

Note of decisions taken and actions required

Title: Children and Young People Board

Date and time: 16 July 2012, 11.00am

Venue: Leeds Civic Hall

Attendance

Position	Councillor	Council
Chairman	David Simmonds	Hillingdon LB
Vice chair	John Merry CBE	Salford City
Members	David Pugh	Isle of Wight Council
	Robert Light	Kirklees MBC
	Paul Lakin	Rotherham MBC
	Rita Krishna	Hackney LB
	David Bellotti	Bath & NE Somerset Council
	Catharine Grundy	Birmingham City
Substitutes	Susie Charles	Lancashire CC
	Paul Cullen	Richmondshire DC
	Peter Downes OBE	Cambridgeshire CC
In attendance	Professor David Thorpe	Lancaster University
	Cllr Judith Blake	Leeds City
	Cllr Ralph Berry	Bradford MDC
	Cllr Julie Abraham	East Riding of Yorkshire
	Cllr Olivia Rowley	Wakefield MDC
	Cllr Tony Hall	North Yorkshire CC
Apologies	Kath Pinnock	Kirklees MBC
	Paul Carter	Kent CC
	Derrick Murphy	Norfolk CC
	Anne Burns	Cumbria CC
	Apu Bagchi	Bedford BC
	Liz Green	Kingston upon Thames RB

Officers: Sally Burlington, Ian Keating, Cassandra Harrison, Justine Wharton, David Pye, Lucy Ellender

Item	Decisions and actions	Action by
	<p>Cllr Judith Blake, Deputy Leader of the Council and Lead Executive Member Children's Services welcomed members to Leeds Civic Hall for the regional meeting.</p>	
1	<p>Yorkshire and Humber Safeguarding project</p> <p>Professor David Thorpe outlined the work he had undertaken in the region. It was noted that this was a collaborative approach between 14 out of the 15 local authorities in the area and other public services including education, health, the police as well as the voluntary sector. It had produced some significant results in reducing the number of looked after children in the region.</p> <p>Members asked how this approach would be different to the current system. Professor Thorpe said this that was a new way of managing issues collaboratively between agencies. The system the region had implemented changed the manner in which calls to the child safeguarding team were answered. This enabled officers to record as much information as possible in the initial stages and then decide how to react to it. The information was collated to help identify issues raised with a number of agencies about individuals or their wider families. This was continually monitored and then reviewed each week. Professor Thorpe said that this had then led to a reduction in the number of referrals.</p> <p>Members raised concerns about how the new system managed risk. Professor Thorpe said that the system was effective at managing risk due to the initial information gathering, and the constant monitoring – action was taken on every referral and followed up.</p> <p>Members were concerned about the level of outside pressure exerted on social workers to make particular decisions. Members asked what impact this new system had done on the outside pressure felt by social workers. Professor Thorpe stated that the new system helped to support social workers due to the amount of information collated in the initial stages of contact with the safeguarding team.</p> <p>Decision <i>Members thanked Professor Thorpe for his presentation.</i></p> <p>Action Officers to share Professor Thorpe's slides with Members.</p>	<p>Lucy Ellender</p>
2	<p>Children's homes, child sexual exploitation and children missing from care</p> <p>Cllr Simmonds introduced this item saying that two recent reports</p>	

highlighted serious concerns about failings in the current system to protect children who go missing from care and the associated risk of sexual exploitation. Both heavily criticised the residential children's home system, which is now being reviewed by the Government. This had also been heavily featured in the media.

Members discussed the recommendations within the report and highlighted that placing authorities and host authorities face different challenges, but agreed that this should not hinder the LGA advocating reform of the system.

Members agreed that further work needed to be done to support councils to shape the market for children's homes. This would help councils to improve the geographical spread of children's homes, the quality of the service provided and help to provide a mix of accommodation available for children within, or close to, their home authorities. .

Decision

Members agreed the recommendations in the Board paper.

Members requested that an LGA position paper be drafted.

Members also asked for further work around the children's homes market and support to the placing and host local authority.

Action

Officers agreed to draft a position statement and to circulate a further paper to a future Board meeting.

Cassi Harrison

Officers to invite Police representatives to a future meeting to discuss ways of working to effectively safeguard children placed in residential care.

Lucy Ellender

3 LGA/DfE action research into the evolving role of the local authority in education

Ian Keating said that this was an opportunity for the Board to discuss the final report of the action research, which had been jointly funded by LGA and DfE, in preparation for the discussion of it at the Ministerial Advisory Group scheduled for November. Members felt the research was very useful and hoped that it would promote understanding of the importance of the continuing council role in education. Members stressed the need for councils to be funded properly to perform their important roles in place planning, school improvement and protecting vulnerable children and young people.

Members discussed the importance of creating and maintaining a

strong scrutiny role for councils' in education, with academies and other providers actively engaging in the scrutiny process. It was agreed that the LGA should prepare a response to the research, setting out in detail what the continuing council role in education should be.

Decision

Members agreed that an LGA response to the research should be prepared.

Action

Officers to draft a response, for clearance by the Board's Office Holders.

4 LGA topslice funded Children & Young People research programme 2012/13

Cllr Paul Lakin introduced this item outlining the potential areas for research as:

- Research on the development of partnerships with Independent Fostering Agencies (IFAs) and adoption agencies to investigate how councils are working with local providers to shape and develop the market;
- Work around the issue of sexual exploitation of children and specifically children in care;
- Exploration of the impact on schools of the revised OFSTED inspection regime categories;
- Review of the extent to which levels of parental drug and alcohol misuse impact on the number of looked after children in an area.;
- Best-practice case studies of home to school travel;
- Review of the unintended consequences of government policy on children and young people;
- A study investigating the perceptions of social workers to the current fostering and adoption processes;
- The impact of the service premium in terms of improving outcomes for children who are part of service families;

Decision

Members agreed that LGA officers should begin to develop research proposals around:

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- *Best-practice case studies of home to school travel;*
- *Exploration of the impact on schools of the revised OFSTED inspection regime categories;*

Some work is already being undertaken by DfE in these areas and so to avoid duplication, officers will monitor outputs from these and

then suggest potential research that could build on the work already completed.

Members agreed that the “Research on the development of partnerships with Independent Fostering Agencies (IFAs) and adoption agencies to investigate how councils are working with local providers to shape and develop the market” could be combined with the research into “sexual exploitation of children and specifically children in care”. However, members were keen that any research on the issue of sexual exploitation should be expanded to include those children not in care.

Members agreed that the research into the “Exploration of the impact on schools of the revised OFSTED inspection regime categories” could also include some work on the pupil premium.

Action

Members should feed in any further comments to Cllr Lakin or David All Pye.

5 Schools funding update

Members discussed the implications of the LACSEG announcements on local authorities budgets and the potential difficulties this may cause for local authorities. Members discussed the possibility of undertaking further work on this area to identify how much money would be top-sliced from authorities.

Decision

Members noted the report.

Action

Officers to proceed as requested.

6 Children’s Improvement Board (CIB) – update on sector-led improvement

Decision

Members noted the report.

Action

Officers to continue to provide updates to the Children and Young People Board.

7 Appointments to Outside Bodies 2012/13

Decision

Board members noted the bodies to which the Board would be appointing for 2012/13 and agreed the nomination process.

Action

Officers to proceed with appointments process.

Lucy Ellender

8 Other Business Report

Decision

Members noted the report.

Action

No actions arising.

9 Note of the last meeting – 21 May 2012

Members **agreed** the note of the meeting held on 21 May 2012.