

# **JOINT PROTOCOL BETWEEN AFTERCARE AND PREPARING FOR ADULTHOOD TEAM**

<b>Contents</b>	<b>Page</b>
<b>1. Introduction</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>2. Purpose</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>3. Roles and Responsibilities of Aftercare and Preparing for Adulthood Team</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>4. Planning at Age 16</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>5. Case transfer at 18</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>6. Joint working</b>	<b>4</b>

## **1. Introduction**

Thurrock Social Care is committed to ensuring that all children and young people have the best chances in life to achieve their full potential. In doing so, the Aftercare and Preparing for Adulthood Team (PFA) have developed this joint working protocol that sets out the ways in which both teams will work together to improve outcomes for disabled care leavers. It is important that planning between the Aftercare and Preparing for Adulthood team begins early to ensure a seamless transition of disabled care leavers to their service.

This protocol was developed to clarify the different roles and responsibilities of each team and to outline the process involved when joint working with disabled care leavers supported by both services. For the purpose of this protocol, the term “disabled young person” is taken to mean someone with a physical and /or sensory impairment and/or learning disability as defined by Sec 17 (11) Children Act 1989.

The two teams will work together to ensure that young people receives joined up intervention to help them achieve as adults and fulfil their potentials. Young people will be supported to be at the centre of this process and are encouraged to be active participants in the planning of their future.

## **2. Purpose**

This joint protocol has been developed to meet the requirements set out in Children and Young People Act 2014 that all services should work more closely together to promote the health and well-being of children and young people, families and carers. It also puts into consideration the Care Act 2014 requirements in regards to the young people transiting into Adult services and Preparing for Adulthood. This protocol sets out the requirements for a successful joint working arrangement between Aftercare and Preparing for Adulthood team targeted at meeting the needs of disabled care leavers. It also:

- Sets out the requirement for a successful and smooth transfer of cases from Team for Disabled Children, Children Looked after (CLA) and Edge of Care.
- Sets out the principles that will guide service provision between the two teams.
- Define what is expected of each team
- Provide guidance to staff

## **3. Roles and Responsibilities of Aftercare and Preparing for Adulthood teams**

- **What does Aftercare team do?**

The team works with care leavers from the age of 18 - 25 and up to 25 for those in higher education, as set out in the Children Act 1989 (sec 24), amended by the Children Leaving Care Act 2000, as required by the Children and Young Person Act 2008 and Planning Transition to Adulthood for Looked After Children.

The team is responsible for providing dedicated services targeted at improving the life prospects of young people as they make the transition to adulthood ensuring that they achieve positive outcomes in respect of Children and Young People 2014.

The team works in partnership with young people to develop independent living skills and remain in suitable accommodation that is appropriate to their needs. The team support young people to keep safe, healthy and reach their **potentials** for education, training and employment to enable them to achieve adult independence. The team duties also include staying in touch with young people; provide advice and information and regular review of Pathway Plans with clear actions targeted towards meeting the needs of the young people.

See Appendix A for Aftercare team eligibility criteria and entitlements

- **What does the Preparing for Adulthood service do?**

The Preparing for Adulthood team (PFA) is under the umbrella of Adult Social Care and the service **ensures** that all young people aged 14 to 25 years with special educational and care planning needs have a professional (if needed) to support, guide and provide information to them and their parents or carers about options and opportunities for the future. For example:

- Helping young people to make the informed choices and decisions with support from those that know them best.
- Providing young people with support and assistance to help them reach their education, training and employment potential.
- Helping young people to live as independently as possible.
- Encouraging young people to engage with the Local Area Coordinators to link them to activities of their interest and be aware of what is happening in their chosen area.
- Advising young people on how to access leisure and recreation facilities.
- Assessing care and support needs to enable young people to achieve their outcomes in employment, education, independent living, health and community participation.
- Information, advice and signposting.

See Appendix B for Adult Social care eligibility threshold.

