

South East Region: Political leadership of...effective Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) systems

4th March 2022

Agenda

09.30 **Welcome and Overview**

Alison Michalska, Children's Improvement Adviser- South East

9.40 **SEND delivery landscape- A National Perspective**

Caroline O'Neill, Children's Improvement Adviser- North East followed by an opportunity for discussion

10.10 **Introductions- yourself and the SEND Journey in your Council-** Breakout session

10.30 **The SEND journey at Reading Borough Council**

Councillor Liz Terry, Lead Member for Children's Services and *Deborah Glassbrook*, Director of Children's Social Care, Education and Early Help Service followed by a chance for Questions

11.00 **Break**

Agenda

11.10 **A spotlight on effective and meaningful co-production**

Videos have been specially produced by *Dame Christine Lenehan*, Director, Council for Disabled Children and also *Vici Richardson*, Co-Chair, Northumberland Parent Carer Forum to support discussion

11.50 **Working with partners; the transition of young people to adulthood**

Danny Meek, SEN Statutory Assessment and Commissioning Manager, Gateshead Council followed by a chance for Questions and discussion

12.10 **Reflections and Learning to take back to your Local Authorities- Breakout session**

12.25 **Summary and looking forward**

Alison Michalska, Children's Improvement Adviser- South East

12.30 **Close of Session**

Welcome

Chair for Today's workshop

Alison Michalska

Children's Improvement Adviser – South East

Objectives

- To explore leadership challenges in relation to the SEND agenda and share ideas and progress in meeting them
 - To equip you with knowledge you can use to influence and lead improvement of your local SEND system and provide effective challenge and support
 - A chance to network and share learning
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The SEND Review

4th March 2022

Caroline O'Neill

**Strategic Director Children, Adults and Families,
Gateshead Council**

LGA CIA North East Region

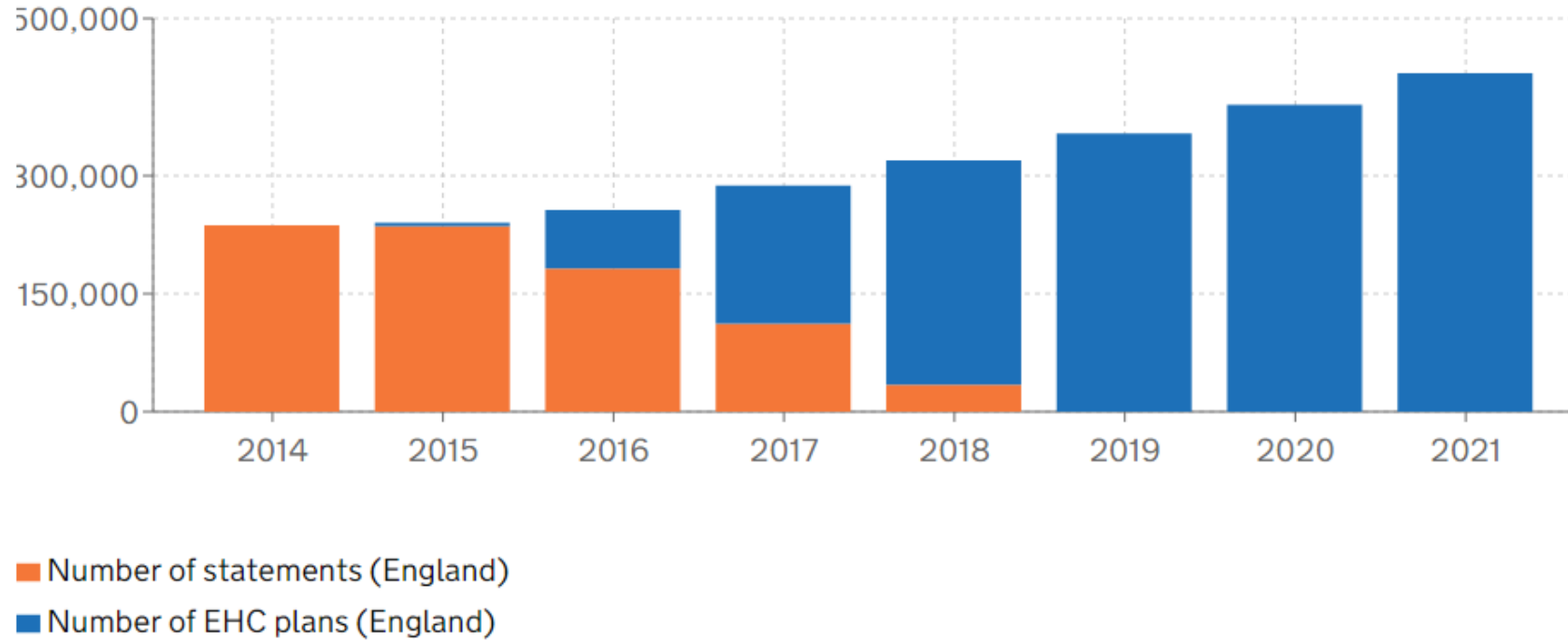
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Current situation

