**Partners in Commissioning**

**14th June 2022**

**12:00 – 2:00**

**Virtual**

**Partner Attendees:**

**Pinpoint:** Sarah Conboy (CEO); Linda Green (Participation Officer); Fay Dutton (Chair of Trustees); Bianca Cotterill (Finance Officer); Hasan Amjad (Trustee); Lisa Martin (Deputy CEO)

**CCC:** Jon Lewis (Director Schools); Lucy Loia (Senior Commissioning Manager SEND); Helen Andrews (Commissioning Manager, Children and Families); Teresa Grady (SEND Policy Lead); Sasha Long (Head of Service Disability Social Care); Jo Headley (Head of SEND Service 0-25); Robert Wilson (SENDIASS); Pippa Hayward (Business Support and Minute Taker) Bob Wilson (SENDIASS)

**Health:** Karlene Allan (Deputy Director of Maternity and Children’s Commissioning / Deputy Chief Nurse); Kathryn Goose (Commissioning) Sue Allan (Healthwatch)

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| 1 | Welcome and apologies |  |
| 2 | Previous minutes and outstanding actions |  |
| 2.1 | Minutes were accepted |  |
| 2.2 | *JL will share the place planning when appropriate and his paper when completed* – JL confirmed a paper is going to Committee at the County Council. To be covered later in this meeting |  |
| 2.3 | *LL will bring learning by commissioning of using Autism Toolkit back to this meeting* – To be covered in this meeting. |  |
| 2.4 | *JL will update this meeting on the LA’s response to the Green Paper when information is available* – to be covered in this meeting. |  |
| 2.5 | *LL said that HC will be arranging a meeting with Pinpoint (and Family Voice) to discuss capturing broader views beyond the PCFs* – LL to plan asap. |  |
| 2.6 | *JL and TB to bring back ideas of what CCC should be doing once the response to the Peterborough reinspection is received –* to be picked up. Ofsted have released a new framework so need a reset and refocus as it is very different.  **New Ofsted framework to be on the agenda of a future meeting**. |  |
| 2.7 | *TG to bring the Accessibility Strategy to the next meeting* – this is ready for publication. **TG to forward to SC** | TG |
| 3 | LA update from JL and JH |  |
| 3.1 | Place planning – demand is still high in CCC for special school places and EHCPs. JL will be emailing schools outlining progress made in developing local provision. The information will be in the public domain by end of the week ending 24th June, once the CCC Committee have had a determination.  **JL will share as soon as available.**  The biggest challenge has been making sure of the right coverage of need and placements.  SC pointed out that parents awaiting placements are extremely anxious. JL confirmed that parents will be contacted with the latest information.  JL confirmed that there have been conversations with the health service to be able to resource appropriately to ensure children have a full offer from the start of a placement.  Work is ongoing with the statutory assessment team to address the exceptional growth in demand that has been causing a backlog. There will be investment in psychology support, including additional technology, to look at assisting the timings of assessments and what can be carried out where. JL confirmed that the growth in numbers and complexity of need is a national issue, not just a regional or Cambridgeshire specific issue. It will still be challenging going forward but the teams are working hard to resolve things.  SC pointed out that she and the Community Paediatricians have raised capacity issues in the health service to meet requests for assessment this will be discussed at the Children and Maternity Collaborative this month. | JL |
| 3.1.1 | Green paper **– JL will share the initial response that is being put together. Once the regional response is received JL will also share that**  Primary heads are working on a response.  It was agreed that the Green Paper is not particularly accessible. JL expressed some concern about parents engaging with the Green Paper – he worried it was too inaccessible but that views needed to be heard by Government. There was agreement by those attending.  **JL to liaise with SC to write a letter of the Green Paper highlights to go out to parents before the end of Summer Term.**  SC confirmed that the easy read and video version have been shared with parents and Pinpoint received only one response to their quick survey. It was acknowledged that parents and carers are under pressure with their children’s needs, and other life pressures, including the cost-of-living crisis, and this can affect engagement. | JL  JL |
| 3.1.2 | Challenges in CCC finances – JL reported that there is a £39.2 million deficit in a budget of £100 million, with approximately 10% overspend each year. This is a national issue. There has been recognition from the DfE that the funding system does work as intended.  CCC have been successful in acceptance into the DfE Safety Valve Process, to transform activities in a planned, appropriate, and staged way and to reduce their deficit. The first meeting for this was in May and dialogue will continue until October. If the CCC fulfil their part and an agreement is reached, the DfE will write off the High Needs Block deficit over the next 3 – 4 years. The way forward is currently being negotiated and work will be ongoing for the next 3 months. The focus, required by the DfE, will be on the number of children accessing services.  Data shows that CCC EHCP growth is less than the national average, but the authority is not closing as many EHCPs as other authorities. There is an aim to avoid out of county placements and to ensure that all schools can meet children’s needs.  Information will be in the public domain in September, until then JL is unable to share further details.  LG pointed out that some parents are reporting children as young as 6 or 7 being excluded from school and asked what alternatives to exclusion are available as it felt like it was school or home. It was agreed that some schools are very forward thinking and inclusive, make reasonable adjustments and handle situations well, whilst others appear not to.  It was pointed out that school league tables are to be adjusted to include SEN - this will encourage schools to be more inclusive. JL outlined the work being done to set out what schools in Cambridgehsire will be expected to make ‘ordinarily available’ at SEN Support. The new OfSted Framework also sets out the need for all schools to be inclusive. JL expressed concern at the time it will take to implement the Green and White Papers. |  |
