

PLANNING TO EXIT

In this section explain how you intend to plan and approach your exit from IASP funding?

Throughout the years of receiving the IASP grant funding, the use of it has always been considered with the following strategic outcomes in mind:

- To ensure we are fully compliant with the minimum standards for a SENDIAS.
- Whatever is invested in either needs to be sustainable once the funding stops or leaves a lasting benefit to the service.
- Impact is evidenced from additional, temporary posts added to the service so that business cases seeking additional permanent funding can be written.

Using this strategic method since the IASP funding began, examples of some of the outcomes we have achieved:

- *Secured additional permanent funding from Education and Skills to make the two temporary part time Children and Young People Adviser posts permanent*
- *Secured permanent funding from Clinical Commissioning Groups to make a part time temporary Adviser support post permanent, and to also increase a permanent Adviser role to a full-time post.*
- *Sought feedback through events around the county, to ensure any service development would continue to meet current and potential service user needs.*
- *Commissioned a parent carer with relevant skills and experience to carry out research and put together a marketing and communications report for the service. The recommendations were considered and put in place during the following year and will be ongoing.*
- *Commissioned and set up our own independent service website (in line with minimum standards), that is sustainable once the funding ends.*
- *Produced several live webinars using a year's 'Click Meeting' subscription. These webinars were recorded and can stay on website all the while the information is up to date with current law and guidance. We also used this as an opportunity to work in partnership with other services and teams to build relationships and demonstrate the benefits of this media if adopted by the whole Local Authority (LA).*
- *Able to invest in our volunteers to show how we value them, and to also give them opportunities to support the team more, going some way to address the ever-growing demand to the service.*
- *Commissioned a service to translate 6 of our most popular leaflets (e.g 'SEN Support', 'EHC Needs Assessments', 'EHC Plans' etc) and our 'Moving to West Sussex' leaflet into the top 5 non-English-speaking languages in West Sussex.*
- *Commissioned a Graphics company to design our first service logo, and will develop service branding and identity from this, separate from the LA.*

As funding is due to cease on 31st March 2021, a SWOT analysis has been put together to identify what our strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats are moving forwards.

<p><u>STRENGTHS</u></p> <p>Impact of additional resource from IASP grant funding has been continually evidenced. This has led to securing additional permanent funding from Education and Health, which gives us additional capacity to help meet the demands of an IAS service moving forward</p>	<p><u>WEAKNESSES</u></p> <p>So far, we have not been successful in engaging effectively with Social Care, nor receiving any funding from them to commission the service.</p>
<p><u>OPPORTUNITIES</u></p> <p>Enabling Volunteers to be trained in IPSEA Level 1 (and other training using past IASP grant funding) could lead to some giving IAS support to parent carers where this is possible.</p>	<p><u>THREATS</u></p> <p>Ceasing of grant funding will reduce service capacity. A temporary part time post (30 hrs a week) which supported Area Advisers will terminate. This will reduce the effectiveness of the service to respond to service users within 3-5 days and will increase pressure on other staff.</p>

The threat section highlights the greatest risk and negative impact to the service and the Local Authority. This temporary part time role has ensured that all area Advisers are supported during the times when their caseload increases. Along with the other part time Adviser support role, it has also meant that we can think more strategically into the future and invest in other project work aside from the 'day to day' IAS support to parent carers, children and young people. This has led to resources produced that can empower some service users to be their own advocate within their situation, support Advisers with their own work, offer other opportunities for service users to be supported (based on the feedback they gave us) and supporting other colleagues through training and project work. For example, schools recognised for demonstrating good practice in working with parent carers, structured conversation training to schools, working in partnership with LA to input in production of EBSA materials, training to Early Help colleagues on the increasing basic SEND knowledge, etc.

If this temporary role ceased, the risk to the service and the Local Authority would include (some extracts taken from the SENDIAS Joint Commissioning business case):

- stricter triaging of IAS given, and families would not feel adequately supported.
- service users may not get the timely support needed e.g to write letters, understand processes, express their views, wishes and aspirations. The greatest impact will therefore be to the most vulnerable parent carers.
- SENDIAS would need to reduce the training and support they offer to other services that enable professionals to better understand and support families.
- a negative impact on Local Authority budgets if SENDIAS is not able to give support in the early stages of a difficulty or issue, thus preventing some families needing Early Help and other Social Care services.

