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THE NATIONAL SEND FORUM Minutes 08th December 2021

Virtual Zoom Meeting

Present: David Bateson OBE (DB) *Chair*, Lorraine Petersen OBE (LP) *FLSE*, Rona Tutt OBE (RT) *NAHT*, Caroline Wright (CW) *RCSLT*, Carol Kelsey (CK) *NNPCF*, Chris Rollings (CR) *FLSE*, Julie Walker (JW) *sen.se*, Kiran Hingorani (KH) *SWALSS/NASS*, Tina Wakefield (TW) *BATOD/NATSIP*, Rob Williams (RW) *NAHT*, Stephen Deadman (SD) *NAHE*, Carolyn Morgan (CM) *FLSE*, Malcolm Reeve (MR) *WSS*, Penny Barrett (PB) *SSV*, Hajira Liaquat (HL) *NSN*, Jane Carter (JC) *PDNET*, Clare Dorer (CD) *NASS*, Annamarie Hassall (AH) *nasen*, Brendan Heneghan (BH) *engage*, Richard Boyle (RB) *engage*,

Guests: Lorraine Mulrooney (LM) *NHS*

Minutes: Andy Petersen (AP)

1. Welcome and Introductions

For Action

DB welcomed and thanked everyone for joining this virtual meeting. DB explained that the meeting would not follow the agenda since several delegates had time constraints.

2. Protocol for meeting

DB went through some protocols for this virtual meeting

3. Apologies

UWMAT, Browne Jacobson

4. Minutes of last meeting and matters arising

The minutes were agreed with minor alteration.

5. Lorraine Mulrooney (SEND lead, NHS ENGLAND and NHS IMPROVEMENT). Discussion

LM explained her background in the NHS and her new role as national specialist advisor (SEND). NHS England had set up a fund to cover this area up until March 2024. LM was in the process of recruiting a new team to deliver SEND who would cover a mixture of programmes, policy, clinical roles etc. which covered 14 professional disciplines. Currently the team was focused on inspections, driving up improvement and making sure health providers were carrying out their duties.

However from 1 April 2022, a new plan would be in operation which had not been finalised as yet. Two thirds of the funding available had been given to regions which had enabled them to expand their

teams – most regions had doubled their staffing levels. LM was trying to improve communication both regionally and nationally so as to avoid a “silo” culture.

LMs team was also working on the imminent transfer of CCGs to Integrated Care Boards (ICB) following the approval of the NHS bill and to communicate responsibilities to the CEOs of those ICBs.

Another big piece of work was being done in conjunction with Community Services to examine how therapists and community nursing is recovering from the pandemic and how therapies contribute to the health and welfare of SEND children.

CR then gave an update on a recent meeting he and LM had had with the Medicines and Specialist group. CR explained that an excellent presentation had been given by Dominic Wall and agreed to pass the details on to DB so that he could present to NSENDF. **CR**

LM stated that she intended to continue as a delegate to NSENDF in the future.

CR queried whether briefings would be given on the work of the ICBs. LM responded that there were no specific briefings available although CR could refer to websites etc. LM agreed to query this with the regions. CR gave anecdotal evidence of the lack of knowledge of his SEND group on what was going to happen. **LM**

LM suggested that SEND professionals would need to connect with medical professionals when necessary.

LM stated that planning guidance for NHS England due shortly would give more clarity.

SD commented that educators of the NAHE were experiencing difficulty in getting access to hospital sites. Another issue was hospital schools being charged for operating on a hospital site for a statutory service. Finally there was an issue of young people with mental health problems being held on general wards.

LM responded that she would connect SD with NHS colleagues who were looking at some of these issues, but a conversation was on-going across government about who should pay for delivering services.

CK queried what were the arrangements for user input into the new ICB system? LM responded that draft guidance was available on the ICB website. LM suggested that Integrated Care Partnerships, which were non-statutory, would have greater access for stakeholders.

CM queried the impact of lack of funding and access to CAMHS in the regime. LM responded that this relied on local relationships but agreed to bring this up with the national team. LM requested that CM email her about the issues so that she could address them. **CM**

RT queried whether there was any clarification about written statements of action not having a designated medical officer or clinical officer in place. Also information on the role of school nurses, and whether there will be a change to their role. LM responded that a model of what good practice should be for designated medical officers was being developed. With regard to school nursing this was now the responsibility of local authorities. She hoped that the expansion of the workforce planning resources within the NHS would assist in this area.

LM gave **CR** an update on the development of therapies strategy. CR commented that schools were using their funds to “bridge the gap” on services which should be provided by the NHS. LM commented that this emphasised the importance of workforce planning.

CK placed a link to the Kings Fund with information about how the integrated care systems would work under the Health and Care Bill?

<https://www.kingsfund.org.uk/audio-video/integrated-care-systems-health-and-care-bill>

CR promised to circulate a copy of SSV's report on Nursing Provision in Specialist Settings – This can be found on the FLSE website - <https://flse.sendforum.org/resources/>

CD referred to the document "These are our children" A review from Christine Lenehan in 2017.

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/585376/Lenehan_Review_Report.pdf

DB and the Forum thanked LM for her input and noted that the 'Who does what?' and 'Who pays?' in relation to medical and therapeutic support remains of great and growing importance.

