

Frontline Social Workers and Safeguarding

*A Review by the Children and Young
People Scrutiny Committee
June 2014*

Contents

Introduction

Foreword by Councillor John Hough,
Chairman of the Task and Finish Group 4

Executive Summary, Conclusions and
Recommendations 5

Establishment of Task and Finish Group 9

National and Local Context

What is the National Picture? 10

What is the Local Picture? 10

What have we found out?

Robustness of Safeguarding 12

Support for Frontline Social Workers 27

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Further Information on the
National and Local Context 36

Appendix 2 – Benchmarking with Other
Local Authorities 42

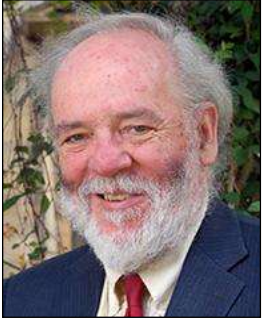
Appendix 3 – Pathway for Referral to
Children's Social Care where there is a
Risk of Significant Harm 44

Appendix 4 – List of Acronyms 45

Appendix 5 – Contributors to the Review 46

Introduction

Foreword by Councillor John Hough, Chairman of the Task and Finish Group



This review has looked at whether the safeguarding procedures in Lincolnshire are robust enough and whether frontline Social Workers receive enough support for them to carry out their job effectively. In today's society, Social Workers are under immense pressure to ensure that children are safeguarded, but at the same time receive a lot of negative press when reported by the media. From our meetings with Social Workers and their managers during this review, we have discovered that the Social Work staff in Lincolnshire are extremely dedicated and hard working, and should be strongly supported in carrying out their roles wherever possible. This review has highlighted that the safeguarding procedures in Lincolnshire are, on the whole, robust, and that the frontline Social Workers do receive a lot of support. However, the review has identified some areas for improvement which are set out in more detail in the report.

Finally, I would like to thank all the Members who took part in this Task and Finish Group for their dedication and support throughout the review, and to also thank the officers involved, in particular Janice Spencer (Assistant Director of Children's Services), Sam Clayton (Principal Child and Family Social Worker), Tracy Johnson (Scrutiny Officer) and Andrea Brown (Democratic Services Officer) for their support during the review. I would also like to thank everyone who met with us, especially the parents and children, the Social Workers and their managers who gave us an extremely useful insight into the world of children's social care.



Cllr John Hough

Task and Finish Group Members

The Task and Finish Group also consists of the following Members:



Cllr Bob Adams



Cllr Sarah Dodds



Cllr John Hicks



***Mrs Emma Olivier-Townrow
Parent Governor Representative***



Cllr Mrs Sue Ransome



Cllr Mrs Christine Talbot

Executive Summary, Conclusions and Recommendations

The scrutiny review into Frontline Social Workers and Safeguarding was established in October 2013 with the intention of scrutinising the robustness of safeguarding practices in Lincolnshire and whether there is sufficient support provided to frontline Social Workers.

This review was carried out between November 2013 and May 2014. As part of the review, the Task and Finish Group met 11 times during which it reviewed local safeguarding practices, procedures and policies, benchmarking Lincolnshire against other local authorities, and performance information relating to safeguarding. The Task and Finish Group also spoke to a range of frontline workers, such as Social Workers, Family Support Workers and Targeted Youth Workers, and also to Team Managers from the different localities. The Task and Finish Group visited the Customer Service Centre to observe the handling of queries and referrals relating to children's social care as they came in. Individually, the Members of the Task and Finish Group also attended meetings of Child Protection Conferences and Support Panel meetings, and some were given the opportunity to shadow a Social Worker as they conducted home visits. The Task and Finish Group has also spoken to the University of Lincoln regarding the social care degrees that are offered and also to the Lincolnshire Safeguarding Children Board to find out what they are doing around multi-agency working and training. Some Members of the Task and Finish Group also attended a Signs of Safety training session, and met with Judge Swindells, the Family Court Judge in Lincolnshire, to find out her views on whether safeguarding was robust enough in Lincolnshire.

According to the Safe Network, nationally one in five children in the UK today have experienced serious physical abuse, sexual abuse or severe physical or emotional neglect at some point in their lifetime. Furthermore, one in 10 children in the UK has been neglected. There have been a number of national policy changes relating to safeguarding and child protection over the last few years. The Munro review in 2010 was the catalyst for change to the way child protection and safeguarding was conducted across the country. The review led to new national guidance being issued in 2013 called "The Working Together to Safeguard Children: A guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children". This guidance set out the legislative requirements and requirements and expectations on individual services to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and a framework for Local Safeguarding Children Boards (LSCBs) to monitor the effectiveness of local services. According to the guidance, over 600,000 children nationally were referred to local authority children's social care services in 2011-12. The guidance states that

*"Ultimately, effective safeguarding of children can only be achieved by putting children at the centre of the system, and by every individual and agency playing their full part, working together to meet the needs of our most vulnerable children."*¹

Around 20% of children aged 0 to 17 in Lincolnshire have been subject to some form of early intervention in the last six months. This includes involvement in all universal and targeted services such as those offered at children's centres, early help arrangements, Team Around the Child (TAC) and ESCO (Early Support Care Coordination). There are approximately 3700 open cases with the Children's Services Social Care Service at any one time. This includes Looked After Children, Children with Disabilities, Child in Need (CiN) and children on Child Protection Plans (CPP). In addition the number of children who are looked after has steadily been increasing over the last couple of years from 470 in September 2011 to 601 in April 2014.

In line with the national position, Children's Services is experiencing much greater demand on child protection services. In the last five years, caseloads have increased by over 30% from 2,842 in 2008 to 3,802 in 2013. The rise in referrals of children requiring services is putting increasing pressure on

¹ Working Together to Safeguard Children: A guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children>

Social Workers and Lincolnshire County Council has recently agreed to allocate an additional £400,000 to recruit more Social Workers.

Conclusions

From the evidence and findings detailed in the report, the Task and Finish Group has drawn a number of conclusions:

- The Task and Finish Group was satisfied that safeguarding in Lincolnshire is compliant with national legislation and guidance and that the safeguarding practices are robust. However, the purpose and function of Support Panels was questioned and this needs to be relooked at.
- One important safeguarding issue that has been highlighted is around neglect cases and ensuring that these are acted on as quickly as possible when required.
- There needs to be closer working with schools on neglect issues, including more pastoral care for vulnerable children, and around the prevention agenda by offering parental training to teenagers.
- The current IT system ICS (Integrated Children's System) is not very user friendly and a number of issues have been raised by Social Workers about ICS. The new Mosaic IT system and the potential use of mobile technology for remote working we expect will improve IT access for Social Workers.
- Social Workers need better training opportunities around report writing skills, child development and capturing the Voice of the Child through objective child focussed observations.
- The training courses offered by the University of Lincoln also need to be looked at again to ensure that students are fully prepared for a career in social work.
- Issues around recruitment and retention, particularly of experienced Social Workers, are of great concern and this needs to be examined further, including detailed review and evaluation of all exit interview data.
- The Customer Service Centre (CSC) plays a vital role in screening safeguarding referrals that come through to Lincolnshire County Council. Given the nature of the calls which the CSC staff have to deal with, there is concern over whether the staff are sufficiently trained or qualified to handle these referrals.
- The Lincolnshire Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) is very proactive in Lincolnshire and is currently carrying out a number of audits and producing a multi-agency neglect policy. However, there is a need for all partner agencies to own and embed the LSCB agendas and targets.
- Capturing the Voice of the Child effectively by Social Workers and partner agencies has been identified as a particular issue. The Task and Finish Group concluded that more training is required on this and that the LSCB should take a lead role in identifying the various methods used by partner agencies to capture the Voice of the Child and cascade and assess the application of best practice.
- Information sharing between partner agencies is another issue which has been highlighted. The co-location of different social care teams, along with partner agencies, in each locality would be beneficial to joint working and sharing vital information between staff.

Recommendations

In light of the evidence and findings detailed in this report, the Task and Finish Group submit the following 17 recommendations to the Executive:

Recommendation 1

A review should be carried out to ensure that all parents receive a copy of their assessments and that the mechanisms for this process are robust.

Recommendation 2

The Task and Finish Group welcome and support the multi-agency Neglect Policy and Procedure being developed by the Lincolnshire Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) and encourage the Board to ensure that all partner agencies adhere to it. Given the complexities around neglect cases, the LSCB is recommended to review and ensure that comprehensive and specific training on neglect, particularly around complex neglect, is delivered to all frontline staff within all partner agencies. This relies on the knowledge and understanding of child development and the ability to capture neglect through child focussed observations. The Lincolnshire Safeguarding Boards Scrutiny Sub Group should monitor the implementation of the Neglect Policy and Procedure, and the neglect training opportunities made available to partner agencies.

Recommendation 3

The recent Ofsted report “In the child's time: professional responses to neglect” makes seven specific recommendations to local authorities. The Task and Finish Group recommends that a work programme is produced to ensure that these recommendations are implemented in Lincolnshire.

Recommendation 4

Lincolnshire County Council should identify and share best practice with schools on how they can use their pupil premium to improve the attainment, health and pastoral care of young people suffering, and at risk of, neglect.

Recommendation 5

Children's Services should work with secondary school Headteachers to encourage them to offer parental training, including child development, to all teenagers.

Recommendation 6

The LSCB is recommended to conduct a pilot project to identify the methods used by partner agencies to listen to and record the Voice of the Child and share the most effective methods amongst partner agencies as examples of best practice. An audit trail of the Voice of the Child should also be carried out.

Recommendation 7

The social care teams in each area, along with other agencies such as Health and the Police wherever possible, should be co-located to ensure better joint working and information sharing across the different teams and agencies.

Recommendation 8

That best practice is shared in relation to Child Protection Conferences, including the timeliness of paperwork being presented, to ensure consistency across the county.

Recommendation 9

The purpose and function of Support Panels should be revisited to ensure that they are providing thorough challenge by using the Signs of Safety methodology to map and summarise each case.

Recommendation 10

It is recommended that an audit of the training on children's safeguarding provided to CSC staff, and the quality of that training, is undertaken to ensure that it is fit for purpose and that CSC staff are trained in the issues of children's safeguarding and child development to deal effectively with contacts.

Recommendation 11

A review of the recruitment and retention strategy for Social Workers should be undertaken, including revisiting the pay and reward offer for front line Social Workers, to ensure that there is some form of recognition for this challenging and difficult role. An analysis of exit interviews should also be undertaken to see if there are any trends around reasons for leaving and where Social Workers move onto.

Recommendation 12

Further work should be undertaken with the universities across the region, including South Yorkshire, the Humber, and the East Midlands, around the recruitment of Social Workers and developing degree courses to ensure they provide the rights skills and training needed by Social Workers.

Recommendation 13

The report writing training offered to Social Workers, and the management oversight of this, needs to be revisited to ensure it is fit for purpose and enables Social Workers to be able to produce quality reports, such as for Child Protection Conferences. It would be beneficial if report writing models were developed as examples of good practice for Social Workers. This should be underpinned by training on child development and should include examples of how best to capture the Voice of the Child.

Recommendation 14

The University of Lincoln should be encouraged to provide more training on child development and capturing the child's perspective through objective child focussed observations.

Recommendation 15

A strategy should be developed around training for Practice Educators at Levels 1 and 2, along with a review of who is the best provider of the Practice Educator courses in the region.

Recommendation 16

The Task and Finish Group recognised the difficulties faced by Social Workers when using the current ICS system and considers it essential that the new IT system, Mosaic, is brought in as soon as possible.

Recommendation 17

A trial of using mobile technology such as Ipads / tablets should be conducted, with at least one or two FAST teams, to examine what the benefits would be for Social Workers in using mobile technology in their work with children and young people.

Establishment of the Task and Finish Group

The Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee agreed at its meeting on 18 October 2013 that there was a need for a scrutiny review to investigate the issues around Frontline Social Workers and Safeguarding after concerns had been raised through a recent serious case review.

The Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee agreed at its meeting on 24 October 2013 to establish a Task and Finish Group to conduct this scrutiny review, and the following objectives were approved:

- 1. To examine the robustness of safeguarding practices.*
- 2. To ensure sufficient support is provided to Frontline Social Workers.*

The National Picture

In June 2010, the Secretary of State for Education commissioned an independent review of child protection in England by Professor Eileen Munro from the London School of Economics and Political Science. The central question of the review was *'what helps professionals make the best judgments they can to protect a vulnerable child?'* In May 2011, **The Munro Review of Child Protection: Final Report – A child-centred system** was published. The report states that

*"Within preventative and other services good mechanisms are needed to help identify those children and young people who are suffering, or likely to suffer, harm from abuse or neglect and who need referral to children's social care. The association between child abuse and neglect and parental problems, such as poor mental health, domestic violence and substance misuse, is well established. It is not easy to identify abuse and neglect. Signs and symptoms are often ambiguous and so it is important that those working with children, young people and adults have ready access to social work expertise to discuss concerns and decide whether a referral to children's social care is needed."*²

The review recommended the designation, in each local authority, of a Principal Child and Family Social Worker, who is still doing direct work, to advise on enhancing practice skills. This role would take responsibility for relating the views of Social Workers to those whose decisions affect their work. The Munro report also recommended that the Government revised statutory, multi-agency guidance to remove unnecessary or unhelpful prescription and focussed only on essential rules for effective multi-agency working and on the principles that underpin good practice. In March 2013, the Government published **Working Together to Safeguard Children: A guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children** which replaced the previous statutory guidance.