| 3.1.3 | SC has been asked to speak at the CCC SEMH conference and will be speaking about parent experiences. This conference will be for heads and SENCos and should support the messages around inclusivity and support. (It will also promote STEPs) |  |
| 3.2 | JH shared her presentation on the transformation programme (shared with these notes).  She confirmed that there are currently 212 children on the waiting list for a special school. The SEN Support Toolkit and Ordinarily Available Guidance for schools should support schools to more effectively support children in situ. THE Special School outreach programme is also supporting mainstreams schools to cater for children awaiting specialist places.  The SEMH conference is to be held on 5th July. There is an aim to offer at least one place per school for training in the STEPS model. There will be a new model of supporting.  JH confirmed that all exclusions are monitored.  The SEN Support toolkit will look at need and tie them to a graduated response. The banding and descriptors of need are being worked on currently for a clear guide for parents.  HA noted the variation between SENCOs and schools and asked if parent carers can see the guidance. JH confirmed it would be available and hosted on the Learn Together website. There will be a parent carer version – Pinpoint will help with communication to parent carers. This was welcomed. LG suggested that SENCOs should be telling parents about Pinpoint, so that they are aware of help available.  THE LA has been reviewing its tribunal cases (Pinpoint has been asking for this for some time and welcomes it) A report will be available shortly and will inform future thinking. The SAT team have been piloting bring some cases in house with some success. SC pointed out that there is a parent perception that the LA is withdrawing from tribunals at the last minute. JH confirmed that she has taken this on board. There is a new project underway (working with SEND4Change) looking at inconsistencies in funding models. It’s intended this led to greater consistency, a better graduated response and better decision making around provision.  SC asked if JH might look again at exclusions - legal and non-compliant – as there was a concern there were recent increases (soft intelligence). The request was noted. SC also asked that the behaviour offer be package to make a coherent offer for schools and families.  There is a new role for SEND System leadership which Rebecca Salmon will lead - this was welcomed.  There has been work to manage the panels workload by splitting into two – a Needs Assessment panel and a Post Assessment panel. There is also work looking at SEN Support plans – these will be piloted. SC and BW both noted that assessment is driving EHCNA requests – some of these assessments could be done without and formal request but aren’t. Both asked that this be looked at again – can we do more assessments earlier and at SEN Support? JH will remind schools about the available support and assessment material freely available from the specialist team. KA will look at health assessments request to consider what more could be done in parallel.  Transport for Special Schools work in ongoing.  EHCP Improvement Plan – ongoing with a new senior project lead to push this work forward.  Preparing For Adulthood (PfA) is now being led by Martine Simpson Thomas and work is taking place on stakeholder analysis and youth participation.  There is a new tuition lead who will be looking at opportunities for young people to reintegrate into their schools, where possible and appropriate.  New Case Management System for Statutory Assessment Team with templates and letter being reviewed. It will include a parent and a professionals portal.  Early Years will start advertising their new support offer shortly.  2 new workstreams – high-cost top up and budget reviews will help drive better practice.  Enablers include: The case management system, the quality assurance work on EHCPs, data quality work and trajectory management (understanding demand for services and places) and comms.  A parent newsletter with information on the local offer will go out by the end of July.  Much thought is going into how to share the huge amounts of information and to receive feedback.  BW commented that there is much here that is welcome and positive. SC commented that there is a high need for the LA to tell parent carers what the LA is working on – may be using the ‘you said, we did’ format.  **TG will contact JH regarding information sharing to parents** |  |
| 3.3 | SC thanked JL and JH and felt that their updates showed the sheer complexity and volume of ongoing work. The group agreed that this shows how CCC are approaching a national problem.  RW said it is the most comprehensive approach that he is aware of.  **SC will let parents know that their concerns have been heard and work is underway by sharing the LA’s ‘You said, we did’ and any other LA comms once available** | SC |
| 4 | Update from SL and LL |  |