#### **4. Planning at Age 16**

The involvement of After Care and Preparing for Adulthood Teams begins early with both teams to:

- Attend the 16+ LAC / Pathway Plans Review meetings for the Team for Disabled Children. However, not every LAC / Pathway Plans review meeting will be attended by the Preparing for Adulthood Team, as this is not a statutory requirement but the Preparing for Adulthood Team will endeavour to attend at least once a year.
- Attend the PFA Transition Panel for 17 years old to ensure that post 18 placement provision is in place before the young person turns 18.
- The Preparing for Adulthood Team will start the Adult Assessment from age 17 in readiness for presentation to the Adult Social Care Panel at least 6 months prior to the 18<sup>th</sup> birthday.

- Preparing for Adulthood team to carry out Care and Support Assessment. This assessment should support the young person and their family to plan for the future, by providing them with information about what they can expect.
- All Adult assessments must include an assessment of current needs for care and support with a strength base approach and how these impact on their wellbeing, whether the child or carer is likely to have needs for care and support after the child in question becomes 18. If so, what those needs are likely to be, and which are likely to be eligible needs, the outcomes the young person or carer wishes to achieve in day-to-day life and how care and support (and other matters) can contribute to achieving them.

## **5. Case transfer at 18**

- The transfer of cases (and financial responsibilities) from Team for Disabled Children and Children Looked After teams to Aftercare and Preparing for Adulthood team will take place on the young person's 18<sup>th</sup> birthday.
- The young person will have an allocated social worker / support planner in the Preparing for Adulthood team and Aftercare worker / Personal advisor (PA) in the Aftercare team.
- The social worker in the Preparing for Adulthood team will take the lead responsibility for case management of young people with complex care needs whilst the Aftercare worker will co-work the case with the social worker until the young person is 21.
- Any other cases that do not meet the threshold for care and support to be referred to the Preparing for Adulthood Transition panel and Aftercare worker to attend this panel.
- For young people who are unable to live independently in the community, the Preparing for Adulthood team takes the lead on the case and will secure funding for appropriate placements in accordance with the Care Act 2014, through the Adult Social Care panel.
- In situations where young people want to remain with their foster carers, a Staying Put arrangement is an option for the Aftercare team to explore.
- Where a young person is deemed capable of managing independent living, the Aftercare worker/ PA will take a prominent role to support the young person with developing these skills and access relevant entitlements. The support provided to the young person will be recorded in the Pathway Plans.
- At 21, Aftercare team will close the case (unless the young person is in higher education) whilst case will remain open to Transition team until young person is 25 and thereafter transfer to the Complex care team in Adult Social Care.

## **6. Joint working arrangements**

Aftercare and Preparing for Adulthood teams are committed to ensuring that children and young people with disabilities enter adulthood feeling supported and empowered to participate both socially and economically within their communities. In doing so, both teams will be working together to fulfil this purpose through:

- Sharing of information & knowledge around legislation and policy.
- Case management responsibilities.
- Effective communication.
- Pathway Plan reviews; to be undertaken jointly where possible when the Adult Social Care review meeting is required.
- Case discussion meetings.
- Tasks allocations.
- Joint visit arrangements.

- Updating the database system in a timely manner ensuring both workers have access to relevant information.
- Education, employment & Training support.
- Funding responsibilities.
- Explore the option of the young person's eligibility for the Leaving Care grant.

**18+ SERVICES**

**SERVICE GUIDE**

This leaflet gives you a snapshot of some of the support you can get as a care leaver (18 +) from the Aftercare team. Please talk to your Aftercare worker also known as Personal Advisor (PA) on 01375 652456 for more information on leaving care services.

To qualify for the support detailed in this leaflet, young people will need to be a Former Relevant young persons aged 18 -21 years (or up to 25 years if attending further or higher education) who have been Eligible or Relevant young person, and were placed in care subject to a care order, or remanded into care or accommodated by voluntary agreement.

