

## **WORKING ARRANGEMENTS BETWEEN: LOCAL SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN BOARD and the HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD**

### **Summary:**

This document sets out the nature of the working arrangements between West Sussex Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) and the Health and Wellbeing Board (HWBB)

The two Boards have distinctive and complementary roles in keeping our children and young people safe.

The aim of this memorandum is to support the Boards to operate effectively, being clear about their respective functions, inter-relationships and roles and responsibilities of all those involved in this important work.

The Children Act 1989 provides the statutory framework for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in need. The Children Act 2004 provides the Statutory framework for the establishment of the LSCB, this being the key mechanism for agreeing how relevant organisations in the area will co-operate to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in the area, and for ensuring the effectiveness of what they do.

The **LSCB role** (appendix A) is set out in statutory guidance 'Working Together to Safeguard Children'. A revision of this guidance was published in March 2013 and becomes effective from 15 April 2013. The statutory objectives and functions of the LSCB are 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 to ensure the effectiveness of what is done by each such person or body and the wider partnership. It is also a function of the LSCB to offer appropriate challenge where required to strengthen safeguarding arrangements. Its activities are part of the wider context of West Sussex Health and Wellbeing Board's arrangements and its work contributes to the wider goals of improving the wellbeing of all children and young people. Guidance states that the LSCB must maintain a separate identity and an 'independent voice'.

The Health and Social Care Act 2012 imposed a statutory obligation on West Sussex County Council to take lead responsibility for the establishment of a **Health & Wellbeing Board** (HWBB) and to work in partnership with others to undertake joint strategic needs assessments. The Board must adopt and operate under a Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy which identifies the top priorities where working together can make a real difference in promoting the health and wellbeing of the people of West Sussex.

The HWBB has responsibility for developing, publishing and monitoring the Joint Strategies. It will agree the overarching vision, policies and strategies contained in these Strategies but is not directly responsible for implementing them. The responsibility for implementation and for commissioning services continues to remain with individual partners.

The purpose of the HWBB is to bring all partners with a role in improving outcomes for children together to agree a common strategy on how they will co-operate to improve children's well-being and to help embed partnership working in the partner's routine delivery of their own functions. It provides the strategic framework within which the partners may commission services in a co-ordinated way either by joint or aligned budgets.

In line with national guidance the HWBB should receive the LSCB Annual Report and respond to the key messages / challenges which may need to be addressed in strengthening services to ensure the safeguarding of children and young people. In addition, the H&WBB should permit a right of audience to the Independent Chair of the LSCB in the event that an urgent or significant safeguarding issue needs to be referred for their consideration.

It will be important for both the H&WBB and the WSSCB to develop an effective joint protocol to support their working relationship in the interests of safeguarding children. The LSCB Annual Report will be one means for influencing and informing the need for services which promote the safeguarding of children and young people in West Sussex.

## Appendix A: Statutory functions of the LSCB (*Working Together to Safeguard Children, 2013*)

The LSCB does not commission or deliver services. Each Board partner retains their own existing line of accountability for safeguarding. While LSCBs do not have the power to direct other organisations they do have a role in making it clear where improvement is needed.

The statutory functions of an LSCB are to:

- develop local policies and procedures as specified in the regulations for how the different organisations will work together on safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children;
- communicate the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and participate in local planning;
- undertake a Serious Case Review where abuse or neglect of a child is known or suspected, a child has died, or been seriously harmed, and there is cause for concern as to the way in which the authority, their Board partners or other relevant persons have worked together to safeguard the child;
- review the deaths of all children who are normally resident in their area and put in place procedures to ensure that there is a coordinated response by relevant organisations to an unexpected death of a child.
- monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of what is done by partners individually and collectively to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and advise them on ways to improve. This should include as a minimum:
  - a) assessing the effectiveness and impact of the help being provided to children and families, including early help; and
  - b) quality assuring practice for example through joint audits of case files involving practitioners and identifying lessons to be learned;
- assess whether Board partners are fulfilling their statutory obligations under section 11 of the Children Act 2004 and parallel duties and asking Board partners to self-evaluate;
- monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of training, including multi-agency training, to safeguard and promote the welfare of children; and
- produce and publish an annual report on the effectiveness of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in the local area. The purpose of this report is to ask whether safeguarding arrangements are working, and if not, why not. It should provide local partners and the public with a rigorous and transparent assessment of

the performance of local services. Once published the annual report should be submitted to the Chief Executive and Leader of the Council, the local Police and Crime Commissioner and the Chair of the Health and Wellbeing Board.