

WIRRAL CHILDREN'S TRUST BOARD – 21st January 2014

Wirral Safeguarding Children Board and Children's Trust Board Development Day 6th December 2013 - Summary Report

1.0 Background

At the September 2013 meeting of the WSCB the Board resolved to hold a development day in December to allow the WSCB and the Wirral Children's Trust Board (CTB) to discuss the impact and consequences for partner agencies of the publication of Working Together in April 2013 and preparation for the Ofsted inspection of the effectiveness of LSCB's published in November 2013.

Jan Horwath, Professor of Child Welfare at the University of Sheffield was commissioned by the WSCB to facilitate the development day. Jan has facilitated previous development days and sessions with the WSCB over the past 6 years and most recently led a day with the WSCB and CTB in December 2012 which explored what Wirral's early help offer should look like.

2.0 Introduction

The Development Day was held on 6th December 2013 and was attended by 47 colleagues from the WSCB and CTB representing a variety of agencies including health, education, police, fire service, children's specialist services, children's targeted services, Wirral Council and voluntary, community and faith organisations..

Julia Hassall (DCS) and Bernard Walker (Independent Chair WSCB) introduced the day and set the scene. Bernard emphasised the importance of safeguarding and the increasing importance of engaging with our communities to keep children safe. He also stated the importance for us to evidence the good work which is undertaken across the partnerships. Julia highlighted the importance of development days as good opportunities to reflect on the work we do to ensure that the systems we use are safe and to remind us that we are the leaders who set the tone, culture and priorities for the staff in our organisations.

Jan introduced the activities for the day and stated that she feels Wirral's Safeguarding Board and Children's Trust Board are both operating from a position of strength and this strength will allow them to critically analyse their respective roles and responsibilities and to evaluate the relationship between both Boards.

Jan outlined the three sessions to be delivered during the day:

2.1 Session 1 Implications of Working Together 2013

To consider how WSCB and CTB can build on existing arrangements to ensure the needs of maltreated and vulnerable children in Wirral are met. This was undertaken by-

Exploring the roles and responsibilities of the WSCB and CTB and considering how they can work together to improve practice;

Identifying the challenges for agencies, professionals, communities, children and families in 2014 and establishing ways in which these can be addressed by collaborative partnership working;

Proposing favourable changes to current ways of working.

2.2 Session 2 Performance Information

Consideration of what is it that the WSCB (and others) need to know to be assured that children in Wirral are adequately safeguarded. This included consideration of-

What do we know about Wirral?

What data do we need to know to be assured safeguarding is adequate?

What is the evidence base for knowing how effective safeguarding practice is, and how can we triangulate the evidence base?

What are the next steps Wirral needs to take?

2.3 Session 3 Ofsted review of the Effectiveness of LSCB's

Ascertaining the expectations of OFSTED regarding LSCBs and establishing how WSCB can demonstrate its effectiveness. This was undertaken by-

Completion of an Ofsted Readiness questionnaire by WSCB and CTB members prior to the development day;

Consideration of the effectiveness of the WSCB by evidencing good practice for 5 key themes:

- Leadership
- Partnership Arrangements
- Service user Perspectives
- Professional Learning
- Improving Outcomes through Quality Practice

A summary of the activities and discussions from each session as the outcomes and actions is presented below.

3.0 Activities, Outcomes and Actions from the Sessions

3.1 Session 1 Implications of Working Together 2013

The session established the different roles of the WSCB and the CTB as:

WSCB- Responsibility of WSCB to assess the effectiveness of the help being provided to children and families including early help;

To assess whether partner agencies are fulfilling statutory obligations in terms of identifying emerging problems

CTB- Wirral's Children's Trust vision is to enable Wirral's children, young people and families to access services quickly in order to be secure, healthy, have fun and achieve their full potential.

Discussion took place about the relationship between the WSCB and the CTB. It became apparent that there was some confusion amongst colleagues about how the two Board's 'fitted' together, particularly around how they communicate and challenge each other.

This was further explored by a mixed group activity which presented a series of fictional scenario's (e.g. *a recent serious case review has identified poor quality CAFs completed*

by midwives) related to early help services. For each scenario the groups had to consider whether the WSCB or CTB was responsible and should take action and if so what action should be taken.

Key observations and discussion points raised by the activity were:

- The lines of responsibility to and from the WSCB and CTB are often unclear
- How does the WSCB hold the CTB to account (what are the mechanisms)?
- Do CTB members have a responsibility to 'champion' safeguarding at CTB meetings?
- How can the WSCB and CTB gain a collaborative advantage?
- A review of lines of communication and role and purpose of sub committees is needed
- Activity should be led by the priorities of the WSCB
- The Executive of both Board's should be empowered to make strategic decisions
- A remodelling opportunity exists to align the work of the CTB, WSCB, HWBB and other groups

Following the discussions groups were tasked with producing a model for the future which showed how the WSCB and CTB (and other groups) should be developed. These have been summarised and can be sent out on request. The models all differed and some included moving to a locality model whilst others combined the CTB and HWBB or replaced the CTB with a simpler commissioning group or children's strategic group.