In March 2014, Ofsted published a report entitled **In the child's time: professional responses to neglect**. The report explored the effectiveness of arrangements to safeguard children who experienced neglect, with a particular focus on children aged 10 years and under. The report drew on evidence from 124 cases and from the views of parents, carers and professionals from the local authority and partner agencies. According to the report,

*"One third of long-term cases examined on this inspection were characterised by drift and delay, resulting in failure to protect children from continued neglect and poor planning in respect of their needs and future care."*³

Further information on the above reports, along with the outcomes from a Community Care Survey of Social Workers undertaken in November 2013, national safeguarding data, information on Public Law Outline (PLO) 2014 and Signs of Safety can be found in Appendix 1.

The Local Picture

The Lincolnshire Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) was established in 2004 following the Victoria Climbié Inquiry to create a multi-agency framework around high profile and sensitive issues. The Lincolnshire Safeguarding Children Board has produced a guide called **Meeting the Needs of**

² The Munro Review of Child Protection: Final Report – A child-centred system

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/munro-review-of-child-protection-final-report-a-child-centred-system>

³ In the child's time: professional responses to neglect <http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/childs-time-professional-responses-neglect>

Children in Lincolnshire: A Shared Responsibility in response to the national Working Together 2013 guidance.

In Lincolnshire, there are eight locality teams covering Lincoln, West Lindsey, East Lindsey (North and South), North Kesteven, South Kesteven, Boston and South Holland. Within each of the locality teams there are Family Assessment and Support Teams (FAST) which consist of a mixture of level 1 and level 2 Social Workers, Advanced Practitioners, Practice Supervisors and a Team Manager. There are also targeted teams consisting of Family Support Workers and Targeted Youth Support Workers, and Families Working Together (FWT) teams consisting of key workers which all provide valuable support to Social Workers. Appendix 1 has further details about the LSCB and the locality teams in Lincolnshire, along with the outcomes from the last Ofsted inspection in 2009.

The table below sets out the data relating to safeguarding children from October 2013 to April 2014:

	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr
New referrals for the County	570	517	375	440	382	532	420
Number of total open cases to Social Care (FAST Teams)	3691	3733	3680	3704	3627	3763	3791
Number of children subject to a Child Protection Plan	363	359	361	371	374	344	330
Number of children 'Looked After' by LCC	575	580	589	603	591	599	601
Number of children open for a TAC	974	1002	1094	1109	1033	1069	1220
Number of children who have been subject to early intervention in the last six months (cumulative figure)				20,557	24,617	28,104	29,586
Child population in Lincolnshire 0 to 17				139,301		139,720	

As can be seen from the data above, approximately 20% of children aged 0 to 17 in Lincolnshire have been subject to early intervention in the last six months. This includes involvement in all universal and targeted services such as those offered at children's centres, early help arrangements, Team Around the Child (TAC), and ESCO (Early Support Care Coordination). There are approximately 3700 open cases with the Children's Services Social Care Service at any one time which includes Child in Need (CiN), Looked After Children, Children with Disabilities, and children on Child Protection Plans (CPP). In addition the number of children who are looked after has steadily been increasing over the last couple of years from 470 in September 2011 to 601 in April 2014.

Appendix 2 provides information on benchmarking Lincolnshire against other local authorities. Throughout the various Ofsted inspections that have been examined, a number of key themes have been identified in enabling a strong overall service for safeguarding and child protection. These include:

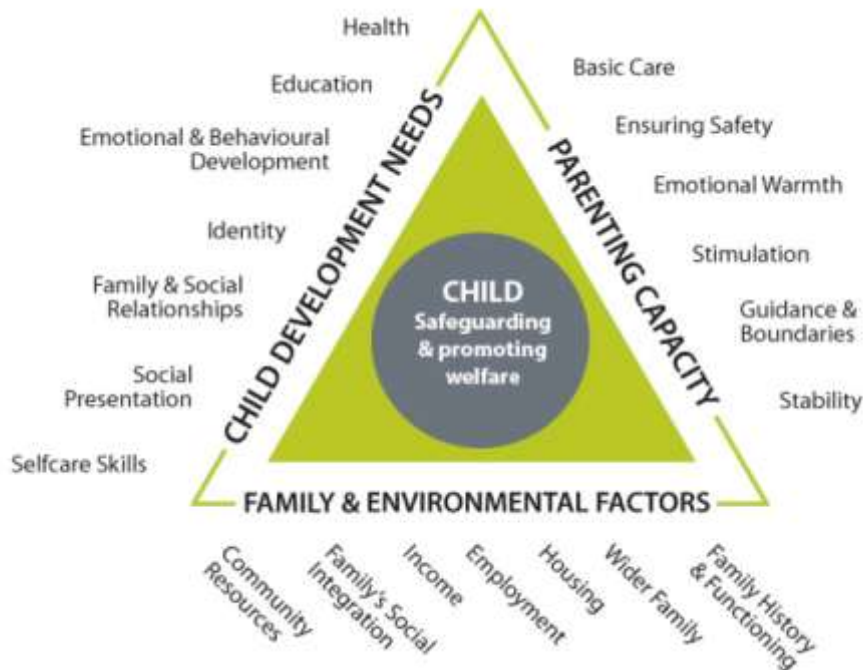
- Strong management and leadership structure providing clear guidelines and protocols to its authority.
- Good permanent workforce of experienced Social Workers with good working practices in place to support new and less experienced Social Workers.
- Close partnership working, ensuring that all multi-agency working is consistent in its practices.
- Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) is an important factor within a local authority and must be working closely with all partners.
- Consistent approaches to working practices amongst Social Workers, ensuring that adequate time and support is given to allow for all records to be accurately maintained and up to date within a timely manner.
- Where the Signs of Safety approach has been implemented with local authorities, it has facilitated for identified improvements in the Social Workers practice. It has encouraged increased confidence from the families and children involved, giving the feeling that their voices and opinions are being taken into consideration. Further information on Signs of Safety is contained in Appendix 1.

What have we found out?

Robustness of Safeguarding

How does the Assessment Process work?

The diagram below sets out the framework for assessment of children in need and their families as detailed in the Working Together 2013 guide.



Since June 2013, social care staff have been implementing Signs of Safety across Lincolnshire as part of the assessment process. According to the Meeting the Needs guide,

“Signs of Safety is a way of looking at the strengths and difficulties for and with a child and family and was first introduced in Lincolnshire in Summer 2013. It helps to better understand what needs to change, how this can be done and who needs to do what to reduce risk and improve the lives of children.”⁴

This approach is a relationship-grounded, safety-organised child protection framework designed to help families build real safety for children. This would be reached by allowing families to demonstrate their strengths in protection and requires partnership and collaboration with the child and family. It would also assist professionals at all stages of the child protection process. The goals of Signs of Safety are:

- To reduce the rates of child abuse
- To reduce the rates of repeat maltreatment
- To reduce family disruptions and the number of foster care placements
- To increase children and family engagement and direct participation in the child protection work and decision-making
- To increase child welfare practitioners' job satisfaction and worker retention
- To increase practitioner's practice depth and to grow child protection systems and structures that grow such practitioners
- To create a shared language risk assessment and practice framework and culture across all child protection responses, both statutory and non-statutory, government and non-government, which is also understandable and accessible to families and children

⁴ Meeting the Needs of Children in Lincolnshire: A Shared Responsibility <http://www.lincolnshirescb.org.uk>

Early Help Assessments (formerly known as Single Assessments) have been developed to help professionals to identify if a child has any additional needs and how they can be supported. An Early Help Assessment should be completed by any professional at the earliest opportunity when they are worried about a child or young person's health, development, welfare or progress; or if the child, young person or their family has raised a concern with a professional. The form has been developed in line with Signs of Safety methodology, which is an evidence based approach to safeguarding children and young people. The form provides a clear template to facilitate a meaningful assessment with the participation of the child, young person and their parents/carers. The Assessment template has been developed as part of Lincolnshire's Early Help Strategy, and agreed by all partner agencies via the Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership on 24th February 2014.

However, where there are immediate child protection concerns and it is considered that a child has suffered or may be suffering significant harm, a referral must be made to the Council's Children's Services Social Care Service through the Customer Service Centre (CSC). Any safeguarding concerns which a professional or a member of the public has about a child are directed through the CSC call handlers who record the referrals on the ICS (Integrated Children's Services) system. The Practice Supervisors based at the CSC will then allocate the referral, if required, to the appropriate locality team.

Social care staff will then need to undertake a Social Care Assessment. This assessment was introduced in October 2013 and replaces the initial and core assessments which were previously conducted. The Social Care Assessment covers the same areas as the Early Help Assessment but in greater depth. As with the Early Help Assessment, a Social Care Assessment is best developed in partnership with the child and family, and with the assistance of all those other professionals who are working with or who have had contact with the child and family. Professionals involved with the child are expected to contribute to the Social Care Assessment.

If significant harm has been identified, immediate action is taken and a Child Protection Conference is arranged within 15 days. If no significant harm has been identified, a Child in Need meeting is held within 20 days. The Meeting the Needs guide contains a pathway for referrals to children's social care which is attached at Appendix 3.

How robust are the Safeguarding Processes?

The Auditing Processes of Child Protection Cases

The Quality Audit Procedure involves reviewing case records. The purpose of the quality audit is to:

- Assure that the Voice of the Child is heard, recorded, and used to influence the work undertaken as far as possible;
- Assure that the child's journey is as timely and effective as possible;
- Assure the quality of work undertaken including appropriate multiagency involvement;
- Assure all basic data items are recorded and that the quality of recording is in line with agreed recording standards;
- Promotion of an open learning culture through reviewing professional practice.

There are three processes for auditing child protection cases. Firstly, there are the day to day audits carried out by Practice Supervisors on every open case. The Practice Supervisor will check the quality of the case notes, ensure early work is timely and focussed, and that everything has been recorded on the ICS system. A number of cases are audited by Practice Supervisors each month. Audits are normally carried out within 60 days of a case being opened and then again when a case is closed. Team Managers have also been doing random audits since 2010 and undertake three audits per month.

Secondly, the Children's Services Directorate Management Team usually requests audits of particular cohorts. In addition Heads of Services will undertake three audits per quarter. Thirdly, the Performance and Audit team in Children's Services carry out an annual Quality Assurance audit of cases.

All audits are given grades which are based on the Ofsted ratings. The grades are

- Outstanding - Direct work with children, young people and families is of the highest quality and is delivering measurably improved outcomes, for some children progress exceeds expectations. Early help is in place and has been as effective as possible. Professional challenge and leadership inspires high quality work with the family that helps protect and promotes the welfare of children and young people. The views and experiences of children, young people and their families are at the centre of thinking and planning.
- Good - Children and young people are protected, the risks to them are identified and managed through timely decisions and the help provided reduces the risk of, or actual, harm to them. The Local Authority works with partners (including commissioned services) to plan and deliver early help, to protect the child/young person to improve educational attainment and narrow the gap for the most disadvantaged children.
- Requires Improvement - No serious failures on the case, and child is safeguarded but the child and family are not yet supported through delivery of good protection, help and care, with more needing to be done to promote change, avoid drift and so on. (Plans are insufficiently developed, lack timeframes and focus).
- Inadequate - Serious failures are in the case and the child has been left in a harmful situation at risk of harm. Management oversight/supervision has not identified or rectified this. There is a lack of authoritative practice.

A new suite of five audits for different workers is being developed. These audit tools will cover the FAST workers, Looked After Children case workers, FWT key workers, plus an audit tool for adoption for adoptive carers, and one for fostering for foster carers.

Other auditing that occurs is of Child Protection Conferences, where the Chairs complete a questionnaire after each conference, which includes questions such as whether the Social Worker was prepared for the meeting. The Chairs have meetings every month with Team Managers and Practice Supervisors to provide feedback. Another process of auditing is at Support Panel meetings where a different area Head of Service chairs the meeting and brings a fresh perspective to ongoing cases. Peer auditing between Team Managers has also been introduced so that Team Managers can learn and continuously improve from each other.

Furthermore, Ofsted audit a random set of cases when conducting an inspection. There is therefore a wide range of auditing being undertaken of the safeguarding processes. The diagram below sets out the auditing journey from case discussions to audit.

Audit Processes

TAC co-ordinator to send appointments to relevant manager 3 appointments to be sent.

1. Appointment one to say 15 day case discussion and include ICS number and surname

2. Appointment two to say 40 day case discussion and include ICS number and surname

3. 60 day first audit to include ICS number and surname

1. Case Discussion by day 15

Make an entry on ICS under Case Discussion and Decision to explain whether a case is closing, moving to TAC (or ESCO), or the assessment is continuing

And in every circumstance, give the reasons why the decision is being made
Please put 15 day decision in your recording

2. Case Discussion by day 45

Make an entry on ICS under Case Discussion and Decision to explain whether the case is to close, moving to TAC (Or ESCO) or remaining open to social care, in every circumstance give the reasons why.

Please put 40 day decision in your recording.

3. First Audit 60 days

New form to be completed then sent to Business Support to index. You need to record onto ICS that you have completed. On the child's file new case note titled Quality Audit 0 Children's Services Audit press save then do the extra questions.

4. Second Audit closure, transfer, annually

New form to be completed then sent to Business Support to index. You need to record onto ICS that you have completed. On the child's file new case note titled Quality Audit 0 Children's Services Audit press save then do the extra questions.

What have been the outcomes from previous consultations with service users regarding their experiences of the safeguarding processes?

A number of surveys have recently been conducted by Lincolnshire County Council to gain an insight into the experiences of parents, children and young people who are involved with the Children's Services Social Care Service.

