

Appendix 8: Guidance to Aid Working Together in Carrying out the Role and Function of the Personal Advisor for Young People aged 16 - 18

Purpose of the guidance:

To provide clarity for Personal Advisors, Supported Housing Officers and Project Officers from the House Project in relation to their individual roles and responsibilities as they relate to young people aged 16 to 17 years old

To provide clarity and support as to Personal Advisors, Supported Housing Officers and Project Officers from the House Project and their responsibilities to each other.

To provide clarity as to the role of supervision and management support when supporting young people aged 16 – 18.

Introduction

The role and purpose of Leaving Care Services is to support young people who are leaving the care of a local authority to become independent adults who are settled in their own accommodation and are on a journey to achieve their potential, whatever this might be.

The mechanisms to demonstrate this is through the pathway plan and the role, allocation and functions of the Personal Advisor.

In Rotherham young people have access to a number of people who are able to help them make the transition from care into adulthood. In some instances the people around them are heavily dependent on the accommodation a young person is living and what the support arrangements for move on would be. These people can be any one or more of the following posts - Social Workers, tenancy workers, project officers from the House Project, Supported Housing Officers, Personal Advisors, foster carers, residential workers.

The guidance for determining who best to become the PA when a young person is aged 16 – 17 largely depends on who is best to undertake that role

How these decisions are made and at what point they are made is at the discretion of the local authority who has responsibility for any particular young person.

In Rotherham the choice has tended to be to appoint and allocate a person who is known as the Personal Advisor

However in the current context it is increasingly important to consider the views of the young person as well as making sure the service is utilising its resources to their best and most efficient use.

Principles of this guidance

The allocation of the role of the PA will be based on the following principles:

- Who will be best to develop and then maintain a working and trusting relationship
- Who best understands the communication needs of the young person
- Is there a current professional or carer where there is an existing trusting relationship

- Does the person who has the necessary skill, knowledge, experience and time required to fulfil the role
- Young people will have views about the kinds of qualities that they will expect from their PA and these should be taken into account when matching an individual care leaver to any person acting in a capacity as a PA.

The functions of the PA for young people aged 16 – 18

There are a range of functions any person acting as a PA will be responsible for when supporting and caring for a young person. These are

- provide the young person with advice and support as they move towards independence
- participate in reviews of the pathway plan
- liaise with the responsible authority about the provision of services including liaising and negotiating with the full range of services that make up Rotherham's offer to its care leavers.
- co-ordinate the provision of services, ensuring that these are responsive to the young person's needs and that s/he is able to access and make constructive use of them;
- remain informed about the young person's progress and keep in touch with him/her with frequency that promotes and maintains the development of a trusting and positive working relationship
- maintain a record of their involvement with the young person, monitoring the effectiveness of services in preparing the young person for a time when s/he will move to greater independence or when s/he ceases to be looked after

In any case where a person acting as a Personal Advisor is not primarily employed as a Personal Advisor the service the following guidelines will apply so individuals are supported to carry out this role with confidence.

Between 16 and 18 the lead worker for any young person entitled to Leaving Care support will, in all cases, be a qualified social worker. The social worker is the key individual responsible for the decisions and activity in relation to any young person aged 16 – 18.

When a person is acting as a PA where their role is of Supported Housing Officer

Where a young person is due to move in or has already moved in to Hollowgate or one of the dispersed properties, has no allocated PA and/or where there is no existing relationship with their allocated PA active consideration will be given as to whether the function of the PA could be carried out by the Supported Housing Officer.

To come to this decision the Supported Housing Manager with a Leaving Care Manager will have a discussion as to how the role of the PA can be fulfilled and who would be the best person to carry out this role.

In coming to this decision the following will be considered

- Quality of relationship with workers from within the broader Leaving Care Service
- Primary needs of young people and focus of work which needs to be undertaken with young people i.e. if they are moving into Hollowgate/ dispersed tenancy
- Views of all those involved including young person's allocated social worker.
- Views of the Young Person alongside the Supported Housing Officer will be consulted as to their views.

If all of these indicators suggest the Supported Housing Officer could act as the PA the following activities will need to be undertaken:

- Initial training with Leaving Care Team Manager/Social Worker to support understanding the key tasks of a PA when the young person is between 16 and 18 years of age.
- Training and support as to the requirements of LCS to record activity which will include the data returns of in touch, suitable accommodation and activity status.
- Joint supervision between allocated social worker and their team manager as well as the Supported Housing Officer and their supervisor. Frequency for joint supervision will be expected to be in line with all other case supervisions.
- Invitation to all relevant care and pathway planning meetings/ PEPs for young people.
- Offer of a Personal Advisor acting as mentor to support any worker in adapting to the revised role for specific young people

The purpose of all of these elements is to develop the confidence and skill of the Supported Housing Officer in carrying out the functions of the PA for a young person between the ages of 16 – 18 years of age.

When the young person turns 18

When a young person reaches their 18th birthday the lead worker becomes a Personal Advisor from the Leaving Care Service.

As the young person reaches this age, this PA will be allocated and the responsibilities of reviewing the pathway plan will be transferred to this worker.

However in terms of day to day support and the detail of tasks required to support any young person the following principles will continue to apply:

- Quality of relationship with workers from within the broader Leaving Care Service
- Primary needs of young people and focus of work which needs to be undertaken with young people
- Views of all those involved including young person's allocated social worker/newly allocated PA.

