

SOUTHEND SEND STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP BOARD

MINUTES

**Thursday 25th March 2021 – 10am to 12 noon
Via MS Teams**

Minutes
<p>1. Welcome and introductions</p> <p>MM opened the meeting with a welcome, and rather than have formal introductions asked attendees to introduce themselves as they spoke.</p> <p>Apologies had been received from AW , LS and JOL.</p> <p>CF is deputising for AW and AP for JOL.</p>
<p>2. Minutes of the last meeting</p> <p>The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed with any matters arising discussed as pointers below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Terms of Reference for the SEND Strategic Partnership Board, SEND Operations Groups and Joint Commissioning Group have all been confirmed and circulated - Discussion on publishing papers and minutes from the Board and SEND Partnership Groups will be covered in item 5 of the agenda. - SSIF and CMc confirmed they are still working to confirm a meeting date to discuss questions they have regarding EWMHS. Other priorities took precedence so is not complete yet <p><i>Agreed: Minutes from the meeting on 20.01.21 were reviewed and signed off by the chair.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Action: Chair to ensure all actions are agreed and clearly identified who is taking them forward for future Board minutes</i>
<p>3. Current perspective from partners</p> <p>MM introduced this item is to capture the broader partnership picture and input onto Board with the following insights:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Where we are current SEND offer? - What are the different partnership perspectives? - How we improve? <p>It was raised that there are many surveys currently in circulation that families and children and young people are being asked to complete; both locally and nationally. Members of the Board discussed this with the following main points raised:</p> <p>Voluntary groups to consider their community functions and working together to gather input to avoid survey overload for families.</p>

The LA to map what feedback is essential / who is doing it / what we want to know and how we take forward findings in meaningful way. The comms group working with parents and professionals could agree how we do this. The aspiration of the SEND forward plan is to ensure activity is proactive and shapes what we do; consider adding in surveys to the forward plan.

In summary MM outlined we needed to coordinate the current and expected national and local surveys in a more effective way. CMc to ask the Comms group to scope local and national surveys, where they fit with forward plan with ideas suggestions / proposals on the wider strategy and bring findings to next meeting.

- **Action: CMc / Comms group to provide a short report to outline priorities, and our wider programme of communication and engagement ensuring that they feed into the forward plan and identify what we want to influence and get involved in for the next Board meeting.**
- **Action: CMc - ensure Comms group includes a broad cross section of representative partners**

4. Meeting the needs of the SEND Agenda post Covid.

School representatives were asked to share their experiences on the wider return to school following the recent lockdown. Common themes were shared:

School staff were better prepared regarding the remote learning offer during this lockdown and staff routinely had contact with families. Pupils that attended school throughout the wider closure (vulnerable, key worker & SEND pupils) have fared well appearing happy and upbeat; their resilience appears greater from having benefited from the consistent routine and it is noted these pupils are demonstrating increased confidence which has continued back into whole class groups.

Most pupils have returned or have a planned phased return including some clinically vulnerable pupils who will return after Easter. There are small numbers of pupils not attending which school pastoral teams are working with.

In the main the return has been very positive but schools have worked through many issues. The focus from schools has been centred around pupil's emotional well-being; with structures / activities built and planned around wellbeing, re-establishing relationships with peers and adults and having time and space to openly discuss worries and to rediscover the social aspects they have lost.

Some pupils have needed additional support to get back into school. School pastoral and inclusion teams have worked hard with families to build relationships and reassurance. Some pupils are experiencing social and emotional issues and schools are in touch with relevant services for support. In general schools have found more anxiety with parents and carers regarding decisions on the return to school.

Schools are seeing the impact of lockdown / remote learning offer on pupil's social skills and this is a challenge to manage; pupils present as more agitated, with increased conflict and disagreements - pupils are finding it harder to find resolution themselves. Pupils have lost independent learning skills and seem to rely on adults more for support; appear to have less learning stamina, are tired and lack focus to follow instructions.

