

WIRRAL COUNCIL

Policy and Performance - Families and Wellbeing

9th September 2014

SUBJECT:	Safeguarding Children
WARD/S AFFECTED:	All Wards
REPORT OF:	Director of Children's Services
RESPONSIBLE PORTFOLIO HOLDER:	Councillor Tony Smith
KEY DECISION?	

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 Working Together to Safeguard Children defines that the Independent Chair of the Local Safeguarding Children's Boards (LSCB) are required to publish an annual report on the effectiveness of child safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in the local area.

The annual report for the Wirral Safeguarding Children's Board (WSCB) 2013-14 is presented in two sections; the report looking over the past 12 months and the business plan looking forward over the next 12 months. In Section 1 the WSCB annual report sets out the priority areas for 2013-14, the individual targets within those priorities and the progress made. This includes an assessment of what remains to be done.

Section 1 also includes the main findings from the Section 11 safeguarding audit undertaken by individual organisations, a summary of and the lessons learnt from SCR's and other reviews, headline performance information and reports which reflect and assess how the WSCB has fulfilled its responsibilities.

Section 2 of the report sets out the business plan for 2014-15 and details the priority areas and work to be undertaken through the WSCB over the next 12 months.

2.0 BACKGROUND AND KEY ISSUES

- 2.1 The Independent Chair of the WSCB must publish an annual report on the effectiveness of child safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in the local area. The annual report should be published in relation to the preceding financial year and should fit with local agencies' planning, commissioning and budget cycles. The report should be submitted to the

Chief Executive, Leader of the Council, the local police and crime commissioner and the Chair of the Health and Wellbeing Board.

The report should provide a rigorous and transparent assessment of the performance and effectiveness of local services. It should identify areas of weakness, the causes of those weaknesses and the action being taken to address them as well as other proposals for action. The report should include lessons from reviews undertaken within the reporting period (see chapters 4 and 5).

The report should also list the contributions made to the WSCB by partner agencies and details of what the LSCB has spent, including on Child Death Reviews, Serious Case Reviews and other specific expenditure such as learning events or training. All WSCB member organisations have an obligation to provide WSCB with reliable resources (including finance) that enable the WSCB to be strong and effective. Members should share the financial responsibility for the WSCB in such a way that a disproportionate burden does not fall on a small number of partner agencies.

3.0 RELEVANT RISKS

- 3.1 The objectives and functions of the WSCB are set out in statutory guidance (Working Together to Safeguard Children). If the functions were no longer delivered there would not be any oversight of the effectiveness of activities to promote safeguarding and the welfare of children and young people. Organisations would not be held to account for the quality of their service and co-ordination of activity would be lost. There would be an inadequate judgment by Ofsted leading to significant Government intervention and reputational risks.

4.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 4.1 It is a requirement to publish an annual report.

5.0 CONSULTATION

- 5.1 Partner agencies are significant contributors to the content of this report and the work of the Board.

6.0 OUTSTANDING PREVIOUSLY APPROVED ACTIONS

- 6.1 None.

7.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR VOLUNTARY, COMMUNITY AND FAITH GROUPS

- 7.1 Voluntary, Community and Faith Groups are represented on the Safeguarding Board and play a key role in developments. Working Together to Safeguard Children 2014 makes specific reference to the role of Voluntary and Faith organisations in being aware of their responsibilities for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

8.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: FINANCIAL; IT; STAFFING; AND ASSETS

- 8.1 The WSCB has come under increasing financial pressure. Partner agencies have been asked to make additional financial contributions to support the work of the Board. Despite these pressures, the Board remains ambitious in its plans going forward.

9.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 Working Together to Safeguard Children 2014 states that Local Safeguarding Children Board's (LSCB's) were established under Section 13 of the Children Act 2004. LSCB's are Independent multi-agency bodies who exist to coordinate and ensure effectiveness of safeguarding across organisations. Section 14 of the Act set sets out the objectives of LSCBs, which are:

(a) to coordinate 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.

Working Together to Safeguard Children is issued under Section 7 of the Local Authority Social Services Act 1970, which requires local authorities in their social services functions to act under the general guidance of the Secretary of State; In addition section 16 of the Children Act 2004, states that local authorities and each of the statutory partners must, in exercising their functions relating to Local Safeguarding Children Boards, have regard to any guidance given to them by the Secretary of State.

10.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 Has the potential impact of your proposal(s) been reviewed with regard to equality?

(a) Yes and impact review can be found via the following link:

<http://www.wirral.gov.uk/my-services/community-and-living/equality-diversity-cohesion/equality-impact-assessments/eias-2010/children-young-people>

11.0 CARBON REDUCTION AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1 None.

12.0 PLANNING AND COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

- 12.1 None.

13.0 RECOMMENDATION/S

- 13.1 That committee notes this report and considers how it can support the Board's plans to safeguard children and young people.

14.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

14.1 The committee receives this report to consider the effectiveness of child safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in the local area.

REPORT AUTHOR:

Simon Garner
Senior Manager Corporate Safeguarding
Telephone: (0151) 666 5575
Email simongarner@wirral.gov.uk

APPENDICES:

Local Safeguarding Children’s Board Annual Report 2013-2014

BACKGROUND PAPERS/REFERENCE MATERIAL

BRIEFING NOTES HISTORY

Briefing Note	Date

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date