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Department of Children & Young People



Minutes

SEND Improvement & Assurance Board Meeting

16th July 2024

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| 1 | **INTRODUCTIONS & MINUTES** |  |
|  | The Chair welcomed everyone to the first official SEND Improvement and Assurance Board meeting with the June meeting being a set-up meeting.  Introductions were made and apologies given.  The Chair reiterated the expectations that everyone in attendance read all the agenda papers prior to the meeting.  The minutes from June SIAB were accepted as a correct record. |  |
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| 2. | **ACTIONS & DECISION LOG** |  |
|  | The action log was reviewed and updated.  The Chair reiterated the need for everyone to read the SEND Code of Practice in order to fully understand what the Code of Practice and the Children Family Act 2014 is expecting of us. There is a fundamental expectation that if you are a Board member that agreed actions are undertaken.  In terms of the JSNA review there is an expectation that the Board understands the demographics and challenges that Bury is specifically facing.  The Terms of Reference Appendices were completed and agreed in principle. There is one outstanding element to finalise in terms of ICB Strategic Lead attendance.  The amended Principles of the Board membership have been re-circulated.  The Youth Voice Network meeting dates were shared in the agenda pack.  It is important that all leads comment on workforce implications and what is happening in terms of communication as part of their highlight reports. This will make sure that the two of the three Areas of Improvement are being addressed.  The first stock-take of the Board to be completed in November.  **Action** – to establish a meeting to discuss the first stock-take meeting. Consideration to be given to not holding a Board meeting in December and instead hold a meeting to undertake the first stock-take.  A question was raised around the whole Board being regularly kept up to date on the progress being undertaken with the highlight reports. The Chair advised that the highlight reports need to provide the Board assurance and evidence of what has progressed and what the impact is. The full Priority Impact Plan will be RAG rated so that Board members will understand the impact and progress being made. The Board need to be assured by the information that they are reading and if not, what action/evidence Board members are needing. |  |
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| 3 | **VOICE OF THE YOUNG CHILD/YOUNG PERSON** |  |
|  | It is really important that we hear what children are saying and that the SIAB remain focused on children’s experiences. It is essential that we achieve sustainable positive outcomes for the children and young people of Bury.  Highlights from the presentation were:  The Youth Cabinet has had the opportunity to discuss how they would like to feed into this Board in the future. They advised that they would like to be invited to the Board and have representation as an equal partner. They asked if they could present at the start of each meeting. Consideration would need to be given around the future timing of meetings as it would not be possible to come out of school to attend. The Youth Cabinet stated they would like to see something visual rather than just reports, for example a video of the board summarising what had been discuss at the Board. The Youth Cabinet said that they would like to have reciprocal arrangements so that Board members could attend Youth Council. Five 5 young people said they would like to come along to the next Board meeting.  The dates of the Youth Voice Network are on:  12 November 2024  4 March 2025  24 June 2025  They did have some questions of the Board:   * How many young people would you like to attend the meetings? * What would you like to feed back to the groups from today? * Based on what young people have said, how will you be feeding back to them moving forward?   Discussion   * The Board members agreed the importance of inviting young people to come along and speak to the Board directly and express themselves. * Is it appropriate for them to stay for 3 hours and do we have a specific section for them? * Reports currently include some technical language and can be quite complex therefore we need to create space for sharing reports and opportunity to engage with the young people and feedback on the progress of the Board. * Are we engaging children outside of the education system? It was confirmed that the children and young people in the group are those who have been reached out to. However, more work is being done to increase the number of children and young people reached. * The Board needs to understand who they are representing and the range of groups. * Could the Board produce an executive summary of the highlight reports to be written directly for young people? **Action** – To consider how we present the information for young people moving forward. * The ethnicity mix needs to be considered. * The SIAB minutes are being made available on the Local Offer and podcasts to be developed so that children and young people can access the information as well as parents, families and other stakeholders. However, all names will be redacted. The minutes are to go on the Local Offer this week, possibly with the photograph of the Board from the June SIAB along with the Ofsted/CQC Inspection report and the Priority Impact Plan. * We need to decide which Board members are going to attend which of the Youth Voice Network meetings.   **Action –** SIAB Board Members to check availability to attend Youth Voice Network meetings by September SIAB. |  |
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| 4 | **GOVERNANCE** |  |
