



Wiltshire Local Safeguarding Children Board

ANNUAL REPORT 2010-11

&

BUSINESS PLAN 2011-13

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Wiltshire LSCB Annual Report 10-11 meets the requirements of the Apprenticeship, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009 to produce and publish an annual report on the effectiveness of safeguarding in the local area. The annual report has been approved by Wiltshire LSCB and will be submitted to the Wiltshire Children and Young People's Trust Board.

Section One provides a Chair's Summary outlining the LSCB's activity in undertaking a Serious Case Review, challenging agencies over how they are managing risks from reduced public funding, the analysis of performance information and reviewing Board business.

Section Two explains the governance accountability and structure of Wiltshire Local Safeguarding Children Board. In March 2011 there were 40 LSCB Board member representatives from 19 statutory and voluntary organisations that work with children in Wiltshire.

Section Three – Review of Wiltshire LSCB Activity and Development demonstrates the extent to which the functions of Wiltshire LSCB as set out in Working Together (2010) are being effectively discharged.

Activity and development of Wiltshire LSCB objective and sub groups

LSCB quality assurance activity identified required changes in child protection practice for unborn babies and evidenced improvement in the recording of the child's voice in social care assessments.

The LSCB's undertaking of statutory auditing responsibilities for Section 11 of the Children Act 2004 monitored an overall improved audit score for agencies discharging their functions to safeguard children. Areas of improvement included service development, single agency safeguarding training, recruitment/ vetting and clear statements of safeguarding responsibilities. LSCB monitoring of the implementation of Section 175 of the Education Act (2002) identified the successful completion of self assessment safeguarding audits by schools, acknowledging that in Ofsted inspection evaluations of Wiltshire Schools, 90% received "Good" or "Outstanding" for safeguarding and no schools failed in this area of inspection.

LSCB sub group monitoring of safe recruitment and practice of frontline staff has noted the implementation of common safe recruitment standards across Wiltshire agencies, including training for interviewers. Progress has been slowed down due to restructuring in agencies. Allegations against staff have been monitored to ensure compliance with government guidance and a clear accessible system for reporting concerns to the LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer) is in place. Auditing outcomes of the process are reported to the LSCB Sub Group.

Wiltshire LSCB met its function to review all child deaths in Wiltshire. The Wiltshire and Swindon Child Death Overview Panel concluded that there were modifiable factors in 31% of the deaths reviewed. The lessons learnt about the prevention of

future child deaths are actioned and monitored by the Child Death Overview Panel. Wiltshire LSCB Board members were informed of an arising universal safeguarding issue of the risk of parent/ infant co-sleeping and concurrent use of alcohol/ drugs.

A Serious Case Review was undertaken by Wiltshire LSCB from September 2010 – April 2011 following the death of a young person who took her own life and was anonymously known as Child G. For this serious case review the focus of LSCB activity for the business year 10-11 was in the undertaking and completion of a timely comprehensive review in accordance with government guidance, also monitoring the development of planned agency and multi agency action and where required immediate implementation to address urgent need. This included reinforcement of interagency escalation protocol, review of service threshold criteria, referral pathways and assessment processes. Also the development of a multi agency panel for young people presenting high risks in the community.

LSCB focus for the business year 11-12 is upon disseminating the lessons learned from this serious case review to practitioners in Wiltshire and monitoring the implementation, evaluation and ongoing impact of the review's action plans. The LSCB serious case review subgroup monitored the outstanding training actions arising from a serious case review undertaken in 2008. The group reviewed the learning for Wiltshire from national serious case reviews, disseminating lessons about practice issues for resistant parents and planning actions to safeguard Wiltshire's children in this area and education at home.

The LSCB training sub group designed and contributed to the delivery of multi-agency child protection training. In 10/11 98 training days were provided on Wiltshire LSCB multi agency safeguarding children courses. Training was provided at 4 levels to meet the training requirements for local professional. Also 795 places were provided on a level one awareness of child abuse and neglect e-learning course and qualification. In addition to tailoring training content to meet local needs an audit evidenced that government guidance from "Working Together" (2010) was effective in the Level 2 and 3 training courses.

