



Bolton Information and Advisory Service

Sustainability plan 2021

IASP

Contents

Page 3- Context and requirement for sustainability plan

Page 3- How we have used existing IASP funding

Page 4- Ensuring continuity

Page 5- Our action plan

Page 6- Joint working arrangements

Page 7- Impact on families

Page 7- Final notes

Appendices

Context and requirement for IAS sustainability, including sustainability plan

Bolton IAS is an outsourced, statutory service as part of the Bolton Local Authority area. The service has seen significant cuts to funding in recent years due to general austerity and a need to recoup spending here in Bolton. However, there is wide recognition that the scope of the service is ever increasing- most significant since the 2014 reforms, and continues to do so in the ever changing climate of the education sector.

IASP funding has been gratefully received. The funding allowed us as a service to ensure compliance with our Minimum Standards, maintain appropriate staffing levels, allow for training and development, and moreover, improve our service offer as a whole.

We appreciate that there is not an endless pot of money to enable this to continue, and so wanted to look at ways we can ourselves, sustain the outcomes we have achieved under IASP. The outcomes we were previously funded on, we feel, are still relevant when moving forward.

What have we done with existing funding and what it has enabled us to do

Under IASP funding, we were able to focus resources on the following areas;

- Service contribution- ensuring we were adequately staffed, with the recruitment of an additional member of the team, to allow for backfilling time for other staff to do their duties fully, and to work with young people more specifically.
- Supporting strategic functions- to have a compliant and purpose built, database, to ensure compliance with GDPR law, enable more effective communication, allow for timely and accurate data reporting and monitoring, and to ensure all staff were trained and confident in using the system.
- Supporting core functions- adequate staffing has ensured we have had a full attendance at both local and regional events, can maintain our response times all year round, and ensure we can work towards the mitigations of the risk register. This has been tested rigorously in times of COVID, where we have shown that despite significant service disruption, we have been able to assure service continuity without any break, or hinderance on the families using us.
- Professional development- we have been able to assess for, secure, and attend training to enhance the teams knowledgebase and skill set, and enrich the offer we have to give families. We now have staff who are training in communication by sign, staff trained in conflict management, and all staff have had further safeguarding training. It has also meant the whole staff team have been able to complete their IPSEA level three legal training too.
- Supporting innovation- focusing on the work we do with young people, which became a red flag area for us, following a self evaluation of our effectiveness, we have some innovative and carefully crafted ways of supporting this particular cohort. We used some of the funding to do a consultation with young people to see what they needed from our service. Using the results of the consultation, we now do outreach work in various settings across Bolton to meet with, and support, young people with SEND.

How we will try to ensure continuity, and our action plan

We feel strongly that the outcomes above are the right ones to carry on with as priorities for the service. The impact of the funding in allowing these outcomes to be delivered, has meant that families accessing us, have genuinely had the best possible service we can deliver. We have response times of within 24 hours, including evenings, weekends, and holidays. It has also seen a great improvement in staff morale and emotional health- staff do not feel over worked, or stressed about work related matters. They have very busy, yet very manageable caseloads, with the knowledge they have some flex on the hours and days that they work to accommodate not only the families needs, but the needs of their own families too.

We are not unrealistic, in that we do not believe we can carry on with this level of delivery without funding, and/or contribution. We know that to build on the success we have already established, we will need further investment. This is not to say that it will all be a monetary matter however.

We have taken action to drive down further our overhead costs. Although these have always been much more cost effective than many other similar services, we have still managed to streamline some expenses, and reinvest saved finances back into the service to go towards staff salary.

The evening and weekend outreach work would normally have been paid to an IAS officer as additional hours. However, we are working on the pretence now, that this time will be paid in the form of 'time owing', meaning that if the officer does four hours in a week on outreach, this can then be taken back by the officer, at a different time, in daytime working hours.

The database and communication system comes at an ongoing cost. We have been supported by our LA to apply for, (and have subsequently been successful for), a small grant to cover the cost of our communications system. This has been paid for one year, and we may have further opportunities to apply to the same fund next year. The database cost will be funded by money saved on IAS staff mobile phone contracts, which we managed to get at a cheaper rate for the next two years.

Because of COVID, all staff have been working at home for the vast majority of the time. This means that incidentally, we have savings from our monthly staff mileage expenses pot. This has allowed us to save a small, but meaningful amount, to cover any further training we identify as needing, or any staff backfill costs associated with attending events that we are required to attend, or compulsory training sessions, to enable us to carry out our roles effectively.

We have also been looking at how we may be able to generate some income, and have been in very productive talks with our parent carer forum, about ways in which we could do this.

