

















1. Attendance, Apologies & Governance

SLSCB Members	Title	Representing	Other Interests: Stockton-on-Tees or Tees Valley Partnerships, Boards, Group etc. (Ch. denotes Chair, VCh Vice-Chair)	  Apols
Colin Morris (CM)	LSCB Independent Chair	SLSCB	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>LSCB and SSAB Chair Sunderland</li> <li>LSCB Chair Newcastle</li> </ul>	
Pauline Beall (PB)	Business Manager		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>MALAP (Multi Agency Looked After Partnership)</li> <li>Stockton VCSE Safeguarding Forum</li> </ul>	
Leanne Bain (LB)	Lay Member			
Lesley Cooke (LC)	Lay Member		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Eastern Ravens Trust</li> <li>Catalyst</li> </ul>	
Deborah Wray (DW)	Lay Member			
Jane Humphreys (JH)	Corporate Director of Children, Education & Social Care (CESC)	Local Authority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CCG Stockton Locality Board Member</li> <li>Hartlepool &amp; Stockton CCG Board Member</li> <li>Health and Wellbeing Board (HWB)</li> <li>HWB Adult Partnership</li> <li>HWB Children's Partnership</li> <li>SMB – Public Protection</li> <li>Tees Adult Safeguarding Board</li> <li>Safer Stockton Partnership</li> </ul>	
Peter Kelly (PK)	Director of Public Health		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Health and Wellbeing Board (HWB)</li> <li>HWB Adult Partnership</li> <li>HWB Children's Partnership</li> <li>Adult's Joint HWB Commissioning Group</li> <li>Children's Joint HWB Commissioning Group</li> <li>Tees Adult Safeguarding Board</li> <li>Safer Stockton Partnership</li> <li>Tees VEMT Strategic Group</li> </ul>	
Martin Gray (MG)	Head of Early Help, Partnership and Planning			
Liz Hanley (LH)	Adult Services Lead		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Health and Wellbeing Commissioning Group</li> <li>Learning Disabilities Partnership (Ch.)</li> <li>Stockton Local Executive Group Adult Safeguarding</li> </ul>	Apols
Diane McConnell (DM)	Head of Schools and SEN		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CAF Board</li> <li>Convener of the Safeguarding Forum for Education Settings</li> </ul>	
Shaun McLurg (SM)	Head of Safeguarding and Looked After Children / Chair Tees LSCB's Procedures Group / Chair SLSCB VEMT Sub-Group		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Children &amp; Young People Health and Wellbeing Commissioning Group</li> <li>Spark of Genius Children's Homes</li> </ul>	
Julie Nixon (JN)	Head of Housing & Community Protection		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>HWB Adult Partnership</li> <li>HWB Children's Partnership</li> <li>Tees Adult Safeguarding Board</li> <li>Safer Stockton Partnership</li> <li>SBC Adult Social Care Programme Board</li> </ul>	Apols
Simon Willson (SW)	SBC CESC Head of Business Support & Improvement / Chair Performance Sub-Group		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>MALAP (Multi Agency Looked After Partnership) (Ch.) (pending new Chair to be determined as part of implementation of CESC Children's Review)</li> </ul>	
Cllr Ann McCoy (AM)	Lead Cabinet Member - Children and Young People (Participating Observer)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Governor Tees, Esk &amp; Wear Valley NHS FT</li> </ul>	
Neil Schneider (NS)	Chief Executive (Participating Observer)			

SLSCB Members	Title	Representing	Other Interests: Stockton-on-Tees or Tees Valley Partnerships, Boards, Group etc. (Ch. denotes Chair, VCh Vice-Chair)	  Apols
Elisa Arnold (EA)	Service Manager	CAFCASS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Redcar and Cleveland LSCB</li> <li>Local Family Justice Board</li> <li>Able to feed in national changes within the Family Justice Service</li> </ul>	
Alastair Simpson (AS)	Detective Superintendent / Chair LIPSG	Cleveland Police	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Redcar SCB (Full board, Exec and LIPSG)</li> <li>Middlesbrough SCB (Full board and LIPSG)</li> <li>Hartlepool SCB (Full board, Exec and LIPSG)</li> <li>Teeswide Safeguarding Adults Board</li> <li>Tees LSCBs Strategic VEMT Group</li> <li>MAPPA SMB</li> <li>MASH Strategic Management Board (N Tees)</li> <li>CDOP</li> </ul>	
Alex Taylor (AT)	Head Teacher Independent Schools	Education Establishments		
Clare Humble (CH)	Head Teacher Secondary Schools		<i>No other interests</i>	
Kerry Coe (KC)	Head Teacher Primary Schools		<i>No other interests</i>	Apols
Joanna Bailey (JB)	Principal Stockton Sixth Form College		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Governor at Thornaby Academy</li> <li>Governor at The Grangefield Academy</li> <li>Campus Stockton Teaching Alliance</li> <li>14-19 Partnership,</li> <li>Campus Stockton CPD Group</li> <li>Campus Stockton R&amp;D Group</li> <li>Secondary Heads Group</li> </ul>	
<i>Vacancy</i>	SBC Chief Advisor School Effectiveness			
Jean Golightly (JG)	Executive Nurse	Hartlepool & Stockton Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>South Tees CCG (Exec Nurse)</li> <li>Teeswide Safeguarding Adults Board</li> <li>Member of NHSE Quality Surveillance Group meeting</li> </ul>	Apols
Trina Holcroft (TH)	Designated Nurse, Safeguarding Children & LAC			
Kailash Agrawal (KA)	Designated Doctor <i>Advisor to the Board</i>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Middlesbrough LSCB</li> <li>Redcar and Cleveland LSCB</li> <li>NT&amp;HFT Safeguarding Steering Group</li> <li>Teesside Designated Doctors Group (Ch.)</li> </ul>	Apols
TBC	Deputy Director of Nursing, Quality and Safety	NHS England (Cumbria & North East)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tees Strategic VEMT Group</li> <li>Middlesbrough LSCB</li> <li>Redcar and Cleveland LSCB</li> <li>Hartlepool LSCB</li> <li>Durham LSCB</li> <li>Darlington LSCB</li> <li>Teeswide Safeguarding Adults Board</li> <li>Durham Safeguarding Adults Board</li> <li>Darlington Safeguarding Adults Board</li> <li>NHS England CSE Sub-Group</li> <li>NHS England Regional Safeguarding Forum</li> </ul>	
Lindsey Robertson (LR)	General Manager, Nursing & Professional Standards	North Tees & Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust (NTHFT)		

