

## DERBYSHIRE SEND IMPROVEMENT AND ASSURANCE BOARD MINUTES

Wednesday the 23rd of April 2025,  
Committee Room 1, County Hall, Matlock, 10:00-13:00

### MINUTES

Item No:	Minutes:
<b>DSIAB2425/01</b>	<p>Young People's Focus – "Mind of my own"</p> <p>The discussion on the "Mind of My Own" emphasised the importance of involving young people in decision-making processes; the focus group is called "Friends of the Local Offer" rather than "Mind of my own". This initiative is part of the broader effort to ensure that the voices of young people are heard and considered in the development and implementation of services.</p> <p>There is a concern that currently the Lead for Participation has not been asked to be a part of any other key areas of work within the Priority Impact Plan. Leads need to make sure they are extending invitations.</p> <p>The 'Friends of the Local Offer' initiative is designed to empower young people by providing them with a platform to express their views and participate in decision-making processes.</p> <p>It was highlighted that ongoing projects such as the 'Friends of the Local Offer' and the feedback mechanisms are in place to ensure young people's voices are heard. The Participation team has been engaging young people in providing feedback on the Local Offer website, which started in 2021. This feedback is used to make improvements and ensure the website meets the needs of young people. Young people from various schools and colleges have been involved in providing feedback on website design and content. The feedback is collected through focus groups and individual consultations, ensuring a wide range of young people are represented.</p> <p>Young people who participate in these projects receive certificates recognising their contributions, which helps acknowledge their efforts and encouraging further participation.</p> <p>The Participation team will continue to engage young people in various projects, including the development of the 'Friends of the Local Offer app'. There are plans to involve young people in Transition Planning and other areas where their input can significantly impact service delivery. The Board would appreciate the opportunity to meet with young people from the group to ask members some questions. The Chair was keen for the questions to be asked directly on the day as the questions should be able to be answered by those in the room, the Board agreed to this. One of the challenges mentioned was ensuring consistent and effective communication with young people and their families.</p>

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<b>DSIAB2425/01 continued</b>	<p>The SIAB discussed the importance of having clear communication strategies and involving parents and carers in workstream meetings to ensure a holistic approach. The SIAB emphasised the need for all Priority Impact Area leads to discuss how they can incorporate young people's feedback into their work. There was a call for active participation from all Board members in reviewing and updating risks, ensuring that young people's voices are considered in risk management processes</p>
<b>DSIAB2425/02</b>	<p><b>Priority Impact Area Reports:</b></p> <p><b>a) Priority 2 – Strategic Partnership Commissioning</b></p> <p>The Board emphasised the importance of conducting a thorough needs and gap analysis. This involves scrutinising data from the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) and other relevant sources to identify gaps in service provision. The process should include cross-referencing and double-checking the data to ensure the interpretation aligns with the experiences and expectations of stakeholders.</p> <p>The group implemented for Priority Impact Area 2 planned to finalise the definition and scope of Joint Commissioning in their next meeting on the 29th April. This involves agreeing the key principles and ensuring that all relevant stakeholders, including children, young people, families, and professionals, are involved in the development of the strategy. The importance of co-production was highlighted, ensuring that the voices of children, young people, and families are central to the Joint Commissioning process.</p> <p>There was a discussion about the necessity of having clear data-sharing protocols. These protocols are essential for Joint Commissioning to function effectively, ensuring that high-level data can inform commissioning decisions without breaching GDPR regulations. The Board acknowledged the need to learn from other regions, such as Nottinghamshire, which have successfully implemented data-sharing protocols across Health and Local Authorities.</p> <p>The SIAB recognised the importance of engaging with a wide range of stakeholders, including those from Social Care, Education, and Health sectors. Ensuring consistent representation at Joint Commissioning meetings was identified as a challenge that needs to be addressed. The Board also discussed the need for a clear Communication Strategy to keep all stakeholders informed and involved in the Joint Commissioning process.</p> <p>The Lead for Priority Impact Area 2 agreed to meet with the communications lead to discuss the involvement of children and young people. They also planned to review the SEND Code of Practice to ensure that all aspects related to Joint Commissioning are covered in their strategy. The importance of having a clear sequence and milestones in the project plan was emphasised, with the aim of demonstrating progress in the next Board meeting.</p> <p>2.1.3 - RAG Rated Red for Data Sharing, the data sharing aspect has been flagged as high-risk (Red). The data involved in Joint Commissioning will be high-level and non-specific, yet it remains valuable.</p> <p>2.1.4 &amp; 2.1.5: These points are a continuation of the outcomes derived from 2.1.2 and 2.1.3. The completion of these points is contingent upon the successful execution of 2.1.2 and 2.1.3. The project plan has elucidated the contributions these points will make.</p>

