

**WIRRAL IMPROVEMENT BOARD
MINUTES AND ACTIONS FROM IMPROVEMENT BOARD MEETING
WEDNESDAY 24TH OCTOBER 2018**

Present:

Linda Clegg	Chair of the Improvement Board
Prof. Maggie Atkinson	Chair – WSCB
Cllr Phil Davies	Leader of the Council
Cllr Phil Gilchrist	Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group
Cllr Lesley Rennie	Deputy Leader of the Conservative Group
Cllr Bernie Mooney	Cabinet Member-Children and Families/Deputy Leader of the Labour Party
Cllr Thomas Usher	Chair of Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Lorna Quigley	Director of Policy & Patient Safety Clinical Commissioning Group
Nick Gunatilleke	Merseyside Police
Tony Taylor	Representative of Wirral Association of Secondary Headteachers
Simone White	Deputy Director for Children’s Services

Officers in Attendance:

Joe Banham	Head of Practice Improvement
Carly Brown	Assistant Director – Modernisation & Support
Natalie Jarmay	Principal Performance & Improvement Officer
Hannah Myers	Performance & Improvement Manager - Improvement

Apologies:

Eric Robinson	Chief Executive
Paul Boyce	Director for Children’s Services
Elizabeth Hartley	Assistant Director – Early Help and Prevention
Ian Hassall	Area Commander, Merseyside Police
Jill Pearson	Chair of Wirral Primary Headteacher Consultative Group
Paula Wareing	Chair of Wirral Special Headteachers Association

1. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING – 27th SEPTEMBER 2018

The minutes were agreed as a true record.

2. DfE REVIEW

Linda Clegg gave an update and overview of the recent Department of Education review:

- A cross section of staff were met with and discussions took place who all gave the consistent and positive message that progress is being made with significant improvements over the last 6 months.
- Staff stated that the conditions and culture for good practise and practise improvement are starting to be seen, despite a slow start.

- ASYE's were positive and excited to be part of Wirral and its improvement journey; they could all evidence the vast improvements in their programme including reflective supervisions, adequate caseloads and stable and consistent management.
- Team Managers were positive about Cheshire Lines, agile working and the positive culture change it had brought about; however, there are concerns about their span of control. The performance management measures are working well and encouraging competitiveness to achieve even better results between teams.
- There are still concerns regarding partnership working as highlighted in the last two letters from Ofsted, so it is now critical that this is addressed to ensure compliance with Working Together 2018 and due to the importance of partnership working in this improvement journey.
- A formal letter will be produced by Linda to government by the end of October with her findings to date, which will be shared with the Improvement Board at a later date.

The following points and queries were raised:

- Maggie Atkinson stated on behalf of the Chief Executive that the WSGB's key focus at all board meetings is to seek assurance of compliance of s11 and Working Together 2018.
- Cllr Gilchrist asked for clarification regarding 'span of control' due to the number of managers in post. Linda explained that team sizes were very high, encompassing an Advanced Practitioner, seven social workers, two ASYES and a Family Support worker which makes the caseload across the team around 220. This has been discussed with Paul Boyce and he agrees.
- Cllr Gilchrist also asked if the timeliness of Initial Child Protection Conferences had improved and he was assured by Simone White that there had been a significant improvement, this is evidenced within the data book.

3. IMPROVEMENT BOARD PERFORMANCE AND DATA UPDATE

Simone White gave an update on Children's Services performance data from the information and commentary provided in the Databook. The additional points and queries were discussed:

- For the next Improvement Board, data will be supplied for our Early Help services to demonstrate how we are supporting children within our communities.
- Cllr Davies asked what are the reasons that many children re-enter Social Care. Simone explained that this is often due to the lack of preventative and support services in the community; including drug and alcohol misuse support services.
- Cllr Rennie referred to the 'revolving door for families' into Social Care in Wirral, which has been a long standing, multi-generational, historical issue of abuse. Simone explained that there has been a vast amount of multi-agency work to address these issues. There has been a joint Police and Social Care operation that has been mapping out individuals of concern and their profiles. This is then allowing us to target our resources and establish direct and indirect connections, so we can manage risk to children in a preventative way. Previous efforts have been to protect the child, often securing them in other areas which can be penalising the child. Previous use of paper records meant work was disjointed. However joint working and utilising both Police and Social Care intelligence means we can collate all information and target perpetrators and hence take preventive steps to safeguard children on the Wirral.

- Tony Taylor stated that whilst it is positive that sickness levels are improving, they are still very high. Simone explained that many instances had been dealt with incorrectly historically. They are now

all being dealt with; however, processes can be time consuming but there are dedicated HR staff helping address this issue.

- Cllr Gilchrist asked for clarification regarding staff turnover. Simone stated that this figure encompasses staff that have left due to personal reasons, staff that have been promoted and staff that needed to leave the service.

4. WORKING TOGETHER 2018

Maggie Atkinson gave a presentation regarding Working Together 2018. (Please see attached).

5. FOCUS GROUP: PARTNERSHIP WORKING

All meeting attendees then participated in a group discussion regarding partnership working with a focus on three main points:

1. What do we understand to be the responsibilities and expectations on ourselves and our partners?
 - Health is a huge body with many components so there needs to be clarity on who are partners are. Health professionals know the need to report, but often don't close the loop, instead just often 'risk-passing' which isn't sufficient.
 - There is a lack of understanding regarding collaborative partnership working, more focus needs to be on Working Together 2018 and establishing partnership promise so it is clear what can be expected of each other.
2. What are the barriers to effective partnership working to ensure compliance e.g. attendance at strategy meetings?
 - Strategy discussion attendance by partners is significantly lower than it should be. Police were possibly able to show improvement sooner due to the uniformity of the organisation versus the complexity of health.
 - Health believe barriers could be due to individuals' understandings of others and their own responsibilities. It should be clear that attendance at these meetings is not discretionary but that the understanding is the focus on outcomes for children. Working Together 2018 is clear that strategy meetings are a jointly owned statutory requirement - not a Social Care meeting.
 - It is understood that all agencies are under resourced and under staffed with massive demands; however, Ofsted will want assurance and evidence that statutory obligations are being met.
3. What can we do collectively and individually to make progress quickly?
 - A challenge and engagement session with Health and Social Care to explain roles and responsibilities and identify areas where improvements can be made quickly
 - Police attendance at strategy meetings has already improved so this can continue. Plus, the current joint agency operation is a fantastic demonstration of effective partnership working to achieve a targeted goal.

- There needs to be a recalibration of governance and partnership for Wirral. There needs to be a focus on what can be done to improve partnership working for all frontline workers to improve outcomes for children.
- Every Child Matters Framework to be revisited as is integral and still relevant.

- Cllr Usher stated that the scrutiny committee have been undertaking 'reality check' visits within the council and would be happy to expand these visits into partners if it would be helpful.

ACTIONS:

- **Lorna Quigley to ensure that all relevant directors in Health receive a copy of Working Together 2018 and ensure it is disseminated to all staff.**
- **Linda Clegg and Lorna Quigley to host a facilitated event for all health partners and relevant social care to staff to involve them in this conversation, so they can take part and have ownership of their roles and responsibilities.**
- **Social Care to explore the facilitation of a work shadowing programme between Police, Health and Social Care to assist in staff getting a full understanding of each other's roles.**

7. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

None noted.

8. DATE OF NEXT MEETING:

Thursday 29th November 2018, 2.00pm to 4.30pm at Wallasey Town Hall, Committee Room 1.