- Children and Families Act 2014
- ‘The right reforms at the wrong time’?
- Year-on-year increases in demand for EHCPs, not accompanied by increases in funding
- Health partners contributing effectively?
- Decreasing levels of inclusion in mainstream/increased use of special and independent settings = ££££
- SEND home-to-school transport
- Use of tribunals

EHCP Demand 2014-2021

Number of EHC plans and statements of SEN, 2014 to 2021



Funding

- SEND funding a major challenge for councils
 - HNB deficits - £970m total
 - The DfE have listened - £2.5bn over 20-21 to 22-23
 - £2.4bn funding for special school places (no detail)
 - ‘Safety valve’ project – support to councils with biggest DSG deficits as highest % of DSG
 - ‘Statutory override’ – DSG deficits do not sit on council balance sheets – due to attend March 23
-

The SEND review

SEND review announced September 2019 and aims to:

- End the 'postcode lottery' facing CYP with SEND
 - Increase mainstream inclusion
 - Align incentives and accountabilities
 - Clarify why demand for EHCPs continues to increase
 - Best use of resource and high-quality outcomes
-

Direction of travel?

- Review delayed by Covid and then reset in September 2021
 - Green paper published end of Q1 this year
 - Likely themes?
-

LGA lobbying priorities

- Clear local accountabilities – councils as system leaders
 - Joint decision-making on use of resources – council/schools/health
 - A reduction in the use of tribunals (and consider vfm where they are used)
 - Major reforms will take time – need interim arrangements
 - Short and long-term sufficiency of funding
 - Will a national approach raise expectations again?
 - Links with Care Review and Education White Paper
-

Impactful SEND Services

Councillor Liz Terry - Lead
Member for Children &
Deborah Glassbrook - Executive
Director of Children's Services

March 2022



Welcome, introduction & content



- Reading context
- What does good look like and feel like
- Challenges
- Inspection



Reading Context

- Reading has approximately **37,000** children aged **0-18** years and a total population of **160,300**
- **30,400 (18.9%)** children under 14 years
- **24,200 (15.1%)** children between 14-25 years
- Percentage of children (under 16) living in low-income families was **14.6%** in Reading, and **19.1%** nationally in 2020*
- In 2021 **20.8%** of primary aged children were entitled to free school meals, lower than the national **21.6%** figure. Secondary age entitlement **15%** is also lower than the national at **18.9%**.

