

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

**Thursday, 31 March 2011 in Committee Room Three,
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 A P Williams (Executive Support Councillor for Children's Services and Adult Education)

Added members: 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), Tracy Johnson (Scrutiny Officer), Sue Westcott (Assistant Director, Children's Services), Rachel Wilson (Democratic Services Officer)

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor M W Davidson (District Council Member)

35. DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS

There were no declarations of interest at this point in the meeting.

36. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING OF THE LINCOLNSHIRE SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN BOARD SCRUTINY SUB GROUP HELD ON 4 FEBRUARY 2011

AGREED

That the minutes of the previous meeting of the Sub-Group held on 4 February 2011 be agreed as a correct record.

37. MINUTES OF:

LINCOLNSHIRE SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN BOARD STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT GROUP MEETING ON 13 JANUARY 2011

AGREED

That the draft minutes of the Lincolnshire Safeguarding Children Board Strategic Management Board held on 13 January, 2011 be noted.

LINCOLNSHIRE SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN BOARD OPERATIONAL
DELIVERY GROUP MEETING HELD ON 20 JANUARY 2011

AGREED

That the draft minutes of the Lincolnshire Safeguarding Children Board Operational Delivery Group held on 20 January 2011 be noted.

Councillor S F Williams gave his apologies to the Group as he had been unable to attend this meeting as planned.

With reference to minute 8, it was queried by one of the Members what was meant by the term 'overlay' and this was clarified by the officers present.

Again, with reference to minute 8, it was reported that it was hoped that the paediatricians would be in place the following day. The Independent Chairman of the LSCB informed the Group that he had a meeting with the health service the following day and he would be able to clarify this situation following the meeting.

It was also reported that the option of forensic medical examinations taking place in Peterborough had been considered and the Independent Chair would report back on this to the next meeting.

38. PROPOSALS FOR CHILDREN'S SERVICES CORE OFFER 2011/2014

Consideration was given to a report presented by the Assistant Director, Children's Services, which outlined the services which Lincolnshire County Council proposed to continue to deliver as part of its core offer.

It was commented that many of the Members of the Scrutiny Sub-Group may already be aware of the proposed changes and may have already seen the report. It was noted that this would be a major reconfiguration of services and it would prioritise early intervention. There would be many changes at a locality level, specifically around youth centre provision; however, all safeguarding services had been protected. The aim was to bring services together at a locality level for a targeted service incorporating youth centre provision, children's centres and the family support service. This would provide a more consistent approach across the services and they would be able to draw on each other, which would strengthen the teams.

Councillor Shore raised concerns regarding the magnitude of the cuts, and that preventative services would be cut by a third. It was suggested that officers should be outlining the risks and the challenges which would be faced by the services in the coming years.

It was queried how these cuts would affect the work of the Lincolnshire Safeguarding Children Board and it was reported that the Board was currently developing its own business risk register, which was in draft form. It identified that with the current economic climate, all agencies were a business risk to the Board, as they were all facing significant cuts in funding. It would be up to the Board to decide how to manage these risks and what controls to put in place to maintain the outstanding rating.

APPENDIX A

Health services and the police were reconfiguring their services, as was the case throughout the public sector and these changes were all risks to the Board, and the challenge would be how to minimise the risk to children in Lincolnshire.

The Group was informed that the officers had been asked to make these savings and they had done this with as little impact on safeguarding as possible. It was commented that as there was now far less regulation to follow, it had been possible to cut down the number of performance indicators. In the future it would be about working in a different way, it was not being proposed that this would be a better way of working, but it had to be done due to the funding cuts imposed by central government.

It was commented that the cuts to services was a concern to foster carers, as it was often the back office staff who carried out a lot of the work to enable front line staff to do their jobs more efficiently.

Members were reassured that there had not been any cuts to social worker teams or leaving care teams, and also there would be graduates coming back to the team. It was also noted that it had been requested for case workers workloads to be audited, and they were now monitored by the number of children they worked with, not the number of families. It was also commented that reassurance was gained from the knowledge that a risk register was being developed for the Board.

It was highlighted that one of the main concerns was the preservation of front line services as there was no evidence whether the changes would be effective, but the Sub-Group would monitor the objectives closely.

It was discussed whether it was an appropriate time to go through a Section 11 process, and it was thought that the Quality Assurance and Risk Management (QARM) group should monitor this on behalf of the LSCB.

Concerns were also raised regarding the involvement of the proposed GP Consortia, and whether they had been involved in any discussions regarding child protection issues, as it was considered important that they were engaged with sooner rather than later. The Group was informed that 500 GP's had recently participated in safeguarding training, and this was quite a significant step.

It was noted that the Munro final report was due to be published at the end of summer.

AGREED

That the report and comments made be noted.

39. LINCOLNSHIRE SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN BOARD CHALLENGE AND IMPROVEMENT TOOLKIT – PRINCIPLE SIX

The Challenge and Improvement toolkit enabled the LSCB (Lincolnshire Safeguarding Children's 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 Six was presented to the Group and this focused on *Good Governance means engaging stakeholders and making accountability real*.

It was reported that this was the last of six main principles which the Group had been considering over the year, and every action except 6.3 and 6.4 had been rated as green. It was felt that one area where there was still a need for improvement was participation of families in the work of the LSCB. A participation strategy was under development which would aim to involve families in the work of the Board. It was suggested that through the Communities and Communication Group could be an appropriate way for families to get involved. It was considered important that this was an interactive process in order for young people to participate.

It was noted however, that due to the work which had been carried out around involving families in serious case reviews, the County Council had been asked by the University of Nottingham if they were able to speak with some of the families about their experience of being involved in a serious case review as part of some work the University was carrying out.

The Group discussed whether outside help would be brought in if it was decided to progress with a Section 11. It was noted that this would not be the case due to the cost involved, and one of the Assistant Director Children's Services staff would instead assist in the training, and it would be the Board members who would carry out the Section 11, as it was very expensive to commission an external consultant to take on this role.

Discussions also centred around possible ways to engage more with young people, and it was suggested that as a lot of children communicated electronically through means such as Facebook, instant messaging and texting, that these should be part of the interaction. However, there were some concerns that this would mean that the young people would be missing out on face to face interaction.

Action 6.10 was also discussed and it was queried whether there was any input from diverse backgrounds, and it was commented that this was an area to still be developed further but some of the work which had already been carried out with the Muslim community had been very successful.

With regard to a suggestion of whether the LSCB should look to have some sort of branding in order to get more young people involved, it was commented that when a consultation took place the previous year, it was the young people rather than adults who most easily understood what the work of the Board was about.

AGREED

That the Lincolnshire Safeguarding Children Board Challenge and Improvement toolkit – Principle Six be noted.

40. WORK PROGRAMME AND DATES FOR NEXT MEETING

It was reported by the Scrutiny Officer, that there were no further changes to the work programme, but it was suggested that an item relating to the impact of the budget changes on the work of the Board be considered at the July meeting.

It was also agreed that:

APPENDIX A

Councillor H R Johnson would attend the meeting of the LSCB Operational Delivery Group on 16 June, 2011.

Councillor Mrs C M H Farquharson would attend the meeting of the LSCB Strategic Management Group on 14 July, 2011

AGREED

That the work programme be approved, subject to the amendments outlined above.

The meeting ended at 11.35am.