



Report to Walsall Metropolitan Borough Council Children's Scrutiny Panel.

14th January, 2014.

Walsall Safeguarding Children Board Annual Report 2012/13

1. Statutory and Legislative Context for LSCBs

Walsall Safeguarding Children Board was established in April 2006 in response to the requirements of the Children Act 2004 and its accompanying guidance 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' (2006). The scope and role of LSCBs encompass the broader remit of safeguarding and prevention in addition to child protection. The WSCB has two objectives, as detailed in the Children Act 2004 and Working Together 2010¹ as follows:

- 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 of the authority
- To ensure the effectiveness of what is done by each such person or body for that purpose

Working Together 2010 states that each LSCB should have a clear work programme, including measurable objectives and a budget. This report reflects the priorities set within the WSCB Business Plan for 2012/13, progress against these priorities and areas for further development.

It is acknowledged that a full Annual Report for 2012/13 should have been completed well before now. However, long-term vacancies in key posts (notably that of Board Business Manager) and other staffing difficulties have meant that it has only recently become possible to commence the preparation of the full Annual Report. That will shortly be available but, meanwhile, it is felt to be essential that what amounts to an executive summary of the final report be made available to the Scrutiny Panel now.

¹ A new version of Working Together was published in mid 2013 but the 2010 guidance is relevant for the 2012/13 period. The 2013 Guidance will govern production of the 2013/14 Annual Report.

2. The Ofsted Inspection of Safeguarding Services in Walsall June 2012.

The content and outcome of the Ofsted Inspection of children's safeguarding services in Walsall carried out in June 2012 is well known to members of the Scrutiny Panel so there is no need to rehearse the full detail here. Suffice it to say that the impact of that inspection on the WSCB was fundamental: I will make a brief presentation at the Panel's meeting to summarise the Inspectors' conclusions and outline the Board's responses.

3. The Key Priorities Originally Identified by the WSCB for 2012 – 2013

The WSCB Business Plan 2012 – 2013 outlined the following priorities:

- (i) 'To work in partnership to identify and prevent maltreatment, or impairment of health or development, and ensure children are growing up in circumstances consistent with safe and effective care'

In order to achieve this aim WSCB stated that it would:

- Support the development of and monitor the effectiveness of a tiered multi-agency response to neglect
- Monitor the impact of the new operating model on children's safeguarding
- Respond to serious incidents:
 - Using the Reflective Practice Review process
 - Developing a multi-agency protocol for Critical Incidents
 - Revising the Serious Case Review process in line with the new Working Together to Safeguard Children Document
- Undertake a training needs analysis and produce a multi-agency training programme

- (ii) 'To support and protect children who are vulnerable or are suffering or likely to suffer significant harm'

In order to achieve this aim WSCB stated that it would:

- Focus on the most vulnerable children and young people in our community via the Children Who Runaway protocol, Children At Risk of Exploitation Panel and Sexually Harmful Behaviour services
- By developing a multi-agency pathway in response to young people at risk of suicide and deliberate self harm
- Engage in the development of local Sexual Assault Referral Centres (SARC's)
- Continuing with a multi-agency response to Domestic Abuse

- (iii) 'To coordinate and ensure the effectiveness of local work to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people'

In order to achieve this aim WSCB stated that it would:

- Develop working relationships with the new Health and Wellbeing Board and GP Commissioners
- Strengthen working arrangements between the WSCB and the new school economy
- Continue to strengthen links between the adults and children's safeguarding agenda
- Embed the Quality Assurance and Performance programme, including the tracking and monitoring of action plans from audits and Serious Case Reviews
- Ensure the voice of families and children are heard by the Board
- Revise the multi-agency Child Protection Procedures in line with local and national guidance

4. Summary of Key Areas of Progress/Achievements During 2012 – 2013

The Ofsted inspection in June 2012 inevitably and properly impacted on the work of the WSCB for the greater part of 2012/13 especially from December 2012 when I was appointed as the Independent Chair of the Board. Not all of the aims of the WSCB Business Plan for 2012/13 remained priority areas for action. However, key areas of progress/achievements that were aligned with the 2012/13 Business Plan included:

- A development day for the Serious Case Review Sub Committee held in January 2013 which considered the process for undertaking Serious Case Reviews as well as different models of review, and including elements that would form a Walsall model for Serious Case Reviews. This has led to the production of a WSCB Serious Case Review Practice Guidance and Toolkit
- A comprehensive multi-agency training needs analysis, which has informed the training programme for 2013/14
- A part time secondment to the WSCB of an experienced Independent Reviewing Officer to progress work in relation to children at risk of sexual exploitation and those that go missing
- Development of a multi-agency procedure in response to young people at risk of suicide and deliberate self harm which was launched on 1st March 2013
- Providing a consultation response to the development of local Sexual Assault Referral Centres (SARC's)
- Development of a Quality Assurance and Performance framework aligned to the Safeguarding Performance Information Framework (and now embodied within the WSCB Learning and Improvement Framework)

- Ongoing engagement with young people via the contribution of the Safeguarding Inspection Team (SIT) to the work of the WSCB²
- Revisions to the WSCB Multi-agency Safeguarding Procedures in June 2012 and March 2013

A key area of progress not included within the WSCB Business Plan 2012-2013 which became a priority area for action was a review of the WSCB structure, governance and accountability arrangements. This included:

- A WSCB Development Day held on 13th February 2013
- A review of the effectiveness of the WSCB Sub Groups, subsequent changes to their membership, Terms of Reference and reporting requirements
- The creation of a WSCB Business Manager post
- Establishing a multi-agency auditing programme and audit tools
- A review of requirements in relation to Child Protection planning and Core Group functions
- A review of the Section 11 Audit Tool (duty of agencies to co-operate)

5. Summary of Financial Position 2012/13

A breakdown of the year-end financial position for the Walsall Safeguarding Children Board for 2012/13 can be shown as follows:

Income

LA Funding	£112,429
Partner Agency Contributions	£76,184
Carry Forward of CWDC Munro Funding*	£26,585
Total	£215,198

* In 2011-12 we received funding from the now defunct CWDC³ to implement findings from the Munro report. We carried £26,585 forward into 2012-13

² The SIT is a group of Walsall young people who have each individually volunteered, after training, to become young inspectors of children's services in Walsall. A SIT representative is a member of the WSCB

³ Children's Workforce Development Council

Expenditure

Employees

Notes

Development Co-ordinator (WSCB)	£17,870	
Agency Development Co-ordinator (WSCB)	£43,758	
Training and Development Officer (WSCB)	£36,120	
WSCB Admin Assistant	£24,115	
CDOP Co-ordinator	£13,463	
Review and Child Protection Co-ordinator (50%)	£18,710	(1)
Staff Travel	£551	
	<hr/>	
	£154,587	
	<hr/>	

Other Costs

Independent Chair of the Board	£20,400
Tri-X Procedure Manual	£3,000
Print and Design spend	£1,446
Advertising	£2,288
Office Costs	£890
Contribution to Young People's Safeguarding Group	£300
Section 11 Audit tool	£2,000
Chronolator ⁴ renewal	£1,535
Under achievement of income targets	£2,984
Balance of SWIF Munro ⁵ - to be c/fwd 13-14	£7,875
	<hr/>
	£42,718
	<hr/>

⁴ Simplifies the creation and merging of the chronology tables needed to produce Chapter 8 (Child Protection) and other Serious Case Reviews etc

⁵ Social Work Investment Fund

Internal cost - HR / Finance /
ICT

£2,264

Total Spend

£199,570

From this, we can identify an under spend on budget for the financial year 2012-13 of £15,629.

Notes:

(1) In 2011-12, we received funding from the now defunct CWDC to implement findings from the Munro report. We carried £26,585 forward into 2012-13 where it funded £18,710 of work completed regarding CSE and missing children from September 2012 to March 2013. The remaining £7,875 was carried forward into 2013-14.

6. Concluding Remarks.

The period 2012/13 was immensely challenging for the WSCB, as it was for all the partner agencies, especially Walsall's Children's Social Care. However, in the last quarter of the year, significant progress was made which meant that we entered 2013/14 leaner, stronger and more fit for purpose to meet the vital challenge of playing our part in safeguarding all Walsall's children and young people.

Finally, may I express my thanks to the many colleagues across all the partner agencies who worked tirelessly throughout 2012/13, and continue to do so, with and on behalf of the WSCB.

Robert Lake
Independent Chair WSCB