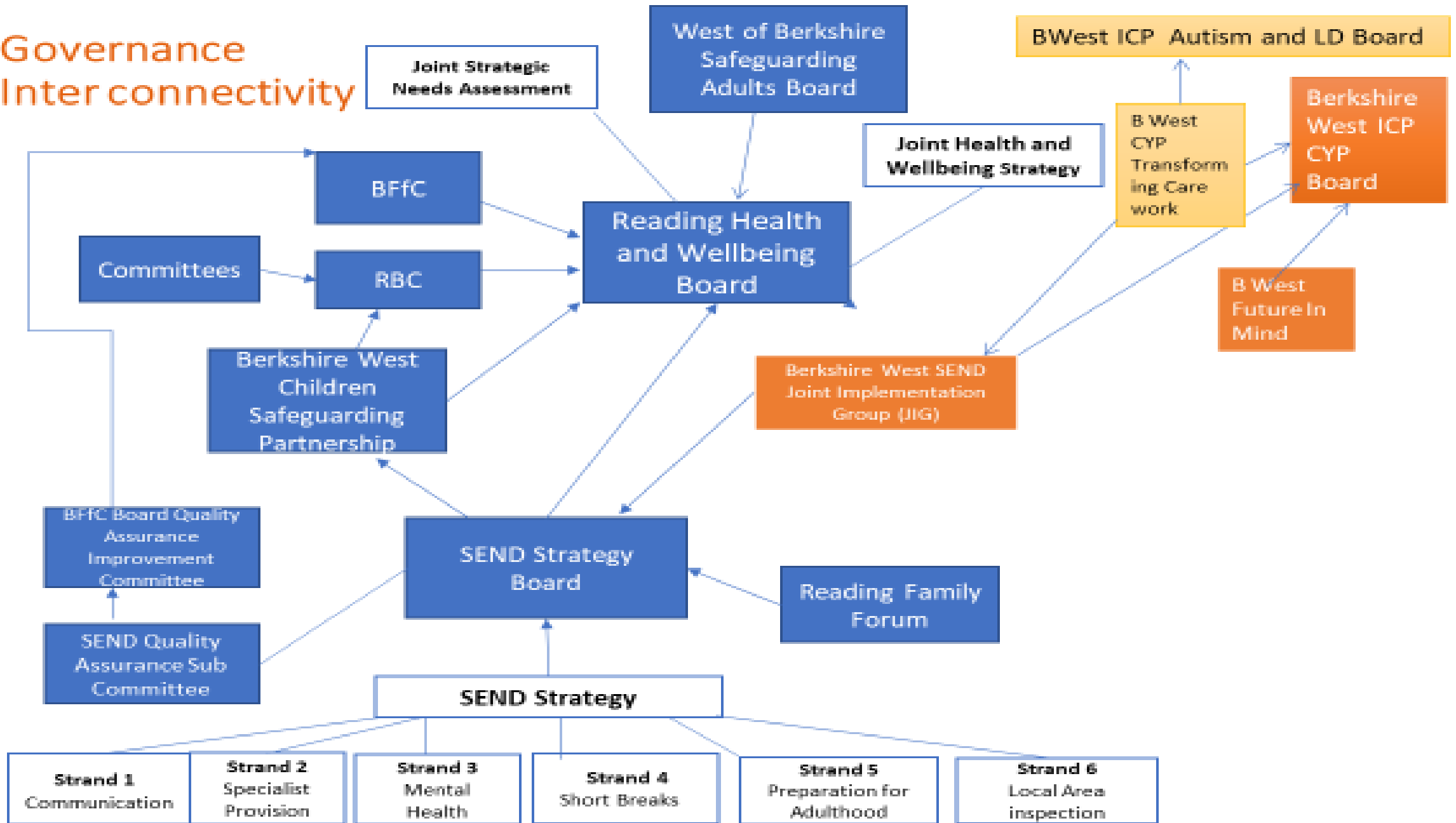


Reading Context

- A rich, diverse community with **59%** of children from a Black or Minority Ethnic background
- **Over a third** of children in primary schools speak English as an additional language **37.4%** in primary while at secondary level is **32.5%**
- More than **150** languages spoken at home
- **1,572** children with EHCPs and **2,970** SEN support. Over representation of children who are White British and under representation of children who are Asian.



