

BIRMINGHAM SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN BOARD

Business Plan 2006-2008

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1. Foreword & Introductions

Foreword from Tony Howell, Director of Children's Services

I am delighted to introduce to you, on behalf of the Birmingham Safeguarding Children Board (BSCB), the Business Plan.

The role of the board is to ensure, as part of the broader context of children's trust arrangements for improving the well-being of all children, the effectiveness of the arrangements made by individual agencies to safeguard and promote children's welfare.

The "stay safe" objectives and activities of this business plan are also incorporated into the Children and Young People's Plan. This demonstrates joint commitment by all partners to the Every Child Matters change programme being taken forward within the wider children's trust arrangements. I and fellow board members intend to ensure that the BSCB retains its own strong identity and independent voice within the children's trust arrangements.

We will maintain an ongoing and direct working relationship – and of course in all our activities we are strongly committed to taking account of the ongoing need to promote equality of opportunity and meet the diverse needs of all our children and young people.

We shall all be working together to fulfil the six key points of the Pledge to which the BSCB is signed up.

Tony Howell

Introduction from Andrea Hickman, the Independent Chair

At the heart of the establishment of our Birmingham Safeguarding Children Board (BSCB) is the desire to develop a shared sense of responsibility across all agencies working with children, their families and communities to keep children safe from harm. In order to achieve this, we recognise the need to develop a more preventative and community-based approach to safeguarding children and young people. This will require a strong emphasis on partnership, integration, information sharing, participation and accountability at all levels.

We face challenges and opportunities presented by the five outcomes of the Every Child Matters, Change for Children Programme. Our priorities are in relation to the 'Stay Safe' outcome and are set out in this Business Plan for 2006/08. They are of necessity ambitious, reflecting the challenges faced by all professionals working with children. The pace of change will not slacken as the new board establishes itself within the changing landscape of services and builds sound working relationships within the Children's Trust arrangements.

We aim to improve our communication with front-line professional staff and local communities, this will be done through our quarterly news letter and material posted on the website.

Through our monitoring and quality assurance role, BSCB will aim to ensure that agencies working with children, young people and their families take all reasonable measures to ensure that the risks of harm to children's welfare are minimised. Where risks are identified, agencies will take all appropriate actions to address them, working in partnership to locally-agreed policies and procedures.

Our work will demonstrate our full commitment to Safeguarding the children and young people of Birmingham

Andrea Hickman

2. What is a Safeguarding Children Board?

The Children Act 2004 requires each local authority to establish a Local Safeguarding Children Board. All agencies working with children are represented within the Birmingham Safeguarding Children Board (BSCB) structure. The BSCB was launched on the 7th February 2006 and is part of the wider context of Children's Trust arrangements for Birmingham. We support the aim to improve the overall wellbeing of all children in Birmingham, through the five Every Child Matters outcomes.

Whilst contributing to these wider goals the main focus of the BSCB is on the 'Stay Safe' outcome.

The definition of Safeguarding and Promoting the welfare of children is: -

- To protect children from maltreatment
- To prevent impairment of children's health & development
- To ensure children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- And understanding that role so as to enable those children to have optimum life chances and enter adulthood successfully.

Protecting children from harm through properly coordinated services remains a key goal supported by BSCB policies and procedures, which determine the action to be taken where there are concerns about a child's safety or welfare.

3. National & Local Context

The government envisaged that the operation of Local Safeguarding Children Boards (LSCBs) will be developed from the existing Area Child Protection Committees (ACPCs), fully replacing ACPCs by April 2006. The statutory duty for agencies to co-operate is enshrined within the Children Act 2004 and strengthens the arrangements for the new boards.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children requires effective co-ordination. BSCB will become the key statutory mechanism for agreeing how all relevant child care organisations in the City will co-operate to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

The National Service Framework (NSF) for Children, Young People and Maternity Services also forms a key strand of the change agenda for children's services, setting out standards for children's health and social care, and the interface with education. The NSF aims to break down professional boundaries and strengthen partnership working between agencies by placing children and young people at the centre of their care, building services around their needs.

Standard 5 of the NSF states that *"all agencies work together to prevent children suffering harm and to promote their welfare, provide them with the services they require to address their identified needs and safeguard children who are being or who are likely to be harmed."*

More specifically, the BSCB will monitor and quality-assure the effectiveness of members' work and set policy and procedures on safeguarding. This work will be supported by a multi-disciplinary training programme and good practice material posted on the website.

The core objectives of LSCBs are set out in Section 14.1 of the Children Act 2004:

- To co-ordinate what is done by each person or body represented on the LSCB for the purposes of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in the area of the authority by which it is established; and
- To ensure the effectiveness of what is done by each such person or body for that purpose.