In making arrangements for support for the young person as they reach and move past their 18th birthday the following will happen

- A final joint supervision 3 months before the young person turns 18 between the allocated social worker, the Supported Housing Officer and their supervisor as well as the newly allocated PA and their supervisor.
- Frequency for joint supervision will be expected to be in line with all other case supervisions.
- Invitation to all relevant care and pathway planning meetings/ PEPs for young people.

When a person is acting as a PA where their role is of Project Officer, House Project

Where a young person is due to move in or has already moved in to Hollowgate or one of the dispersed properties, has no allocated PA and/or where there is no existing relationship with

their allocated PA active consideration will be given as to whether the function of the PA could be carried out by the **Project Officer, House Project**.

To come to this decision the Project Manager House Project with a Leaving Care Manager will have a discussion as to how the role of the PA can be fulfilled and who would be the best person to carry out this role.

In coming to this decision the following will be considered

- Quality of relationship with workers from within the broader Leaving Care Service
- Primary needs of young people and focus of work which needs to be undertaken with young people i.e. if they are moving into Hollowgate/ dispersed tenancy
- Views of all those involved including young person's allocated social worker.
- Views of the Young Person alongside the **Project Officer, House Project** will be consulted as to their views.

If all of these indicators suggest the **Project Officer, House Project** could act as the PA the following activities will need to be undertaken:

- Initial training with Leaving Care Team Manager/Social Worker to support understanding the key tasks of a PA when the young person is between 16 and 18 years of age.
- Training and support as to the requirements of LCS to record activity which will include the data returns of in touch, suitable accommodation and activity status.
- Joint supervision between allocated social worker and their team manager as well as the Supported Housing Officer and their supervisor. Frequency for joint supervision will be expected to be in line with all other case supervisions.
- Invitation to all relevant care and pathway planning meetings/ PEPs for young people.
- Offer of a Personal Advisor acting as mentor to support any worker in adapting to the revised role for specific young people

The purpose of all of these elements is to develop the confidence and skill of the **Project Officer, House Project** in carrying out the functions of the PA for a young person between the ages of 16 – 18 years of age.

When the young person turns 18

When a young person reaches their 18th birthday the social worker, as the responsible lead worker, ends. The lead worker becomes a Personal Advisor from the Leaving Care Service.

As the young person reaches this age, this PA from a Leaving Care Team will be allocated and the responsibilities of reviewing the pathway plan will be transferred to this worker.

Any relationship the young person has with the Supported Housing Officer or the Project Officer from the House Project will be maintained. The nature of the relationship will be dependent on the circumstances of the young person and their wishes and feelings.

However in terms of day to day support and the detail of tasks required to support any young person the following principles will continue to apply:

- Quality of relationship with workers from within the broader Leaving Care Service

- Primary needs of young people and focus of work which needs to be undertaken with young people
- Views of all those involved including young person's allocated social worker/newly allocated PA.
- Views, wishes and feelings of the young person

In making arrangements for support for the young person as they reach and move past their 18th birthday the following will happen

- A final joint supervision 3 months before the young person turns 18 between the allocated social worker, the **Project Officer, House Project** and their supervisor as well as the newly allocated PA and their supervisor.
- Frequency for joint supervision will be expected to be in line with all other case supervisions.
- Invitation to all relevant care and pathway planning meetings/ PEPs for young people.

If as a result of these conversations it may be the young person expresses a preference for either their Supported Housing Officer/Project Officer, House Project to become their PA.

Each request will be considered on their own merits and would not be considered usual for young people.

In each request the following will be offered

- Initial training with Leaving Care Team Manager/Social Worker to support understanding the key tasks of a PA when the young person is over 18 years of age.
- Training and support as to the requirements of LCS to record activity which will include the data returns of in touch, suitable accommodation and activity status.
- Training and support regarding development and production of a pathway plan
- Joint supervision between allocated social worker and their team manager as well as the Supported Housing Officer/Project Officer and their supervisor. Frequency for joint supervision will be expected to be in line with all other case supervisions.
- Offer of a Personal Advisor acting as mentor to support any worker in adapting to the revised role for specific young people

It would not be expected for this role to continue beyond the tasks associated with the post of Supported Housing Officer/Project Officer, House Project unless there were significant reasons to maintain the relationship.

Joint supervision

When more than one worker is allocated to work with a young person joint supervision is essential in making sure young people receive a consistent and caring service.

Joint supervision is a compulsory element within case management for all young people where more than one worker is involved in their care and support.

The details of any joint supervision must be reflected on the young person's file. This is so the young person will be able to see from their file the efforts undertaken to make sure we are caring for the young person to the best of our ability. It will also provide clarity of role and purpose for each person involved with a particular young person.

Purpose of Joint Supervision

In all cases Joint Supervision is to determine

- What tasks need completing with and for the young person
- Who is best placed to complete those tasks
- Address any worries or issues that are developing within the support network
- Address any worries or issues that are arising for the young person through the use of SoS or other risk competence frameworks
- Undertake structured critical reflection to make sure the approach undertaken with a young person is working or whether adjustment/review is required.
- In some instances it may be appropriate for the young person to be present at these meetings so they are able to participate in conversations about how they would like to be supported and cared for.

Frequency of Joint Supervision

The frequency of joint supervision will be dependent on the needs of the young person. At a minimum it will be every 3 months or sooner if there is a significant change/issue which requires resolution.

Resolution of any issues.

Should any issues or worries arise between any of the people involved in supporting a young person it will be expected that workers will do everything they can to explore their worries and concerns with each other in a restorative manner.

If this is not possible or does not work a joint supervision should be called at the earliest opportunity to debrief/reflect on the circumstance and work out a way forward.