Governance Inter connectivity



What does good look like and feel like

- Knowing your local area – strengths and weaknesses
- Data and performance within and across local area
- Needs led not resource led
- Strong & transparent partnerships with children and families / feedback and identification of achievements and difficulties
- Regular senior leaders' strategic meetings across the system – knowing yourselves



What does good look like and feel like

- Effective operational multi-agency working
- Agreed and co-owned local area strategy with priorities, actions, leads and timescales
- Close working with and support to schools
- Therapeutic Thinking – Trauma Informed
- Local Offer and Family Information Service
- Transitions to Adulthood



Challenges

- Increased demand
- Meeting parental expectations
- Finding out what you don't know
- Staffing
- Waiting lists
- Sufficiency of local specialist school placements / EHE
- Funding
- Driving priorities
- Covid-19



Lead Member Perspective

- Leadership & People
- Culture and co-production
- Getting the basics right
- Realistic about resources - It's not always about money!



Managing the inspection

- Self-evaluation of the Local Area – knowing yourselves
- Preparation – planning ahead
- Collaborative presentation
- Inspection team
- Showcasing across the system



Top tips

- Know the legislation, regulations and Code of Practice
- Listen to children, young people and their families
- Strong partnerships, leadership and governance – be willing to have those tricky conversations
- Understand your context – areas that are working well and those that need more focus
- Comprehensive and collaborative SEND Strategy and robust, well-led and time-framed action plan
- Effective communication channels
- Make best practice common practice
- Use data and evidence to track improvement
- Capture achievements and consolidate these.





SEND and Leadership , moving from fear to confidence
Dame Christine Lenehan
March 2022

1. Identifies some of the key challenges for SEND lead officers
2. Looks at models for change and improvement
3. Helps you think through the questions to ask
4. Provides a detailed practice example



1. High needs funding and a need to reconcile budgets
2. Working with angry , able , parents
3. Working with members on understanding and reconciling the challenges
4. Working with health and agreeing collaboration
5. Bringing together culture and behaviour across SEN and Social Care
6. Not knowing what good looks like
7. Trying to work out where to start
8. Ofsted / CQC inspections/revisits
9. Mixed relationships with schools
10. Costs of independent/non maintained placements



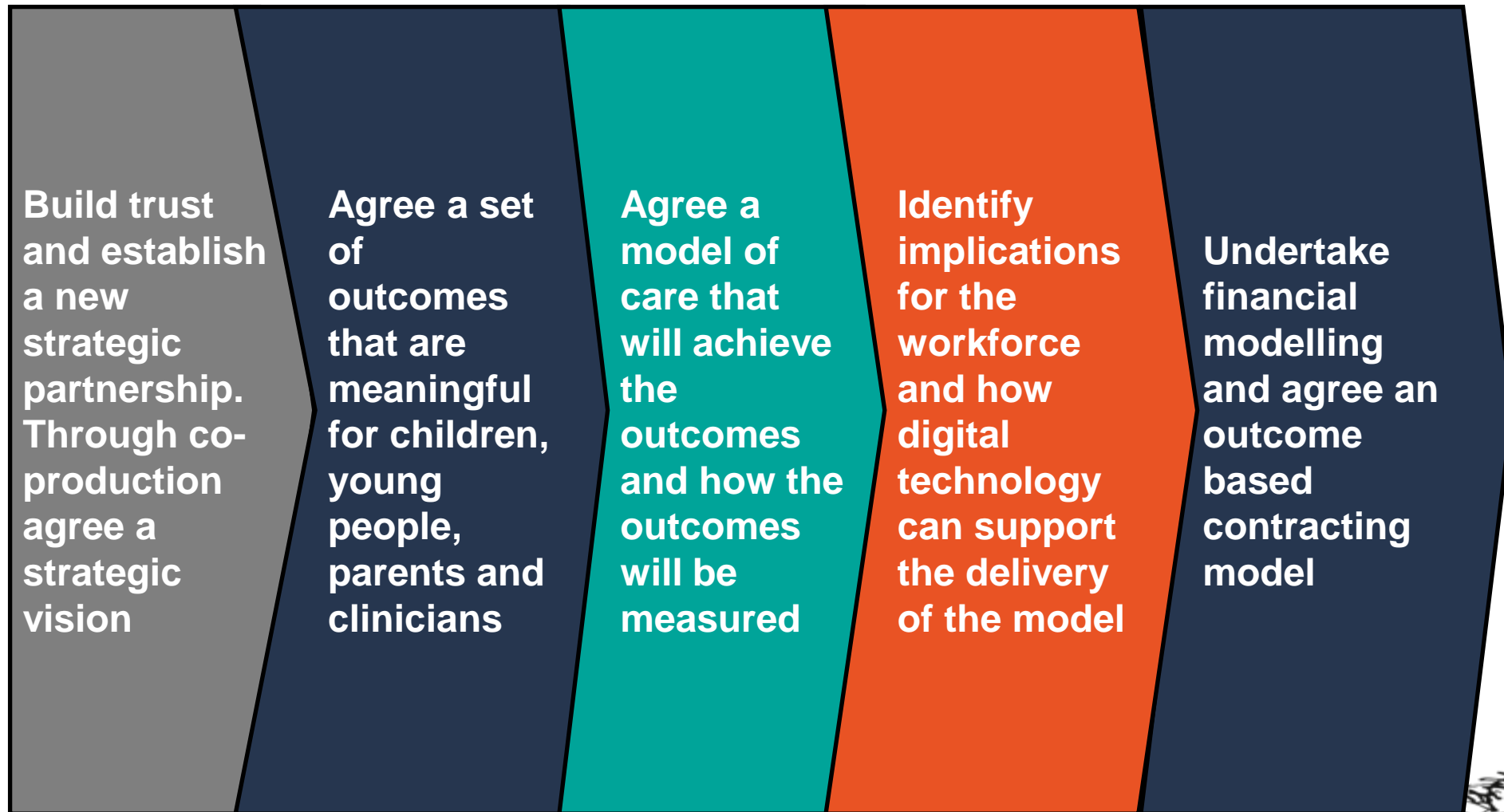
Common analysis of challenge at system level