SLSCB Members	Title	Representing	Other Interests: Stockton-on-Tees or Tees Valley Partnerships, Boards, Group etc. (Ch. denotes Chair, VCh Vice-Chair)	✓ ✗ Apols
Elizabeth Moody (EM)	Executive Director of Nursing and Governance	Tees, Esk & Wear Valley NHS Foundation Trust (TEWV)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teeswide Adult Safeguarding Board</li> <li>• North Yorkshire Adult Safeguarding Board</li> <li>• North Yorkshire Children's Safeguarding Board</li> <li>• (Member of other safeguarding boards but send deputies on regular basis)</li> </ul>	Apols
Julie Allan (JA)	Head of Cleveland Area – National Probation Service (NE)	Probation Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Middlesbrough LSCB</li> <li>• Redcar and Cleveland LSCB</li> <li>• Hartlepool LSCB</li> <li>• South Tees YOS</li> <li>• Stockton YOS</li> <li>• Hartlepool YOS</li> <li>• YOS Management Board</li> <li>• LCJB</li> <li>• Local Public Service Board</li> <li>• Teeswide Safeguarding Adults Board</li> <li>• Tees Adult Health and Wellbeing Board</li> <li>• Strategic DV and Abuse Strategic Group</li> <li>• Contest Gold</li> <li>• Stockton Scanning and Challenge</li> <li>• ETE/OSE Board</li> <li>• Tees Strategic VEMT Group</li> </ul>	Apols
Barbara Gill (BG)	Head of Offender Services - Community Rehabilitation Company			Apols
Julie McNaughton (JM)	Accommodation Contracts Manager	Thirteen / Housing Provider	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tees Valley Choice Based Lettings Steering Group</li> <li>• My Sisters Place – Board</li> <li>• North East Homelessness Group</li> </ul>	✓
Steve Rose (SR)	Chief Executive Officer Catalyst	Voluntary Sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Safer Stockton Partnership</li> <li>• Stockton 14-19 Partnership</li> <li>• Stockton Carers Implementation Group</li> <li>• Stockton Health &amp; Wellbeing Partnership</li> <li>• Stockton VCSE Senior Leaders Forum</li> <li>• Stockton Voice</li> <li>• Stockton Youth Offenders Service Board</li> <li>• Tees Dementia Collaborative</li> <li>• Tees Valley Local Development Agencies Forum</li> <li>• Tees Valley Unlimited European Social Inclusion Task &amp; Finish Group</li> </ul>	✓

Guests:		
Ian Coxon (IC)	SBC - Head of Transactional Services	Participating Observer
Kim Staff (KS)	SBC - Service Manager, Independent Review & WD	
Barbara Potter (BP)	HAST CCG - Head of Quality and Adult Safeguarding	Sub for Jean Golightly
Karen Agar (KA)	TEWV - Named Nurse for Safeguarding Children	Sub for Elizabeth Moody
David Egglestone (DE)	Probation – CRC Lead Manager	Sub for Barbara Gill

<b>Minute-Taker:</b>	Gary Woods - SLSCB Business Support Officer
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<b>Meeting Quorate:</b>	Yes
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<b>Declarations of Interest:</b>	None
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<b>Ref No. 1</b>	<b>Attendance, Apologies &amp; Quoracy</b>
<i>Discussion</i>	<p><b>BP</b> was in attendance as the substitute for <b>JG</b>, <b>KAg</b> was in attendance as the substitute for <b>EM</b>, and <b>DE</b> was in attendance as the substitute for <b>BG</b>.</p> <p>On behalf of the SLSCB, <b>CM</b> sent best wishes to <b>KA</b> following his recent operation.</p>
<i>Agreement/ Outcome</i>	Noted.