Staff don't appear to have the same resilience or energy than the first lockdown; some also suffering personal loss or the effects of lockdown. Poor pupil behaviour has seen an increase in incidents directed at staff.

CC - There is a huge task ahead in terms of recovery from the lockdown and planning for the future; school leaders are finding it extremely difficult to juggle COVID issues and measures alongside school opening and future planning/recovery. A dual approach is needed; schools need to be back up and running, with good teaching and carrying out core business but with targeted interventions and support to help pupils who are struggling.

BM offered sincere thanks to school staff and parents for the phenomenal task they undertook he will be writing to school leaders to thank them for their efforts and the director of public health will be writing to parents to echo the same. The LA will now collectively plan for recovery over the next 2 years. BM will look at piece of work with school leaders of the board to ensure the school learning is captured and featured in whatever is taken forward.

PD - from a health perspective there is a significant impact on physical comorbidity from people not exercising and we will need support from public health colleagues and initiatives to support schools. There is also a mental health crisis and a disproportionate amount of children and young people in mental health crisis that were not known to services before and there is a huge impact in acute settings.

There was discussion around a need for information & support for parents / carers for them to look after their own health too. AC - we need to recognise their efforts families have made and outline strategies and support available. AP- we should capture and map services & resources and ensure information is available both on the Local Offer and Livewell sites. MM agreed; we need to pull information together about what activities / support / opportunities are available for children, young people and their families over the summer period including anything that will be available from a public health perspective.

- **Action: Brin to take the lead on the wider programme of recovery.**
- **Action: SSIF and Local Offer Team to capture and share details of local activities and support available for families**

5. SEND Operations Group highlight report

Key features:

- Expected revisit from Ofsted; LA's that have not previously been inspected will be in line for revisit from June. Therefore there will be strong focus going forward on the revisit.
- Recommendation for the Board to approve the publishing of agendas, papers and minutes of SEND Partnership Board and groups on the Local Offer website from the next meeting cycle.
- Recommendation includes health and social care to Local Offer Review Group.
- Voice of the Child group; lots going on to capture and link to existing means of gathering voice, for example using school councils to obtain CYP views.
- Quality and Outcomes Framework; this is ongoing work but needs resource for this area to be taken forwards.
- Quality Assurance of EHCP's –audit tool has identified 2 key areas 1) clearly articulated outcomes 2) parental contribution to AR
- WSoA blockages – 21 actions individually addressed and actions identified.
- Recommendation for SSIF to produce a Southend pack re Neuro Development Pathway.

PD – supports the decision re neurodevelopment packs; but need to ensure there is consistency with the Essex pack for those families living on borders so that themes are similar.

MM – need an update on WSoA for next meeting.

MM - invited the Board to consider the highlight reports; are they accessible, provide enough content and structure to get key info and do they enable the Board to challenge and scrutinise the work?

Agreed: continue with highlight report format.

MM invited the Board to consider publishing in the public domain papers, agendas and minutes for SEND Partnership Board and groups. These papers will be intended for information only; we are not inviting members of public to raise questions for the meeting and it will not be webcast. Need to consider confidential / commercially sensitive information and agree criteria for any papers that would not be published, in line with the criteria used for Council confidential papers.

Agreed: publish all future agendas, papers and minutes unless any papers are deemed to be confidential or commercially sensitive.

- ***Action: Update on WSoA at next meeting (GB)***
- ***Action: Obtain clarity from Democratic Services on the criteria used to determine if any papers for a council meeting need to be treated as confidential and apply this criteria to the future publication of papers for the SEND Strategic Partnership Board meetings. (BM)***

6. Joint Commissioning Group Highlight report

Key features:

- Three priorities (balance system pathway) development is going well with recruitment beginning in April.
- Roadmap graphic – feedback invited from SEN Strategic Partnership Board.
- SEND spend – recognition of the need to simplify this as it is complex.

Feedback on the roadmap included it was easy to access/clear but it needed to have a future focus as currently heavily reflective of tasks undertaken. Uncertain if need to add months into it re the delivery of actions; doing so could mean it becomes action plan / implementation plan rather than a strategic plan. CMc confirmed there is a detailed commissioning plan to sit underneath this.

