although one parent had a child aged 17 and one aged 18.
- There was a feeling that commissioners should lead the way in Person Centred Planning. They should determine what the needs would be in 5 years time and then ask the providers what they can offer.

- When asked about the positive aspects, parents felt that the staff were good but they were restricted in what they could do. In terms of services, something is better than nothing.

5.2.5. **Parents, carers and young people felt there were issues relating to Post Transition:**

The following comments were made:

One parent said she did not receive any help in trying to get her child into school and to sort out transport and support.

- There was a perception among some parents that the only option for young people who do not go to college are day centres. One parent suggested setting up day care provision specifically for young people (aged 18-30), so that they can mix with people their own age.
- There is not enough information on direct payments.
- More support is needed for young people when they leave school, e.g. support at college and help and encouragement with pursuing their interests and aspirations.
- The people who attended the post transition forum felt that integration into mainstream education is important, as the relative “safety” of special schools does not prepare people for the real world.

Profile 7

One young person aged 19 has very complex needs. Her school was supportive in planning for her future, and the Learning Disabilities Team Manager and Social Worker were involved. There was no suitable provision in-borough, so they opted for an out of borough placement in Bamber Bridge. However, soon before she was due to start, the Health Complex Needs Team suddenly raised the issue of her epilepsy, and said that it was too high a risk to transport her to her placement. It took five months to resolve this. The problem identified in this case is one of planning. The person had had epilepsy for 19 years and the health and safety issue should have been identified and resolved sooner before it caused difficulties.

(Source: testimony given at Parents Forum)

5.3. **Voluntary groups informed the Select Committee:**

- Partnership working and information sharing is effective in Wigan.
- Plan long term.
- Ensure people are trained for the job.
- Stop using jargon, be consistent and state the facts more clearly.

- There is limited support available for older teenagers with complex needs. They should receive age-appropriate services rather than being with much younger children.
- Parents feel frustrated and isolated and need to be listened to and supported.
- There should be more publicity of the services provided in the borough and more consultation with the public. Young people should be involved in coming up with ideas.

Profile 8: Young People's Centre at Kingsdown High School

The Young Person's Centre provides a morning playschool for approximately 45 children and an afternoon playgroup for approximately 30 children. Inclusion is an important part of the service, and there are currently 14 children with disabilities using the after school and holiday care.

There is no age limit for the centre, and children can continue attending until they feel they are too old. However, there is very little social provision in the borough for older children and they do not have anywhere to go once they stop going to the Young People's Centre.

(Source: Young People's Centre)

5.4. Commissioned consultation: SCOPE

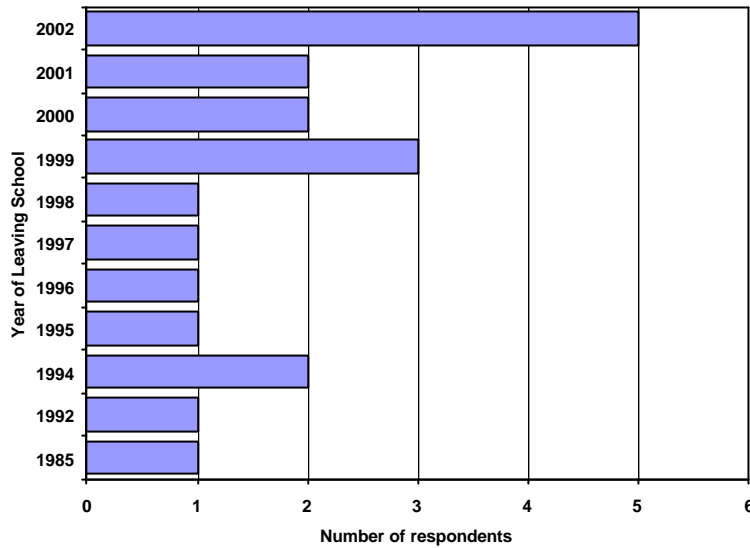
The Select Committee commissioned Wigan and Leigh SCOPE to undertake a consultation exercise with staff, families, children and young people about the transition process. This exercise was undertaken in 4 parts:

- **Part One** consisted of a questionnaire to young people who have left school. Twenty questionnaires were returned.
- **Part Two** was a combination of individual and group discussion with families of young people aged from 13-22 years old.
- **Part Three** involved discussing transition and the future with a group of 9 young people aged 16-18, from Hawkey Brook Further Education Unit (based at Hope School).
- **Part Four** was a seminar entitled 'Reach for the stars', attended by approximately 50 family members, young people and service staff.

The output from this consultation exercise was a written report entitled 'Reach for the stars', which records views, shared experiences and aspirations for the future.

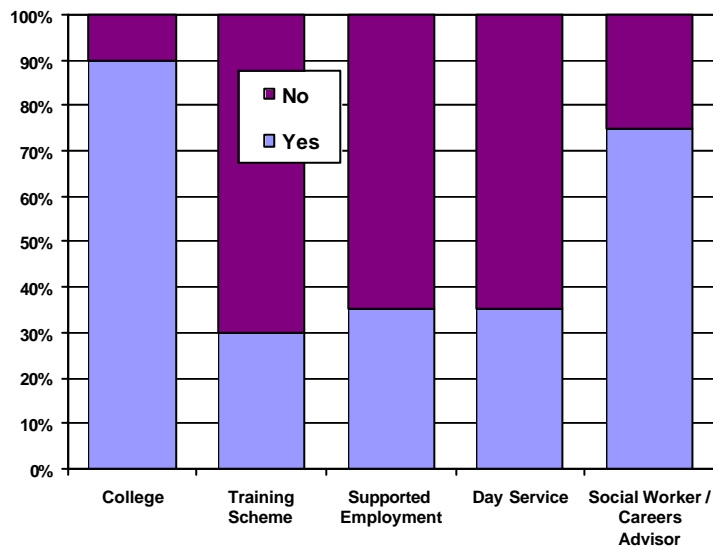
5.4.1 SCOPE Part One findings: Summary of questionnaire responses

Twenty young people returned the questionnaire. Their ages ranged from 16 to 30 years. The following graph shown the years in which they left school:



5.4.2. The young people were asked what services they were currently receiving. Their responses are shown in the graph below:

% of respondents currently receiving a mix of services



5.4.3 Issues raised by the young people

- The transition between leaving school and going to college was satisfactory, but there was no after support. For example, many individuals stated that they had been passed from course to course with no real progression or purpose.
- Nine out of the 21 respondents said they had enough support before, during and after school.
- Some of the further comments made by individual respondents are shown below:

Comments from young people

"I feel that I didn't get enough support after leaving school because I wanted to go to a local college and not a specialist one"

"I only got help from my teachers and helpers"

"At school I had help in my classes and at college I have a helper in my class"

"I received no support at all until I was 18 years old"

"I was helped during my transition from school to college by Social Services and the support workers at my college"

"My school provided good support in choosing and applying for college. However, my physiotherapy and occupational therapy treatment ended very abruptly. Also no advice was given regarding the benefits I was entitled to and I only found out by word of mouth"

"I was not told about colleges for special educational needs and there were not enough places this side of the borough. My parents had to fight with the Education Department for months as they think we have learning problems and so do our parents. They therefore push a choice on us that is not always the right one"

"I feel everyone worked hard to get me into the right college and to get me funding"

"I feel that I did not receive enough support after leaving school"

"I got a lot of support during school but received very little after leaving"

5.4.4. SCOPE Part Two findings: Summary of family discussions

Families expressed a number of concerns and identified the following areas for improvement:

- **Effective planning systems**
It is essential that all partners are involved early on in the transition process to enable an effective plan to be worked on.

- **Information**
Information that provides real choices about all the options that are available for young people was seen as an essential requirement for families.
- **Person centred approach**
The tools of person centred planning would enable young people and their families to feel part of the process. It will also provide an on going plan which can be revisited during and after the transitional process.
- **Co-ordination and communication**
Families need some clarity as to who should be doing what. There is a need for someone to take responsibility for co-ordinating the whole process and to maintain contact with the family and young person throughout.
- **Meaningful days**
The greatest anxiety for families was what their young people would be doing all day. Families stressed that young people's days must have a purpose and meaning and not merely about existing.
- **Leisure and social opportunities**
This was seen as essential for quality of life. Opportunities in the evenings and at weekends needed to be available.
- **Direct Payments**
Direct payments were seen as a real option for many young people who wanted to access leisure and social opportunities. For others it was seen as more appropriate to have more support within the family setting rather than sending their young person somewhere else.
- **Health**
More awareness is needed in this area and specific pathways need to be established.

5.4.5. **SCOPE Part Three findings: Summary of meeting with young people at Hawkley Brook**

In general, the young people's views of Hawkley Brook were very positive. They stated that it was different from school, for example, they did not need to wear a uniform, they were treated more like adults, it was more relaxed and it helped them to become more independent.

The young people all said they were welcome to attend and contribute to their reviews. They found this was useful and enabled them to comment on what they enjoyed and what they would like to do in the future.

The frustrations when young people were leaving Hawkley Brook were around getting the social worker from the adult teams involved. The Social Services Department, having had no prior social work input did not know some young people. Consistently people were being told it is "too early", which was frustrating for the family, the young person and the F.E. Unit. Positive Futures is now involved in supporting the F.E. Unit with transition, but the more complex the need the more likely it is that the young person will need a social worker to be involved.

Further comments relating to Hawkley Brook are provided in section 6.8. within Phase 3 of the report (What Happens after Transition?).

5.4.6. SCOPE Part four findings: "Reach for the Stars" seminar

The outcomes of the seminar, which aimed to reach out to young people and their families before, during and after transition are summarised below:

- There was a general consensus that there was very few quality opportunities for individuals to access once they had left school.
- It was felt that the transition review was not being used to plan for the future, and there was no clear plan for young people as an outcome of the review.
- Direct payments were discussed in detail. Some individuals were very interested in pursuing direct payments, whilst others said they would rather have a service which was based within an actual setting.
- Families wanted support in trying to work out an individual person centred plan for their son or daughter, which focussed very specifically on their needs and where families actively participate in the plan.
- Some families were clear about what they wanted for the future whilst the majority kept emphasising they did not know what options and choices were available.
- The young people discussed their own dreams and aspirations. Many of the young people expressed their desire to go to college and then to get a job.
- A key issue for families and young people was the lack of social and leisure opportunities and they recognised the need for support in order to achieve this.
- Parents and carers attending the seminar expressed some anxiety about their lack of understanding of the transition process.

5.5. Key Findings from Phase 2

The table below summarises the key messages identified in phase 2 of the review, and how these have been addressed.

| Key findings from Phase 2 | Recommendations |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Parents, carers and young people do not feel adequately prepared in advance of the 14 + transition review (5.2.1). ➤ Parents, carers and young people do not feel engaged and empowered in the 14+ transition review meeting and there is not enough discussion about the options for employment, leisure and social opportunities (5.2.2, 1.6). ➤ Parents feel that they are not adequately supported through the transition process, particularly by the Social Services Department (5.2.4; 5.4.3). ➤ Parents expressed anxiety about the limited choices and post transition opportunities, within the Borough, for young people with complex needs (5.2.5). ➤ Families stressed that young people's days must have a purpose and meaning and not merely about existing. In particular, leisure and social opportunities were seen as essential for quality of life. Direct payments were recognised as a vehicle for greater choice (5.4.4). | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Ensure that parents, carers and young people have one to one support and/or mentoring to enable them to participate fully in the review meeting. ➤ Appoint a lead person with responsibility for supporting and maintaining contact with families and young people going through the stages of the persons centred plan. ➤ Through consultation with parents, carers and young people, map all quality of life services and opportunities for young people with complex needs within the Borough. |

6. PHASE 3: WHAT HAPPENS AFTER TRANSITION?

6.1. The Select Committee felt that a review of transition must look beyond the planning process and consider what services and support are available to young people with complex needs when they leave school. Some of the professionals involved took a view, whether justified or not, that those expressing dissatisfaction with transition may be disappointed with the outcome rather than the process itself. For some service users, it was clear that a successful transition was measured by the quality and choice of services available locally in terms of housing, employment and training, leisure and social life.

