



Kingston SEND Partnership Board

	<p>Thursday 27 May 2021, 10-12pm</p>
	<p>Virtual via Google Meets</p>

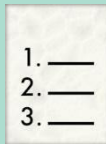


Members

Ian Thomas, Chair	IT	Chief Executive	Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames
Alison Stewart	AS	Designated Clinical Officer for Special Educational Needs & Disabilities	South West London Clinical Commissioning Group (Kingston)
Alison Twynam	AT	Director Children's Social Care	Achieving for Children
Cllr Andreas Kirsch	AK	Lead Member for Community and Governance	Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames
Anna Chiva	AC	Associate Director for Special Educational Needs	Achieving for Children
Ashley Whittaker	AW	Programme Director	Achieving for Children
Brian Gale	BG	SEND Professional Adviser	Department for Education
Carmel Brady	CB	Speech & Language Therapist Lead for Children's Services	Your Healthcare CIC

Caroline Ash		Head of Conferencing and Review	Achieving for Children
Charis Penfold	CP	Director for Education Services	Achieving for Children
George Chaplin	GC	Participation Member	
Georgina Andrews	GA	Head of Practice Learning	Achieving for Children
Grace Over	GO	Participation Officer for Children & Young People with SEND	Achieving for Children
Helen Green	HG	SEND Support Broker	Kingston Centre for Independent Living
Ian Dodds	ID	Director of Children's Services	Achieving for Children
Jonathan Brown	JB	Corporate Head of Service - Learning Disability & Transition, Locality Team Hubs	Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames
Jonathan Rourke	JR	SENDIASS Coordinator for Richmond and Kingston	SENDIASS
Judith Mobbs	JM	SEND Professional Adviser	Department for Education
Karel Stevens-Lee	KS-L	Deputy Head of Transformation - Children's Services Lead	South West London Clinical Commissioning Group (Kingston)
Nikki Craig	NC	Head of HR, Corporate Projects and IT	Achieving for Children
Nigel Evason	NE	Head of Children, Mental Health and Learning Disability	South West London Clinical Commissioning Group (Kingston)
Rachel Nye	RN	Headteacher	Tolworth Infant and Junior School
Sean Maher	SM	Headmaster	Richard Challoner School
Sian Wicks	SW	Non-Executive Director	
Stuart Sweeney	SS	Lay Member (Social Investment Sector)	
Terry Tottman		Commissioning Manager	Achieving for Children
Tonia Michaelides	TM	Executive Locality Director (Kingston)	South West London CCG
Apologies			
Alison Danks	AD	Associate Director for Health Services	Achieving for Children
Beverley Pass	BP	Parent Representative	Parent Carer Forum
Claire Deadman	CD	Nursery Manager	One Nine Seven Early Years Nursery
Cllr Diane White	DW	Portfolio Holder Children's Services including Education	Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames
Elizabeth Broadhurst	EB	Interim Children's Commissioner	Exec Dir for Social care and Health
Iona Lidington	IL	Director of Public Health	Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames
Jessica Thom	JT	Director of Commissioning and Partnerships	Achieving for Children
Jane Bearman	JB	Assistant Director, Adult Services	Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames
Julie Percival - on behalf of Peter Mayhew-Smith	JP	Assistant Principal - Curriculum & High Needs	South Thames College Group
Karen Long	KL	Service Lead, Frontline Services	Your Healthcare
Laura Smyth	LS	Chief Executive Officer	Yorda Adventures

Leigh Edser	LE	Principal	Dysart School
Louise Kearney	LK	Parent Representative	Parent Carer Forum
Michael Smith	MS	Associate Director for Finance	Achieving for Children
Martin Ellis	ME	Interim Director of Commissioning & Transformation	South West London Clinical Commissioning Group
Peter Mayhew-Smith	PMS	Group Principal and CEO	South Thames Colleges Group
Sarah Ireland	SI	Director of Corporate and Commercial	Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames
Sharon Houlden	SH	Executive Director for Social Care and Health	Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames

