

Minutes of a meeting of the EAP Future Communities

At 5.00 pm on Tuesday 5th March, 2024 in the
Virtual meeting, via Zoom

Present:-

Members

Councillor Scott Edwards (Chair)
Councillor Jean Addison
Councillor Wendy Brackenbury
Councillor Philip Irwin

Councillor Macaulay Nichol
Councillor Lee Wilkes

Officers

Helene Denness	Deputy Director of Public Health
Marsha Brown	Children's Services
Mark Napier	CPI
Sally Crew	Transport Strategy Manager
Laura Priestnall	Children's Services
David Watts	Executive Director of Adults, Health Partnerships and Housing (DASS), and Children's Services
Richard Woodward	Head of Business & Performance (Interim)
Callum Galluzzo	Democratic Services

Also in attendance – Councillor

44 Apologies for absence

No apologies for absence were received in advance of the meeting.

45 Members declarations of interest

The chair asked members to declare any interests on items present on the agenda.

No declarations were registered.

46 Minutes of the meeting held on 11th January 2024

RESOLVED that:-

The minutes of the meeting held on 11th January 2024 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

47 North Northants SEND Health Needs Assessment

Mark Napier, Centre for Public innovation attended the meeting and stated that in order to inform relevant partners in North Northamptonshire a needs assessment was commissioned to build a quantitative picture with regard to children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

Members heard that the needs assessment sought to profile the SEND population for North Northamptonshire, looking at needs, future estimates of need, outcomes and areas of inequality.

It was then heard that the total number of children and young people in North Northamptonshire with a SEND need (children and young people in schools receiving SEND support and all those aged 0 to 25 with an EHC plan) was 10,109. Of the 10,109 children and young people, 6,580 receive SEND Support and 3,529 have an EHC Plan.

It was confirmed that the total number of young people with a SEND need had risen from 7,284 in 2018 giving an increase of 38.7%. Similar rates of increase in the number of young people with a SEND need had also occurred in this time period across both the East Midlands and England as a whole.

Forecasting need. Forecasting carried out for the needs assessment indicated that there are likely to be 13,154 young people with a SEND need in 2028 and 16,185 by 2033.

Members heard that over half (53%) of the total SEND need population was made up of children aged 0 to 10 years of age. Boys made up nearly two thirds of the total population with SEND need (62% of those with SEND support and 73% of those with an EHC Plan).

The ethnicity of the total population of young people (0 to 25 years) with SEND largely parallels the ethnicity of the wider population of North Northamptonshire: 86% of those with a SEND need were of White heritage who also made up exactly 86% of the population of North Northants aged 24 years or less

Young people with a SEND need made up 15% of the total school population in 2022-23. This was a lower rate than for the East Midlands (16%) and England as a whole (17%). Four in five young people in schools with a SEND need presented with one of SLCN (22%), SEMH (21%), SLD (15%), MLD (14) and autism (10%). These rates closely parallel rates for the East Midlands and England as a whole.

SEND needs differed considerably by gender with boys making up the majority across all SEND needs other than hearing impairment. The gender distinction was greatest with regard to autism where boys make up 76% of this cohort.

It was then heard that data for Key Stage 2 indicated that nearly two thirds (65%) of pupils with no identified SEND need achieved the expected level compared to 18% of those with SEND support and 6% of those with an EHC Plan. Rates for those with SEND support and with an EHC Plan closely mirrored the picture in the East Midlands and England.

Members heard that the following recommendations were being presented as part of the SEND Health Needs Assessment:

- The SEND Accountability Board should inform each of the SAB workstreams about the SEND population projections as set out in this report so that this information can be used to inform medium to long-term planning in each group. The Accountability Board should utilize SEN2 data to develop a more sophisticated picture to inform and underpin service and sufficiency planning.
- NN partners should review processes in relation to and the capacity of staff involved in EHC needs assessments and planning in order to prepare capacity for future demand.
- NN partners should review the capacity of social care staff who contribute to EHC needs assessment and planning to ensure that they can continue to contribute effectively to needs assessment and plans.
- The work of the SEND Early Help team should be reviewed annually to determine whether it is successfully providing preventative and earlier intervention. If the team is proving to be successful, some consideration should be given to adding capacity to the team in order that it can continue to address rising levels of demand.
- The recent review of sufficiency should be revised in light of the forecast data in this report.
- The SEND Accountability Board should review data regarding the ethnicity of children and young people in all elements of SEND assessment and provision (SEND support, EHC needs assessment and planning, accessing specialist provision) on an ongoing basis to determine whether access is equitable across all groups. In the first instance differential rates in relation to SEND support should be examined in order to address apparent rates of under-representation.
- The SEND Accountability Board should consider preparing and disseminating information regarding SEND need among girls and young women to all partners regarding how SEND may present (and may present differently to boys) in order to ensure that girls are being identified and referred on as needed.
- The SEND Data Dashboard group should explore the feasibility of capturing a wider set of outcome measures (in addition to the Therapy Outcome Measures that are already captured) in order to create a more holistic picture of impact.
- The SEND Accountability Board should engage with partners in education to better understand the apparent under-performance of young people with an EHC Plan at Progress 8 and Attainment 8. Where possible the Progress 8 and Attainment 8 data should be analyzed in further detail to identify if there are cohorts of children who are performing significantly worse than their peers with an EHC Plan in order to target responses more effectively.

48 Early Years Update

Members received an update in relation to Early Years

Members heard that in the government's spring budget, the Chancellor announced transformative reforms to childcare for parents, children, the economy and women. By 2027 to 2028, the government was expected to be spending in excess of £8bn every year on free hours and early education, helping working families with their childcare costs.