6.2. Valuing People identifies a number of objectives and targets relating to services, which should determine support given to adults with learning disabilities. These include:

- Valuing People, Objective 3: *“to enable people with learning disabilities to have as much choice and control as possible over their lives through advocacy and a person centred approach to planning the services they need.”*
- Sub-objective 3.3: *“making direct payments available to all those people with learning disabilities who request them and who meet the requirements of the scheme”*

Proposed Performance Indicator: % of people with learning disabilities receiving community based services who are receiving direct payments

- Sub-objective 3.4: *“developing locally agreed protocols and procedures to ensure that services are based upon a person centred approach”.*
- Sub-objective 3.5: *“ensuring that people with learning disabilities are fully and actively involved in all decisions affecting their lives”.*
- Objective 6: *“to enable people with learning disabilities and their families to have greater choice and control over where and how they live.”*
- Objective 7: *“ to enable people with learning disabilities to lead full and purposeful lives within their community and to develop a range of friendships, activities and relationships.”*
- Objective 8: *“to enable more people with learning disabilities to participate in all forms of employment, wherever possible in paid work and to make a valued contribution to the world of work.”*

6.3. Mindful of these objectives, during Phase three of the review the Select Committee investigated the provision for young people when they leave school. This was primarily done by interviewing managers and service providers, discussions with young people and information gathered at the Transition Event, including leaflets and brochures about local and out of borough services.

Valuing People Overview

6.4. **Martin Routledge** of the Valuing People Support Team was consulted about what needs to be done to make transition a success for people. He suggested that we would want to see, for individuals:

- Plans for post school lives which increasingly reflect the five key features of person centred planning (see 4.2.4)
- The tailoring of resources and services to reflect person centred plans i.e. the service would 'fit the person' rather than the person fit the service.

Martin felt that greater importance should be given to anecdotal evidence about what works and what does not work. Other more objective measures could also be used to see movement in positive directions, e.g.:

- Numbers of school leavers using direct payments
- Numbers entering employment
- Reductions in numbers entering traditional day services
- Numbers entering mainstream adult/further education.

Once this simple evaluation has taken place, it would be useful to explore outcomes in greater depth such as checking post school careers to ensure traditional options are not simply replaced by "new traditional services" like doing the same college classes over and over, etc.

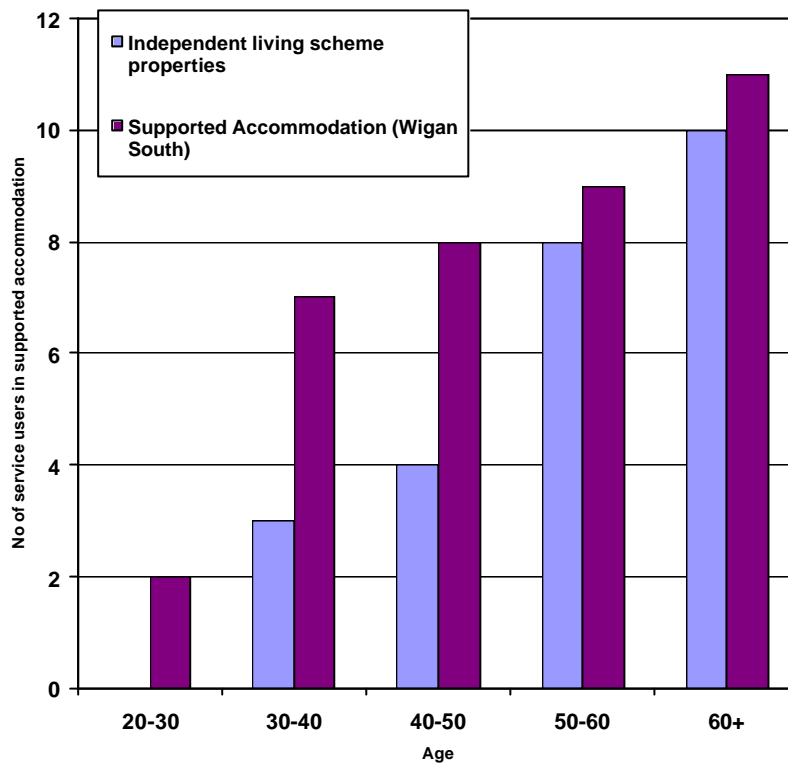
Martin also recommended that we consider more strategic outcomes. Individuals are unlikely to access new choices and options unless organisations responsible for commissioning ensure that those choices and options are provided. Hence there is a need for a multi-agency group (Social Services, health, education, employment, careers etc) that develops strategies and services to meet those changing needs. Evidence collected from individual planning can be successfully used to develop cross agency action plans for change.

6.5. Housing

Valuing People, Objective 6 is *"to enable people with learning disabilities and their families to have greater choice and control over where and how they live"*.

The strategic role in managing Care in the Community Housing remains with the Council and Wigan and Leigh Housing (W&LH) as the main service providers. The Care in the Community Housing Co-ordinator of W&LH, provides a central role for liaison with other agencies/departments around needs of vulnerable people.

Social Services undertake a needs assessment and W&LH determine what type of housing would be most appropriate. W&LH provide 21 independent living properties within the Borough (as of 11th April). In addition, Social Services provide supported accommodation where 108 people are helped to live in their own homes with support (72 properties). In a sample of 62 adults in independent living/supported accommodation only 2 were under the age of 30 years old (see graph below).



The Housing Link Team provides a flexible housing support service for vulnerable people who require support to access and set up a new tenancy or to maintain an existing tenancy for any period up to a maximum of 2 years. The aim is to enable service users to achieve the maximum possible independence. The team provides housing related support rather than care, so it is not a substitute for social services provision.

The types of support provided can vary according to the person's needs however the following is a list of the main areas, which are covered:

1. Help with moving on to new accommodation
2. Assistance with benefit claims
3. Advice on budgeting and/or debt management
4. Supporting/teaching of housing related life – skills to establish a successful tenancy
5. Liaising with agencies working with the individual
6. Assistance with maintaining a safe property and safe use of appliances
7. Help with repair issues
8. Dealing with neighbour disputes / nuisance
9. Help with settling into the local community.

The Care in the Community Housing Co-ordinator identified the following areas for improvement:

- Better / earlier planning for individuals who may be coming to an age where they may want to live in their own tenancy, e.g. planning whilst someone is still in hospital.
- Possible conversion of current stock. For example, in one area there are a number of small one-bedroom bungalows, which could potentially be converted into suitable accommodation for people with a disability by converting two properties into one.

- Provision of a range of easy-to-read information leaflets. W&LH is currently working with the Social Services Learning Disabilities Team to achieve this.

6.6. Leisure

Valuing People, Objective 7 is *“to enable people with learning disabilities to lead full and purposeful lives within their community and to develop a range of friendships, activities and relationships”*.