In October 2012, a **Learning by Listening Survey – Experiences of Children, Young People and Families going through the Child Protection process in Lincolnshire** was conducted. Ten children and young people participated in the survey in connection with issues relating to the child protection process along with fourteen parents/carers and seventeen professionals. The purpose of the Learning by Listening Survey was to enable Lincolnshire County Council to identify what services needed to be improved from the perspective of its service users. The survey highlighted a number of key messages for practitioners and managers to take into account when reviewing their practice:

- **Listening and recording-** how well are you tuned in, do you take the time, make space, how do you make sure children's views, wishes and feelings are properly taken into account? Is the voice of the child evident?
- **Sharing information and preparing people-** how effectively do you share information with children and families? Are they always and routinely arriving at meetings well-informed, prepared in advance, ready to participate?
- **Reliability-** are you on-time, responsive, and if things need changing or cancelling, do you give good notice?
- **Integrated working-** how effectively do you keep in touch and co-ordinate with other professionals around the child and family? How well do they keep in touch with you?
- **Clarity and consistency-** do you give clear and consistent messages about what is wrong and what 'right' looks like, even when the messages are 'tough to hear'?
- **Reflecting and learning-** is there a rigorous approach to listening, learning and improving at a team and individual level?

In February 2013, **Touchstone Consultancy** surveyed approximately 1000 Lincolnshire residents through the Customer Service Centre to ascertain their experience of the Social Workers which they had been involved with. 91 responses were received. Of these, only 22% of respondents received any useful information or leaflets from the Social Worker and 31% did not receive a copy of their initial assessment. Furthermore, 31% did not have the same Social Worker throughout the process, of which 24% felt that this had a negative impact on their experience. However, 70% of respondents felt involved in the decisions made about their children and 84% of respondents found the Social Worker to be polite and friendly throughout the first meeting. Following the results from this survey, steps were taken to address these issues, which included working with parents to redesign the leaflets. The Task and Finish Group was concerned, however, as to whether all parents are receiving a copy of their assessments and recommend that this is examined further.

Recommendation 1

A review should be carried out to ensure that all parents receive a copy of their assessments and that the mechanisms for this process are robust.

In response to the Munro Review, Lincolnshire County Council established a Principal Child and Family Social Worker role in 2013 to promote social work in a positive way as the general public do not fully understand the role of qualified Social Workers. Another element of this role is to obtain user feedback on the services they are involved with. Officers are moving forward with the Munro Parent Groups which meet quarterly in different areas. This Group allows parents to give feedback on the safeguarding process. Officers are now establishing the Munro Children's Groups to gain feedback from children and also young people about their experiences of the safeguarding process. Officers are

developing a child's version of the Child Protection Plans with the Munro Children's Groups. New versions of the Child Protection leaflets are also being developed. A new survey for children and young people going through targeted and specialist services is also to be trialled with approximately forty teenagers before being extended to younger age ranges.

What have we learnt about the robustness of safeguarding procedures?

The Task and Finish Group held a focus group with a number of Team Managers to discuss what their views are on the current safeguarding arrangements in Lincolnshire. Furthermore, while undertaking visits to the different locality teams, the members of the Task and Finish Group have also spoken to Team Managers to find out their views on whether safeguarding in Lincolnshire is robust and if there are any issues.

What are the Team Managers' views on the robustness of safeguarding in Lincolnshire?

All the Team Managers who the Task and Finish Group spoke to thought that the safeguarding arrangements are pretty robust and up to date with all procedures and processes in place. Compared to five years ago, practices are now solid and consistent across the teams. Due to a cultural change, systems and policies are now different to the way they worked before. There are now systems in place to encourage and enable challenge.

There was a feeling amongst Team Managers that a lot of other councils are several years behind Lincolnshire County Council. A number of other authorities are only just moving to what the County Council has been doing for the past five years. One Team Manager commented that they are a member of a national Early Help Group but did not feel that they are getting much out of it as they have spent the last nine months explaining to other councils "the Lincolnshire way". Responsibility for safeguarding is now more widely accepted than five years ago. If there was a child protection issue in school five years ago it would have been passported straight to the Social Worker, whereas now schools see it as their role as well.

A clear message from the Assistant Directors and Heads of Service has helped to improve the robustness of safeguarding. The Team Managers believe there is good quality staff and good quality training being provided. There are also good partner relationships with other agencies for strategy discussions.

Safeguarding is not just about the high end of child protection but also all the work agencies do and have in place to support families. With regards to children with disabilities, very few children are on a Child Protection Plan but there is still a lot of work to do to safeguard them due to their individual disabilities. Preventative early help processes are in place in Lincolnshire. Commissioned services also provide family support and early help has led to minimal escalations to FAST teams. Strengths of early help and comparison with other counties show that Lincolnshire is leading the way. There are fewer escalations into social care due to the preventative early help work undertaken and Lincolnshire is also reducing the number of cases out of social care and into Team Around the Child (TAC). There is clear support available for families all the way through the processes.

Although there are separate teams within the localities, they all felt very much like they worked as one. North Kesteven are co-located as much as possible in North Hykeham, and have the Looked After Children (LAC) and FAST team in their entirety, and the leadership team as well. This arrangement has worked really well. Across the county, the different teams, such as Targeted and FAST, are now managed much better, are more integrated and work well together.

What concerns did the Team Managers raise about safeguarding?

Despite the feeling that safeguarding arrangements in Lincolnshire are robust, the Team Managers did highlight a few issues over the current safeguarding arrangements in Lincolnshire.

The South Kesteven locality team currently has problems with accommodation as they have teams located in different buildings across their area, especially within Grantham where the accommodation is small and cramped. Proposals are currently being considered for an extension. It was felt that co-location would be a great step forward for their teams. However, it was highlighted that finding physical space within buildings to co-locate all the teams together is an issue across the county.

Transport to rural areas is also a problem in certain localities as some Social Workers have to travel the full length of the district and can potentially take a full day to do one visit. Some cluster services or visits together but it is not always possible to do that. The North Kesteven locality team has done a pilot on how they use their time and travel has been identified as an issue. It was highlighted that there is only so much that can be done to alleviate the pressure but it is being looked at by senior managers.

There is an issue with recruiting experienced Social Workers to social work posts and this appears to be a real difficulty across the county as a whole. It was highlighted that West Lindsey had received 45 applications for a Level 1 vacancy. However in South Kesteven, when they have been advertising for a Practice Supervisor or Team Manager, they often do not receive any applications at all. Despite the benefits being offered, the team still struggles to attract applicants. Solutions are being looked at and South Kesteven has had some staff seconded to Grantham to support the team. However, this results in a knock on effect on other teams. One of the main issues is the time commitment required for the role and that a Social Worker has to follow a case through to the end, which could be late into the evening. It was highlighted that it is difficult to recruit with that level of commitment while ensuring a work life balance. Boston also has similar recruitment issues. Reputation is also key, as once people hear that a certain area is not so good to work in, it deters them from applying for roles in that area.

It was highlighted that there is a growing problem with adult mental health, drugs and alcohol abuse across the county which is putting pressure on services. These issues are being looked at to see what additional support can be put in place. There is an emergency out of hours duty team which the Police resources and works closely with the County Council on this. However, there is a lack of resources in partnership agencies which is an issue. It was highlighted that it is not just a Lincolnshire problem but a national issue due to increasing austerity and shrinking resources against increased public awareness. Lincolnshire County Council is better resourced as most partner agencies are having to make cuts. Concern was expressed about out of hours staffing in the Public Protection Unit (PPU) and Children's Services are working with the PPU on this. Preliminary discussions are ongoing with the PPU and other relevant agencies, such as the police and health colleagues, around resources.

Staff have a very good relationship with the police and PCSOs and it was emphasised that they do provide good evidence. However there was a concern raised by Team Managers with regards to thresholds and training with the police. Safeguarding training for uniformed officers is needed. The police have introduced Stop Abuse where they press a button and this leads to a referral. This process comes under the Signs of Safety approach and staff will be introducing Signs of Safety training for the police and PCSOs as well.

What do Team Managers think would improve safeguarding?

When asked what three things would help to improve safeguarding practices in Lincolnshire, a number of suggestions were put forward by Team Managers. One of these was looking at recruitment of the social work role to ensure retention. Staff who are appointed to roles in Lincolnshire often gain experience here then leave after a few years. It was highlighted that senior managers are now looking to develop a recruitment website for Children's Services in Lincolnshire which will interview people in anticipation of a post becoming available. A frontline Social Worker in a FAST team is a pressured job and newly qualified Social Workers do not always have a lot of life experience so are not always

necessarily prepared for the work they are appointed to do. Different levels of supervision are in place to assist new qualified staff as is a protected caseload. It was suggested that more students should do placements with the County Council and work is ongoing with the University to encourage this. There is also a need for more detailed engagement with students to make it clear what the job entails, without frightening students off.

It was highlighted that there is also a need for early multi-agency cross training to understand what each other does and to get to know faces. This should be done on a regular cyclical basis as things change and when there is need to reflect on those changes. Shadowing each other's area of work would be also beneficial to gain a better understanding of what different teams and agencies do.

It was agreed that frontline/acute and preventative/targeted services are all important. There is a need to protect acute services, namely Social Workers, as there is increasing pressure on this service. There is also a need to protect targeted/preventative services, such as Family Support Workers. However, the problem with this area is that you do not know what you have prevented which makes it difficult to justify resources.

What are the views of the Family Court Judge on the safeguarding arrangements in Lincolnshire?

The Task and Finish Group also met with Her Honour Judge Swindells, the Family Court Judge, to find out whether she thought safeguarding procedures are robust enough in Lincolnshire. Judge Swindells was extremely complimentary of staff from Lincolnshire County Council who she thought were very professional. The Judge emphasised the excellent working relationship between the judiciary and Lincolnshire County Council, and that if there were any problems they held a meeting to address them. There have not been any cases which she thought should not have been brought to court and she highlighted that the Local Authority is being professional and issuing proceedings when they ought to be issuing proceedings. From a court perspective, she was not picking up any difficulties and there has been no impact on the quality due to budget cuts. The Judge believes Lincolnshire is doing much better than other areas and she regards herself as very fortunate. Lincolnshire is the number one court in the country for dealing with cases within the legal timescales. There is an excellent working relationship between professionals such as Social Workers, legal officers, guardians and local practitioners.

Judge Swindells highlighted that she has received first class professional assistance from Social Workers who are well prepared when they come to court and that statements from Social Workers have come on immensely. Sir James Mumby, President of the Family Division, highlighted in his report that in future he wants evidence for court to include robust analysis and succinct information. Previously, there was more narrative in the statements but now Social Workers are writing the evidence in bullet points and succinctly. There is now focussed and robust analysis in the statements from Social Workers which includes pros and cons, various options, and why the option they are putting forward is the best option for the child. Care plans are of excellent quality and there is a lot of work and thought put into them. The Judge highlighted that they were expecting another national template, but she was hoping there would be discretion to continue to use the local template which she felt worked really well.

The Judge stated that Lincolnshire County Council works very quickly on non-accidental injuries. Cases now have to go through court within 26 weeks. However, this is out of step with the Police who are not completing within 26 weeks for criminal proceedings. This creates problems for the court as the Judge would be holding a disclosure meeting and asking for evidence which the Police have not done yet or which they do not want to disclose so that the case for the Police is not compromised. Social Workers also feel that the Police are hanging onto evidence. There is a protocol in place which helps but there is still a tension between the court and the Police because the Police do not want to disclose any evidence too early. The local protocol with the Police was working well but there is now a new national protocol which it was felt not to be as good.

The Judge emphasised her support for Cafcass Plus which has been rolled out for baby cases. Cafcass is involved in pre-proceedings which Judge Swindells highlighted works well in Lincolnshire as everyone collaborates but maintains independence. Everyone agrees where it can be agreed but the independence of Social Workers and the child's guardian is maintained which is a good illustration of good working relationships. The Judge receives analysis from the child's guardian and from the Social Worker which often coincides. Everyone involved has to maintain their professional independence and Lincolnshire is excellent for that.

The Judge also emphasised that the Voice of the Child is of fundamental importance. She receives double evidence, one from the Social Worker in their final analysis which contains the wishes and feelings of the child, and one from the child's guardian whose role is to let the court know the child's wishes and feelings. The court's role is to weigh them up. Older children often want to see the Judge, but she makes it clear to the child that it is not a private conversation and she will tell the court, and that her decision will be based on all the evidence not just what they say. She always has the child's solicitor and guardian present during the meetings. Judge Swindells highlighted that she is confident that she is getting the Voice of the Child through the Social Worker and the child's guardian, which often coincides and are saying the same thing.

What is the main safeguarding issue highlighted by the Family Court Judge?

The Judge highlighted that the main difficulty is neglect cases, which can do more long term emotional and psychological damage. Often the neglect cases are brought to court quickly, but there have been some cases which were not brought quickly enough. However, she does recognise that long standing neglect cases are difficult for Social Workers, and that she has the benefit of hindsight. A lot of work goes into long term neglect families who may improve in the short term but then fall back again. Judge Swindells highlighted that proceedings should have been issued beforehand in some cases, but she does appreciate the difficulties in assessing when it is the right time to issue proceedings.

These issues were also highlighted in the recent Ofsted report **In the child's time: professional responses to neglect** which recommends that local authorities should:

- ensure that there is robust management oversight of neglect cases, so that drift and delay are identified and there is intervention to protect children where the risk of harm or actual harm, remains or intensifies.
- prioritise the training and development of front-line practitioners, focusing on the skills needed to engage in direct work with families and the development of good assessments that describe what life at home is like for children.
- support Social Workers and managers in the use of models and methods of assessment that enable them to effectively describe and analyse all risk factors in cases of neglect and then take decisive action where this is required
- prioritise the development and use of plans to support and protect children suffering from neglect, ensure that those plans set out clearly, with timescales, what needs to change and the consequences of no or limited change; plans should be subject to routine management oversight given the complexity of work with neglected children.
- ensure that Social Workers have specialist training and supervision to enable them to exercise professional authority and challenge parents who fail to engage with services, particularly when their children are subject to child protection plans; this process should be subject to robust, regular management oversight and practice audit
- ensure that there is clarity about the threshold for care proceedings to be initiated in cases of neglect, and that the threshold is understood, consistently applied and monitored by local authority social care staff, senior managers and their legal advisers
- oversee the written evidence presented to courts so that it is clear, concise and explicitly describes the cumulative impact of neglect on the daily life of the child.