Here are some of the services provided to young people by the Aftercare team:

**PERSONAL ADVISORS (PA's)**

All care leavers aged 18 - 21 years (and up to 25 years) will have an Aftercare worker also known as Personal Advisor. Your PA will provide advice and support and help you to access services you need, and keep in touch with you for a minimum of 4 times a year but more if this is needed. You can always contact your PA in between these contacts if you need advice and support. You can also agree the best way to keep in contact with your PA. Your PA will take part in updating and reviewing of your Pathway Plan until you are 21 (up to 25 if you are still in education) to help you to stay on track and achieve the things you want from life.

**PATHWAY PLAN**

A Pathway Plan is your own individual plan and it is expected that as you are preparing to leave care and after leaving care, you will be involved in updating, agreeing and reviewing your Pathway Plan. Your Pathway Plan is important, as it will look at the things that are important to you in moving to independence such as being ready to leave care, where you live, money management, looking after yourself, health, employment, education and training issues. So it makes sense that you play a big part in putting it together and share your views and wishes. Your Pathway Plan is also your proof of the support that the local authority has agreed to provide to you.

**FINANCE**

At age 18, you will be able to claim benefits if you are in education, not working, on low income or receiving apprenticeship allowance. Your PA will help and support you to make any claims for benefits you are entitled to. This might include helping you to get your ID sorted out, apply on line

and accompany you to the Job Centre to process your application. Your PA will support you to make your claims in good time and you will do what is required to keep your benefits in regular payments and prevent Benefit Sanction. While you are waiting for your benefits application to be approved, the Aftercare Team will provide you with a personal allowance and it is expected that you pay back the money once you are in receipt of benefit.

## **HEALTH**

Your PA will support you to ensure that you are registered with a GP, Dentist and Optician and offer you advice and support on how to access health services for your specific health needs. Your PA will discuss with you how your health needs will be met as part of your Pathway Plan and provide you with support and advice about applying for a Health Credit Certificate known as HC2 or HC3 if you are on a low income. This will reduce the cost of, or provide free dental, eye checks / treatment, as well as prescription charges. You can get free emergency treatment from the Accident & Emergency (A&E) department at any general hospital. You do not have to be registered with a GP to use the A&E service at the hospitals.

## **EDUCATION**

We want you to be able to continue your education or training or find work when you leave care. Your PA and the Aftercare Education, Employment & Training (EET) worker will work in partnership with you to provide advice and support to consider your EET options.

Young people at College will be able to apply for the 16-19 Bursary Scheme which began in 2011 and Looked After young people and Care Leavers should get a guaranteed £1,200 Bursary, if they stay in full time education. Young people should get in touch with their education provider (e.g. school or college) to find out how to claim the Bursary. For advice speak to student support services or your tutor, or go to [www.direct.gov.uk/16-19](http://www.direct.gov.uk/16-19) bursary.

Young people in University or higher education will receive a Higher Education Bursary of £2,000 to cover the whole of their course. The money will be paid in instalments annually across the duration of the course and detailed in the Pathway Plan. In addition a maximum of £125 per week will be paid towards accommodation cost during the university holiday periods. Your PA will support you to claim other grants or bursaries. Others support includes travel costs associated with Education, Apprenticeship, work interviews and training equipment.

## **ACCOMMODATION**

Many young people will leave care at the age of 18. Whenever, you leave care there should be a clear plan, which is part of your Pathway Plan about where you will live and the support you will need to meet your needs. In deciding whether your accommodation is suitable to meet your needs, we will listen to your views about the accommodation that is appropriate for you. If you want to remain living with your carers, this may be possible if your carers are willing and able to have you continuing to live with them and there is an agreed need for you to stay there under the Staying Put Policy. You may need to apply for Housing Benefit to contribute towards some of your rent cost with this arrangement.

