
MINUTES – Local SEND Partnership Board

Date: Wednesday 6th March 2024
Time: 13.00pm – 14.20pm
Venue: Sovereign House/White Rose House, Heavens Walk, Doncaster
DN4 5DJ

Discussion Items	Lead
<p>1. Welcome, Introductions and Apologies</p> <p>Meeting Chaired by Leanne Hornsby, Assistant Director Children, Young People and Families</p> <p>Attendees:</p> <p>Sarah Timmins (DPV rep), Alexis Johnson (AJ), Kate Jones (KJ), Laura Churm (LC), Karl Bower (KB), Tracie Baghurst (TB), Kim Holdridge (KH), Leanne Hornsby (LH), Jane Cresswell (JC), Martyn Owen (MO), Natalie Tyrrell (NT) Annika Leyland (AL), Ruth Parkes (RP), Sarah Hall (SH), Natalie Firth (NF)</p> <p>Apologies:</p> <p>Joel Hardwick (JH), Bushra Ismaiel (BI), Debbie Osborne (DO), Emma Kirk (EK) Emma Price (EP) Andrea Ibbeson (IB) Alison Tomes (AT), Angela Harington (AH) Simon Witham (SW)</p> <p>Non-Attendees:</p> <p>Paul Scotting (PS), Philippa Cousins (PC), Ethan Osborne (EO), Emma Kirk (EK)</p>	
<p>2. Requests for any other business</p> <p>There were no requests for any other business.</p>	
<p>3. Minutes from previous SEND Board</p> <p>The previous minutes were agreed as a true reflection of the meeting on 24th January.</p> <p>Actions were updated on the action log as follows;</p> <p>Action 1 – The meeting regarding EIA work needs to happen between Karl Bower, Alison Tomes and Jane Cresswell instead of Jane Reed. KB to pick this up.</p> <p>Action 2 – KB updated that this is a much wider piece of work which needed to be undertaken and at the current time, does not have capacity to pick this up. LH explained that we needed to consider the scope of this work to be able to be clearer on what is needed and how we can then resource this.</p> <p>ATION: KB to think about how to scope out the SCLN work, to send this back out to board members virtually for comments before the next meeting to agree in principle.</p>	<p>KB</p> <p>KB</p>