One of the findings highlighted in the Ofsted report is that the challenge for local authorities and their partners is to ensure that best practice in cases of neglect is shared in order to drive improvement. The

LSCB is currently drafting a multi-agency Neglect Policy and Procedure which will highlight what neglect looks like and what agencies should be doing to address it. The draft policy and procedure should be available around the end of July 2014. Furthermore, more work could be done with schools around information sharing when there are concerns around neglect and the use of the pupil premium for specific pastoral support to vulnerable children who are suffering, or at risk of, neglect. The Task and Finish Group recognised the potential impact on fostering and adoption as more children are removed at earlier stages due to neglect.

In light of these concerns around neglect, the Task and Finish Group make the following recommendations:

Recommendation 2

The Task and Finish Group welcome and support the multi-agency Neglect Policy and Procedure being developed by the Lincolnshire Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) and encourage the Board to ensure that all partner agencies adhere to it. Given the complexities around neglect cases, the LSCB is recommended to review and ensure that comprehensive and specific training on neglect, particularly around complex neglect, is delivered to all frontline staff within all partner agencies. This relies on the knowledge and understanding of child development and the ability to capture neglect through child focussed observations. The Lincolnshire Safeguarding Boards Scrutiny Sub Group should monitor the implementation of the Neglect Policy and Procedure, and the neglect training opportunities made available to partner agencies.

Recommendation 3

The recent Ofsted report “In the child's time: professional responses to neglect” makes seven specific recommendations to local authorities. The Task and Finish Group recommends that a work programme is produced to ensure that these recommendations are implemented in Lincolnshire.

Recommendation 4

Lincolnshire County Council should identify and share best practice with schools on how they can use their pupil premium to improve the attainment, health and pastoral care of young people suffering, and at risk of, neglect.

Recommendation 5

Children's Services should work with secondary school Headteachers to encourage them to offer parental training, including child development, to all teenagers.

What other safeguarding issues were raised by the Family Court Judge?

One issue raised was getting families to contact centres due to long distances. The Judge highlighted that they were not able to provide local access to justice any more as there now had to be one single family court in the county. Lincoln is the designated family centre, but they are also trying to keep some family work at Boston. This does put pressure on families outside of Lincoln as public transport and transport infrastructure is not very good. In private law, St John's Ambulance has closed its contact centres. It is hoped to reopen contact centres for private law in mid-May 2014 with help from Lincolnshire County Council and other bodies. Contact centres are essential for families in dispute. Signs of Safety analysis is being used for contact analysis which is concentrated on the Voice of the Child in the contact and how the child was in the contact.

Another issue for Lincolnshire is that there are a lot of parents who are European nationals governed by Brussels II Revised, which means there are issues of jurisdiction under Article 8. Where this regulation applies (including care proceedings under the Children Act 1989) the basic principle set out in Article 8 (1) of the regulation is that jurisdiction under Brussels II Revised is dependent on habitual residence of the children in England and Wales, so the starting point in every case where there is a European dimension is an inquiry as to where the child is habitually resident. Habitual residence is usually evidenced by such things as do the children live in a secure tenancy, are they registered with a GP, are they on the roll of a school here? If there is a dispute about whether the children are habitually in England and Wales then evidence is filed and the court will have a hearing to make a decision about whether it has jurisdiction over the case.

Once Jurisdiction of the English Court has been established, the court needs to consider whether to exercise its power under Article 15 of Brussels II Revised to request the court of another member State to assume jurisdiction. The criteria which are to be used in deciding whether to exercise this decision are:

- The child has a particular connection with that State,
- The other court would be better placed to hear the case, and
- This is in the best interests of the state

Article 55 provides that the central authorities of each of the member state (In England and Wales the central authority is the office of the Official Solicitor) shall co-operate to collect and exchange information on the situation of the child, any procedures underway or on decisions taken concerning a child. This duty extends to the provision of information by 'public authorities' which would include Lincolnshire County Council.

Guidance on future cases was set out in the case of re E (a child). This case was heard on 17th – 20th December 2013 and the judgment was published on 17th January 2014. In this case the President of the Family Division, Sir James Mumby, gave some guidance about how future cases of this type should be dealt with by the Courts. He recommended that in any public law case (care proceedings or adoption) the court should set out in both its judgment and its order:

- (i) The basis upon which it is accepting or rejecting jurisdiction
- (ii) The basis on which it either has or hasn't decided to exercise its powers under Article 15

He also recommended that the English Courts need to be assiduous in providing, speedily and without reservation, information sought by the Central Authority of another member State. At the same time he recommended that courts should use this channel of communication to obtain information from the other Member State wherever this may assist them in deciding a case with a European dimension. He also stated that in cases involving foreign nationals there must be transparency and openness as between the English family courts and the consular and other authorities of the relevant foreign state.

If the jurisdiction issue is straightforward and not an Article 15 request for transfer to another state, then the Judge will deal with it in the High Court. However, if it is an Article 15 request then it has to be referred to the High Court in London. Potentially a high number of cases could be sent to London from Lincolnshire for a jurisdiction decision as the expertise is all in London for jurisdiction requests. Judge Swindells believes that eventually these cases will be heard locally due to sheer volume.

What are the LSCB's views on safeguarding arrangements in Lincolnshire?

The Task and Finish Group spoke to the Chris Cook (Independent Chair of the Lincolnshire Safeguarding Children Board [LSCB]), Andrew Morris (LSCB Business Manager) and Rick Hatton (Head of Public Protection, Lincolnshire Police) to discuss what the LSCB's priorities are around safeguarding and whether they felt the safeguarding practices in Lincolnshire are robust enough.

The Independent Chair highlighted that, from the LSCB's perspective, there are no significant gaps or risks around safeguarding in Lincolnshire. However, the LSCB are currently conducting a number of

audits, three of which are particularly relevant to this review:

- 1) An audit of Child Protection Conferences, processes and planning has been commissioned as a result of findings from Serious Case Reviews and national findings from review work. The aim is to analyse how effective the plans are, question if they are tailored to individual family needs, and ensure they are not too generic, but are bespoke to manage risk. The final report is expected by mid-July 2014.
- 2) An audit of the Pre-Birth Protocol is being conducted, looking particularly at the early Team Around the unborn Child (TAC) and the effectiveness of managing the child's safety and wellbeing outside of mainstream social care. The Audit seeks to clarify if risks and problems are minimised early, and strategies and resources are used more effectively early in the life of the child to help prevent escalating the child into the protection process. The final report is expected by mid-July 2014.
- 3) An audit of the Team Around the Child (TAC) process will be undertaken around September 2014.

It was highlighted that one of the strengths of the LSCB is partnership working. All the agencies know each other well and can challenge effectively. The police are fully engaged with the LSCB, including writing and implementing LSCB policies, and see the LSCB as a force for good and is driving improvements around safeguarding. The police ensure that all their staff do a two week placement on safeguarding so that they have an understanding of the statutory responsibilities around safeguarding. One negative that was highlighted is that the individual agencies still have to have their own individual policies around safeguarding, rather than an overarching one across all agencies.

The LSCB has a comprehensive training programme, including 26 e-learning courses and a range of face to face courses, which is in addition to what is offered in house by each agency. The Voice of the Child is embedded into all training offered by the LSCB.

The Task and Finish Group considered the LSCB to have a crucial role in ensuring all agencies capture the Voice of the Child and to identify the various methods used by the agencies to capture this. By identifying the best methods used to capture the Voice of the Child, these could then be passed onto other agencies as examples of best practice.

Recommendation 6

The LSCB is recommended to conduct a pilot project to identify the methods used by partner agencies to listen to and record the Voice of the Child and share the most effective methods amongst partner agencies as examples of best practice. An audit trail of the Voice of the Child should also be carried out.

A potential weakness for the LSCB going forward is the funding, capacity and capability of each agency which could make their commitment to the LSCB vulnerable. The agendas and targets of the LSCB need to be owned by all agencies and widely promoted. The LSCB has established a Public Protection Board, which brings together senior representatives from the LSCB, the Lincolnshire Safeguarding Adults Board and MAPPA (Multi- Agency Public Protection Arrangements) to identify strategic priorities in Lincolnshire. This is a new initiative created by Lincolnshire and is not in existence anywhere else in the country.

It was highlighted that the different agencies working better together, being co-located and having better relationships is key to the safeguarding agenda. It was suggested that a Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) should be looked at so that staff from the different agencies could be co-located which would result in better information sharing and decision making. Communication between agencies, in particular electronic communications, remains a concern. Some councils have established a MASH such as in Devon and Nottingham City. However, there have been issues with MASH around information sharing and data protection, which are national issues, and some MASH have been disbanded.

As previously highlighted by the Team Managers, co-location of all the social care teams in each locality would be beneficial to frontline workers. The Task and Finish Group supported this view and agreed that it would also be beneficial if other agencies could be co-located with the social care teams wherever possible. This would reinforce the desire to understand each other's work and support the agenda of remote working.

Recommendation 7

The social care teams in each area, along with other agencies such as Health and the Police wherever possible, should be co-located to ensure better joint working and information sharing across the different teams and agencies.

How robust are Child Protection Conferences?

The members of the Task and Finish Group attended Child Protection Conferences across the county to see how robust the safeguarding arrangements are in this process. The Initial Child Protection Conference brings together family members, the child, supporters/advocates and those professionals most involved with the child and family to share information, assess risks and to formulate an agreed plan of management and services, with the child's safety and welfare as its paramount aim. These are then followed up by Child Protection Review Conferences. Comments made by the Members on the processes observed included:

- The Chair had good knowledge of the case, and the information had been shared across all of the agencies. The Chair invited the mum into the room for a chat and welcome first, before inviting the assembled professionals into the room. Mum was as at ease as she could be and was very well informed on how the meeting will be conducted. At the end of the meeting she expressed her gratitude for the support she had received.
- During the review the family were defensive but this may be due to the volume of people present from the authority. The Key Worker appeared to be very different from the family and there was a clear clash in attitudes which may have been a class or social level issue. The Voice of the Child did not come through either and, although the Class Teacher came to talk about her observations which were valid, nothing was presented from the child, e.g. a drawing/picture/story.
- Paperwork had been provided and the Member was given the opportunity to speak to people around the room at the end. The mother involved was alone during the Child Protection Conference and before she came in for the review, the police officer had been discussing her partner and his issues. However this was not mentioned again once the meeting had started.
- The Child Protection Conference was in relation to a five year old child to ascertain if he was to continue on his Child Protection Plan. The mother, aunt and sister all attended the meeting and the discussion focussed on the continuation of the Child Protection Plan. All issues at home were, reportedly, resolved resulting in the child becoming much calmer. However, the child was still disruptive in school. The Member spoke with the Chair afterwards to ask why they had decided to continue with the plan and it was due to all parties agreeing that there was little evidence presented regarding the Voice of the Child.
- The Child Protection Conference related to a domestic violence case with a mother currently expecting her second child. It was decided not to continue with the Child Protection Plan as the parents were no longer a couple. Unfortunately, the Conference was not quorate and only the Health Visitor was in attendance. The Chair decided to go ahead with the Conference despite this and all present were given the opportunity to speak. Two external agencies should be present to ensure a Conference is quorate but the Chair can make an executive decision to continue regardless.
- The Child Protection Conference was straightforward and the mother engaged with the process.
- The Chair tried to let everyone have a say and outcomes had been very clear.

- All agencies were in attendance other than the Police. Due to their other cases, engagement with the police could prove difficult. Each agency was complimentary of each other and how supportive senior management were.

Although very complimentary of the safeguarding practices across the county, there were some issues that one of the Chairs did highlight for improvement. Firstly, she felt that some agencies were poor at engaging (such as DART and probation). The LSCB has a role in the collaboration between different agencies. There is a reporting mechanism through the LSCB which holds agencies to account. If a particular worker is not attending meetings on a regular basis, Supervisors and Managers should contact their counterpart to ascertain the issues. Should an inspector note the non-attendance of other agencies, they would assess the impact on the child and would look at what the local authority has done to raise the issues with the relevant agency. Increasing demands and pressures could be impacting on the attendance of agencies. A pilot in Gainsborough and Boston has been started with school nurses as there are not enough to attend every case due to the ratios between staff and cases. There is a need to be clear about who must be there and who is not necessarily key at each meeting.

Secondly, some FAST teams could be very late in the day getting papers to her for the Conference. Some of the paperwork was not being made available until 9 or 10pm the night before the Conference. This made it hard for her and the other agencies to absorb all of the relevant information for each case.

Through the Task and Finish Group's observations of Child Protection Conferences, it has been highlighted that there are some inconsistencies between Child Protection Conferences across the county.

Recommendation 8

That best practice is shared in relation to Child Protection Conferences, including the timeliness of paperwork being presented, to ensure consistency across the county.

How robust are Support Panels?

The members of the Task and Finish Group also attended Support Panel meetings to see how robust the safeguarding arrangements are in this part of the process. Support Panels are a non-statutory way of working that is distinct to Lincolnshire. Support Panels review the progress of a case and determine whether there is a need to start legal proceedings. Comments from the Members who observed Support Panels included the following:

- It had been distressing to consider the case within the Support Panel of a 12 year old child whose father was terminally ill and the mother was unknown. The child currently resided in a foster placement in Gainsborough quite some distance from the father. There was a real issue in encouraging the Voice of the Child and making them feel secure enough to do so.
- This was a really useful way of adding rigour and accountability to decision making on child protection cases.
- There were eight cases discussed in total, six of which were preborn or newborn cases.
- Four different cases were considered. A letter before proceedings was to be issued in two of the cases. Additional options were considered to further support the families. It may have been helpful to have the Family Support Worker attend the Panel in addition to the Social Worker to provide additional evidence.