1. Opportunities for effective early intervention are missed across the system
2. System spend and focus is on specialist support -with no evidence of impact or value
3. Current behaviours/ practice in the system direct demand towards specialist support
4. Parents and professionals do not have confidence in the local offer to meet needs
5. Demand for EHCPs, special school and AP is increasing with LA budgets typically overspent
6. Support is not tailored to needs and resources are inequitably allocated between & within LAs
7. Professionals and agencies are not joined up around the needs of cohorts
8. There is no clarity on outcomes achieved for children with SEND

6



One way of getting there Outcome based approach to commissioning



Hertfordshire Outcome Bees



Five outcome statements from Leeds

1

Be safe from harm

2

Do well at all levels of learning & have skills for life

3

Choose healthy lifestyles

4

Have fun growing up

5

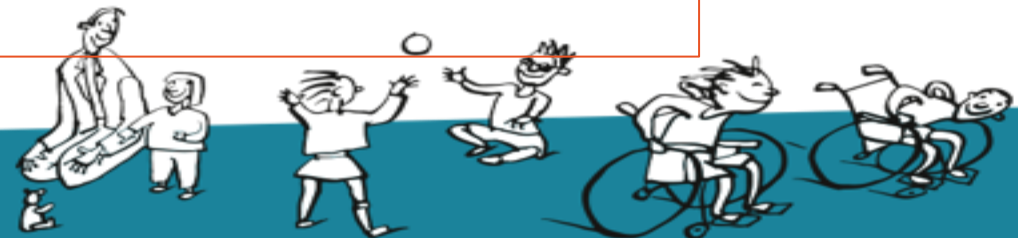
Be active citizens who feel they have voice & influence



Going back to principles

Core principles to delivering child and family centred approach to integrated working

- Shared values and outcome focused.
- No decision about me, without me.
- Tell my story once.
- Parent carers / young people and professionals both have active roles to play in the assessment of need, identification and implementation of the shared goals.
- Shared goals that a team around a child / family can work on.
- Shared understanding of key working functions.
- Clear and accessible information that is available to parent carers and young people early in the process.



