

Minutes of Northumberland Parent Carer Professional Forum (PCPF)

Venue: Stannington Village Hall

Date: Thursday 3 May 2018 10.30 - 12.30

PRESENT:	Alison Bravey (Minutes), Lynn Bryden (guest), Helen Cowens, Angela Davies (guest), Judith Dodds, Jane Falconer, Sarah Hanlon, Leslie Hutchinson (guest) Elizabeth Johnston (Chair), Eileen Robinson, Doris Ross, Jacqui Simpson, Fiona Tarn, Lesley Tweddell, Jane Walker (guest)
APOLOGIES:	Sam Barron, Amanda Richardson, Nicola Strachan, Gill Turner

ITEM	DESCRIPTION OF DISCUSSION	ACTION BY
1.	Welcome and introductions	
2.	Minutes of Previous Meeting: agreed	
3.	<p>Matters Arising:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MAG Autism meetings still on hold pending a decision on what the future arrangements will be. • BUZZ Learning SENCo to be invited to SENCo meetings - will attend next Forum meeting on 17 May. • Sue Aviston the Head of School Organisation to be invited to July forum meeting to provide an update on school/SEN consultations. 	<p>SB</p> <p>EJ</p>
4.	<p>Commissioning - NE12 and Short Breaks - Lynn Bryden</p> <p>The position in Northumberland with regard to NE12 has not changed since Lynn briefed the Forum in October 2017. NE12 is a commissioning process set up for the 12 North East Local Authorities to enable collaboration going forward for the purchase of certain services/provisions, including special school places and overnight short break respite. The process did not impact on the needs assessment for individual children and how the authority works with parents and children. It was set up to standardise the contractual terms and pricing for placements across the region. The Local Authority undertook an options analysis last year and it was felt that NE12 did not work for the particular set of circumstances in Northumberland. Returned to a process of individual negotiations with providers and spot purchasing.</p> <p>Discussion: It was queried why parents who were expecting that their child's details would go on the NE12 portal had not been informed that the system had changed. Parents and young people need to understand what the process is, particularly with regard to transition (young people at 16 and 19 years of age). Need to look at educational progress in terms of next steps for adulthood/independence.</p> <p>Lynn advised that most children have their needs met without the need to go to private providers. The parents perspective was noted however it was stressed that the way in which the Council approaches a provider to commission a placement does not influence the underlying decision around whether or not an external placement is required.</p> <p>Lynn responded to questions/issues raised at the last meeting:</p> <p>Q Are people accessing personal budgets? Are they being used for self directed support? Would like to have access to some feedback from parents.</p> <p>Commissioning doesn't manage personal budgets so it may better to invite someone from the Personal Budget Team to a meeting if a more developed answer is needed. it's my understanding that personal budgets are accessed and can be requested</p>	<p>EJ</p>

