



Strategic Management Group (SMG) SENDIASS 24/03/23

10am – 11.30am

HYBRID - Barnsley Town Hall/TEAMS Virtual

Present

SW, SB, SD (part), KB, JS, PS, TR, LF, JW, TG, JV, ME, HH, SD, JC, LH

Apologies

KP, JHC, JJ, NW, AT, HR, KB, NW, SK (representative sent), BM (YP representation although popped in at beginning to show support of the meeting)

Invited

SH, EB

1. Welcome and apologies.

SW to chair and minute as both chair and vice chair not in attendance – agreed a stakeholder be identified as a further person to stand in as chair for back up. Agreed that the new SENDIASS assistant case officer would attend SMG to make notes for purpose of creating minutes for future meetings.

Action: Identify a chairperson from stake holder attendees (SW)

Confirm attendance of SENDIASS staff to act as minute taker (SW)

2. Minutes of last meeting had been circulated prior to the meeting for comments by those not in attendance. Matters arising.

Minutes agreed.

Action: Minutes to be published on SENDIASS webpage (SW/EH)

3. Updates from actions identified in last meeting.

SW reported.

3.1 Investigate emails about SMG to PS and send the refreshed ToR too – completed – PS confirmed he was now receiving all communications.

3.2 Feedback required about SENDIASS Review, future for outsourcing or in Borough provision of IASS in the local area. Access to full report/Executive Summary – completed - SW reported that she had contacted to KB (line manager) and SH (HoS Commissioning) following last meeting and sent a copy of the minutes and the identified areas of action for their attention on 17/3/23 and KB followed this up with SH and created a collective response for SMG and SW provided this statement into SMG:

'In relation to the first question why the full report was not shared, this was because it contains commercially sensitive material and the summary provides a full overview of the key points. In relation to question 2, this is as I explained yesterday, the LA will periodically review services and when this is undertaken it will always consider all options including whether it can provide better services through outsourcing them. This is in no way an indicator that this is what the council is looking to do but is just part of the routine process of review. The additional resource was provided to SENDIASS and our job is to show the excellent work we can do with that resources so that when it comes to the review, we will evidence we are providing good quality, cost effective services that are achieving service aims and requirements.'

PS and JW both queried again why the full report could not be shared with SMG members expressing concern that SMG would not receive such information to support the service through SMG effectively. Further concerns were expressed that outsourcing the service is very much a concern raised by parents out in parenting communities and the statement above did not go far enough to offer reassurance about the future of SENDIASS to families. Parent reps in attendance expressed support of these views.

Action: SW to feed this back to KB/SH and ask that a further meeting of SMG with them both or their attendance be secured for the next SMG where this can be discussed again (SW/KB/SH)

3.3 Early Help and SENDIASS to meet up to look at each remit and create a communication pathway to help families understand the difference roles and routes to right service at the right time. In progress – SW and LH did meet and SENDIASS/FSW surgeries now in place and joint working will be ongoing,

Action SW to initiate meeting with LH and wider partners to complete this piece of work (SW)

3.4 Deep dive data sample reported into SMG – SW agreed to do this prior to the next SMG.

Action: A deep dive of case referral trends to be undertaken (SW and SENDIASS staff)

3.5 Finalise development plan and circulate – Completed – SW completed a review of the SENDIASS review outcomes and circulated to the SMG members and identified key areas for next step working. SW pointed out, however, due to delays in recruitment and selection processes, beyond the services control that this was a second priority over high demand for IAS and the 300 + waiting list that needed to be given attention. JW pointed out that staff welfare was important and that given the much-reduced capacity in the service and high case work demand at this time then as a stakeholder of SMG concerns were for the welfare of staff and hoped that this was recognised by senior leaders with overall responsibility for the service and staff. Parent reps (PS, LF, TR, JS, KB) in attendance also expressed the view that staff welfare was paramount and there are many parents struggling without much needed support.

Action: staffing updates to be fed back into the next SMG (SW)

3.6 Create a short policy for how SENDIASS Facebook will be an impartial offer and engage with its service users in relation to SENDIASS and its families – completed and SW sent in draft to SMG members.

PS asked about how accessible the service was if parents were not on social media. JW asked PS how the DS group had managed this with its members. PS thought this a good question. JW talked about how SENDIASS was creating a range of different ways to engage with service users and that the social media platforms should be in line with BMBC corporate policy and that he didn't feel SENDIASS were responsible for creating something bigger or different from the LA platforms. SB thought JW raised valid points and agreed SENDIASS were not responsible for the social media accessibility policies of BMBC as a corporation and agreed to raise this as potential general accessibility issues for all service users who access BMBC social media platforms.

Action: Policy for accessibility be agreed and published on SENDIASS website (SW/EH)

3.7 Scope out a process for recruiting new parent carer members to comply with ToR membership requirements – to be completed.

Action – To create draft format and present at the next SMG as an agenda item (SW)

4. Service Update

SW reported that recruitment and selection processes were ongoing and although there were delays it was due to process. This meant SW had to support back fill for case support and CC had continued to work additional hours to also support case work. She reported that there were over 250 new referrals since 16/1/23 to present. In January at start of term there was an increase in referrals where parents were asking SENDIASS for short breaks and there was a pattern of emails where parents were expressing frustration to SENDIASS about panel decisions for their children, but these referrals were sent as though SENDIASS had made the decisions. SW said she was confused at the sudden rise in referrals that were not for SENDIASS and wondered how this was happening. SB stated she too thought it unusual and as the letters from the EHCP team had not changed this was not a cause and SW agreed as she too had checked this. SB raised the rise the EHCP team had received in complaints and when parents questioned about why they had complained, parents stated SENDIASS had 'asked' them to. SW pointed out that this is not a common practice of the service and so again it felt there was some miscommunication taking place and parents were getting caught up in the middle of that. SW and SB agreed that the usual way of working between services was that one service would flag to the other emerging potential spillage to complaints and SW stated that any parent saying SENDIASS asked then to make complaints can be tracked so SB agreed the details of those complaining and stating it had come through SENDIASS could be shared to track records for accuracy. KB queried whether parents were confused as to who to go to for help. SW said this was possible but unusual given there are clear pathways on the SEND local offer and SENDIASS were clear what communication they were sharing. JW said from the alliance point of view their data and communication shows parents know the distinction between SENDIASS and other SEND services, and that he wondered if parents were misguiding parents and if so, it was not coming from BSPCA, and he can evidence this is SW and SMG requires it.

Action: SW to monitor the situation for now and to use case tracking to deep dive into accuracy and source of why it is going wrong for families who are already vulnerable

5. Any Other Business

JW raised the status of the Alliance as the DfE grant, he asked that the conversation be respected as confidential within the meeting and therefore this agenda item would not be discussed outside of the SMG or recorded.

JW stated that the alliance as a stakeholder within the ToR for SMG would not be present at future SMG meetings.

SW stated as the ToR were to be reviewed in readiness for SMG from the autumn term onwards as this would be the annual review process for SMG then the ToR would not be amended until the review of the ToR. SW further pointed out all membership will be reviewed, and amendments made to reflect new membership after the next SMG in June 2023 as the SMG will have gone through the cycle of 3 meetings in its first year. New membership will begin in the autumn term 2023.

Action: Create a recruitment process for parent representatives of SMG in preparation for that review (SW) and a review of the stakeholder membership to be discussed at the next SMG

Meeting closed, SW thanked BSPCA for their attendance as stakeholders and then all members of SMG in attendance for their contribution to SMG meeting.