Area of development	Work we undertook with IASP funding	How we will sustain this/ what we need to do
Service contribution	Ensuring adequate staffing through recruitment of a part time staff member	Already saved costs elsewhere to recoup some money. Need to identify funding opportunities for up to £10,000- to contact CVS and see what funding may be available
Supporting strategic functions	Secured and built database and communications system	Applied for and received funding from the 'Bolton tech grant'- pays for communications. Savings from telecommunications to pay for maintenance of database for the next two years
Supporting core functions	Ensuring that we meet all of our Minimum Standards, can fulfil out contractual obligations to both the LA and IASNN, comply with mitigations on the risk register, and run continually throughout COVID	This would be sufficiently covered with the actions in the service contribution funding opportunity, in terms of ensuring staffing to continue to fulfil these actions. Risk register mitigations can be somewhat met with our partnership and offers of support from the parent carer forum.
Professional development	Staff, through supervision, have been able to identify which training they feel they need/ want. We have been able to source, pay for, and backfill time to allow this to happen.	Free training to be identified that fits the criteria staff express and interest in. Wigan and Leigh College do free remote CPD training in the SEN sector. We have already had one staff member take advantage of this. For more specific or cost implicated training, we will have some savings from the lack of travel/ mileage expenses claimed throughout COVID which can be added to the training pot.

Supporting innovation	We have an IAS outreach service for young people, where an officer attends different settings frequented by young people in Bolton, in evenings and weekends, to take support to them.	We have discussed in team meeting, and agreed, that this will no longer be an additional paid role within the service. Officers will do this on top of their usual contracted hours, and 'bank' worked hours, to be taken as time off in lieu at a mutually agreed date. One officer has already volunteered to be the young persons outreach worker.
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Joint working arrangements

IAS and BPC (the parent carer forum here in Bolton), have always worked hand in hand together and share the same values and ethos. We have for some years now, jointly delivered training workshops for families in Bolton. We as IAS, write and design the workshops, drawing on our legal knowledge, and the forum facilitate us in their building, provide refreshments and training materials. Parents and carers are invited jointly by both organisations. This is always free to parents and carers, and the odd professional who comes along for their own personal development! We have, however, been designing between us, bespoke packages for schools and professionals. We were asked to put together a proposal by Bolton's Head of SEN services, and we are in discussion about whether the LA will fund us to deliver so many per year to so many delegates. In the event the LA do not feel able to fund these, we are looking to go out to schools and services, with a traded element of our services, to see if there is interest in buying in the training directly.

At the start of the pandemic in March 2020, this relationship grew even more, and became co-dependent, as we both strived to ensure families were supported to the best of our abilities, and informed in a factual, consistent way. We made the decision to do all of our COVID work, as a partnership. Mostly, this took the form of a joint weekly bulletin, giving families the latest government advice, with a joint support package offer, and details of what else they could tap into in Bolton. We ran a joint helpline, our 'natter and listen' service, for isolated or lonely families. IAS continued to do IAS business, and the forum signposted parents to us, and disseminated information from us. It doubled our contact base, and meant we were reaching directly, nearly two thirds of Bolton's SEND population. We have done joint information sessions on webinars too. The forum have shared their resources with us, through loaning of equipment, such as mic's and webcams, and have allowed us to use their skills, by designing for us, our new logos and branding. They have offered us office space in the event we need to be in work, but cannot for COVID reasons, access our own office. We feel we will be able to draw on, and utilise, the support of the forum as we move into the next phase.

The impact on our families and other stakeholders

IAS prides itself on the consistent feedback we get from families and other stakeholders, about the effectiveness of what we do. We maintain our 100% five star rating for those who would recommend us to others, and a 97% five star rating for 'what a difference we made'. The full figures are published in our annual report and are fed back to IASSN upon request.

Our qualitative feedback is always extremely positive, with the most common statements families make being around;

- Our knowledge about the matter
- The friendliness and approachableness of staff
- How we respond even at weekends and in the evenings
- That they feel like they understand things better themselves
- That things are now better or improving for them

We also enclose a case study to highlight the impact in one case.

Final note

All staff at IAS are committed to ensuring that the service continues to be a service with excellent standards and quality support. Through working smart, and taking advantage of the new ways of working we have been forced to develop as part of our prolonged remote working throughout COVID, we are able to be more effective with our finances, and reduce some other costs. We hope that this, coupled with the actions outlined in this plan, will enable us to continue on the trajectory that we have enjoyed progressing, under IASP contracting.

We look forward to another four successful years, delivering our knowledge and support to those whose situations we personally understand so well, with passion, and dedication.

