



TORBAY SEND LOCAL AREA IMPROVEMENT PARTNERSHIP BOARD (SLAIP)

PUBLISHED MINUTES – SEPTEMBER 2025

Date: 10 September 2025

Time: 1.00 – 3:00pm

Location: Virtual

1. Welcome, Introductions & Apologies

- The Chair welcomed attendees, noted apologies, and confirmed deputies.
- New members and deputies introduced themselves.
- The Chair clarified the importance of full board membership

2. Minutes & Actions from Previous Meeting

- The Chair explained the intention to publish minutes from each board meeting, on the local offer website for transparency, with names redacted.
- Board agreed to this approach.
- Minutes reviewed; no amendments raised.

Discussion and Action:

Board supported transparency and public access to minutes and agreed that the redacted minutes would be circulated for review before publication.

Action Tracker Review

- It was confirmed the joint commissioning checklist had been reviewed, but suggested it be revisited as part of ongoing stocktakes.
- Board agreed to make the checklist a regular checkpoint for commissioning priorities.
- Peer review report publication delayed due to inspection; to be chased.
- Communications strategy actions discussed; The board emphasised the need for a partnership approach, not just corporate communications.
- Task and finish group for a single data dashboard ongoing.
- Redesign of the pledge action to be followed up by participation team.

- Amber actions relating to post-16 representation and attendance to be reviewed once the Priority Impact Plan (PIP) is approved.

Discussion and Action:

Board recognised the need for a comprehensive, partnership-led communications strategy. There was agreement to convene a group to develop this, involving a wider range of stakeholders.

3. Feedback from Senior Officers Meeting

- The Chair summarised the senior officers meeting (18 August), noting good attendance despite school holidays but acknowledging the absence of education leaders due to the timing.
- The meeting focused on reviewing inspection findings, identifying challenges, and seeking assurance on governance and leadership commitment.

Discussion and Action:

Formal minutes were requested from the senior officers meeting for wider board benefit. The DfE confirmed minutes would be shared, explaining the delay was due to legal review of improvement notice language. Board members agreed on the importance of sharing learning and challenges from the meeting.

4. Headline feedback from co-production sessions

- The Chair of SEND Family Voice Torbay presented a report on parent carer engagement in the development of the Priority Impact Plan, highlighting challenges of timing, capacity, and parent expectations due to the summer holidays.
- Engagement included in-person and online meetings, surveys (38 responses for SEND support, 34 for health), and targeted outreach.

Discussion and Action:

Board members praised the report and triangulated findings with their own findings from attending the sessions. Members of the board emphasised the need to formally thank parent volunteers and to increase reach, especially to families at the start of their SEND journey.

The need to formally respond to the survey was discussed to establish a clear feedback loop ("you said, we did") to build trust. The Chair agreed to develop a response with board members.

The need for a coordinated approach to engaging children and young people, not just families was also highlighted. Board agreed to develop a long-term, consistent feedback mechanism.

5. Priority Impact Plan (PIP) Update

- The Chair summarised the PIP's five main areas and the need for an accessible summary version.
- The PIP is under review by DfE and NHS England; feedback expected soon.

- The Chair emphasised the need for strong partnership working and avoiding siloed delivery.

Discussion and Action:

The role of the SLAIP Delivery Group was explained. Board agreed to review delivery group membership to ensure all accountable officers are included.

It was suggested health should lead on performance and quality assurance; it was confirmed a new partnership QA framework is being developed.

The need for clearer impact measures in Area 5 of the PIP was raised and noted.

7. EHCP Timeliness Report

- Data on EHCP timeliness, noting previous improvements but a recent decline, due to high demand and issues with educational psychology (EP) capacity.
- National timeliness has dropped; Torbay faces high demand for statutory assessments, especially from schools and experienced a significant spike in July.
- EP service capacity is a significant risk; actions taken include process review, resource redeployment, and leadership changes.

Discussion and Action:

It was suggested the risk register be broadened to include any health delays.

The reasons for the July spike in requests were discussed and challenged, suggesting use of trainees to support - it was confirmed that good university links are already in place for trainee psychologists.

The impact of reduced school-commissioned EP hours on assessment timeliness was discussed

A board member highlighted Torbay's disadvantage due to lower spending on support services compared to other areas.

8. Health Waiting Times

- An update was given on waiting times for health services, noting improvements in speech and language therapy and CAMHS, but ongoing challenges in neurodiversity assessment.
- Dual statutory and health roles of the OT team and the impact on waiting times was discussed.

Discussion and Action:

The board was challenged to measure not just waiting times but also the quality of support while waiting. The Board agreed to include more granular data and impact measures in future reporting.

9. Neurodiversity Strategy

- Presentation of the five-year neurodiversity (ND) strategy, emphasising early identification, needs-led support, and co-production.

- The strategy aligns with SEND and emotional wellbeing strategies and has been approved by Devon and Plymouth boards.

Discussion and Action:

Members of the board described a recent ND workshop focused on launching an integrated assessment pathway and mapping existing support.

The Chair asked about ongoing engagement and feedback mechanisms for parents and carers; Health colleagues confirmed this is central to the strategy.

10. Any Other Business & Next Steps

Monitoring Delivery & Impact

- Presentation of the new Gantt chart and impact tracking documents to monitor action delivery and impact.
- Board will receive regular updates and exception reports.
- Next meeting in six weeks; quality assurance and data will be key agenda items.
- Members invited to suggest further priorities for the forward plan.

Actions Agreed

1. Minutes Publication:
 - Publish redacted minutes on the local offer website; circulate for board review before publication.
2. Senior Officers Meeting Notes:
 - DfE to share formal minutes/notes with the board.
3. Commissioning Checklist:
 - Make joint commissioning checklist a regular checkpoint in commissioning priority action.
4. Communications Strategy:
 - Convene a partnership group to develop a comprehensive, long-term communications and engagement strategy.
5. Pledge Redesign:
 - Participation team to follow up and report back on progress.
6. Parent Carer Engagement:
 - Formally thank parent volunteers; seek ways to increase reach, especially to families at the start of their SEND journey.

- Explore external support and grants to build capacity for SEND Family Voice.

7. Feedback Loop:

- Develop a clear, consistent “you said, we did” feedback mechanism for families.

8. PIP Delivery Group Membership:

- Review and update delivery group membership to ensure all accountable officers are included.

9. Quality Assurance Framework:

- Bring new partnership QA framework to the next board meeting for review.

10. PIP Impact Measures:

- Add clear impact measures to Area 5 of the PIP.

11. EHCP Timeliness Risk:

- Add educational psychology and health capacity risks to the risk register; continue to review and improve processes.

12. Health Waiting Times Data:

- Include more granular data and impact measures in future reports.

13. Neurodiversity Strategy Implementation:

- Continue partnership workshops to map support and develop integrated pathways.
- Build ongoing parent/carer and young person feedback into implementation.

14. Forward Plan:

- Members to email the Chair with suggestions for future agenda items and deep dives.

Meeting closed at 3:00pm. Next meeting on 22nd October 2025