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<b>DSIAB2425/02</b> <b>Continued</b>	<p>The SIAB emphasised the need for a consistent approach to RAG ratings to ensure clarity and uniformity across all reports. It was noted that different interpretations of what constitutes a red, amber, or green rating could lead to confusion and miscommunication. The Board agreed that a standardised definition for each rating should be established and adhered to by all priority impact area leads. This would involve defining what each colour represents in terms of progress, risks, and issues.</p> <p>It was highlighted that some ratings might be red not because of a lack of progress, but because certain actions had not yet started or were not due to start. The SIAB discussed the importance of distinguishing between these scenarios to avoid misinterpretation. It was suggested that additional categories or explanations might be needed to clarify the status of actions that are not yet due to start, ensuring that these are not incorrectly marked as red.</p> <p>b) Priority 5 – Improving Communications to include Communication Plan &amp; key</p> <p>There was a description about the scope of the Communications strategy, breaking it down into three main areas: customer service, engagement and participation, and mass communications. Customer service refers to the direct interactions between officers and families, such as responding to emails and phone calls. Engagement and participation involve listening to and incorporating the voices of children, young people, families, and carers into service development. Mass communications encompass broader outreach efforts through media and social media to share information and involve the community.</p> <p>The Board acknowledged the communications efforts that have been made since the Ofsted and CQC inspection, including updates on the Local Offer website and sharing information through Parent Carer Voice groups. These activities form part of the short-term Communications plan aimed at addressing immediate needs and improving transparency.</p> <p>The SIAB discussed the essential components needed to build a robust Communications Strategy by September. This includes defining the vision and objectives, understanding the baseline of current perceptions through surveys, and identifying key audiences and stakeholders. The strategy will also need to outline the resources required, key messages, potential risks, and a timeline for implementation.</p> <p>The Board emphasised the importance of engaging with a wide range of stakeholders, including those who may not have access to technology or who face language barriers. This includes ensuring that communication reaches all families, particularly those who are marginalised or have additional needs. The Board also discussed the need for a clear communication strategy tailored to different forums and networks within the Education sector to ensure comprehensive coverage.</p> <p>The SIAB highlighted the need to develop shared values around communication, ensuring that interactions are respectful and supportive. This includes addressing the abuse that staff may face and fostering a culture of mutual respect. The Board proposed hosting workshops to co-create these values with stakeholders, including parents and carers.</p> <p>The SIAB agreed on action points discussed, including developing a glossary of terms to ensure consistent language across the partnership, incorporating data into reports to provide evidence of progress, and understanding the impact of waiting times on families.</p>