	<p>following an individual assessments of need.</p> <p>Q Is it possible to invite the commissioner for short breaks? The senior manager for the Disabled Children Team, takes the lead on short breaks. There has been some change so I will find out who that will be going forward and let you know.</p> <p>Q What is the budget for short breaks/ direct payments? The budget is demand led. If there is an assessed need the Local Authority must meet that need whilst ensuring value for money The number of families eligible can fluctuate from year to year. ' The budget for the Disabled Children Team has remained the same.</p> <p>Q What is the criteria for short breaks? Are you expected to contribute yourself towards short breaks? Provided when parents/carers are assessed as needing a break from their caring responsibilities or to provide social opportunities for children/young people assessed as needing them. This is identified through a social care need assessment or an Early Help Assessment. There is a threshold for where the Local Authority becomes responsible for funding short breaks, based on an assessment of need. The term 'short break' has a broad definition and can include overnight care and enabling support. Need to look at what works best for individual families.</p> <p>The North and West of Northumberland do not have anything offered at the moment. Short breaks are provided on a contractual basis with providers. There is a range of providers, but in some parts of the county there is a more limited choice for children/young people with high levels of need. To address this the Local Authority works with the family to put a suitable service in place sometimes through a Direct Payment. This can include an enabler to help with access to activities. Lynn to provide fact sheets on the Play schemes on the framework.</p> <p>Discussion: it was mentioned that parents used to get good information about what was available with regard to short break opportunities through Debbie Bakkali from the Family Support Team, but this is no longer the case. It was confirmed that Debbie no longer works for the local authority. Would be really helpful to have this information and also information about the eligibility criteria for receiving a service. There seems to be a lot of things available for older adults - there is a gap in the 18 - 30 age range,</p> <p>Need to make sure that the Local Offer is up to date and relevant. Needs to be in a place where you can find the information easily. It was noted that special schools are good at letting parents know about things, but mainstream school staff may not be aware of what is available. The Locality Hubs for Early Help mentioned as a possible source of information - need way of passing on information through the Hubs. Some providers advertise through local papers. The SEND Roadshows also provide an opportunity for families to talk to local providers. Need to make sure that all providers are invited to the roadshows in September 2018. It was mentioned that Ability to Play run through Active Northumberland, a provider which is supposed to cover the whole county, only attended the roadshow in central Northumberland and most activities seems to be based in that part of the county. Active Northumberland now has a new management structure and its relationship with the local authority is different, so this might help to resolve this issue.</p> <p>The criteria for accessing a short break funded by the Local Authority is that a child/young person has to have an assessed need through a social work or Early Help assessment (where there would need to be approval through the Early Help Hub). The assessment would identify the outcome for the family and the outcome for the child/young person as the result of a short break. Siblings might also be eligible</p>	<p>LB</p> <p>LB</p> <p>EJ</p>
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	<p>for a short break service if they fall into the role of a young carer. This would be through a Young Carers Assessment. Jackie McCormick, the lead for Young Carers, to be invited to a future Forum meeting to provide more information.</p>	
<p>5.</p>	<p>Local Offer - Jane Falconer, Communications and Information Manager, Northumbria Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust</p> <p>Jane provided an update on the work she has been doing and will attend subsequent meetings. She has been asked to support with communication about the Local Offer to families, carers and providers. This includes raising awareness about what the Local Offer is and how it is described to families. Work on the Local Offer will be co-produced with families. In the early stages of the project - currently meeting with parents and professionals and mapping out what the Local Offer contains and looking at where the gaps are.</p> <p>Discussion: Fiona Tarn and Judith Dodds mentioned that they had recently completed an audit of the Local Offer and now understood a lot more where the gaps are. One of the key things flagged up was the importance of the SEND guide to services and how much it was valued by families. It was felt that the guide needed a more prominent place within the Local Offer.</p> <p>Information needs to be presented in an accessible and user friendly way. People don't have time to read through reams of information. Jane has done a lot of work on Personal Budgets for adult social care and a person centred approach was part of the process. Making sure that families are involved in decision making Jane's own background has included working with children/young people with SEN and their families.</p> <p>It would be helpful for Jane to attend future In it Together locality meetings to meet with families (possibly September 2018) - look at best practice in other areas. Jane mentioned that the Northumberland County Council website has had a refresh and one thing that was looked at was the search facility. It was felt that it was better than before. Other possible improvements were suggested which Jane will take back to the web team.</p>	<p>EJ/JF</p>
<p>6.</p>	<p>Home Education - Jane Walker</p> <p>Elective home education is where the parent takes responsibility for providing full time education for their child and removes them from the school roll. Where a child has an EHCP the decision would need to be taken in conjunction with the Local Authority.</p> <p>Elective home education can be portrayed as a very bad thing, but this is not the message from Northumberland Local Authority. It can be an appropriate choice that parents can make and their children thrive and succeed. However current legislation creates gaps in terms of safeguarding for children.</p> <p>Flexi-schooling is where a child is educated partly at school and partly at home. The school would have to agree to this - most schools don't agree to it. The child remains on the school roll and the school retain full responsibility for the delivery of education and for safeguarding.</p> <p>Some questions from Dr Gill Turner were answered: What is the level of review and how does the county assure itself that CYP with additional needs are receiving an appropriate ongoing level of education? For a child with an EHC Plan the plan would be monitored according to statutory guidelines; e.g. reviewed at least annually.</p> <p>Are parents in this situation offered a personal budget as a matter of course and given support to figure out how big that budget should be – ie to cover</p>	

