



## Early Help Task and Finish Group

Date: 6 October 2016

Time: 11.00 am

Venue: STDC, Monkmoor, Shrewsbury

### MINUTES

#### Present

Phil Wilson, Business Support, Learning & Skills (Chair)

Julia Dean, SEN, Learning & Skills

John Eglin, Headteacher Morda CE Primary School

Gwyneth Evans, Business Support, Learning & Skills

Sabrina Hobbs, Headteacher, Severndale Academy

Kerry Lynch, Headteacher, Wilfred Owen Primary School

Kay Redknap, Headteacher, TMBSS

Colleen Male, Children's Social Care

Marion Versluijs, Commissioning Support

Stephen Waters, Finance, Shropshire Council

Sarah Wilkins, Children's Social Care

Kay Smallbone, Troubled Families Strategic co-ordinator

Helen Woodbridge, Business Support, Learning & Skills (notes)

#### 1. Welcome

PW welcomed everyone to the meeting.

#### 2. Apologies

Apologies had been received from Neville Ward

#### 3. Notes from the meeting on 5 July 2016

The notes from the previous meeting were agreed.

#### 4. Proposed use of DSG funding to support Early Help (being considered by the High Needs Task and finish Group)

Phil Wilson advised that Schools Forum had approved the funding for Young Carers/Enhance.

John Hitchings reported that Schools Forum would be keen to have clarity and assurance of best value.

Phil Wilson confirmed that fixed contracts will be monitored and reported back on.

Sarah Wilkins identified the need for effective partnerships between health, education and social care as joint commissioners with more linkage to CPG.

Julia Dean echoed this in line with the Children and Families Act 2014.

Sarah Wilkins advised that she, Kay Smallbone and Marion Versluijs had met over the summer to talk about the Troubled Families programme which is an example of joint commissioning through a partnership for early help.

#### 5. Troubled Families Pilot

Kay Smallbone talked through the schools pilot which is in Phase 2 of the Troubled

#### ACTION

Families Programme – a family focus with joint commissioning around worklessness, attendance, domestic abuse etc. Commissioning within cluster areas is being investigated.

Conversations were held with schools re pilot participation with a joint funded professional worker (usually a Children's Centre worker) who would take the lead for one year. There are three areas of schools and one with a housing association. The worker works with around 15 families over the year. There are different models – eg one cluster has a weekly clinic and another has a breakfast club.

There is a management group which meets termly and a report will be produced at the end of the pilot. Operating group meets regularly.

So far there are positive outcomes for the families which are being tracked.

The Whitchurch cluster is already considering continuing the work further using charity funding.

Sarah Wilkins advised that supervision is provided for the workers through social care.

Cases are managed through the ECINs case management system.

Outcomes should draw down additional funding (payment by results).

Phil Wilson asked if there was to be any scaling up.

Sarah Wilkins advised that some interest is being shown and that the service has improved at identifying need.

John Hitchings spoke of the scale of the issue over the country and the need for effective early help as a preventative measure in early years.

Sarah Wilkins advised that a needs assessment had been carried out and shared.

Kay Smallbone added that this had included children from age 2 upwards. Other programmes work with health visitors. This will give us the opportunity to work over the next five years on what works well, to upskill and develop new ways of working.

John Eglin was disappointed that his school had not been able to afford the £5k to join. He suggested entry levels for different sizes of schools and this was taken on board.

Colleen Male spoke of the fit with the wider early help model and asked what schools want. Locality service delivery could be considered based at children's centres with differing provision from area to area depending on need.

Sabrina Hobbs suggested that 'joined-upness' and accountability is what was missing.

Colleen Male identified the need for an overall plan to be agreed together.

Sarah Wilkins indicated that Troubled Families may impact of the funding that Schools Forum consider.

Phil Wilson advised that Troubled Families is an illustration of how we can achieve more by pooling funding LA/Grants/Schools.

John Eglin was worried about equity if some schools join and other don't.

Sarah Wilkins pointed out that some strands are across all schools eg Solihull Approach.

Sabrina Hobbs echoed worries re accessibility for all schools if DSG is supporting services that some schools can't access for different reasons.

Phil Wilson suggested that MATs will change the situation.

Colleen Male pointed out the need to find ways to fund services when the grant ends.

John Hitchings identified the need to consider private nursery provision.

Sarah Wilkins confirmed that Children Centre provision engages with them.

Julia Dean suggested that the EHCP agenda means closer working. Review of EHCPs is key and the right people need to be invited.

Sabrina Hobbs felt that the whole picture needs to be shared – should involvement finish when a child starts school? Public Health are now looking at 0-25 re health visiting/school nurses. Health professionals are not joining up. It would be good to have a systematic way of sharing working log – social care/education/health.

Colleen Male advised that the High Needs group had approved the spending of £600k on early help and asked how long this would be for.

Phil Wilson would hope to fund for 2017/18 but funding is unclear after that. There may be a need to discuss separate contracts with separate time budgets agreed.

John Hitchings added that the £600k is a bale out and only there until March 2018.

John Eglin suggested thinking about a traded service model.

**6. Future direction and focus for the Early Years Task and Finish Group**

Phil Wilson suggested that there had been an initial cross-over between the two task and finish groups but that now their work is growing apart. There is more of a need for a working group rather than a subset of Schools Forum. The aim would be to get more effective use of funding.

**7. Dates of next Task & Finish Group meetings**

It was agreed that a further joint meeting could be arranged in November and then the group could be amended to consider the future.

**8. Any Other Business**

There was no other business

The meeting closed at 12.35

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