One issue that was raised by the Task and Finish Group was the challenge from the Chair of the Support Panels. It was highlighted that these meetings were very short and that there seemed to be a lack of enquiry by the Support Panels. It was also felt that some paperwork presented at the Support Panels could be improved. It was queried how effective the Support Panels are in appreciating and enquiring into a case and whether the Signs of Safety approach should also be used within Support Panels.

Recommendation 9

The purpose and function of Support Panels should be revisited to ensure that they are providing thorough challenge by using the Signs of Safety methodology to map and summarise each case.

What have we learnt about how the Customer Service Centre handles contacts to Children's Services Social Care Service?

The Customer Service Centre (CSC) receives and screens all potential contacts to the Children's Service Social Care Service. There are approximately 6000 contacts every quarter. The call handlers make notes of the information received from the referrers on the ICS system. The Practice Supervisor based at the CSC then determines what should happen to the contacts and which area team it should be passed onto. The members of the Task and Finish Group observed the CSC to see how this process worked and the following comments were noted:

- The CSC was a credit to the authority and worked well. The staff were required to glean a lot of information quickly from callers.
- Operators had different ways of recording information; either on paper, or straight into the system. The computer keyboards were quite noisy and the spellcheck on the system used was not very efficient.
- One Member had listened in to a call regarding a child with a facial injury. The caller had stated the injury was 'recent' but had not been asked for further clarification on when the injury had occurred. It was felt this was a basic question which should have been asked, as the timing of the injury would have changed the context of the call. The Member had challenged the operator regarding this.
- The training of CSC operators in relation to social care may be inadequate. One particular operator had only received one day's training in four years.

It was highlighted to the Task and Finish Group that since 6 May 2014, there has been an additional Practice Supervisor in the CSC screening the "no further action" decisions to ensure that nothing has been missed in these cases. This additional support in the CSC was welcomed by the Task and Finish Group.

The Task and Finish Group felt that training for CSC staff needed to be more frequent, especially when they are acquiring information to pass on to a Social Worker. The Task and Finish Group was concerned that some CSC staff may be turning down contacts without having received proper training. The CSC staff also have the responsibility of going back to the referrer to let them know the outcome from their phone call. If it was a professional who made the referral, they would receive an email letting them know the outcome. However, if it was an individual, the CSC staff would have to let them know through a phone call. The Task and Finish Group had concerns over the social care knowledge and expertise of the CSC staff who are responsible for making these phone calls and agreed that basic safeguarding and e-safety training should be standard.

Recommendation 10

It is recommended that an audit of the training on children's safeguarding provided to CSC staff, and the quality of that training, is undertaken to ensure that it is fit for purpose and that CSC staff are trained in the issues of children's safeguarding and child development to deal effectively with contacts.

Support for Frontline Social Workers

The Task and Finish Group spoke to a number of Social Workers and other frontline workers during a focus group held at the St Giles Centre in Lincoln. The Members of the Task and Finish Group also had the opportunity to speak to other Social Workers during their individual visits to the different locality teams. Through these discussions, the Social Workers presented their views regarding the different types of support they receive and where they felt it needed to be improved.

What are the main pressures on Social Workers?

It must be acknowledged that Social Workers work in a very fast paced and pressured environment where decisions have to be made quickly. One of the main pressures on Social Workers is workload. Since 2008, there has been a 30% increase in the number of caseloads. As the number of referrals is increasing, the workload for Social Workers is also increasing. In addition, there are more complex cases being referred. For example, referrals in the area of disabled young people have doubled.

Workloads are a big issue in the FAST teams and finding a way of managing caseloads within the team is difficult. All Social Workers have to do a duty week. The usual rota across the FAST teams is to do two weeks of duty, where they are allocated any new cases which are referred to the area team, followed by four weeks off to allow time for all the assessments to take place.

There is a capacity issue which is mainly due to there being more inexperienced than experienced staff in the locality teams. For example, in the East Lindsey (North) FAST Team, eight staff out of the whole team are newly qualified Social Workers. Across all of the FAST teams, there is more level 1 than level 2 Social Workers which makes it more difficult to allocate the more complex cases. This means there is constant pressure on managing the workload between a protected caseload for newly qualified Social Workers and serious cases needing experienced Social Workers. The average caseloads of Social Workers vary depending on experience. Newly qualified Social Workers should have a protected workload for the first year. Although professional training equips newly qualified Social Workers with the skillset required to undertake their role, it is the experience of dealing with caseloads which is a learning curve in itself. Another issue which impacts on workloads is the closing of existing cases. This does vary across the county but some Social Workers are not as good at closing cases or may keep them open to avoid being allocated new cases.

Sickness absence can also put more pressure on Social Workers. When teams do not have a full complement of staff or some staff are not doing as much, then this puts pressure on the other staff within the team to pick up the additional workload. Absence Management is very important within the social work teams. Although the urgent work is usually shared out between the Practice Supervisor and Team Manager, it does impact on cases being able to be closed. Additionally, it takes time away from other important duties such as planning, training and personal development. There is also a reliance on all management posts being filled as it does slow down when they are not. There is pressure on Practice Supervisors in terms of their workloads as they have everything to do except budgets. The role of the Practice Supervisor involves managing and assigning referrals, supervising and checking reports and decision making, planning to meet staff's training needs, and covering urgent work for staff who are absent.

It was highlighted that average caseloads in Lincolnshire are low when compared to other areas nationally. Children's Services have had independent auditors in to look at this issue and it was noted that social work staff are not overstretched in Lincolnshire and do not have too many caseloads. There is an issue with the perception of caseloads by Social Workers. Caseloads are monitored monthly by senior managers in Children's Services. It was highlighted that the teams are coping with current workloads and this is, in part, due to the support from line management. Staff are clear that if support is needed, their line management is approachable and supportive. The teams have managed so far due to the good support mechanisms in place. However, it has been acknowledged that there is a need for

more staff as caseloads have increased and it was agreed in the County Council's budget for 2014/15 that an additional £400,000 would be made available to allow for the recruitment of more Social Workers.

The Task and Finish Group recognised the issue of caseloads and that these are constantly monitored. However at this stage, especially with the new funding for additional Social Workers, the Task and Finish Group do not see this as an issue.

Another pressure on Social Workers is the new court timescales. Implementation of the new Public Law Outline has now come into force since 22 April 2014, which now means that cases have to be dealt with within 26 weeks. Despite being one of the leading councils in the country in getting these cases to court within the required timeframe, the downside is that there is added pressure in the amount of work required before it gets to court. All assessments and work required has to be done before court proceedings start. However, due to the support between teams, targets are generally able to be met. Team Managers and Practice Supervisors have a duty to Social Workers in managing their time. It was recognised that staff do put the hours in to ensure that the court timescales are met so there is a need to be flexible. As they work on a shift rota, any overtime has to be taken off. Sometimes Social Workers are paid for the extra hours or take it as TOIL. However there is a risk that it becomes a habit or part of the culture.

What are the issues around recruitment and retention of Social Workers?

It has been highlighted to the Task and Finish Group that there is an issue with recruiting and retaining Social Workers, particularly experienced Social Workers, which is a national problem. It is widely recognised that social work is a very challenging and difficult area to work in. There are a lot of newly qualified Social Workers within the FAST teams and retaining experienced staff continues to be more difficult in some localities. Due to the nature of the work, it is difficult to keep Social Workers in the FAST teams for more than two to five years. A number of the Social Workers in the FAST teams tend to move into the Looked After Children (LAC) teams or into the fostering or adoption teams. Furthermore, some staff want to work in fostering or adoption from the outset but need to have knowledge of child protection from the FAST team which is seen as a good learning environment.

There is a piece of work currently being undertaken by officers looking at recruitment and retention in the FAST teams. Seven Social Workers have qualified through Lincolnshire County Council which has been beneficial to the teams as it achieves some stability. Some areas in the east of the county, such as Horncastle, are perceived to be more attractive to staff which is having an impact on recruitment in other areas. One example is Boston which has a lot of vacancies and is a difficult place to recruit in due to its position in the south of the county. The Cambridgeshire area has been targeted in an attempt to address this. Officers are also looking into offering a returners course through Bishop Grosseteste University, and are revisiting recruitment from Eastern Europe. Officers have been visiting universities in the region, such as Hull, Sheffield, Nottingham, Nottingham Trent and Leicester, to encourage students to apply for vacancies. There is a need to develop knowledge of young people who go off to university to do social work degrees elsewhere in the country so that the County Council can keep in contact with them and possibly offer some social work experience over the summer break.

One of the main issues around retention is agencies approaching staff. The County Council gets new staff in and trained up and then the agencies approach them. It is therefore a continuous cycle of recruiting and replacing staff. Despite the number of benefits of being employed by the County Council, such as better pay when compared to other local authorities in the region, the current economic climate is driving agency work, as agency staff are paid around 10% more than they would do if employed by Lincolnshire County Council. In 2013/14, the cost spend on agency staff for FAST Teams, Fostering, Looked After Children, and Adoption teams was £1,503,490.76. This equated to 70 agency staff. Approximately 6% of Social Workers at Lincolnshire County Council are agency staff. However, Lincolnshire County Council does have a high conversion rate of agency staff becoming permanent Social Workers.

Work is ongoing around retention, such as offering extra qualifications such as post qualification training and giving people the time to do it. One reason for the retention issues which was highlighted by staff is a lack of opportunities for progression and promotion through the teams. A Career Progression Panel held its first sitting on 23rd April 2014 to look at applications from Social Workers who are interested in moving from Level 1 to Level 2. Only one person applied, however, for the first Panel and the next one is due in August 2014. It was highlighted that there is a pattern where a newly qualified Social Worker stays in Lincolnshire to get a good grounding in social work, but then moves to somewhere else such as big cities. Exit interviews are conducted where staff agree to them, but no analysis is carried out to see if there are any trends around the reasons for leaving and where staff move to.

There is currently an East Midlands task and finish group being led by the Director of Children's Services at Leicestershire County Council, which is investigating the issues around recruitment and retention of Social Workers across the East Midlands, and looking into possible solutions with the aim of applying to the national Growth and Innovation Fund for funding. This could include doing some work around improving the reputation of the profession and making it more welcoming. Other options could be to develop something similar to a teaching school for Social Workers, or accrediting experienced and outstanding Social Workers to deliver sector led support around the East Midlands region to share expertise or provide peer challenge / review.

The Task and Finish Group recognised the challenging and difficult work undertaken by Social Workers and agreed that there should be some form of recognition of this through the pay and reward offer. Further work also needs to be undertaken by officers around recruitment from universities in the surrounding regions.

Recommendation 11

A review of the recruitment and retention strategy for Social Workers should be undertaken, including revisiting the pay and reward offer for front line Social Workers, to ensure that there is some form of recognition for this challenging and difficult role. An analysis of exit interviews should also be undertaken to see if there are any trends around reasons for leaving and where Social Workers move onto.

Recommendation 12

Further work should be undertaken with the universities across the region, including South Yorkshire, the Humber, and the East Midlands, around the recruitment of Social Workers and developing degree courses to ensure they provide the rights skills and training needed by Social Workers.

What support do Social Workers receive and is that support adequate?

It was highlighted that Lincolnshire County Council (LCC) are very supportive of staff and staff are well paid in comparison to other authorities. Overall, the majority of the Social Workers who the Task and Finish Group spoke to felt supported. LCC are recognised by all employees to be a good employer who take care over the professional support and development of staff. All staff felt valued and there is good evidence of staff choosing to come and work for LCC from other authorities and who are prepared to travel some distance. There is strong supervision, good team working, support from colleagues and training opportunities. It was felt that there was always someone to contact so there were no complaints highlighted in relation to a lack of support.

Team Managers also highlighted that they found their Heads of Service very supportive and if they are not available, Assistant Directors and other Heads of Service can be approached. It was emphasised

that senior management has become more approachable and supportive in the last couple of years. The Principal Child and Family Social Worker is responsible for promoting the role of Social Workers and driving improvement in safeguarding practices. Lincolnshire has very committed social work teams but, due to bad national press in recent years, work is ongoing to restore that belief in these professionals. Good social work practice needs to be actively promoted to the public. However, families are often ashamed to admit that they have a Social Worker and their role needs to be better understood. A leaflet explaining the remit of qualified Social Workers was trialled in the North Kesteven and West Lindsey areas of Lincolnshire during November and December 2013 and it is hoped that this will be rolled out throughout Lincolnshire during the coming months.

In terms of driving improvements, each area team has identified a Munro Champion to be part of a supported group that links back into teams to develop and sustain improved practices. A new microsite for Munro Champions was launched in February 2014. The Munro Champions led on the development of eight local service user groups to inform improvement which have just been established in each locality in the last six months. These groups are looking at devising leaflets to provide better information to users.

The Social Care Forum has been established around Lincolnshire for all Social Workers to attend. This forum takes place on a monthly basis at different locations in the County and acts as a mechanism for good practice to be shared amongst Social Workers in the County as well as an opportunity to discuss and raise issues. Weekly bulletins are also sent out to all social work staff to share research and national guidance with teams to inform and develop practice via their Munro team champion.

There is now a requirement to seek and evidence the Voice of the Child. A new poster campaign has just been launched to highlight to staff that the Voice of the Child and participation are key elements of the ASYE (Assessed and Supported Year in Employment) and CPD (Continuous Professional Development). In terms of supervision, appraisals, team/service level reporting and Quality Assurance reporting, the Voice of the Child is now a key component. Improvements to the ICS system to record the Voice of the Child are being introduced to enable improved recording of the Voice of the Child.

In terms of emotional support, there is the Employee Counselling Service in place which staff can access. Employee Support have come out to speak with staff to gain an understanding of what it is like for teams. However it was highlighted there is a need for the service to go out into the localities to give staff more support. Team support is also key and there is a risk of Social Workers becoming isolated. Social Workers can work from home or in other children's centres to save travelling between visits but this risks isolation if that is happening too often. An agile working practice has been adopted, rather than being based from home. Given that Social Workers are often out on visits to children and families, all staff have been issued with laptops for working out and about.