- negative impact on Local Authority budgets if these young people, that sometimes fall under the radar, are not being supported to find employment, housing, etc.
- negative impact on joint commissioning initiatives (e.g ASC / ADHD pathway / Life Pathways).
- Possible increase in those 'NEET' and 'Missing in Education' who then may require 'Social Care' support and intervention.
- Unable to support young people at CETR (Care, Education & Treatment Review) meetings. Feedback shows that SENDIAS presence has helped bring positive outcomes from the meeting, which has led to support able to be provided within the county.
- Reduction in ability to support a restorative approach in order to build relationships between parties. This could lead to continued miscommunication, and possibility of no resolution without the need for tribunals.

CONSIDERING CONTRACT MATTERS

In this section explain how you will meet the requirements set out in the IASP contract task order during the exit process?

All objectives for the current contract are in hand and due to be completed by March 2021.

Outcome 1: West Sussex SENDIAS will be moving towards compliance in being commissioned by Education, Social Care and Health

Objectives for March 2021: I will have had at least one meeting with identified person in Social Care around them working towards full compliance in joint commissioning the SENDIAS service. **Evaluation:** Meeting notes / Quotes from emails.

Current Situation: On discussing this desired outcome with Line Manager and SEND Commissioning Manager, it was decided that we needed to be more direct with the strategy related to this objective, as it was felt that going straight to Executive Director level would be the best way towards securing possible permanent funding in a short amount of time. Therefore, I was asked to put a business case together (completed in August 2020) that was checked by my Line Manger. Following this a summary business case was requested (October 2020) and discussed in an Education and Skills Senior Leadership Team Meeting. Currently the business case is with the Director of Education and Skills who will be discussing this with the Executive Director of Children, Young People and Learning (Education and Social Care both fall within the umbrella of her remit). **Green: All that is in my control has been completed.**

Outcome 2: Review Service name, and branding (based on recommendation from our independently written marketing and communications report in 2019)

Objectives for March 2021: We will have actioned the outcomes from the report (if changes are required). **Evaluation:** Evidence of work carried out e.g name change, new logo and branding (if that is required).

Current Situation: We sought feedback through a survey via our online Blog to find out whether partners and service users wanted a name change. A report was produced which evidenced feedback to show that the majority did not want us to change the name. We also sought feedback from partners and service users on logo options (narrowed down by the team and steering group members) and produced a report via a blog to launch the winning logo. We now have our first logo that is shaping

our branding and starting to be used on documents, resources and publicity as and when they can be updated. **Green: All is completed.**

Outcome 3: CYP Advisers to work with Local Offer Officer & LA SEND Participation Lead & 'Young Voices for U', to adapt the 'Reaching Families' facts sheets on certain conditions in to YP friendly versions.

Objectives for March 2021: We will have produced the 3 facts sheets.

Evaluation: Fact sheets approved / Fact sheets printed / Factsheets on Local Offer

Current Situation: The pandemic has set this back a little in that we are having to engage with young people through online meetings, rather than support them in person with this work. It therefore has made it difficult to get the information needed from them to complete this objective. Having said that, the group has come up with some great ideas for factsheets and written some information to go in them, as well as thinking about how they can expand this work through the Local Offer to include videos of their own experiences. With the help of the LA SEND Participation Lead, we are also supporting the delivery of an online webinar in February to get ideas and feedback from a wider audience. This will help us to finalise the leaflets. This is currently being promoted, primarily through social media and schools. **Amber: Setbacks, but in progress and it is still hoped that we can complete this by March 2021 deadline. The exit planning will not affect this.**

Outcome 4: There is a volunteer training programme in place, over and above the initial training provided.

Objectives for March 2021 & Evaluation: Numbers trained, and impact evaluated by survey questionnaires with volunteers which is reported to IASP.

Current Situation: Those that were interested completed a questionnaire to identify their areas of interest and knowledge gaps. From this, training was discussed with the individual and an agreed plan put together. This opportunity was also extended to a parent carer representative on our Steering Group who holds a voluntary role in supporting other, new parent carers Steering Group representatives. **Green: on track and report will be written for final IASP report in March.**

In terms of those that we will be currently supporting, the worse-case scenario of the exit plan will not leave them at a disadvantage. The planning of the funding enabled the last remaining temporary role in the service to lead on project work for the year and supporting those Area Advisers that may be struggling at times with their workload. Therefore, ensuring they are not involved in ongoing work with parent carers or young people. However, if permanent Advisers are struggling with their workload the effectiveness and timeliness of response to new service users may be affected.

