

**Lincolnshire Safeguarding Children Board
Scrutiny Sub-Group**

**Friday, 4 February 2011 in Committee Room Five,
County Offices, Lincoln**

PRESENT: COUNCILLOR S F WILLIAMS (CHAIRMAN)

Councillors Mrs C M H Farquharson, J D Hough, H R Johnson and R A Shore

Councillors in attendance: Councillor Mrs P A Bradwell (Executive Councillor for Children's Services and Adult Education)

Added members: Councillor Mrs M W Davidson (District Council Member), Mrs E French (Parent Governor Representative), Mr R Childs (NHS Lincolnshire), Mr J Walker (Lincolnshire Police Authority)

Officers in attendance: Chris Cook (Independent Chairman of the Lincolnshire Safeguarding Children Board), Sheridan Dodsworth (Lincolnshire Safeguarding Children Board Business Manager), Simon Evans (Scrutiny Officer), Sue Westcott (Assistant Director, Children's Services), Rachel Wilson (Democratic Services Officer)

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor A P Williams (Executive Support Councillor for Children's Services and Adult Education)

29. DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS

Councillor J D Hough declared a personal interest as his partner was a Non-Executive Director of Lincolnshire Partnership Foundation Trust and he was a Member of the Trust.

30. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING OF THE LINCOLNSHIRE SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN BOARD SCRUTINY SUB GROUP HELD ON 18 NOVEMBER 2010

Clarification was requested in relation to the type of meetings which were referred to in paragraph 2 of minute 22, and it was reported that this statement related to Child Protection Review Meetings. It was thought there was a lack of support for children attending these meetings and there should be appropriate support for whether Looked After Children had advocates available that they could call on in these situations. It was noted that in most cases, children would attend these meetings with their parents. The Sub-Group was informed that a report would be brought to the Corporate Parenting Panel shortly about this issue, as it was raised at the last meeting.

It was also noted that the sentence should have stated "children aged 13 and under", in the second paragraph of minute 22.

AGREED

That the minutes of the previous meeting of the Sub-Group held on 18 November 2010 be agreed as a correct record.

31. DRAFT MINUTES OF THE LINCOLNSHIRE SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN BOARD OPERATIONAL DELIVERY GROUP HELD ON 9 DECEMBER 2010

The Sub-Group discussed whether any further progress had been made with the issues around staffing in terms of paediatricians for medical examinations. Clarification was also requested regarding a number of acronyms used within the minutes and it was requested whether it would be possible in the future for reports and minutes to include an explanation of acronyms.

Discussions also took place regarding the level of resource implications for Short Life Task Groups.

AGREED

That the draft minutes of the Lincolnshire Safeguarding Children Board Operational Delivery Group held on 9 December 2010 be noted.

32. LINCOLNSHIRE SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN BOARD CHALLENGE AND IMPROVEMENT TOOLKIT – PRINCIPLE 5

The Challenge and Improvement toolkit enabled the LSCB (Lincolnshire Safeguarding Children Board) to score themselves on various principles. This ensured the Board was headed in the right direction and allowed it to scrutinise its own progress. The outcome of the scoring of Principle Five was presented to the Group, and this focused on *Good governance means developing the capacity and capability of the LSCB to be effective*.

It was reported that this was Principle 5 of 6 main principles, and that every action except 5.10 had been rated as green. In relation to action 5.10 – The LSCB compares its performance with that of other LSCBs – it was noted that the LSCB was trying to get more comparative data with other Local Safeguarding Children Boards, and this was being examined through the QARM (Quality Assurance Risk Management) group.

It was queried whether the Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership (CYPSP) would remain in its present form, as it was a demonstration of good partnership working and it was hoped it would continue, even though there was to be a move away from the 'Every Child Matters' agenda.

During discussions, queries were raised regarding the rating of the following actions: 5.4 – *All board members have suitable influence within their host agencies to achieve the intended outcomes of the LSCB* – concerns were raised about whether this action should be rated as 'Amber' instead of 'Green' in case there were instances where Board members had not ensured that actions were carried out. However, it was noted that it was the role of the Chair to ensure that all actions were followed up, and each agency was expected to provide evidence that the actions had been carried out. If they were not, they would be referred back to the Strategic Management Group.

The Chair of the Sub Group would ensure that actions were carried out following a Serious Case Review.

5.7 – *The LSCB has the sufficient financial resources to carry out its functions effectively* - Again it was queried whether 'green' was the most appropriate rating for this action as there were concerns regarding funding availability for the LSCB in the event of a serious case review taking place. However, it was reported that all partner agencies had committed to adequate funding for the coming financial year. It was reported by the Independent Chair of the LSCB that it had been agreed across the Strategic Management Group to not hold a 'pot' of money for serious case reviews, but that agencies would be called upon to contribute funding for them as and when necessary using the same funding formula as that for Core Budget contributions. It was considered important that a new formula was established for budget setting in the future

5.6 – *The LSCB has the sufficient human resources to carry out its functions effectively* - The human resources available to support the work of the LSCB was queried as it appeared that roles were duplicated. However, it was clarified that the 1 full time and 1 half LADO referred to the post of Local Authority Designated Officer.