 1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____		Action
1.	<i>Welcomes, Introductions and Apologies</i> IT welcomed the Board, apologies and introductions noted.	
2.	<i>Children and young people update</i> GO asked for an update / feedback following Kirsty's presentation and KJ's audio message at the last Board – 31.03.21. As a reminder the message was about the difference that using the right language can have, highlighting the difference between autism spectrum condition (ASC) and autism spectrum disorder (ASD) and the effect that describing it as a 'disorder' has on young people and asking professionals to use the correct terminology. AW noted that the terminology has been updated in all documentation relating to the SEND Futures Plan, and now reads ASD not ASC, and AfC will continue to use the correct terminology in all documentation moving forward. JM noted that BG had shared Kirsty and KJ's messages with her while in her previous role in Suffolk, as a result Suffolk updated their practice. BG also noted that the DfE Adviser team are	

	<p>not using ASD and the National Adviser for SEND in the DfE has said they will try to ensure new DfE publications do not use ASD.</p> <p>AC noted that Sarah Herbert shared the messages with the SENCOs and will be taken forward in their work with CYP and their families.</p> <p>AS noted that the messages had been shared with paediatric colleagues and there are ongoing discussions around the use of terminology.</p> <p>SW noted that the message had been shared with the AfC Board and the councils are aware of the message given by the young people.</p> <p>GA the message will be taken forward as part of the language project in AfC and will be included in the planned identity work.</p> <p>GO will share the feedback with Kirsty and KJ and the Board asked GO to express their thanks.</p>	
3.	<p><i>Parent and carer update</i></p> <p>On behalf of BP, AW presented an update. The PCF welcomed their inclusion in the recent LGA Peer Review and fully endorsed the findings of the review. The PCF are also pleased about the new Kingston Parent Participation Officer role that has been agreed and are excited about the opportunities presented by this new role. Currently working on the job description, in partnership with AfC, and will be fully involved in the recruitment process, which will start shortly. The PCF were also delighted with the £15K annual funding that has been agreed by AfC and the council, which is in addition to the funding that they receive from the DfE. The funding will help the PCF deliver the objectives that they have agreed with AfC. The PCF feel that the new role and additional funding will bring about a step change in co-production and working together to help meet the needs of our children.</p> <p>IT noted that AfC were working with the PCF on a Signs of Safety reflection exercise to celebrate strengths, also concerns, and asked for an update. AW explained a meeting was held on 17.05.21,</p>	

chaired by Ian Dodds, there were several members of the PCF, together with AS, CP, AC and AW. The SoS structure was used within the meeting for an exercise where reflection focussed on the areas of strength, areas that had not gone so well and agreed specific actions to take forward. An example of strength, there are regular opportunities for parents to meet directly, and not just through the PCF, on a monthly basis with AfC, CCG, providers and the council. The meetings are alternated between daytime and evening to make it as accessible as possible and there is a frank exchange of information sharing. An example of an area that the PCF felt needed more focus was the strategic nature of some areas of joint working. In terms of co-production and joint working, improvements need to be made to make this jointly strategic and parents need to be involved earlier for this to be truly embedded, the PCF felt that if the CCG or AfC have a priority, that priority also needs to be agreed by parents. The PCF were very clear that support offered across schools and SEND Support for CYP who do not have a plan was a priority for them, together with 16-25 Pathways. To help move this forward 6 priorities have been agreed. It was agreed that the additional funding and the new parent Participation Officer role will be of great help.

IT asked for more detail around the plans for SEND Support and working with schools, and noted that this has been raised before. CP noted that there is an update planned later on this agenda as SEND Support sits within Workstream 4 of the SEND Futures Plan. CP noted that she has attended a number of meetings where SEND Support has been discussed and there is a lot of energy and enthusiasm to take this forward. It has also been taken to the School Improvement Forums as a priority for ongoing conversations, where headteachers and SENCos attend. ID noted that it was positive meeting with the PCF and when discussing what needs to change, a reduced set of 5 areas of co-production were agreed and these blended the priorities of AfC, CCG and the PCF and if this can be achieved it will be a positive change in the relationship.

