

**Minutes of Surrey SEND Community Group**

**Dianthus Building, Wishbone Way, Woking**

**27th June 2017**

1. **Introductions, recap on last meeting and objectives for group**

David welcomed everyone to the second Surrey SEND Community Group. The intent of the group is that the combined knowledge and input of local organisations in Surrey will ensure the needs of SEND families’ are fully represented.

The first meeting in Jan 17 was to get an idea of whether these meetings would be useful and to hear from organisations about what these meetings should look like in future. The feedback was very positive.

The intention is to hold these meetings quarterly and that they will become the driving force to make SEND voices heard. Members of the group are encouraged to propose agenda topics or offer presentations from their organisations for future meetings.

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| **Actions** | **By Who** | **By When** |
| Please let Claire Poole know if you have any other suggestions for organisations that should attend these meetings: [claire.p@familyvoicesurrey.org](mailto:claire.p@familyvoicesurrey.org) | By ALL | As and when |
| Please send proposed agenda topics or details of offered presentations to Claire | By ALL | Quarterly |

**2. Overview of Family Voice Surrey’s aims and objectives for 2017/18**

David gave a presentation summarising Family Voice Surrey’s aims and objectives for this year.

It was hoped that organisations attending would identify aims and objectives that aligned with FVS’s and make contact to explore joint working or information sharing.

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| **Actions** | **By Who** | **By When** |
| Please let Sue Lea know of any aligned work or initiatives you think could be worked on jointly – email: [sue.l@familyvoicesurrey.org](mailto:sue.l@familyvoicesurrey.org) | By ALL | At 3rd Oct meeting |
| Please let Sue know if there are related areas of work that you think FVS should be addressing | By ALL | At 3rd Oct meeting |

1. **A presentation from Liz Mills, Assistant Director for Schools and Learning, on progress on Surrey’s Written Statement of Action (Surrey’s response to last year’s local area inspection)**

Liz talked about the broader SEND transformation programme which links with early help including SEND, safeguarding, working differently with schools (in partnership rather than old LA role) and not working on their own – good work can’t be achieved in isolation. They are working in partnership across the board including with some within the room.

It was recognised that communication hasn’t been great – although some case workers are fantastic at this, unfortunately they are not always able to do the best for families and it is hugely frustrating when this happens.

The Ofsted/CQC inspection highlighted that the pace and scale of change hasn’t been good enough. The Local Authority’s Written Statement of Action (WSA) has been accepted but it was noted that their proposed performance measures were not fully developed . They now have measures and a rigorous process in place, they are keeping to time and targets are being met. Performance measures are on track - there are concerns around the volume of Statements to transfer to EHCP’s but they are making good progress. The NE teams are having problems with resources but they are putting things in place. They are not just looking at the short-term – the WSA is only until December 2017 but they plan to continue in the SEND Development Plan.

During a recent SCC SEND webinar, 31% of participants said they’d seen an improvement since the Inspection.

In Surrey, there are 150,000 school places, 1 in 3 has an additional need, 20,000 Support Plans, 7000 Statement/EHCP’s. Nationally there is a 29% increase in EHCP requests.

A full copy of the Written Statement of Action can be found on the Surrey Local Offer website. Link here: [Surrey SEND Written Statement of Action](https://www.surreylocaloffer.org.uk/kb5/surrey/localoffer/advice.page?id=wkvnLDXSrBE)

EHCP headlines

* Timeliness/productivity is better BUT 170 new EHCP requests in December and 217 in March. Huge peaks in demand makes things tricky.
* Cumulative figure is 41% - they are working through the backlog, increasing by 3-4% each month.
* 300 plans last September were over 25 weeks – now down to 52 and they are more timely with new requests.
* Once a month Liz meets with senior colleagues in Health and Social Services – drawing out themes.
* Exclusions reducing – need to work on absence (PT timetables etc) and are now working directly with schools on this
* They are replicating what is working well within other areas. They are making progress but the service isn’t adequate yet. Once it is they would like to work towards getting it outstanding.

Liz made a point of saying the organisational updates that were provided by the SEND Community Group for the meeting were really helpful and took away the information provided to inform the SCC work.

Liz was thanked for coming and was extended an open invitation to come back at any time. David also requested that Liz feedback at each meeting re progress being made.

1. **Q&A – Burning issues taken from organisation update forms and answered by Liz Mills.**

**Q. Early Help works better: but changes to Early Years need to be communicated to families.**

**Liz Mills Response:** Early Years provision is changing with 30 hrs provision - there is a campaign to make families aware. Huge challenge to implement and fund – agreed with Schools Forum that the Local Authority will hold on to a substantial amount as a contingency for SEND/Equality implications in the new system. Re promotion of the change – will work with colleagues.

**Q. SEN Support in schools is inconsistent/poor: some evidence of illegal practice, eg: informal exclusions.**

**Liz Mills response:** Surrey has lower SEN Support than national average (in comparable areas) – we are driving towards increasing this number. The bulk of SEN Support is at under 1 year of age so we are identifying them early. We need more flexible models, with the right support at the right time. Data is held at school level – with 388 schools in Surrey, not including non-maintained independent schools, it is difficult to draw on this data. The Inspection suggested that some children were being excluded or on part-time timetable – it is challenging to unearth that information. Where education is at home – through virtual school - SCC has a good indication. This issue has been put on the agenda for the School Improvement Strategy Board.

Comment from room that there are issues around not noticing ‘spiky profiles’ of some children – need to notice particular indicators and identify them.