Cheryl Wyatt

Head of Service

Appendices

Appendix A Case study

Appendix B Most feedback report

Appendix C Risk register

Appendix D Exit plan

Appendix A

How our work with young people directly supported one young lady

We had been attending one of the groups we have a link partnership with, and were asked if we wanted to go on a trip with the staff and the young people. We agreed that we would love to.

One of the young ladies on this trip was a face we had seen a couple of times before in session. We shall call her YP1. She is a young lady with some considerable learning difficulties, and a physical disability too. She was shy and quiet, but always engaged with us and would chat with us about her dog.

The trip was to a local park. We were able to walk there together due to its proximity. As we started to approach the park, YP1 became very jittery and seemed quite anxious. She said she was ok when asked, but it was clear she wasn't. As we got a little nearer, she began to breathe heavily and was visibly shaking. We stopped, and I took her slightly away from the main group and asked her what was the matter. She began to cry but wouldn't speak. We decided she wasn't in the right emotional state to continue, and half the group carried on to the park, with the other half, including myself and YP1 returning to the centre.

Once there, and things had calmed a little, I started to talk to her about her dog, which lowered her anxiety and allowed her to feel more at ease again. I then asked her if I could help her as I didn't like to see her so upset before. She proceeded to tell me she had seen another young person from her school on the park as we were walking toward it, and that this other child really doesn't like her and says horrible things to her at school and pushed her earlier that day. I asked if she had told anyone else, and she said she hadn't, I reassured her we could help her to tell someone who can do something about it, and she agreed I tell the centre lead, who could report to parents. I gave them a service leaflet and asked parents to call the IAS officers the next day. They did.

The IAS officers met with parents and facilitated and attended a meeting at school to discuss. Parents and school both stated how they'd seen a change in YP1 since she was moved classes, and that the other young person was in that new class. It was agreed that YP1 would move back to her previous class where she had a friend, and that some work would be done with the other young person about feelings and kind words etc (as the other child had SEN too).

The following week, YP1 told me she had had a really good week and was back in her old class.

Without the work that the IASP money funds, this chain of events may never have taken place. Both the parents, young person and the session staff now know where to go for help in future, and this issue was dealt with by YP1 speaking to only one person, and was resolved the next day.

Appendix B

Service User Feedback	
1	Invaluable advice and help without which we would have been lost and confused. Their knowledge and experience is way beyond that of the Sencos at the schools regarding crucial processes and decision making at the council.
2	The team have offered advice to help my daughter get an EHCP which she desperately needed. They simplified it all for me by helping me fill in the forms with no stress
3	You are all always very helpful and knowledgeable.
4	Cheryl and her team do a wonderful job of supporting the parents and the staff in school. They always respond quickly and efficiently and are always on hand to help support the families they work with. Their expertise and knowledge is fantastic and I know they are always there for us! Thank you
5	I have always found IAS a very useful resource and the staff extremely helpful and they always try to help and support me wherever possible, especially Cheryl Wyatt!
6	Always get top quality support from IAS, whatever the issue. Nothing is too much trouble. Also, the compassion shown to parents is second to none.
7	As a professional and a parent i have accessed the support of IAS. Not only are they friendly, approachable and efficient, they are also incredibly helpful and i would recommend them to any parent who requires help in their area of expertise. They provide an excellent service
8	Cheryl is always there when you need her. They have a responsive service and the advice and support that Cheryl offers me is much appreciated. Cheryl and her team offer a valuable service to families with a child with SEND. The fact that they truly understand the difficulties parents with children with complex needs face really helps and they are an advocate for us. It is crucial that this service continues to support parents like me. Thank you Cheryl for your ongoing support- Zaynab
9	Extremely helpful and friendly in a difficult unknown time.
10	We had appointment met with a colleague who was very supportive knowledgeable give us direction and support. It's on going because of lockdown but will continue to need your help and I feel assured it will be there.
11	IAS have been an absolute Godsend for me on my journey with my little girl. They are my 'go to' option for any advice. The ladies are always so helpful and forthcoming to help us. They always give fair advice and remain honest. Some of the challenges I have faced I honestly could not have gone through without Cheryl she's been amazing and an absolute asset to this service. I always recommend IAS to all parents of children with special needs simply b3cause I know they will help and they CARE. THANK YOU SOOOO MUCH ladies x
12	Cheryl has helped previously with my sons draft EHCP through to final. With regards to the education law, she knows what children are entitled to and the best way to achieve this. She is always at the end of the phone when I need her and is highly responsive of emails. It just feels like she is right there holding your hand and empowering you to fo the best by your child. Such an excellent service, which I am extremely grateful for.
13	The team at IASS have always been available for advice and support. Helping us navigate systems to get the best possible support for our child. We would be absolutely lost without them! They provide an invaluable, person centred, professional but friendly service. Nothing is too much trouble. Thank you IASS for everything you've done for us!
14	I would be lost without IAS.... an amazing amazing service for which I am eternally grateful to have access to...
15	Has to be the best service I've used.
16	Cannot thank Cheryl enough for the help and guidance we were given. We would of been totally lost without her help. Absolutely amazing service. Knowledgeable and very professional.
17	Lots of relevant advice and support when working through different processes
18	I found so much support From The Independent advisory service That Helped Me To Grt Through The Minefield Of SEN I Really Could Not Of Managed Without Them They Are A Vital Service And Always There Happy And Willing To Help
19	I was directed to IAS by a family who attend nursery. Being new to Bolton local authority has meant learning the pathways for processes, and highlighted services and support that I wasn't already aware of. Cheryl is fantastic and supports everyone involved with providing the best for every child and family she works with. Her knowledge has supported me greatly, and her passion to strive for the best she can for all really shines through. I can reach her at any given time with any niggle or question, and she always reassures and directs me. Thank you, Cheryl! Your guidance and support has helped me flourish, and I will be recommending the IAS to all our families in Bolton thanks to you.
20	The workshops they do are Brilliant been to 3 so much information is given and explained so we understand Nan and Cheryl are fab. I feel I can approach them for help and they will help with everything I ask them keep up the great work 😊
21	Because of your knowledge, understanding experience, but mostly the fact that you care about the people you help.
22	Great service, great advice, felt important, listened too and above all helped!
23	I was battling for years with medical professionals. My gp referred my child to a paediatrician at the age of 3 or 4 as she noticed something. I battled throughout nursery and primary years with no luck Or success "it was my fault bad parent" apparently Those were the comments I got. Did triple P, as school refereed me. They said it wasn't appropriate for my child's needs. as did triple P teen. uad a child on from ks1 SA+ IPB. IAB. I was sign posted to IAS AND BPC when my child was in year 6.and a CAM. I'd had 8 years of trying to help my child. Never heard or been signposted IAS or BPC. IAS AND BPC have helped my child and I get my child accepted into a school full time provision SEMH SEND. Whereas previous attending a mainstream provision who were and admitted to struggling with providing support. education and welfare for my child. And was put on a significant reduced

