

RICHMOND SEND PARTNERSHIP BOARD
Salon, York House, Twickenham
26 November 2019 – 9.30am – 11.30

Attendees:	
James Thomas (JT)	Director of Children’s Services, Richmond Council
Ian Dodds (ID)	Managing Director, AfC
Mandy Skinner (MS)	Assistant Chief Executive, Richmond Council
Tonia Michaelides (TM)	Managing Director, Kingston & Richmond CCG
Elaine Ball (EB)	Headteacher, Orleans Park School
Grace Over (GO)	Participation Officer for Children and Young People with SEND, AfC
Ian Hutchings (IH)	Headteacher, Sheen Mount Primary School
Charis Penfold (CP)	Director of Education Services, AfC
Jonathan Rourke (JR)	SENDIASS Team Coordinator for Richmond and Kingston, KIDS
Ashley Whittaker (AW)	Programme Director, AfC
Susie Joslin (SJ)	0-19 Locality Lead (Richmond), Central London Community Healthcare NHS Trust
Cllr Penny Frost (PF)	Cabinet member for Children’s Services and Schools, Richmond Council
Aaron Guiver (AG)	Parent representative
Alison Stewart (AS)	Designated Clinical Officer
Minta Townsend (MT)	Parent representative
Heather Mathew (HM)	Children and Young Peoples Voluntary Sector Strategic Lead Manager, Richmond CVS
Alison Twynam (AT)	Director of Children’s Services (AfC)
Alex Hardy (AH)	Independent Supporter, Ruils
Sharon Cousins (SC)	Assistant Principal - Student Experience, RuTC
Claire Schneider (CS)	Clinical Service Manager for Paediatric Therapies
Ivan Pryce (IP)	Headteacher, Strathmore Special School
Janice Riley (JR)	PA to Ian Dodds & James Thomas, AfC, minutes

Apologies:	
Tracy Mabbs (TM)	Early Years provider representative
Mitch	Young Person representative
Sara Doyle (SD)	Associate Director for Identification & Assessment, AfC
Natalie Douglas (ND)	Deputy Director Clinical Services for Richmond and Southwest London
Doreen Redwood (DR)	Lead Children’s Health Commissioner, Kingston & Richmond CCG

1. Introductions and welcome

2. INFORM

a) Data Dashboard and Analysis

AW presented report. We are in a much better place with our ability to report on key measures, although still work in progress and we have plans in place to fill the gaps. More robust commissioning process is reducing costs in placements. Health reviews for 2 year olds are working well and are currently above target.

The increase in the total number of EHCPs remains high and this is a concern because of the pressure on the funding gap which is increasing. Quality of plans is a key focus, our QA process has flagged a low number of plans rated as good or better in quality. The findings of the recent LGA Peer review was actually better than our own assessment which does show that we have a robust internal process.

HM asked who is accountable for indicator 3.7 – Doreen Redwood is due to report back in January with an action plan around addressing this. JT noted that this is in progress and we have asked for a full report to the January Board. This will also include waiting times for assessments of ASD/ADHD, which has improved for over 5s but not under 5s. TM noted she is expecting Q3 to be better.

Action: DR to provide full report on CAMHS performance concerns and improvement plans at January Board.

AH asked if the results for performance indicator 5.5 mean that reviews are being done annually. AW responded that footnote 20 applies and that we recognise the timeliness of the issuance of amendments to the EHCP is of more relevance to families and that we have targets in place. CP advised all Year 5s and 9s are targeted by the SEN team to ensure their annual reviews are planning appropriately for transitions. EB noted that schools/settings are carrying out the annual reviews for all ages on a routine basis. JR noted communication with parents is key to explain any delay. MT asked how data is reported if the draft is completed and the final issued on the same day but work is continuing.

Action: CP to check on MT query and report back.

