

## Halton SEND Strategic Improvement Board

**Minutes - 17 April 2024**

### **Present**

Zoe Fearon	Executive Director Children's Services, HBC (Chair)
Denise Roberts	Associate Director of Quality and Safety Improvement, C&M ICB
Charlotte Finch	Divisional Manager SEND and Inclusion, HBC
Michelle Creed	Interim SEND Governance & Quality Assurance Lead, C&M ICB
Jess Haslam	DfE/SEND Advisor
Carl Fagan	DfE/SEND Advisor
Cllr. Tom McInerney	Lead Member for Children's Services, HBC
Clare Collins	Chair Halton SEND Parent Carers Forum
Anthony Leo	Place Director, C&M ICB
Christine Douglas	Director of Nursing & Care, C&M ICB
Philip Thomas	Associate Director of Transformation, C&M ICB
Wayne Longshaw	Director of Integration, Mersey and West Lancs NHS Trust
Karen Worthington	Associate Director of Childrens Services, Bridgewater Community Healthcare NHS Trust
Anne Tattersall	Associate Director, Children and Young People Services, Mersey Care NHS Trust
Lindsey Marlton	Regional SEND Lead, NHS England
Cathy Liku	Headteacher, Birchfield Nursery
Elaine Haver	Principal Headteacher, Cavendish Special School
Emma Roberts	Headteacher Victoria Road Primary School
Kevin Greaves	Interim Head of Commissioning – Social Care, Early Help & Education, Contracts, Commissioning & Placements, HBC
Tracy Ryan	Policy Officer, HBC (minutes)

### **Apologies**

Stephen Young	Chief Executive, HBC
Katherine Appleton	Operational Director, Children and Families Service, HBC
Dot Roberts	Principal Policy Officer, HBC
Marie Lynch	Operational Director Care Management, Safeguarding and Quality, HBC (Adults Services)
Jill Farrell	Operational Director Education, Inclusion and SEND, HBC
Julia Rosser	Assistance Director of Public Health, HBC
Simon Corner	Principal, Wade Deacon High School
Colin Scales	Chief Executive, Bridgewater Community Healthcare NHS Trust
Sarah LeGood	Riverside College
Dot Roberts	Principal Policy Officer, HBC

No	Item	Action	Deadline
1.	<p><b>Welcome/Introductions</b></p> <p>The Chair, welcomed everyone to the first meeting and members introduced themselves. Apologies noted as listed above.</p>		
2.	<p><b>Declaration of Conflicts of Interest</b></p> <p>None declared.</p>		

<p><b>3.</b></p>	<p><b>Executive Overview of Purpose of Halton SEND Improvement Board</b></p> <p>The Chair introduced and gave some context and background to the establishment of the Board. In summary, in November 2023, the Halton Local Area Partnership received an Ofsted/CQC SEND Inspection, where inspectors looked at the local area partnership's arrangements for children and young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Inspectors found widespread and/or systemic failings leading to significant concerns about the experiences and outcomes of children and young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), which the local area partnership must address urgently. A full copy of the report was included in the meeting pack.</p> <p>Senior leaders from Cheshire &amp; Merseyside ICB (C&amp;M ICB), Education and Halton Borough Council (HBC) working with colleagues across the Local Area Partnership have worked together to develop and submit a Priority Action Plan (PAP) to address the five identified areas for priority action.</p> <p>As part of the plans for improvement the Department for Education (DfE) and NHS England have allocated SEND advisors to work closely with the Halton Local Area Partnership. The PAP has now been approved by DfE.</p> <p>There is a requirement to establish an Independent Chair and whilst this recruitment is underway, partners agreed that Zoe Fearon chair this first meeting.</p> <p>The purpose of this Board is to ensure we deliver on the PAP and for this we welcome challenge and scrutiny to move forwards as a Local Area Partnership. It is important that as Board members, we are confident we have the right people from across the Local Area Partnership on the PAP Working Groups in order to progress and deliver the required improvements.</p>		
<p><b>4.</b></p>	<p><b>Governance Structure</b></p> <p>The Halton SEND Strategic Improvement Board (SSIB) will report into the statutory governance within C&amp;M ICB and HBC including the Health &amp; Wellbeing Board, as shown on the structure chart.</p> <p>The SEND Delivery Group will report into the SSIB, the Senior Reporting Officers (SRO) for each priority area will lead their respective working group to co-ordinate the work required within the PAP. A Highlight Report from each SRO will be reported into the SSIB each meeting.</p> <p>It was agreed that as senior leaders each partner would make a commitment to attend. That if deputies attend, they must have the appropriate delegated authority to make a decision on their behalf.</p>		