	<p>possible OT, specialist teaching input, resources etc? Also is that budget determined before the CYP comes out of school?</p> <p>Not necessarily. With elective home education the parent normally has full responsibility for the provision for their child's education. Where a child has an EHC Plan and their parents make alternative arrangements the local authority must satisfy itself that those arrangements are suitable before it is relieved of its duty to secure the provision.</p> <p>A parent would need to reach agreement with the local authority with regard to a personal budget to cover the provision required for their child to support what is happening at home; e.g. therapies. This should be done before they remove their child from the school roll.</p> <p>Discussion: Jane circulated a document which covers Elective Home Education in Northumberland - to be circulated with the minutes. It includes information about why parents choose to home educate. They may be pressured by the school to take this step to avoid a permanent exclusion. It was noted that some parents of children with EHCPs choose to home educate their children because there are no special school places available. Children may be reluctant school attenders because of ASD/ADHD/sensory needs who are struggling to cope in mainstream school. Some parents may decide to home educate when they receive letters threatening legal action re attendance.</p> <p>Issues with home education: health services are delivered through schools so children may miss out. Likewise with SEND support services. How to safeguard children who are home educated. EWOs (Education Welfare Officers) can't ask to see the child - their conversations are with the parents. Can offer a home visit to offer support, but parents don't have to agree to this; e.g. in Northumberland only 41 out of 200 families have agreed for the EWO to visit. Unless a local authority has clear evidence that the child is not being educated they can't act. There is no national data on 'destinations' for children who were home educated; i.e. what they went on to do. The Department for Education (DfE) is currently calling for evidence to help consideration of whether the current arrangements for oversight of elective home education are adequate to fulfil the government's aspiration that all children in England should receive a good education (closing date 2 July 2018). It is also seeking views on the proposed updating of departmental guidance on current arrangements for elective home education. This may include parents going on a register of parents who home educate. It is not about challenging a parent's right to choose to home educate.</p>	EJ
7.	<p>SEND Questions and Update - Angela Davies</p> <p>Questions:</p> <p>Angela will pass on a list of questions raised by parents at locality meetings on to Russell Pickering (who was unable to attend the Forum meeting) to respond.</p> <p>The concerns raised included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In It Together have been contacted by 9 parents of young people at the Post-16 and Post-19 transition stage of their education who have not yet received the official decision with regard to their child's education. The statutory deadline is 31 March so the Local Authority is in breach of their statutory duty. This denies parents/young people their appeal rights to the SEND Tribunal. • Have social care been informed about the increase in young people to their service if they don't stay in education? <p>Discussion: Transition reviews should identify the social care provision a young person will require as an adult. Sharon Pearson from the SEN Team is looking at transition feedback. A pilot Transition project in the west with staff from the Disabled Children Team (Julia Cairns and Michael Nelson) is covering up to age 25. Marian Moon no longer manages the Disabled Children Team. The new</p>	AD/RP

manager is Adele Wright.

Update:

- Angela thanked In It Together for inviting her and her colleague Nicola Taylor to their locality meetings to consult on the EHCP parents' views documentation. The contributions from parents were really valuable.
- Outlined 4 SEND workstreams:
 - Graduated approach - what the Code of Practice says about schools implement the graduated approach for SEN (special educational needs). How parents feel that it is being implemented by schools, and information shared about how they and their children (the learners) should be involved. What processes there should be within schools.
 - Mainstream local offer - schools asked to nominate parent/learner pairs. Aim is to produce a document which sets out what the mainstream local offer should be for every school in Northumberland. A session to be held in schools in South East/Central (Astley High), North (James Calvert Spence College) and West Northumberland (Haydon Bridge High). Will involve a wide variety of learners ranging from those with emerging SEN through to those going through the EHC process. Age range: nursery to Year 11.
 - EHC processes being reviewed including application for EHC needs (statutory) assessment. Looking at the form for parental contribution for EHC needs assessment and a new request form for schools to fill in. It is felt that the current form doesn't help them to reflect the child's needs. SENCO conference to be held on 6 July at the Holiday Inn, Seaton Burn, to introduce new processes/documentation. All SENCOs invited - limited places. There will be briefing sessions with services and teams following the conference.
 - Commissioning panel - new Terms of Reference being written. To be implemented from 1 September 2018.

Discussions: Angela and Nicola will keep the Forum informed about future developments. In It Together representatives have attended two of the EHCP audit meetings and felt that the parent carer voice is being correctly reflected in EHC Plans.