To disseminate national and local learning the LSCB presented 6 practitioner safeguarding Fora covering 2 themes; the requirements of new safeguarding guidance in "Working Together" 2010 along with national learning from serious case reviews and the child's voice in safeguarding.

Wiltshire LSCB procedures group continued to contribute a Wiltshire perspective to the South West Child Protection Procedures as they continued to develop to meet new national guidance and emerging research. Local Wiltshire protocols to update practice guidance were also agreed.

An LSCB Improvement Plan was developed to ensure LSCB monitoring of identified areas from national and local learning for safeguarding action in Wiltshire. The plan has evidenced improvement in implementation of the common assessment

framework, multi agency thresholds, review of service delivery and inclusion in training of pertinent issues arising from serious case reviews.

LSCB Board and Executive Group reviewed achievement of the LSCB Business plan and the effectiveness of LSCB processes to achieve this. The completion of a Self Assessment and Improvement Tool identified progress in the dimensions of effective governance, building capacity and establishing the Board's strategic direction. Areas for further consideration included consultation and involvement of children, parents and the community in LSCB safeguarding activity and demonstrating how LSCB impacts on safeguarding outcomes for children.

In line with current research the Board decided to develop options for restructure to improve its effectiveness.

Wiltshire LSCB Objectives Review

There were three priority objectives for Wiltshire LSCB in 10/11 all of which achieved significant progress. In objective one - the implementation of "Working Together" (2010) guidance into everyday practice was evidenced by an audit of agency practice and training. A similar process was undertaken for LSCB business processes.

Objective two – Missing Children, the LSCB monitored the developments in local practice to reduce the number of children and young people going missing. Progress was made with the introduction of a co-ordinated multi-agency response to missing children in Wiltshire. A multi- agency Missing Children protocol was adopted and a robust reporting procedure implemented. A multi agency Panel was established to plan a multi agency response to young people who frequently run away and review safeguarding in high risk locations. The piloting of a voluntary sector Outreach Worker post continued. The outcome of this work has led to an increased evidence based understanding of the extent and issues relating to young people who go missing in Wiltshire.

Objective three – increasing independence, challenge and relationships with Children's Trust championed the principles of independence and challenge across the LSCB. Its achievements, reviewing the mechanisms for independence and challenge to partner agencies, the introduction of a challenge item in LSCB group agenda and terms of reference has led to a firmer embedding of the principles in LSCB business.

Challenge/ Communication with related Boards

Effective communication with related Boards in Wiltshire is essential to improve understanding of roles and related strategic activity. It assists in identifying issues for joint influence and individual challenge. Communication agreements are in place between Wiltshire LSCB and related Boards/ strategic partnerships in Wiltshire. As a "learning Board" the LSCB has strengthened links with Wiltshire's Children's Trust

Board, Wiltshire Community Safety Partnership and Wiltshire Local Safeguarding Adults Board. This includes regular sharing of information, agendas and annual report along with Manager/ Chairs meetings and work together shaping the broader aspects of safeguarding to ensure that all children and young people in Wiltshire are supported to achieve good outcomes. It is anticipated that from this platform of shared knowledge effective robust challenge will be made where required from Wiltshire LSCB to the work of the Children's Trust in driving improvements in the safeguarding of children and young people and in promoting their welfare.

Section 4 – Review of Wiltshire local safeguarding children performance outlines the context and effectiveness of local arrangements to safeguard children.

Performance Information

Wiltshire LSCB scrutinises local performance data to recognise examples of good practice and areas for future development responding to identified needs. Data from Wiltshire's performance in the "Stay safe" national indicators has improved in 8 out of 11 areas. Red ratings are in place regarding: the time taken to complete initial assessments; children becoming subject to a subsequent child protection plan and stability of placements for looked after children. Details of agency investigation into areas of concern and plans to improve the performance are scrutinised by the LSCB. Improvement has occurred in the scrutiny and monitoring of Children in Need plans.

