

Minutes



Safety Valve Board Meeting

Friday 24th May 2024, 2.30pm

Meeting Room 5B/Microsoft Teams Meeting

Present:

Naomi Carter (NC) – Service Director, Education, Inclusion and Access
Heather Morris (HM) – Strategic Manager, SEN and Inclusion
Dean Prodomo (DP) – Service Manager, Education and Post 16
Ashley Jefferies (AJ) – Service Manager, Access and Resources
Rachael Williams (RW) – Inclusion Manager
Irina Rowan (IR) – Senior Finance Business Partner
Margarida Ressurreicao (MR) – Data Analyst
Theresa Wall (TW) – Senior Early Years Advisory Teacher

Apologies

Jade Kennett (JK) – Service Manager, Strategic Development
Jodi Smith (JS) – Senior Accounting Technician
Rosie Lister (RL) – Virtual School Headteacher

Summary of Actions
Action: CH to set up meeting between NC, HM and TW.
Action: CH to set up meeting between NC, HM and RW.

1. Welcome

NC welcomed everyone and explained that some reprofiling of the agreement was needed so this meeting will be used to go through everything. She advised that she, IR and HM have worked hard on the criteria and the submission they need to give to the DfE around financial implications. This meeting will be used as an opportunity to ask any questions and be clear how we move forward. NC shared that she has to meet with DfE and there is a tight window to turn a report around.

2. Chairs Update

NC advised that since the last meeting, the reprofiling of workstreams has taken longer than anticipated. IR has identified finances around the overarching programme, and now they need to look at each area.

NC explained that she has taken the 7 workstreams and looked at all the work we are doing as service and where it sits in the workstreams. She has given the workstreams abridged names, and they are broad. NC briefly went through each workstream and noted:

- 3.2 – one word has been changed.
- 3.4 – this week the figure has increased to 201 additional places, and this does not include the free school bid but includes the additional pressures for Medina House.
- 3.5 – the wider outreach model will be incorporated.
- 3.7 – any high needs spend that doesn't sit in other workstreams will sit here.

NC feels that the work done on the workstreams should make the whole safety valve work easier to understand.

NC shared the high needs forecast.

NC advised that earlier in the week she had to share the figures with the Chief Exec and Section 151 officer. These numbers are currently ringfenced in the statutory override but if this is removed then they will sit on the council's budget.

NC shared a breakdown of the high needs block from last month which IR needs to update. Each budget line has been linked to the agreement and at the end of each line it states who the owner is. NC advised that they had to do modelling on how get to an in-year balanced budget.

NC ran through each budget line and noted:

- We need to look at Post 16 top up; engaging with providers and look at the commissioning model. The finance officer attached to this is Jodi.
- With regards to the speech language and team, talks need to be held with health colleagues around their statutory duties around providing advice. An initial conversation has taken place with Anthony Harper and Ashley Whittaker. NC noted that the service is non-statutory but is a great resource. The statutory function sits with Health. There is also admin attached to the service which needs to be looked at.
- Pre-school SEN is non-statutory. TW felt that it is needed, and NC said that they can look to see if it can be a sold service. HM stated that she knows the value it brings.
- The outreach services will sit under one umbrella and will need to have clear KPI's and held to account. Children should move fluidly between OAP and SEN support, and the LA need to be confident that needs are being met through school resources and the expertise going out as part of the outreach model which will be developed over the next 12 months.

3. Workstream Update

DP advised that he needed to leave soon so provided an update on the Post 16 and Pathways work. He confirmed that the DFN project is moving forward, however we are still waiting for the NHS; a decision was taken for it not to be taken to the board but to be taken to the committee instead. It has gone to the committee and been heard but there has not

been an answer back yet. DP explained that he has contacted his link at the NHS and will see if Emma Meek has a contact so that he can make contact to push it through quicker.

In terms of pathways, DP has networked with almost all stakeholders, apart from HTP, who he has a meeting scheduled with. Supported internships are something that HTP and a couple of other providers are interested in, and DP suggested that they might be able to grow the model quickly if they can get the initial one off the ground, which is positive.

DP confirmed that they have just received the grant offer letter regarding the Careers Hub, which set out how much funding we would receive, and he is working with Southampton and Portsmouth to break it down into what it means for the island.

DP advised that he shared his first SEN Employment Forum, and it went positively. Attendees have been asked to bring their current offer to the next one so they can put together all of the pathways open to young people with SEN. DP noted that Claire from the IW College is providing support to run the forum, and he feels it is a good conduit to join up other workstreams. HM asked if the DFN project is for any young person, or specifically just for those with EHCP's. DP confirmed that currently it is just for those with EHCP's. HM suggested that they need to be mindful that if there is due to be some engagement from health from September, they will need to look at timescales as the SEN team cannot just change provision in plans and have to enter a statutory process in order to change section I. She suggested picking this up offline and DP felt it would be worth bringing Claire into the conversation.