	improvised individual this battle Actually took 10years a lot of heart ache arguments job changes and giving up career opportunities to enable my child's future Without IAS BPC, My Child would not be where they are today. I am definitely and so grateful for all the work and support the rug have done. I know every parent family carer and child(ren)) appreciate every single contact enquiry support help advice parent carers and children would be continually insure insecure uneasy nervous scared Where would our children and families have parent carers be without the support and communication and family that are BPC IAS Children's Opportunity Group, BreakingBarriers , Kidz2gether
24	I was referred to Cheryl and she has helped me in everyway possible with my son's EHCP don't think i would of been able to do it without her and has always got back to me as soon as i have emailed/rang. Makes a massive difference to families to have that support and someone who knows how to help.
25	You are always there when we need you, you understand what we are going through (often having been there yourself) and you always give expert advice and offer a listening ear
26	I got really speedy and useful advice via email on both occasions I needed to contact you. I find it so reassuring that you are there even when I don't need your service. Your training has been informative and I am really grateful for your Covid bulletins which put all the government jargon into relevant language as well as collating everything we have available to us as parents of children with SEN in Bolton. Thank you, your service is greatly appreciated, and many would be lost without you xxx
27	Excellent advice
28	Without the support of Bolton IAS my son would never have got his asd diagnosis , his EHCP or a place in a specialist setting. It's been a long battle to get the support needs, and as a lone parent it has been extremely difficult. Bolton IAS have supported me every step of the way and Are a real lifeline for parent carers and our children.
29	Every contact I have had with IAS has been exceptional. Cheryl is another level amazing! I feel there is nothing she doesn't know or can't advise on. Completely professional and 100% honest
30	Fantastic advice and guidance from Cheryl and her team. Always willing to support me , the advice is always excellent, top service. Cannot thank Cheryl enough will always be grateful to her.
31	I absolutely love parent partnership the team are so helpful and go above and for us all. They have helped me through a tough time i thank them all
32	I have a child with SEND who is due to start school in september. This service has been invaluable in providing information and support for me to make informed choices about her future
33	I couldn't fault the support and advice I received. I am a relatively new SENCO and the first EHCP I submitted needed to go to mediation and Bolton IAS was there every step of the way. Nothing was too much trouble. I know if I need further help I will be contacting them again. I am eternally grateful for their help and support. Thank you
34	Very supportive, friendly and knowledgeable. Offer help quickly and they really do care.
35	I could not have managed anything without the empathy, compassion and support I received from Cheryl! Not just for my child but me as a parent she is one in a million and I can't thank her enough for everything she has done for us as a family I would highly recommend her services to anyone and everyone
36	Before speaking I was at a loss especially as my son is undiagnosed so finding the right help can be difficult. They made everything so much easier and I feel without there help I wouldn't be heading in the right direction now
37	Cheryl and the team were always helpful and supportive, didn't raise our hopes with false promises or guarantees but worked hard to fight to get our daughter the help and support she needs, and never made us feel like we were wasting her time.
38	Karen has been a massive help for us We wouldn't be where we are now without the help she gave us Thank you!
39	Absolutely fantastic couldn't fault the service at all
40	The support I've had from karen partridge, has been amazing, she has been there for me through school meetings and has spoken up for me too. I feel more at ease having that extra support when I have meeting regarding my son in school .
41	Fantastic service which helped me to understand it all
42	If it wasn't for the help off 2 amazing ladies Nicola & nan I would no doubt in my mind be in jail now or I would of had a mental breakdown. They never give up on us and supported us they gave us so much advice and support and knowledge they have been outstanding. I have had times I wanted to give up the fight in school for my daughter but they have always been there with support and kept me going. I would of lost it big time or even walked out of some meetings in school if they weren't with me. Without them I wouldn't of understood most things in these meeting and would of took everything the teachers said as gospel and my daughter would be suffering more. They have even been there at times just for a chat for me to voice off my anger and upset of it all. There the best of the best and couldn't be where I am today without them.
43	There was so much information regarding the responsibility of my childs statement for educational needs and EHCP from the educational providers i was never made aware of! That was until i received support from Bolton IAS. Also it was the first time i felt my opinion mattered when adding information on an EHCplan previously i was ignored completely. Also i was provide with useful information so that i can effectively work with professionals in the future
44	I found Karen very friendly and helpful. I feel a lot more reassured about my child attending greenfold special school. When I emailed Karen to ask for more advice, she rang me the very same day and gave me all the support and help I needed.
45	I was very please with the way Mike handle my son case. very accommodating and good communication skill. will definite recommend the service and Mike. thanks.
46	Mike made me feel at ease. Mike was friendly and easy to talk too. Thank you to you and your PM team for all your help and support
47	IAS are like the light at the end of the tunnel when you don't see anyway out. They just no what to say to make you feel ok and have wealth's of information to back it up. If they can't get to the phone then they have always rang or emailed me back very