|  | Terms of Reference  The Terms of Reference is to be reviewed on a six-monthly basis but is currently still in draft format. The Executive Nurse at the ICB and her deputy, who are named in the Terms of Reference, are keen to talk to the Chair and other Chairs around Greater Manchester about representation.  **Action** – the Chair to meet with ICB representatives and other Chairs of SEND Boards before August Board.  In principle Board members approved the Terms of Reference.  It was highlighted that there is an action due for June that states ‘ensure clear governance including escalation routes and various impact measures’. A question was raised whether the education system was feeding back information to schools. It was confirmed that feedback is provided to every school and that they can escalate information back to this SIAB. The Board needs to receive information from sub-groups and schools. The Leads of each Priority Impact areas will be talking to all key stakeholders when writing their reports to bring forward evidence. and that is where the evidence regarding what is happening across Bury will be obtained.  Principles of the SEND Improvement and Assurance Board Membership  It has come about in the past that there needs to be clarity around what Board members are expected to do. As part of the SEND Improvement Board toolkit, this document was developed.  Everyone agreed to sign up to the document and document to be updated with ‘final copy’ at the bottom and to be reviewed in six months’ time. |  |
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| 5 | **PRIORITY IMPACT PLAN (PIP)** |  |
|  | The Chair informed the SIAB that the Priority Impact  Plan is about sustainable impact and not just actions. It was very impressive that it was signed off at first time out. This is a tool to use as a Board to ensure we are moving at pace; timeframes need to be adhered to. Currently, Bury is 10 years late in delivering on some of this work which was outlined in the Children and Families Act 2014 and the subsequent Code of Practice. The Board’s responsibility is to use the Priority Impact Plan as tool to check, as a partnership. The SIAB will use it to cross reference against the highlight reports to assess progress and impact. The Priority Impact Plan is now signed off and cannot be changed without agreement with DfE and NHSE Advisors.  Discussion  Who owns the RAG rating? The Chair enquired if the PIP should be presented every other month in terms of the RAG rating. The Chair advised that the Project Manager will oversee the collating of this and the Board will need to agree the rating criteria.  There is an action outstanding to identify project management support and how the role will be resourced. Funding has been identified and the Council are out to market on the PMO role.  It was suggested that there should be a dashboard presented at every Board meeting as it is important to use the dashboard to evidence the delivery of what has been committed to.  The SIAB also need to make sure that co-production work is moving forward. Bury2gether will identify from the highlight reports where this is not happening. There is a need to be mindful that teams and organisations are no longer about working in silo, it’s about partnership working.  The work is about impact and not process.  The Health Scrutiny and Childrens Scrutiny are keen to receive feedback from the SIAB. The Chair advised that she is happy to attend and present to Boards. |  |
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| 6 | **REVIEW OF THE 6 PRIORITY ACTIONS INCLUDING AREAS OF IMPROVEMENT** |  |
|  | The Chair confirmed that the August Board meeting will still take place, despite it being the holiday season, and that she is expecting as much attendance at possible. At the August Board we will carry out deeper dives with data, with analysis and looking at impact measures for each of the three Priority Impact Areas that will be presented.  Priority Impact 1  The action is about ensuring that the SEND strategy continues to be implemented to improve the lived experience of children and young people with SEND. There are essentially five elements to this:   * To create a SEND strategy on a page by October 2024 * To work with Buy2gether colleagues to co-produce a model for parental feedback around families’ experiences with a mechanism to be clarified by December 2024 * Confirm the Governance by June but recognising that we undertake reviews after three and six months * To review the QA framework by August 2024 * To make progress on the effective communication of the strategy by November 2024   Updates   1. Strategy – the update is the opportunity to progress engagement and working with the strategy and communication with a plan on a page to be developed by October. 2. Parental feedback – we need to clarify how this is done systematically to allow a good framework of co-operation and no later than by December 2024. 3. Governance is substantially complete. We have clarified the Governance within the council, and we are connected to all elements of ICB governance. 4. QA Framework – consideration around strengthening our audit processes and quality assurance processes. 5. Communication of the strategy – there is a gap due to the limited support capacity.   On 19 August the Chair and Executive Director of Strategy & Transformation are co-ordinating a Task and Finish group to take a look at communication and to undertake a mapping exercise of what is already is in place and what needs to be done whilst we get some capacity in place.   * Bury has a Quality Assurance Framework which is being reviewed. * Quality assurance tools have been developed and have been trialed with a series of multi-agency audits. * Uncertain of how we are gathering data in terms of our Quality Assurance Framework and our implementation of that. * Establish from the multi-agency audits what do we know so far in terms of the quality of our EHCPs and where our strengths and where are our opportunities for development. * DCO has undertaken some work with the ICB. * Need to re-establish our multi-agency audits especially from the Autumn term. * Work has taken place with our Envision 360 colleagues in establishing a digital quality assurance tool. * Looking at Health and Education Care plans within the EHC team in terms of the quality and knowledge of experience.   