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Department of Children & Young People



Minutes

SEND Improvement & Assurance Board Meeting

14th October 2024

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| 1 | **INTRODUCTIONS & MINUTES** | | |  |
|  | The Chair welcomed everyone to the SEND Improvement and Assurance Board meeting. 4 young people also attended this meeting, joining at 4.00pm.  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 September SIAB were accepted as a correct record. | | |  |
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| 2. | **ACTIONS & DECISION LOG** | | |  |
|  | The action log was reviewed and updated.   * Action 28- Co-ordination, finalisation and distribution of the newsletter for the first week of October.   The newsletter is under review. The Chair emphasised achieving timeliness on distributing the newsletter.   * Action 29- PPL to provide a risk register for the October SIAB Board. This will now be presented to November Board as other papers have needed to take priority. * Action 31- Update on Graduated Approach and toolkit for November Board when present. * Action 39- Ofsted and CQC report was distributed with current minutes. * Action 44- Priority Impact 6 typo was corrected, and update provided for sections, re-circulated with current minutes. | | |  |
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| 3 | **B2G to formally present the demographic information about membership** | | |  |
|  | There was a presentation given on the demographic information. This information was previously circulated to Board Members in September.  The scrutiny process for the UK Parent/Carer support Forum (PCF) conducted by Contact who are the delivery partners of Department for Education (DfE), so BURY2GETHER were not scrutinised as part of Bury’s SEND inspection process.  The annual SEND survey found that 65% of Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) families have 2 or more children with SEND. BURY2GETHER’s membership covers at least 50% of all the children with SEND in Bury.  Most parents/carers that are joining BURY2GETHER are female.  **Action**- Further co-ordination of work to increase memberships  BURY2GETHER are annually funded £17,500 by the DfE whereas other areas in Greater Manchester receive additional funding from their Local Areas and usually match the DfE grant.  BURY2GETHER previously provided Max cards for SEND parents providing reductions on attractions. There was an agreement with the Council to provide new members with cards which encouraged more parents/carers to join the membership which has stopped.  B2G members are volunteers.  The Chair raised that there is a need for a lead on communications to promote the Parent/Carer Forum.  **Action**- DCS to take responsibility on communications to promote Parent/Carer Forum.  The Chief Executive added that the Board and BURY2GETHER still need to work together and connect as a partnership. | | |  |
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| 4 | **Priority Impact Plan (PIP) 1** | | |  |
|  | Since the last Board there has been significant activity including the engagement with PPL and the governance arrangements which holds everyone accountable.  A key development is building the Strategy under the key priorities and consulting with young people who are co-producing the Strategy.  An important aspect of the Strategy is the further development of the Local Offer with it being the face of the strategy.  In relation to communications, there is additional capacity with the new Head of Communications, who is now a part of the SIAB Board. There is progression on recruitment for Communications and Engagement role which has been refined to include digital capabilities.  There has been work undertaken on the Quality Assurance Framework. There is a multi-layered approach including the Invision training specifically about assurance, learning and a development programme in relation to Education, Health and Care plans, and there are plans for multi-agency auditing.  Discussion   * The Strategy co-produced with young people is still in progress with the goal to deliver the strategy for December. To support this there has been re-engagement with the Council for Disabled Children and the Local Authority. Collaborative work with Bury2gether will also be a part of the co-production of the Strategy. * The Communications and Engagement role will be advertised from Wednesday 16th October. Bury2gether have provided feedback around the nature of the role. The Chair emphasised the need for a Corporate Review of the delays in relation to the development and advertising of the role, noting significant delays since the previous person's departure. The process to get the adverts out should have been much quicker. The Chair requested an update to identify what were the barriers and how to ensure better efficiency and effectiveness in the  Corporate team's operations moving forward.   **Action**- A review process in relation to the communications role and update the Board in November.   * The Quality Assurance Framework will be written to be presented to the Board for approval. It will be supported by a digital product Invision which will help provide key performance information. * A program has been established to involve all key partners in promoting outcomes for children and the young people will be a part of the audit. Feedback from young people, parents, and carers will also be a part of the quality assurance framework. The Chair reiterated the importance of assurance for and from the Board. * Training with Invision has been scheduled for 28th October and 1st November. Training sessions for auditors on Education, Health and Care plans are scheduled for October 29th and November 6th. These sessions will cover what constitutes a good plans, with input from multi-agency auditors. Additionally, the first tranche of audits will launch on November 7th, followed by a comprehensive multi-agency audit to collaborate and share insights. * The Chair emphasised the importance of having a regulatory mechanism to monitor the progress and impact of projects and programs to ensure that actions are on target and effective. This regulation is crucial for keeping the Board informed about the current status and progress. The Chair mentioned the necessity of documenting these processes to maintain clarity and accountability. PPL acknowledged that the current