JT noted that 3 indicators around post 16 (4.6, 7.3 & 7.4) are red rated and showing concern. CP advised that part of the problem is around timing so we would expect Q3 to give different results. JT asked if we could come prepared if this is still red before next meeting in January. EB asked how we would take 4.6 to amber as the target seems high. AW advised that the target is marginally above national target.

Action: CP to provide narrative at January Board if the three Post 16 indicators are still red.

Action: AW to review target for performance indicator 4.6 – need to agree tolerance.

b) Quarterly Quality Assurance Report

CP advised that we have completed two three way pieces of quality assurance activity which are now bi-monthly. A random sample of 20 plans were looked at by

LGA Peer review team. We are looking at the golden thread of plans and are building a good bank of evidence of what a good plan looks like.

AS noted she has worked with a multiagency system looking at health advice that contributes to the plan. They are beginning to carry out a deep dive and will be ensuring advice is compliant and included in the plans. They have looked at the trail of advice into the plans, how this is translated and are trying to unpick where advice may not have been clear. A Reference group will meet next week and will be looking at the results of the deep dive. CS noted the importance of looking 'bottom up' as well – AS responded that they will be looking at this through the reference group. JT noted quality assurance is a real driver and feels encouraged by the steps we have taken but it is important we then follow through.

Action: Board to receive a QA report at each Board summarising the findings and what we are doing about it. CP and AS.

3. INVOLVE

a) Update on parental engagement

AG updated on the recently formed Parent Carer Forum. Governance documents were drawn up and signed last week so the process is complete, enabling the group to start working on giving a voice. There are 12 places on the steering group however only 6 have been filled so far. They are keen to try and recruit parents with children with a range of different disabilities. It was agreed to phase out the existing Parent Panel with 31 December as an end date to give parents the chance to get involved with the new Parent Carer Forum or resign if they do not wish to do so. They are very keen to connect with hard to reach parents and to work with AfC to improve. The recent meeting was very positive and the new group are trying to move on from the past and feel encouraged that this is possible. The PCF are looking to secure a host and hopefully this will be RUILS which would provide administrative support. This would help with consistency. Next step is to apply for grant.

JT recognised the importance of this as a milestone and congratulated AG and MT on their achievement. We are very committed to working collaboratively going forward and feel optimistic that we will get things right as we move forward and that we all have the same goals. We will offer our support where we can. We have a shared objective in achieving the widest involvement from parents across the borough.

AW noted the grant is available now and needs to be spent. Acknowledged and thanked Ana Dauwalla and Kristina Dale who have been supporting the Parent Panel. JT will write formally to thank them. HM noted in terms of recruiting people she would be happy to circulate through the voluntary sector network. JT noted that PCF should feel able to utilise all board members in spreading the word.

Action: JT to write to Ana Dauwalla and Kristina Dale to thank them for their support.

b) Update on co-production priorities

CP advised that we are piloting surveys with children and young people around process. The results have indicated that young people respond better face to face rather than through surveys. Ann Mason is leading on a transitions navigator and is working with young people looking at how we proceed. We received good feedback from families and asked for parental feedback about process. There is a query around how we pick up issues raised as part of the survey and how these are taken

forward. The online EHCP hub will be more accessible to parents so they can see what stage their application is at and it is hoped this might reduce the number of email enquiries. We are also looking at the possibility of text communications. The hub is not yet live but we will notify families as soon as it is. The Health section on the local offer is live and is a response to what parents have said in the past, including contact details. We do recognise that some people will still want to speak to a person. JT noted that we have had 5 key co-production priorities and with the PCF now formed would like to think about what the priorities should be for next year. JT asked other board members to also consider whether there is anything in the pipeline that may want to prioritise for co-production next year.

Action: All to advise CP of their suggested priorities for co-production next year.

c) Update on Workforce Development

ID referred to the paper circulated with the agenda. There have been lots of outcomes from the workstreams and a Task and Finish Group has been set up to bring together an action plan. ID will lead the task group and the next meeting is scheduled for January. There is a sector lead approach, and Board members are invited to attend the next meeting in January. We will be surveying all those who work with SEND to find out the pressures being faced and developing a core competency framework, working on what that looks like in terms of training. The third stage will then be to put this in place and we anticipate 18 months to deliver this. CS asked if the training will be from all services – ID confirmed it will.