<b>Ref No. 2</b>	<b>Voice of the Child</b>
<i>Discussion</i>	<p><u>Children’s Social Care Exit Questionnaires</u></p> <p><b>KS</b> presented the circulated Quarter 2 report on Exit Survey Activity (July – September 2015). This telephone exit questionnaire is undertaken with a random sample of parents or carers of children whose cases were closed in the previous quarter, and where they had been in receipt of assessed service (i.e. an Initial, Core or Single Assessment). <i>Please note that referrals that result in a child being adopted are excluded from the survey.</i> Since Quarter 1 of 2015, four new questions have been added in relation to children on Child Protection Plans.</p> <p>Approximately 100 telephone calls were made to service-users, although as might be expected, many of them did not answer the call, or their telephone numbers were outdated, or they did not want to take part in the survey. A total of 20 respondents took part in the survey, and 20 telephone questionnaires were completed. Results indicated that (Q1 scores in brackets):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 95% of respondents understood why they were receiving a service (95%).</li> <li>• 85% felt that the service provided met needs (75%).</li> <li>• 85% said that they had some say in deciding what service should be provided (75%).</li> <li>• 100% felt that race, culture, religion or disability was considered (100%).</li> <li>• 80% said it was very easy/easy to contact their Social Worker (60%). 20% said that it was difficult /very difficult (40%).</li> <li>• Overall rating: 80% felt they received an excellent/good service (65%); 5% a fair service (35%); 5% rated it as poor (0%); 10% rated it very poor (0%).</li> </ul> <p>Of the seven respondents who were involved with a Child Protection Plan, all said that they had understood the content of the Plan and what they needed to do, the agencies involved talked to them about their concerns, and agreed that the Plan improved their situation. All but one respondent felt they were informed when things had changed.</p> <p>The above results demonstrated significant improvement upon last year’s feedback, and Board members were encouraged by the positive information coming through via these exit questionnaires. However, <b>CM</b> urged some caution regarding the low response rate, and questioned what the 80% who did not take part in the questionnaire might have felt about the services that they had received? Agencies need to be careful they do not assume all is well.</p> <p>Board members were asked to identify other routes for gaining feedback from service-users – suggestions included liaising with other authorities who may have more innovative means of gathering information, and utilising social media more effectively. <b>LR</b> felt that collecting service-user views whilst they are still accessing services (rather than just at the end) would be more beneficial, and noted the Health ‘How are we doing?’ questionnaire. <b>JH</b> advised that letters have also been sent out to service-users in the past, but limited resources are available to increase the levels of feedback. Partner agencies were questioned whether they also do similar surveys/questionnaires, and if not, whether they should be doing so?</p>

Leaving Care Interviews

**KS** gave an overview of the circulated Leaving Care Interviews report, providing an update on the outcomes of leaving care interviews undertaken with young people aged 16 and above who were discharged from Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council Authority Care between June 2013 and March 2015. The interviews were conducted between April 2015 and September 2015, and the same questionnaire as previous years was used, but with one question added: 'Did you ever experience discrimination, in relation to race / religion / gender / age / ability?'

14 Care Leavers (7 female and 7 male) completed a leaving care interview – all but three of the interviews were conducted on a face-to-face basis; one was a telephone conversation as the participant had moved to Wales; and two postal questionnaires were returned from young people currently in Young Offenders Institutions. Results indicated that:

- Positive feedback about their experiences as Looked After Children – none of them rated the service as 'not good' or as 'bad'; most (12/14) rated it 'good', and some (2/14) rated it excellent.
- Many were very positive about their placements, with most (9/14) giving an overall rating of 'good', and some (5/14) rating their placements as 'excellent'. None of the participants thought that placements were 'not good' or 'bad'.
- Preparation for Independence ratings shows that Care Leavers are generally happy with their Personal Care and Health Care services preparation. Budgeting and Emotional Skills scored the lowest, however, with Social Skills and Practical Skills falling in the middle of the scale. This information will be passed to the relevant teams.
- Highlights that improvement can be made in certain areas - Feedback on Contact, for instance, suggests that although most young people do get to see their immediate family, there is not enough emphasis on contact within their wider family – aunts / uncles / cousins – or with their close friends.
- Bullying issue raised by the Care Leavers, both at school and within placements. This information will be passed on, and recommendations will be put forward.
- Since 2006, this practice has ensured that the views and opinions of Care Leavers are influencing the design and delivery of care services within Stockton-on-Tees. The Children's Rights & Participation Officer will continue to look at ways to evidence and promote how we have listened to children and young people so they can feel validated in sharing their experiences with us.

It was noted that this report has been shared at SBC Children & Young People Management Team (CYPMT), and actions to address the identified issues have been agreed.

**CM** asked if the reasons for Care Leavers feeling they were unprepared for independence had been more fully explored. – **KS** advised of ongoing work being undertaken by Jackie Ward (Team Manager - Child Placement) and her team looking at budgets, and work linking in with the regional Children in Care Council. **AM** also noted that a representative from the Credit Union had agreed to talk to young people at the Let's Take Action Group (the local voice of Looked After Children). **MG** advised that further work focusing on Care Leavers was taking place within the Multi-Agency Looked After Partnership (MALAP), and was part of the MALAP Work Programme. **DM** added that issues around bullying in schools had been identified and will be challenged and followed up with these establishments.

**SR** again urged the Board not to lose sight of those Care Leavers who did not take part in these interviews, and questioned if there were alternative means to engage them and gather their feelings. Although it was noted that the Leaving Care package includes incentives to fill in a feedback form, Board members were encouraged to explore other ways of ensuring the voice of young people is heard.

**CM** thanked **KS** for presenting both reports which were helpful and informative.

Thematic Improvement Area - Voice of the Child (VoC)

With reference to the circulated scoping document and December 2015 Voice of the Child report, **JB** provided an update to Board members on progress of this thematic area.

Highlighting objective 1 (To audit the VoC information currently gathered by practitioners and in conferences, and to recommend actions to close any gaps revealed), although the VoC group had reviewed the VoC questionnaire responses received and 'adopted' responses to specific questions in order to identify gaps, examples of best practice and any other significant findings, **JB** noted that there were ongoing issues around the difficulty in scheduling meetings which group members can attend, and delays in receiving information.

**CM** challenged Board members about whether they were truly committed to undertaking this important and high priority piece of work, as the continuing struggle to ascertain information from agencies is suggesting otherwise. The scope and terms of reference for the VoC group had been considered and agreed in previous meetings (where it could have been challenged), and there was a need for all partners to support **JB** who had kindly offered to lead on this area of work.