	<p>Action 3 – Clarification on this action was needed – NT to pick this up.</p>	<p>NT</p>
<p>4.</p>	<p>Voice Update</p> <p>It was noted that moving forward SEND Board meetings had been moved to Thursdays to be able to accommodate Ethan Osborne and Mel North.</p> <p><i>SEND Shadow Board</i></p> <p>MO updated that the members of the Shadow Group met last week and had good conversations around the current level of activity happening within the SEND Priorities which they had set. There had been significant progress made against the priorities which the children and young people were pleased with. Children and Young people were pleased to hear of the results which came out the parent and carer surveys as this backed up some of their areas of concerns and interests.</p> <p>In attendance at the Shadow Board was colleagues from the HAF Programme holiday activities to provide an overview of their service. This was a useful discussion to ensure how children and young people can shape activities moving forward in terms of special events and mainly accessibility to these. Clare Tyas, Youth Officer was also in attendance who discussed the youth provision which was in place for children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities to access.</p> <p>Also in attendance at the meeting was Daniel Debenham from the Council Communications Team and Emily Allsopp, Educational Psychologist to talk about the promotional video young people want to create. In the video children want to share their experiences of the system and how they can shape our professional development across the system. Professional filming of this will start soon through the council's communications team.</p> <p><i>Making a difference parent session</i></p> <p>MO updated on a successful parent's session which took place on the 29th February where he was able to update on the significant progress made from the last SEND Engine Room. Key areas which came out of this for parents was their involvement in the iDox system and being able to be a part of this. The co-production charter has been officially signed off by parents and is with the council communications team for branding and will be launched alongside the new Local Offer refresh. Parents were keen to be part of workforce development and were interested in the workforce audits which showed the lack in confidence of SEND in practitioners across the system. Parents were also interested in the Speech, Communication and Language Needs (SCLN) and have invited Karl Bower to the next session to talk through this.</p> <p><i>Parent / Carer Survey</i></p> <p>MO provided an overview of the parent carer survey which was distributed to parents and carers of children with special educational needs and disabilities for two weeks in December 2023. This was completed by 356 parents and provided invaluable feedback on the current SEND system. Four key themes which came out of the survey responses were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Timeliness and pathways • Access to the community and activities outside of school 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication and accountability • Training on SEND for all professionals who work with children and young people <p>Following the survey, the senior leadership team have held SEND Surgeries for parents and carers to meet with the Director and Assistant Director of the Children, Young People and Families Directorate. These have proven to be successful sessions where parents have been able to share their experiences and put forward suggestions to shape our services better in the future.</p> <p>LH explained that the sessions had been interesting and made parents feel listened too. LH detailed that some of the areas of concerns coming through for parents was navigating the support they need through the system. The parent toolkit which is in development will support parents in having all the information they need in one place. LH noted that there is a need to have a “myth buster” section within this, as sometimes parents felt that through the system and other parents concerns that things can be misunderstood.</p> <p>KB agreed that having a myth buster section on the toolkit was a good idea as well as a section around where to go for support. He raised concerns around parents seeking diagnosis advice from companies who are not quality assured. There is a need to make sure teams have the right quality assured information of services for families in one easily accessible place.</p> <p>LH agreed that this was something that needed to be included with the quality assurance of diagnosis and making it clear to families where to go for support.</p> <p>SH confirmed that she knows families who had paid a lot of money for private diagnosis and that having clearer information would be beneficial.</p> <p>ACTION: MO, TO, KB to ensure that the quality assurance of diagnosis / myth busters is included within the parents’ toolkit.</p> <p>AJ asked if a copy of the parent toolkit and co-production charter could be shared.</p> <p>MO confirmed that the parent toolkit was still in development and would need to go through internal checking processes first and would then come to the board for oversight and approval. He confirmed that we could share a copy of the co-production charter.</p> <p>ACTION: NT to circulate the co-production charter with the minutes.</p>	<p>MO, KB</p> <p>NT</p>
<p>5.</p>	<p>Progress Update on SEND Implementation</p> <p>NT provided a high-level overview of the SEND Implementation Plan progress on deliverables. It was noted that there were now 10 deliverables within the plan which were now off track. The updates of these were as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • P.1.12 & P.1.13: Online EHC Hub (idox). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The go live date is the 18th April as opposed to the original deadline date of 31st January. Quality assurance process was now in place and professionals training began on the 2nd February and was running to the 16th April with best practice training to run alongside this and continuing beyond the delivery of the system. • P.2.52: Opening of 4 Social Emotional Mental Health (SEMH) Hubs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ All initial cohorts are in place across all 4 of the hubs. ○ Castle Hills planning is currently 8-10 weeks for the building to open 	

- McAuley/Nexus – cohort in place, waiting for DfE approval.
- Brooke – (Branches) SH updated that the provision was going well. Opening date was October 2023 but with building delays they had a transition week of December starting full time for January 2024. Branches was part of Brooke and links in with the school ethos/logo. Some of the children are accessing mainstream provision, been very fluid with the plans and have two more children started with a view to have 10 more by the end of the year. MO noted that there had been really good partnership working and it was good to see how well the provision has done.
- LH explained that there would be an aim for a phase 2 but there would be a need to secure capital funding first. MO updated that the project team were in the processes of conducting a lesson learned workshop to reflect on the project and shape future work.
- **P.3.3: Improving adulthood transition planning by building robust transition plans.**
 - The original end date was the end of January, the work has been completed but it is currently out for consultation which will be completed by the end of February.