The Wigan Leisure and Culture Trust (WL&CT) and Positive Futures have provided a range of activities for people with disabilities based on funding opportunities from a broad range of sources. This includes:

- Structured support through the Active Living Team e.g. Healthstart (See below).
- A 6-week youth club at Queen’s Hall for young people aged 14-21, which would enable them to be assessed and integrated into mainstream activities.
- The Arts Development Section offers one-off events and projects with specific funding.
- Dorset Road Community Centre Dance School
- Youth Arts Challenge
- Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme
- Maydays Festival involvement
- Libraries provide specialist materials for individuals and schools
- Specialist art projects at the Turnpike Gallery
- Disability Sports Forum
- Hope School music project (3 months)

A fundamental difficulty with many of the above activities is the lack of longer-term funding provision. The Executive Director acknowledged that one-off activities require evaluation to demonstrate that there are positive outcomes that may support future funding.

Profile 9: Wigan Leisure and Culture Trust

Healthstart Activity Course

Healthstart is a 10-week course designed to offer a range of safe and effective activities and physical activity opportunities for people with learning difficulties. The aim of the course is to develop a protocol, which will enable all people with learning disabilities to gain a health benefit through effective appropriate physical activity, which meets their individual needs.

Howe Bridge Pool

Howe Bridge has a dedicated session for severely disabled swimmers every Friday – this does not have discounted entry, but carers can also swim at no cost.

(Source: Wigan Leisure and Culture Trust)

A number of short term schemes have been organised specifically for young people with learning disabilities, as listed below:

- Greater Manchester Youth Games 2003 has the following events that have included disabled young people:
 - Swimming (years 5-9) - children with severe learning difficulties are included within this team
 - Netball (U16s) - children with moderate learning difficulties
 - Girls Football (U16s) - children with moderate learning difficulties
 - Athletics (U17s) - children with moderate learning difficulties and severe learning difficulties are included in this event alongside those children with physical disabilities
- Golf coaching for Montrose School (6 weeks)
- Pupil referral unit (EBD) rugby coaching (4 weeks)
- Rugby Union for Montrose School (6 weeks)
- Netball coaching for Montrose School.

The Executive Director identified the following areas for improvement:

- There is no strategic overview or direction in relation to leisure services for people with disabilities.
- The WL&CT wants to forge better strategic links with Social Services and improve those with the voluntary sector, health and education in this area.
- One-off events and projects are promoted in the special schools but there is limited general promotion of leisure services for young people with disabilities. The Children's Disability Register and voluntary organisations are used to advertise specific projects but not general services such as swimming.
- The Active Living Team has specialist training, but there are difficulties in recruiting specialist staff for Healthstart.
- No one within WL&CT has specific responsibility for accessing funding, it is the responsibility of individual managers.
- Provision of information leaflets in a format that is easy-to-read for people with learning disabilities.

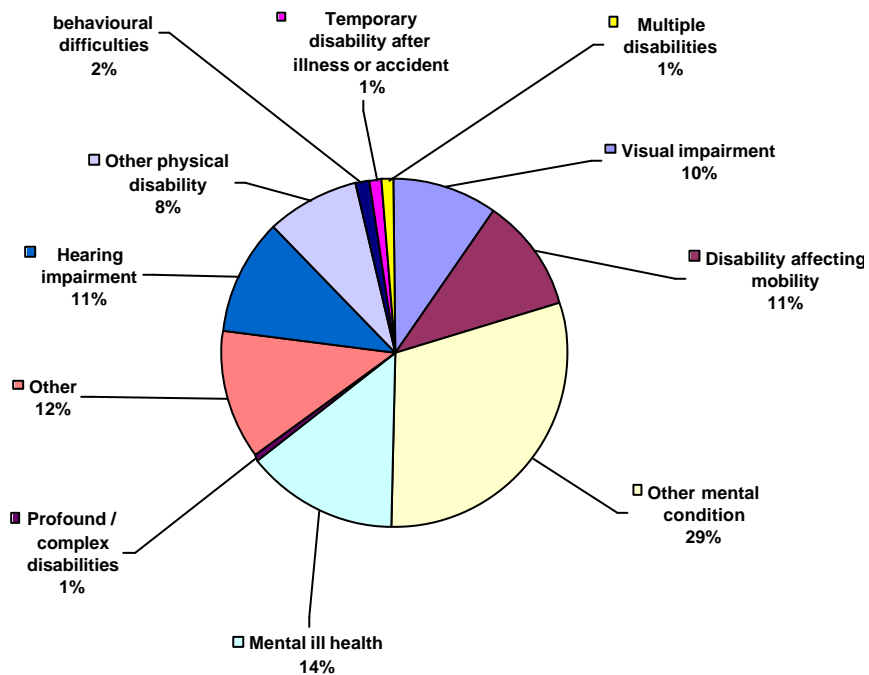
The Active Living Team is involved with Kirklees MBC, benchmarking against initiatives such as the exercise referral scheme (numbers, outcomes etc), resources and training for instructors. The team is also implementing the QUEST model, a national standard, which focuses on procedures and operational standards. The Trust is also a member of APSE for benchmarking in Active Life, Environmental Management and Halls.

6.7. Further Education – Wigan and Leigh College

The Inclusive Learning Manager from Wigan and Leigh College informed the Select Committee that ten years ago, a limited number of specific courses were offered to people with learning disabilities e.g. independent living, literacy, numeracy. Students were not given real curriculum choice. The college now has a support service, which looks at people's interests, identifies an appropriate course and supports them in doing that course. Independence skills are still taught at the college, but this is done alongside another vocational course. Money management comes into the majority of courses.

The College has decided not to offer discrete 'independent living skills' courses but to teach these skills within other courses. When this was done it was found that there was an issue of lack of progression routes for further study. The focus of the college is on independent learning rather than independent living.

- Funding for learning support is based on the needs of individual students. Currently, at Wigan and Leigh College, learners are assessed and the appropriate support is put in place and the costs reclaimed from the Learning and Skills Council through the additional support units. This funding mechanism is under review but will remain the same for the next funding year.
- Young people with complex needs mix with other students. They may be grouped together due to the level of the course they are taking but not because they have a disability, e.g. an entry-level course will attract people who do not have qualifications such as people with learning disabilities or people who have missed out on an education.
- The following chart shows the range of disabilities of people supported by the team.



- The Inclusive Learning Manager links with special schools to do some transition work. Some young people have college links whilst still at school (e.g. attend college one day per week). This enables learners to make a more informed choice for post 16 placement.
- Wigan and Leigh College may not be able to match the requirements for all learners, some learners choose to apply to specialist residential college.