Concern was expressed as to why some Partner agencies were unable to provide evidence of the VoC, as the Board is aware that work in relation to this is going on (though **JH** added that some agencies may not be submitting information as they do not have any, which would also raise concern). **NS** felt the lack of support for **JB** was inexcusable, and noted that any independent body looking into this situation would question how seriously agencies take their safeguarding responsibilities. **PB** re-affirmed Board members' responsibilities on the Board, and reminded all present that if any deputies are standing in for them, they must be fully briefed in order to play an active role.

**LR** asked whether the Board's role was one of delivery or seeking assurances, and queried what the Board is seeking to achieve here. It was also noted that any work undertaken can evolve, providing obstacles that can hinder the completion of the original objectives. **AS** added that this thematic area was an ambitious piece of work, and that although those agencies who have not submitted information should be pressed on this, any VoC evidence already collected could start to be collated and analysed in order to close any gaps revealed. **MG** offered assistance to **JB**, as this links in with work he intends to carry out following the information gathering phase. **PB** offered further support via the SLSCB Business Unit if required.

In relation to objectives 2 and 3 outlined in the scoping document, it was agreed that these could not be addressed until objective 1 has been achieved. However, **JH** advised that elements of objective 2 (To evaluate the extent to which sample case file audits show the Voice of the Child was appropriately heard and acted upon and make recommendations accordingly) were currently being looked at in terms of what is happening across all agencies, which can feed into this thematic area – more representatives for the VoC group can be provided if required. **SR** suggested a potential fourth objective around the recognition of two 'voices' – one voice from children who are the victims of safeguarding issues, and the other voice from children outside the system and what they are saying/think about safeguarding.

Having ascertained that there was indeed Board commitment, it was agreed that **JB** would provide a verbal update report to the next Board meeting in January 2016. This would follow the next VoC group meeting scheduled for the 13<sup>th</sup> January 2016, where any VoC information should be submitted and will be considered. Agencies that still need to forward information should send it to **PB** by the 31<sup>st</sup> December 2015 (**JB** to provide a list of those who have already responded).

**CM** registered his thanks to **JB** for her resilience, and for bringing this issue to the attention

	of the Board. It is hoped that the discussion at this Board meeting will provoke the necessary support from the partnership to aid completion of this work.			
<i>Agreement/ Outcome</i>	Exit Survey report and Leaving Care Interviews report noted. Progress and challenges around the Voice of the Child thematic improvement area discussed, with actions agreed to move this work forward.			
<i>Log Ref</i>	<i>Mtg Date</i>	<i>Action Required</i>	<i>Person Responsible</i>	<i>Due Date</i>
85/12/1516	17.12.15	Provide a list of those agencies who have already responded to the request for evidence of the VoC.	<b>JB</b>	31.12.15
86/12/1516	17.12.15	Any further information in relation to evidence of the VoC to be forward to <b>PB</b> .	<b>ALL</b>	31.12.15
87/12/1516	17.12.15	Provide a verbal update report on the VoC thematic area at the next Board meeting in January 2016.	<b>JB</b>	21.01.16

<b>Ref No. 3</b>	<b>Early Help</b>
<i>Discussion</i>	<p><u>Children's Early Help Review</u></p> <p><b>JH</b> gave an overview of the circulated letter (from Peter Rentell) regarding the Stockton findings of the Children's Early Help Peer Review across Tees. The letter highlighted that all staff who had been interviewed by the review team were enthusiastic about how early help services within the local authorities and working with partners can be developed and improved. Attention was drawn to the following findings:</p> <p><i>Governance and Strategy</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Evidence that the Stockton Children and Young People's Partnership (SCYPP) is providing effective leadership to the development and delivery of the Early Help Strategy. Schools are engaged in strategic partnerships which are very positive, and this is reflected in their engagement and delivery in operational partnerships.</li> </ul> <p><i>The Role of Partners and Partnership in early help</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(Operational partnerships) Good operational partnerships seen included Operation Gremlin between the Police, Youth Directions and local voluntary organisations for young people; Council commissioning of voluntary agencies in a way that builds local capacity and is seen as co-production (e.g. Big Life, Harbour, Eastern Ravens Trust); Awareness of the Early Help strategy in schools; CAF team facilitating early help practitioners in other agencies, but particularly schools; Improvement in School Nursing services through their reshaping to have nurses linked to each school; Targeted mental health in schools (TAMH) works well.</li> <li>(NHS partners) Relationships with CCG and Commissioning Support Unit (CSU) not clear enough, and reflected in comments about the need for clearer designation of roles and priorities between the LAs and the CCG and CSU.</li> <li>(Police) The discussion on the MACH and with the senior Police team showed differences of view on the vision for the MACH. While the Police are signed up for this there are areas of concern they have which they would like more fully recognised. The issues appear to be about the direction of development for the MACH for the future (i.e. whether it will develop adult safeguarding functions in the future).</li> <li>(Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS)) Good awareness of the early help strategy in the VCS, and strong buy-in to its core objectives. The leadership role in the VCS for the Fairer Start programme is seen as evidencing the local authority's inclusive approach and willingness to share leadership.</li> <li>(Local Authority Partnership) Stockton Children's Services have been reluctant to invest time in exploring developments across Children's Services if it has been of the view that the impact would have a potentially negative impact or benefits were not proportionate to the amount of time invested.</li> <li>(Schools) Schools in Stockton seem to have a good awareness of the Early Help strategy and their role in delivery, and have seen impact from early help work on attend-</li> </ul>

ance and engagement with education.

Points for consideration (not recommendations) were included within the letter, although the Local Authority may ultimately determine that not all are achievable from a Tees perspective.

