

## Children & Young People Select Committee

A meeting of Children & Young People Select Committee was held on Wednesday, 30th March, 2016.

**Present:** Cllr Carol Clark(Chairman), Cllr Tracey Stott(Vice-Chairman), Cllr Elsi Hampton, Cllr Barbara Inman (Vice Cllr Di Hewitt), Cllr Ross Patterson, Cllr Lauriane Povey, Cllr Paul Rowling (Vice Cllr Rachael Proud), Cllr Mrs Sylvia Walmsley, Cllr Lynn Hall (Vice Cllr Sally Ann Watson), Norah Moffat, Mr Phil Rigby

**Officers:** Neil Schneider (Chief Executive), Martin Gray (Assistant Director - Early Help, Partnership and Planning), Judith Trainer (Team Leader - Scrutiny and Electoral), Jenna McDonald (Governance Officer)

**Also in attendance:** Cllr Ann McCoy (Cabinet Member for Children and Young People)

**Apologies:** Cllr Rachael Proud, Cllr Sally Ann Watson, Cllr Di Hewitt

### **CYP 58/15 Evacuation Procedure**

The evacuation procedure was noted.

### **CYP 59/15 Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

### **CYP 60/15 Minutes for signature - 13 January 2016**

The minutes of the meeting held on 13 January 2016 were signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

AGREED that the minutes were signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

### **CYP 61/15 Draft Minutes - 17 February 2016**

Consideration was given to the draft minutes of the meeting held on 17 February 2016.

AGREED that the minutes be approved.

### **CYP 62/15 Scrutiny Review of Stockton Local Safeguarding Children Board**

The Committee received evidence as part of the review of Stockton Local Safeguarding Children Board (SLSCB).

Members were keen to understand the Chief Executive's personal opinion on the effectiveness of the SLSCB. It was heard that the CEO believed that it was important for him to be involved in the work of the SLSCB and whilst it was not possible to attend every meeting, he attended on a regular basis in addition to attending regular meetings with the Independent Chair of the SLSCB and Director of Children's Services.

He was responsible for overseeing the appointment of the Independent Chair and discussed the operation of the Board as part of appraisal of the Chair. One outcome of these was that work would take place on succession planning.

The Chief Executive emphasised the importance of commitment from all Board members and he had challenged individual board members on commitment in the past. He felt that it was important that other agencies took the lead as well as the Local Authority and there had been more recent evidence of this from Board Members. He felt that there was now good attendance and contribution from key partners. He also highlighted that the independent chair carried out appraisals of other Board members and their input into the work of the SLSCB.

The Committee asked how SLSCB compared to other LSCB's in other boroughs. In response, it was heard that the CEO was a participating observer on only the SLSCB. However, he believed that the Board was well resourced and he was aware of positive feedback from Board Members serving on more than one Board. He was assured by the clear focus and visible commitment of the Board.

It was noted that following on from the resignation of the SLSCB Chair, a new chair has been appointed to the Board. Members were keen to understand the background of the newly appointed Chair and heard that the Chair was previously employed by Cleveland Police and was once the independent chair of Hartlepool LSCB.

The Committee asked the CEO what judgement he believed the SLSCB to would receive from OFSTED. In response, Members heard that while it was difficult to predict a rating, the CEO was satisfied that the Chair of the Board understood what would be assessed and that all necessary actions were being taken.

The Committee was keen to understand how valuable the CEO considered his time spent as a Participating Observer on the SLSCB. The CEO highlighted that time spent safeguarding vulnerable children was critical.

Members asked the CEO to provide examples of innovative/good practice of the Board. The Chief Executive highlighted the more focused performance management framework, the voice of the child and also focusing on outcomes.

Julie Allan, the Lead Manager from National Probation Services Teesside/ member of the SLSCB was also in attendance of the meeting. It was noted that the probation manager had been a member of the SLSCB since June 2014 and commented that it took time to fully understand the wide range of work carried out by the board. With regard to effectiveness, the Committee heard that regular reviews on performance took place and detailed performance reports were discussed at board meetings and challenged.

Julie believed that scrutiny led to effectiveness. It was noted that SLSCB agendas were robust/full agendas and consistently well structured. The Committee heard that there were strict expectations that all board members had read and understood the papers prior to each meeting. Notwithstanding this, Julie commented that she would prefer to see more regular, shorter meetings.

Clear priorities had been set in the Business Plan. Key agenda items included early help and voice of the child. She felt that work carried out on smaller specific issues was useful as were the regular bulletins and the work of the Tees Wide Procedures Group. She also highlighted the Section 11 Audit as

being a particularly

With regard to attendance it was explained that the board was well attended by agencies and attendance was regularly monitored. It was noted that any agencies with poor attendance would be contacted by the Chair.

Members asked how she believed the SLSCB compared to other LSCBS, in response it was highlighted that all boards were well organized/structured and also received a high level of contribution from elected members.

In relation to added value and outcomes of the Board, Julie felt that this was achieved through the breadth of work and the wide range of agencies represented; members of the board were able to take back what was learned into their own organizations. She felt that the work of the sub groups were particularly useful as well as work that had been carried out on the Joint Neglect Strategy and the development of a new performance framework.

As asked of other board representatives, it was asked whether she felt that the board meetings were a good use of her time. Members were informed that it was difficult to assess whether your own contribution was useful to the board however she was confident that taking back information to her own organization was invaluable.

With regard to predicting an OFSTED grading, Julie felt that this was difficult to predict as she did not work within children's services however she was optimistic and confident around the work of the board.

Taking into consideration the high level of joint working across the Tees, Members asked why there were currently four LSCBS as opposed to one large board for all four areas. Julie commented that as an external member, providing four responses to four boards was not a good use of her time but she acknowledged that if there was one board, there would need to be a new structure to ensure local focus was maintained. She commented that she would, however, welcome greater consistency across the four LSCBs.

The Cabinet Member for Children and Young People attended the meeting to provide information and to answer questions of the Committee. The Cabinet Member who was also a member of the SLSCB felt that the Chair and members of the Board provided effective challenge in their roles as board members and that there had been significant improvements in the operation of the board over the last two years. She highlighted Section 11 work, the Neglect Strategy and the Voice of the Child as examples of valuable work.

It was noted that when considering future OFSTED gradings of the SLSCB, the Cabinet Member felt that the Board would be able to demonstrate that all implemented procedures were effective.

In addition to the comments made around the structure of the four separate boards in the Tees Valley, the Cabinet Member informed the Committee that an advantage of having four individual boards was more beneficial due to the need for local discussion.

The Cabinet Member for Children and Young People informed the Committee

that the SLSCB meetings were a vital part of her role as lead member.

AGREED that the information be noted.

**CYP  
63/15      Feedback from Member visits to Frontline Services**

Members received feedback from recent visits to frontline services.

AGREED that the feedback be noted.

**CYP  
64/15      Work Programme**

Members gave consideration to the Work Programme 2015/16.

AGREED that the work programme be noted.