	promptly. I honestly don't think i could of had any better help. The child's wellbeing is paramount to every single decision they make and advice they give. I'm very grateful to all of them for all the support they continue to give.b
48	For over a year i had been having problems with my daughter's school and having meetings after meetings and nothing was being done but with the help the ball finally started rolling and the teacher's started to listen to what we was saying and started to help my daughter
49	Really good advice with very helpful advice and caring staff
50	From being under the service with both my children I've had massive amounts of advice help and time taken. I've had help with forms being filled to advice on what I can do to meetings arranged. Once I call I always get a response. Fantastic team epically Mike and Cheryl both have taken the time every time to help. We are still currently awaiting help with school but Mike is so easy to get hold of if I need him and he always sits listens and gives the best advice possible for the situation very grateful for everything you guys have provided and I'm very lucky to have such a brilliant team helping me get the help I can for my children on what they deserve I will forever be grateful thank you keep doing what you guys are doing
51	Mike was very helpful
52	Nan has been instrumental in pushing forward my sons EHCP. She supported our family through listening, acknowledging, advising within realistic timescales and most importantly acted as the go between from ourselves and Bolton council. I will always be grateful for the work Nan out in to push through this plan Thank you
53	I've only ever dealt with Cheryl and Nan but both have been exceptional! They've communicated super quick and have always had all the correct knowledge. They are so friendly and make you feel completely at ease!
54	I feel the response is always speedy and informative as well as caring and approachable thank you for all the advice/support
55	This service has provided ourselves with imperative support and guidance. After many years of not being supported by my son's school I was advised to contact this service. Parent Partnership gave us the support needed that has made the school listen to us and our son's needs. Although issues are still ongoing with school we as parents feel more positive that parent partnership challenge steps that are vital for support and the future progression that our son requires.
56	Advice and help I have needed Mike or Sophie have always got back in touch immediately
57	I have had dealings with both Nicola and Cheryl. They have helped so much and gave advice which has helped put my mind at rest in quite stressful situations. Not only are they extremely professional but also very warm and welcoming too.
58	Full marks for excellent support
59	Always provide an extremely good service - Thank You
60	Rapid response to a problem via email Extremely helpful Very supportive Great advice Solved a difficult issue
61	Cheryl was very informative
62	Cheryl and Elaine gave me so much support
63	I think in question 3 which says " We work for YOU. No one else. " says it all really. All the people that help my child with his autism are actually employed by a school or another agency. Most of them balance the interests of their employer and my child. Then there is you, you only have my child's interests at heart. You don't seem frightened to challenge people/schools etc, you know your stuff inside out. If I was doing your job as well as you do, I would be very proud of myself.
64	I have found applying for an EHCP for my son very challenging at times. It has been difficult to understand what kind of information the forms needed me to include. It was also hard to understand the systems and processes. The guidance I was given at the 1:2:1 sessions made the process a lot easier, and I felt confident about the clarity and accuracy of my application. The workshop was also very useful, at it explained my son's rights and my role within the process. We have been so lucky to have access to such essential support. Thank you for your help.
65	I was advised to contact yourselves after my daughter had a conversation with SENCO within her employment area. I.we were at our wits end being fobbed off by my childs school and his needs not being addressed. School made me feel like a neurotic parent who was making the situation up. After contacting the services I have had nothing but reassurance, help, advice and most importantly support during an upcoming meeting with school. All I want is my sons best interests being addressed appropriately and measures put in place to help my son grow into an independent young man. I strongly feel that this service has given me the boost I required that my concerns are warranted and that they too will help find pathways which will enable us to ensure my son will gain the correct support he so deserves. Although my son is academically high functioning this does not mean he struggles in social and with life skills, Parent partnerships understood me and I truly believe they are the light in our tunnel to help go forward.
66	The service from IAS is invaluable, Cheryl and Nan are a fountain of knowledge and the support they give is second to none. They are passionate in their roles and nothing is too much trouble. We, the parents, would be lost without them and I hope that this service will carry on to help other parents in need of some back up and support. Thank you
67	IAS Bolton. Has made a huge difference to both my child and I. Without IAS my child would not have got a EHCP as I was constantly fobbed off by my child's schools « we have no concerns » Since worker no with IAS and attending Parent Carers Workshops I have learnt my child was actually on SEN Support and should have been assess when CAMHS were telling school. IAS have empowered me and supported my child and I. They have given me the tools I needed to speak with school / LA. Supported us in Early Help Reviews and helped with EHCP Application. Without IAS my child would still be without; diagnosis / EHCP/ SEND Provision/ new found confidence/ future prospects / opportunity/ friends /social interaction / SRV/ personal development and growth And I would have been sacked from my job.
68	Your input, help and support in getting my child's EHCP amended, so it was fit for purpose, was invaluable. I couldn't have achieved the necessary outcome without the help of IAS, thank you so much.
69	I feel very supported by cheryl and she's helped me massively