IT noted the positive steps and changes that have been taken place since his joining 2 and a half years ago, but clearly there is still work in progress. BG agreed that we have positively moved forward and are now able to have productive conversations and being part of co-production means having difficult and challenging conversations. BG also noted that it will be interesting to see how the opinions of CYP will be heard, past experience shows that the opinions of the CYP and

	<p>parents vary, and BG asked if there were any differences in opinion, and if there were, how will they be brought together to inform the plans for the future. ID noted that there were some differences between what CYP and parents told us, but there were more commonalities. AfC will now need to triangulate the information and agree a set of priorities with our professional partners, CYP and parents and carers. One of the ideas is for the new Parent Participation Officer to work in a similar way to how GO does successfully with CYP. ID noted that it is important to put the views of our CYP at the centre of our decision making. It was noted that “You said, We did” is in place, but it needs to be communicated more widely to parents and carers.</p> <p>There was a discussion around the updated website, which includes the work around the SEND Register, this includes gathering contact details of a wider group of parents and carers not just those with an EHCP. ID thanked everyone who was involved in developing this and also promoting it, please continue to do so.</p>	
<p>4.</p>	<p><i>SEND Futures Plan update and Q4 Dashboard</i></p> <p>AW talked through the key points of the plan and noted that the purpose of the update is for the Board to look at areas of concern and where we need to take more action.</p> <p>The SEND Futures Plan will be going to the Council’s People Committee in June because there has been a number of changes. An annex has been added, which is the Dedicated Schools Grant Financial Model, this includes the outcome of discussions with the DfE about the Safety Valve funding agreement, which includes future financial forecasts and levels of need. Key Performance Indicators (KPI) are in the process of being agreed. The dashboard circulated for this meeting will be the last in the current format and from Q1 of this financial year there will be a new set of KPIs, which will include the plan and also some additional reporting requirements of the Safety Value, which are reported to the DfE on a quarterly basis. AW highlighted the recent DfE data release, which is the annual data release around EHCPs across the England and covered a period of the pandemic. The total number of EHCP in England for 2020 increased by 10.4% compared to 2019, this is a similar year on year increase to the previous 12 months. The number of new plans issued in 2020 was 11% higher than the previous year and is also a similar year on year increase.</p>	

Workstreams

Workstream 1 – **AW** noted the ongoing work of the recruits crew and how helpful their input has been in the interview process for new staff and also the contributions of the Easy Information Group and this is now business as usual and adds huge value to the system. The YP Health Group, which is attended by **AS**, there are useful contributions being made here. There was a Social Care away day, which is a quarterly training day for SC staff. The focus of the most recent one was SEND, the contributions from CYP at this event was amazing and they opened the event and also ran workshops. Parents and carers, the progress being made with the SEND Register, it has been well received and 700 families have signed up and this will continue to grow, this was launched at the end of March 2021. **AW** noted that only half of the people who have signed up have an EHCP, which is a positive and will help with communication with this cohort.

Workstream 2 – The ongoing changes to therapies continues with the Therapies Oversight Group who are currently agreeing contractual arrangements, although providers are already acting up in principle. **AW** noted that **JT**, who currently chairs this group, is leaving AfC. Going forward Sue Lear, who was the co-chair, will be chairing WS2. **MS** will become the co-chair of WS2 and joining the SEND Partnership Board. **AW** noted that it has been helpful to have **KS-L** on board and a great example of joint working. The consultation for short breaks has been completed and the feedback from this is currently being collated.

Workstream 3 – **AW** highlighted the concerns around the pressure on the emotional wellbeing and mental health services and the waiting times. There is ongoing work to address this. **AW** suggested a discussion after the update. Local places, positive progress continues and there are plans for a satellite Dysart in North Kingston and also a Specialist Resource Provision at Alexandra Primary both planned for September. The AfC Free School plans in Moor Lane continue and discussions are ongoing with providers. There is also a 16-25 consultation planned for June with engagement from CPY and families. There are concerns around the 16-25 pathways and the effect the pandemic has had on next steps interviews, but also on vocational work opportunities.

Workstream 4 – There is a lot of good early intervention work taking place at the birth to Early Years stage with increased multi-agency working. The early help resilience work has had positive

feedback. The Quality First Teaching work is gathering pace and aiming to launch in September. New Transitions guidance is in the process of being issued.