ACTION: NT to chase this up

- **P.3.4: The EHCP QA process for planning for adulthood.** Delivery is progressing through the NDTi work – following an event held in December 2023. This should have been completed by the end of January, but due to availability for the follow up sessions with NDTi they are not scheduled until 22nd March.
- **P.3.13: The creation of a baseline options paper** which sets out the current approach and challenges in the system for preparation for adulthood. This was due to be completed at the end of January, but once work began on this the adult's directorate realised that this was a much bigger piece of work and suspect this will be completed by the end of the summer.
- **P.3.18: To create a shared charter across children's and adults** – including the voice of Children Young People and wider partnership. This was due to be completed at the end of January, the charter has been completed and is currently being circulated for comments, once feedback has been received this can be signed off at the next PFA Board in March.
- **P.4.11: Development of a borough wide Inclusion Charter.** This was due to be completed by the end of January however the charter is still in the process of consultation with the partnership. This is due to be presented at the next Engine Room on 26th March.
- **P.4.17 & P.4.18: Local Offer refresh and launch.** This was due to be completed at the end of January however due to availability in the design / comms team there has been a slight delay but the new date for completion of the is the 29th February. The relaunch is due to take place mid-April, the communications team are currently working on a plan.

LH acknowledge the amount of good work which was happening within SEND and that there was a need to communicate this out to the wider system. Consideration on how we get this out to the right people, so they are kept up to date with progress.

TB explained that the project team were working with the communications team and ensuring everything is linked in with the campaigns which they were doing. Their guidance is to follow

NT

	<p>the communications plan they link to, so messages are communicated at the right time. TB noted that there was development of a new Education and Skills Hub website, which SEND will be a part of and all communications would be able to go through there.</p> <p>TB and NT also updated that there was a weekly briefing that goes to internal colleagues as well as health colleagues at the ICB.</p> <p>KB asked whether wider health colleagues should be included within this communication.</p> <p>TB confirmed we could include them but would need to think about the messages we are communicating.</p> <p>MO noted that there was lots of things to celebrate and there is a need to ensure we are managing the priorities correctly and sometimes communications can be a challenge. We need to ensure we communicate to schools and parents.</p> <p>SH explained that she felt parents, particularly in hard-to-reach areas, were more likely to read things which were sent directly from schools, rather than the council.</p> <p>KB updated members that he was delivering a presentation to GPs focusing on SEND which was a really beneficial slot to get.</p> <p>MO asked if KB could ensure he linked up with Emily Allsopp and Anna Barker to include the workforce development areas.</p> <p>ACTION: KB to contact Emily Allsopp and Anna Barker to ensure join up of the workforce development priority.</p>	KB
6.	<p>Performance, Quality Assurance and Improvement Framework (PQAIF)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deep Dive <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Setting measures ○ To agree cycle <p>LH explained that this document is how we measure ourselves and ensure accountability in the work which we are doing in SEND.</p> <p>TB went through the document and explained that this had been a work in progress and the questions which had been included had come from members of the board. The next steps were for board members to approve these questions, add anymore and think about where the data can be collated from.</p> <p>SH asked if this had been shared with Special Educational Needs Co-Ordinators (SENCOs)</p> <p>TB confirmed it had only been seen / inputted to by board members.</p> <p>MO reflection on the document was that there was nothing around the identification of needs and whether schools were identifying these needs. Looking at Annual Reviews / golden thread – making sure that there is more accurate question to ask around this. The Quality Assurance work if proving valuable so there needed to be a clear picture of this reflected in the document.</p> <p>MO suggested that the document is shared at our next SENCO Network to ask them to review this and make suggestions / add in the questions which they would expect to see.</p>	