5.5 – *The LSCB provides support to board members in order to maximise their effectiveness (e.g. training)* – It was queried whether more could be done for members, but it was reported that the training which was taking place had become integrated into the programme, and training specifically for board members was now carried out. An annual one day event was held for members, but there would now be additional dates added as considered appropriate. It would form part of the business planning for 2011/12. Officers tried to keep Board Members up to date with what was happening nationally with regards to safeguarding of children.

AGREED

That the Lincolnshire Safeguarding Children Board Challenge and Improvement Toolkit – Principle Five be noted.

33. TRAINING SESSION – HOSTILE FAMILIES POLICY

Members of the Sub-Group received a presentation from the LSCB Business Manager as part of a training session, to inform them of what was being done in relation to working with Uncooperative and Hostile Families.

The Members received detailed information during the presentation which focused on the following areas:

- Definition
- Support to Staff
- Types of uncooperativeness
- Understanding reasons for uncooperativeness
- Impact on assessment
- Impact on the assessment of the child
- Impact of uncooperativeness on professionals
- Effects on the child
- Questions professional must ask themselves
- Impact on multi-agency work
- Response to uncooperative families
- Dealing with hostility and violence

- Making sense of hostile responses
- Impact of hostility and violence on professionals
- Keeping professionals safe

The Members of the Scrutiny Sub-Group were provided with the opportunity to ask questions relating to the presentation they had received and the following points were raised:

- This issue had been raised following a recent serious case review as the perception of violent behaviour had discouraged some agencies from visiting this family
- Drugs and alcohol could be a factor in instances of hostility
- If there was a high level of hostility within a family, then removing the child from that situation would be considered
- Schools could play an important part
- It was a multi agency responsibility to look out for the child
- There may be genuine reasons why families would want a change of social worker
- There was a whole care programme approach around adults with mental health issues
- It was possible for the child to be violent, so how was this dealt with?
- There was a need to reach at an early age in order to prevent them from learning violent behaviours from others
- There was a need for supervision of the social workers in a therapeutic way, for instances when a worker was significantly affected by a case
- Reflective workshops were to be piloted with C4EO and it was hoped that these could be rolled out across the county and region if they were successful
- There was a need for preventative work in order to reach staff before they were signed off work with stress
- Staff in Social Care had a maximum caseload of 16 children
- When cases became public, the media would focus on any point where information was not shared as it should be
- There was very good information sharing in Lincolnshire, with information sharing arrangements and protocols in place

AGREED

That the presentation be noted

34. WORK PROGRAMME AND DATES FOR NEXT MEETING

The Group considered its work programme for the coming months, and it was agreed that the Child Protection Plan should be brought to the next meeting, where the findings would be presented.

It was also suggested that a short report be brought to the next meeting on the effects of the budget changes to Children's Services as some clarity was required.

Councillor Mrs P A Bradwell, Executive Councillor for Children's and Adults provided the members of the Sub-Group with an update on the situation with CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service). It was reported that there would be a 23% reduction in the Children's Services budget, and withdrawing the funding from CAMHS was highlighted, however, negotiations with the LPFT were still taking place. Frontline services such as the FAST team would be protected, and the authority was

looking at charging more for post 16 transport as well as reshaping the youth service. It was proposed to withdraw funding from some of those services which were not statutory, and find other ways of providing those services.

It was reported that it was hoped to bring some of the existing CAMHS's workers back to the authority, and assimilate them into currently vacant posts within Children's Services. It would be vital to ensure that a child still had access to these workers if they had a mental health issue, and it was hoped that when necessary specialist workers would be brought in. The main aim of this was to bring the expertise of the primary mental health workers in house, and utilise their skills and experience more effectively.

The Assistant Director, Children's Services provided an update to the Scrutiny Sub-Group on the unannounced Ofsted Inspection of Referral and Assessment services which had recently taken place. It was reported that positive feedback had been received from this inspection and it had been reported that the Authority had robust performance management indicators and strong leadership. Another area which had been highlighted as an area of strength was that the service was addressing the individual needs of the child and effectively responded to individual circumstances.

No areas of priority were highlighted and only two areas for development were reported, one of which related to the signing off of assessments and the other surrounding capturing more detail of multi-agency actions required following strategy meetings.

It was reported that the action plan for addressing these two areas of development would be brought back to a future meeting by the Assistant Director for Children's Services. But, overall this was good news.

The following were agreed as dates for future meetings of the Lincolnshire Safeguarding Children's Board Scrutiny Sub-Group:

- 31 March 2011 – 10.30am
- 19 May 2011 – 10.30am
- 15 July 2011 – 10.30am

It was also agreed that:

Councillor S F Williams would attend the meeting of the LSCB Operational Delivery Group on 17 March 2011.

Councillor J D Hough would attend the meeting of the LSCB Strategic Management Group on 28 April 2011

Richard Childs (NHS Lincs) would attend the meeting of the LSCB Operational Delivery Group on 12 May 2011

The meeting ended at 3.05pm.