If it is not possible for you to stay with your carer, but it is felt you are ready to move into your own place, your PA and the Aftercare Housing Co-ordinator will discuss what options are available to

you and provide support to you in finding somewhere to live that will meet your needs. This may include social housing or Aftercare accommodation or private renting accommodation. You will receive a Setting up home grant of £2,000 to help with the cost of purchasing essential household items for setting up a home. For young people with disability, they will be referred to Adult Transition team for the provision of suitable accommodation and young people with mental health issues to the Adult Community Mental Health team. For young people that become Homeless, they will be referred to Thurrock Homeless department.

## **POST 21 SUPPORT**

If you are over 21 and already on an agreed course of education, training and apprenticeship as stated in your Pathway Plan, then support will continue until the end of that programme. If your case has been closed at 21 and you want to go back into education or training, you should contact the Aftercare team for advice and support to consider your options. Please see separate leaflet for post 21 returning for leaving care services.

## **COMPLAINTS**

We believe everyone has the right to express their views and make complaints, comments or compliments about service. We see your feedback as a way of improving the quality and effectiveness of our service and we're ready to listen. To make a complaint or compliment, contact:

Complaints Manager

Children's Services, Civic Office, New Road

Grays, Essex RM17 6SL

Email: [ascfeedback@thurrock.gov.uk](mailto:ascfeedback@thurrock.gov.uk)

Tel: 01375 652643

## **CONTACTS**

If you wish to talk to someone different in the team or you're unable to reach your worker, you can contact:

Aftercare team - 01375 652456: Monday – Friday from 9am – 5.30pm.

Aftercare Duty - 01375 652456: Tuesday & Friday only: 10am – 4.00pm

Aftercare email: [HaveYourSay@thurrock.gov.uk](mailto:HaveYourSay@thurrock.gov.uk)

Out of Office: Emergency Duty Team - 01375 372468.

In an emergency, contact: POLICE: emergency = 999 non-emergency = 101

Essex County Fire & Rescue Service – 01376 576000; emergency = 999



## Appendix B

### **Care Act 2014**

#### **Thurrock Council Eligibility Guidance (Section 13)**

Section 13 of the Care Act requires Local authorities to determine whether a person has eligible needs after they have carried out an assessment or a carer's assessment. It provides for regulations which will set out the eligibility criteria, including minimum level of eligibility at which local authorities must meet a person's care and support needs. This has been set in line with current 'substantial' criteria in recognition that most council in the UK had set this as their minimum threshold.

Local authorities are able to set lower thresholds of moderate and low if they wish, but do not have a duty to do so.

Although The Care Act guidance states it is setting national criteria for the first time, it still appears to rely on the assessment process and could still result in areas differing the way they interpret the law. What is important is that various factors are considered in determining eligibility after assessment, and that these assessments are transportable into other local authorities and support continuation of good care.

This paper brings together the various parts of The Care Act guidance that relate to eligibility and is a guide to how practitioners can apply to ensure fair allocation of resource.

If each of these areas are considered and become imbedded in good practice it is likely that the decision made will be reflective of the intention of The Care Act 2014 to support personalisation, promote well-being, intervene earlier and promote independence in our communities. The allocation of resources following assessment will also be lawful.

Link to Eligibility Section 13 Care Act 2014:

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2014/23/section/13/enacted>

## Well-Being Principle

The new Statutory Principle of Well-Being is the driving force behind care and support- it is described as the paramount principle.

The College of Social Work describes this principle as the Care Act's its 'most radical innovation'. The Act outlines that in exercising the promotion of individual wellbeing a local authority must have regard to factors such as the need to protect people from abuse and neglect, an assumption that the individual is best-placed to judge their own wellbeing, the importance of participation, regard to all an individual's circumstances, and the importance of achieving balance between the individual's wellbeing and that of any friends or relatives involved in their care.

The principle of an individual's wellbeing **must** be kept in mind throughout the assessment. An adult's eligibility is determined by the identification of the level of **impact upon their wellbeing** as a result of being unable to achieve two or more outcomes independently, not solely based upon the nature of the actual activity(s). In order to identify the level of risk to an individual's wellbeing a risk assessment must be completed.

