



**TORBAY SEND LOCAL AREA IMPROVEMENT PARTNERSHIP BOARD (SLAIP)  
PUBLISHED MINUTES – DECEMBER 2025**

**Date: 3 December 2025**

**Time: 11.00 – 1.00pm**

**Location: Virtual**

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**1. Welcome, Introductions and Apologies**

- Multiple apologies noted – Chair acknowledged low attendance due to impact of SEND monitoring visits in the ICB's two other local areas and the late change in the time of the board meeting. New members and deputies introduced.

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**2. Minutes and Matters Arising**

- Two sets of minutes: full and redacted for publication. Correction noted regarding names in the communications plan action. Discussion on whether to redact names for public minutes; consensus to continue redaction for now. Correction made to those responsible for leading communications plan.

**Action Tracker**

- Majority of amber actions ongoing, especially around the communications plan and feedback to families. Subgroup for data performance and quality assurance established; members invited to join.
- Pledge event postponed due to inspections; to be rescheduled in the new year. Date to be decided by Friday 5<sup>th</sup> December. Proposed date 28<sup>th</sup> January.
- Project for 16–18-year-olds at risk of NEET discussed; funding challenges due to UK Shared Prosperity Fund ending. Board to be kept updated regarding attempts to secure funding from alternative sources.

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**3. Risk Register**

**Discussion and Actions**

- **Programme Lead Vacancy:** The Chair raised the lack of a programme lead as a significant risk; recruitment for a senior SEND programme lead is being fast-tracked, with the job description under evaluation and plans to circulate the advert to the board for wider sharing.
- **Resource Risk Severity:** It was recommended increasing the severity rating for resource risk due to the end of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund and limited

funding for transition projects; Chair agreed to review and update the risk register accordingly.

- **Mitigations and Controls:** The Chair requested that blank mitigation/control sections be completed for the next board meeting and that any slippage or changes in priority impact plan actions be recorded in the risk register.
  - **ICB Restructuring Impact:** It was reported upcoming ICB organisational changes and redundancies, which may affect the partnership's ability to participate in SEND work; updates will be provided as the situation develops.
  - **Health Footprint Risk:** It was suggested that adding a risk related to the wide health footprint and potential impacts from ICB changes would be important, as shrinking health resources may affect SEND support.
  - **Ongoing Monitoring:** The board agreed to regularly update the risk register to reflect new risks, changes, and mitigations as actions progress.
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#### 4. Progress Against Priority Impact Plan: Discussion and Actions

- **General Progress:** The Chair explained that anything from 5% means that the action has started. As the tracker is the overview of impact, rather than just activity, many areas will sit within 5-10% which is expected at this point in the improvement trajectory. The board is focused on ensuring all activities are underway and tracking impact as evidence builds.
- **Governance (Priority 1):** Highlighted the need to strengthen communication, especially positive messaging, and to involve parents in quality assurance. Actions include developing a RAG rating for co-production and improving the partnership-wide communication strategy.
- **Commissioning (Priority 2):** Updates on special school redesignation, outreach expansion, and learning disability/emotional health pathways were provided. Actions include supporting mainstream schools with MLD and ensuring families are aware of available services.
- **Education Inclusion (Priority 3):** See previous response for detailed actions, including mapping neurodiversity support, addressing EHCP timeliness, and using the QA subgroup for strategic data analysis.
- **Health (Priority 4):** Reported progress on waiting lists, new services, and improved data dashboards. The main challenge remains neurodiversity waiting times. Actions include making service information more accessible and continuing partnership work to reduce waits.
- **Transitions (Priority 5):** Noted the formation of a transitions task group and ongoing mapping of adult workstreams. Actions include ensuring the right children's and health representatives are involved and linking with employment/training teams.

- **Risk Register:** The board discussed raising the risk rating for resources due to funding uncertainties and the need to add mitigations and track slippage for each PIP area.
- **Data and QA Subgroup:** A new subgroup will review detailed data and provide highlight reports to the board, supporting more focused oversight and action.

#### **Key Actions:**

- Leads to ensure all PIP actions are underway and report on impact and slippage.
  - Develop and implement a partnership-wide communication strategy and RAG rating for co-production.
  - Finalise neurodiversity mapping and present a gap analysis.
  - Address EHCP delays through targeted events and process improvements.
  - Review commissioning committee membership for appropriate representation.
  - Use the QA/data subgroup for strategic analysis and sharing best practice.
  - Update the risk register with mitigations and resource risks.
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## **5. Data and Quality Assurance**

### **Discussion and Actions**

- **Subgroup Formation:** The Chair announced the establishment of a Data and Quality Assurance (QA) subgroup to meet between board meetings and produce highlight reports, enabling the board to focus on key metrics and impact rather than wading through all data.
- **Data Dashboard:** The updated SEND data dashboard was shared, highlighting improvements in EHCP quality, ongoing challenges with timeliness due to high demand, and mixed results in suspensions/exclusions. NEET data showed significant improvement, attributed to new processes and targeted interventions.
- **Health Data Integration:** The new health data dashboard was presented, which now provides monthly metrics on waiting times and service access across Devon, Torbay, and Plymouth, with the ability to track individual cases and trends. The dashboard is accessible to the local authority and will be integrated into partnership reporting.
- **Operational Impact:** The subgroup will analyse detailed data and bring key issues to the board, such as areas of concern (e.g., low EHCP timeliness, SEN support suspensions/exclusions) and positive trends (e.g., NEET reduction, improved service access).
- **Actions:**
  - QA subgroup to review and report on data trends and impact.
  - Board to ensure data systems can overlay strategic analysis across agencies.
  - Continue to refine dashboards and share relevant metrics with the board.

