



## Merthyr Tydfil Policy on Preparing Young People for Adulthood

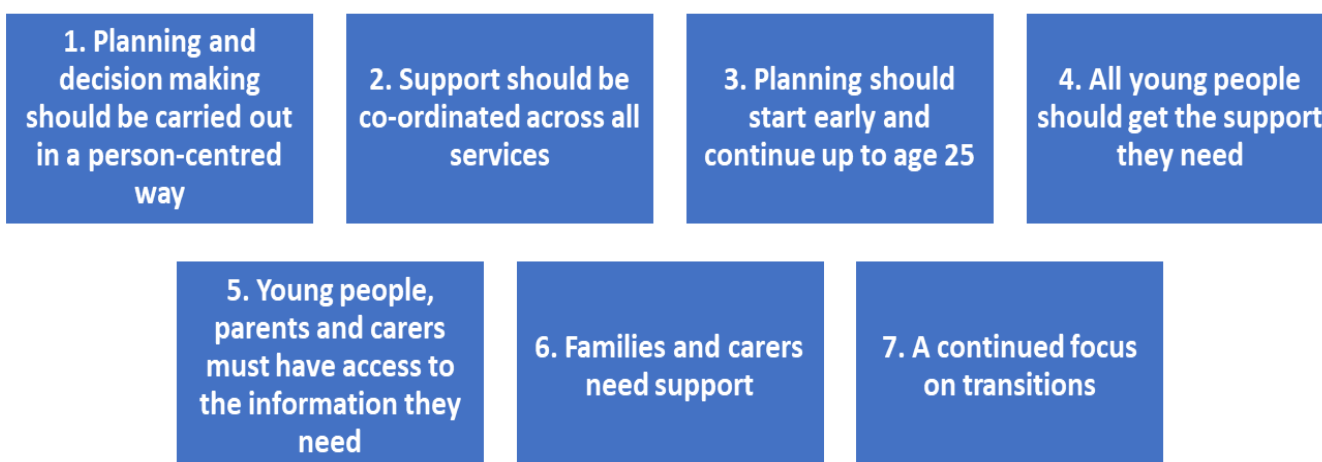
### Implementation of the Cwm Taf Safeguarding Board: Principles & Approach to Transition Policy

In December 2018 Cwm Taf (now Cwm Taf Morgannwg) Safeguarding Board approved the above Policy. As a member of the Cwm Taf Morgannwg Safeguarding Board it is a requirement of Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council to implement this Policy and embed it into practice. This Policy sets out the practical steps needed to ensure the principles and values set out in the approved Cwm Taf Policy can be implemented. An essential component of this work is ensuring the interest of young people approaching adulthood are central to the values of those implementing the policy at the centre of the planning process. This Policy is written in accordance with the Social Services and Wellbeing Act (Wales) Act 2014 (SSWB Act 2014) and other relevant legislation.

As part of this work, consultation with young people involved in transition will inform the final draft of this work. Additionally, we will establish a cross-directorate quality assurance process to inform ongoing improvement to this Policy.

### The Seven Principles of Good Transitions

These principles from the Cwm Taf Policy and the detail of the policy inform this Policy. The focus of this document is how these seven principles receive practical application through the practitioners that have vital roles in supporting the young people concerned.



The practical application involves the following areas of practice.

1. How a joint transition assessment across Children's services and adult services can be managed to ensure:
  - only one transition assessment is completed even if this is subsequently updated prior to the age of 18 should circumstances mean this is necessary;
  - a clear structure is in place for practitioners to follow leading to an effective joint assessment and care and support plan;
  - the assessment provides the clarity required to enable the young person, their family and practitioners to put effective plans in place ahead of time for support to be co-ordinated and for young people to have the best chance to be prepared for adulthood; and
  - Adult Services are a clear stakeholder being fully involved in the joint assessment and subsequent plan allowing for seamless portability of co-produced outcomes from Children's to Adult Services.
  
2. How the National Eligibility Criteria (NEC) should be applied to ensure:
  - the transition proportionate assessment adheres to primary legislation (SSWB Act 2014);
  - fulfilment of personal outcomes wherever possible draws on the strengths of the young person themselves, that of their natural support networks and community and non-statutory services;
  - Adult Services are only supporting the fulfilment of outcomes for those young people that require adult services statutory services to achieve this; and
  - young people who require adult services statutory services have the right support.