It was highlighted that there is a need to look at how Team Managers and Practice Supervisors work to support Social Workers and allow them to develop. It is the responsibility of the Practice Supervisors and Team Managers to ensure level 1 Social Workers gain the experience while protecting them. A possibility could be allowing Social Workers to chair meetings if Team Managers decide someone is capable of chairing their own meetings. There also needs to be investment in teams to provide a structure to allow people to move up.

In terms of personal safety, Social Workers have been issued with lone working devices which are emergency alarms. These look like ID badges but are connected to a call centre so if the Social Worker feels threatened they can press a button and the call centre are able to listen in and monitor the situation, calling the police if deemed necessary. There is a traffic light system in place depending on the situation. Lone working is an issue for Social Workers who are in a property with a family they may not have met before and therefore do not know what to expect. Practice Supervisors and Team Managers take great care to safeguard their teams and are very aware of where the staff are at all times, and have clear procedures in place to monitor their safety in potentially dangerous situations.

Social Workers also rely on the support and co-operation of other teams and agencies especially health. Working with health on health issues has got a lot better in the last 4 to 5 months. Social Workers have to develop good working relationships all over the place with different agencies and time has to be invested in key partners such as school nurses and health visitors. It does vary as to how valuable different relationships are at different points in time, which is critical when working with children. Social Workers need to have confidence that partner agencies are getting on with any work identified.

What training is available to improve the skills and competences of Social Workers?

The Munro review concluded that the high levels of prescription had also hampered the profession's ability to take responsibility for developing its own knowledge and skills. For child and family social work, the review gave more detail of the capabilities relating to knowledge, critical reflection and analysis, and intervention and skills. The review recommended that these capabilities explicitly inform initial social work training, continuing professional development, performance appraisal and career structures.

The ASYE offers one year of post qualification support to newly qualified Social Workers, of which there were fifteen this year. This consists of additional training and development practice. All staff have received one full day of training on Public Law Outline and court training as many Social Workers do not feel confident when attending court. Social Workers go on a one day practice run to experience what it would be like in court, where they are tested and cross examined by advocates. Training is incorporated culturally and all staff go on a wide variety of training such as Signs of Safety, child protection and a two day course on report writing which is mandatory as part of the ASYE. However, the Task and Finish Group has a number of concerns over the quality and standards of the report writing for case files, Signs of Safety mapping, Child Protection Conferences and Support Panels. The Practice Supervisors should be checking the quality of the reports before they are submitted to Support Panels or Child Protection Conferences. However, the quality of report writing for court has improved greatly and is now of a good standard. The Task and Finish Group agreed that the issues around report writing need to be addressed alongside training in relation to child development and capturing the Voice of the Child through objective child focussed observations.

Recommendation 13

The report writing training offered to Social Workers, and the management oversight of this, needs to be revisited to ensure it is fit for purpose and enables Social Workers to be able to produce quality reports, such as for Child Protection Conferences. It would be beneficial if report writing models were developed as examples of good practice for Social Workers. This should be underpinned by training on child development and should include examples of how best to capture the Voice of the Child.

The issue of training was raised by some Social Workers we spoke to and the general consensus is that staff are unhappy about the current national social work training currently being provided. There is a need to recruit people who are capable but also to consider the level of training given to students. It was highlighted that there is a need to teach practical and emotional skills in training such as ASYE as the University of Lincoln does not discuss these issues or emotional resilience as part of its course.

There is now a requirement to have a Degree, Diploma or Masters in social work to be able to call yourself a qualified Social Worker. Previously Social Workers had to be a minimum of twenty-five years old with two years' experience. Besides the university courses which are offered, there is also now Frontline First which is available in Greater Manchester and Greater London. This is a graduate programme which offers a unique opportunity for high-achieving university leavers and career changers

to become a Social Worker. The two year programme offers intense practical and academic training, coupled with a leadership development programme designed to shape the next generation of children's Social Workers.

Officers are now being more robust in the appointments of Social Workers and require applicants to have children's social work experience. However, a number of the people who have applied for vacant posts had not been given the experience of working in children's social work as part of their degrees as they do not currently have to do a statutory placement.

Lincolnshire County Council is working closely with the University of Lincoln to oversee their social care syllabus and offer advice. There is a lot of work to do with the University on what is included in the curriculum for the degree courses. However, it was highlighted that the University has a different agenda, as it is not just training Social Workers to work in Children's Services at Lincolnshire County Council. Staff from Lincolnshire County Council are now on the interview panels for assessing the suitability of applicants for the social work degrees. There are currently twenty-four placements on a part-time degree course at the University with another thirty people on a Masters Degree. The Degree courses are for three years with two placements. However, the students' final placements do not have to be a statutory placement and many students choose to work for charity organisations.

The Task and Finish Group met with Nigel Horner, Head of School of Health and Social Care from the University of Lincoln to discuss the issues that had been raised. It was highlighted that the University does not determine whether people are suitable for working in social care, but their admissions procedure does require higher standards for admission than is required. The minimum published standard is currently 240 UCAS points, but the University requires 280 UCAS points, which will soon be increased to 300 UCAS points. All shortlisted candidates have to undertake several interviews and a written test. The concept of safeguarding is addressed thematically throughout all the Level One modules, and Signs of Safety is incorporated into the course. Through the course, the University tries to prepare students for the stress and emotional difficulties of being a Social Worker by preparing them to take responsibility for their own well-being, to understand the importance of mentoring, supervision and leadership, and their responsibilities around whistle-blowing and addressing poor practices.

The course also includes a session on the Social Worker in civil court and sessions used to be delivered with a Lincolnshire County Council Children's Services solicitor until a charge was introduced. It was highlighted that this was an area that needs to be revisited and that the University should consider paying Legal Services to provide this. Presentation skills are also worked on throughout the course. However, it was highlighted that child development training needs to be strengthened in the University courses, so that it provides students with a better knowledge.

Recommendation 14

The University of Lincoln should be encouraged to provide more training on child development and capturing the child's perspective through objective child focussed observations.

Social work is best learnt in practice and placements are key to learning "on the job". However, it was highlighted by the University that the number of final placements offered by Lincolnshire County Council to University students in 2013-14, including EBR (Employment Based Route) students, are considered low. From September 2013 to May 2014, there has been a total of 54 students at Lincolnshire County Council, of which 47 are from the University of Lincoln. There are also student Social Workers who are studying part-time Degree Courses within the FAST teams.

However, there is an overlap of placements. Placements which started in September 2013, including both first placement from the undergraduate degree (including EBR) and final placements from the postgraduate degree, do not finish their placements until the end of February 2014 or end of March 2014 while the final placement for the undergraduate degree (including EBR) and the first placements for the postgraduate degree start in January 2014 and February 2014. This means that Practice

Educators do not want to take two students at the same time. In Adult Social Care and Children's Services there are a total of 63 Practice Educators. There could be several reasons why some Practice Educators do not have a student, such as people are off sick, the team could only take one or two students, the Practice Educator was too busy to take a student, or that there were no students who could access that particular placement. It was highlighted that the University of Lincoln charges £2000 to train Practice Educators. It was agreed by the Task and Finish Group that the provider of this training should be reviewed.

Recommendation 15

A strategy should be developed around training for Practice Educators at Levels 1 and 2, along with a review of who is the best provider of the Practice Educator courses in the region.

At the present time, there has been a slight decrease in the number of students, and numbers are now limited by the number of bursaries the University is able to offer which has been capped. There are a total of 65 students between the postgraduate and the undergraduate route.

There have been two recent national reviews of social work education, **Making the Education of Social Workers Consistently Effective: Report of Sir Martin Narey's Independent Review of the Education of Children's Social Workers** (January 2014) and **Re-visioning Social Work Education: An Independent Review** by David Croisdale-Appleby (February 2014). Both of these reports stressed the importance of selecting the right calibre of student. The Narey report endorses the minimum of 240 UCAS points, whereas the Croisdale-Appleby report recommends progression towards 300 UCAS points.

The Narey report also recommends that universities should be encouraged to develop degrees for those intending to work in children's social work. However, the University of Lincoln emphasised that they remain wedded to the view that a sound foundation training best prepares practitioners for entry to the Stage One register, and that specialist training at ASYE level leading to entry to specialist Stage Two registers is the way forward for quality services.

Furthermore, the Narey report recommends that

"the requirement that social workers have placements in contrasting service settings (typically, one with children and one with adults) should be relaxed to allow those intent on a career in children's social work to spend all 170 days of placement in a children's setting."⁵

However this is in contrast to the Croisdale-Appleby report, which recommends that

"A key condition of the regulation of all courses leading to the professional qualification as a social worker is that all social workers should have the capability to work with all individuals, families, groups and communities and to do so in all settings and situations likely to be encountered, so that generic capability is not sacrificed on the altar of early specialism. There are always beguiling arguments for a move towards pre-qualification specialism, in order more quickly to provide additional practitioner numbers in particular fields, for example currently in mental health and child protection. Great care must be taken to ensure this is not achieved at the expense of sacrificing education for a career in social work for some arguable short term gain in practice readiness. In all comparable professions to social work, the route to high quality professional capability is through a progressive and incremental move from the general to the specialised."⁶

⁵ Making the Education of Social Workers Consistently Effective: Report of Sir Martin Narey's Independent Review of the Education of Children's Social Workers (January 2014) <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/making-the-education-of-social-workers-consistently-effective>

⁶ Re-visioning Social Work Education: An Independent Review by David Croisdale-Appleby (February 2014) <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/social-work-education-review>

Until the Government decides which recommendation to endorse, the University would not be able to allow students to exclusively take placements in children's social work.

What additional support do Social Workers need to carry out their roles more effectively?

People's attitude towards social work services remains a significant issue. The current public perception is that Social Workers are there to take children away. There is a need to promote Social Workers in a more positive light by providing information on what they actually do rather than the current public perception. It was highlighted that there is a need to get out more to careers fairs and sell the job and the good stories to the public.

Given the cutbacks to the budgets for the various agencies involved in social work, there is a need to consider pooling resources better, and to start looking at where the resources are and how they could be used better. This is not necessarily just about sharing resources but also sharing knowledge and expertise. All the agencies work well together but they do not formally come together with an open agenda in terms of sharing resources. It would be useful if around some specific issues the different agencies could work together more closely in order to come up with a better solution for working with a child or family. Co-location of the different social care teams with partner agencies would also facilitate with sharing resources, along with sharing knowledge and expertise.

It was also highlighted that another way to support staff better would be to have more Social Workers. As mentioned previously on page 28, an additional £400,000 has been allocated to recruit more Social Workers. However, this does not solve the issue of recruiting experienced Social Workers and then retaining the staff in order to maintain some stability and experience within the locality teams.

One difficulty that Social Workers do have is in relation to the current IT system used. There is a clash between what Social Workers need to record and how the ICS system works. It was highlighted on several occasions by Social Workers and their managers that the ICS system is not very user friendly and unwieldy, which results in the users having to go through several different windows to record information. It was also emphasised that the ICS system is extremely slow when the users are trying to input the information and it can take a while for the information to load and save. This was also highlighted as an issue by the staff in the Customer Service Centre, who have to input the information they receive from the phone calls straight onto the ICS system. Given the time pressure that all the users of the ICS system are under, this creates a lot of frustration and delays for the users.

A new IT system for case management has been commissioned. The new system, Mosaic, is currently being built to specification in order to streamline the current processes, and practitioners have been involved through a Development Group to inform the new system. The principle is that a vast range of professionals will be able to access it and it will be remotely accessible. Signs of Safety is also being incorporated into the new system. The new system will be largely paperless but any additional paperwork received could be scanned and embedded as appropriate.

However, having spoken with Social Workers, some have indicated that they have not been as involved in the development of the new system as they would have liked. A representative for each team is invited to attend the Development Group, whose role is to feedback to their team, bring forward issues from their team and gather information to submit to the Development Group. It is acknowledged that attendance at the Development Group is not compulsory which may have resulted in no representation of some staff at times. All staff are also invited to the Social Care Forum, although some teams again send a representative.

The Task and Finish Group has recognised that the new Mosaic system is critical for Social Workers in order to save time when recording information and allow more time for visiting children and families. It

is proposed for the new system to go live in April 2015.

There is also a disconnection with mobile technology for Social Workers. Tablets could be a helpful way to assist with paperwork and recording information when out of the office, and for information capture. Using a tablet interactively could enable children to record their feelings, rather than being asked a series of questions while a professional made notes. This could potentially allow children to express themselves in a different way. It was highlighted that while this would be useful, legal advice would need to be sought about making videos of children or children recording themselves, and any issues with confidentiality.

Recommendation 16

The Task and Finish Group recognised the difficulties faced by Social Workers when using the current ICS system and considers it essential that the new IT system, Mosaic, is brought in as soon as possible.

Recommendation 17

A trial of using mobile technology such as Ipads / tablets should be conducted, with at least one or two FAST teams, to examine what the benefits would be for Social Workers in using mobile technology in their work with children and young people.

Appendix 1 - National and Local Context

National Context

The Munro Report 2011

The **Munro report** set out some proposals for reform which were intended to create the conditions that enabled professionals to make the best judgments about the help to give to children, young people and families. This involved moving from a system that had become over-bureaucratised and focused on compliance to one that valued and developed professional expertise and was focused on the safety and welfare of children and young people. The review recommended that the Government should place a duty on local authorities and their statutory partners to secure the sufficient provision of local early help services for children, young and people and families. This should lead to the identification of the early help that is needed by a particular child and their family and to the provision of an offer of help where their needs do not match the criteria for receiving children's social care services.

