

**Doran: National Commissioning Group for Education Provision for Children
and Young People with Complex Additional Support Needs
Note of meeting held on 15 February 2017
at Saughton House, Edinburgh**

Present

- David Barr, Aberlour representing Coalition of Care & Support Providers in Scotland (CCPS) & Educating Through Care Scotland (ETCS)
- Donna Bell, Deputy Director for the Learning Directorate, Scottish Government
- Lauren Bruce, Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA)
- John Butcher, North Ayrshire Council representing Association of Directors of Education Scotland (ADES)
- Laura Caven, Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA)
- Owen Derrick, National Parent Forum Scotland (NPFS)
- Megan Farr, Children & Young People's Commissioner Scotland
- Susan Hannah, Improvement Advisor, Scottish Government
- Alison Herbert, Scottish Council of Independent Schools (SCIS)
- Andy Jeffries, Head of Service representing Social Work Scotland (SWS)
- Steven McPherson, Education Scotland
- Laura Meikle, Support and Wellbeing Unit, Scottish Government
- Paul Nisbet, CALL Scotland representing the grant funded national centres, Scottish Sensory Centre (SSC) & Enquire
- Margaret Orr, Chair
- Fiona Page, Support and Wellbeing Unit, Scottish Government
- Pat Salter, The Craighalbert Centre representing Grant Aided Special Schools
- Barry Syme, representing The Association of Scottish Principal Educational Psychologists (ASPEP)
- Deborah Walker, Support and Wellbeing Unit, Scottish Government (Secretariat)

Apologies

- Alex Little, NHS Dumfries & Galloway representing NHS Chief Executives
- Deborah Lynch, Support and Wellbeing Unit, Scottish Government

1. Welcome and apologies

1.1 Margaret Orr (**MO**) welcomed members to the seventh meeting of the National Commissioning Group and noted apologies. MO advised of the following changes to the membership of the group, SCIS will now be represented by Alison Herbert, replacing Ruth Mendel and ASPEP will for the time being, be represented by Barry Syme, replacing Carolyn Brown. The members recorded their thanks to Ruth and Carolyn and welcomed the new members. The group also welcomed Pat Salter attending on behalf of Richard Hellewell, representing GASS, John Butcher attending on behalf of Caroline Amos, representing ADES and Lauren Bruce from COSLA.

1.2 MO also welcomed Susan Hannah (**SH**) to the meeting. SH is an Improvement Adviser with the Scottish Government and would be facilitating the Improvement Session today.

2. Minute of the previous meeting

2.1 MO confirmed that the minutes of the previous meeting held 16 November 2016, have been circulated and the minute was now cleared by the group. The minutes will now be added to the Doran website.

2.2 Deborah Walker (**DW**) provided the following update on the action points:

- AP1 – cleared
- AP2 – carried forward to next meeting
- AP3 – cleared
- AP4 – Mental Health strategy not published yet. Carried forward to next meeting

3. Chairs update

3.1 MO provided the group with an update on her activities since the last meeting in November.

3.2 MO advised that she had met with Andy Jeffries (AJ) at Edinburgh Council to brief him on the work of the group.

3.3 Visited Aberdeen University where she met with the Head of School and the senior management team. MO confirmed that they were interested in being involved in further developing pre and post graduate courses, including the Leadership agenda. Action research was also an area of interest to them. During the visit there was a video conference with Head and Depute head teachers from Aberdeenshire, Orkney and Shetland who are currently on the SCEL Introduction to Headship Programme, working with Aberdeen University. They were particularly interested in the possibility of the Third Sector specialist providers being a source of CPD.

3.4 Coming up MO has a pending meeting with Harmony School Board and the Scottish Funding Council (regarding their access strategy).

4. Improvement Session (Facilitated Session)

4.1 MO handed over to Fiona Page (**FP**) to introduce the improvement session. FP provided a recap to the group on the work undertaken at the previous meeting on 16 November. FP explained that at that meeting she had introduced the concept of the Driver Diagram (DD) and referred members to the DD in their meeting packs. The DD had been introduced to support the group to broaden thinking around what were the services we want to commission and what would be the expected outcomes. The work and views from this meeting had been collated by FP and will be consolidated into those from this session.