The core functions of LSCBs are set out in Government regulations

These include the following priorities:

- Policies and procedures;
- Multi-agency training of all people who work with children;
- Recruitment and supervision of people who work with children;
- Investigation of allegations concerning people working with children;
- Safety and welfare of children who are privately fostered;
- Co-operation with neighbouring Children's Services Authorities and their board partners;
- Communicating and raising awareness;
- Monitoring and evaluation;
- Planning and commissioning;
- Child Death Review function;
- Responsibility to collect and analyse information of all child deaths from 1 April 2008.

4. Priority Outcomes

We are committed to meeting the Every Child Matters Outcomes for all children and young people with in the Stay Safe agenda.

Our pledge to the children, young people and families in Birmingham is

To co-ordinate and ensure effectiveness for the purpose of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people, in order that: -

- Children and young people are safe from maltreatment, neglect, violence and sexual abuse.
- Children and young people are safe from accidental injury and death.
- Children and young people are safe from discrimination and bullying in schools and the community.
- Children and young people are safe from becoming victims of crime and or involved in anti-social behaviour and criminal activity.
- Children and young people have security, stability and care.
- Parents, carers and families provide safe homes, environments and stable care.

BSCB has chosen two key priorities for the next two years. These have been identified from serious case reviews and reinforced by the 'Stay Safe' concerns raised by children and young people.

- We will focus on raising public and professional awareness regarding the impact of domestic violence on children and young people to ensure they are appropriately identified, protected and supported
- We will work directly with and support the anti-bullying strategy developed within Birmingham to ensure that the number of children and young people affected by bullying and discrimination in schools and the community is reduced

In addition, through the effective work of the BSCB:

- a) We will develop and revise policies and procedures for inter-agency and multi-agency work to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in line with national and local requirements. This includes encouraging and developing effective working arrangements in the light of experience and research
- b) We will monitor the arrangements made by individual agencies to carry out their safeguarding duties and responsibilities
- c) We will audit and evaluate how well local services work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of children

- d) We will establish and monitor agency procedures for investigating allegations of abuse by employees and others working with children in their care
- e) We will identify multi-agency training priorities and ensure training is appropriate to meet local need through three area forums
- f) We will ensure that, as part of the new Children's Trust arrangements, planning and commissioning of children's services takes account of the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children
- g) We will establish a Child Death Review team by April 2008 to include terms of reference, procedures and reporting arrangements
- h) We will establish a Rapid Response Team
- i) We will continue to undertake serious case reviews
- j) We will raise awareness of safeguarding issues by implementing a communication strategy
- k) We will ensure inter-agency co-operation in safeguarding and promote the welfare of children who are privately fostered

5. Birmingham Safeguarding Children Board Structure

Through the new structure the BSCB will work to ensure that the vision for ensuring children and young people live in a safe and secure environment is realised. Arrangements for safeguarding and promoting the welfare for children and young people will be effective and bring about improved outcomes for children. We will achieve this by:

- Meeting the requirements of the government guidance 'Working Together to Safeguard Children'
- Demonstrating a clear and independent identity within local governance arrangements
- Establishing a board structure and membership that improves performance and fulfils the statutory requirements
- Being accountable to the Director of Children's Services
- Working with the lead Council Member responsible for safeguarding
- Working within the wider Children and Young People's Trust arrangements
- Monitoring the effectiveness of arrangements to safeguard and promote the well-being of children and young people against the priorities set out in the Children and Young People's Plan

- Providing leadership and support to all agencies to discharge their duty to safeguard children
- Ensuring the board is adequately and reliably resourced to fulfil its responsibilities
- Carrying out an Audit and Scrutiny programme of self-inspection to prepare and complement the Joint Area Review process

6. Membership

Statutory Members

Independent Chair
 Children, Young People and Families Directorate
 Education, Lead Officer: Safeguarding
 Education, Head of Early Years
 District Manager, National Probation Service, West Midlands
 Regional Director, CAFCASS
 West Midlands Police
 Head of Youth Offending Service
 Assistant Director of Housing
 Health, Director of Children's Services (Citywide)
 Health, Designated Doctor
 Health, Designated Nurse
 Regional Representative of NSPCC
 Assistant Director, Legal Services
 Head of Child Protection & Review, Children Young People & Families Directorate
 Director CAMHS
 Chief Executive, B,ham & Solihull Mental Health Trust
 Head of Youth Service
 Community Safety Partnership
 Head of Children's Fund
 Head of Connexions B,ham & Solihull
 Chief Executive, South PCT
 Chief Executive, North/East PCT
 Chief Executive, HoB PCT
 Director, Adult & Community Services

Associate Members

National Asylum Support Service
 Representative, Crown Prosecution Service
 Immigration & Nationality Department
 West Midlands Ambulance Service
 West Midlands Fire Service
 Domestic Violence Forum
 Learning Skills Council
 Further Education Colleges
 General Practitioners
 Independent Health Care Representatives

Voluntary & Community Sector Organisations
Children's Centres
Coroners Service
Local Family Justice Council
Local Criminal Justice Board

Support Officers

Business Co-ordinator
Training Co-ordinator
Administration Manager

7. Reporting Process

The Business Plan, under the direction of the co-ordinator, sets the context of the board's work for the next two years.

