



4 **Matters arising**  
Minute 5 – Parental Ambassadors Programme

Scrutiny Officer advised that a briefing paper on the programme giving more details was sent to panel members.

5 **Pupil Referral Unit Briefing paper**  
Resolved:

The panel agreed to note the briefing paper.

6 **Children Safeguarding Board Annual Report 2015/16**

Alan Coe, Independent Chair of Wolverhampton Safeguarding Children Board (WSCB), presented the annual report. The Independent Chair commented that the report represents a summary of partnership work activity between a range of local organisations involved in safeguarding children. The Independent Chair explained that he is responsible to the Chief Executive, City of Wolverhampton Council and meets with him to review progress.

The Independent Chair works 30 days a year and is supported by Gillian Ming, Children Safeguarding Board Manager. It is a statutory requirement for the Board to publish an annual report. The Independent Chair highlighted the key achievements of Wolverhampton Safeguarding Children Board and specifically the improved website which provides a range of information and resources. The Independent Chair commented that there has been better engagement by schools in the safeguarding agenda. All local schools were invited to attend an annual conference to discuss safeguarding issues. The attendance by schools at safeguarding events has improved. The panel were advised while there is no obligation on schools to send a representative to the event, they are encouraged to do so and non-attendance is monitored.

The Independent Chair commented on the work done to improve regional working arrangements. The Independent Chair praised the safeguarding work of the Council to improve the regulation of licensed premises and regulated services to meet its safeguarding responsibilities.

The panel were invited to attend the MASH offices to see the work being done and commented that the service was an example of good partnership working in practice.

The panel queried the involvement of children and young people in the work of WSCB. The Independent Chair responded that young people with direct experience of the care system were working with members of the B-Safe Team. The WSCB partly fund the work of the B-Safe Team. The team have met with Councillor Gibson, Cabinet Member for Children. Cllr Gibson commented that concerns about the issue of bullying raised by young people led to the development of the anti-bullying campaign. In addition, work is being done to get a small group of young people together to act as ambassadors.

The panel discussed the definition of neglect and the number of cases reported to the WSCB. The Independent Chair commented that the issue of neglect is a major concern among members of WSCB. The Board has recently produced guidance to

get greater consistency in how professionals recognise signs of neglect, which has led to a greater consistency in approach by partners.

The Independent Chair commented on the role of other agencies such as west midlands fire service in reporting any concerns about the welfare of children in a property they have visited. Gillian Ming, Safeguarding Manager, commented on the training provided to agencies to strengthen safeguarding arrangements to deliver more effective services.

The panel queried how the WSCB has considered the issue of mental health and the work done to identify and support children. The Independent Chair commented on the support given to victims of CSE.

The panel expressed concern about whether the right people were represented on the Board and the pattern of poor attendance detailed in the report by some organisations. The Independent Chair commented that all the organisations are engaged with the work of the Board and that the low rate of attendance should not be seen as a reflection of their level of commitment to safeguarding children. The Independent Chair also explained that organisations such as a fire service who offer a regional wide service are not able to attend all safeguarding board meetings across the seven different local authorities it covers due the limited staff resources. The Independent Chair advised that representatives of the fire service give priority to attending Safeguarding Adult Board meetings.

The Safeguarding Manager explained that the attendance figures were not correct and agreed to reproduce the report and share it with members of the Board.

The panel discussed the role and work of Child Death Panel during the year. The Safeguarding Manager explained that the Board had reviewed the circumstances involving 23 child deaths in Wolverhampton in 2015/16.

The panel commented on how different agencies were coping with the work demands and responding to the pressures, for example, a 34 percent increase in the number of CSE cases. The Independent Chair commented that every agency is under its own resource pressure and was confident that there was no evidence that cases were not being properly assessed, in order to reduce the demand.

The panel discussed the procedures and policies to monitor and identify pupil who are absent from schools.

The panel discussed the ethnic profile of children and young people known to the Board. The Independent Chair commented that children who are white European are over represented in the number of referrals received and minority ethnic children are under-represented. The Independent Chair agreed that the situation needs to be carefully monitored and removed to identify children at risk. The Safeguarding Manager commented on the work being planned to improve the quality of data. A report on the findings will be presented to Children's Trust Board in December 2016.

Resolved:

1. The panel welcomed the report and progress made.
2. The panel agreed to receive correct details of attendance at WSCB meetings

7 **Children's Services Self-Assessment - 'Our Story' and Improvement Plan**  
Cllr Val Gibson, Cabinet Member for Children and Young People introduced the report. The Cabinet Member advised that all local authorities are inspected by Ofsted within a three year period. The inspection will cover issues such as governance, leadership and management. Wolverhampton was last inspected in June 2011. The Cabinet Member gave a summary of the Children's Services Improvement Plan and 'Our Story' which has been updated to reflect the current performance of the service. The Cabinet Member gave a summary of progress against key judgements, but accepted that there more needs to be done. Emma Bennett, Service Director Children and Young People, explained that the report is a self-assessment of the service and analysis against a performance scorecard of work done during the year.