By September 2025, working parents would be able to claim 30 hours of free childcare a week, over 38 weeks of the year, all the way through from nine months up to their child starting school.

Members heard that 30 hours childcare for every child over the age of 9 months with working parents/carers by was to be implemented by September 2024, where eligibility will match the existing 3 and 4 year old 30 hours offer.

Changes to 'Wrap around Care where Local authorities and schools were to be given more funding to set up what's known as 'wraparound care' to support all primary schools in offering wrap around care. It was noted that funding was available to North Northamptonshire Council from 2023- 2026 where £1,821,402.34 was available to support implementation and delivery.

Members then heard that from September 2023, one member of staff was allowed to allowed to look after five 2 year olds, which was up from four 2 year olds which is the current rule.

It was then heard that the Department for Education had proposed changes to the Early Years Foundation Stage Framework (EYFS) framework to make it more practical for different types of EYFS providers. A consultation to collect views of Local Authorities and Providers was conducted over the summer 2023 and a revised EYFS framework was issued to Childminders in December 2023.

Members then heard that a number of issues and risks were identified which included the requirement for additional providers to deliver the wider offer, whilst there are no sufficiency issues at present, there is potential for future issues. Facilitating delivery of provision for 9 months onwards where existing providers may not have capacity, no capital funding is available and most of the North Northants providers rent premises. Expansion of 2 year old offer is not equitable it still leaves some of the children within North Northamptonshire without access to the offer
Wrap around care, early indications not all schools will want to provide the offer.

49 Speech & Language Provision

Members were notified that Item 6 – Speech and Language provision had been withdrawn from the agenda and would be presented to a future meeting of the EAP future communities.

50 Adoption of the Sustainable Modes of Travel to School Strategy

Members received a report which sought to provide the Executive Advisory Panel members with an update on the progress of the Sustainable Travel to Education Strategy, report on the findings from the public consultation and to seek approval to submit the Sustainable Travel to Education Strategy to the Executive for adoption.

It was heard that North Northamptonshire Council was required to arrange free, suitable, home to school transport for children of compulsory school age, who are eligible, to their nearest suitable qualifying school in line with section 508B of the Education Act 1996 and the Government's statutory guidance 'Home to School Travel and Transport Guidance 2014'. The Education and Inspections Act (2006) also placed a duty on local authorities to promote the use of active and sustainable travel to education and further support the choices and flexibility of educational provision. The Act outlined four main elements to promoting sustainable modes of travel, including the assessment and audit of sustainable travel options within the local authority, the development of a strategy for the promotion of sustainable travel to schools and other educational or training facilities. As such, North Northamptonshire Council was

required to produce and publish its annually a Sustainable Modes of Travel to School Strategy (SMoTS).

Members then heard that the Sustainable Travel to Education Strategy included 4 targets:

- Children and young people aged 5 to 18 should have averaged at least 60 minutes of moderate or vigorous intensity physical activity everyday.
- Every school should have a school travel plan by 2033
- All schools should have AQ below WHO air pollution limits
- 55% of primary school-aged children to walk to school by 2025

Members were presented with the action plan which set out a number of schemes and training events aimed at promoting school travel planning, community active travel events, cycle security training, cycle loan and hire schemes and school streets.

The formal consultation ran from 14th September to midnight 26th October 2023. 24 responses were received, respondents travelled either by bus or carpool, with half of respondents choosing this mode due to a lack of options.

Respondents indicated support for improved bus services, in terms of frequency and geographic coverage as well as support for EV buses, car clubs and cycle training in schools however concerns were raised with cycling environment in/from school. Concerns were also raised about the distance children travelled to school and lack of transport options available. Concerns were also raised about how rural areas (and children living within them) lack transport options to get to education and the challenge of managing the school run particularly if families have children in different schools (e.g. primary/secondary schools).

It was noted that the Sustainable Travel to Education Strategy document was to be considered by Executive on 14th March.

51 Service Presentation - Commissioning and Partnerships

Members received a service presentation regarding Children's Services Commissioning & Partnerships. Members heard that the service area included Business & Performance functions (including the Children's Trust client function), partnerships & development and commissioning.

Members heard that key objections included to support schools in developing local provision by strengthening an early help offer of SEND advisory teams around our mainstream schools as well as working to develop a SEND Brokerage function, to support more effective commissioning of provision from Independent and non-maintained schools/colleges.

The service is aiming to work closely with the SEND team to review and develop responsive, flexible, and effective local specialist provision ensuring the special educational needs of our children are responded to quickly and effectively through development of a brokerage service whilst also supporting schools to improve their offer to our children through robust quality assurance programmes.

Another key objective was also ensuring value for money through contract monitoring, reviewing and evaluation of our commissioned services

Robust accountability and governance of both spending and quality assurance through comprehensive reporting mechanisms and transition for children & young people is improved across all areas of operation. As well as the development of an effective SEND Commissioning function, underpinned by access to timely data to support evidence-based decision making and more effective strategic planning.

High level service challenges were also presented to members of the Executive Advisory Panel as well as key mitigations in place.

52 Forward List of Items for the EAP

The following items were agreed for the May 2024 meeting:

Item 1: SEND Priority Improvement Plan

Item 2: Speech & Language Therapy Service Update

Item 3. 0-19 Service Recommissioning

RESOLVED that: the Executive Advisory Panel Future Communities agreed Future items for its meetings.

53 Close of Meeting

There being no further business, the Chair thanked Members and Officers for their attendance and closed the meeting.

The meeting closed at 7.00 pm

Chair

Date