

**WIRRAL IMPROVEMENT BOARD
MINUTES AND ACTIONS FROM IMPROVEMENT BOARD MEETING
WEDNESDAY 28 FEBRUARY 2018**

Present:

Tony Crane	Chair of the Improvement Board/DfE Advisor
Eric Robinson	Chief Executive
Cllr Phil Davies	Leader of the Council
Cllr Moira McLaughlin	Member of Children & Adults Overview & Scrutiny Committee
Cllr Bernie Mooney	Lead Member for Children and Young People's Services
Cllr Phil Gilchrist	Liberal Group Council
Cllr Lesley Rennie	Conservative Group Councillor
Cllr Thomas Usher	Chair of Overview and Scrutiny
Prof. Maggie Atkinson	Chair – Wirral Safeguarding Children's Board
Julie Murphy	Chair of Wirral Primary Headteacher Consultative Group
Tony Taylor	Deputy Chair of Wirral Association of Secondary Headteachers
Paul Boyce	Director for Children's Services
Deborah Gornik	Deputy Director of Children's Services
Andrea Williams	Senior Manager – HR/OD
Paula Wareing	Chair of Wirral Special Headteachers Association
Lorna Quigley	Director of Policy & Patient Safety, CCG

Officers in Attendance:

Kerry Mehta	Interim Head of Practice Improvement
Robert Coot	Social Worker – Wallasey
Chris Hyams	Assistant Director for HR and OD
Caroline Halewood	Senior Human Resources Officer
Jenny Stenhouse	Area Admin Co-ordinator

Apologies:

Simone White	Deputy Director for Children's Services
Carly Brown	Head of Quality, Performance & Improvement
Ian Hassall	Area Commander, Merseyside Police
Avril Devaney	Director of Nursing, Therapies and Patient Partnership
Kevin MacCallum	Senior Manager – Marketing & Communications
Mandy Williams	Social Worker – Wallasey
Jo Williams	Team Leader Human Resources & Organisational Development
Hazel Richards	Head of Meadowside
Kelly Scarth	NHS
Nicci Oliver	Quality Auditor

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING – 31 JANUARY 2018

The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed by members of the Improvement Board.

The Improvement Board to be provided with an update of the work of the CLA Strategy Group.

WIRRAL SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN'S BOARD UPDATE

Prof. Maggie Atkinson presented the Safeguarding Children's Board update.

There are 9 areas of focus chosen to illustrate how the WSCB supports practice improvement; ***Training, SFEF, Right Side of Care, Auditing, S11/175, Focus Groups, Learning from SCR's, Committees, Actions and Challenges and Material, Resources and Media***. This has been the focus for the previous 12 months and foundations are now starting to set. Front line staff talk about being challenged, understood more which provides the intelligence to apply information. Positivity from senior managers has provided them the ability to step forward with confidence.

There are two things to remain focussed on and these are strategy meetings and referrals – what is the quality of interactions and escalations.

In addition, newly qualified social workers should continue to be nurtured as there are inconsistency in practice. This will provide them with confidence and enable the retention of good social workers. Kerry Mehta has created a cohort support group to ensure that the required standards are met and an environment that supports best practice. Partner agencies also need to feel like part of the improvement journey and we need to consolidate.

There is a full programme of multi-agency training delivery by the WSCB training pool with a Training Co-ordinator with as much access to face to face training available which is funded by schools to promote advice and direct to training. A robust three-level evaluation strategy and all the findings are published and shared on the website. There is also a comprehensive safeguarding e-learning package available to all professionals and a full training offer now available to all schools and colleges. More than 2000 staff registered to use the e-learning in 2017.

In relation to Thresholds, Section 11 (partner agencies) and Section 175 (Schools) safeguarding audits take place bi-annually. Themes and trends are reported in the WSCB Annual report and informs future training. Statutory partners are required to attend and share learning from each other. This year neglect, children in need plans and the escalation process is will be explored.

Focus groups are held every month, the reports of these groups are on the WSCB website. A web page for learning for Serious Case Reviews has a directory of links to a 2 hour learning and training facility and is available quarterly.

DFE REVIEW

Tony Crane presented the feedback from the DfE Review.

There is concern at WASH whether training provided 2 years ago now needs staff re-training. There was not an accepted or agreed practice framework and there were no consistency. If staff feel they need re-training they should talk to David Robbins in Safeguarding about re-training. The intention is to keep staff abreast and more involved in Working Together guidelines to plan ahead.

ACTION: A report on the progress of the Wirral Improvement Plan to be presented at next Improvement Board meeting.

DIRECTOR FOR CHILDREN'S SERVICES IMPROVEMENT UPDATE

Paul Boyce presented on the improvement activity to date.

Improvement work continues to focus on embedding the right conditions for change to allow good practice to happen consistently. On Tuesday 6 March, a Staff Engagement Conference will be held and will cover what we have achieved so far and what we are going to be doing in the next 3 months. The actions taken need to be practical and sessions will focus on the way in which we undertake practice and offer reassurance, raising the need for clarity at all levels of the organisation.