	<p>LH went through the leadership charter and explained how these should also be reflected in the document. From a leadership perspective there is a need to ensure we are evaluating what we are doing against the PQAIF.</p> <p>AJ stated that he felt from a SENCOs point of view they would probably have elements which they would want to include in it, and it was worth consulting with them. From a strategic point of view, there is a need to ensure members look at future strategic development and how this links in nationally. He agreed he felt this document looked good, but further consultation with SENCOs would be beneficial.</p> <p>LH requested that this document is sent to the SENCO network, council internal teams and board members for their review and input. LH suggested that we remove the existing questions and send this as a blank document, with only the four priorities and ask people to think of the assurance questions we should include and how they can be measured.</p> <p>LH encouraged board members to ensure that they respond and input into this as this is an important document that board members need to have oversight and input too.</p> <p>AL noted that there needed to be a key question included around transition planning and what age does this start from.</p> <p>KJ noted that some of the phrases were quite broad and needed strengthening for example “timely manner” could mean something to one person, but different to another.</p> <p>LH was keen for this to be completed quickly and ask for this to be done by the Easter Holidays – 28th March.</p> <p>ACTION: Project team to make contact with the standards and effectiveness team to be able to link up with SENCOs and how we get this out to the Network for review and completion. To also communicate this back out to internal teams as well as board members.</p>	<p>NT / TB</p>
<p>7.</p>	<p>Engine Room Escalations by exception</p> <p>KB updated that the biggest success which came out of the last Engine Room on the 13th of February was that health and the Local Authority were now fully compliant with Section 23 of the children’s act. This is where the Local Authority are notified of children who are under 5 years old who have a special educational need and or disability. Alison Fleetwood had done an amazing job of securing an online portal on the Local Offer for health professionals to input children’s information on to notify the Local Authority. The next steps with this were around communications to health colleagues ensuring that they knew about this and how to use the portal.</p> <p>KB also noted that the quality assurance reports have worked really well and at the Engine Room members received an update on this work and now have a greater understanding of other people’s roles and how they work across the partnership.</p> <p>KB wanted to raise to board members that the Engine Room was a really positive meeting and that he can see how much positive work is happening in SEND in Doncaster.</p>	

8. Escalations for the Education & Skills Portfolio Board

It was agreed for the good news stories and updates from the Engine Room to be included in the highlight report to Education and Skills Portfolio Board.

To update in terms of all the positive communication work which is happening in SEND.

Opening of the SEMH Hubs provisions – all cohorts in place.

JC updated on the constant improving picture of timeliness for parents. JC updated that last quarter this was 50% and this quarter it was up to just over 80% which was a massive improvement. There had been more Education Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) come through and if advice comes through in a timely manner it works well.

KB asked how did this place us regionally?

JC explained that were much better than regional authorities. The figure for regional authorities was around 47% so we were also hovering over above each quarter.

KB asked would there be an increase within 20-week deadlines with the ne iDox system.

JC confirmed that the team would hope this would happen as at the moment there were a lot of factors which affect deadlines. Waiting for parents' responses can take lengthy amounts of times, missing the deadlines. Were as the new online system will send reminders to parents and professionals to input their advice and submit things on the days they need to be finalised. It would also improve any human errors and resourcing issues in terms of issuing things out on time. JC continued to explain that there has been approximately 135 EHCP requests received in the last quarter, this was a 140% increase from 2017 so the last quarter has been very busy for the team. There was also a huge number of requests now coming directly from parents – 50%. JC explained that of this number 70% of them weren't proceeded with as there was no evidence of a graduated approach. This then means there is an increase in tribunals and mediations.

KB confirmed that sitting on the panel he had see some of these parental requests and could see some of the key needs of the children but as the panel must see evidence that the graduated approach had been followed these were being turned down, which was a shame.

MO noted that it would be interesting to see if we can do any analysis of this to understand these requests better and feedback the messages / outcomes through the parent toolkit.

JC noted that there is more pressure on the Educational Psychology Team now as they are attending mediations and tribunals. KB also noted the pressure from health colleagues too.

AJ asked if we are going to be more compliant with the code of practice this year than last, what about the 20% of children who don't receive plans on time, is there any prioritisation with these children, potentially around moving phases.

JC explained the 15-day extension period that was in place. Transition points are usually around years 6 to 7 and that they had seen a massive increase for out of area placements from parents. We have a regular weekly catch up with the senior SEND Officers and assistant director to specifically focus on these children to ensure that no one is falling behind.

9.	Any Other Business There was not any other business raised	
10.	Leadership Charter	
11.	Date and time of next meeting ➤ Thursday 18 th April, 2pm – 3.30pm, Microsoft Teams	