**Q. Issues relating to transport: in particular, skillset/knowledge of providers, esp. when dealing with challenging behaviour.**

**Liz Mills response.** £25m is currently spent on Surrey’s SEND school transport. We need to ensure that, where possible and appropriate, students’ needs are met closer to home, i.e. there needs to be better local provision. We have yet to get right where resources lie between SEN and transport teams – we are embedding this and now have SEN workers within the transport team. There is a peak in August – EHCP in place? Do they have a school place? Transport organised? Connecting teams will help and leave SEN Team free to focus on EHCP’s. Knowledge of needs for transporting children is important – need to select right route but also right provision.

**Q. Concerns over transition services/Post 16 – lack of, transitions not well managed.**

**Liz Mills response:** Lots of work to be done on this. Have a good working relationship with Health and Social Services Adult Services. March – September is too small a timeframe to transition. Transition should start at 14yrs, or even better, at the start of senior school (age 11/12yrs).Currently too process driven.

Comments from room – Need employers to come forward to offer opportunities, otherwise prepping opportunities aren’t there.

Concern raised about need for clear definition of outcomes for EHCP’s – NOT provision of services in outcomes box. Liz referred to the WSA- this is being monitored and smarter outcomes are needed. She also invited SOS!SEN to work with FVS to define what a good outcome is.

The LA does auditing of all EHCP’s and a sample is sent to the DfE. Liz meets with families who have been through the tribunal process and reviews monthly. The need to focus on service improvements to avoid tribunals was recognised.

As there wasn’t time to discuss all the questions raised by the Group, it was proposed that a webinar take place to cover the remainder.

1. **A presentation from the Children and Families Health Service about the new integrated health service for families (more details here:** <http://www.childrenshealthsurrey.nhs.uk/>**)**

Sandra Pycock, Head of West - Surrey Children and Families Health Service (CFHS), gave a presentation on the new service and their vision for the future. After successful transfer of all of the services to the new provider attention was now focused on transformation of the service pathways and delivery models to give the consistent and equitable service provision across Surrey.

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| **Actions** | **By Who** | **By When** |
| Please feedback to Sandra your opinion of whether the proposed Young People’s Forum should be separate or part of the main CFHS forum. Email: [sandra.pycock@nhs.net](mailto:sandra.pycock@nhs.net) | By ALL | By 29/09/17 |

1. **Round room introductions and summary of plan for group going forward.**

The draft Terms of Reference circulated to the Group prior to the meeting were discussed and unanimously agreed without change. It was agreed that the format for the meeting had worked well and should continue, the networking slots had been very popular.

It was recognised that a number of our organisations are involved in statutory boards and other formal and informal bodies and that it would be useful to map these links and understand our collective reach and influence.

It was also recognised that there was a lot of meetings and events across the county and that a managed central calendar would help avoid clashes and assist in possible collaboration. The Group asked FVS to take on that role but this is a lot of work and it was agreed that FVS should approach the Local Offer team to see if they could host and manage this.

The next meeting will include Family Voice Surrey’s research into the impact caring has on a parent carers’ health and wellbeing.

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| **Actions** | **By Who** | **By When** |
| It would be useful to understand the links we have within the group, so please feedback details of which boards/ bodies individual organisations sit on. To Claire Poole – [claire.p@familyvoicesurrey.org](mailto:claire.p@familyvoicesurrey.org) | By ALL | By 03/10/17 |
| Use Local Offer website to advertise events – to avoid/check for clashes. <https://www.surreylocaloffer.org.uk/kb5/surrey/localoffer/whats_on.page> | By ALL |  |

Attendees

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| **NAME** | **ORGANISATION** |
| Andrea Collings | Co-Chair, Family Voice Surrey |
| Anne Hubble | Home Start Elmbridge |
| Cate Newnes Smith | Chief Executive, Surrey Youth Focus |
| Catherine Castiglioni | Volunteer, SOS!SON |
| Christine May | Shooting Star Chase |
| Claire Bryant | Chief Executive, Cherry Trees |
| Claire Davies | Operations Manager, We Shine |
| Claire Poole | Coordinator, Family Voice Surrey |
| Cliff Bush | Surrey Coalition of Disabled People |
| David Izatt – **Chair** | Co-Chair, Family Voice Surrey |
| Emma Collyer | ADHD Time Out |
| Gemma Evason | Director, We Shine |
| Gemma Roulston | Director, Surrey Coalition of Disabled People |
| Jacqui Maclean | Senior Advisor, Action for Carers |
| John Spedding | Chair, East Surrey Mencap |
| Laura Swinerd | Advisor, Surrey Independent Living Council |
| Linda Palmer | SSIASS |
| Liz Mills - **Speaker** | Assistant Director Schools and Learning, Surrey County Council |
| Llinos John | Development Manager, Elmbridge Community Link |
| Marion Strudwick | Trustee, SOS!SEN |
| Matthew Parris | Healthwatch |
| Nicky Goode | Steering Committee, Family Voice Surrey |
| Sam Neale | Chair, Children with Disabilities Forum Spelthorne |
| Sandra Pycock - **Speaker** | Head of West - Surrey Children & Families Health Service |
| Sara Truman | NAS Surrey Branch |
| Sharon Sutcliffe | Volunteer, SOS!SEN |
| Simon Morley | Treasurer, Family Voice Surrey |
| Sue Gunn | Young Epilepsy |
| Sue Lea | Operations Manager, Family Voice Surrey |
| Tom Flood | Children’s Rights & Participation Team |
| Wendy Jenkins | Core Assets |