Time has been set aside in my diary for ensuring management reports and data requirements are produced and provided to the timeframe set out in the contract. As work is done throughout the year reports are written so that the time needed to put the report together is at a minimum.

We can access support from the Education and Skills department in requesting for invoices to be raised. Therefore, if we are aware of the amount that we have been authorised to have for this timeframe with good time, there will not be an issue with the final invoice being raised by the finance department by 7 April 2021.

CONSIDERING LOCAL PARTNERSHIPS

In this section explain how you have considered the impact of a change with local partners?

Our SENDIAS Steering Group members are aware of the implications if funding ceases. They have been supportive of our situation and some members have been very proactive in championing our cause or supporting with work related to sustainable planning for the future.

In particular:

- SEND Service and Market Development Manager has given feedback on business case and supports liaison with Senior Manager on the Joint Commissioning Team.
- Parent Carer representative on Steering Group was commissioned to carry out research and produce a marketing and communications plan to support targeted promotion of service into the future.
- Former Health Commissioner agreed to co-deliver a video with me on the history of how the SENDIAS is commissioned by Health. This was primarily done to support with the national IASP workshops but has also proven helpful in showing the benefits to commissioning our service (which may help with securing social care funding). Video: <https://bit.ly/3n2XAPI>
- Parent Carer Forum CEO (co-chair of Steering group) is exploring how they may be able to support with parent carer volunteer representatives on the Steering Group (including possible remuneration), and also co-producing a voluntary role profile within the Steering Group so parent carer representatives would feel supported, with minimal staff time required.
- Early Help Steering Group representative has been working with us to enable the production of an online training resource to increase Family Support Workers knowledge in the basics of SEND law and information. This will hopefully reduce the need for SENDIAS service support unless specialised SEND knowledge is required.

All partners are happy to support with any necessary communications if we have the worst-case scenario and must reduce capacity within the service. They are also aware that a reduction in the service capacity could have implications on the demands to their own areas of work, so are keen to help where they can to ensure the extra permanent funding needed to run an adequate and effective IAS service is secured.

Meanwhile, we will continue to email monthly service statistics and case studies to key Senior Managers within the LA and key partners in other services and voluntary organisations. We also use this opportunity to highlight concerns as well as celebrate service successes.

CONSIDERING PARENTS AND YOUNG PEOPLE

In this section explain how you have taken into consideration parents and young people?

As outlined at the beginning of this report, during the years that we have received IASP funding we have always considered how we can use the funding to our best advantage, ensuring the majority of what we invest in is sustainable and brings lasting benefits to our service users, even once the funding has ceased.

Examples would be (some already previously mentioned):

- Feedback events to ensure future service development continues to meet current and potential service user needs
- Live and recorded webinars on specific SEND subjects that can be viewed from our website
- Service website that is financially sustainable after funding ceases
- SENDIAS Blog giving tips and advice on specific SEND subjects
- Working in co-production with other LA teams and voluntary organisations to produce materials and deliver training that will empower service users (e.g EBSA resources, 'tools for schools' sub-site of Local Offer, online training through the charity 'Reaching Families', improving Local Offer pages on certain subjects)
- Translations of 6 SENDIAS leaflets into the top 5 non-English-speaking languages in West Sussex.
- Developing a logo and branding which will help bring identity to the service, reduce confusion with other services (e.g SENAT) and help with targeting promotion of service to potential users that may be in need of timely IAS.

However, when the IASP grant ceases (and assuming no additional permanent funding is secured), the risk/impact to service users could be:

- The timeliness in speaking to an Adviser and receiving IAS
- Stricter casework triaging, leading to less people receiving face to face support. This support was considered the most valued in feedback collected. It could also mean that the most vulnerable service users that need this extra support could be left at a disadvantage.
- Project work to support service users in being their own advocates will reduce.
- Social media posts will lesson in frequency and effectiveness as time to strategize and research will be reduced.
- Project work that supports schools and other professionals in engaging with and supporting SEND families will reduce.
- Less resource to target promotion effectively to those vulnerable individuals that require intensive support to navigate the system.