Update from Sam Barron, Head of SEND Strategy (provided by Angela)
SEND Consultations

Following the consultation in November with regard to building capacity with regard to special school places, Priory School in Hexham will be extended to increase capacity and in September 2018, the Dales School in Blyth will open an annex to their existing provision to be referred to as 'Ashdale'. The annex will be located in Ashington.

There is agreement to go to the second rounds of consultations. This will include reaching out to mainstream schools again with regard to Additionally Resourced Provisions (ARPs). Russell Pickering, Senior SEN Manager will be meeting with schools have expressed an interest. It will also include a 'deep dive' into data and a close look at provision in the North and West Northumberland.

SEND Survey on Local Offer website was mentioned to be flagged up with families.

Discussion: In It Together publicised the survey and had received a torrent of negative feedback from parents who are fed up with being asked to complete surveys. These parents don't feel listened to and feel that the feedback they have previously given is not followed through. It was noted that parents can go the Local Offer to comment on services - the comments go through to a page editor for someone to respond. It was noted that it is not clear on the website that the parent

	<p>can comment about a service - it looks more like they are commenting on the web page. Previously there had been a list of questions that Alan Carrick, SEND Commissioner, responded to. This was published on the Local Offer annually in the form of a 'You Said, We Did' full report.</p> <p>Local Area Inspection Newcastle has been inspected this week and the Northumberland inspection could happen at any time in the future. A Parent / Carer Communications Framework has been produced which sets out how parents/carers will be contacted about the inspection.</p> <p>Discussion: In It Together have had no updates since Claire Brown left the Local Authority. Important to keep it on the radar and prepare every stakeholder for it. One issue for In It Together is the EU General Data Protection Regulations which comes into effect on 25 May. Have to contact all members to obtain their consent to continue to hold their data and may potentially lose a lot of members if they don't get back in touch. Also have social media group pages for sharing information with parents/carers.</p>	
8.	<p>NAS North Northumberland - Leslie Hutchinson It has been a very busy year for the branch. Their achievements include being chosen as the NAS branch of the year. They have 115 members and meet monthly at the Bellview Centre in Belford. Aim is to pool experience and expertise within the group and support each other. Guest speakers invited to meetings to cover different topics/issues identified by members. The branch has held workshops on a range of themes, including OT (Occupational Therapy) for children with autism, Positive Mental Health, Money Matters, the role of the Autism Support Service and the work of SpLinter group.</p> <p>Liz Ann Davison an Occupational Therapist from Jigsaw Therapy, has held a series of Saturday OT clinics initially for families who are members. The clinics are now being held every 6 weeks. Each family is allocated a hour and receive a written report with a list of strategies - reviewed 6 weeks later. Feedback has really positive. The branch are accessing different ways of funding this service.</p> <p>Have also been involved in a big project creating a sensory garden supported by £11 000 of funding from the National Garden Scheme. Open to members on 6 June and official opening on 9 June. Cards available for members. If the project is successful can look at extending it. The branch has contributed feedback to the Northumberland SEND consultation. One of the main issues flagged up by members is about gaps in educational provision. Two members have recently opted to home educate their children because the issues with education seemed insoluble and there didn't seem any other options.</p> <p>Discussion: Comments included how friendly and welcoming the branch meetings are for those who have attended them. The aim is for everyone to feel comfortable to be able to open up and access support from other people.</p>	
9.	<p>Locality Updates and Information Sharing/AOB</p> <p>Healthwatch update: Lesley Tweddell Audiology: The Wansbeck Hospital Audiology service closed on 1 May 2018. Patients can now access service at Manor Walks, Cramlington and The Mount, Morpeth. In Berwick it is through Union Brae Surgery.</p> <p>Consultation on Personal Health Budgets: Healthwatch compiling a questionnaire working with social care representative. Will also be holding workshops to get direct feedback.</p> <p>Annual survey: 579 replies - good comments received. Responses will be published</p>	