70	Professional, friendly, helpful. Knowledge is power and they have a wealth of it! Eternally grateful for all they have and continue to do for my child.
71	You are just bloody awesome. Nicola supported us at the beginning of our journey and latterly Cheryl has taken a firm hold of the reins and is a force of nature in her own right... Lovely to see Nan on board now too. Keep up the magnificent work ladies and carry on with the superb job that you all do. Thank you from the bottom of my heart Team Hodgson-Wale xx
72	Relatively early days with the support for my daughter.
73	IAS have been tremendous with us. The information is direct and to the point. They have helped us to find the right services and have also given us the confidence we needed to help our child. From the very first conversation with the team at IAS I felt like a weight had been lifted, like finally someone is listening and can and wants to help. I feel so fortunate to have this service in my area. What a fabulous asset for families. Everything is made so hard and you're expected to fight and prove and become a legal expert just for assistance and IAS take the pressure off the families by educating and providing valuable information so they can go forth with confidence.
74	IAS has been a massive pillar of support to us for the past years ,dealing with schools, preparation for review meetings and attending them less stressful. We feel extremely lucky to have such a dedicated team with us and make our journey as special need parents a lot easier
75	Cause everything was dealt with fast and the person I spoke to was brilliant
76	Without the help I got for my son off this service I would have my son still out of education thank you so much
77	Because you have been unbelievably helpful. I have had contact by phone with lots of wonderful advice as well as support in a school early help meeting. I've felt extremely supported and been given really helpful informative advice helping me and my daughter through a difficult time where you were the only organisation giving me advice for 'us' to help me make the right decisions for my daughter. I also know other people that say the same about your fab service. Thank you x
78	Its a fantastic service, offering lots of advice and support. It has been invaluable to me.
79	staff always very helpful and friendly x
80	Excellent on point advice given and v friendly staff
81	I have never had any issues with the service. Have always been able to get answers to my questions and support in meetings.
82	The situation we found ourselves in with our son was awful and the school and the local authority did very little to help us. When I contacted the service Cheryl responded almost immediately and gave me some great advice. Prior to that I had felt very frustrated and felt I was getting nowhere. It was nice to communicate with someone who understood and Cheryl gave me really helpful advice in how to deal with our situation.
83	Excellent advice, excellent support, very handy to talk through a problem before I talk to the school incase I'm misunderstanding things. It means I can understand where I stand and check my expectations are reasonable before I contact the school.
84	You have been very supportive, helpful and informative. Thank you
85	When, as a family we were facing huge obstacles, the team (especially Cheryl) from IAS were an absolute god send! They attended meetings with us, helped us make sense of all the new terminology we were having thrown at us and ultimately, helped us secure a place at a specialist school for our boy. Amazing group of people! Thank you :-)
86	They have helped me for years, always helpful and kind and supportive. Made a huge difference to us as a family
87	Cheryl helped me with my son who is dyslexic. She guided and supported me when I lost all hope. I will always be grateful to her.
88	Being very helpful with my sons tribunal and understanding
89	Cheryl Wyatt has always responded promptly and with up to date and useful information
90	Without the help & support I received from Cheryl I would never of managed to secure my boys EHCP containing everything he needs and more. Your all amazing & I couldn't thank you all enough.
91	Very helpful, lots of information and advice given. Staff very approachable.
92	The service has been very helpful with everything. And I can always get hold of them when needed
93	The only reason I dropped a couple of stars is because I am in the very initial discussion stages so cant really comment however initial discussions have given me so much help. Help I was struggling to get for years and was very much losing hope. This service is hugely important to parents suffering in the same situations. I only wish I would have found you years ago.
94	Really helpful
95	Whenever I have had problems or still having on going problems cheryle has dealt with it all.nothing is a problem for her. She is great
96	Was an amazing workshop!! Helped me understand so much more so very helpful. I don't think I could get through this process if it wasn't for Cheryl and her team. Thank you all so much you have no idea how much this means to our family ♥
97	Emailed me back very fast with good advice
98	Cheryl and the team have been fantastic and help my so much with my little boys forms.
99	Because of Cheryl Watt. She is really really helpful and guide me all the time when I need her

