

## WESTMORLAND & FURNESS SEND PARTNERSHIP

### Minutes of Meeting


#### SEND Partnership Board


Date: 17th July 2025 Time: 14:00 – 16:00




**Present:** Catherin Prince, Julie Jones, Susan Hodkin (for first item), Andrea Henderson, Andrew Horrobin, Janet Wray, Janet Doherty, Jason Habbershon, Alison McCulloch, Steve Hatton, Lisa Balderstone, Amy Holliman, Julia Dean, Paul McCubbin, Sally Richardson, Elaine Croll, Isobel Booler, Peter Chapman (from 14.30)

**Apologies:** Mil Vasic, Lorraine Rudd-Williams, Dean Graham, Helen Keaveney, Jacquie Shenton, Steve Hatton, Louise Haymer

	Agenda Item	Notes
1.	Welcome and Apologies	Isobel welcomed all to the meeting Catherine shared the apologies received from colleagues.
2.	Updates and Actions	Update from Steve H regarding independent chair - we now have a chair profile and what we would want from that role. We have also gone through the appropriate procurement guidelines to ensure that we can now proceed to during the next few months. We are hoping to look to appoint potential candidates by the beginning of October. So hopefully by the October board meeting, we will be able to announce who will be our new independent chair.  Action - SEND and Transitions teams to work together to pull together a transition's booklet for schools. This is still ongoing, and will be picked up as part of the SEND Improvement Plan.

3.	SEND Participation Update	<p>Sue Hodkin - shared slides and gave an overview of the work that has been going on by both the Participation Team and Lorna (SEND Development and Engagement Officer)</p> <p>A plan has been put together for effective coproduction and to develop participation of children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities. This group is with CYP from a wide range of settings, and from across the authority. Existing groups are also being engaged with to provide wider opportunities for these young people to take part in something additional.</p> <p>When established, this group will be able to provide feedback and support us with our work so that we can ensure their voices/views are heard. There are also plans to hold celebration events for these young people twice yearly, with the first one planned for Christmas 2025.</p> <p>Sue also gave a brief overview of the Young Inspectors' work, visiting HAF and Short Break provisions and this again would be taking place over the summer holidays.</p> <p>IB - At the next partnership board, we could have some of those young people's reports?</p> <p><b>ACTION:</b> Catherine to organise Young Inspectors reports to be shared at next meeting</p>
4.	SEND Improvement (a) SEND Improvement Plan progress (b) Development of further aspects of the plan (c) Monitoring of performance/ dashboards	 <p>July SEND Partnership Board update</p> <p>Steve H shared slides about the improvement plan</p> <p>Workstream status – Steve gave an update/overview of each workstream and its status. He also informed the board that moving forwards, the Partnership Board would be the opportunity to raise delays/concerns.</p> <p>Risk register is in the plan – no new risks have been identified. If you see an emerging risk in something else that might impact us then please let me know and we can add it to that risk register.</p> <p>Over the summer, Steve will collate the progress on all workstreams, update this and republish the plan with this update included.</p> <p><b>ACTION:</b> – Peter to check some of the dates on the plan and confirm these with Steve/Catherine</p>