Strategy needs to be reviewed and that it's important to ensure the Strategy is correct, even if it takes more time. He suggests implementing more process and structure around the change process to improve outcomes. * DfE discussed the oversight of improvements for children with SEND, noting ongoing progress and the need for time. It was stressed that understanding the system and experiences to inform and refresh the Strategy to acknowledge experiences not just quality. The Board agreed that performance data provides an understanding of the outcome for children but there is a need to capture deeper experiences. Bury2gether have previously captured some outcomes through their work with the Council for Disabled Children, which involved co-produced paragraphs with children and young people. * The Chair raised the questions: what would the young people like the Board to measure in relation to each of the 6 priority areas? How do they perceive these measurements? Can they help the Board understand their perspectives on this? The challenge of ensuring that all measures are visible to everyone, given the cross-representation on subgroups and emphasised the importance of not losing sight of the co-produced outcome measures while also focusing on key accomplishments related to the Priority Improvement Plans was acknowledged.   **Action**- DCS to collaborate with the SEND Delivery Group on collation of outcome measures.   * The multi-agency approach aims to improve the impact of services though collaborative work with different agencies. This will help improve quality assurance measures for Education, Health, and Care Plans (EHCPs), streamline new applications and existing cases. Regular reviews and standardised questionnaires for families will provide consistent data to evaluate service effectiveness. This collaborative effort will help identify and implement practical improvements, ensuring services are more effective and impactful. * The EHC team, consists of 6 Special Educational Needs (SEN) Officers, 2 senior officers. A training pack, which is focused on maintaining quality assurance and meeting staffing needs is available. The aim is to maintain high standards without compromising timeliness or quality. | | |  |
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| 5 | **PRIORITY IMPACT PLAN (PIP) 2** | | |  |
|  | A Continuing Professional Development (CPD) offer has been circulated to ensure cohesive support across various services, including schools, NHS, social care, and the Oak Learning Partnership. The Education, Health, and Care (EHC) and inclusion teams have collaborated to develop CPD packages.  The focus for early October, November, and December is on the pre-Graduated approach, providing support before addressing specific needs through the Graduated Approach. This approach is evolving with input from various services, and an induction pack has been created for staff. It's crucial to ensure schools understand and implement the Graduated Approach effectively.  Both internal and external CPD packages have been developed. The CPD offerings being released to all schools include Emotional Literacy Support Assistants (ELSA) training, which focuses on emotional and inclusive support systems. This training aims to enhance how teachers support children, introducing new methods for teacher training within schools. Additionally, a support and advice package for schools has been created for cases where EHC plans are declined, ensuring schools know how to access support.  The multi-agency inclusion panel (MIP) has expanded its support through the Education Psychology team to ensure support for children pre-EHC plans. The Graduated Approach Toolkit is now available on the Council's website, and the Early Years and Post-16 teams are expected to complete their development by December 2024.  Internal teams are now working together under a structured four-visit model: consultation, observation, support, and reviewing school structures. This approach aims to provide comprehensive support to schools, including screening advice. Activities are coordinated through a multi-agency Inclusion Panel to target training and support effectively. Requests from Graduate Boards are addressed by providing additional support or recruiting specialists like Speech and Language Therapists (SALT) and Occupational Therapists (OT). Additionally, an Inclusion Support mailbox was launched at the end of September, offering immediate advice on Social Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) and communication issues, ensuring timely responses within 24 hours to support schools'.  The Local Offer is being developed and maintained, with a focus on Preparation for Adulthood and gathering necessary support. Recently, there has been an increase in website visitors, from 320 in August to 449 in September.  A £300,000 investment has been made to increase Health Visitor capacity, with a new lead starting in January. Recruitment for additional Health Visitor posts is ongoing. A review of funding allocation has been completed, revealing the backlog and upcoming demands. A Recovery Plan has been developed to support increased usage over the next two years with continual quality assurance.  The effectiveness of Early Years support has been revised, with no negative feedback received about the Evolution Pathway. A Google form will be distributed in December to analyse if the approach has improved the support offered so far and ensuring appropriate support is provided going forward.  The Community Educational Psychology Service is still in its early stages, focusing on building a fully functioning team. The concept of a community service and collaboration with Bury2gether will be part of phase two. Currently, the priority is to fill eight vacancies in the educational psychology service before co-producing the community strategy with Bury2gether.  