Appendix C

Risk Register

Problem	How likely is it?	How would this affect the project?	When might it happen?	How will you avoid, counteract or limit the impact on your service	Whose responsibility is it to manage this risk?
Major loss of funding	Low.	A major loss of funding would have a significant impact on the ability to deliver the service in accordance with our obligations under contract and as per the Code and minimum standards.	Nov 2024	As this would be at a time when we would be deciding whether to apply for the tender, we would need to reconsider whether we were the right people to bid- and if we did, whether we would need to look at a reduction in staffing hours	Head of service and Trustees
Poor service user experience	Low.	Poor performance would deter other families from accessing us- as the only type of service that do what we do in Bolton, this would be massively detrimental for parent and cyp support across the three sectors	Staff experiencing personal problems, unclear about expectations of the role, and lack of support, as well as poor training and morale.	Effective supervision process in place and line management support. Clear job descriptions and person specifications to outline role expectations and regular performance reviews. Knowledge and levels of training gained by accessing available training and continuing CPD.	Head of Service
Loss of positive public face	Low.	Reputational damage would lead to a reduction in families using us for support. It would also mean our partnership links and good work relations with other orgs would be damaged. It would also have an impact at recommissioning.	Due to staff error or misjudgement.	The use of promotional materials, using feedback and showing a “you said, so we did” approach. Further, to use our close links with BPC to help parents regain confidence in using us	The head of service and Trustees. Working with the PCF.

Loss of any critical key people (e.g. service manager, board member)	Low	Loss of knowledge and experience, and potential relationships with other stakeholders.	Resignation of key staff or Trustees, or staff absence due to long-term sickness.	Implementation of continuity plan- other staff “acting up” until formal appointment made- re-designation of workload to ensure all families receive the support they need when they need it	Head of Service and Trustees
Closure of COG	Medium	Loss of premises and functions (office equipment etc)- loss of business manager	Funding from LA ceases for COG nursery function/ critical incident (fire/ natural disaster)	Emergency “rehoming” by the LA or the adoption of home working until independent premises are arranged. Offer of shared space within the space the PCF has.	Head of Service and Trustees

Appendix D

HOW WE HAVE BEEN PLANNING TO EXIT

We have been aware that the funding may not be able to continue for some time, and we always work on the assumption that no funding lasts forever- as such, we have some safeguards in place to remedy any possible funding loss. We categorise these into two sections- critical funding loss (core), and general funding loss. We used the IASP funding as a 'top up' to our core funding from the Local Authority, and therefore, we can be sure that our basic functions and obligations can continue as contracted.

