

REPORT TO SEND STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP BOARD

Title:	Highlight report from SEND Operations Group
Report by:	Gary Bloom Head of SEND SBC
Meeting Date:	6th October 2022

1. Summary of progress and actions since last period

SENDOPs met on 21st June 2022 and again 22nd September 2022 and considered the following items:

SEND Partnership updates

A number of changes and updates were noted:

- SEND Service Manager maternity cover now in post
- Integrated Care Board (ICB) commenced with effect from 1/7/22.
- South-East Essex Alliance partnership formed and working across South-East Essex covering Southend Castle Point and Rochford
- Dedicated Medical Officer (DMO) role ceased and replaced with 2 new Designated Clinical Officer (DCO) roles.
- Children Young People and families Public Health Service has a new senior lead in Public Health, a new professional lead and a new role Specialist Public Health Nurse SCPHN for children who are Home Educated
- Staffing changes across organisations affecting SENDOPS membership – Director of Education vacancy, Principal EP takes retirement at the end of September, and primary SENCo stepped back from SENDOPS. New members are being sought
- SSIF advised Jo Richardson is stepping down from her role in SSIF at the end of September. They are preparing the introduction of SSIF seminars from after October half term
- The LPS (liberty protection standards) consultation has concluded, there is some preparation needed for colleagues / services/ settings in mental capacity training and understanding – actions to follow

Risk Log

Red risks were discussed at both meetings with comments noted:

- Capacity to deliver BAU is still a significant risk
- Turnover of staff within the SEND team; pressure from complaints, the wider community about satisfaction and perceived poor service affecting morale.
- Balance system; noted the slow pace but headway is being made now that South East Essex is branching off in to look at therapies in a different way.
- It was requested that the Neu Approach Pathway was increased from moderate risk to high risk.
- Pupil voice is still an area that needs to be developed; the introduction of new surveys will add to this but there is more to do. Through various methods of engagement we hear the SEND community still lack confidence in the Southend Partnership and perceptions have not changed. Need to develop better communication and information and a more systematic feedback loop. Inroads being made with the SEND newsletter but to align partnership messaging consideration of a formal SEND comms strategy so that communications are organised and effective.

Progress Monitoring

The all-plans tracker was circulated ahead of the meetings.

The June meeting heard that following the re-visit meeting with DfE it was felt there was not enough evidence of impact and a further monitoring visit is due Autumn 22.

The September meeting noted:

- Graduated Response (GR) workstream is progressing well the co-designed, accessible guide has now been launched and is widely available
- Coproduction of the Local Offer website (and supporting information) is being strengthened by holding half termly 'Local Offer - Your Way' sessions. Invites are open for anyone wishing to support the development of a topic on the Local Offer

For the September meeting a focused discussion took place on the supporting evidence needed for APP.

- Acknowledgement that lots of changes across the organisation will evidence that the area is doing things differently to benefit families, but some activity is slow and not progressed as planned (commissioning roadmap, Balance system, Neu Approach Pathway) and is covered in the risk log.
- Co-production Charter completed but is not yet operational – refresh needed.
- Agreement that a fuller discussion on Neu Approach pathway was requested at the next meeting.

Specific agenda items covered other APP updates (Sept 22):

- **SEND Strategy** Highlights from consultation, progress on the development and next steps of the SEND Strategy was noted.
- **SEND Surveys** Update provided on the launch of 2 new SEND surveys; the EHCNA and AR survey for parents and carers. There is wide publication and promotion of both and members were asked to encourage families to take part. Links to both surveys were circulated.
- It was noted that the C&YP survey is delayed whilst questions are refined and a platform for making it more interactive is sought.

SEND Team data

Data was presented at the June meeting. Initial Assessments for EHCP and refusal of requests discussed. At the time 100 requests for assessments received in two months; 47 of these did not progress to assessment. Going forward the aim is to reduce number of requests declined. Concerns expressed regarding capacity of the team.

New inspection framework

A verbal update was provided in the June meeting on the new SEND framework. Summary is that area based inspection of SEND are case centric and following cases through, pupil and parent voice focused with 4 proposed types of outcomes.

The Green Paper

Feedback from the meeting of eastern region Directors of Children services was discussed in June. Agreement that the partnership would provide a joint response including representatives from all partners. The parent carer forum to submit a separate response.

Education Board update

The June meeting heard a verbal update on additional DSG funding available to schools, money allocated to schools to support implementation of the Green Paper, additional Capacity for EHE and interim tuition team, bid for inclusion in schools funding has been approved. A small group will meet to discuss and act as a commissioner. Further updates on the work will be provided at future SENDOPS meeting.

Southend Essex Thurrock (SET) CAMHS

Leads in SET CAHMS joined the June meeting to give update on the new service. Contract awarded to NELFT in partnership with HCRG to deliver children and adolescent mental health service across Southend, Thurrock and Essex. A presentation of the changes and overview of the service was given. Agreement that wider comms should take place so that everyone is aware of changes.

Designated Clinical Officers

In September the 2 new DCO's attended the meeting to introduce themselves and their roles. Roles cover the whole of mid and southeast Essex Thurrock and Southend. The DCO roles are much more operational and 'on ground' than the previous DMO role. There is a mix of operational and strategic outcomes that will ensure the ICB is meeting its statutory requirements. DCO's are meeting people, providers and the PCF's across the organisations and attending meetings to find out what is happening and what is needed from partners. They will be scoping and mapping work to identify where best their support is deployed to meet requirements of the role. The scoping work with refine priorities for the next 6-12 months

Skills and Employment project

Colleagues from the LD transformation team attended with a presentation on the first day opportunities programme at the September meeting. The meeting heard that the project is working with day opportunity providers and Southend Care Ltd, essentially to look at a skills framework to enable and prepare young people (YP) and adults for employment. Overall the aim is for YP to gain and sustain employment. It should start early in 2023 using existing resources. An invitation was extended for SEND leads, NHS health colleagues, Educational Psychologists, schools and colleges to consider joining the work and development of the pathway.

2. Risks & Issues - Are now reported via the Risk Log

3. Proposed priorities and activities for next period

Activity and outcome	By when	
	Initials	Due Date
Task		
A review of the terms of Reference for SENDOPS including membership	SEND Scrum	October 2022
SEND Strategy completed through governance routes to cabinet	SEND Scrum	November 2022
CYP survey	Local Offer Team	October 2022
APP – evidence collated to support sign off / completion	SEND Scrum	November 2022
Forward Plan	GB/CJ	October 2022

4. Recommendations / Discussion / Decisions required from Partnership Board

SSPB to consider the risks identified around capacity and to support need for response to capacity review.