Tees Early Help Review (Report of the observation of Stockton BC First Contact)

**JH** referred to the circulated report of the observation of Stockton BC First Contact. The observation was undertaken on Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> September 2015 by Sarah Newman and Sophie Wales. Key findings included:

- *Consent* - consent is checked with care and well-articulated.
- *Thresholds* - the Manager demonstrated a good understanding of thresholds but isn't routinely referencing them to support the decision making process.
- *Child's Journey* - the distinction between a Contact and a Referral was not well understood (neither the Service Manager nor the Team Managers were clear), i.e. 70% of all work coming in to the Front Door goes beyond 24 hours before a decision is made on an outcome. This issue is compounded by the IT system which labels the initial proforma 'contact/ referral'. **JH** noted that work was underway to address this.
- *Link of CAF, Early Help and First Contact* - the CAF team and First Contact appear well resourced. The CAF team understand their role in Early Help and were supporting those not meeting the threshold for statutory intervention. In turn, there was a substantial team (14 posts) of Family Support Workers helping deliver Early Help interventions.
- *Quality Assurance* - there is an Integrated Quality Assurance Group which oversees CAF activity which has good data available. This data has been used to support the LSCB's role in having an overview of Early Help activity and holding partners to account for their contribution. The quality of useable data was good. The management of performance was acceptable but the interpretation of the contact and referral process that leads to delay in decision making did not appear to be picked up in the performance management overall. The understanding of workflow could be improved to help ensure families are directed to the right services at the right time.

Areas for consideration had been identified around being clear about the status of work undertaken within First Contact so that the process for contact, referral and single assessment complies with Working Together guidance, and whether the high numbers of NFA following assessment is of concern and may reflect problems in practice (i.e. poor quality referrals).

Stockton-on-Tees Feedback on Case Audit Review

**JH** provided an overview of the circulated feedback from the auditing of 10 cases in Stockton through case records review and discussion with early help practitioners. The Peer Review Team audited the cases using the Raise system and paper files from a number of partner agencies, with lead professionals from schools, health visitors and local authority staff (including Children's Centres). Key items highlighted included:

- Of the cases audited two were achieving the expected standards (both written by the same worker) and eight were below expected standards. No Stockton Good Practice Guides or Practice Standards for early help services were seen, however, some good documentation on processes was evident. **JH** advised that the Case Audit Tool used for this review will be utilised to establish what a 'good' case file looks like.
- The voice of the child was not evident in all assessments, or where it was clear that children had been seen there was insufficient information in the assessment, TAF minutes and case records to ensure that their views, wishes and feelings were heard. In many it was not possible to see a 'picture' of the child through reading the assessments and files. Where there were young children, there were no observations noted in assessments.
- Stockton have a comprehensive range of Early Help Services across the Council and



partner agencies, but there is more work required focussing on systems and on collating data on early help from all agencies. Timeliness is an issue in too many cases and there is no clear guidance on timescales - this will help ensure compliance with child friendly timescales and would enable the local authority to monitor this effectively. More work is required on the voice of the child, direct work and a consistent use of evidence-based models to measure progress. There is a danger that CAFs become a route into a service (referral) rather than a meaningful assessment, and there should be a drive on the need to complete all sections of the CAF, including the family history and functioning. Similarly, work needs to be done on critical thinking and analysis and identifying needs, risk and resilience.

SLSCB Group Discussion

**MG** gave a presentation titled 'Early Help: Where next?' The intention was to clarify the direction of early help work for partner agencies, and to further engage Board members in discussions in order to identify how the Board can make a difference. From an Ofsted perspective, there is a need to evidence what is happening in relation to early help, and for agencies to demonstrate clarity over the processes and services in place, as well as the impact they are having, as part of an analysis of the child's journey through the continuum of need.

**MG** highlighted the financial impact of late intervention which the Board needs to be mindful of as this is essential in establishing the business case for early help, in addition to the objectives of securing better outcomes, and noted that the focus is often on what has already gone wrong (those young people who are already in the Social Care system). Instead, early help should be viewed as part of a continuum: early help – CIN – CP – LAC. This is an emerging field, and has to be prioritised, particularly in relation to children's needs arising from parental substance misuse, mental ill health and domestic abuse (toxic trio).

In terms of where we are now, although there is a strategy in place more work is needed to ensure that the strategy is driving and directing work. However, a valued and appropriate Family Support offer was in place, and there was evidence of innovative work around 'Fairer Start'. Early help is very much a targeting issue - are we effectively identifying families who may need help, or are we waiting for need to arise? There is also a need to question if the right interventions are being used, or whether we are just doing more of the same. If done effectively (particularly during the -9 months to 2 years age-range), there is evidence that early help can make a big difference.

**MG** invited Board members to a 10-minute group discussion around early help, specifically what it means to them, and what partners feel about current and future provision. Feedback from these group discussions included:

- Parenting – the role of universal and preventative services in supporting parents to become better parents, What can we do to make people better parents?
- Need to adopt a whole-family approach, and use everyone in the process. The best quality assessments and team Around the family approaches already do this, but there is more to do on consistency
- Skilled practitioners are often working with families, but in some cases are referring issues to other agencies rather than necessarily getting to the root causes
- Lack of clarity around what the early help offer actually is - does the Strategy need to be more visible? Are we joined-up enough regarding information sharing?
- Opportunity with Troubled Families - which families are we working with; are we identifying families with the 'toxic trio'; are we looking at parents who have been in care themselves; what about very young parents?
- Multi-Agency Children Hub (MACH) - this information hub could also be used to guide professionals on early help. However, do we need every professional to know what the early help offer is - some frontline practitioners work with children every day, others

	less so, therefore different expertise and knowledge of early help exists?			
	<b>MG</b> thanked Board members for the discussion points identified, and agreed that he would feed these into the Early Help Work Programme. <b>MG</b> advised that he will be meeting with agencies in the coming weeks to further discuss early help.			
Agreement/ Outcome	Reports around the Early Help Peer Review noted, along with ongoing work to address the issues identified. Board discussion followed around early help, including what is understood of it, the views of the current offer, and ideas for future provision.			
Log Ref	Mtg Date	Action Required	Person Responsible	Due Date
88/12/1516	17.12.15	Reflect the SLSCB group discussion around early help in the Early Help Work Programme, and meet agencies individually to explore further.	<b>MG</b>	21.01.16