		<p>JH – shared slides regarding EHCP Volume and Forecasting</p> <p>Numbers of EHCPs are continuing to increase - 7.4% of school age children (National percentage 5.3%)  We have received 19% more requests for assessment than this time last year (381 to 320)  16% of these requests failed to meet requirements for an assessment.  Our compliance in issuing EHCP's with 20 weeks is lower than last year, but it is beginning to rise after a drop in May. We continue to have very few delays.  The percentage of decisions not to issue an EHCP is rising after a drop in the early part of the year.  Our compliance for both annual review meetings and annual review completions has improved over last year, and this is an area we continue to monitor closely.</p> <p>PC - what the data is telling us very clearly is that if this continues, then this time next year we'll be dealing with another 15/20% demand again. So, there's probably almost some of that future planning in the risk document we need to capture.</p> <p><b>ACTION:</b> – JH/SH to put together a risk register based on data forecasts and wider risks</p>
5.	SEN2 Data	 <p>SEN2 Data Deep Dive Updated.pdf</p> <p>This item was not covered in depth, but please contact Jason if you have any immediate questions.</p> <p><b>ACTION:</b> Colleagues to contact Jason with any queries re: SEN2 data</p>
6.	Feedback from SENDAC Parent/Carer Forum (inc. Conference Update)	<p>Paul gave a brief update of some of the work they had been involved with: attending workstream launches/interview panels. The key focus at the moment is to recruit more/new volunteers that live in W&amp;F. Volunteer sessions have been planned and Georgina wants to deliver these. Unfortunately due to personal circumstances, these have been delayed and are rescheduled for September. Paul provided an update on the PINS project (Partnership for Inclusion &amp; Neurodiversity in Schools) and SENDAC are working in partnership with LA, LSCFT and schools to deliver this in 10 schools across W&amp;F.</p>

		<p>Discussion took place about Contact's involvement with SENDAC and LA to look at the future of the Parent Carer Forum in W&amp;F. This work is due to start and has been unexpected by all parties. Contact will hold the W&amp;F grant for the next 12 months and will work with SENDAC and the Partnership to decide the best way forward and how the PCF model will work best. Hopefully we will know more by September.</p> <p>Paul confirmed that SENDAC are still our partner and still very keen to support/work alongside whilst this is ongoing.</p> <p><b>ACTION:</b> IB to raise with Louise Haymer tomorrow at Regions Group.</p>
7.	Health Updates	<p>PC – health update and the ICB reforms, there is still a gap in clarity what they are going to look like, as it isn't clear what it will look like for SEND colleagues.</p> <p>Where there are currently vacancies within teams and staff leaving, it's exceptionally difficult to recruit, as we don't know what the future will look like.</p> <p>As soon as there is more clarity on what this means for us as an ICB and the SEND team and SEND functionality, we'll share that. But understandably, It's quite a traumatic time for staff.</p> <p>Currently undertaking a piece of work around recommissioning speech and language right across Lancashire and South Cumbria.</p> <p>HH – The north is very similar to what Peter's outlined in terms of restructure.</p> <p>We have published our 10 year plan, with key focus on prevention rather than treatment and very much community focused services. We're looking at neighbourhood health as well and involving children in there and will link in with some of our children's hubs. We are also in the process of submitting a 'Right to Choose' Business Case for Foetal Spectrum Alcohol Disorder.</p> <p>Cumberland's SEND Inspection is completed, and we are now awaiting the outcome.</p>
8.	SEND Practice Week: Final reports and Practice bulletin	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; align-items: flex-start;"> <div style="text-align: center;">  <p>SEND Practice Week Report April 2025.doc</p> </div> <div style="text-align: center;">  <p>SEND Practice Week Learning from Practio</p> </div> <div style="text-align: center;">  <p>SEND Practice Week Report Appendices.zip</p> </div> </div>

		<p>Practice week in April with Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) as the overarching theme.</p> <p>During this week, Masterclasses were delivered by Public Health, SEND Team, Educational Psychologists as well as input from school based colleagues. These were attended by a wide range of colleagues, including schools and were well received.</p> <p>In addition to this, annual reviews were observed and EHCPs quality assured by a wide range of professionals, as well as multi-agency audits taking place.</p> <p>Final reports and a practice bulletin are now ready for publication and all resources have already been shared with schools and colleagues. The report has been put together and reviewed by all partners, to ensure we have captured findings and next steps.</p> <p>One of the biggest outcomes was that we have identified that Annual Reviews are not being delivered consistently, both in timescale and in terms of quality, so our next practice week (Oct 2025) will focus on this. A working group is now in place to develop this.</p>
<b>9.</b>	Forward Planning	