There is a bigger piece of work around setting the vision and articulating the strategy and the young people have begun to express what this should look like and there is work to do to co-produce a strategy with our parents/carers forum. The next steps are to move to a position where we can articulate what we are seeking to achieve with inclusion woven through it.  Everyone needs to understand our key priorities and how we are going to get there.  There is the potential for some duplication with Project Safety Valve (PSV) and we need to ensure we have some alignment to those priorities and how we are achieving what is needed.  Parental feedback would make more of a difference and we need to hear and evidence the voice of the parents to ensure that our parents feel they are being listened to and heard.  **Action** – SIAB to be provided with demographic breakdown of parents involved.  **Correction to highlight report -** The highlight report states that it is a neuro-diversity survey, and it is a neuro-pathway survey.  Priority Impact 2  The action is in relation to Early Identification.   * The Graduated toolkit is online and is crossing over to PSV. * The school section is complete and online. * The writing of other sections is complete but not digitally online, but this will happen over summer and Stephen is linking in with IT to ensure it is fit for purpose and live. * The CPD programme for schools is now fully delivered and has comprised of 56 online sessions. * We are now looking at how do we get out in the community and deliver on our side of the Graduated Approach using our Outreach team which is still being built. We now need to amalgamate with what we have in-house.   Discussion   * Where are we in terms of Midwifery, Health Visiting, Early Years? Early identification is fundamental, and the Board needs to hear if Midwives, Health Visitor understand about identification, what training have they had, what are their expectations and what are they expecting. We also need to check whether we are talking only about the education elements or all additional needs. * Some services are not able to be accessed without an EHCP which is causing waits and delays to meet a child’s needs. * It would be interesting to understand which teams/services say that that children and young people require an EHCP in order to receive a service. * SENCOs have had some training around identification with 54 schools attending. The feedback questionnaire only talks about 8 responses which does not give enough assurance on the validity of impact. Stephen to follow-up on satisfaction and impact.   **ACTION –** SIAB Members to consider how to assess the approach and language being used by professionals/teams in relation to expectations of needing an EHCP to access services.  Priority Impact 3  The action is about Leaders across the partnership needing to improve the quality and availability of support for children, young people and their families while they wait for specialist assessments.  There are two broad action points under this item:   1. Timely access to services – there are a massive number of services involved and we will be clearer in future reports in itemising progress against all the individual items. Jane and Will have been meeting with providers of services and are assured that there is a determined effort with partners to make good progress especially around waiting times for Speech and Language Therapy. There has also been additional training and development around Health Visiting. 2. Lots of examples of engagement especially with Jewish community). There is more to do with Bury2Gether around co-production.   The Chair expressed the need for data to be seen within each of the highlight reports.  **Action** – Consider forming a working group to discuss feedback, policy/comms, consultation and co-production and to define our terms and set some expectations. This will be fed back to the Delivery Group in August for the first time.  Priority Impact 4  This is relation to children and young people being prepared for adulthood.   * There is more to do around preparation and more opportunity to explore around health and social care involvement. * There needs to be more robust informative information around access to pathways that children and young people will follow if they move through to adulthood. * Multi-agency audits have evidenced a lack of preparation for adulthood.   Discussion   * The work needs to be done by everyone across the partnership. Preparation for Adulthood is expected to start around age 14 (year 9) and we need to make sure that schools understand what that is about and help families think about what and how they are doing things and think about it more widely. * The Transition Framework is to be published by NHS England. It’s around clinical pathways and will have a focus on preparation for adulthood but for SEND it will need some work. * Ofsted and CQC is publishing a thematic document on Preparation for Adulthood which is due to be published around September. * The Council for Disabled Children’s website has good information about Preparation for Adulthood. * Co-production in section 3 does not talk about consulting with young people and needs to in the future.   How is the Board going to manage risks that are identified? The Chair advised that we are waiting for a project manager to be employed and to develop the risk register. SIAB requires regular updates on mitigating risks from each of the Leads.  All information will be used as part of the ongoing assessment when there is a stock-take at month 6 and month 12.  Priority Impact 5  This action is about Transitions.   * Secondary schools have a named Transitions Lead. * As a team they recognise that they have not got transitions right in primary and secondary schools, so the work had already begun and there has been positive responses to this. * A Task and Finish group has been established with representations from Adult Care. The next steps will be around how we involve parents in this. * Standard operating procedures have been agreed. * A risk has been added in the report which is more of an awareness at this time and does not need addressing yet.   