It is acknowledged that many young people are unlikely to move from having eligible needs as a child to not having eligible needs due to becoming 18 years old. However, some factors to consider are:

- the young person may make an informed choice to not engage with adult services and this can happen at any time;
- the young person's parents will no longer have parental responsibility and some parents may no longer be willing carers; and
- for children who are looked after by the local authority reference needs to be made to the local authority's responsibilities as a corporate parent.

### **Achieving a Joint Transition Proportionate Assessment**

1. Timetabling and Arranging of Assessments
  - Decisions need to be made about when Adult Services become involved and when the joint transition assessment starts, who will be involved and when further decisions are made.
  - The timing has to be flexible according to the unique circumstances of the young person and what will result in the best possible preparation for the young person's adulthood.
  - The Transition Planning Meeting (TPM) is where information about many young people is brought together. This is an ideal opportunity to plan involvement and the assessment. Once the young person is approaching 16 years old the TPM meeting can either:
    - make the decisions below to begin the assessment process;
    - or
    - request practitioners meet to agree on a timetable for the below.

Should the Transition Planning Meeting not be convened or is unable to assist this process responsible team managers in consultation with principal managers in both Children's and Adult Services will ensure this process is not delayed.

Our multi agency partners are essential allies in achieving the right transition proportionate assessments for our young people. Their involvement in assessments is crucial as set out in Part 3 of the SSWB Act 2014.

## 2. Decisions that need to be made before the assessment starts

- When will an Adult Services Social Worker be introduced and begin involvement with the young person?
- How the young person and parents are to be involved in co-produced assessment and care and support plan.
- Who else needs to be involved in assessment including multi agency partners?
- Assessment start date.
- Assessment finish date (maximum of 42 working days from the start).

### **National Eligibility Criteria (NEC)**

This is an essential component of any proportionate assessment for any child or adult. The NEC is in primary legislation (SSWB Act 2014 Part 3). If all four conditions are met (see below) the local authority is obliged to produce a care and support plan outlining how assessed eligible needs and co-produced outcomes will be met. Below is the NEC as set out in the SSWB Act 2014 for Adults. This is the criteria on which the transition assessment will focus when looking ahead to how future needs and outcome will be met.

The **first condition** relates to the Adult's circumstances and is met if the need arises from the circumstances which are specified in the regulations:

- Physical or mental ill-health
- Age
- Disability
- Dependence on alcohol or drugs
- Or other similar circumstances

The **second condition** is met if the need relates to one or more of the outcomes specified in the regulations:

- Ability to carry out self-care or domestic routines
- Ability to communicate
- Protection from abuse or neglect
- Involvement in work, education, learning or in leisure activities;
- Maintenance or development of family or other significant personal relationships
- Development and maintenance of social relationships and involvement in the community **or**
- Fulfilment of caring responsibilities for a child

The **third condition** is met if the need is such that the adult, is not able to meet the need, either alone, or with support of willing others, or with assistance of services in the community.

The **fourth condition** is met if the adult is unlikely to achieve one or more of their personal outcomes unless the local authority provides or arranges care and support to meet the need in accordance with a care and support plan.

