

Task Group update

1. Safeguarding Children & Young People Task Group

Membership: Cllr Andrew Davis
Cllr Jon Hubbard (Chairman)
Rev Alice Kemp
Cllr Bill Moss
Cllr Carole Soden
Cllr Bridget Wayman

Meeting Wiltshire Council staff

Since the Committee's last meeting, the Task Group has met with:

- The Head of Referral and Assessment – Children's Social Care
- Assistant Team Managers (ATMs) from the Referral & Assessment team
- Child Protection Chairs (CPCs) and Independent Reviewing Officers (IRO) from the social care team
- Head of Service – Integrated Youth

Attending Multi Agency Forums

Several members attended Chippenham MAF in order to learn about MAFs' operation and discuss attendees' views of safeguarding in Wiltshire. The Task Group now plans to attend MAFs in other community areas.

Visits to other local authorities

On 12 October the Task Group visited Swindon Borough Council, which received an Ofsted grading of 'Good' at their last safeguarding inspection. The Task Group met officers from social care and Swindon's Lead Member for Children's Services. Learning points from the visit included:

- Swindon's social care teams have low staff turnover, stable management and a low number of temporary staff.

- Staff across the different agencies value having established and stable networks of contacts.
- The social workers consider themselves to be effective at managing the anxiety of other agencies – they consider this a key part of the job. A ‘Lead for School Safeguarding’ post has helped to reduce the number of unnecessary referrals.
- Swindon’s children’s services scrutiny committee receives a safeguarding performance report at every meeting.

A visit to Dorset County Council is now being arranged.

Future work

Following its formation, the Task Group resolved to focus on four key themes:

1. Communications
2. Workloads
3. Locality working
4. Future scrutiny of safeguarding

The Task Group plans to cover areas 1 to 3 up until Christmas 2012. Members believe this will give them a good enough understanding of safeguarding issues to effectively undertake area no. 4. The Task Group will meet on 29 November to review progress and agree what further work is required.

The Task Group then plans to bring its final report to the Children’s Select Committee on 28 March 2013.

2. Special School and Post-16 SEN Task Group

Membership:

- Cllr Carole Soden
- Rev Alice Kemp
- Cllr Graham Payne (Chairman)
- Cllr Anthony Trotman

The Committee received the Executive response to the Task Group’s report in September and following this agreed that the Task Group would continue its work. The Task Group is provisionally scheduled to meet again on 6 December to receive various updates and discuss future work. The Task Group work programme currently includes:

- Health care provision in special schools

- Usage of and waiting times for Canon's House and Hillcote respite facilities
- Post-16 provision by special schools and Wiltshire College
- Identification of Speech and Language difficulties in primary school aged children

3. Major Contracts Task Group

Membership: Cllr Jon Hubbard
Cllr Jacqui Lay
Cllr Bill Moss (Chairman)
Cllr Carole Soden

This Task Group's will meet on 17 December to conduct their annual review of the Council's contract with the White Horse Education Partnership (WHEP) for the provision of fully serviced secondary school accommodation at Chippenham (Abbeyfield), Malmesbury and Royal Wootton Bassett.

The other contract on the Task Group's work programme is the cluster contracts with four providers of the county's children's centres. A meeting to review these will be arranged for February 2013.

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