	<p>Christine sought some clarity on NHS England (North West) within the structure.</p> <p><b>ACTION:</b></p> <p><b>a. Structure chart to be amended to clarify NHS England.</b></p>	LM/TR	01.05.24
5.	<p><b>Terms of Reference and Membership</b></p> <p>The Halton Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Strategic Improvement Board Terms of Reference (ToRs) were reviewed by Board members. Noting the purpose of the Board is to bring together partners who work together and are accountable for the delivery of shared strategic vision, values and priorities. The Halton SEND Partners that form the Board is an equal partnership of Halton Patient &amp; Carer Forum, Halton Borough Council, NHS Cheshire &amp; Merseyside Integrated Care Board (C&amp;M ICB), Healthcare Providers and Education Providers. The Board sets the strategic direction and challenge, is accountable for, oversees and monitors the delivery of the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Halton SEND Strategic Plan</li> <li>• Halton SEND Improvement Plan</li> <li>• Halton SEND Local Area Partnership Inspection Recommendations</li> </ul> <p>and their impact and effectiveness for improving outcomes and life chances for children and young people with SEND and their families.</p> <p><b>SEND Strategic Improvement Board</b> Terms of Reference were noted, and approved, subject to minor changes.</p> <p>Once the Independent Chair is appointed, a nominated Deputy will be confirmed and the frequency of meetings will be discussed.</p> <p>It was proposed that a representative to cover the Early Years Private, Voluntary and Independent sector be sought to join the Board membership.</p> <p><b>ACTION:</b></p> <p><b>b. Education – Special Schools to be added.</b></p> <p><b>c. St Helen and Knowsley NHS Trust to be amended to Mersey and West Lancashire Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust</b></p> <p><b>d. NHS England/North West to be added.</b></p> <p><b>The Halton SEND Delivery Group (SDG)</b> will provide robust multi agency oversight for the delivery of services across the SEND partnership and the programme of change required to provide an outstanding service to children and young people with Special Educational Needs. The Delivery Group will also have responsibility for the delivery of the recommendations outlined in the Halton local Area partnership SEND Inspection. The Delivery Group will provide key governance ensuring pace, challenge and oversight for all</p>	TR TR  TR	01.05.24 01.05.24  01.05.24