Workstream 5 – The timeliness of advice from Social Care and Health colleagues is improving. The LGA report noted how well established our multi-agency Quality Assurance Process is. The process around annual reviews is also improving. There was a decline in Q4 of the 20 week issuing performance, but this was temporary and performance is already recovering, this was due to lockdown and staffing issues, which are now showing some improvement.

Finance Update

Putting aside the Safety Valve agreement, the High Needs Block would have overspent by £6.6M and the Dedicated Schools Grant has overspent by £5.2M. The net effect of the safety valve agreement of £9M additional grant and the agreement that the council no longer needed to repay the £3M advance has resulted in a £12M benefit. The cumulative carry forward deficit of £24.4M, this has been reduced to £12.4. Work will need to continue so that we ensure that the future payments are agreed in the Safety Valve Agreement.

IT picked up on the Dashboard and asked are we reflecting our position properly, this could be because of a number of issues including originally setting overly ambitious targets or that we are actually operating in a pandemic. IT asked the DfE representatives if their understanding was that Ofsted will be factoring in the effects of the pandemic in their inspections. BG noted that from recent feedback that they will not accept it as an excuse, but guidance does say that local areas will need to describe the impact of Covid on their systems and plans and how they have been adjusted and how they will take account for this. When Ofsted do revisit the main focus will be has sufficient progress been made on the specific areas of weakness, but they can ask questions about other areas. BG noted that there had been mixed feedback from those areas already revisited and the emphasis on Covid does depend on the local area. BG did point out that if it hadn't been for the pandemic Kingston would already have been revisited and area leaders will have to have a clear understanding of the impact of Covid on CYP. JM noted that there are two parts to the story: What progress was made prior to COVID, given 18 months was March 2020,

and what your assessment is of the impact of COVID on CYP and how you have adapted to respond to the impact of COVID going forward? IT thanked BG and JM and noted that Covid is a reality and not an excuse and there will be a clear focus on the narrative, including the positives, new practices emerging, the impact on our CYP and how mental health is a concern and also our staff and how the pandemic has impacted on them.

SS noted that on the current dashboard finance is very close to amber and what needs to happen to come out of the red into amber. AW explained that in simple terms the driver of spend is the number of the EHCPs and the average of cost of an EHCP. There are some assumptions in the modelling, which were based on information given to us by the DfE e.g. we asked what do we assume the annual year on year increase is in the High Needs Block allocations, they suggested we use an 8% increase, which is a large increase in annual funding. The annex that has been added to the SEND Futures plan will explain in detail the model used and it will show the projected percentage increase in the number of plans. There is a lot of work to complete and AW explained that the year on year increase in the total number of plans in Kingston has been around 10-11% and there needs to be a decrease to 6% in the next 4-5 years. WS4 will focus on this area with the work that is going on in mainstream schools to address needs of CYP before they escalate. We also need to improve how we commission places so that the average cost of a plan decreases.

IT presented the areas of concern, referring to access to mental health, wellbeing and therapies and asked the Board what can be done to move this forward. NE noted that there is a scoping exercise taking place at present and interfacing between all services in Kingston, including mental health in schools teams and the Trailblazer programme, work with the emotional health services and CAMHS Tier 3, which is a specialist provision. The plan locally is to scope the iThrive Model and look at the emotional and mental health issues and work together as a system and understand where everybody is and getting everyone in the right place to focus on all levels of the system together as a partnership. It is a challenge as there are varying needs in CYP and partners need to try and work together to provide the best outcomes for our CYP. TM is currently reviewing the mental health investments for the local area. The outcome of the scoping exercise will be

shared so that we can influence and shape how it will look and be managed going forward. **NE** also noted that South West London St Georges have a Mental Health Transformation Plan, this is currently in its initial planning stage and will begin in Kingston in 2022/23, the plan will consider transitional issues, which means CYP needs will be considered and how they will transition into adulthood. In terms of the inspection **NE** noted that the CCG has seen progress, investments have been made in emotional health and wellbeing, the Trailblazer scheme was extended. The Joint SPA has also had an impact. **IT** expressed his ongoing concern about evidencing progress in this area. **AS** shared the concern and noted that we will be asked what difference has been made and as we develop our narrative around the revisit this area has been a key element of the conversation and the service are aware that CYP are struggling to access services at the right time. The significant increase in partnership working is a positive and will benefit CYP.

