DERBYSHIRE SEND IMPROVEMENT AND ASSURANCE BOARD MINUTES

Tuesday 11th February 2025, Committee Room 1, County Hall, Matlock, 10:00-13:00

MINUTES:

Item No:	Minutes:
DSIAB2425/01	**Welcome, introductions and apologies** The Chair opened the meeting and welcomed all attendees and thanked them for their time and commitment to the Board. Apologies were noted.
DSIAB2425/02	**Declarations of Interest** The Chair asked if there were any conflicts of interest or declarations of interest that needed to be noted. No conflicts of interest or declarations were reported by the attendees at that time.
DSIAB2425/03	**Agree Terms of Reference** The Board began by reviewing the terms of reference, noting that they would be subject to review every six months to ensure they remain relevant and effective. There was a specific discussion about removing certain behaviours from the terms of reference and including them in the principles of Board membership instead. This change aimed to streamline the document and ensure that the terms of reference focused on the Board's core responsibilities and governance structure. Discussion centred on whether the Board should include learning from Derby City in its terms of reference. Some members felt that while learning from Derby City is important, it might not be necessary to formalize this in the terms of reference. Instead, it could be managed through the delivery group approach, ensuring that insights and best practices are shared without overcomplicating the Board's primary document. There was a detailed discussion about how the Board would ensure accountability for both the priority actions and the broader SEND system. The need for a clear governance structure to manage both the improvement plan and business-as-usual activities was highlighted. Members agreed that while the Board should focus on the priority actions, it also needed to ensure that the overall SEND system was functioning effectively and that all necessary activities were being monitored and managed. **Action – Amend key on governance diagram to clarify dotted and solid lines** **Action – SEND business as usual governance needs clarifying alongside improvement governance. Further discussion required as to where this will be reflected** The Board agreed to **approve** the terms of reference for now, with the understanding that they would be amended as needed based on further clarity and developments. It was acknowledged that the terms of reference are a living document and would evolve as the Board's work progresses. This approach allows the Board to remain flexible and responsive to changing needs and circumstances.

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DSIAB2425/04	**Agree Principles of Board Membership**
	The Board emphasized the importance of regular attendance to ensure continuity and effective governance. It was agreed that members should attend a minimum of nine out of twelve Board meetings, or nine out of eleven for the current year. This expectation underscores the commitment required from each member to actively participate in the Board's activities. However, recognizing the busy schedules of its members, the Board agreed that if a member cannot attend a meeting, they should send a representative. This provision ensures that the work of the Board continues smoothly even in the absence of some members.
	A significant concern raised during the discussion was the potential impact of frequent delegation on the Board's effectiveness. It was stressed that while sending a representative occasionally is acceptable, it should not become a regular practice. The presence of senior leaders is crucial for maintaining accountability and providing strategic direction. The Board agreed that senior leaders should primarily attend the meetings to ensure that the Board's decisions are informed by their expertise. The principles of Board membership were reviewed, focusing on responsibilities for behaviours and confidentiality. These principles are designed to ensure that the Board operates cohesively and effectively.
	After reviewing the principles of Board membership and discussing the necessary amendments, the Board agreed to adopt them. The principles were **approved** with a slight amendment regarding attendance and representation. It was also agreed that these principles would be revisited and updated as needed to reflect any changes in the Board's operations or membership.

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DSIAB2425/05	**Children and Young People's Involvement** The board member responsible for engagement presented an initial video aimed at engaging Children and Young People in the work of the Board. The video was described as a "start of the 10," meaning it was an initial draft intended to gather feedback and improve upon. Board members provided feedback on the video: • Accessibility: It was noted that the video was text-heavy and might not be accessible to all Children, especially those in primary school or with additional needs. Suggestions included adding voiceovers, imagery, and symbols to make it more engaging and understandable. • Language: The language used in the video was discussed, with some members suggesting that it might not be easily understood by Children. It was recommended to co-produce the video with Children and Young People to ensure the language is appropriate and relatable. • Purpose and Audience: There was a discussion about the purpose of the video and its intended audience. It was suggested that the video should clearly communicate the Board's role and how it aims to support Children and Young People. The video should also be tailored to different age groups and abilities. The boards engagement officer emphasized that the video was just an initial draft and that the next step would be to take it to Children and Young People for their feedback. The plan was to engage with groups of Children and Young People who have lived experience relevant to the Board's work. The Board discussed the importance of ongoing engagement with Children and Young People. This includes not just creating a video but also regularly seeking their input on various topics and ensuring their voices are heard in the Board's decision-making processes. The plan is to use existing networks and partnerships to gather feedback and involve Children and Young People in a meaningful way. The Board agreed that more work was needed on the video before it could be presented to Children and Young People. Board member from the NHS and the Board member from Derbyshire County Council, who are leading on communications, were tasked with supporting the engagement officer in refining the video. The revised video would then be brought back to the Board for further review. **Action - Participation & Engagement Video - to be developed and shared with Comms Priority Leads** **Action – share priority area plans with the engagement officer to ensure engagement with Young People with lived experience can be undertaken in timely manner**