- Address information governance barriers to parent involvement in multi-agency audits.
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## 6. Parental Confidence Review (LGA Report)

### Discussion and Actions

- **Review Findings:** The LGA's independent review highlighted themes of transparency, defensive/reactive communication, and limited collaborative input with the parent carer forum, all impacting parental confidence.
  - **Board Reflections:** The board acknowledged the findings, agreeing on the need for greater transparency and proactive communication. The importance of demonstrating political cross-party support was discussed and improving communications, especially during key events.
  - **Recommendations:** The review recommended a fundamental reset with parents/carers, creation of a feedback loop ("you said, we did"), and strengthening strategic, operational, and individual engagement. No board members challenged the recommendations; all agreed on their relevance.
  - **Actions:**
    - Feed review findings into the partnership-wide communication strategy.
    - Develop and implement a feedback loop for parental input.
    - Reinvigorate existing co-production frameworks (e.g., four cornerstones, SEND Co-production charter).
    - Use the parent carer forum and other mechanisms to ensure broad representation and accurate feedback.
    - Plan for a revisit of the review in 8 months to assess progress
    - Address barriers to parent involvement in QA/audits
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## Spotlight Reports Overview

### 7. Spotlight #2: Commissioning (Priority 2)

#### Discussion and Actions

- **Special School Designation Change:** It was reported on the consultation to change Coombe Harford School's designation from MLD to ASC, addressing the high need for autism provision in Torbay. The transition will honour current placements, and up to 40 ASC places will be available from next September. Parental anxieties about mainstream MLD provision will be addressed through listening events and targeted support.
- **Outreach Services Expansion:** A successful grant application has been secured, enabling the Special Partnership Trust to provide advisory support to nearly all mainstream schools in Torbay, with 15 schools already engaged.

- **Learning Disability and Emotional Health Pathways:** Progress in making information about learning disability and emotional health services more accessible to families was described, with further work planned to improve communication and marketing of available support.
  - **JSNA Next Steps:** The board discussed the upcoming Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA), agreeing to a partnership event facilitated by the LGA to analyse the data, identify gaps, and align priorities with the PIP. It was suggested breaking down the JSNA into themed sessions for more focused strategic action.
  - **Actions:**
    - Hold a listening event for MLD families and strengthen mainstream support.
    - Roll out expanded outreach services to all mainstream schools.
    - Improve accessibility and marketing of learning disability and emotional health pathways.
    - Organise a JSNA sharing and analysis event in January, with LGA facilitation, and align findings with PIP priorities
    - Review membership of the commissioning committee to ensure appropriate health representation
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## 8.Spotlight #3: Multi-Agency Education Inclusion (Priority 3)

### Discussion and Actions

- **Graduated Response Implementation:** Ongoing work to map neurodiversity support across Torbay was presented, aiming to identify gaps, reduce duplication, and make resources accessible for families and professionals. A plan for a graduated response gap analysis will be brought to the next board meeting.
- **EHCP Timeliness and Quality:** The SEND team restructure and new processes are focused on improving EHCP timeliness and quality. There is a current backlog due to a spike in requests, and a “hot house” event is planned to address delays in educational psychology advice (Appendix D).
- **Alternative Provision QA:** Implementation of a new quality and performance framework for alternative provision is underway and on schedule.
- **Suspensions, Exclusions, and Attendance:** There is a mixed picture—reductions in EHCP suspensions/exclusions but increases at SEN support level. The SEMH pilot in secondary schools is showing positive impact, with a third school joining soon. Attendance for SEND is improving, but SEN support remains a concern.
- **Strategic Data Use:** The need for more forensic, school-level data to identify where interventions are effective and to share best practice was emphasised. It

was agreed to use the new QA and data subgroup to overlay and analyse this data strategically.

- **Actions:**
    - Finalise and publish the neurodiversity support map; present a graduated response gap analysis plan at the next meeting
    - Hold a “hot house” event to address EHCP Appendix D delays
    - Continue QA framework rollout for alternative provision
    - Use the QA and data subgroup to analyse school-level impact and share best practice
    - Address barriers to parent involvement in audits and QA
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## 9. Any Other Business

- QA framework for AP and SEND resubmitted, awaiting sign-off.
  - Next meeting dates to be reviewed to avoid clashes.
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## Action Items

- **Programme Lead Recruitment:** LA/ICB to circulate job description and advertise role.
- **Risk Register Update:** Review resource risk level and add mitigations/controls.
- **Communications Plan:** Continue development, ensure positive stories and feedback loops are embedded.
- **Parental QA Involvement:** Develop options for parent involvement in QA audits.
- **JSNA Workshop:** Coordinate partnership event and thematic breakdown.
- **Transitions Task Group:** Ensure children’s reps included and to nominate employment/training rep.
- **Data/QA Subgroup:** Ensure all relevant data is shared and subgroup is operational from January.
- **Pledge Event:** Reschedule and communicate new date.
- **AP/SEND QA Framework:** Awaiting confirmation of sign-off.
- **Meeting Dates:** Review and propose new dates for 2026

**Meeting closed at 1.00pm. Next meeting on 14<sup>th</sup> January 2026**