GC referring to the Dashboard noted that the waiting times for CAMHS Tier 2 have got considerably worse and is there a timescale for when these can return to pre-Covid levels. **TM** noted that the CCG are working with providers to reduce the waiting times and working through the backlog. The challenge was that through the pandemic services were available, but the digital offer did not always work for CYP. The finance this year will be used to reduce waiting times. The concerns around waiting times is not just for Kingston, it is a national concern. **Kooth** has continued in Kingston to help with access.

IT asked about the 20 week issuing performance of EHCPs. **AW** noted that there was a dip, but Kingston still remained significantly above the national average performance and is now increasing. **CP** noted the impact of staffing in the SEN Team, there have been significant challenges around recruitment and sickness, but these have been resolved and we are beginning to move towards previous timescales.

There was also a discussion around the improvement with feedback from parents and there has also been sufficient progress in vocational pathways and also in future plans.

GO commented on the feedback and felt that there is not a good approach to collecting feedback from CYP who receive SEND Support or have an EHCP. Currently the data is collected via digital surveys and face to face focus groups, which was not possible during the past year. There does need to be a discussion about how to embed a systemic approach that would work better.

HG noted the 400% rise in advice for personal budgets, which is positive and there are some good examples to share. Agreed to discuss further with **AC** to evidence this in the SEND Futures Plan.

BG reminded the Board that the 2020 data, which is what the inspectors will be reviewing, Kingston is still in the upper quintile for 2020 and still the 29th best local area out of 152. Referring to the revisit and the Written Statement of Action, it is important for the leadership of Kingston to have a narrative around the CCG work, whether that narrative is around sufficient progress and risk of being criticised by the inspector's or is the focus on the strong partnership working, clear strategy and plans and evidencing improvements. The narrative will help guide the team with the impact statement and presentation. **JM** referring to the Dashboard and viewing it for the first time, **JM** observed that is an extensive Dashboard and it would be worth thinking about are some sections necessary and could they be subsets of other sections and is information under the correct headings. There is a need to look at the keys areas and are they demonstrating progress. Also, is it right to start with finance, it is important, but should it not start with outcomes for CYP.

Action – **IT** to meet with **TM**, **AS**, **ID** and **NE** to discuss the narrative for weakness 3. Completed – Meeting held on 02.06.21.

5. *LGA SEND Peer Review, findings and next steps*

ID updated the Board on the recent LGA SEND Peer Review in Kingston which took place on 26-30.04.21. Gail Tolley, DCS in Brent, lead the review together with 10 other reviewers from a range of disciplines. ID thanked the Board members who were involved and contributed to individual interviews or focus group discussions, the contributions were invaluable and gave a useful outcome to the peer review. A bespoke review was requested, particularly around the Safety Valve funding with the DfE, as a reminder the review was agreed to as one of the conditions of the Safety Valve. They reviewed 20 EHCPs from the last 12 months. They completed 37 interviews and focus groups with 58 people. We asked them to focus on 4 areas, 1. Governance and leadership of the SEND improvement work across the borough, in particular to review a question from the DfE around whether the delivery model for children's services through AfC was a contributory factor to be overspent in the HN Block. ID noted that AfC felt that it was not. 2. The quality and effectiveness of the SEND Futures Plan. 3. The deliverability of the deficit management plan with the DfE as part of the Safety Valve agreement. 4. The quality of SEND Services in particular to assessment planning and review.

The review identified a number of strengths, and accorded with our own assessment of where we think we are at the moment, which was positive. They saw a system wide approach to SEND Services and the effectiveness of this Board. They thought the SEND Futures Plan was a good plan and was understood by strategic partners and that they had bought into it. They highlighted an area of good practice, our engagement with CYP and congratulations to GO as she was singled out in the review as an exemplar of good practice. They recognised the commitment of the PCF and the work they have started to get the parents voice into the development and delivery of our services. They saw improvements to the EHCPs, both in the quality of the plans and in the timeliness of issuing them. They also saw improvements to the Annual Reviews, which has been a particular focus for the SEND Service over the last 12 months. They recognised the multi-agency support in EHCP planning through both the Designated Clinical Officer and also the innovation and impact of the DISCO role. Lastly they commented on the emerging quality of the early intervention

work in schools and Quality First Teaching and could see that this will have a significant impact on our early intervention and transitions work.