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<b>DSIAB2425/02</b> <b>Continued</b>	<p>The Board also proposed creating personas to map the journey of children and families through the system, providing qualitative insights into their experiences.</p> <p>It was agreed that a paper will come to the Board in the future around capacity and mapping around workforce.</p> <p>The Chair raised that moving forward all reports will include a section to report on workforce.</p> <p>c)      Priority 6 – NHS Waiting Times</p> <p>The Board reviewed the current status of waiting times for Neurodiversity Spectrum services, specifically those provided by Paediatric teams. It was noted that the Transformation Programme Delivery Group meets monthly to address issues. The group has established core areas of focus and is working on producing business cases to increase capacity and reduce waiting times. Progress is being made, but the SIAB emphasised the need for detailed data to understand the current waiting times and the impact of the transformation efforts.</p> <p>The SIAB discussed the Mental Health Support Services and the recent business case aimed at increasing capacity. This business case was presented to the Integrated Care Board (ICB) Senior Leadership team and is awaiting final budget approval. Once approved, additional capacity will be allocated to Chesterfield Royal Hospital and University Hospital of Derby and Burton to tackle the waiting times for mental health services. The Board stressed the importance of having up-to-date data on waiting times and the need to include this data in future reports to provide a clear picture of progress.</p> <p>The discussion about Wheelchair Services highlighted the need for accurate data on waiting times. The Board acknowledged that the current data does not show unreasonable waiting times, but there is a need to verify this information and ensure that all relevant data is captured. The Board requested further intelligence on this matter in order to close the action at the next SIAB.</p> <p>The SIAB emphasised the importance of providing support to families while they are waiting for services. The term "waiting well" was discussed, and it was agreed that it should be replaced with "support while waiting" to better reflect the need for active support during waiting periods. The Board requested a detailed understanding of the support available to families and the impact of waiting times on their experiences.</p> <p>The Board discussed the governance and accountability structures in place to manage waiting times and capacity issues. It was noted that these issues are discussed at the joint Derbyshire System Mental Health Delivery Board and the Children and Young People Delivery Board. These Boards have wide representation and are supported by senior leadership from the ICB and other organisations. The SIAB requested more detailed information on the governance structures and how they ensure accountability for waiting times and capacity.</p> <p>The SIAB stressed the need for transparency in reporting data on waiting times and capacity. It was agreed that future reports should include detailed data on waiting times, trajectories, and the impact of capacity increases. This data should be benchmarked against national standards and provide a clear picture of progress. The Board also requested qualitative data to understand the experiences of families and the impact of waiting times on their lives.</p>

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<b>DSIAB2425/02</b> <b>Continued</b>	<p>The Board highlighted the importance of considering inequalities and the intersectional lens in the Communications strategy. It was noted that families who are marginalised or have additional needs may face greater challenges in accessing services. The Board requested that the Communications strategy include specific measures to reach these families and ensure that their voices are heard.</p>
<b>DSIAB2425/03</b>	<p><b>Enabler Update</b></p> <p>- NHS Quality Assurance Annual Report</p> <p>NHS partners undertake an annual self-assessment of their performance against key indicators. This self-assessment process is crucial for maintaining high standards and ensuring accountability within NHS services. The self-assessments are shared among partners and include reporting on key performance indicators (KPIs). One significant KPI mentioned is the timeliness of data submission within the 20-week process for creating Education, Health, and Care Plans (EHCPs). This KPI is vital as it directly impacts the efficiency and effectiveness of service delivery to children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).</p> <p>The quality assurance process involves regular monitoring and support to address any performance issues that arise. When performance issues are identified, targeted support is provided to the teams to improve their performance. This proactive approach has led to significant improvements in the quality and consistency of services over the past seven years. The document highlights that the performance and quality of services have remained consistently high, with only occasional glitches that were promptly addressed. This ongoing commitment to quality assurance ensures that NHS services continue to meet the needs of children and families effectively.</p> <p>The report includes information from both Local Authorities and NHS provider services, emphasising the importance of collaboration in maintaining high standards. The quality of health advice and services is a key focus, and NHS partners report their quality assurance activities twice yearly. These reports are shared with the relevant Independent Boards, ensuring transparency and accountability. The collaborative efforts between Local Authorities and NHS services are crucial for addressing challenges and improving service delivery.</p> <p>The report acknowledges specific challenges, such as waiting times and the pressures on services. These challenges are being addressed through joint commissioning and closer collaboration with Local Authorities. Efforts to improve service delivery include recruitment drives, investment in services, and process improvements. The proactive approach to identifying and addressing challenges is essential for maintaining high standards and ensuring that children and families receive the support they need.</p> <p>The report outlines future plans to spread quality assurance practices further across more NHS services. This includes involving specialist nursing, public health services, and other NHS services in the quality assurance process. The goal is to ensure that all NHS services are engaged in maintaining high standards and improving service delivery. The document emphasises the importance of ongoing evaluation and adaptation to respond to changing circumstances and meet the needs of children and families effectively.</p>