The College of Social Work would play a major role in helping the profession build its knowledge and expertise. The review also considered that social work must have greater visibility and voice within Government. It recommended the establishment of a Chief Social Worker, whose duties should include advising Government on social work practice and the effectiveness of help offered to children and young people.

Working Together to Safeguard Children: A guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children

The **Working Together to Safeguard Children: A guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children** guidance defines safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children as

- protecting children from maltreatment;
- preventing impairment of children's health or development;
- ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care; and
- taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

Children are best protected when professionals work together and are clear about what is required of them individually. Effective safeguarding systems are child centred. Failings in safeguarding systems are too often the result of losing sight of the needs and views of the children within them, or placing the interests of adults ahead of the needs of children.

College of Social Work

In 2009, the College of Social Work was established to represent and support the social work profession. The College exists to uphold the agreed professional standards and promote the profession and the benefits it brings to the general public, media and policy makers.

Health and Care Professional Council (HCPC)

The HCPC are a regulator, and was set up to protect the public. The aims of the HCPC are to

- maintain and publish a public register of properly qualified members of the professions
- approve and uphold high standards of education and training, and continue good practice
- investigate complaints and take appropriate action
- work in partnership with the public, and a range of other groups including professional bodies
- promote awareness and understanding of the aims of the Council

Community Care Survey

In November 2013, the **Community Care Survey**⁷ of 600 children's Social Workers and managers found that most professionals are struggling to protect vulnerable children as referrals to Children's Services social care rises and local authority budgets are squeezed. The vast majority (88%) of respondents said austerity measures in their council have left children at increased risk of abuse, while 73% said they lack the time, support or resources to prevent children from experiencing serious harm. According to 80% of respondents, child protection thresholds have risen over the past year, making it harder for workers to intervene and protect children from neglect and abuse. Social Workers said thresholds have risen for even the most serious forms of child abuse. Nearly a third (30%) said thresholds for sexual abuse had risen in their council, while 31% said this of physical abuse and 78% said thresholds for neglect had risen.

Nearly half (47%) of child protection workers had even come under pressure to reclassify section 47 child protection cases as 'child in need' cases, which is a less serious category requiring less intervention. Almost three quarters (72%) said the pressure was due to senior management trying to reduce the number of child protection cases. Nearly two thirds (64%) of professionals said they were very or quite uncomfortable with the level of risk they are managing in such cases. Only 12 of the 600 surveyed said they felt comfortable and relaxed about the level of risk.

In the child's time: professional responses to neglect

The Ofsted report **In the child's time: professional responses to neglect** found a number of key findings, of which the main ones to highlight are

- Nearly half of assessments in the cases seen either did not take sufficient account of the family history, or did not adequately convey or consider the impact of neglect on the child. Some assessments focused almost exclusively on the parents' needs rather than analysing the impact of adult behaviours on children. In a small number of cases this delayed the action local agencies took to protect children from suffering further harm.
- Some authorities are using effective methods to map and measure the impact of neglect on children over time and to evaluate the effectiveness of interventions. This results in timely and improved decision-making in some cases. However, not all local authorities have such systems in place to support Social Workers in monitoring the impact of neglect on children and the effectiveness of their interventions.
- Non-compliance and disguised compliance by parents were common features in cases reviewed. Although some multi-agency groups adopted clear strategies to manage such behaviour, this was not evident in all cases. Where parents were not engaging with plans, and outcomes for children were not improving, professionals did not consistently challenge parents.
- Drift was identified at some stage in the child's journey in a third of all long-term cases examined, delaying appropriate action to meet the needs of children and to protect them from further harm. Drift was caused by a range of factors, including inadequate assessments, poor planning, parents failing to engage and in a small number of cases, lack of understanding by professionals of the cumulative impact of neglect on children's health and development. Drift and delay have serious consequences for children, resulting in them continuing to be exposed to neglect.
- Front-line Social Workers and managers have access to research findings in relation to neglect, although the extent to which this is incorporated into practice varies. It is by exception that front-line Social Workers use specific research to support their work. The impact of training on professional practice with regard to neglect is neither systematically evident nor routinely evaluated.
- Routine performance monitoring and reporting arrangements to LSCBs infrequently profile neglect. Therefore most boards do not receive or collect neglect data except in respect of the

⁷ Community Care Survey <http://www.communitycare.co.uk/2013/11/19/community-care-survey-exposes-rising-thresholds-leaving-children-danger/#.UoxXs8T0H3N>

number of child protection plans where the category is recorded as neglect. Most boards were not able to provide robust evidence of their evaluation and challenge about the effectiveness of multi-agency working to tackle neglect.

- Those local authorities providing the strongest evidence of the most comprehensive action to tackle neglect were more likely to have a neglect strategy and/or a systematic improvement programme across policy and practice, involving the development of specific approaches to neglect.
- The challenge for local authorities and their partners is to ensure that best practice in cases of neglect is shared in order to drive improvement.

Public Law Outline (PLO) 2014

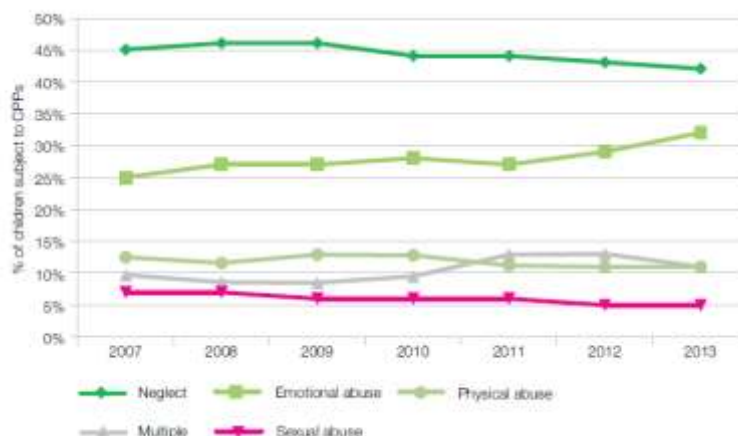
From 22 April 2014, the **Public Law Outline (PLO) 2014** for care, supervision and other proceedings came into effect. The PLO 2014 updates the pilot PLO that was introduced on 1 July 2013. This has been developed to reduce the amount of time taken to make a decision in certain cases. It has been designed to reposition Social Workers as experts within their field and to move away from independent experts which, ultimately, builds in delay to the process. The PLO now requires decisions on social care proceedings to be made within 26 weeks.

National Data

According to the NSPCC report **How Safe are Our Children? 2014⁸**, there were 593,500 referrals to children's social services in England relating to 511,500 children for the year to 31 March 2013. Referrals have decreased year on year in England since 2010/11 and a quarter of referrals in England in 2012/13 were re-referrals.

In England, there were 179,090 children in need due to abuse or neglect at 31 March 2013. This comprises 47% of the total children in need. Overall, the number of children in need due to abuse or neglect has increased between 2009/10 and 2012/13. There were 43,140 children subject to Child Protection Plans (CPP) on 31 March 2013. There were 52,680 children who became the subject of a CPP in the year 31 March 2012 to 31 March 2013. Between 2002 and 2013 the number of children subject to CPPs increased by 68%, and the number of children becoming the subject of a CPP each year increased by 89%. Neglect is consistently the most common reason for being subject to a CPP, followed by emotional abuse. Multiple forms of abuse have overtaken physical and sexual abuse in the last few years. At 31 March 2013 the breakdown of Child Protection Plans in England was as follows:

- 42% neglect
- 32% emotional abuse
- 11% multiple reasons
- 11% physical abuse
- 5% sexual abuse



⁸ How Safe are Our Children? 2014 http://www.nspcc.org.uk/Inform/research/findings/how-safe/how-safe-2014_wda101852.html#messages

Signs of Safety

Signs of Safety is an approach created in Western Australia during the 1990's. It aims to work collaboratively and in partnership with families and children to conduct risk assessments and produce action plans for increasing safety, and reducing risk and danger by focusing on strengths, resources and networks that the family have. The model has evolved since the 1990's and has been built on the experiences and feedback of case workers adapting the approach in the field. In practice the model can be used from the first stages of gathering information about an allegation through to case closure and has broad applicability to child protection work. The Signs of Safety model follows three core principles of approach which are:

- 1) Establishing constructive working relationships and partnerships between professionals and family members, and between professionals themselves.
- 2) Engaging in critical thinking and maintaining a position of inquiry.
- 3) Staying grounded in the everyday work of child protection practitioners.

All three principles emphasise the need to move towards a constructive culture around child protection rather than a protective model where the professionals adopt the position that they know what is wrong and they know specific solutions.

In 2011 the NSPCC commissioned a survey⁹ to determine where Signs of Safety was being used, with an initial focus on England. LSCB chairs and managers were contacted via email to see if they were using Signs of Safety in their local authority. This covered a total of 153 local authorities in England. They had a response from representatives of 67 local authorities (44%). Over half of those local authorities (35) who responded used Signs of Safety. There was a variety of responses to the surveys and different local authorities were using the approach in differing ways. Some local authorities were using only some elements of the approach, while others used the approach consistently across all aspects of their child protection services. Other local authorities indicated their interest in the approach or their intention to introduce it.

Practitioners described Signs of Safety as a useful framework for addressing the danger and harm factors in a case and clarifying the concerns and risks, especially with more difficult cases and during periods of crisis. Signs of Safety helped practitioners to be more specific about child protection issues, ensuring they described behaviours and frequencies rather than just saying the child had experienced 'neglect'. Signs of Safety methods were thought to increase participation, co-operation and the engagement of parents/families. Parents liked focusing on strengths and not just problems, and it helped them to see things from the child's perspective. The tools gave younger children a voice and a say. There is limited evidence so far on whether Signs of Safety improves outcomes for children and further research is needed to evaluate the effectiveness of this model.

Local Context

Lincolnshire Safeguarding Children Board

Section 13 of the Children Act 2004 required each local authority to establish a Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) for their area. The Act specifies the organisations and individuals that should be involved and Section 14 describes the key statutory objectives of the LSCB. These are:

- a) To co-ordinate what is done by each person or body represented on the Board for the purposes of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in the area: and
- b) To ensure the effectiveness of what is done by each such person or body for those purposes.

⁹ Signs Of Safety In England: An NSPCC commissioned report on the Signs of Safety model in child protection, March 2013
http://www.nspcc.org.uk/inform/research/findings/signs-of-safety_wda94937.html

Regulation 5 of the Local Safeguarding Child Boards Regulations 2006 sets out the functions of the LSCB in relation to the objectives under Section 14 of the Children Act 2004. These include developing safeguarding Policy and Procedure; agreeing with partners the actions to be taken where there are concerns about a child's safety; training those who work with children; recruitment and supervision of staff; investigation of allegations against people working with children; ensuring the safety and welfare of privately fostered children; monitoring the effectiveness of what is done by the authority and their Board partners; undertaking reviews of serious cases ensuring that the lessons learned are widely understood and reviewing the deaths of all children in the local authority area.

The LSCB is a co-ordinating body which consists of a huge range of agencies, of which the key partners are health, police, and Lincolnshire County Council. National guidance issued three years ago stated that all local safeguarding children boards should have an independent chair whose role is to hold the agencies to account. The LSCB consists of a Strategic Management Group which makes the strategic decisions, and an Operational Delivery Group which makes the operational decisions. The LSCB also has four sub-groups, which are the Child Death Overview Panel, Child Sexual Exploitation Sub-Group, Policy, Procedure, Training and Development Sub-Group, and the Serious Incident Review Sub-Group.

The LSCB has produced a guide called **Meeting the Needs of Children in Lincolnshire: A Shared Responsibility** in response to the national Working Together 2013 guidance. This guide provides an outline of the range of needs of all children in Lincolnshire and the thresholds at each level. This is a framework for assessment, planning, delivering and review. It provides a single coherent approach for undertaking these key processes of working with all children who are in need of support services. It emphasises that the child's voice should be evident through all assessments, planning, delivery and review of services. The key principles for working with children and families are defined as

- Be child-centred with a clear understanding of the needs and views
- of the child
- Focus on outcomes
- Be holistic in approach
- Involve children and families
- Raise awareness of Children's welfare and that safety is everyone's
- responsibility
- Use Multi and Inter-agency approach
- Build from previous assessments
- Be evidence based
- Build on strengths as well as identifying difficulties
- Meet the needs within locally based services
- Give families the opportunity to find their own solutions

Social Care Teams

Within each of the eight locality teams there are targeted teams, Families Working Together (FWT) teams and Family Assessment and Support Teams (FAST).

The Families Working Together teams cover a range of issues, including Anti-Social Behaviour, educational issues, exclusions, and out of work benefits. Work with troubled families could potentially continue for up to two years. The Government has funded this initiative for a further five years and work has commenced to try to coordinate multi-agency involvement with family access to family budgets from the Government. Out of the 1370 troubled families identified by the government in Lincolnshire, 1224 have been identified so far by Families Working Together. The majority of these families are in the Lincoln and East Lindsey areas.

Interventions by Targeted teams are based on Needs Assessments which are undertaken by Team Managers, Practice Supervisors and FAST colleagues. The key worker would coordinate the

involvement of relevant teams to ensure families receive the support they need. Partner agencies would also assist where required.

The FAST team has legal and statutory responsibilities, whereas the Targeted Team provides early intervention and support to the Social Worker where there is a Social Care Plan in place.

Qualified Social Workers carry out a full range of work with both children in need and child protection cases. This includes court work, looked after children, child subject to a Child Protection Plan and child subject to some court orders, such as Supervision Orders. A level 1 Social Worker is usually a worker who is newly or recently qualified and for the first year in practice they attend the ASYE programme (Assessed and Supported Year in Employment) once a month. They also have a protected caseload in their first year. A level 2 Social Worker is usually a worker with two years' experience who has completed the ASYE and then moves on to early professional development.