CC – challenged the Board to be the strategic lead for SEND rather than stray into operational issues. BM agreed; we need a 3 year SEND strategy. It is a priority and an omission. MM welcomed CC's challenge; confirmed this Board should have oversight and challenge; and the 3 year strategy is crucial.

CBr – The SEND Summit in April intends to pull everything together and we can identify priorities and write the strategy from that.

7. My life: lived experience, views and wishes from a child and/or their family.

GB - The Voice of the Child group is starting to collect stories and Billy's story presented with the papers today is the first to be shared. There was some filming completed in the gathering of Billy's views and the question for the Board is what do you want to see from these stories; video / narrative / analysis / learning?

CMc - stories presented allows board members to keep issues live and relatable; hearing an experience whether that is good or bad sets the perspective and helps to keep that family or young person mind.

BM - we should aim to use stories and consider how we can improve outcomes / services but it shouldn't be the only lens we are looking at; factor in the timeliness of input and support. Need to ensure that we obtain permission to share stories for other purposes (for example for the Local Offer and not just the Board).

CBr – the Board should direct other groups within the partnership / services and groups to do that learning from the story - what difference does it make in future and what we going to do?

MM – the story will give Board a flavour of how service users are experiencing and responding to our SEND offer. We do not want a case study. It will be the family perspective and we should keep in mind it is a snap shot of their experience and service. We need to consider what does their experience prompt us to think about / our objective? We should not get too retrospective but take forward successes and what didn't work so that we can build upon experience in improving our Local Offer.

- **Action: Local Offer Team to seek permission to use Billy's story including video for the SEND Summit**

8. Future work

MM – with limited time left of the meeting feedback on SEND Summit agenda was invited to ensure it has partnership input – help is invited from volunteers we would like different people being part of the day to lead workshops and to contact CJ directly.

SEF will shape the discussion of the summit.

- **Action: Members to feedback to CJ re Summit input**
- **Action: The SEF needs to be considered by the Board for formal sign off**

9. Actions and feedback:

Action log to be updated (CJ)

10. Any other business

None raised

11. Future meetings:

SEND Summit 22 April 10am – 2pm

28th May 2021 12.30 – 2.30 pm

5th July 2021 10am – 12 noon

12. The meeting closed at 12.02pm with MM sharing thanks to all partners for their continued efforts and that feedback and challenge is always welcome. With warm wishes to enjoy a break over the Easter period

Attendance				
	Name	Job Title	Organisation	Initials
Chair	Michael Marks	Executive Director, Public Health and Children's Services	Southend Borough Council	MM
Attendance	Patricia D'Orsi	Chief Nurse CP&R and Southend	NHS Southend CCG	PD
	Brin Martin	Director of Learning	Southend Borough Council	BM
	Caroline McCarron	Associate Director of Integration and Partnerships	NHS Southend CCG	CM
	Gary Bloom	Head of SEND	Southend Borough Council	GB
	Clare Costello	Secondary School Head Representative	Shoeburyness High School	CC
	Jackie Mullan	Special School Head Representative	SEN Trust Southend	JM
	Anna Cheeseman	Chair	Southend SEND Indep. Forum	AC
	Owen Richards	Chief Officer	Healthwatch	OR
	Samantha Delve	Secretary	Southend SEND Indep. Forum	SD
Substitutes	Carole Brooks	Independent Advisor	Carole Brooks Associates	CB
	Chris Farrell	Primary School Head Representative	Hamstel Junior School	CF
	Allette Pryce	Service Manager	Southend Borough Council	AP
Apologies	Amanda Wiley	Primary School Head Representative	Blenheim Primary School	AW
	John O'Loughlin	Director of Children's Services	Southend Borough Council	JOL
	Lynn Scott	Head Adult Social Care	Southend Borough Council	LS
Administration	Carron Jacobs	SEND Project Officer	Southend Borough Council	CJ