In terms of staff resource, the impact to IASP grant funding ceasing effects one part time post. It was decided that this post would not cover a specific area of the county regarding service user case work, to create minimal impact on service users if and when funding, and therefore post, ceased. Therefore, we will not have to inform stakeholders of any major service changes, but may need their support to share the message that the timeliness and level of support that can be offered may be affected at times when the demand on the service is high.

CONSIDERING LEGACY MATERIALS

In this section explain what you will do with resources and materials developed over time through the IAS programme?

All resources and materials that remain current and up to date will be available on our service website. We will also promote them from time to time through social media, blogs and directly with individuals through IAS support.

These include:

- Recorded webinars on 'Who we are and what we do', 'SEN Support', 'EHC Needs Assessment requests and Plans', 'Exclusions' and 'Introduction to Options after Year 11'.
- Adviser videos on how to check a draft EHC Plan (planning to do more), and service volunteer training videos recorded by the team in private 'Volunteers' section of website.
- Past blog posts with tips and advice of specific SEND subjects. Also, once posted, blogs articles are sent direct to email inboxes of individuals that have signed up via website.
- SENDIAS leaflet translations in top 5 non-English speaking languages in West Sussex
- Leaflets produced in co-production with Young People group 'Voices for You' and LA SEND Participation Lead will be on the young people's section of the Local Offer website (also a link from SENDIAS website).

When resources need updating, we will incorporate new service logo/branding into the design. Where possible we have produced our own resources, or commissioned resources that can easily be updated by the service (e.g. translations were requested as word documents so logo has now been added:

<https://westsussexsendias.org/sendias-resources/>)

A positive outcome from the pandemic has escalated the need for LAs to purchase and roll out online software to teams, in order to enable the use of online meetings and continue to deliver training online to partners and service users. This means that we can continue to record videos and update webinars through online training as and when needed using this software. We therefore do not need to renew our 'Click Meeting' yearly subscription that was funded by IASP grant.

A spreadsheet has been compiled of all the resources that have been developed, which details where they can be found and when they need to be reviewed and/or updated. We can therefore continue to monitor all resources if national law and guidance changes and, if necessary, remove completely from the public domain.

CONSIDERING STAFF TEAM AND/OR VOLUNTEERS

As a manager of an IAS service, explain what you will do to support staff affected by the end of this contract.

I have had a meeting with my new HR Adviser, and she is aware that the service has a temporary post that may cease at the end of March if additional permanent funding cannot be secured.

The post holder has been in the role since November 2019 so there will be no need to follow any timeline within a redundancy process. However, the future is regularly discussed with the member of staff to ensure that they are supported to find new employment, or to discuss possible options for the continuation of the role if funding continues at a lesser amount or if additional funding is secured at a reduced amount than needed to continue role in its current capacity.

If the role is to cease at the end of March 2021, the county council have a redeployment scheme that the postholder could be put into to maximise their chances of a smooth transition into a new role. Meanwhile, support has been given with preparing for an interview for a role outside the service.

My Line Manager is aware of the situation and has been in liaison with the Director of Education and Skills about the joint commissioning case. She is also looking into whether there is any funding, however minimal, from any other 'funding pots' within the LA.

If the post ceases then the existing staff will continue as normal, unaffected to a certain extent in terms of their day to day role. However, the support to ease workload when reaching demanding levels will not be there so I will need to monitor staff health and well-being closely to ensure that stress levels are managed. To prepare, we have also over time been:

- addressing the management of service user expectation in terms of timeliness of receiving of IAS, and level of support.
- producing resources that can empower the service user to be their own advocates.
- starting to train and equip volunteers to give more support to Advisers directly (e.g support with checking draft EHC Plans, supporting parent carer to make a request for an EHC Needs Assessment).

If we are unable to secure continuation of IASP grant funding or additional permanent funding for the service by end of March 2021, I will continue to work towards the joint commissioning of the service from Education, Health and Social Care. If successful in securing additional funding from Social Care in the future, it would be hoped that the ceased post can be reinstated to ensure that we can run an adequate and effective IAS service. This will also enable us to plan strategically into the future and triage the IAS that is required for each service user, so that none are at a disadvantage.

Heather McIntosh, West Sussex SENDIAS Team Manager

25th January 2021