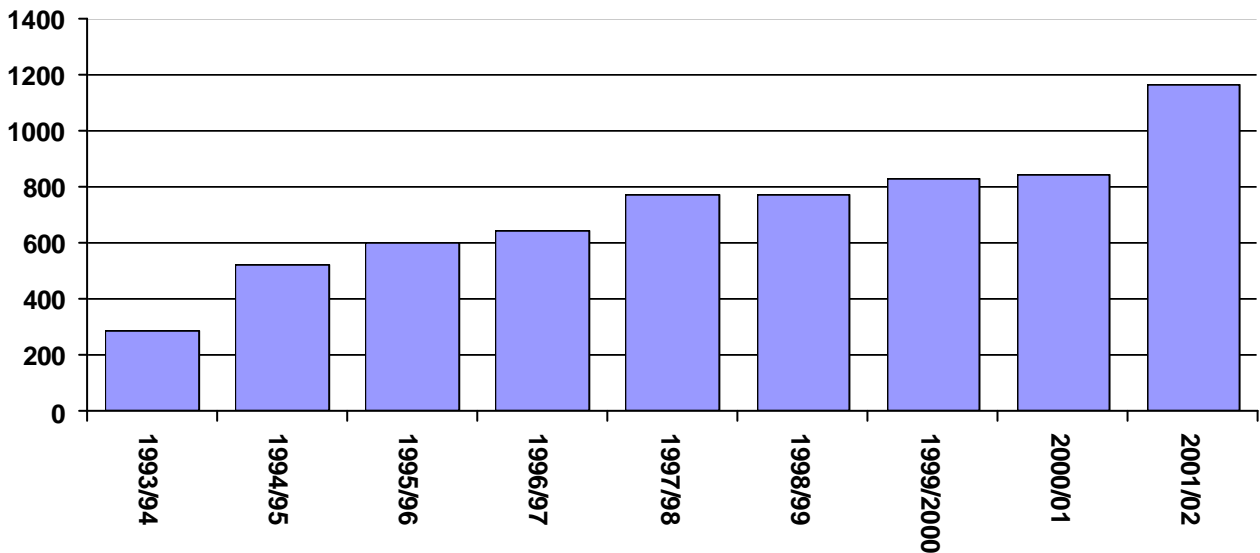
Profile 10

A student leaving Hope School at 16 enrolled at the college to take an entry-level vocational course. The group of students in the class may work together for a third of the timetable on generic units. The student then chose to take brickwork options, and for this part of the timetable he was working with other students doing brickwork at higher levels. At 18, the student may choose to go onto an NVQ level 1 course. The student received leaning support. The support workers role is to ensure that learning is taking place and that reasonable adjustments are made for the learners needs. This may include assisting the learner in taking notes, organizing work and accessing resources.

(Source: Inclusive Learning Manager, Wigan and Leigh College)

- The college has 105 support workers, supporting about 850 students of which 56% were 19 years of age or under. At the time of the review 46 students had come from special schools. The following chart shows the growth in the number of students supported by the team.

Numbers of Students Supported by Inclusive Learning Team



- Some students are not necessarily progressing in their learning but enjoy going to college. Funding is linked to progression, but for some students, maintenance of skill is a successful outcome. The college is about progressing people on for a purpose, not just filling their day.
- Sensory curriculum is for people with very complex needs, e.g. light rooms, sounds, textures that they may respond to. The college does not currently have the facilities to provide this type of curriculum, but would be prepared to look at this.

The Inclusive Learning Manager identified the following areas for improvement:

At transition we need to communicate more clearly to parents, carers and young people what the college is about and what options are available.

- The involvement of Social Services in the college's two-year review, which would assist in the decision making process for the young person, post college.

6.8. Further Education – Hope School (Hawkley Brook) Further Education Unit

As part of the SCOPE consultation exercise 9 students aged between 16-18 years from Hawkley Brook participated. They described a range of options that were made available, which included:

- Catering
- Plantcare
- Ironing
- Recycling
- Classroom Assistant
- Retail
- Construction
- Work experience.

Young people stated that they wanted to gain employment and secure an income in the future. When asked what type of working environment/job they would want they made a number of suggestions, which included:

- Airport
- Information technology and computers
- Teacher/Classroom assistant/Nursery nurse
- Fighter pilot
- Hairdressing/Health and beauty
- Police/Army

6.9. Supported Employment Service

Valuing People, Objective 8: *“to enable more people with learning disabilities to participate in all forms of employment, wherever possible in paid work and to make a valued contribution to the world of work”*

Less than 3% of people with learning disabilities have a job¹⁰. Unofficial information from services in Greater Manchester suggests that the figure is between 3 to 5%. In Wigan the figure is around 4%. Every local authority has to produce an Employment Strategy alongside a Day Centre Modernisation Strategy.

The Learning Disabilities best value review set targets on extending supported employment as follows:

| Year | Target numbers in supported employment |
|----------|--|
| April 02 | 31 |
| April 03 | 40 |
| April 04 | 50 |
| April 05 | 60 |

Within the Council itself, the target for the current year is to place 4 people in paid employment, with a focus on people with learning disabilities. It takes an average of 12 months or more to move someone with a learning disability into open paid employment. The target of 4 is restricted by the number of Employment Training Advisors available to train and support the individual.

The SES have placed people into employment in the following departments of the Council:

| Department | Nature of placement |
|---------------------|---|
| Land and Property | Mental health paid employment (the person has now left the Council) |
| Legal | Mental health paid employment |
| Engineering | Mental health paid employment |
| Grounds maintenance | Mental health paid employment (temp contract) |
| Planning | Mental health work experience |
| Personnel | Physical disability work experience (finished) |
| Chief Execs | Learning disability paid employment |
| Social Services | Learning disability work experience |
| Leisure | Physical disability work experience (being arranged) |
| Education | Learning disability – one person placed in a school on permitted earnings |

The Council's Supported Employment Service (SES) is a professional employment and training consultancy, securing employment opportunities for people who have a disability. SES originally started through MENCAP with funding from Wigan and Leigh College, the service also received funding from Social Services to run a work preparation course within the college. When the funding ran out the whole service was taken into Social Services. The SES works with local employers placing people who have a disability into open paid employment. Where necessary

