

Children and Young People Board – report from Cllr Roy Perry (Chair)

Franco-British Cooperation on NEETs

1. I attended a meeting arranged by the Franco-British council in Paris to discuss differing approaches to training and supporting for those not in education, employment or training (NEETs) on 25 January. The discussion focussed on how the two countries currently manage young people's transition from school into the labour market, how they might cooperate to improve outcomes, and how best practice could be shared going forward.

Roundtable on Mandatory Reporting of Suspected Child Abuse

2. I attended a roundtable on mandatory reporting of suspected child abuse organised by Professor Michael Preston-Shoot, Executive Dean of the Faculty of Health and Social Sciences, Bedfordshire University on 22 February. The event was attended by academics and senior staff from relevant government agencies. Participants considered reporting from countries where mandatory reporting is already in operation; heard from advocates on both sides of the debate; and considered alternative solutions, such as new sanctions for failure to act.

Roundtable on Review of Local Safeguarding Children Boards (LSCBs)

3. Cllr Richard Watts attended a multi-agency roundtable discussion about LSCB governance and accountabilities, hosted by the Association of Independent LSCB Chairs (AILC) on 13 January. The purpose of the discussion was to inform the various parties' responses to the ongoing review of the role and functions of LSCBs being undertaken by former Director of Children's Services Alan Wood on behalf of the Department for Education (DfE). Since the roundtable, Cllr Watts has participated in a survey that was distributed to participants by Alan Wood. The LGA submitted a corporate response to the survey prior to the deadline of 22 February, and Cllr Watts will attend a follow-up meeting to the initial roundtable event that has been organised for 16 March.

Meeting with former Director of Children's Services Alan Wood

4. Cllr Richard Watts and Cllr David Simmonds will meet with the former Director of Children's Services Alan Wood to discuss the ongoing review of the role and functions of LSCBs that he is undertaking on behalf of the DfE. The discussion will consider the current role of LSCBs within the local authority multi-agency space, including a consideration of what multi-agency arrangements need to achieve locally, how that might best be achieved, and where accountability for ensuring the effectiveness of child protection arrangements should lie. The attendees will also aim to identify what success looks like and the factors that make LSCBs successful or unsuccessful, and consider whether alternative structures to the existing model might ultimately improve the outcomes for children and young people. In addition, Alan Wood has asked for the LGA's view on the impact that centralisation of the Serious Case Review (SCR) process is likely to have on the role of LSCBs, and to suggest how learning from SCRs in future can be effectively embedded in local practice.

Analysis of Ofsted Inspection Reports

5. The Board commissioned a piece of work analysing the outcomes of all Ofsted Single Inspection Framework (SIF) inspections to date, alongside a textual analysis of the key judgments set out in the inspection reports. The resulting research highlights seven characteristics of an authority that is likely to be judged as good, which will help to inform local authorities' improvement work.

Home Office Expert Panel on Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

6. A report summarising the meeting of the Home Office Expert Panel on CSE and local delivery that I attended in December has been shared with officials across Government, submitted to ministers, and presented to the cross-Government directors group on CSE.

Leadership Essentials: Children's Services

7. We held a 'Leadership Essentials' event for children's services from 28 – 29 January. The event provided portfolio holders, service committee chairs and interested council leaders a chance to develop leadership skills specific to the area of children's services and share their experiences among colleagues dealing with similar challenges.

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