The Service Director explained that the remit of the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) has been extended to include adults. The Service Director offered to present a progress report to a future meeting of the panel for consideration. The Service Director highlighted the progress in reducing the number of looked after children and improved educational results – 19% of looked after children achieved five GCSEs at Key Stage Four in 2015. The result is well above the national average.

The Service Director commented that work is continuing to prepare a business case to exempt all care leavers from paying council tax. The policy was agreed at Council meeting.

The Service Director updated the panel on progress on the development of the regional adoption agency. Wolverhampton is part of the early adopter project which will provide an opportunity to share best practice. The Service Director agreed to share a briefing paper on the progress of establishing a regional adoption agency that was presented to Corporate Parenting Board with members of the panel.

The CSE Director updated the panel on the range of other initiatives to improve outcomes for children and young people in Wolverhampton, for example, work done to review the CSE strategy and welcomed the recent appointment of child sexual exploitation risk co-ordinator. The positive contribution by members of the Children in Care Council in the process was noted.

The panel discussed the Council's role in monitoring the care of children who are privately fostered by a family relative. The Service Director explained that the number of children in this situation is low. The Council is responsible to assess and review the welfare of the child in this arrangement.

The panel queried the reasons that details not provided about the human resources and equalities implications in the report. The Service Director accepted the point and agreed that a summary will be provided in future reports to the panel.

The panel suggested that it would be useful to have a public friendly version of the main report.

The Service Director accepted the point and agreed to look at the possibility of preparing a summary of the main report that could be shared with the public.

The panel discussed the policy towards the adoption of black and minority ethnic children and importance of considering cultural needs. In addition, the DFE has issued national guidance on the issue adoption of children.

The Service Director explained the criteria used when making a decision and reassured the panel that cultural needs of the child are considered. The Service Director also confirmed that regular checks are done to monitor how well the service is meeting the needs of black and minority ethnic children and the process is robust. For example, the adoption panel will ask prospective fosters about their understanding of the cultural needs of a child, where appropriate. The Service Director explained that where a child is being privately fostered or being home educated it is more difficult to monitor how their cultural and social needs are being met.

The panel discussed the lower adoption rate for black and minority ethnic children.

The panel welcomed the report and the progress made

Resolved:

1. The Service Director to share a briefing paper on progress in establishing the Regional Adoption Agency with the panel.
2. The Service Director to present a progress report on the performance of the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) to a future meeting of the panel.

## 8 **Update on Youth Offending Team Inspection Action Plan**

Sally Nash, Head of Service –Youth Offending Team introduced the report detailing the findings of a full joint inspection of the service. The Head of Service commented that the service had performed really well and is the highest performing service in the country. Cllr Val Gibson, Cabinet Member for Children praised the performance of the service.

The Head of Service commented on the significant progress on actions detailed in the joint inspection plan.

The panel discussed the plans to use a toolkit developed by Youth Justice Board to provide better intelligence about where action is needed to address the particular needs of the local community in Wolverhampton. The Head of Service commented that analysis has shown young black men are underrepresented in prevention service and the toolkit will help to provide a better understanding of how issues such as diversity are considered by agencies. The Head of Service commented that the service will continue to work with local voluntary sector organisations with the skills and experience to reach these groups.

The Head of Service advised that the use of the toolkit will be considered by YOT Management Board. The Head of Service advised that quarterly meetings are held with Youth Justice Board to review the progress of the joint inspection action plan.

The panel discussed the services commitment to address diversity and equality issues. The Head of Service acknowledged the issue and confirmed the commitment to monitor and improve the service. The panel suggested that results of the equalities analysis works should be presented to a future meeting.

The panel discussed the importance of considering the safeguarding issues of vulnerable young people who may be at risk of offending and engaging with them. The importance of making services proportionate and relevant to the needs of the local population was highlighted.

Resolved:

1. The panel welcomed the report and the excellent performance of the service.
2. The findings of the toolkit developed by Youth Justice Board to be presented to a future meeting of the panel.
3. The findings of the equalities analysis to be presented to a future meeting of the panel.

## 9 **Healthy Child Programme**

Neeraj Malhotra, Consultant in Public Health, introduced the report and explained the development of the new service model for the delivery of the Healthy Child Programme. The Consultant in Public Health gave a summary of the key findings from the formal engagement and consultation with the public and a range of health professionals on the proposed service model.

The Consultant in Public Health commented on how responses to the consultation have helped to shape the proposal for the new service. The Consultant in Public Health commented that there was broad agreement about the proposals for improving the service – a key aim was moving from the current model of having three distinct services to a model which is less rigid and focused on improving health outcomes for children from 0 – 19 years old. The model will bring together three separate services into one team.

The youth council representative commented on the positive experience of being involved in the consultation. The Consultant in Public Health commented on how feedback from the youth council and other groups had helped to shape the plans and that a key requirement of the service provider for the programme is they have a have a model that meets the needs of different groups and receive input from service users on a regular basis.

The Consultant Public Health advised the panel that the new service will start delivering from 1 August 2017.

The panel welcomed the report.

Resolved:

The panel supported the proposed new service model for the delivery of the Healthy Child Programme.

10 **Transformation Plan Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) - report to follow**

The Service Director, Children and Young People, agreed to investigate the reason for no report being presented to the panel. The panel to be advised of the outcome.

The meeting closed at 19:50