Item No:	Minutes:
DSIAB2425/04	<p><b>Partnership Updates:</b></p> <p><b>a) Derbyshire Parent Carer Voice</b></p> <p>One of the significant updates was the successful recruitment drive of six new representatives. This recruitment is crucial as it brings in new parent carers and individuals with disabilities, ensuring that the group is not solely represented by a single demographic. The group is mindful of its current composition, which is predominantly White British, and is actively reaching out to include perspectives from minority groups. This inclusivity is essential for representing the diverse needs of the community accurately.</p> <p>The Partnership has been developing ways to support the broader Partnership through qualitative approaches. The Parent Carer representatives who have backgrounds in research, are leveraging their expertise in methodologies such as digital storytelling, personal customer journeys, focus groups, and surveys. These methods are aimed at bringing the lived experiences of families to life, ensuring that their voices are heard and considered in decision-making processes. This approach is seen as a way to move from frustration with the lack of progress to a more constructive and supportive role within the partnership.</p> <p>Communication remains a critical focus for the Partnership. There is an acknowledgment that while significant work is being done, it is not always effectively communicated. The Partnership is working on improving how information is disseminated to ensure that it reaches all stakeholders, including those who may not have access to technology or the literacy levels to understand complex reports. This effort includes putting minutes on the local office page and ensuring that communication is accessible and understandable for everyone.</p> <p>The Board was asked to note that the Parent Carer Forum will continue to protect school holiday times and asked for this to be remembered when inviting parents and carers to meetings.</p> <p><b>b) NHS Integrated Commissioning Board</b></p> <p>The update began with a discussion on the proposed changes at both NHS England and ICB levels. It was noted that there is an intent to reduce costs across the ICB by 50%. However, the specifics of how this will be achieved, including the impact on Health and Social Care, were not yet clear. The ICB is expected to have a model in place by the end of April and a detailed plan by mid-May. This plan will outline how the ICB will manage its functions and statutory duties within the new financial constraints. The timeline for implementing these changes is tight, with some actions expected to be in place by September and others by December.</p> <p>The update also highlighted the impact of these changes on NHS providers across the country. Providers have received information about the levels of input required for corporate functions, which will affect all forms of service delivery. The ICB has submitted its annual planning accounts for the year, which are very tight. Last year's plan was successfully delivered, but the current workforce plan has been submitted with zero growth. This means that while existing positions can be filled, there is no room for workforce expansion. This constraint poses significant challenges for service delivery and meeting the needs of the population.</p> <p>The ICB emphasised the importance of communication and sensitivity during this period of significant change. It is crucial for all stakeholders to be aware of the ongoing changes and their potential impact. The ICB is committed to sharing information as it becomes available and ensuring that all partners are kept informed. This transparency is essential for maintaining trust and collaboration among all parties involved.</p>