Actions

- **For the CTB and WSCB to consider how best to ensure a productive relationship exists**
- **For the CTB to review its current operational and sub group model**

3.2 Session 2 Performance Information

Kevin Jones, Interim Safeguarding Manager, led a session which explored the future of the performance information which is presented to the WSCB on a quarterly basis. The presented data is a key part of the body of evidence which assures the Board that children are safeguarded. Presently the data is very social care 'heavy' and includes limited amounts of multi-agency data. It has been recognised that LSCB's can be data rich but intelligence poor and it is important that there are now surprises in our Wirral data uncovered by audits and inspections.

The presentation was well received and the main proposals from the presentation were to:

- Establish a multi-agency meeting early in the New Year to explore the content of future performance information more closely
- For the group to also propose a more sophisticated way of presenting and interrogating the data to make 'drilling down' into detail and the data behind the data possible and to establish a model for triangulating the data (eg combining data with findings from audits, feedback from children, parents, staff etc)
- Undertake a short audit of partner agencies to find out who knows what in terms of key safeguarding data (including health agencies undertaking their own internal audit across the health economy)
- For a proposed draft dataset to be presented to the WSCB in March 2014

Action

- **For the WSCB to establish an extraordinary meeting in February 2014, to include interested partners from the CTB, for the purpose of designing a model for the presentation of future multi-agency performance information**

3.3 Session 3 Ofsted review of the Effectiveness of LSCB's

The final session led by Jan considered how the WSCB can demonstrate its effectiveness. Prior to the development day an Ofsted readiness questionnaire had been sent out to WSCB and CTB members for them to gauge how well prepared they believe the WSCB to be. The questionnaire and full analysis report are available on request. The recommendations from the report are for the WSCB to:

- Ensure practitioners in all agencies are aware of the work of the WSCB and its sub groups
- Discuss how the WSCB can evidence how standards are fully achieved
- Prioritise the resolving of the WSCB's financing and resourcing by partners
- Involve a wider range of practitioners in auditing and developing good practice
- Ensure the training strategy includes evaluating the impact of training on outcomes for children, young people and families
- Publicise the governance and communication arrangements which exist between the WSCB and other influential bodies
- Collect the views and wishes of children and young people and use as a measure of improvement
- Widely publicise the Annual Report

Jan continued the afternoon session by summarising the (Ofsted) features of an outstanding LSCB:

Highly influential and strategic;

- Directly influences and improves performance in the care and protection of children;
- Ensures improvement is sustained and extends across multi-disciplinary practice with children and young people and families;
- Secures exceptional analysis and evaluation of performance and helps the local authority and its partners to properly understand the impact of services, the quality of practice and the areas for improvement;
- Ensures a comprehensive range of training for managers and practitioners that is directly related to multi-agency improvement priorities.

Jan presented the features of a good and outstanding LSCB from the Ofsted inspection framework summarised under five headings and groups were asked to list evidence which demonstrated that the WSCB could evidence they had met each of the standards.

The completed response sheets have been written up and are available on request. The responses indicate that partners feel the WSCB:

- Has some examples of excellent practice but must record them
- Process for undertaking and learning from SCR's and training programme are real strengths
- Should continue the review of performance information and set itself aspirational targets

- Must focus on recording the voice of the child but also record the voice of the family and of the practitioner
- Need to include young people in the design of service
- Should involve frontline practitioners more in audits, sub groups and task and finish groups
- Should focus on outcomes for children and young people as an indicator of effectiveness
- Use different media to reach the community (Website, Twitter, Video, Facebook etc)
- Collects a lot of quantitative data but needs more qualitative data
- Needs to demonstrate better challenge to agencies

Action

- **For the WSCB to request examples of good or emerging practice from agencies which demonstrate effectiveness of the WSCB and safeguarding**

3.4 Facilitators Summary

Jan commented that collecting and using the voice of the child was commented on by most of the groups as an area from development by the WSCB and hopefully individual examples of good practice would be returned from agencies.

Jan reiterated that she feels that both the WSCB and the CTB are operating from a position of strength and whilst improvements can always be made both Boards should be pleased by how they operate effectively. Having said that, now is a good time to review how both Boards operate individually and collectively. On a practical basis Jan suggested that the WSCB collects and keeps examples of good practice and any changes which are made to either Board are evidence based.

4.0 Recommendation:

That Wirral Children's Trust Board note the report and consider the outcomes from the day.

Appendices

The discussion and activities undertaken by each table group in the three sessions have been written up and are available from David Robbins (WSCB) Business Manager to be emailed on request. This also includes the detailed findings from the pre Development Day Ofsted preparation questionnaire.

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