¹⁰ Source: Association of Supported Employment

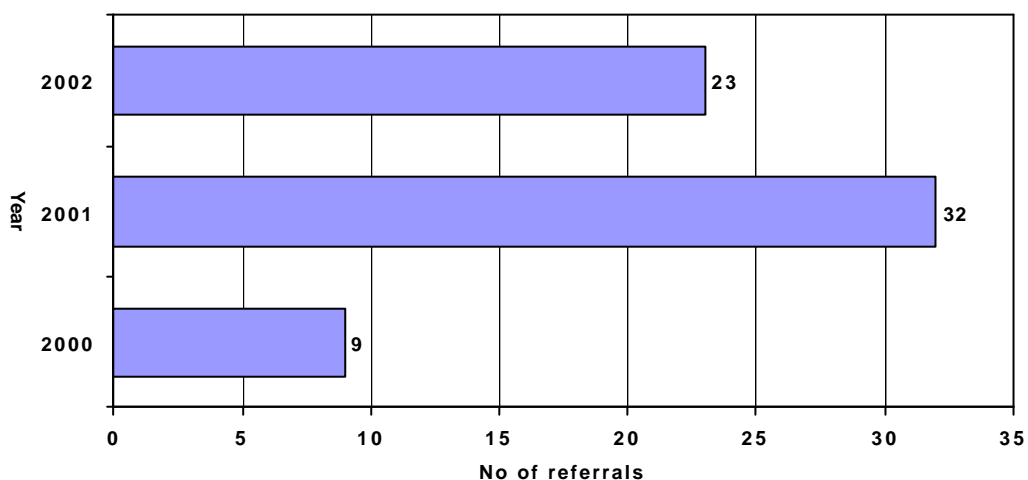
and possible the service will negotiate with the employer to “carve” a job for an individual. This involves negotiating different tasks into and out of the job description to create a suitable post.

The SES manager confirmed that in her experience of working in special schools many young people go into residential college when they leave school. There are many reasons for this, but two main reasons were the fact that residential colleges also provide much needed respite for families and is an alternative to day care provision.

Young people who were consulted by the SES confirmed that they wanted to get a job. However, the actual experience of people in their 20s and 30s was that they went round in circles going to college and training courses and gaining certificates. SES was originally set up to provide an alternative to this experience.

Referrals to the SES are via social work teams. Sometimes parents ring direct, but they are advised to go through Social Services. Most people who are referred have what would be classed as severe or borderline moderate-severe learning disabilities by main stream employment and training providers standards. Currently there is nobody who would be classed as having complex needs. Overall, 80 – 100 people are currently on the register.

The chart below shows the referrals to the SES over the past three years:



There are other organisations locally that support people into employment, e.g. Remploy (through the Workstep programme and New Deal for Disabled People), Oak Lea Trust (through the Job Centre Plus Work Preparation programme). “Access to Work” which provides aids and adaptations for people with physical disabilities and limited mentor support for people who have a learning disability (available through the Job Centre Plus). The SES differs in the model of supported employment it uses and the amount of support it can offer and in the fact that it supports people who have been classed as unemployable by mainstream providers or failed in one of the provisions listed above.

Profile 11

Miss A lives in Ashton and is 23 years old. Initially Miss A undertook the work skills training course designed by the service. She was unsure as to the type of work she wanted to move into and said that she felt she would be happy trying any kind of work experience but she enjoyed being with people.

A suitable placement was found in the leisure industry, and the SES provided one to one support in the work place until Miss A was able to carry out the tasks required to an acceptable standard. Following a very successful placement Miss A was offered open paid employment by the Manager. The one to one support continued to ensure that Miss A was up to speed and meeting all quality standards of the employer.

(Source: SES)

The SES Manager identified the following areas for improvement:

- The Council does not track people's journeys after transition. This may be why people are going round in circles – they need to develop relevant skills at the relevant times and there should be a progression pathway to prevent people getting stuck in the systems or lost. People who choose not to go into day centres often end up at home.
- There may be a need for respite being available in different and more flexible ways up to the transition stage and beyond.
- There is a need to establish more accurate unit costs in providing SES. The service is expensive but it is considered cost-effective in the long term. This is backed up by some research that was undertaken by Cardiff University.
- More involvement of parents / carers and people with learning disabilities in defining needs and designing services.
- More independent advocacy for people with learning disabilities.

Profile 12

Mr C lives in Worsley Mesnes and he is 36 years old. He has a severe learning disability and is diagnosed with Downs Syndrome. Mr. C began a work experience with a supermarket for two days per week and his job was to replenish shelves. SES staff carried out detailed job, task and work place culture analysis before Mr. C started his placement. Although having one to one support, Mr C was initially apprehensive about starting work but within weeks he settled in and began to build up relationships at work and make new friends.

Although a valued member of the work team there were no planned vacancies in the supermarket, but Mr C was offered employment with another supermarket chain. SES staff have carried out the full analysis of task, job, workplace culture and are presently supporting Mr. C one to one in his new job.

(Source: SES)

6.10. Social Services Provision

Services for adults with learning disabilities were recently inspected by the Social Services Inspectorate following a best value review. The results of the inspection were that the service served most people well and had excellent prospects for improvement.

Supported Accommodation

The Learning Disability Service has changed dramatically over the past few years. People with learning disabilities used to live in one of five hostels, or in Calderstones long stay hospital. There is now one remaining hostel (The Pines), and 52 Supported Accommodation Service (SAS) properties, where up to 4 people per property are given 24 hour support to live independently. There is a commitment to move the remaining 27 people from the Pines into the SAS.

Independent Living

The Independent Living Service supports 29 people. This differs from SAS in that it does not provide 24 hour support but offers more general, less intensive support to enable people to live independently in their own homes.

Short Term Breaks
The Pines has a Short Term Break (STB) service providing respite for families and meaningful activities for people with learning disabilities who live at home with their parents. There are four-bedded STB services at Golborne and Leigh, and also two Training and Development flats to assess the support needs of young people moving into greater independence. The aim is to try to enable people to experience an ordinary life and to be integrated into the community.

Day Care Services

Day services used to be very traditional, but there have been some significant changes. The vision has been to move towards smaller community bases for day care, with close links with work and leisure. This has been achieved with varying degrees of consistency across the borough. We now have four Day Centres and 40 off-site community bases including the Goodbodies Café and charity shops etc where people do voluntary work.