Discussion   * When writing reports, we need to ensure we are using the Priority Impact Plan with the required timeframes. * On a point of clarification, it is Ofsted **and** CQC that undertake these inspections. * An EOTAS policy is currently being developed - Education Other Than At School. The first Parents’ Forum was held last week where they discussed how we best get the young people’s voice heard in this piece of work. Suggestions were offered from parents as to how we may be able to do this.   Priority Impact 6  This action is about Education, Health and Care Needs Assessment and EHC plan, including monitoring and review (statutory service).   * Looking at the quality and timeliness of Education and Care plans. * Quality is about improving communication. * Need to establish the functionality of our systems in terms of how they are supporting us to administer the statutory functions within the teams. * It’s not just about increasing our staff numbers; we want to ensure that they are appropriately trained and supported to conduct their statutory duties in a timely manner. * Addressing communication issues. * Risk around timelines to build capacity up of case officers in the team. We want to attract the most appropriate candidates and attract experienced SEND professionals. * Carrying out baseline salary and comparisons. * We need to have a single version of the truth around how our Local Area is performing in relation to the statutory duties that we hold.   Discussion   * We need to have a session in August around what is an EHCP. * A scorecard/dashboard based around what our statutory duties are, rather than what we historically measure, would be welcomed. * We need to focus on what areas we need to fix. * Are we sighted enough on what has gone wrong as there a high level of parental dissatisfaction in relation to EHCP needs. * There are evident barriers within the team preventing us delivering the change. * Identifying some quick wins but currently gathering more information around this. * There are variances in the team around knowledge, skills and statutory compliance. * Looking at the structure in terms of escalation of cases. * Need proper diagnostic around what is not happening now. * Need to ensure that we look at the welfare of our staff in terms of abusive parents etc. * We need to bring to the Board reviews and new plans as there is the worry around case officer workload. * There needs to be clarity around expectation of who is doing what. * The partnership needs to fully understand the child’s full journey.   **Action –**  A session about EHCPs will be planned to take place in August. |  |
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| 7 | **COMMUNICATION** |  |
|  | Update on Comms.   * Currently undertaking some scoping on this piece of work. * We need to be clear on the definition because we have got culture meets communication meet workforce development which means that not everything is a part of the communications plan. * We need to understand the channels through which we are going to operate which, internally is divided into two pieces of work:  1. Internally, within our own organisations about our own staff understanding why this is of strategic importance and understanding what our organisational priorities are. 2. Internal workforce messaging for those who are directly delivering this.   Externally, the channels that we need to look at is working with our children and young people and parents and parent groups and then partners and wider partners as in Team Bury. Comms needs to go out to wider public to recognise what is being discussed in the media, that there needs to be some messaging about what Bury, and its partners, are doing about this.   * A programme of work is to be developed through a Task and Finish group to get as much to mapped as possible as to what is in the system already. * We are currently recruiting to Send Engagement Officer which we failed to recruit recently * We will require a senior Comms person to help pull all this work together.   Discussion  A Communications mapping workshop is being held on 19th August at 10.30am – anyone wanting to attend please confirm.  **Action - A**sk all workstreams to provide input for the workshop on the 19th August about what the Board is looking for them to deliver. |  |
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| 8 | **WORKFORCE** |  |
|  | Will Blandamer provided an update on workforce.   * Lots of workforce implications and some evidence reflected in all of the highlight reports. * Identify dedicated capacity around workforce that would help. * Asked for examples of best practice and Janet has provided some initial good practice. If anyone else has any evidence of good practice, please share with Will.   **Action -** Leads to report on communications requirement and workforce in all future highlight reports.  SIAB members need to ask if you are assured that we are on the right track from the evidence being presented in the highlight reports. Today was a benchmark around where we are currently, but now we need to move into deeper dives around three priority areas in August and a further three in September and then again in October and November before the first Stock-take. |  |
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| 9 | **FORWARD PLAN** |  |
|  | For the August meeting it was agreed that Priority Actions 1, 2 and 3 be discussed in more detail then in September, Priority Actions 4, 5 and 6 be discussed in detail.  If feels that there is an energy and traction in all six priority areas. We need to move to quite quickly into the impact and what that will look like. We also need to ensure that we are capturing information and data in order to see the differences that are being made. |  |
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| 10 | **ANY OTHER BUSINESS** |  |
|  | Draft Improvement Notice  The Board is to hold back from publishing the Improvement Notice until it has been finalised. |  |
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| 11 | **DATE OF NEXT MEETING** |  |
|  | 20th August at 10.00am – 1.00pm.  25th September at 10am – 1.00pm  14th October at 11am – 2.00pm  27th November at 10am – 1.00pm |  |