In the Wiltshire shared partnership safeguarding accountabilities agreement Wiltshire LSCB is accountable for strategic oversight of children and young people who have suffered abuse. Data relating to children subject to a child protection plan or a social care referral is monitored in order to understand the local area safeguarding context, also its comparison to national trends. Similarly to the national picture there is an increase in the number of children subject to a child protection plan. The predominant category of plan is emotional abuse followed by neglect. The predominant welfare factors in a family where a child had become subject to a child protection plan were domestic violence, adult mental health and alcohol use.

Children from the age of 5 who are subject to a Child Protection Conference are offered an advocate. Advocacy service records note that 85% of Conferences heard the views of Children and Young People and in the advocate's opinion 30% of conferences showed evidence that the child's views had been acted upon.

Vulnerable Groups

The effectiveness of safeguarding vulnerable groups of children is reviewed. The Wiltshire Domestic Abuse Strategy has led to the provision of specialist abuse support services to target the needs of predominantly adult victims. The Wiltshire MARAC (Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference) process is providing a multi agency response to prevent and reduce further harm from domestic abuse. There

was a decrease of domestic abuse incidents reported to the police. Of the 2058 incidents reported 68% mentioned children.

In November 2010 Wiltshire LSCB formally endorsed its support for the Wiltshire Hidden Harm Strategy to improve the outcomes for children and young people affected by parental drug and alcohol misuse. It is acknowledged that there is a lack of local and national data making it difficult to specifically define the numbers of problematic substance users in Wiltshire who are parents of dependent children. Wiltshire LSCB will monitor the implementation of the strategy and its progress on outcomes for children.

The LSCB has a role to monitor the safety and welfare of privately fostered children and receives reports about notification of arrangements and an ongoing awareness raising programme. Numbers are low, influenced by national changes in looked after arrangements for children.

The population of vulnerable children in Wiltshire is recognised in the assessments and plans of Wiltshire Children and Young People's Trust and the Public Health Joint Strategic Needs Assessment of Wiltshire Council/ NHS Wiltshire.

Agency Safeguarding Activity

Progress in Wiltshire agencies safeguarding activity is reported to the LSCB contributing to the context of local safeguarding arrangements. Strengths of safeguarding arrangements and areas for development in Wiltshire Council's Children's Services were identified in July 2010 following an Ofsted Unannounced Inspection of contact, referral and assessment arrangements.

Also, as a component of the local safeguarding context, following the significant changes announced for public services in 2010 the Chairs of the LSCB and Local Safeguarding Adults Board jointly wrote to Chief Executives of partner agencies requesting information about the risks/impact of proposed changes and their plans to mitigate the risks.

Section Five- Wiltshire LSCB Business Plan 10-13.

This is influenced and challenged by local and national developments and learning. The foremost priority for Wiltshire LSCB business is to meet its core functions as set out in legislation and regulation: to meet the objectives of co-ordinating local safeguarding work and ensuring its effectiveness within the LSCB scope of universal, responsive and targeted safeguarding activity. This will include monitoring the effectiveness of integrated working including the use of the common assessment framework. Each LSCB Group has identified objectives and action plans for 11-12 which form part of the LSCB Business Plan. In addition a priority area forming an annual objective for the LSCB is increasing consultation about safeguarding with children, young people and parents and becoming more responsive to their views.

Agency safeguarding priorities for 11-12 are also noted focussing on ongoing monitoring and audit of safeguarding practice, implementation of national reviews and learning, further development of multi agency safeguarding strategies and projects, seeking the voice of children and adults and evaluating the impact of adult focused work on children. These priorities and developments set the context for evaluation and review in the next Wiltshire LSCB Annual report.

Rachel Hull

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