DP left the meeting.

NC went through each workstream:

3.1

NC noted that schools are becoming more comfortable with the VSEND tool. She would like to make schools more aware of the phone line as the LA is paying for the service and it is a free resource for schools.

NC confirmed that she sent an email to the whole department yesterday with a link to the new Transforming Education platform that has been set up which hosts the toolkit and 5 e-learning module. She said that she is very pleased with this, and it can be added to.

TW explained that the intended impact of the networks and training the Early Years team put on, is that practitioners and teachers will make them feel more capable and feel confident that they don't need an extra person. HM suggested adding to the success criteria "appropriate allocation of inclusion funding in Early Years". HM also suggested looking at growth data; there is a steady growth of EHCP's being requested in EY, but they are complex high-end young people, so they are appropriate referrals. She feels this needs to be recognised as if someone just looked at the dataset, it looks like there is growth year-on-year. TW advised that she received the list for 2025 Medina House applications. HM reported that there are 25 children already in the system for Year -2 which shows how complex the needs are.

Action: CH to set up meeting between NC, HM and TW.

3.2

HM advised that this section is about the team actively attending review meetings for EHCP's and their impact and effectiveness. HM noted that once in specialist provision, they expect pupils needs to deescalate as they are in the right environment.

HM confirmed that the success criteria will be around working with partners and ensuring that the advice coming through is reflective so that plans are being written accordingly. She noted that it is a big task and will need to be embedded but she is confident that they can look at it in timely manner.

TW asked if Early Years should be added into section D and HM advised that it is reflected in 3.1.

HM advised that the transformation team did a piece of work that ended in November, which flagged some duplication in terms of the systems being used (the hub/Capita/SharePoint) and found that they could work in a smarter way. It also identified a need for training within reviews and HM is putting together a training package with the team that will form part of an annual cycle and induction.

HM reported that officers need to become much more proactive in understanding their role in the safety valve model. They need to look at how they make decisions for high-cost placements and the commissioning of them. RW asked if the team provide support for schools around the quality of annual reviews when the SEN service are not in attendance. HM confirmed that this will be the next stage, once she has supported the SEN team.

3.3

NC advised that this section is about having meetings with different members regarding suitability and commissioning of places so there is better value for money. HM is working with partners and making sure they are aware of their responsibility in process. HM confirmed that she has a multi-agency panel meeting every week to look at assessments which is consistently well attended by partners. She noted that they probably need to build in audits of the panels so that they can be confident from a strategic point of view that there is a threshold.

3.4

NC explained that this section is about creating additional places; 201 places are being created and she is very pleased with work. She confirmed that the Studio School provision has been agreed. NC noted that they need to talk to schools with resourced provisions to harmonise the numbers.

NC suggested that she and HM meet with RW to look at the ILC and medical placements.

Action: CH to set up meeting between NC, HM and RW.

3.5

NC advised that this section was originally the PBS section. The original agreement stated that the PBS was being created to reduce PX's even though there weren't any. NC confirmed that they have encompassed outreach as part of this section.

HM and RW have worked on building on OAP and outreach work. HM explained that they need to improve quality first teaching and SEND support, and parents need to be confident regarding the offer in schools and that the services being commissioned are meeting needs.

HM advised that all services need to be aware of what each other are doing and complementing each other. When this has been developed further, KPI's will be developed, which will be supported by performance management.

NC advised that this is a key area, and they are in the early stages of bringing governance together. She said that she is conscious of the work everyone is doing and how much they are expecting people to do. She suggested utilising other staff across the LA, for example, the digital team to build platforms.

3.6

DP gave an update on this area before he left the meeting.

3.7

NC noted that we don't have an EP service currently, but she has done an options appraisal. An in-house EP service is being explored, but this will come with risks as we don't know if we will recruit. HM suggested adding school improvement work to this section, as the SLA is only in place until 31st January.

4. Performance Impact

HM noted that they have only ever reported on SEN time limits and suggested that they should be reporting on exclusions etc.

5. Appendix

NC shared the governance model and noted that it needs to be changed to incorporate Schools Forum, CMT and Cabinet etc. Previous workstreams have been included so we can see where we came from.

6. Any other business

NC said that she was keen to have other stakeholders at these meetings and suggested inviting Rosie Lister.

Post meeting note: RL has been invited to meetings but could not make today's.

NC thanked attendees for their time and hard work.

Meeting closed: 3.55pm