	<p>on website once they have been approved by the Healthwatch board. GP on-line consultations - gathering feedback regionally about whether this is a good or bad idea.</p> <p>SEND Support Services update: Fiona Tarn and Judith Dodds SLAs (Service Level Agreements) for 2018 - 2019: sent to all schools. Two rates; one if schools sign up before 31 May and a higher rate if they sign up after that date. Schools need to think carefully how they use their allocated time across the academic year - may not be staff available if they leave it too late. Can work together to pool resources in terms of SLA time, trade days allocated or buy days from another school. (One day = 6 hours of staff time). Discussion: the impact of schools choosing not to buy into the SLAs or opting for minimal package and how this can be problematic for SEND services. One issue is speech and language where specialist input can be provided by the SEND Support service or through Health. The latter is free at the point of delivery, but there are waiting times. Some schools deciding to wait for this input so they don't have to pay for it, but not in the spirit of early intervention/prevention. Behaviour Support Service: schools chose to 'de-delegate' the funding so the service automatically receives funding. Any maintained school can be provided with an initial assessment by a teacher from the service and an initial report. Any additional provision will be through an SLA. The service also offers MAPA (Management of Actual or Potential Aggression) training which costs £400 for up to 15 - 20 people. Autism Support Service is fully funded through SLAs. SENCO networks invaluable in terms of sharing information and good practice. Not running in the Ponteland - this school partnership has moved away from using Local Authority SEND Services. Partnership Headteachers meetings can also be a way of sharing information.</p> <p>SEND Roadshows September 2018 - Elizabeth Johnston Focus on graduated approach so families get the same message that schools get. Proposed dates: weeks beginning 17 and 24 September, 1 October - to be confirmed as soon as possible to give stallholders and workshop presenters enough notice. Timing to be looked at - possibly 10am - 3pm - to fit in with the needs of families and avoid situation where stallholders are packing up and leaving before the event has finished.</p>	EJ
10.	<p>Dates of future meetings: Thursday 5th July 2018 Thursday 4th October 2018 Thursday 6th December 2018</p> <p>Venue: Stannington Village Hall - all meetings 10.30 – 12.30</p>	

DISTRIBUTION LIST FOR MINUTES

Sam Barron	Head of SEND Strategy, DCO (Designated Clinical Officer) CCG
Paula Batsford	Designated Medical Officer
Alison Bravey	Parent Partnership Officer, SEND Information, Advice and Support Service
Lynne Bryden	Senior Manager, Commissioning
Karen Carnaffin	Team Leader, Families Information Service
Lesley Cole	Autism Northumberland
Mary Connor	Senior Manager, Early Intervention and Prevention
Helen Cowens	Parent Representative, North Northumberland
Julie Anne Curtis/Lauren Burnage	Northumberland CYPS

Mark Cusack	Passenger Transport Operations Manager
Wayne Daly	Deputy Leader of Northumberland County Council and Board Member for Children's Services
Judith Dodds	SEND Support Service Manager, Speech, Language and Communication Service; Literacy Support Service (Dyslexia), EAL
Sarah Hanlon	Parent Representative, West Northumberland
Andy Johnson	Project Director
Mary Johnson	Coordinator of Dasl'e
Elizabeth Johnston	Parent Representative, North Northumberland; Chair of In It Together
Sarah Lee	Participation Adviser, Contact a Family
Patrick Love	Acting Team Manager, Children's Services, Family Support Team
Daljit Lally	Chief Executive Officer, Northumberland County Council
Dorothy Lewis	Children's Centre Coordinator - Seaton Valley Children's Centre, T
Julia Lyford	Splinter Group representative
Janet Millington	Clinical Lead, Speech and Language Therapy, MAG Autism
Rachel Mitcheson	Head of Commissioning (Children)
Kate O'Brien	Commissioner, CCG
Michele O'Brien	Carer's Lead, Involvement & Service Development, Northumbria Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust
Katie Paul	Team Manager, Complex Mental Health Pathway, Northumberland CYPS
Russell Pickering	Senior SEND Manager
Heather Pringle	Healthwatch
Amanda Richardson	Parent Representative, Central/South East Northumberland
Eileen Robinson	Parent Representative, West Northumberland
Doris Ross	Team Manager, Disabled Children Team
Ben Sanderson	Youth Participation Worker, Northumberland Youth Service
Jacqui Simpson	Parent Representative, North Northumberland
Fiona Tarn	SEND Support Service Manager for ASD, Behaviour
Gill Turner	Consultant Paediatrician, West Northumberland
Lesley Tweddell	Healthwatch
Sue Welsh	Head of Therapies, Northumbria Healthcare, NHS
Adele Wright	Line Manager, Disabled Children Team, Northumberland Healthcare, NHS