The Service Manager (Adult Provider) identified the following areas for improvement:

- There is a crisis of confidence amongst parents, who have a lot of fear about provision for their children when they leave school. The Service Manager said this is often due to myths and a lack of knowledge about what services actually exist. There needs to be more marketing of services.
- There is a gap in holiday provision for young people aged 14+. One option is that they could access adult services to have "taster sessions".

6.11. Direct Payments

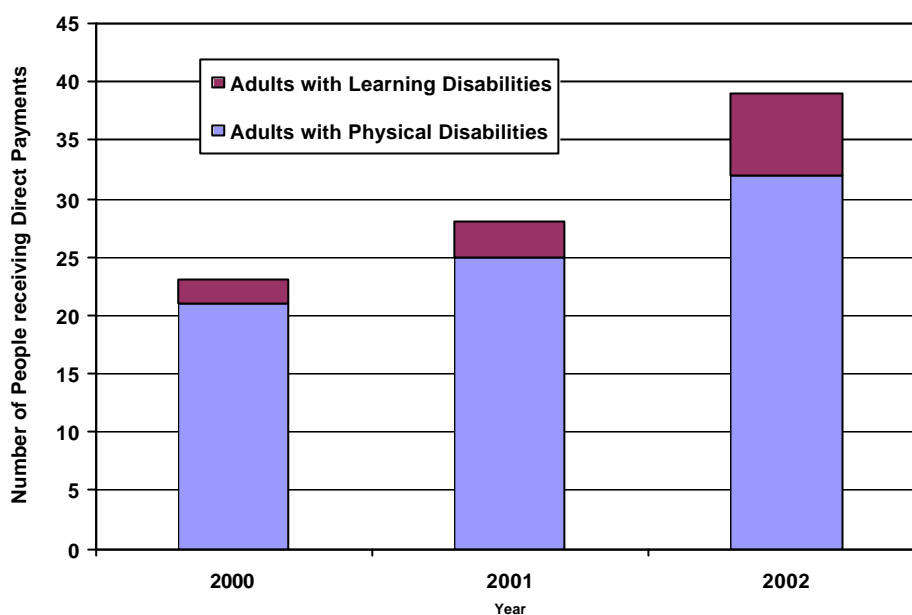
Valuing People, Objective 3: *"to enable people with learning disabilities to have as much choice and control as possible over their lives through advocacy and a person centred approach to planning the services they need."*

Furthermore, sub-objective 3.3: *"making direct payments available to all those people with learning disabilities who request them and who meet the requirements of the scheme"*

Direct payments are cash payments service users can receive from Social Services departments to purchase for themselves services to meet their assessed needs. The only services they cannot be used for are in-house services and permanent residential care. Currently in Wigan there is a total of 57 people receiving direct payments with a further 6 new referrals. The table below provides a summary breakdown.

| Client Groups | Number |
|--|--------|
| Under 65 with physical disability | 38 |
| Under 65 with a learning disability | 11 |
| Parents of disabled children | 3 |
| Over 65 under Older Persons Community Mental Health Team | 3 |
| Over 65 with a physical disability | 1 |
| Carer | 1 |

The growth in the number of people with learning and physical disabilities receiving direct payments over the last 3 years is shown below in the following graph:



The Direct Payments Manager meets regularly with colleagues from 15 other surrounding local authorities to compare the number of clients on each scheme. In addition, periodic comparisons are made of rates paid. The following table below provides a comparative summary of surrounding authorities and the breakdown of client groups receiving direct payments.

Number of people receiving direct payments in neighbouring authorities (as at 30/09/02)

| | Older People | Learning Disability | Physical Disability | Sensory Impaired | Young Carers | Mental Health | Carers of Disabled Children | Disabled Children | Carers | Total |
|------------|--------------|---------------------|---------------------|------------------|--------------|---------------|-----------------------------|-------------------|--------|-------|
| Blackburn | 5 | 9 | 8 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 22 |
| Bolton | 2 | 4 | 22 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 32 |
| Bury | 1 | 2 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 6 |
| Knowsley | 0 | 6 | 10 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 16 |
| Manchester | 18 | 14 | 83 | 8 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 11 | 137 |
| Oldham | 3 | 2 | 13 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 22 |
| Rochdale | 4 | 0 | 16 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 21 |
| Salford | 5 | 10 | 16 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 31 |
| Sefton | 2 | 4 | 23 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 32 |
| St. Helens | 3 | 1 | 8 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 1 | 15 |
| Stockport | 0 | 11 | 15 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 26 |
| Tameside | 2 | 2 | 15 | 2 | 0 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 24 |
| Trafford | 3 | 4 | 20 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 29 |
| Warrington | 8 | 15 | 8 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 31 |
| Wigan | 0 | 9 | 31 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 42 |

Features of the provision of direct payments scheme include:

- The person receiving the direct payment takes on the risk and responsibility and acts as the employer with support from the Direct Payments service.
- Direct payments give people choice, flexibility, independence and control.
- No one in Wigan has ever decided to come off direct payments and go back to the services they received before.
- The smallest package currently received is 3 hours and the largest is 24 hour 2-to-1 support.
- There is no single budget for direct payments, they are all funded from within the teams. To date this year the expenditure has been £278k on physical disabilities and £171k on learning disabilities.
- The Health and Social Care Bill states that everyone should be offered a direct payment at their assessment.

Examples of Direct Payments

- A young person aged 19 wanted to go out in King Street in the evenings. She receives a direct payment and employed someone her own age to support her, and they go out together.
- People can choose to receive mixed services. For example attend a day centre 2 days per week and receive a direct payment for home care. Approximately half of the people on the scheme have mixed services.
- One client uses in-house home care during the day, but because he likes to go to bed late at night he uses a direct payment to pay an agency to help him get to bed when he chooses.

(Source: Direct Payments Manager)

The Direct Payments Manager identified the following issues and areas for improvement:

- The profile of direct payments is being raised increasingly, but there are implications on existing jobs and services.
- It is important that all social workers have a good understanding of direct payments so that they can advise clients and help them to make informed choices.

6.12. Person Centred Planning (PCP)

Valuing People, Objective 3: *“to enable people with learning disabilities to have as much choice and control as possible over their lives through advocacy and a person centred approach to planning the services they need.”*

Furthermore, sub-objective 3.4: *“developing locally agreed protocols and procedures to ensure that services are based upon a person centred approach”*.

Sub-objective 3.5: *“ensuring that people with learning disabilities are fully and actively involved in all decisions affecting their lives”*.