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DSIAB2425/06	**Development of Risk Register**
	Discussion took place around the need for a comprehensive risk register for the Board. An emphasise that the risk register would help identify and manage potential threats and opportunities that could impact the Board's work. The goal is to create a program-level risk register that can be monitored and reviewed regularly.
	There was a request for volunteers to help develop the risk register. Board members from the Integrated Care Board, NHS England and the Local Authority, volunteered to assist in this task. Members involvement is crucial to ensure that the risk register reflects a wide range of perspectives and expertise.
	There was a discussion about the difference between risks and issues. This highlighted the importance of distinguishing between the two, noting that risks are potential future events that could impact the Board's work, while issues are current problems that need to be addressed. It was agreed that both risks and issues should be documented, but they should be managed separately on a risk and issues log.
	The Board discussed the need to identify both system-wide risks and specific risks related to individual priority areas. System risks are those that affect the entire SEND system, while specific risks are related to particular projects or initiatives. The risk register should capture both types of risks to provide a comprehensive overview.
	The Board recognized the importance of including perspectives from parent carers and schools in the risk register. These stakeholders can provide valuable insights into potential risks that might not be immediately apparent to other members.
	Board member from the Integrated Care Board suggested that herself and Colleague work together to create an initial draft of the risk register, including definitions and formatting. This draft would then be reviewed and refined by the Board. The aim is to have a working risk register in place by the next meeting.
	Action – Develop a risk register with partners
DSIAB2425/07	**Priority Impact Area Reports**
	a) Priority 2
	Board member from the Integrated care board and Board member from the Local Authority presented a paper in the above priority area.
	The Board emphasized the need to align the joint commissioning strategy with the SEND strategy, setting a target completion date of September. This alignment is crucial to ensure that both strategies are cohesive and mutually supportive. The discussion highlighted the importance of using rich data to inform decisions and ensuring that these decisions are made collaboratively across the partnership. Additionally, the Board stressed the need for a clear implementation plan and a well-thought-out sequencing of actions to achieve the desired outcomes.

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DSIAB2425/07 Continued	Concerns were raised about the potential risks of not delivering on time, particularly regarding the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA). The Board acknowledged that delays in the JSNA could impact the overall progress of the joint commissioning strategy. To mitigate these risks, the Board discussed the need for quick wins to demonstrate progress and build confidence among stakeholders. This includes reconditioning existing strategies on a joint basis to show a clear intent to work collaboratively and make tangible improvements. Data and Performance: The importance of having accurate and cleansed data to inform the JSNA and other strategic decisions was a key point of discussion. The Board recognized that reliable data is essential for making informed decisions and tracking progress. There was a consensus on the need for a robust data cleansing approach to ensure the reliability of the data being used. This involves validating and verifying the data to ensure it accurately reflects the current situation and can be used to make strategic decisions. The Board had limited assurance on priority impact area 2 and was on track and had been sufficiently challenged. **b) Priority 5** Board member from Derbyshire County Council and Board member from the NHS presented there paper for Priority impact area 5 – The two members provided an update on the progress of developing a strategic partnership communications plan. They emphasized the importance of having clear objectives and targets for communication and engagement with Children, Young People, families, and other stakeholders. The Board discussed the need for a comprehensive communication strategy that supports all priority areas and ensures consistent messaging across the partnership. This strategy is seen as crucial for building trust and confidence among stakeholders and for ensuring that everyone is informed and engaged in the improvement journey. The Board highlighted the importance of engaging with Children and Young People in a meaningful way. Various examples of engagement activities were discussed, emphasizing the need to ensure these activities are impactful. There was a strong emphasis on co-producing communication materials with Children and Young People to ensure that the language and content are appropriate and engaging. This approach aims to make the communication more relatable and effective, ensuring that the voices of Children and Young People are heard and considered in the decision-making process. It was raised in regards about the Local Offer and its significance in the communication strategy. The Local Offer should be a central part of the communication plan, providing clear and accessible information to families about the services and support available. The Board discussed the need to ensure that the Local Offer is well-integrated into the broader communication strategy and that there is no duplication of efforts. The Board acknowledged the challenges of ensuring effective communication across a large and diverse partnership. There was a recognition of the need for clear roles and responsibilities to avoid duplication and ensure that communication efforts are coordinated.