The priorities set by the board will be relayed to Area Safeguarding Children Forums (ASCF) across the city divided into North/East, South and Heart of Birmingham. ASCF members will be responsible for developing a local plan to address these priorities, contribute to the quarterly newsletter and disseminate information to member organisations and service-users. Each ASCF will report to the board through minutes of meetings and attendance of the forum chairpersons.

The Training Co-ordinator will develop a multi-agency training plan, contribute to publicity campaigns, and post information on the website and in newsletters.

Each ASCF and sub-group will contribute to the quarterly newsletter. These reports will be collated and published in the Annual Report.

We will publish the outcomes from Serious Case reviews and lessons learned from these will be relayed to the Quality Assurance & Audit sub-group, ASCF and the Training sub-group. A scrutiny programme has been developed by the Quality Assurance & Audit sub-group, and this will provide an independent, evidence-based overview of the quality of safeguarding activity. The audit programme will identify, showcase and disseminate good practice.

The sub-groups will also challenge and engage those organisations working with children to ensure they mesh effectively together to improve outcomes for children. The sub-groups will report quarterly to the board.

The Policy & Procedure sub group will maintain an up-to-date revision programme of all policies and procedures, reporting to the board on a quarterly basis. All policies and procedures will be posted on the website and announced through the quarterly newsletter.

8. Equality & Diversity

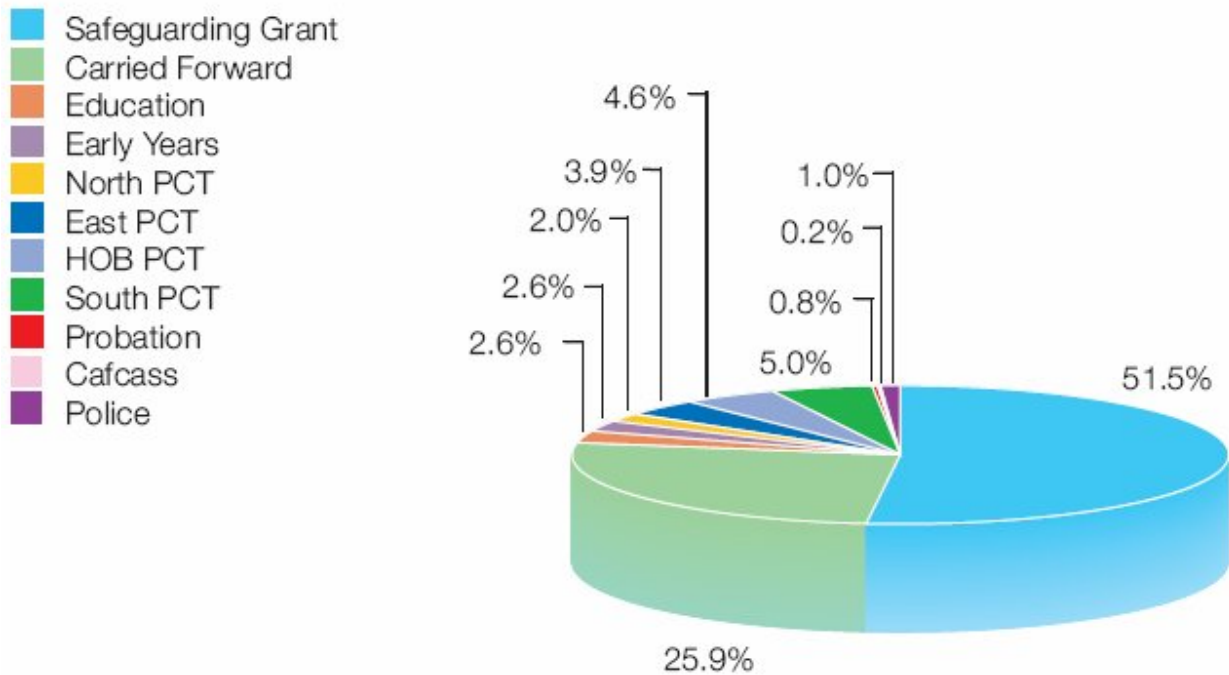
We believe that equal opportunity is about treating people fairly, openly and honestly and recognising that people all have different needs, cultures, experiences and expectations.

We subscribe to the policy of Birmingham City Council to ensure that no person, whether a job applicant, employee, service user or third party receives any less favourable treatment because of his or her gender, marital status, family status, lifestyle, age, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, disability, political affiliation, trade union membership or any other condition or requirement which cannot be shown to be justifiable.

A diverse population contains individuals with visible and non-visible differences which will include gender, race, disability, age, background, lifestyle, personality and work style. Acknowledging and respecting these differences creates a harmonious environment in which everyone feels valued.

9. Finance 2005/6

ACPC Contributions 2005/06



ACPC Allocations 2005/06