Advanced Practitioners are experienced Social Workers with at least three years post qualifying experience who will manage the most complex cases and mentor less experienced colleagues.

Practice Supervisors are first line managers who are a specialist with extensive experience in the work. They will be responsible for supervising between 5 and 10 less experienced Social Workers. This is a first line management position and the Practice Supervisor allocates, reviews, audits and assigns work in conjunction with the small team they manage. They are also responsible for managing any issues that affect their team. Practice Supervisors deputise for the Team Manager as required. Most teams have three Practice Supervisors.

Team Managers have overall responsibility for the team of between 10 and 25 personnel. This post is more strategic and entails an understanding and grasp of the wider aspects of the Local Authority in one of the eight localities.

All statutory Social Workers who are employed by Lincolnshire County Council must be registered with the Health and Care Professional Council (HCPC) at a cost of £72.00 per annum for each Social Worker, which is paid for by the Authority.

Safeguarding Children Working Group

In December 2008, the Leaders of the political groups on Lincolnshire County Council set up the Safeguarding Children Working Group to check that structures were in place to adequately protect the County's vulnerable children.

The aim of the Group was to "seek to reassure Councillors and residents of Lincolnshire that structures are in place to adequately protect the County's vulnerable children". The Working Group had four working sessions to receive and discuss information about the arrangements for safeguarding children and its members visited the Customer Service Centre and a FAST Team that deals with referrals.

At the conclusion of its inquiry in March 2009, the Working Group was impressed with the quality of the arrangements and the dedication, knowledge and experience of the staff dealing with referrals concerning vulnerable children. The Working Group was assured that the Council was in the forefront of Councils seeking to protect children. It recommended that the Council accepted and adopted the considered view of the Working Group that the Council had in place policies and practices, trained staff, supervision and monitoring arrangements and collaboration with partners which should ensure that vulnerable children in Lincolnshire were safe from deliberate harm by others.

Appendix 2 - Benchmarking with Other Local Authorities

Ofsted Inspection of Lincolnshire's Children's Services

Lincolnshire's last Ofsted Inspection took place in May 2010 under the old Ofsted Framework. Overall, the inspection of safeguarding and looked after children services was found to be **Outstanding** (a service that significantly exceeds minimum requirements).

The key points from the report highlighted that:

- the overall effectiveness of safeguarding services is outstanding. The council and partners have maintained a robust, consistent and successful focus to secure the safety and well-being of children and young people across a large and diverse county. The partnership's strategic commitment to providing early support to families has resulted in a transfer of resources from specialist to universal services and the Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership is making significant progress.
- Capacity to improve is outstanding. Outstanding performance management arrangements make sure that prompt and robust action is taken to address any temporary areas of underperformance that are identified. A good example is the way that successful preventative working across the partnership is helping to ensure that more children are safeguarded at an earlier stage so that the number of children with child protection plans is appropriately low. More children are benefiting from thorough, good quality assessments enabling them to receive the services they require in a timely manner. Inter-agency and locality working is being successfully embedded across districts and partners and users of services evidence that the multi-agency 'team around the child' arrangements are working well.
- Workforce planning and development are effective. Vacancy rates are low, including those across health providers. Managers are empowered to make decisions and they and their staff know their service well. Managers take swift action to tackle operational issues effectively, for example, establishing forums where practitioners can meet to discuss individual cases to produce effective and child-focussed solutions. Children, young people and their parents and carers are becoming more involved in helping to shape services. For example, parents have had significant involvement in designing programmes which deliver parenting skills to improve their children's life chances.

The report highlighted that in order to improve the quality of provision and services for safeguarding children and young people in Lincolnshire, the local authority and its partners should take the following action:

- Improve access to Level 3 multi-agency child protection training for health staff
- Ensure that all health care staff are aware of the CAMHS pathway for access to treatment for children and young people
- Ensure that the arrangements for children missing from care, education and home are harmonised so that there is one single data record in place.

Under the old Ofsted Framework, comparative Councils have been rated as follows:

East Midlands Region

- Derby City (Good)
- Derbyshire (Good)
- Rutland (Adequate)
- Leicestershire (Adequate)

- Norfolk (Inadequate)
- Northamptonshire (Inadequate)
- Nottinghamshire (Inadequate)

Other Neighbouring Authorities

- North Lincolnshire (Good)
- North East Lincolnshire (Adequate)
- Doncaster (Inadequate)

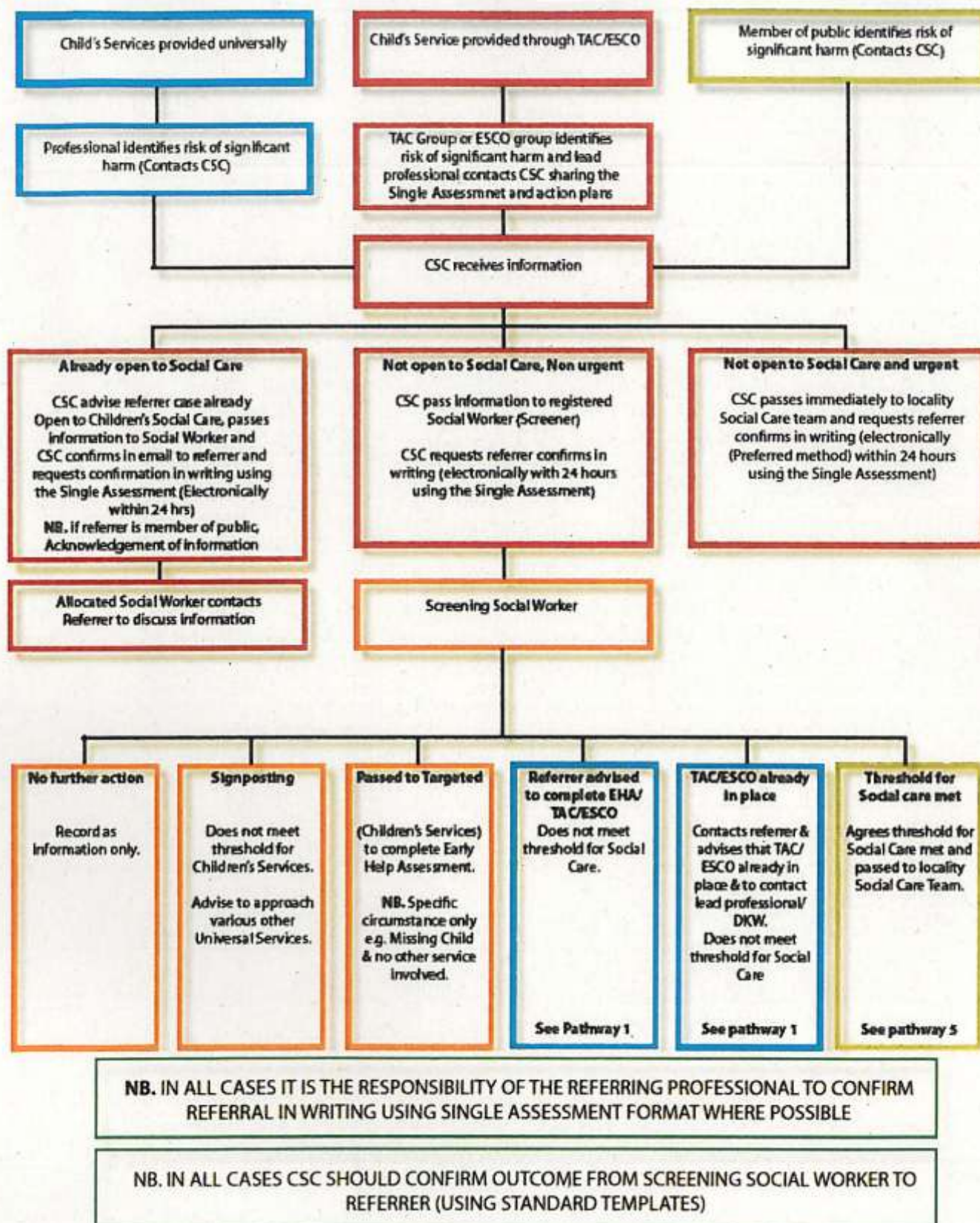
On 3 December 2013, Ofsted published its new inspection framework entitled **The Framework and Evaluation Schedule for the Inspection of Services for Children in Need of Help and Protection, Children Looked After and Care Leavers**. This document details Ofsted's inspection framework both for local authority children's services and for local safeguarding children boards.

Between November and February 2014, the following Councils were inspected by Ofsted under the new framework:

- Derbyshire County Council (Good)
- Hartlepool Borough Council (Good)
- East Sussex County Council (Good)
- Essex County Council (Good)
- Staffordshire County Council (Good)
- Sheffield City Council (Requires Improvement)
- London Borough of Hillingdon (Requires Improvement)
- Bolton Council (Requires Improvement)
- London Borough of Hounslow (Requires Improvement)
- Slough Borough Council (Inadequate)
- Coventry City Council (Inadequate)

There are no outstanding ratings so far under the new Ofsted Inspection Framework. Lincolnshire County Council and the Lincolnshire Safeguarding Children Board are due to be inspected under the new framework in the near future.

Appendix 3 - Pathway for Referral to Children's Social Care where there is a Risk of Significant Harm



Appendix 4 - List of Acronyms

ASYE	Assessed and Supported Year in Employment
Cafcass	Child and Family Court Advisory and Support Services
CAMHS	Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services
CiN	Child in Need
CPD	Continuous Professional Development
CPP	Child Protection Plans
CSC	Customer Service Centre
DART	Drug and Alcohol Recovery Team
EBR	Employment Based Route
ESCO	Early Support Care Coordination
FAST	Family Assessment and Support Team
FWT	Families Working Together
HCPC	Health and Care Professional Council
ICS	Integrated Children's Services
LAC	Looked After Children
LCC	Lincolnshire County Council
LSCB	Lincolnshire Safeguarding Children Board
MAPPA	Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements
MASH	Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub
PLO	Public Law Outline
PCSO	Police Community Support Officer
TAC	Team Around the Child
TOIL	Time Off In Lieu
UCAS	Universities and Colleges Admissions Service

Appendix 5 - Contributors to the Review

The Task and Finish Group would like to offer their sincere thanks to all the parents and children we have met, who kindly allowed us to visit them in their homes and observe their Child Protection Conference meetings.

Furthermore, the Task and Finish Group would like to extend their thanks to:

- The staff in all the FAST teams in Lincolnshire for speaking candidly to us when we have visited the locality teams, and for helping to arrange our attendance at various meetings and the visits to families that have been undertaken.
- The staff at the Customer Service Centre, who spoke to us and allowed us to observe their work.
- The Chairs of the Child Protection Conferences for allowing us to observe the Conference meetings.
- The Heads of Service who chaired the Support Panels for allowing us to observe the Panel meetings.

In addition, the Task and Finish Group would like to extend their gratitude to all the following people who have contributed to this review:

- Rebecca Andrews, Principal Lawyer, Legal Services Lincolnshire
- Debbie Barnes, Executive Director of Children's Services, Lincolnshire County Council
- Councillor Mrs Patricia Bradwell, Executive Councillor for Adult Services, Health and Children's Services, Lincolnshire County Council
- Andrea Brown, Democratic Services Officer, Lincolnshire County Council
- Sam Clayton, Principal Child and Family Social Worker, Lincolnshire County Council
- Chris Cook, Independent Chair, Lincolnshire Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB)
- Rick Hatton, Head of Public Protection, Lincolnshire Police
- Nigel Horner, Head of School of Health and Social Care, University of Lincoln
- Andrew Morris, LSCB Business Manager
- Tracy Johnson, Scrutiny Officer, Lincolnshire County Council
- Janice Spencer, Assistant Director of Children's Services, Lincolnshire County Council
- Judge Heather Swindells, Family Court Judge for Lincolnshire
- Jennie Thornton, Consultant, Lincolnshire County Council

The Task and Finish Group would like to also thank the following Team Managers and frontline staff who met with us during the focus groups:

- Kieran Barnes, Headteacher, The Teaching and Learning Centre
- Sam Carman, Practice Supervisor, Lincoln FAST Team
- Mike Carrol, Team Manager, North Kesteven Targeted Team
- Jo Casey, Team Manager, East Lindsey South FAST Team
- Alex Coman, Team Manager, West Lindsey FAST Team
- Diane Cooke, Social Worker, Lincoln FAST Team
- Victoria Czajkowski, Families Working Together - Key Worker
- Karen Dowman, Team Manager
- Hannah Fassler, Practice Supervisor, Lincoln FAST Team
- Gary Fenwick, Team Manager, West Lindsey Targeted Team
- Philippa Gallop, Team Manager, Customer Service Centre
- Kristine Green, Social Worker, Lincoln FAST Team
- Dom Hine, Team Manager, East Lindsey North FAST Team
- Jon Hird, Acting Team Manager, Lincoln Targeted Team
- Tony Jones, Team Manager, North Kesteven FAST Team

- Danielle Marshall, Practice Supervisor, Families Working Together - Lincoln
- Susan Marrows, Family Support Worker, Lincoln Targeted Team
- Rebecca Morris, Team Manager, South Kesteven Targeted Team
- Fiona Railton, Team Manager
- Urfan Sadiq, Practice Supervisor, South Holland FAST Team
- Yvonne Shearwood, Case Manager
- Lorraine Wallace, Social Worker, Lincoln FAST Team
- Vicky Webb, Social Worker, Lincoln FAST Team
- Paula Whitehead, Team Manager, Team Around the Child (TAC)
- Carly Willingham, Targeted Youth Support Assistant, Lincoln Targeted Team
- Claudia Wood, Practice Supervisor, Lincoln FAST Team

More Information

If you would like any more information about the work of Overview and Scrutiny at Lincolnshire County Council then please get in touch with the Scrutiny Team by calling 01522 552164 or by emailing the Team at scrutiny@lincolnshire.gov.uk