7. Update: Regional Centres of Expertise NSEND Research Update (RT/CD/MR/KH/DB)

MR gave an update on RCEs. (Presentation to be circulated by DB)

DB

A scoping exercise had been performed on LAs in the Southwest to understand what was going on in terms of low incidence needs. A paper had been circulated at the end of 2020 on Regional Centres of Expertise. MR suggested that DB re-circulate this paper. A discussion around how difficult it was to access specialist provisions had been undertaken. This resulted in a mapping exercise in the southwest. MR had summarised the key facts on education, health and care plans and low incidence need across the four authorities the results of which were shown in the presentation.

DB

MR was surprised that there were more children with multi-sensory impairment in mainstream settings. A database had now been established on the key facts in the presentation.

The next step would be to test out the concept of regional centres of expertise in a region and gain their opinions on them. However this would be a lot of work and MR was not sure where the capacity would come from.

MR gave a brief report on the slides in his presentation. In conclusion MR showed a slide of what he felt needed to happen next.

RT commented that the working group had identified that talking to the LAs involved was the next step, but the group wanted to be absolutely sure what they needed to ask them when they had a better picture of where the gaps were what was working well, and also what degree of collaboration was in place already. The group had also considered whether a further "deep dive" would be needed in another area. It was felt that the consultation period for the SEND review might be the right time to present the findings. RT commented that it was interesting that all of the authorities examined had "written statements of action" in place from OfSTED/CQC.

CD commented that there was a need to triangulate between published and experiential data. She felt that the work of the group was challenging.

JC highlighted children with physical disabilities and the disparity between different authorities. She was therefore interested in what authorities might be doing which was influencing the data.

JW commented on the importance of talking to authorities about their data and she would be happy to facilitate this for Somerset.

JW

DB commented that Dorset had set up an RCE and he felt that it would be useful to explore this operation.

DB

AH commented that she was in favour of supporting practice. However she was concerned that there was confusion about the status of regional centres of expertise and what was the DfE position on them.

RT commented that she was not aware the RCEs had become common term. AH responded that some Directors of Children's Services were wary of this new initiative.

8. Updates from Members

NSN – TL gave a summary of the work of NSN and their relationship with Special Schools.

SWALSS/NASS - quality of life workshops had been undertaken. An early year's leadership Network was being established with dates for meetings in December, April and July. A [principals and head teachers conference](#) was scheduled in Torquay for the last weekend of January. A deputy's conference was scheduled for the same venue in March. Finally there was a leadership and management course starting in January going through to July and there was a Southwest SEND conference planned for June 2022.

ENGAGE - The national football competition had taken place at St. George's Park. The National Conference had gone well and had been centred around Mental Health. A mental wellbeing audit was being tested at the moment.

NAHE – A “face to face” conference for leaders was planned for summer 2022. Membership was growing enabling funding of new networks. A noticeable increase in mental health issues had occurred - this was causing capacity problems with organisations such as CAMHS.

SEN.se – The preparation for adulthood work stream continues – SEN.se has now got a five-year contract on permanent shop, with a secondary partner with a local charity. A successful art bid of £10k had been obtained to work with local artists and promote mental health. SEN.se was also supporting schools that had difficulties with recruitment and staffing. SEN.se had also been commissioned to lead run outreach for mainstream lead SEND networks in Somerset.

NAHT – has undertaken a funding survey of members and produced the report – “[NAHT A failure to invest – the state of school funding 2021](#)”. A lot of work was being done towards the white paper particularly the high needs system. An event was planned for 25th March on the impact of the “Online World”. Supporting School Leaders to Manage the Risks of the Digital World for Young People - <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/the-impact-of-the-on-line-world-for-young-people-tickets-210924058537>

RT related that Nadhim Zahawi had been able to attend the main policy conference and give an update on progress of the SEND Review. The date for the next SEND conference had been set at 19th October in Manchester.

pdnet – their conference will be online on 1 July 2022. pdnet’s training was selling well and good feedback was coming from teachers working with learners with a physical disability. Membership levels and forum usage were growing strongly. Jane has shared the winning entry of the pdnet competition – you can find a copy [here](#).

BATOD /NATSIP – The Language Modification course is now live. This course will be useful for anyone with an interest in writing accessible examination questions including those colleagues working in the post-16 sector and those in support roles. It provides a balance of knowledge based learning and practical quiz type assessments which can be taken as many times as required.

BATOD in partnership with RNIB and Vision Impairment Education Workforce is soon to publish a revised guidance document regarding specialist support during COVID times for professional supporting children and young people who are deaf and/or have a vision impairment.

Level 7 apprenticeships. for Teachers of the SI hopefully due to start Autumn 2023

Nasen – 2022 will be nasen’s 30th anniversary year. It was intended to celebrate the input of past CEOs. The nasen live conference will be on 15th July 2022.

EQUALS - regional curriculum and assessment conferences had continued. FLSE northeast was back up and running and met in October. A Water Skills Compendium had been published. A conference on preparation for adulthood was planned for July 2022.

6. Policy and DfE update

Since AI had been unable to attend the meeting DB agreed to circulate the slides prepared by AI.

DB

13. Dates

Next Meeting to be held on 2nd February 2022 (Venue/format) to be arranged

Meeting Closed at 12.10am