Testing the principles against the system

Core principles to delivering child and family centred approach to integrated working

- Parents, children and young people know where to go to get the support they need.
- Being realistic about what is available and timescales to accessing it.
- Open and transparent process.
- Once in the system not being pushed back to the referrer/ no wrong way in to receiving the help and support that the child and family needs.
- Joint workforce training and development, with parent carers empowered to deliver key aspects of the training programme jointly with professionals.
- The training offered to professionals linked to a particular child / young person should also be delivered to the parent carers.
- Effective IT solutions and shared records.



- Do we have an agreed local vision for our children's services including those with SEND ?
- Do we know how we are performing in SEND ? , by understanding our data and need for example ?
- How are our parents voices heard and responded to ? What mechanisms do we have in place?
- How do we hear the voice of children and Young people , can we show how they influence our decisions ?
- What are our mechanisms for joint commissioning and multi agency working and do we know if they are delivering what families need ?



- Where is our thinking on the development of ICS's and how they will impact on children?
- How are we working with schools , both maintained and academies to ensure best practice for children with SEND ?
- How are we bringing together our work on SEND and Social Care , recognising the significant cross over between these groups
- How do we monitor concerns /complaints /tribunals / but how also do we celebrate success ?
- How high is SEND On our corporate agenda ?

Lastlybe involved !!



From the start, Lead Members requested that reports on the WSOA (and now the Ambitious For SEND agenda) be taken to People Committee each quarter to ensure Administration and Opposition oversight in public, even if there weren't specific decisions to be made. This means that there is questioning and challenge to officers on the progress being made, and recommendations for further actions where appropriate. It also allowed us to 'showcase' the progress - and emphasise the responsibilities of the Local Area, not just the LA - as well as ensure that there was a common understanding of what was happening and the difference it was making.

Prior to each People Committee, Lead Members of both the Administration and the Opposition are briefed on the content of the report by officers (i.e. by me and the Strategic Director of People) : this means that some of the more subtle nuances or details can be discussed. In turn, these often lead to the more searching questions at Committee - which again also helps provide an arena to share a wider range of information than might be contained in the report.

Lead Members will also sometimes follow People Committee with press releases highlighting progress and improvement



Made a point of visiting schools (COVID allowing), particularly where schools either are proud of their SEND progress or where there might be issues - through meeting with staff and being 'visible', far more positive relationships have been fostered; schools are very pleased to have met with members

Participated in events we put on for the local area, such as our Preparation for Adulthood seminars, and actively support SEND-related conferences and workshops, thus endorsing the work we are doing.

Attended meetings with our Parent Carer Forum, listening to parent / carer concerns and ensuring these are followed up by officers where needed - this helps build parents' confidence in 'the system' as well as providing opportunities for local area learning if there are wider issues

Requested and / or supported cross party briefings on key issues, such as our High Needs Block review work, to ensure a range of members had the opportunity to learn more about important initiatives.



Helped Cognus (our LATC for education services) set up a parents' voice group, putting forward parents who have been in touch with them for a range of reasons, and have met regularly with the Managing Director and the Head of the SEND Service to discuss issues, receive updates etc - all of which helps develop a coherent and joined up system

Met with key stakeholders including parents to listen to their concerns regarding SEND

Commissioned an independent review of Cognus' services relating to SEND and the progress of actions within the WSOA so that there could be public record of their lawful compliance and progress to reassure parents and the local area of these.

All of this has meant our lead members and their member colleagues have been fully engaged with our improvement journey, and have therefore been able to challenge, support and champion where needed - for which I am very grateful!



Delivering good experiences of Transitions and preparing young people for adulthood

Danny Meek

Statutory Assessment and Commissioning Manager

SEND Service, Education, School and Inclusion

Gateshead Council

Acronyms Galore!

CHC

- **Continuing Healthcare** - package of care for *adults aged over 18*, funded solely by the NHS, assessed by CCG to have 'primary health need'

CC

- **Continuing Care** - package for *child under 18* with needs arising from disability, accident or illness that can't be met by existing universal or specialist services alone

Section 177

- **Section 177** - free aftercare from NHS and social care for anyone who has been in hospital under *Mental Health Act 1983*

PHB's or PB's

- **Personal Health Budgets or Personal Budgets** - Process/option for those with ongoing medical or nursing needs and they wish to manage their own budgets to meet these needs.