Ref No. 4	<b>Performance</b>
Discussion	<p><b>MG</b> proceeded with a short presentation titled ‘Performance and improvement: How and what?’ emphasising the need for Board members to be aware of the performance information collected and subsequently analysed. Reflecting on the discussion at the last Board meeting in November 2015 around the role of the SLSCB Performance Sub-Group, there were good foundations to build upon following the creation of a robust, and now well established, data-set.</p> <p>With specific reference to the benchmarking data provided, <b>MG</b> explained that the 19 indicators included had been agreed by the regional DCS group as key performance measures for safeguarding and vulnerable children. (Stockton collects data on 43 indicators). The 12 Local Authorities in the North East were listed in terms of their performance compared to the national and regional average, and the message for Stockton appeared to be that LAC performance exceeds the national average, whereas performance around Children in Need and Child Protection falls below the national average. <b>JH</b> noted a Tees theme in terms of performance tending to be below the national average, though Redcar appeared to be bucking this trend. The performance of Durham (recently identified as one of six beacon authorities) and Sunderland (recently identified as needing to address significant safeguarding issues) was also highlighted – their mixed results demonstrates that these indicators should not be used to gauge the performance of an authority in isolation.</p> <p>Once again, <b>MG</b> invited Board members to a 10-minute group discussion around performance, emphasising the key issues for consideration. Groups were asked to think about what strikes them most about the benchmarking and how we compare, do the key issues make sense, what else do they think we ought to be focusing on, and what do they want from a Performance Sub-Group? Feedback from these group discussions included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evident that CiN are more likely to become CP in Stockton – what is the challenge to agencies on this; are we managing risk and making the right decisions?</li> <li>• Benchmarking data does not take into account the quality of provision or outcomes, and therefore our performance framework overall needs to be focused on the quality of practice as well as performance data</li> <li>• Redcar better than Stockton in 15 of the 19 indicators – we need to turn numbers into questions, and determine what we should be asking ourselves. It was also noted that Durham and Darlington are our benchmarking neighbours.</li> <li>• Reporting higher numbers of cases resulting in No Further Action (NFA). Auditing work is underway around NFA cases – should these be done on a multi-agency basis, and are other agencies learning from this?</li> <li>• Process of de-escalation – intensive resource required to build up trust with an individual worker (who may then move on from their role). Need families to trust the whole Stockton workforce, not just individuals.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>High numbers of children on child protection plans is an issue in Stockton, but Board members were clear that this is also evidence of appropriate safeguarding if thresholds are met, and there is evidence that decisions are appropriate.</li> <li>Wellbeing and safeguarding is influenced by geography, especially on poverty and deprivation, and our analysis needs to be sophisticated enough to identify hotspots and target resources appropriately.</li> <li>Decision-making is the critical area – what has influenced staff at that time for them to make a particular decision, and do staff have confidence that things will be done when stepping a case up/down? Potential area for work – human factors influencing decisions.</li> <li>Professional view versus agency view – individuals around the table need empowering to be able to take decisions, rather than individual agencies not.</li> </ul> <p><b>MG</b> thanked Board members for an engaging debate, and would reflect this discussion at the SLSCB Performance Sub-Group.</p>			
<i>Agreement/ Outcome</i>	Performance issues considered, noting the context of Stockton's position across the region and nationally. Board discussion followed, identifying areas of concern and development.			
<i>Log Ref</i>	<i>Mtg Date</i>	<i>Action Required</i>	<i>Person Responsible</i>	<i>Due Date</i>
89/12/1516	17.12.15	Outcomes from the performance discussion at the December 2015 Board meeting to be fed into the Performance Sub-Group, which will also be considering its role and remit in providing additional analysis to support the Board's focus on priorities. Feedback from the Performance Sub-Group discussions to come to the Board meeting in February 2016.	<b>MG</b>	18.02.16

<b>Ref No. 5</b>	<b>19.11.15 Board Minutes for Accuracy</b>
<i>Discussion</i>	<p>Minutes of the Board meeting held on the 19<sup>th</sup> November 2015 were agreed as a true record, subject to the following amendments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ref No. 5 (Residential Children's Homes in Stockton) – amend '<b>JH</b> advised that a number of children are placed in foster care from outside of the borough, monitoring of these placements is via their Social Worker/IRO and Link Worker.</li> <li>Ref No. 20 (Any Other Business) – amend first sentence to read '<b>TH</b> advised that, with immediate effect, all historical child sexual abuse medicals will be undertaken by South Tees Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust (STHFT)'.</li> </ul> <p>73/11/1516: 'Contact <b>SH</b> regarding the NHS England competency framework in relation to WRAP training' (<b>TH</b>) – <b>TH</b> clarified that this action was about whether <b>SH</b> was aware of the different levels of WRAP training available.</p> <p>77/11/1516: 'Create a reporting schedule for the submission of quality of practice audits by all partner agencies to the SLSCB' (<b>PB</b>) – <b>PB</b> sought clarity around this action, specifically which agencies are already carrying out audits, and which agencies are expected to do them. The due date for the creation of the reporting schedule to be amended to the next Board meeting in January 2016 (21.01.16).</p> <p>84/11/1516: 'Relay the concern expressed by the SLSCB in relation to the recommendation in the HMIC consultation document that children who offend will always be dealt with as though this is a safeguarding concern – this would have significant impact on all agencies' (<b>AS</b>) – <b>AS</b> confirmed that this action has been completed.</p> <p>Ref No. 16 (SLSCB VEMT Sub-Group): '... there is no current representation from any Health agency' – it was noted that CAMHS (TEWV) and NTHFT have recently been con-</p>