Discussion   * There is a risk if the Communications lead is not appointed, as this role includes digital capabilities. Website hits for the Graduated Approach Toolkit will be available in December, and data on the Local Offer's website traffic will also be discussed for December. * At the Joint Consultative Committee (JCC) Teachers meeting, key points included the need to address gaps in the relationship with the Local Authority and to ensure the Board provides reassurance and support. A new unified approach integrates Outreach, Psychology, and EHC teams to offer comprehensive support, aiming to improve attendance and ensure school staff feel supported. Catch-up sessions are planned to maintain ongoing support and connection among staff as well as the Inclusion Support inbox as an advice line. The inbox was launched at the end of September, it allows users to fill out a form and receive a response within 24 hours. In its first week, the advice line received six appropriate referrals, indicating unmet needs. The service is being monitored to ensure its effectiveness and track attendance at related events. * The Chair emphasised the need to establish impact milestones for each element within the priority impact plan and to track progress towards achieving these milestones. The Chair acknowledge that the PPL has only recently joined and that the work is still in progress. * The Council's efforts to engage with the SENDCO network was highlighted, emphasising the importance building trust using school peers and champions. Concerns about long-term sustainability were expressed, emphasising the need for continued voices and support. The Chair agreed that further work on communication support is needed for schools and education providers to co-produce and identify needs, boost confidence, and determine effective communication methods. * Bury2gether highlighted the need for better communication with parents about available support, such as outreach and inclusion officers, suggesting methods like conversations, posters, and leaflets. They also pointed out the lack of a formal assessment pathway for conditions like dyslexia and dyspraxia in Bury, which complicates getting diagnoses and support, especially as children transition to adult services at age 18. Additionally, they noted that unlike other areas, Bury lacks collaboration between Health and Educational services for diagnosing learning disabilities. * The feedback from schools indicates a stronger effort and commitment to improving relationships. This is evident through visits by officers and Councillors, and the creation of an Education and Inclusion Strategy. The need to continue this work and gather feedback to measure its impact was reinforced. | | |  |
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| 6 | **Priority Impact plan (PIP) 3** | | |  |
|  | The report highlights positive outcomes, including evidence of impact and process improvements. The Joint Commissioning group has provided clear oversight of commissioned activities. There are opportunities to refresh and agree on evaluations. Progress has been made in Early Health system contributions. However, concerns remain regarding waiting times for Community Paediatrics and CAMHS, as well as outstanding issues with the support whilst waiting, and assessment service.  Significant progress has been made in improving timely access to Speech and Language Therapy across various services, particularly for children, with the number of cases over 52 weeks reduced from 90 in April to just two.  Community Paediatrics is currently facing challenges, with approximately a year for wait times. This situation is being escalated to the Northern Care Alliance for further attention on performance improvements and mutual aid. They are also conducting Demand and Capacity analysis to address the issue and have recognised this position as part of their risk establishment processes.  There has been good progress in reducing core CAMHS waiting times and establishing a 16 - 18 service in Bury, addressing a significant gap.  The GM-wide launch of the Neurodevelopmental Profiling toolkit is on track.  The update on evidence-based interactions includes significant progress and positive outcomes. There have been impactful interactions, particularly highlighted by the Paediatric Autism Communication Therapy service.  **Action**- Testimonies to be shared with the Board in November.  The Adult Services update for the contract with Optimise is being finalised to facilitate the transition of young people from CAMHS to support them during this period. However, there is still no Commissioning service in place. Steps are being taken to secure this, and the issue has been escalated to Executive Leads and raised with the Locality and ICB boards. Meetings are scheduled to try and resolve the situation.  Support for families on the waiting list for Speech and Language assessments includes the "Can Do" programme, which has been offered to them. This programme provides video content that families can access, and it has been well-received, with many families frequently revisiting certain videos. There are also a couple of indicators and requested evidence on the use of PADLETS which is on the Local Offer. There is an increased offer of Riding the Rapids (RTR) and Paediatric Autism Communication Therapy (PACT). There will also be a Parent Carer workshop in place for support.  **Action**- BURY2GETHER will provide support and collaboration on Parent Carer workshop.  The Greater Manchester Integrated Care Board (GMICB) is expected to address the significant financial request to help reduce Autism wait times, which are currently under considerable pressure. Preparations are underway to progress as soon as approval is received.  The transfer of individuals over 18 to Optimise has been successful, but as more people turn 18, the demand is increasing again. Efforts to reduce core wait times for assessments have been effective. However, due to HR issues, the up-to-18 offer will be delayed until December. Staff have been working diligently to ensure all referral pathways are correctly followed.  Efforts are ongoing to contact everyone on the waiting list and process their cases. This work is similar to the approach in Stockport, involving coordination with Health colleagues in the Borough contacting those on the waiting list. There are challenges with information governance (IG) issues related to data sharing on who is waiting, but steps are being taken to address these and ensure clarity.  