<p>aspects of SEND improvement across the partnership. The SEND Delivery Group is accountable to the Strategic Improvement Board.</p> <p>The SEND Delivery Group Terms of Reference were noted and approved. For governance and reporting the SROs for individual workstreams will be held to account on progress at each meeting, the SRO Highlight Report will be available at subsequent meetings and will include deep dive reporting.</p> <p>The Halton Place SEND Lead is the C&amp;M ICB Designated Clinical Officer (DCO), who is currently on maternity leave, cover for this post is being sought and will be in attendance at the SDG meetings.</p> <p>Partners discussed knowing who was representing their organisation at the PAP Working Groups and all agreed membership will be shared to ensure that Board members can identify appropriate reps for attendance.</p> <p>Co-production is a key element of challenge and in place with Halton SEND Parent Carer Forum (HSPCF) in attendance at the Board and represented on each of the Priority Action Plan Working Groups.</p> <p>Everyone agreed that ensuring the voice of CYP for co-production is equally as important as the voice of parents/carers being captured to drive the work/improvements, this includes hard to reach cohorts.</p> <p>Wayne queried if there has been any mapping of the size of the cohorts and those unknown? Zoe explained that mapping of all CYP cohorts across Halton Place will be undertaken.</p> <p>Tom sought clarity on how we will measure the success of all the improvements planned to be put into place? Charlotte explained that as we no longer have unlimited resources to make these improvements and that sharing both human and financial resources and expertise across the partnership and working together is a key element to ensure plans are delivered and achieved. Also, that a key indicator survey to parents/carers is in development to ascertain a baseline, to ensure we understand and respond to need will support strategic planning and delivery and then moving forwards this will be re-issued every six months to ensure we deliver.</p> <p>Tracy advised that the draft online survey is ready to be shared with the SROs and parents/carers and an additional survey aimed at CYP has been developed.</p> <p>Clare challenged the co-production of the survey, noting that the Forum had been contacted to submit questions for the survey however, felt that better engagement could have taken place via one of their drop-in sessions whilst other parents were in attendance. It was suggested by partners that the survey be resent to all to ensure the views and questions of all partners were considered before distribution.</p>		
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	<p>Elaine noted that it can take time to build trust with parents/carers, foster engagement and two-way conversations with families.</p> <p>All avenues to share the survey once it's ready to launch will be sourced e.g. schools, SENCO Network, parent/carer groups, commissioners, partners comms etc.</p> <p>Charlotte agreed to contact Clare so that better co-production on the survey could be put in place.</p> <p><b>ACTION:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>e. Mapping to be undertaken across all cohorts of CYP across the Halton Place</b></li> <li><b>f. PAP Working Groups membership to be circulated, members to check and identify relevant attendees.</b></li> <li><b>g. On line survey to be circulated to all partners to enable full contribution to questions.</b></li> </ul>	<p>ZF</p> <p>CF/SROs</p> <p>CF</p>	<p>01.05.24</p> <p>01.05.24</p> <p>April 2024</p>
6.	<p><b>Development of a Risk Register</b></p> <p>A Risk Register will be submitted at each Board meeting, this is currently in development.</p> <p>Each PAP SRO will complete risks for their priority area and they will be reviewed at the Delivery Group and then submitted to each Improvement Board for assurance and consideration. PAP Highlight Report will cover the risks, template is in development.</p> <p>Overall programme risk also need to be monitored.</p> <p><b>ACTION:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>h. Risk Register to be produced for next meeting.</b></li> </ul>	<p>CF</p>	<p>01.05.24</p>
7.	<p><b>Appointment of Independent Chair</b></p> <p>Interviews for Independent Chair scheduled for Friday 19<sup>th</sup> April 2024. Zoe Fearon, Denise Roberts and Anthony Leo will be on the interview panel. Announcement of successful candidate will be made over coming weeks.</p> <p><b>ACTION:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>i. Independent Chair details will be shared when appointment confirmed.</b></li> </ul>	<p>ZF</p>	<p>01.05.24</p>
8.	<p><b>Improvement Plan</b></p> <p>Prior to the Local Area SEND Inspection, an Improvement Plan was in place, this have been updated and revised to combine it with the Priority Action Plan. There is also a Delivering Better Values (DBV) Action Plan being progressed alongside this work. Charlotte explained that the DBV programme is an initiative by DfE for local authorities that are at financial risk due to SEN budget expenditure.</p>		