They noted 10 recommendations, which were: -

1. Streamline governance agendas and discussion to shift the focus to delivery and accountability.
2. Create a high needs sub-group of Schools Forum with ToR to examine the detail the speed and track progress projections delivering impact/value for money. Review top-up funding and implement a banding tool.
3. Improve communications on the SEND Futures Plan across AfC, the council and partners, creating shared ownership of the savings plans. Ensure there is a constructive challenge.
4. Co-production work more effectively with parents for better outcomes and create a co-production agreement with PCF. Consider using a “you said, we did” framework for feeding back to parent and carers.
5. Improve parental confidence about in-borough provision. Consider creating a role for parent engagement from within available resources, collate case studies of positive experiences and develop a coherent support offer for parents and carers; consider what the voluntary sector can offer too.
6. Develop consistently, highly effective, SEN Support provision within all phases of mainstream schools, by identifying, sharing and embedding strong working practices of SENCos and class teachers in relation to early intervention and QfT.
7. Consider changes to EHCPs taking on board the findings of the EHCP review.
8. Develop clearer transitional planning support for young people, along with stronger links with post 16 providers, colleges and adult social care.
9. Reach out BAME communities and those less likely to seek support, working with communities and voluntary sector on this.
10. Review demand projections on a regular basis and link to projecting and monitoring spend. Monitoring spend and demand will also be key given the challenges savings and timeframe they need to be delivered in. There needs to be a close watch on expenditure, by all concerned and at all levels, for the savings to be made.

	<p>The final report will be shared in the next 2-3 weeks, but work has already began on the action plan, it is not the intention to create a separate action plan, but to anchor the recommendations into the SEND Futures Plan, which is the plan to drive improvement, quality and effectiveness of our SEND provision locally. BG noted the positive report and that there were no systemic failures and is building on the work already being completed. One technicality, they made a mistake in the EHCPs areas for improvement and where notes were recorded, the notes had been recorded in the correct section and the reviewers were referred to the SEN Code of Practice ID confirmed that this had been feedback both verbally and also followed up in writing, and the mistake should not appear in the final report.</p> <p>IT thanked all those that had taken part in the review, especially the feedback from the PCF, the review provided useful learning and some helpful recommendations.</p> <p>GC asked if there is a mechanism in place to measure how well SENCOs are trained and how well they feel they can do their job. CP explained that they are pivotal members in the transformation community. There are primary and secondary SENCOs networks, which are held regularly, also during the pandemic there were more regular on-line drop-in sessions. There is also an induction for new SENCOs, because it is such a critical role. The training is evaluated in terms of impact, if you take part in training you are asked to give feedback. We do not measure competence, as this is part of their professional development within their school team. We do recognise the key role that they play and there are networks and these are now more regular, the impact of these networks and ongoing need are part of the evaluation following any training. We would like all schools to be represented and if they do not, we do reach out and make contact to support strong attendance and support for SENCOs.</p>	
6.	<p><i>Minutes from 31 March 2021 meeting and actions not otherwise covered</i></p> <p>The minutes were agreed.</p>	

7. *Any other business* – no items noted.

Forward Plan

- **AS** = Deep Dive around progress of the Therapies Review.
- **AW** = The forecast for the next 5 years and what action needs to be taken.
- **TM** = Deep Dive into CYP mental health offer
- **GC** = Can further detail be available at the next Board around reducing waiting times for the emotional health service. **GC** expressed his concern at the current size of the waiting times.
- **HG** = Feedback from the Short Breaks Consultation.

KINGSTON SEND Partnership Board will next meet on:

NB. Electronic invites have been sent.

14 July 2021 at 10-12pm

30 September 2021 at 10-12pm

25 November 2021 at 10-12pm

26 January 2022 at 10-12pm