The focus remains on recruiting the right people in permanent roles. 40 people have been appointed since 8 February and these are people who we know can do the job. There have been 21 conversions and we have appointed 1 AYSE.

We are removing the barriers and pathways are in place to support individuals' development. Conversations between other local authorities and joint work around development for social worker professionals are happening to support our workforce.

There is ongoing work around the performance framework to strengthen it and get it right particularly with regards to the performance dashboard.

The next Ofsted Monitoring Visit is due to take place on 14 and 15 March. Paul Boyce was advised by OFSTED that it is possible that the release of the Monitoring Visit Letter following the visit may be held up by purdah.

PERFORMANCE AND DATA UPDATE

An update was provided on the performance of services.

Although sickness absence remains high, there are signs that this is reducing and 85% of appraisals have been completed (this figure includes agency staff).

20 champions of mobile and agile working have been identified and development sessions have taken place. Full roll out will begin, week commencing 12 March with a full programme of ongoing support.

A single location for office space has been identified and mobilisation plans in place to move staff from Monday 5 March 2018. This office will be a HUB for Children's Services.

Financial control delegation will be resolved by June. A decision was made in respect of the high cost placements and these will be approved at Senior Manager level. From OFSTED's point of view it will A review has been carried out on the Safeguarding Board in comparison with St. Helens. Before practice is decided on Wirral, the SFEF Model has good example of vulnerable adults with Health, Police etc. The timeframe is well beyond 3 months and Wirral and Police will need to agree a think piece and settle on this before any wider conversations take place.

The number of Children Looked After is beginning to stabilise. The report identified the impact of a case being discharged where there were legal proceedings, care leavers service and sickness issues. We need to ensure that the data set is consistent.

Trends need to be looked at for Early Help Services over the previous 12-18 months to ensure we are making progress with the right children. When referrals are repeat referrals we need to understand to try to prevent this. Every child has an Early Help worker attached and this shapes services. We need to look at what methods of early intervention are most effective and test it out in the future.

In respect of Section 47 older audits, workshops have been developed with Police to address any issues.

Eric Robinson commented that prevention was key to this issue.

ACTION: An interim short report evaluating impact of prevention to be presented at a future meeting.

VIEW FROM THE FRONT LINE

Robert Coot presented the View from the Front Line.

Managers are more visible and Engagement Meetings are filtered down which improves confidence and general feedback. The Practitioner's Group talked about devising a template, this is to be brought back to the next meeting of Senior Managers for authorisation and approval.

If agreed and authorised, the template will be built into Liquid Logic. The guidance will filter into chronologies, e.g. when parents were born, when grandparent born, moving house. Workshops have been arranged on how to set up a genogram and significant events.

The new mobile kit and agile working will support colleagues in enabling social workers to visit families and undertake assessments at timely intervals

ACTION: Robert Coot to attend 30 minutes prior to the next Improvement Board as an open door session to demonstrate the new mobile kit.

Managers have commenced training on a new audit tool and are looking at a shared space on the intranet to share a set of mandatory training for getting the basics right by putting additional workshops in place.

ACTION: Kerry Mehta to provide an update at next meeting incorporated in the practice improvement report.

EMERGENCY DUTY TEAM

Elizabeth Hartley presented a report on the Emergency Duty Team.

There has been a significant amount of work done to strengthen the Integrated Front Door. Reviews have informed decision making, pathways, decisions and hand-offs are done in an appropriate and consistent way. The work is not yet finished, we have learnt from things that are done well more work but more still needs to be done.

EDT are changing their working hours band exploring the workflow from Liquid Logic into EDT. There will be audit activity and clear recommendations for the EDT, out of hours service or an emergency service, but this is to be expected.

Section 47 changes the way of recording and there are already new challenges at the front door. The last 10 audits on statutory meetings clearly show and emphasis on recording important information on statutory meetings.

It is clear that progress is being made on child protection plans, e.g. children's living expenses, assessment takes into account family with 86% taking into account the risk factors which are fed into the plan.

A case study showed that a brief history of family care, demonstrates why we thought audit was good. Taking good case study out and sharing with Practitioner Managers so they know what they need are part of the solution. They really engaged as a group and there are a number of workshops, frontline, tools they use and go out into districts with which support an upstanding and retention strategy. The work is managed by a sub-committee for Child Exploitation Team and Criminally Exploited Team, some resources therefore have been agreed with Police and Simone, this is being developed into multi-agency.

We spoke about monthly meetings using discretion to support Senior Managers with the assistance of Universities and putting in place assessors on a monthly basis similar to ASYE to Support Senior Managers with applications from good social workers with a view to promotion.

To develop an internship and offer placements in the Summer when they have left university and this ties into the retention strategy. A more comprehensive draft plan needs to be created.

Action: Kerry Mehta to present new ASYE plan at next meeting.

HR WORKFORCE UPDATE

Chris Hyams presented on a HR Workforce update, including agency conversion rate, future recruitment plans and reviewed management training and support for the recently introduced mobile and agile working.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

No matters arising.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Wednesday 28 March, 2.00-4.30pm, Birkenhead Park.