The loss of any general funding would impact on how well we carry out our functions and obligations, for example, timeliness, quality, and availability. Obviously, this is something we seek to mitigate through identifying other ways of recouping this money.

As we were up for recommissioning in this funding period also, this gave us an ideal opportunity to seek to reduce spending and make savings and efficiencies elsewhere from core funding, which we were able to do, and these plans have been in place since November 2020.

Further, we have been looking at other ways to provide service income, such as through a traded aspect of the service, providing training to the Bolton workforce. We have already submitted plans and costings to the Local Authority.

We have also considered a number of fundraising options, as a fall back, if we were unable to identify and be awarded, funding from another source.

COMPLETING OUR CONTRACT TO IASP

We are well on track to meet the outcomes specified in our task order, and only have two matters to complete on. Both of these will be ongoing pieces of work anyway for the service, which we have planned on sustaining within our sustainability plan.

We are able to assure that our support will not stop, or be poorly delivered as a consequence, as for a short term solution, we have the remedies available to us though our savings and efficiencies. In the longer term, however, we will need to source some further funding to enable our high standards to be met as they are currently.

All our reporting will be completed on time, as we have already planned for this, and have made a start on gathering the information required for the final report, and when the time arrives, our business manager will be able to raise the invoice without delay.

CONSIDERING LOCAL PARTNERSHIPS

We do not predict a noticeable change in any of our service delivery that would impact on partners. Considering all partners across the education, health and social care sector, we do not foresee any issues because of the IASP funding ceasing. We will still be available for meeting attendance, working together to problem solve for the Bolton area, sharing resources and information between each other, and signposting and supporting (both ways) families to access all services.

The only impact that may be seen, and that is not a negative one, is with the parent carer forum, as we may seek to potentially take them up on some of their offers of support in the longer term.

The partnership we have with the parent carer forum is historical and complimentary in nature. We have lots of work planned as a joint collaboration in the longer term.

PARENTS AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Our families are always at the beating heart of what we do, and everything we have planned for has been around them and their needs. As with COVID, we experienced what would have been, for most, a severe service disruption, yet managed to maintain a seamless transition to remote working and different ways of working, without a single service user even recognising we had undergone huge change and challenge. The same would be true with the ceasing of any funding.

We have already identified possible weak areas that would need to firm up through our sustainability plan such as short term remedies (using savings and efficiencies to maintain the service), and longer term remedies, such as seeking alternate funding, utilising resources from within our own service/ other offers of support from other services.

LEGACY MATERIALS

We were always very careful when designing and printing our materials for the service, that they would always be relevant. As such, there are no details within any of our guides, leaflets, or fact sheets that would need changing, because of a cessation of funding.

All materials and documents procured through the IASP funding, would still be used, and still be factually up to date and relevant.

We would need to lightly amend the page on our website that focuses on IASP, but this would be a very small and time-light undertaking.

STAFF TEAM AND OUR VOLUNTEERS

Staff salaries are provided for (in the main), by our Local Authority core funding. We have tried to mitigate as far as possible, needing to make any redundancies.

The funding from IASP allowed us to employ a member of staff on a part time basis with the flexibility to provide cover to backfill roles also.

IASP funding allowed us to get on top of the jobs we needed to do, to ensure the service was complaint. As such, the requirement for backfilling and cover, is not as great as it was before. Ideally, what we need to maintain is the part time aspect, with a small degree of overtime allowance. We intend to maintain this post by using the savings and efficiencies we have mentioned previously, as well as seeking further funding to top up the post, if savings and efficiencies are not adequate to cover it.

Our financial projection completed as part of the service recommissioning work, shows that we can manage this well in the short term (mid/end 2021), but will need to seek investment for the longer term.

All contracts with the service are for 12 months at a time, to ensure that we can always pay for what we need and have time to plan for things like reducing staffing, if we ever need to.

Our volunteer receptionists will be unaffected by this, as they work for the charity as a whole, as opposed to specifically being for IAS. Regardless of changes to the IAS service, they would continue to provide reception and admin duties for the rest of the COG charity functions.

I will support my team by being open and honest about any situations we may find ourselves in, ensuring adequate time for preparing for staff changes/ contract variations, or anything that may impact on their employment sustainability. I will work with staff to think of creative solutions to any resource problems we may encounter in the longer term, and will ensure that we utilise the expertise of COG's bid writer, to ensure any further funding applications we make, have the highest chance of success.