DSG/HNB

- **Designated Schools Grant - High Needs Block** for educational placement costing and meeting specific educational needs of individuals

Key Partners

- CCG
- Schools/Education providers
- General Practitioners
- Police
- CVS
- Hospital Trust
- Mental Health Trust

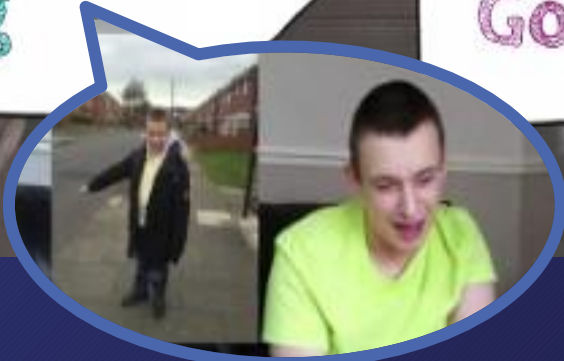
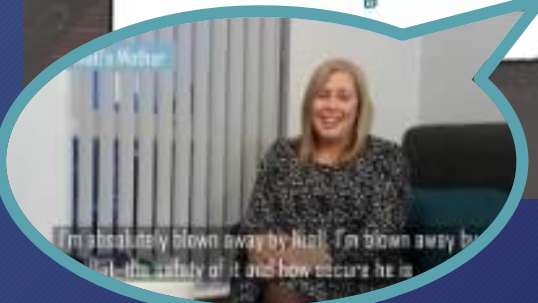
Preparation for Adulthood

Employment

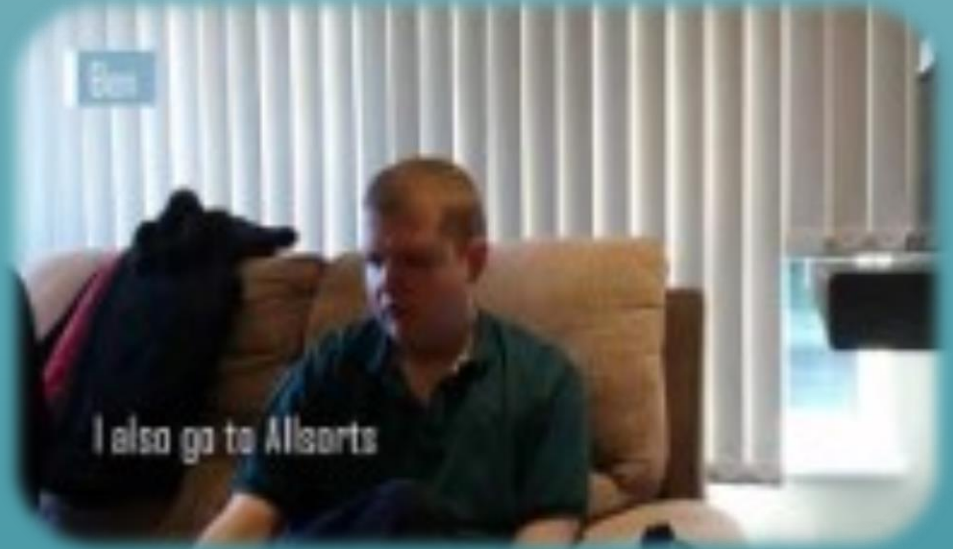
Friends, Relationships
& Community

Independent Living

Good Health



Young people living independently



Questions for consideration

1

How can you reassure yourself about the effectiveness of transition between children and adults services?

2

What % of LD adults, with care experience, live independently and how do we compare with the national ave? (Trend over time?)

3

How effective are relationships with your CCG and how can you be assured joint working is leading to better outcomes for ch & a?

4

How good are links between children and adults services and housing to ensure housing needs of young adults are met?