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DSIAB2425/07 Continued	The risk of not having sufficient capacity to manage communication effectively was discussed, highlighting the need to address capacity issues to ensure that communication is timely and responsive. The Board agreed that addressing these challenges is critical for the success of the communication strategy. The priority impact area responsible officers agreed to hold another meeting in March to further develop the strategic partnership communications plan. The Board had limited assurance on priority impact area 5 and was on track and had been sufficiently challenged. **c) Priority 6** Board member from the NHS presented the paper on priority impact area 6. They highlighted the critical importance of addressing waiting times for assessments and services. The Board discussed the necessity of establishing baseline data to understand the current situation and measure progress over time. Accurate data collection is essential to evaluate the effectiveness of interventions and ensure that waiting times are reduced. The Board recognized that having a clear understanding of the baseline data would help in setting realistic targets and tracking improvements. The Board acknowledged the significant challenges related to capacity within the system, particularly within the assessment teams. There was a recognition that improving communication and reducing waiting times requires sufficient capacity and resources. The discussion emphasized the need for a collaborative approach to address these challenges, involving all partners in finding solutions. The Board agreed that addressing capacity issues is crucial for ensuring that the system can respond effectively to the needs of Children and families. The concept of "waiting well" was discussed, with some members expressing concerns about its implications. The Board debated alternative approaches to support Children and families while they are waiting for assessments and services. There was a recognition that waiting times are a partnership issue and require a coordinated response to ensure that Children and families receive the support they need during this period. The Board agreed that it is essential to provide interim support to minimize the negative impact of waiting times on Children and families. The importance of having robust data and performance management systems was highlighted. The Board discussed the need for accurate and reliable data to inform decision-making and track progress. There was a recognition that data quality is critical for understanding the impact of interventions and ensuring that resources are allocated effectively. The Board agreed that improving data management practices is essential for achieving the goals of the priority impact area. The Board had limited assurance on priority impact area 6 and was on track and had been sufficiently challenged.

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DSIAB2425/07 Continued	The Chair raised that reports will currently only be able to provide limited assurance currently due to timescales since the last inspection. **Action - Priority Area 6 - next highlight report to include clarification on impact of 'Supporting whilst waiting'** **Action - Highlight Reports - should include risks**
DSIAB2425/08	**Enabling Activity** Chair has been doing work nationally to help enable activity across other improvement Boards. There is a need for data in assurance and across the partnership. • **Data and Performance** The Board emphasized the importance of having robust data and performance management systems. Accurate and reliable data is essential for informing decision-making and tracking progress. A Data and Performance Group has been established and is meeting regularly to ensure that data collection and analysis are aligned with the improvement plan. The group aims to provide benchmark data and set targets to track improvements over time. • **Quality Assurance** The Board discussed the need for a comprehensive quality assurance framework to ensure that services are delivered effectively and meet the required standards. A Quality Assurance Group has been set up to focus on multidisciplinary understanding of quality across the partnership. This includes not just education, health, and care plans, but also other areas impacting Children and Young People. The group will work on developing a partnership approach to quality assurance, ensuring that all partners are involved in evaluating and improving service quality • **Communications** Effective communication and engagement are seen as critical enablers for the improvement journey. The Board discussed the need for a strategic communication plan that supports all priority areas and ensures consistent messaging across the partnership. The importance of engaging with Children, Young People, and families was highlighted. The Board agreed to continue working on the communication strategy and to seek feedback from stakeholders to ensure it meets their needs. A Communications Group has been established to develop and implement the communication strategy. This group will work closely with other enabling groups to ensure that communication efforts are coordinated and effective. • **Engagement and Participation** The Board discussed the importance of engagement and participation, particularly with Children and Young People. This is seen as a core part of the communication strategy to ensure that their voices are heard and considered in decision-making. The Board agreed to integrate engagement and participation efforts into the broader communication strategy to avoid duplication and ensure a cohesive approach.

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DSIAB2425/08 Continued	The Board agreed to keep the enabling activities under regular review to ensure they remain helpful and relevant. These activities are seen as essential for driving progress and ensuring that the partnership is working effectively. The Board recognized that these enabling activities are currently in the early stages and will need to be refined and developed over time. The aim is to reach a point where these activities become business as usual and do not require separate groups.
DSIAB2425/09	**Minutes from the set-up meeting held in January** The minutes of the previous meeting were reviewed and agreed upon with some amendments made to the attendance list and apologies list. The Board went through the minutes page by page to ensure accuracy and noted any necessary changes. Once the amendments were made, the minutes were approved by the Board. These minutes will be anonymised and then published online on the website.
DSIAB2425/10	**Action Log from the meeting held in January** Action log was reviewed and updated during the meeting.
DSIAB2425/11	**Any other Business** The Board reviewed the forward plan and upcoming meeting dates. The next meeting was scheduled for March 19th at the Brackenfield SEND School in Long Eaton, Nottingham. The Board discussed the importance of visiting different venues to gain a broader perspective and engage with various stakeholders. Members were encouraged to suggest potential venues for future meetings.

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