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<b>DSIAB2425/04</b> <b>continued</b>	<p>The update also noted Joint Commissioning efforts and the importance of early intervention. The ICB is working closely with Local Authorities to look at how services can be jointly commissioned to provide a more integrated and efficient approach. This includes focusing on early intervention to prevent issues from escalating and requiring more intensive support later on. The goal is to provide timely and effective support to children and families, reducing the need for more complex interventions.</p> <p><b>c) Local Authority Children's Services</b></p> <p>The Local Authority Children's Services are currently in a period of significant change, partly due to the upcoming local elections. This period, known as 'purdah,' restricts certain activities until the elections are concluded and a new administration is established. The elections are scheduled for early May, and the outcomes will influence the setting of agendas and priorities for the next four-year plan. This transitional phase is crucial for determining the direction and focus of the Council's activities and services.</p> <p>Financial planning is a major focus for the Council to ensure stability and the ability to provide services to local residents. Despite existing overspend, the Council is committed to investing an additional £500,000 in the SEND service this year. This investment aims to manage demand more efficiently and effectively, addressing the growing needs within the SEND service. The Council is also working on improving its corporate support functions to enhance service delivery across various departments, including adult care and children's services.</p> <p>To address the increasing demand and improve service delivery, the Council has established a Performance Group. This group is tasked with ensuring that the SEND services are performing at the required pace, rate, and quality. The Performance Group will provide a clear lens on the performance of the Council's SEND services, identifying areas for improvement and implementing necessary changes. The group's focus includes enhancing communication with parents and carers, which has been a significant issue, as evidenced by the high number of complaints related to communication.</p> <p>A recent Triage meeting, focused on performance across Health and Children's Services, particularly in Education, Health, and Care planning. The goal is to prevent more requests for EHCPs by addressing issues early and effectively. This includes broadening the group to include parent carers and schools to ensure a comprehensive approach. The Partnership is also looking at how to enhance early help services through the Family First Partnership agenda, which is seen as critical for improving early intervention and support.</p> <p>The Partnership recognises the need for a cultural shift towards inclusion and early identification of needs. This involves not just Schools but also Health services, Early Years providers, and the Council. The aim is to ensure that all children and young people receive the support they need at the earliest possible stage, without the need for a formal diagnosis. This systemic change requires embedding a graduated approach across all services, ensuring that everyone understands their role in supporting children and families.</p>
<b>DSIAB2425/05</b>	<p><b>Minutes from the meeting held in March</b></p> <p>The minutes from the meeting held on the 13th of March were agreed as a true representation of the previous board meeting.</p> <p>The minutes will be redacted and anonymised and placed on the Local Offer website.</p>

Item No:	Minutes:
<b>DSIAB2425/06</b>	<p><b>Action Log from the meeting held in March</b></p> <p>Reviewed in the meeting and updated.</p>
<b>DSIAB2425/07</b>	<p><b>Any other Business</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Presentation and discussion on defining Graduated Approach in Derbyshire.</li> </ul> <p>The Graduated Approach emphasises the importance of early identification and support. This involves recognising the signs that a child may have additional needs and taking proactive steps to address those needs. The discussion noted that waiting for a formal diagnosis can delay the provision of support, which can lead to further difficulties for the child and their family. Instead, the focus should be on providing immediate and appropriate support based on the child's needs.</p> <p>The discussion highlighted the need for clear and consistent communication with parents and carers to ensure they understand the support available and how to access it. This includes providing information in accessible formats and ensuring that families feel valued and included in the decision-making process.</p> <p>The discussion acknowledged several challenges in implementing the Graduated Approach, including resource constraints, varying levels of expertise among staff, and the need for a coordinated approach across different services. Solutions proposed included ongoing training and development for staff, improving communication and collaboration between agencies, and ensuring that resources are allocated effectively to meet the needs of children and families.</p> <p>The discussion concluded with a focus on future plans for embedding the Graduated Approach in Derbyshire. This includes developing a clear strategy and action plan, involving all relevant stakeholders, and ensuring that the approach is consistently applied across all services. The goal is to create a system where the needs of children and young people with SEND are identified and addressed at the earliest possible stage, leading to better outcomes for them and their families.</p> <p>The Chair asked members to agree three things to take away from today: –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Parents and Carers - we will ensure we engage with them and that co-production becomes embedded across the whole Local Area system.</li> <li>- Highlight the fact that communication is a key focus of this Board.</li> <li>- This SIAB remains committed to deliver to achieve what is needed and this commitment is made to the children, young people and families.</li> </ul> <p>No further business was raised by members.</p>