Discussion   * Work force development planning is ongoing to progress iBasis and Social Attention and Communication Surveillance (SACSR) training as well as Riding the Rapids Early Years training. Training in delivering the neuro profiling toolkit will be sourced once the toolkit has been refreshed. Training will be delivered by the Council next week, revising the methods, as well as building up ‘train the trainers’ with the Multidisciplinary team across health, education, and social care. * The PADLETS are available on the Local Offer, but BURY2GETHER raised the questions around how parents will find out about the PADLETS as well as the assurance and impact around this - a letter can be sent to parents and all services have got the link to the assessments. Contact with parents and carers provides them with the opportunity to shape how they want support and promoting that in the PADLETS. * The Chair highlighted the issue with the initial CAMHS assessment being 18 months and a further 10 months for medication. This raised concerns around how the children and families are managing whilst waiting and this needs further improvement. The community wait for children is recognised nationally as unacceptable. There are questions around CAMHS work and ADHD being clustered together regionally. * BURY2GETHER also highlighted the use of language and to avoid wording that could cause emotional distress for children. * The Northwest Care parent carer forum leads have been collaborating with the ICB on the new inspection framework. This effort aims to address the numerous poor inspections and health issues that have been identified. The goal is to work together with partners to improve these areas. * Risks need to be clearly understood and managed. The Board must agree on how to handle these risks and determine appropriate actions.   **Action**- Risk mitigation strategies will be discussed at November Board and provide a Risk Register.   * Co-production will be discussed in the January Board. | | |  |
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| 7 | **Contributions from, and engagement with, Children and Young People** | | |  |
|  | It is really important that we hear what children and young people are saying and that the SIAB remains focused on children’s experiences. It is essential that we achieve sustainable positive outcomes for the children and young people of Bury. The young people shared their thoughts about being part of the group.    Highlights from the presentation were:  The Youth Voice Network held its first meeting on October 1st, with 13 young people. The group focused on identifying key issues for young people with additional needs and disabilities, worked on Co-production kitemark projects. The young people voted to have four members present at every meeting. Additionally, they planned how to involve all their peers in the ongoing Voice work.  The Circles of Influence Board facilitated by the Youth Voice Network covers themes that directly relate to this board.  **Action**- All Board members are invited to attend the Circle of Influence board on February 28th, 2025.  The SEND Youth Ambassador has started visiting schools and colleges as part of phases two and three.  An update was provided about the Young People’s decision on using social media and agreed for Instagram as the platform.  The member portraits will be shared with the Young People and the Board members once all portraits have been collected.  The Young people have requested a Board member to attend every working group meeting and for each working group member to participate in two Board meetings annually. They would like the Chair to attend all working group meetings whenever possible. The Young People have asked for video summaries of board meetings, portraits of Board members, and opportunities to share their experiences.  There was a questions posed to the Board about topics for the Circles of Influence event next year which included:-   * Reviewing the priorities set last year and evaluating the progress made as part of the Circle of Influence Board. This involves ensuring strong engagement and accountability for delivering on those priorities. * The 10-year plan for Public Services at the Circles of Influence Board. The goal is to ensure it reflects the right priorities for everyone, including children, young people, and those with additional needs. * Focus on young people's mental health, recognising it as a significant issue nationwide. Emphasising the importance of hearing young people's perspectives on services and experiences and creating a mechanism to show that the young people’s voices impact the services provided. * The themes covered need more key individuals to be part of the discussion that are not typically involved with the Board but can support in the themes. * Key Priority Impacts Areas to gain feedback in terms of improvement work. * Board members to send any questions/information to schools for the visits. * The importance of addressing communication barriers, such as language and digital access, to ensure effective engagement with children and families was emphasised. * It was suggested that gathering feedback from young people on their needs during the transition to adulthood, also known as Preparing for Adulthood (PFA). This feedback would help identify gaps and ensure that services are aligned with their priorities and experiences. Both focused on enhancing inclusivity and ensuring that all voices are heard and considered.   The dates of the **Youth Voice Network** are on:  January 7th 9.30-11.30  March 3rd 9.30-11.30  **SIAB Young People’s Working Group**:  January 21st time TBC  February 25th 5-6.30 (provisional) March 25th 5-6.30 (provisional SIAB YPWG) | | |  |
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| 8 | **Data Set** | | |  |
|  | The data set will be presented in the next board. | | |  |
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| 9 | **Self – Evaluation Expectations** | | |  |
|  | The Chair reminded the board about self-evaluation ahead of the 6-month mark of this board.  **Action**- All board members agreed to prepare this towards the end of November/December. | | |  |
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| 10 | **ANY OTHER BUSINESS** | | |  |
|  | A bespoke paper to cover the Communications and Workforce Areas for Improvement was suggested. And the Alternative Provision Area for Improvement will be included in Priority Impact Area 5 report.  **Action**- PPL to support with this.  The Chair also asked the Board members to consider the position of Vice Chair of the Board by the November board. | | |  |
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| 11 | **DATE OF NEXT MEETING** | | |  |
|  | 27th November 10.00-13.00pm  10th December 09.00 - 12.30pm DfE and NHSE Stocktake  22nd January 10.00- 13.00pm- venue: Unsworth Academy | | |  |