	tacted regarding potential representation on the SLSCB VEMT Sub-Group.
<i>Agreement/ Outcome</i>	The minutes of the Board meeting held on the 19 <sup>th</sup> November 2015 be recorded as ratified, subject to the identified amendments.

<i>Ref No. 6</i>	<b><i>Procedures for Consideration by Boards</i></b>
<i>Discussion</i>	<p>i) <u>Core Groups</u> Following circulation to Board members, minor amendments had been suggested in relation to the proposed Core Groups procedure. The procedure was therefore approved by the Board, subject to these minor changes.</p> <p>ii) <u>Orders</u> Following circulation to Board members, no amendments were identified. The Orders procedure was therefore approved by the Board.</p>
<i>Agreement/ Outcome</i>	Core Groups (subject to minor amendments) and Orders procedures approved by Board.

<i>Ref No. 7</i>	<b><i>Tees LSCBs VEMT Strategic Group</i></b>
<i>Discussion</i>	<p><b>AS</b> provided an overview of the circulated VEMT – Annual Report 2014-15, which included appendices relating to the Tees CSE Multi-Agency Strategy, and a CSE Problem Profile analysis report giving a flavour of the type of cases going on across Tees (this is a restricted document and should not be put into the public domain).</p> <p>Specific attention was drawn to section 7 (CSE Data) of the Annual Report, Information regarding VEMT referrals is looked at in greater depth at the Tees LSCBs Strategic VEMT Group, and it was noted that Social Care are awaiting some feedback from the Police in relation to the number of cases in Stockton marked as ‘CSE’, which exceeds the number that Social Care are aware of. <b>AS</b> explained that this may be due to the majority of reported missing-from-home children having a CSE-“ flag “ – this is leading to incidents being recorded as CSE even though they are not (training for Police call-taking staff will be carried out to address this). Updates regarding these recording issues will come to a future Board meeting.</p> <p>Other elements of the Annual Report highlighted included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• (7.3) Gender Breakdown (graph) – is there under-reporting of males?</li> <li>• (7.4) Intelligence Submissions for CSE and Human Trafficking, Sep 14 – Aug 15 (graph) – spike in submissions around September 2014 due to the start of several Operations (Spring, Sponge, Grenadier).</li> <li>• (7.6) Missing Children Episodes, Apr 15 – Sep15 (graph) – this is a key risk area as high numbers of missing episodes can lead to increased risk of exploitation (and other risks). Need to ensure problem-solving around this issue is good.</li> <li>• (7.6) Repeat MFH between Apr 14 – Aug 15 (table) – should be aspiring to Redcar’s position of no high repeat MFH episodes. <b>JH</b> queried how many of Stockton’s high repeat MFH children are LAC, and whether a correlation exists between repeat MFH episodes and the number of Children’s Homes within an authority (Stockton 8; Redcar 2). In terms of Children’s Homes, assurance was given that staff do report missing incidents, feel comfortable to do so, and understand the need to.</li> <li>• (10.1) Training: LSCB CSE (table) – <b>JH</b> felt the Stockton take-up of LSCB courses on CSE-related training (84) was low, and may need to be addressed.</li> <li>• (10.3) Training: LSCB CSE – Strategic VEMT is currently working on defining suggested mandatory training requirements for safeguarding professionals.</li> <li>• (10.6) E-safety – <b>DM</b> was commended for her efforts in rolling out resources to schools to raise awareness of e-safety and the dangers of on-line exploitation with their pupils.</li> </ul>

	<p><b>SR</b> added that a report presented at a recent Safer Stockton Partnership meeting contained a short section on Cybercrime, and suggested that Cyberbullying be looked at by the SLSCB to understand its impact on young people, and how schools in particular are trying to ameliorate it.</p> <p><b>DM</b> queried the impact that work in relation to CSE was having on children, and noted that the survey for young people in order to better understand their perceptions will be launched in schools for year 8 and year 10 pupils in January 2016. <b>AT</b> suggested comparing historical CSE data to determine potential trends would be useful, and felt that any documentation being sent out to parents should also be highlighted.</p> <p>Clarity was sought over whether the Annual Report was a Police or LSCB report – <b>AS</b> advised that the report was a Tees LSCBs Strategic VEMT report for the consumption of Tees LSCBs, and acknowledged the need to include the LSCB logo's to avoid confusion. <b>CM</b> asked if, due to the inclusion of 2014 data, the report should be prefaced with a summary outlining the precise dates that this report covers (Q3 2014-2015 to Q2 2015-2016) – <b>AS</b> agreed to include an appropriate statement.</p> <p><b>CM</b> thanked <b>AS</b> for the reports provided, noting the significant step forward in the level of detail included. <b>PB</b> added that <b>AS</b> does not receive support from any of the Tees LSCB Business Managers in relation to the Tees LSCBs Strategic VEMT Group – this may need to be looked at in the future.</p>			
Agreement/ Outcome	The VEMT – Annual Report, with attached CSE Strategy and Problem Profile, noted and discussed, with minor amendments agreed. Board members considered the current position around CSE, and future work to further develop this area was proposed.			
Log Ref	Mtg Date	Action Required	Person Responsible	Due Date
90/12/1516	17.12.15	Report to reflect it is a Tees LSCBs Strategic VEMT report and not a Police report and to include an appropriate statement at the start of the VEMT – Annual Report outlining the dates covered by this report (Q3 2014-2015 to Q2 2015-2016).	<b>AS</b>	21.01.16