**Each practitioner will check their assessment against the following well-being principles:**

- 1. Personal dignity**
- 2. Physical, and mental health and emotional well-being**
- 3. Protection from abuse and neglect**
- 4. Control by the individual of their day to day life**
- 5. Participation in work , education, training and recreation**
- 6. Social and economic well-being**
- 7. Domestic, family and personal relationships**
- 8. Suitability of accommodation**
- 9. The individual's contribution to society- volunteering, community engagement.**

**This principle must sit alongside, and form a fundamental part of the decision making in terms of eligibility.**



## Eligibility Criteria

An **Adult** meets the eligibility criteria if:

- The adult's needs arise from or are related to a physical or mental impairment or illness
- As a result of the adult's needs the adult is unable to achieve two or more outcomes specified below and
- As a consequence there is, or likely to be, a significant impact on the adult's wellbeing.

### **Specific Outcomes and Circumstances:**

The Care Act specifies particular outcomes arising from or related to an individual's physical, mental health, or illness. The specified outcomes to be explored with the **adult** (service user) are:

- managing and maintaining nutrition;
- maintaining personal hygiene;
- managing toilet needs;
- being appropriately clothed

- being able to make use of the adult's home safely
- maintaining a habitable home environment;
- developing and maintaining family or other personal relationship
- accessing and engaging in work, training, education or volunteering
- making use of necessary facilities or services in the local community including public transport, and recreational facilities or services; and
- Carrying out any caring responsibilities the adult has for a child.

An adult is regarded as unable to achieve an outcome if the adult:

- is unable to achieve it without assistance;
- is able to achieve it without assistance but doing so causes the adult significant pain, distress or anxiety;
- is able to achieve it without assistance but doing so endangers or is likely to endanger the health or safety of the adult, or of others; or
- Is able to achieve it without assistance but takes significantly longer than would normally be expected.

**Where the level of an adult's needs fluctuates, in determining whether the adult's needs meet the eligibility criteria, the local authority must take into account the adult's circumstances over such period as it considers necessary to establish accurately the adult's level of need.**

Decisions about whether an adult or carer has eligible needs should be made after the assessment. Likewise, an assessment of the individual's financial situation should come after the assessment and must not affect the local authority's decision to carry out an assessment.

Further statutory guidance can be found at this link. All practitioners are asked to read the statutory guidance chapter 6.

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/315993/Care-Act-Guidance.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/315993/Care-Act-Guidance.pdf)

### Eligibility Criteria for Carers

The Care Act 2014 simplifies, consolidates and improves existing legislation; **“putting carers on an equal legal footing to those they care for and putting their needs at the centre of the legislation” (Carer's Trust 2014)**

A carer's needs are also now judged against a statutory eligibility criteria if—

- the needs arise as a consequence of providing necessary care for an adult and are likely to have a significant impact on the carer

The following circumstances meet eligibility:

- the carer's physical or mental health is, or is at risk of, deteriorating;
- the carer is unable to achieve any of the following outcomes—

- carrying out any caring responsibilities the carer has for a child;
- providing care to other persons for whom the carer provides care;
- maintaining a habitable home environment in the carer's home (whether or not this is also the home of the adult needing care);
- managing and maintaining nutrition;
- developing and maintaining family or other personal relationships;
- engaging in work, training, education or volunteering;
- making use of necessary facilities or services in the local community, including recreational facilities or services; and
- Engaging in recreational activities.

A Carer is to be regarded as being unable to achieve an outcome if the carer:

- is unable to achieve it without assistance;
- is able to achieve it without assistance but doing so causes the carer significant pain, distress or anxiety; or
- is able to achieve it without assistance but doing so endangers or is likely to endanger the health or safety of the carer, or of others.
- Where the level of a carer's needs fluctuates, in determining whether the carer's needs meet the eligibility criteria, the local authority must take into account the carer's circumstances over such period as it considers necessary to establish accurately the carer's level of need.