1. The assessment will establish one of the following (in addition to what must be in an assessment under the SSWB Act 2014)
  - The young person **will** meet the National Eligibility Criteria and therefore have eligible needs that require involvement from adult services when they reach 18 years old.  
The young person **is likely to** meet the National Eligibility Criteria and therefore likely to have eligible needs that require involvement from adult services when they reach 18 years old.  
If this is the case the assessment will describe as far as possible what factors are present that will determine whether the young person meets the NEC when 18 years old (see below). The assessment will lead to a care and support plan which will focus on the young person's preparation for adulthood and how their outcomes will be met.
  - The young person is **not likely to** or **will not** meet the National Eligibility unless there are significant changes of circumstances.  
If there are current eligible needs the assessment will describe how their current co-produced outcomes will either no longer be relevant or be met without the involvement of adult services. The assessment will also be clear that this information has been communicated to the young person, their family and other relevant parties.  
The Transition Planning Meeting will remain involved in monitoring the transition.  
If circumstances change that may mean the NEC may be met an updated assessment or re-assessment will be needed to reconsider the young person's eligible needs (see below).
2. If the assessment shows the young person will or is likely to have eligible needs at 18 years old the assessment will also establish:
  - when the cost for the young person's service request will be considered by Adult Services; and
  - when and how any Adult Services funding decision will be fed back to the young person, their family and other relevant parties.
3. If circumstances change how will these influence whether a young person has eligible needs?
  - A person's situation can change, and it is possible a young person can have eligible needs at 16 but subsequently not have eligible needs when they are 18. The reverse can be true where a young person may not have eligible needs at 16 but have eligible needs at 18. A purpose of the transition assessment is to consider if eligible needs are likely to be present in the future. This can be done by examining what factors may determine eligibility closer to 18 depending on the young person's individual situation.
  - In some cases, circumstances may cause there to be some uncertainty about future eligible needs. In this situation planning through the Transition Planning Group informed by an assessment is to take place to ensure that the right support will be available to the young person should it be needed. When the child is closer to 18 an updated assessment can be completed which can take full account of both history and new circumstances and make a determination of eligible needs under the National Eligibility Criteria.
  - An updated assessment builds on the circumstances current transition assessment to inform planning and is not a subsequent full transition assessment which should be unnecessary.
4. Using the joint assessment to enable the young person, the important people in their life and service providers to effectively plan ahead
  - For some children where future needs are more predictable it will be clear that adult services will be required to have an active role in the lives of a young person. This will be the case for some disabled young people.

- For other young people there will be a number of factors that could affect whether as an adult they will have eligible needs under the SSWB Act 2014. This will be the case for some looked after children. This could include a number of factors including their relationship with their birth family, how their skills will develop over the transition period, possible effects of substance misuse or other factors.
- For many young people the support needed at the age of 18 may be related to their ability to carry out practical skills independently. Wherever possible when assessing and meeting needs Children's Services will plan and provide resources to maximise children and young people's independent living skills.
- Children's Services will wherever possible strive to maximise young people's potential to fulfil their outcomes through their own skills and resources and through access to non-statutory support. Where co-produced outcomes remain reliant on statutory services to be fulfilled these outcomes will transition with the young person to adult services. The joint assessment will be clear about these circumstances. The assessment will also be completed in good time to enable the care and support plan to be co-produced and detail how these outcomes will continue to be fulfilled without disruption. It is possible that some transitioned outcomes can be met outside of adult services.

For some Children looked after support provided through leaving care support services may be relevant. Some children may need support from both leaving care support services and Adult statutory services. Planning will be needed to ensure continuity and minimise any disruption caused through these adjustments in fulfilling the care and support plan.

- The above will help to fulfil the Cwm Taff Morgannwg Transition Policy through allowing support to be co-ordinated across services and for young people, parents and carers to have the information they need.

What if the young person refuses to engage with adult services once they are 18?

- Ultimately this remains the choice of the adult. Wherever possible during the transition period close work will need to be completed with the young person to make sure properly informed choices are made during this sensitive period. In some circumstances it will be necessary to refer to available national and local Policy and guidance on the issues facing that young person.

What if the young person does not have active involvement with either Children or Adult Services or both?

- The Transition Planning Group is in place to monitor a range of young people in a wide variety of circumstances. Merthyr Tydfil's partner agencies will need to be flexible and creative to achieve the best transition possible for our young people.

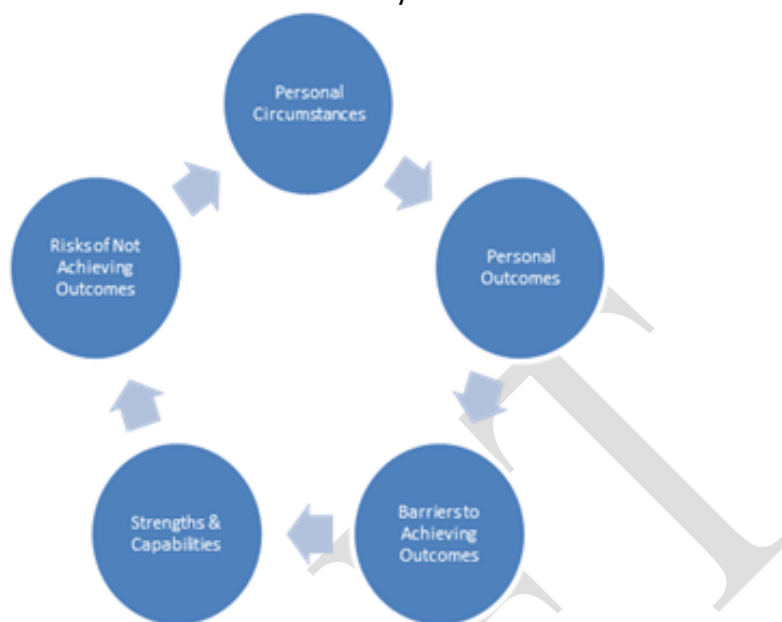
##### 5. How does this fit with pathway planning for looked after young people?