Some training is already being delivered and it was agreed that there should not be any delay in promoting the feedback from young people and parents on ways of working for all professionals. PF noted the variation in skill sets of people working i.e. SENCOs and people working on EHCPs. ID advised that we are adopting the triangle approach with the common core at the top for every professional. GO noted young people would want to be involved – ID responded that this has already been promised. CS raised the issue of engagement and how we will deal with this. ID advised that this will be part of the Task and Finish Group's job to tackle.

4. IMPROVE

a) LGA Peer Challenge Report

JT advised that the LGA Peer Challenge took place the first week of October. The report is the final draft so is not for circulating further. There is an opportunity for us to go back to the LGA before the final version is signed off. We should feel encouraged by some of the messages. They found real momentum of focus and improvement in our system as well as the leadership of this board. They commented on a number of positive areas, notably in Early Years and the Education Psychology Service, and identified a number of areas where they think we should focus on improvements. Parental engagement is their number one area and have said that we need to go further and deeper. Retaining Richmond focus, more focus on SEN support going forwards, sharpening up our approach to joint commissioning and communicating and sharing our outcomes are all areas of focus identified for us. Strengthening social care input and improving our offer particularly around transitions from childhood to adulthood is another area. We feel it was a very useful exercise to inform our own self-assessment.

HM said she is disappointed that there is little reference to the voluntary sector and their importance to our partnership. AH did meet the reviewing officers but the

report doesn't reflect how well we have worked with Voluntary Sector and how important the partnership is. JT will raise this concern with the LGA. MS noted that the language is very generalised and isn't very specific. SC noted that Richmond College needs to change to Richmond upon Thames College. GO noted that the report refers to one young person at the SEND Futures Conference and should read some young people. GO also noted that there is very little mention of young people other than that. We will share the feedback with the LGA, whilst appreciating that they will only be able to report on the evidence that they gathered when on site. CP noted that the review team did go out to schools so must have spoken to young people but there is not much mention of that in the report. JT noted they were only here for three days.

Action: JT to pass feedback on to the LGA

AW noted that some of the recommendations for change in their report are already in place and this is acknowledged. The findings of the review will also feed into our self-evaluation document, which has been to this board previously. The SEND Future Plan went to committee in July and was approved. The LGA report will feed into the next version of the plan. Updates of both documents will be shared with all board members for involvement.

Action: AW to share the LGA report once finalised with Board members.

Action: AW to share working drafts of revised Self-Evaluation and SEND Futures Plan ahead of the January Board

b) SEND Futures Plan

AW ran through the update report circulated with the agenda. The date for next years' SEND Conference has been set as 30 June and we will be asking Dame Christine Lenahan to come along and give a key note speech. We need to raise the profile of health and social care and we feel she will be able to do that. One point which has been raised is whether we should be more engaged with voluntary sector groups by reaching out to attend more of their existing meetings.

A new Director of Commissioning and Partnerships has been appointed. Jessica Thom will be coming to us from Essex and we are hoping she can start end February/beginning of March. TM noted the CCG currently has an interim Director of Commissioning, Martin Ellis, who joined from Croydon and brings a new perspective.

The therapy review is almost finished and a paper was shared at Schools Forum last week.

The Early Intervention Panel approach is not yet delivering all we hoped. There is an increasing number of schools requesting assessments which include social care issues and are more about social care rather than education. We are looking at strengthening links with social care and family support.