| 4.1 | Short breaks - SL reported on the overnight review project, introduced pre-covid. The team have listened to what families want.  Technology enabled care is available to prevent need.  An option for direct payments to be used for overnight care within the child’s own home or that of a trusted carer, giving parents control of the process.  Residential provision and LINK foster care were reviewed.  A consultation took place.  The first stage is to bring children’s homes in house rather being commissioned externally.  The introduction of the direct payments overnight care programme has been popular. Covid impacted on uptake and families are struggling to identify carers currently.  There are currently 24 families using direct payments for overnight care at home or in a carers home. Social workers are promoting this offer.  Work is ongoing with 3 residential children’s homes. Woodland Lodge offers short breaks with an option for longer term care. Havilland offers short-term care. London Road offers long-term care and currently has 2 children in place.  The aim is to offer a range of services to keep children within the county and close to home.  **SL and LL to liaise on how to get feedback from parents using direct payments who do not engage with the local authority**. | SL/LL |
| 4.2 | Commissioning update – LL shared slides covering CWD development programme, DfE respite innovation grant, the autism toolkit, and therapies overview. (Presentation attached) |  |
| 4.2.1 | Children With Disabilities (CWD) development programme – A development programme of work has been established with an operational group sitting under the CWD Board. There are representatives from parent carer for a on the board. The new CWD Operational Group will include Forums.  The focus is on seeing what the current population looks like, what the future population will look like and the need to provide services where required.  There is acknowledgement of the need to ensure services continue and adjust as required.  LL pointed out that the sufficiency statement has been published on the children’s commissioning website.  **LL to bring the CWD dashboard to the next meeting. LL and SC to go through the dashboard and bring highlights to this meeting.**  This offers a robust overview of services and trends and utilisation of services. Offering a good quality view on what happened in the past and how that can inform what should happen in the future.  A feasibility study has shown that all services are near or at capacity or oversubscribed. | LL/SC |
| 4.2.2 | DfE respite innovation grant scheme – CCC have been successful in a bid for funding to create new respite provision pilots.  A request for £1 million to set up an intensive therapeutic support hub for 11 – 15-year-old children who are at risk of education breakdown or demand on family resilience, requiring care or hospitalization. Will be in partnership with PCC and collaboration with the CCG. If successful there will be £1 million over each of the next 3 years.  The corporate leadership team has been supportive and recognize the need to provide some capital in the form of a building and its upkeep. Any fiscal benefits will directly benefit the local authority and be re-invested. NHS England will also provide £120,000 on top to support the health element  **LL will share the bid submission.**  SC reinforced the need to work with the Eastern Regional Parent Carer Forum (of which Pinpoint are members) as they are engaged in the NHSE Building Future Resilience project which has links to this work. SC is the point of contact for Cambridgeshire. | LL |
| 4.2.3 | Autism toolkit – an overview of this has been given at a previous meeting. It is a self-assessment tool for organisations to hold themselves to account and develop and action plan. LL confirmed that the commissioning team have used the tool to self-assess and arrived at action points. It has been implemented into all services commissioned by our local authority procurement.  Local police have also undertaken it.  LL will continue to update this group on its impact.  LL reported that Janet Dullaghan has now retired from the LA and an autism commissioner is to be recruited to deliver the strategy. |  |
| 4.2.4 | Therapies overview – outcomes of additional investment (double the recurrent funding) in OT services are detailed on the slides.  Speech and language service specifications and key performance indicators are currently being finalised.  Equipment services have been recommissioned to NRS. |  |
| 4.2.5 | SC thanked SL and LL. It was acknowledged that it is a challenge for the Forum to keep on top of everything that is happening. |  |
| 5 | Health Update |  |
| 5.1 | KG reported that Nicola and Amy from mental health commissioning are developing a slide deck for presentation at the Pinpoint June conference.  There is a 3-5 year developing mental health strategy for 0-25. There has been engagement with families and priorities have been set.  Due to the CCG move to an Integrated Care System (ICS) the strategy will not be published until the beginning of July. It focuses on those with an identified mental health need rather than prevention.  All priorities will have a task and finish group, who will be working on priorities between July and September.  It should be available in accessible and easy read versions and will be on the ICS website.  LG pointed out that the development of the strategy was an excellent example of co-production. She thanked KG and her team. |  |
| 5.2 | **KA to share a slide deck on the ICS for a future meeting**.  **SC suggested a standalone meeting in September to look at the ICS.** | KA  SC |
| 6 | Pinpoint update – Pinpoint has already circulated papers for these items. |  |
| 6.1 | There was little time remaining of the meeting for this section. |  |
| 6.2 | **SC will pick up on YOUnited with KG offline.**  Pinpoint are having an away day to look at where they are now and where they want to go in the next 5 years, this will be the first face to face meeting since the beginning of the pandemic.  SC confessed to be stunned by the volume of work that has been going on and thanked all on behalf of families. | SC/KG |
| 6.3 | **Health to be the first item on the agenda, followed by Pinpoint updates, at the next meeting of this group** | SC |