- A young person who is looked after will have a pathway planning assessment on the approach to their 16th birthday. This is completed by the young person their social worker and their leaving care personal assistant.
- Once the pathway planning assessment is complete the Transition Planning Meeting will be informed. The Transition Planning Meeting will decide when the best time is for the information in the pathway planning assessment to be updated. This will inform a transition proportionate assessment which will follow the principles above.
- Should the Transition Planning Meeting not be convened or is unable to assist this process responsible team managers in consultation with principal managers in both Children's and Adult Services will take the process of organising transition assessments forward.

6. How will the joint assessment be managed across Children and Adult Services?

The Social Services and Wellbeing Act (Wales) Act 2014 (SSWB Act 2014)

There are the five elements that the SSWB Act 2014 says each assessment must include.



Every Joint transition assessment must be based on these five elements as described in the SSWB Act 2014. More information about this can be found [here](#).

Additionally, as the person being assessed is under 18 the assessment also needs to take account of Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need and their Families. Further detail on this can be found [here](#):

7. How will the joint assessment be managed between Children and Adult services?

<i>The assessment will be co-produced by all parties and practitioners will need to work closely together to achieve an effective assessment. Assessors are likely to agree between them how this can best work in their unique situation. The below is a Policy that may assist.</i>	Which part of the assessment?
Lead Practitioner	Which area of the assessment
Children’s Services	Personal Circumstances
Practitioners are likely to be well placed to decide who should lead on this and are likely to allow the young person to make this choice.	What Matters Conversation
These are the outcomes that will potentially be transitioned to Adult Services. It may help this process if the Adult Services worker leads this part of the assessment. This can be built on work already completed by children’s services. It is essential that the personal outcomes are co-produced and where possible agreed by all parties to the assessment.	Personal Outcomes
Jointly between Children’s Services and Adult Services	Barriers and Strengths to Meeting Outcomes
	Risk of not Achieving the Outcomes
	Developing Care and Support Plan

## 8. Using the Adult Assessment format

- If the joint assessment and any subsequent plan are to achieve a seamless transition into the young person's adulthood the adult assessment format needs to be used. Adult Services can then more easily continue working to fulfil the outcomes established.
- This will help to achieve the transition principals:
  - Support should be co-ordinated across all services.
  - Planning should start early and continue up to age 25.
  - It will also fulfil the statement in the transition policy that says:  
*"... plans and assessments should be adopted by Adult Services and assessments should be transferable between both children and adult services avoiding the need for unnecessary re-assessments."*
- Information relating to the Assessment Framework (as mentioned above) that is required in assessments for children can be included in the personal circumstances section of the adult assessment.
- Once the outcome of the joint assessment have transitioned into adult services, re-assessment will only take place if this is necessitated by one of the triggers outlined in Part 3 of the Social Services and Wellbeing Act (Wales) 2014.

## 9. Multi-agency involvement

- Successful transition to adulthood cannot rely only on Children's and Adult Services' commitment to working together to achieve good practice. Local Authority multi agency partners are essential allies in ensuring the best preparation for adulthood for young people. Our multi agency partners have obligations under the SSWB Act 2014 to contribute to the young person's proportionate assessment. Commitment is needed from each agency to being a pro-active partner in both the assessment process and the Transition Planning Panel.

## 10. Where there are areas of disagreement

- If differences of opinion cannot be resolved directly between practitioners or through use of the Transition Planning Meeting, Heads of Services will discuss and agree on a resolution. This may result in learning to inform the Policy review.

## 11. Review of the Policy

- A review will take place following 12 months of implementation. The review will be informed by the cross-directorate quality assurance process acknowledge positive outcomes resulting from the new way of managing preparation for adulthood. It will also seek to improve the Policy where practice experience shows this is needed.