Lobbying is continuing around the High Needs Block funding. EB noted that placement breakdowns in mainstream schools is a problem. CP responded that we need to look at the designation of some SRPs. There are plans to increase Strathmore. Interestingly there is no waiting list for Clarendon. Some children have been in mainstream primary with high level of support which cannot be maintained moving into secondary. Families need to be supported in understanding the

transition of this stage. AW noted our schools came 4th nationally in a recent report on how inclusive mainstream schools are.

c) Deep Dive Topic – Social Care

AT presented the report circulated with the agenda and acknowledged that we need a more consistent approach across teams. As part of the deep dive we have looked at what is working well, what we are concerned about and what we need to do. Further work needs to be done with frontline teams co-locating. We are looking at the model health have and the DCO role to ensure SEND reforms are implemented and how this could be adopted in social care to enable prioritisation. We are raising the profile of joint working, partaking in quality assurance process as well as a focus on transition and starting this process earlier. There is some work to be done here and we would like to bring forward from the age of 17. There is a wider SEND cohort and we need to be smarter at identifying who those people are. We are working on joining up data and making much more use of the data we have available. There is a lot of work to do and we feel the action plan is robust but would welcome any input.

GO noted that this is not an area where a great deal of work has been done with young people. AG advised this is not something they have looked at yet but could be one of their streams going forward. EB stated that schools struggle with parental engagement and need support with this. AT responded that this has been noted and we are looking at this. CS noted it is important that we do not miss the opportunity of training particularly with the youth offending team. CP noted that in relation to CIN or CP things are not as systematic as they could be and we have been working with social workers to try and encourage them to think differently. AS noted use of shared templates and coordinating responses.

HM raised the challenge for young people transitioning into adulthood mental health services. JT acknowledged this and advised that this is part of aspirations across London to raise the CAMHS offer to the age of 25.

Action: JT to ask Doreen to update on transition into adulthood mental health services in her January update.

JT asked about personal budgets and Short Breaks. There has been a low take up in Richmond, and there is concern around whether the commissioning and funding arrangements for services present obstacles. AT responded that there are a lot of actions and we are aware that it will be challenging and some timescales may slip. s. Personal budgets will be addressed by the new Director of Commissioning and Partnerships. The LGA flagged that we have a low number in a borough this size so is something that needs to be looked at. AH asked if any boroughs have actually said yes this can be done. AS said she doesn't think anyone has the answer and we don't think there is a benchmark. IH asked if, on a positive, this could be seen as confidence in the local offer. This does need further investigation and we will look into this. Short Breaks was also raised in another forum so we are taking forward with Alison Danks.

5. Minutes of previous meeting and action points

JT ran through any outstanding actions from the previous meeting:

Natalie Douglas was going to advise who should join co-production group.

Action: CS to follow up.

SC was to advise CP who should be invited to SENCO events. CP has visited the college and this is in-hand.

6. Forward Plan

JT noted the forward plan was not circulated with the agenda and advised that we will ensure this is included for future meetings.

Action: JR to circulate forward plan

SEN Support is the focus for the end of January. CP, EB and ID will think about what we might bring to the board. AT noted that it would be good to understand more about SEN support and how we raise awareness across the sector. JT noted related areas around whether we have sufficiently clear understanding of the quality across all our schools and if there is sufficient accountability from schools around SEN Support. MT asked about the Bexley model.

Action: JR to circulate the Bexley document with the minutes.

We need to think about how we develop the forward plan for next year and reflect on how well we think the last year has worked. Looking to GO and parent representatives to gather input for subjects on the agenda.

Local offer website is on the forward plan for January and will include how all parents access information. PF noted it would be good to follow through on adult transitions.

7. AOB

JT – minutes are being shared on the Local Offer but JT will do a one page summary for all board members to share more widely.

Action: JT will run the draft summary past parent reps before circulating.

JT – noted this will be his last board meeting and he is now handing over to ID. Big thank you for all support in making the board a really strong partnership. It is essential that we work together and JT feels confident that we will be able to continue with our focus on goals and objectives.

ID thanked JT and wished him well in whatever comes next.

Future meeting dates: 29 January 2020 9.30 – 11.30am – York House, Twickenham