4.2 FP explained that four key drivers had been identified to deliver the overall strategic aim of the group of ***‘Scotland will be a world leader on providing the***

highest quality education and care for children and young people with complex additional support needs by 2026', the four drivers were:

- Children and young people receive the education, care and support that they need
- Information and evidence informs our understanding of needs and supports policy development
- Confident and resilient people with the right skills to help children and young people thrive and succeed
- National services that are accessible across Scotland to provide information and support.

4.3 FP invited SH to start the session. **Session 1:** SH explained that each of the four drivers/concepts had been written up onto flipchart. Members were divided into 4 groups and given 10 minutes for each driver/concept to identify what are the actions which will deliver the main drivers. Members were asked to write up their ideas onto Post-its. After 10 minutes the groups would move round onto the next driver/concept.

4.4 **Annex A** provides the full list of actions identified by the four groups.

4.5 **Session 2:** SH instructed the four groups to look at the actions identified for each of the four drivers and then priorities the top five actions that will deliver.

4.6 Session 3: SH brought all four groups back together and a discussion followed on the top five actions identified.

- **Children and young people received the education, care and support that they need**
 - Make parents and children clearer about entitlements & expectations
 - Joined up working – health, social work and education 0-24 years
 - Place children's rights at the centre of decision making
 - Staff are trained and supported at all levels, all disciplines and all services
- **Information and evidence informs our understanding of needs and supports policy development**
 - Parents and children's views
 - Data and analysis
 - Common understanding of what constitutes complex additional support needs
 - Collaborative culture needed across services
- **Confident and resilient people with the right skills to help children and young people thrive and succeed.**
 - Empathy for children and young people is critical. How do we make this a key part of these roles? Must be child centred.
 - Needs to be a proper National Strategy that is consistent across local authorities – not different policies and processes in local authorities
 - How do we recruit and retain and develop staff

- Better initial teacher training in additional support needs should be mandatory
- **National services that are accessible across Scotland to provide information and support**
 - Link to the governance review – will be dependent on whether the model is national, regional and local
 - Collaboration across local authority boundaries to plan and resource services that may only be needed intermittently
 - National structure with geographical hubs to deliver services – local authorities could contribute to this
 - Exemplify best practice and move forward children’s services integration i.e. social work, education, health, 3rd sector

4.7 SH then facilitated a discussion session around some of the key themes to emerge from the exercise. This included:

- Missing data which was a common theme across all of the four drivers. The question put to members was “What data is missing?”. Stephen McPherson’s (**SM**) view was that we were already rich in data around ASN and was not clear on what was meant by analysis. Pat Salter (**PS**) made the point that it was no good having local data for national services and that there needed to be national level data. Laura Meikle (**LM**) referred the group back to the fact that there had already been 2 years of work to produce a National Needs Analysis, as well as, 5 years’ worth of data in the ASL Report to Parliament. A number of members made the point that while there was some rich data sources there was inconsistency across local authorities in interpretation and understanding of correctly recording the data. A number of members felt that better training of local authority staff, down to school level was needed to improve consistent data recording. LM highlighted that the AGASL group is undertaking work to improve data collection/quality.
- Training and learning – Lauren Bruce (**LB**) asked how do we link training and learning back to what we know about children’s needs. David Barr (**DB**) suggested that there needs to be better coherence through local, regional and national practice – for example GIRFEC is the national practice model but has been implemented differently across our 32 local authorities . DB felt that in Scotland there is a need to reflect on the relationship between local and national government suggesting there is not always evidence of a coherent (and consistent) flow from national policy to local practice – citing integration as another excellent policy area with a wide variety of local approaches to implementation . LB felt that there was potential for tension around local need and services, which will vary throughout the country. SH gave an example of some improvement work around literacy interventions. She explained that while each school tackle literacy interventions differently within that were key elements that there were non-negotiable at any level.

4.8 SH explained that the next steps would be to collate and scribe up top themes into the DD and circulate for further comment. MO thanked SH for running the Improvement Session and explained that we also need to transfer these thoughts into concrete ideas and action.

5. Any other business

5.1 MO announced that the Commissioning Groups 10 year national strategy has been approved by the Deputy First Minister. The hope was to now move to public consultation, bearing in mind that the local elections may impact on when best to begin the consultation.

6. Date of next meeting

6.1 MO confirmed that the date of the next meeting will be in May or June and a Doodle Poll will be sent round to identify the best date/time. In the meantime some of the work can be done through correspondence.

6.2 MO brought the meeting to a close.