

## APPENDIX B

### **Arrangements for auditing and overseeing the safeguarding arrangements of partners (via the Local Safeguarding Children's Board)**

Brief description of issue:

The Local Safeguarding Children Board [LSCB] has a statutory<sup>1</sup> duty [Safeguarding Children regulations 2006] to ensure the effectiveness of what is done' by board partners. Guidance<sup>2</sup> [Working Together 2010] issued under this legislation describe the duty to 'Monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of what is done by the local authority and Board statutory partners individually and collectively to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and advise them on ways to improve.'

Working Together 2010 suggests that the LSCB ask 'individual organisations to self-evaluate under an agreed framework of benchmarks or indicators' with 'particular focus on ensuring that those key people and organisations that have a duty under section 11 of the Children Act 2004 or section 175 or 157 of the Education Act 2002 are fulfilling their statutory obligations about safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.' Specific statutory guidance<sup>3</sup> issued to Chief Executives and senior managers of all bodies named in section 11 of CA 2004 outline the following:

- a) Senior management commitment to the importance of safeguarding and promoting children's welfare.
- b) A clear statement of the agency's responsibilities towards children is available for all staff.
- c) A clear line of accountability within the organization for work on safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children
- d) Service development takes account of the need to safeguard and promote welfare and is informed, where appropriate, by the views of children and families
- e) Staff training on safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children for all staff working with or, depending on the agency's primary functions, in contact with children and families.

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<sup>1</sup> S14 of the Children Act 2004 and Local Safeguarding Children Regulations 2006, SI2006/90

<sup>2</sup> Working Together to Safeguard Children 2010, p. p.93

<sup>3</sup> Statutory Guidance on making arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children under section 11 of the Children Act 2004

- f) Safer recruitment
- g) Effective inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children
- h) Information sharing.

The guidance suggests that the following Local Authority [LA] services have a particularly significant part to play in the lives of children and families in each LA:

1. Culture and leisure services,
2. Early years and childcare
3. Education and schools
4. Licensing authorities
5. Housing authorities
6. Children's Social Care
7. Youth Services
8. Connexions
9. Child employment.

The New Ofsted framework emphasises the supreme importance of partnership working across the statutory agencies, and further emphasises the leadership role of the LSCB in monitoring the effectiveness of this working. One of the main ways it does this is by carrying out a section 11 Audit on a regular basis, and analysing the results from this, as a way of challenging partner agencies. In many recent inspections, LSCBs have been criticized for not fulfilling their Section 11 duties, and not carrying out the required audit.

In London, most LSCBs conduct a section 11 Audit every three years. A standard template has been created for the Audit by the London Board which enables organizations such as Central North West London [CNWL] Trust foundation, that are part of several LSCBs, to collate the information once and report it back to each board, without duplicating the work needed to complete multiple Audits.

### **Hillingdon LSCB previous section 11 Audit [2008]**

The last section 11 Audit was carried out in Hillingdon in 2008. It was due to be repeated in November 2011, but this was superseded by the Ofsted Pilot inspection.

The findings of the previous Section 11 Audit in 2008 were as follows:

#### **Strengths**

- Good accessibility to All London Child Protection Procedures, both electronically and hard copies.
- Good access to "what to do if you suspect a child is being abused".

- Generally good lines of accountability and named people in place with expertise in child protection and safeguarding.
- Good awareness of Local Safeguarding Children's Board.
- Good awareness of how to make child protection referrals.
- Good awareness and take up of inter-agency training including Working Together and core LSCB courses.

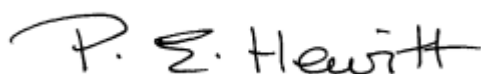
### **Principal recommendations from the Audit**

- The overarching recommendation was that each agency should have in place its own internal arrangements for auditing issues of safeguarding; with more focus on qualitative measurements.
- The LSCB must put greater emphasis on service user participation and widening the safeguarding agenda to include parents and young people in creation of safeguarding policies and their implementation.

### **Conclusion:**

The LSCB in Hillingdon has prioritised the completion of the section 11 audit in its formal Business plan for this Autumn [2012]. The template for the section 11 Audit has been agreed by the multi-agency Performance and Quality sub-group; and was sent out to each partner agency by end of October 2012, with a return date of 10<sup>th</sup> December 2012. The results will then be analysed by the Performance sub-group after Christmas, and presented to the LSCB main Board in March 2013.

The challenge for Hillingdon Council will be to ensure that the Section 11 self audit is appropriately completed by services across all directorates within the Council; including Early Years Services, Youth, Education Welfare, the Contact Centre, Housing etc, as well as Children's social care. Moreover, it is vital that the expectations around safeguarding children and the Section 11 audit are built into the service level agreements with all children's services which are being commissioned by the Council, within the third sector, and that the follow up to the results of the Section Audit are robust in relation to these Services. Potentially this could be the subject of review for the Policy Overview Committee.



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