	Timeframe for delivery is very similar and will work in parallel to the PAP.		
<b>9.</b>	<p><b>Priority Action Plan</b></p> <p>PAPs are moving steadily, there are some risks on the delivery timescales. The most pressing risk is the survey with an April '24 deadline, which will slip as more co-production work is required on this before it can be issued and the baseline outcome known.</p> <p>All Board members agreed that there are some ambitious timescales for delivery possibly some are unrealistic so more time may be required and a rationale provided to explain reasons if timescales need to be moved. Following discussion it was agreed that it would be appropriate for more realistic dates within the PAP to be provided at the next meeting</p> <p>It was agreed that within the PAP a column should be added to identify slippage and the reasons.</p> <p>Carl suggested it may be feasible to launch the survey and then leave this open so that results can be gathered at regular data-set points. These snapshot periods could be then utilized across the PAP.</p> <p>Jess recognised that there is a strong commitment to co-production from everyone across Board members.</p> <p><b>ACTION:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>j. PAP SROs to review each PAP timescales and dates for delivery and if unrealistic to amend with new deadlines to be reviewed at Delivery Group in May and presented to Improvement Board in June 2024.</b></li> <li><b>k. PAP column to be added to identify slippage and the reasons.</b></li> </ul>	<p><b>CF/SROs</b></p> <p><b>TR</b></p>	<p><b>20.06.24</b></p> <p><b>01.05.24</b></p>
<b>10.</b>	<p><b>Strategy Updates</b></p> <p>Charlotte confirmed that for the next meeting the strategies identified will have lead names with delivery/launch dates.</p> <p>Anthony requested background information on how each Strategy contributes and links to the PAP and the SEND programme and each lead should present an overview, progress and updates at the next or future meetings so the Board is cited.</p> <p>Waiting Well Strategy has not yet commenced – Karen is keen to be involved in this as this involves her services within Bridgewater.</p> <p>Alternative Provision (AP) Strategy working with SLIP partners Blackburn and Darwin, close to completion. Clare highlighted that parents/carers have not been involved in this. Health members sought clarify on their involvement for co-production of this Strategy.</p>		

	<p>Lindsay noted that there is an AP Health Task Force across the North West that could support with this work.</p> <p>Anthony proposed a Matrix or Checklist be developed to ensure all strategies have undertaken a coproduction approach and have followed correct governance before being submitted to Board for sign-off and all leads have completed this.</p> <p><b>ACTION:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>i. Strategy Overview, Progress and Update with links to the PAP, including delivery/launch dates and lead name for next meeting.</b></li> <li><b>m. Strategy Governance Matrix/Checklist to be produced with focus on Co-production.</b></li> </ul>	<p><b>Strategy Owner</b></p> <p><b>CF</b></p>	<p><b>20.06.24</b></p> <p><b>20.06.24</b></p>
<p><b>11.</b></p>	<p><b>Halton SEND Performance Dashboard (PAP 6)</b></p> <p>Michelle confirmed that she will be the SRO for this priority. Working Group established and there is an abundance of data-sets across the local area partnership available. The challenge is drawing them together into one system and narrowing down the set of indicators to be agreed. The presentation highlighted that there are at least 91 indicators available to date, this was too large and needed refinement.</p> <p>The next steps are to work with SROs to establish a final set of indicators. Once the indicators are agreed this will require working closely with SROs to provide the narrative for indicators. It is intended that there will be quarterly reporting on the dashboard. This will then be presented to the Delivery Group and the Improvement Board for consideration and approval.</p> <p>Until the dashboard is developed it is currently an item for the Risk Register.</p> <p>Power BI portal is being considered as this will allow access to all partners, and we can then consider the use of templates being drawn up to ensure data consistency. This will also require some human and financial resource. Dashboard will enable scrutiny of end to end pathways.</p> <p>Draft dashboard to be produced for the next meeting.</p> <p>Carl proposed that the Board may wish to adopt 10 measures to be assured on and this may enable data flowing more swiftly so that the SEND Delivery Group can have overall scrutiny of the indicators.</p> <p>Data sharing agreement to be drawn up and agreed, which will be shared with Caldicott Guardians in NHS Trusts.</p> <p>Members welcomed the 'Outcome Statements'.</p> <p><b>ACTION:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>n. Add SEND Integrated Performance Dashboard to the Risk Register.</b></li> </ul>	<p><b>MC</b></p>	<p><b>20.06.24</b></p>

	<b>o. Draft dashboard for presentation at the next meeting.</b>	<b>MC</b>	<b>20.06.24</b>
<b>12.</b>	<b>AOB</b> Anthony raised that at a future meeting the Board needs to consider the communication methods on how we inform the improvements to the wider community.  <b>ACTION:</b> <b>p. Communications as agenda item at next meeting.</b>	<b>AL</b>	<b>20.06.24</b>
	<b>Date/time of next meeting</b> Thursday 20 June 2024,10.30am-12.30pm, Boardroom, Municipal Building		