Ref No. 8	<b>Tees CDOP</b>
Discussion	<p><b>PK</b> referred to the circulated CDOP Budget Update paper, specifically item 4.1 (Proposed annual expenditure 2016 onwards). Assurance was given that the stated shortfall in the 2016/17 budget of approximately £10,500 will be picked up by the Directors of Public Health across Tees.</p> <p>In addition, <b>CM</b> informed Board members of a letter which had been received from Ali Wilson Chief Officer CCG stating that issues around the Rapid Response admin process had now resolved – this letter can be circulated to agencies if requested.</p>
Agreement/ Outcome	CDOP Budget Update paper noted, with assurance received that the 2016/17 budget shortfall will be covered by the Directors of Public Health across Tees. Assurance also given regarding the Rapid Response process.

Ref No. 9	<b>SLSCB LIPSG</b>
Discussion	<p><b>AS</b> advised that the recent LIPSG meeting held on the 10<sup>th</sup> December 2015 considered two cases in order to determine if they met the Serious Care Review (SCR) criteria (these have been subsequently discussed with <b>CM</b> as the SLSCB Chair).</p> <p>One case (EE) requires additional time for a more detailed overview to be provided by agencies; the other case (Norton) does not meet the SCR criteria, but some form of learning will take place, with the exact type and agreed outcomes to be established (following</p>

	<p>agreement by the Chairs of the SLSCB and the Youth Justice Board) – this will be fed back to the SLSCB and the Youth Justice Board.</p> <p><b>PB</b> noted a slight amendment to the process for considering review requests, as full chronologies of cases have been undertaken in the past even when they were ultimately not required – this will no longer be expected to take place unless it is necessary.</p>
Agreement/ Outcome	Noted.

<b>Ref No. 10</b>	<b>Learning from Others</b>
Discussion	<p>The outcome for Gateshead following their recent Ofsted inspection was due shortly.</p> <p>It was noted that the next Ofsted inspection dates are the 11<sup>th</sup> January 2016 and the 25<sup>th</sup> January 2016.</p>
Agreement/ Outcome	Noted.

<b>Ref No. 11</b>	<b>Partners Operational Safeguarding Issues</b>
Discussion	<p><u>Local Authority</u></p> <p><b>JH</b> advised of the continuing issues around recruitment – a paper will be going to the SBC Corporate Management Team (CMT), and then to Cabinet, in relation to recruitment and retention.</p> <p>Agreement has been reached for the Multi-Agency Children’s Hub (MACH) to be in place by June 2016, and Signs of Safety will be implemented in child protection processes (new cases at ICPC across the North of England) from February 2016 – this will be monitored.</p>
Agreement/ Outcome	Noted.

<b>Ref No. 12</b>	<b>Any Other Business</b>
Discussion	<p><u>SLSCB Staff Engagement Event</u></p> <p>Only 15 staff members had registered their interest in attending the scheduled SLSCB Staff Engagement Events in January 2016. This clearly makes the event non-viable, and it was therefore agreed to stand down these sessions.</p> <p>The question for Board members was whether the events should be resurrected later in 2016, or surmise that it was not a popular idea. It was noted that the intended concept of the events put more onus on staff to do the work and this may well represent part of the reason for them not engaging.</p> <p>Board members were asked to consider why staff were not engaging in such events, with reference also made to the recent Staff Drop-In sessions which were very poorly attended by non-Local Authority agencies. <b>AS</b> advised of a recent Redcar event which was well attended – although the event was not specifically focused around the LSCB, but had related items, and allowed for some discussions which the Board were interested in.</p> <p><u>Appraisal of SLSCB Chair</u></p> <p><b>NS</b> advised that his appraisal of <b>CM</b> was now complete, and could be made available to all agencies upon request. <b>NS</b> would also respond to any email queries regarding this appraisal.</p>

<b>Ref No. 12</b>	<b>Any Other Business</b>			
	<p><u>Board Membership</u>  <b>SW</b> was attending his last Board meeting – <b>CM</b> expressed gratitude for his work around performance, particularly over the last year, which has put the Board in a much stronger place to access and understand performance information. <b>CM</b> thanked <b>SW</b> for his considerable efforts, and wished him well in his forthcoming retirement.</p> <p><b>NS</b> advised Board members that, following the resignation of <b>CM</b> as SLSCB Chair, a recruitment process was underway, and the intention was to involve some agencies reflective of the partnership in the search for a suitable replacement – any Board members wanting to be involved in this process should contact <b>NS</b> as soon as possible. Interviews will be scheduled for February 2016 (<b>CM</b> has agreed to remain as Chair until a replacement has been agreed).</p>			
Agreement/ Outcome	Noted.			
Log Ref	Mtg Date	Action Required	Person Responsible	Due Date
91/12/1516	17.12.15	Board members to contact <b>NS</b> if they would like to be involved in the recruitment process for a new SLSCB Chair following the recent resignation of <b>CM</b> .	<b>ALL</b>	21.01.16

	<b>CM</b> wished Board members a merry Christmas and a restful festive period.
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