The Chief Executive chairs the North West Learning Disabilities Taskforce, supported by the Northwest Training and Development Team. This group considers that the key features to drive forward Valuing People are person centred planning and a commitment to direct payments.

The Chief Executive informed the Select Committee of two current related areas of activity:

PCP: A Pilot initiative

There is an overall thrust of public policy moving towards PCP. Some funding has been secured for a pilot scheme within the Borough to carry out person centred planning with approximately 15 young people going through transition. The Council would give a commitment and provide some start-up funding to provide direct payments if required by the plans. The key partner agency is MENCAP who will provide resources in terms of money and people. The Learning Disabilities Partnership has been consulted and other local organisations e.g. SCOPE, and they are very supportive.

Key features of this pilot will include:

- Data sharing would be by consent, which is unlikely to be a problem as parents want information sharing to improve.
- PCP training is being delivered to professionals, family members and carers, and others as appropriate.
- One of the proposed outcomes of this pilot initiative will be to redesign what we do as a Council.
- The success criteria were identified as the:
 - degree of satisfaction with the plan
 - real progress/achievement of the element of the plan
 - whether the plan met the needs more cost effectively?
 - monitoring of the plan against (simple) milestones.
- There is currently perceived to be a fairly limited choice for people. The Chief Executive said that the challenge is to ensure that what is on offer can meet the needs rather than being service-led. Direct payments would help with this.

Individual Recording and Tracking system (IRT)

Under the Preventative Strategy there is a requirement for an individual recording and tracking system. A common assessment framework is needed to achieve this. For every child/young person, there should be a 'live' action plan, which is updated periodically. This would be a computerised system which would produce useful management information for planning and designing services, e.g. around extended local schools (providing health and early years services etc). For very complex needs, a Case Manager is needed, whilst for people with less complex needs, a Personal Advisor (similar to those employed by Connexions) would be an appropriate means of support. There needs to be some proportionality according to the level of need.

The Chief Executive identified the following areas for improvement:

- There is currently no performance management in transition. Helping people is the focus of services, but good performance management should support this, and the two should be seen to complement each other.
- We do not yet have good information about demand. Planning of provision will come out of the information from person centred planning, which will help to define needs.

| Key findings from Phase 3 | Recommendations |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The multi-agency transition steering group does not currently measure outcomes of the transition process (6.1, 6.12). ➤ The Council does not track people's journeys after transition (6.9). ➤ The smallest number of people with disabilities residing in supported accommodation is in the age band 20-30 years old (6.5). ➤ A number of departments are considering the production of a range of 'easy to read' information leaflets for people with disabilities (6.5, 6.6). ➤ The Wigan Leisure and Culture Trust provides a range of short-term schemes for young people with disabilities, but there are problems with securing long term funding (6.6). ➤ Wigan Leisure and Culture Trust does not have an overall strategy in relation to leisure service provision for adult disabilities and wants to improve its strategic links with the Social Services Department (6.6). ➤ Wigan and Leigh College have an Inclusive Learning Team, supporting people with a range of disabilities. There has been a significant increase (320% approximately) in the number of students supported over the past 9 years (6.7). ➤ The Supported Employment Service currently works with up to 100 people. The Council employs 6 people in paid employment and 4 are on work experience placement. This financial year, there is a target to increase the number of employees by 4. This is limited by the number of Employment Training Advisers available to provide training and support (6.9). ➤ The number of people receiving Direct Payments has grown, over the last 3 years, to a current total of 57. In comparative terms Wigan is above the regional average. There are currently no targets set around Direct Payments (6.11). ➤ The Council is participating in a national pilot initiative to implement person centred planning and this will include some service users who are undertaking transition (6.12). ➤ Parents have a lot of fear about provision for their children when they leave school. This is often due to myths and a lack of knowledge about what services actually exist (6.10). | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Ensure that there are performance measuring and monitoring systems in place to track the progress of young people and to demonstrate and improve the effectiveness of the transition process. ➤ Identify young people's aspirations in relation to accommodation. ➤ Establish a corporate standard of easy to read information leaflets covering the range of Council services. ➤ Develop and implement a strategy to maximise the leisure, cultural and social opportunities for people with complex needs through the setting up of a scheme to enable people with complex needs to access activity groups as an equal member. ➤ Set targets to improve the opportunities for employment and work experience within the Council for people with complex needs. ➤ Implement more effective ways of communicating with service users. |

7. CONCLUDING COMMENTS

The Select Committee has taken 9 months to complete this review of 'Managing Transition (childhood to adulthood)' and have found the task both informative and challenging. Over that period of time a substantial amount of testimony, data and evidence as been gathered from range of sources culminating in this report.

A successful outcome of this review would be an improved service delivery to parents, carers and young people. The Select Committee proposes 14 recommendations that are grouped across 3 key theme areas and relate to:

- ❖ Managing and performance monitoring of the transition process;
- ❖ Engagement of young people and their parents and carers;
- ❖ Maximised opportunities and choices available for young people after transition.

Furthermore, an Improvement Plan is also proposed which is included to assist and provide momentum to stimulate change and improvement in the key areas identified.

The Select Committee is grateful to a broad range of contributors who have attended meetings to inform Members and develop further their knowledge and understanding. They include the following list of contributors:

- ❖ Strategic and operational service managers representing the Local Education Authority, Social Services Department, Primary Care Trust and Connexions Service (Positive Futures).
- ❖ Martin Routledge a representative from the Department of Health, Northwest Training and Development Team.
- ❖ Representatives from the voluntary sector for supporting the review by responding to information requests. In particular, Caroline Tomlinson, Service Manager, representing Wigan and Leigh SCOPE for her assistance in facilitating the various fora and sharing her personal and professional experiences of the transition process.
- ❖ Wigan Council Chief Executive Stephen Jones attended Select Committee in his capacity as chair of the Northwest Learning Disabilities Taskforce.
- ❖ Other local authority service managers for sharing their experiences and best practice of the transition process.
- ❖ Last but certainly not least all the parents, carers and young people who completed questionnaires, telephone interviews, attended forums and shared their personal experiences and aspirations with the Select Committee.

8. APPENDICES

FIGURE 1 TIMETABLE/ACTION PLAN

FIGURE 2 CONSULTATION MATRIX

FIGURE 3 ORGANISATION STRUCTURES

FIGURE 4 TRANSITION PLAN SAMPLING DATA

