

Forthcoming SSCB training with available places:

- **7th May:** CSE Loudmouth workshop (including a performance of 'Working for Marcus')
- **18th May:** CSE Loudmouth workshop (including a performance of 'Working for Marcus')
- **20th May:** Workshop to Raise Awareness of PREVENT (WRAP)
- **26th May:** Domestic Abuse & Equality
- **27th May:** MARAC/ DASH & BST
- **18th June:** Safeguarding Module 3
- **8th July:** MARAC/ DASH & BST

See Page 7 for details of new 'Neglect' courses!

Introduction by John Harris, SSCB Independent Chair



On behalf of Sandwell Safeguarding Children Board (SSCB) welcome to the first of the Board's quarterly newsletters in which we hope to provide you with a snapshot of recent activity.

Following my appointment as Independent Chair in July 2014, I led a strategic review of the effectiveness of SSCB. This resulted in the following agreed priorities for 2014-2017:

- 1.) Sandwell has an effective LSCB which meets its statutory responsibilities**
- 2.) Sandwell has highly effective safeguarding systems and practice**
- 3.) Sandwell has effective arrangements for identifying, understanding and responding to key safeguarding risks, including neglect, child sexual exploitation and early help**
- 4.) Sandwell LSCB is visible and influential, engaging with other key partnerships, front-line professionals, children and young people, parents and the wider community.**

I am pleased to say that your Board is making rapid and sustainable progress. There is a strong culture of partnership based on good self-awareness of the Board's strengths and areas for development. The Board has an expectation that the recent OFSTED review should provide us with a baseline from which to drive further improvement.

The past year has been characterised by significant

changes to the political, strategic and operational context in which your Board operates, both within and beyond Sandwell. What has remained consistent is the determination of all who are engaged with SSCB to make a positive difference; to continue to learn, develop and fulfil their responsibilities to the highest standard.

Partner organisations, and their respective staff, have shown commitment and consistency in their contributions to the Board's work, as well as in their day to day delivery of safeguarding services.

John Harris
SSCB Independent Chair

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About Sandwell Safeguarding Children Board (SSCB)

Children can only be kept safe properly if the key agencies in Sandwell work together.

Sandwell Safeguarding Children Board (SSCB) help make sure that this happens.

Local Safeguarding Children Boards (LSCBs) were established by the [Children Act 2004](#) which gives a statutory responsibility to each locality to have this mechanism in place. LSCBs are now the key system in every locality of the country for organisations to come together to agree on how they will cooperate with one another to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. The purpose of this partnership working is to hold each other to account and to

ensure safeguarding children remains high on the agenda across their region

In May 2011, the [final report from the Munro Review of Child Protection, A child-centered system](#), was published. Within this report, Professor Munro set out the important role that LSCBs have in monitoring the effectiveness of partner agencies and recognised that they are key to improving multi-agency working, to support and enable partner organisations to adapt their practice and become more effective in safeguarding children.

Munro states that Local Safeguarding Children Boards are:

‘...well placed to identify emerging problems through learning from practice and to oversee efforts to improve services in response.’

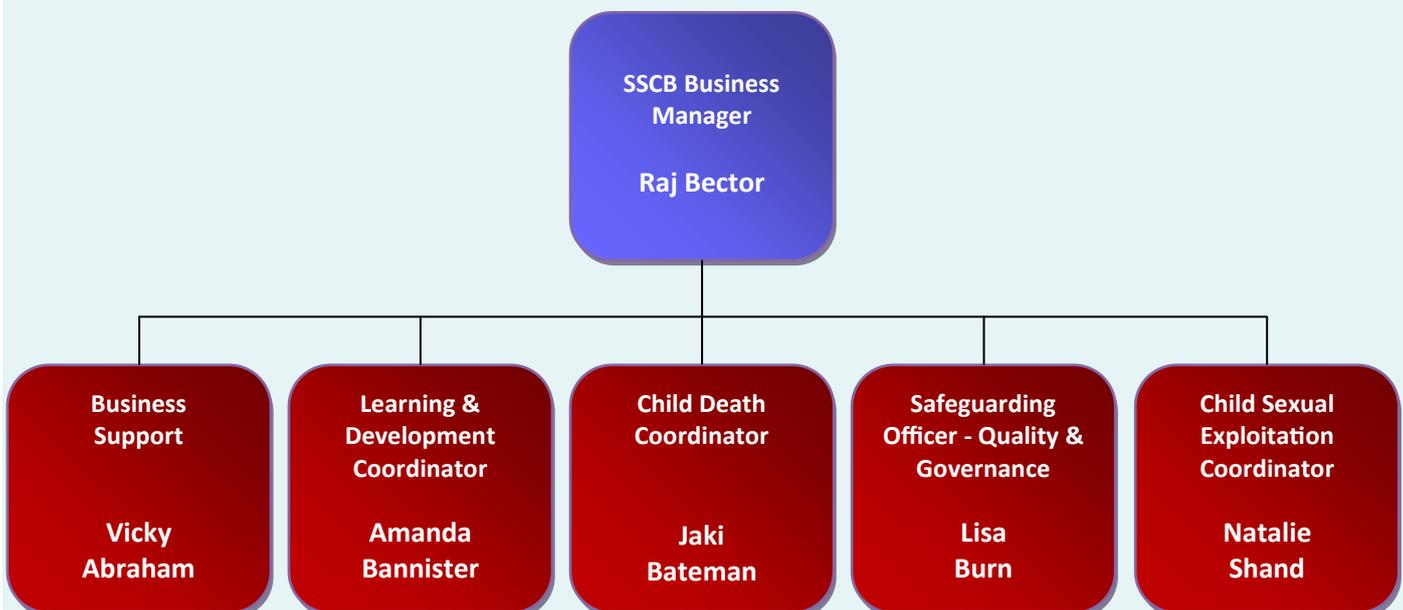
The subsequent publication of Working Together to Safeguard Children 2013 (updated in March 2015) emphasised that Board’s should maintain a local learning and improvement framework which is shared across local organisations who work with children and families. SSCBs framework, which has recently been updated, should enable organisations to be clear about their responsibilities, to learn from experience and improve services as a result.

“The government must...strengthen the role and responsibilities of LSCBs to ensure effective and robust oversight and action at a local level”

Ofsted social care annual report 2013/14 (March 2015)

SSCB Business Unit Structure

The SSCB Business Unit is the central support team for the overarching work of the Safeguarding Board. Capacity and workforce pressures affected the Business Unit during 2014-2015 but as we enter 2015-2016 the unit has a full complement of staff to help support Sandwell’s safeguarding agenda.



SSCB Wider Structure

Much of the work of the Board is conducted through its 7 formal subgroups, and by its central support team (the Business Unit).

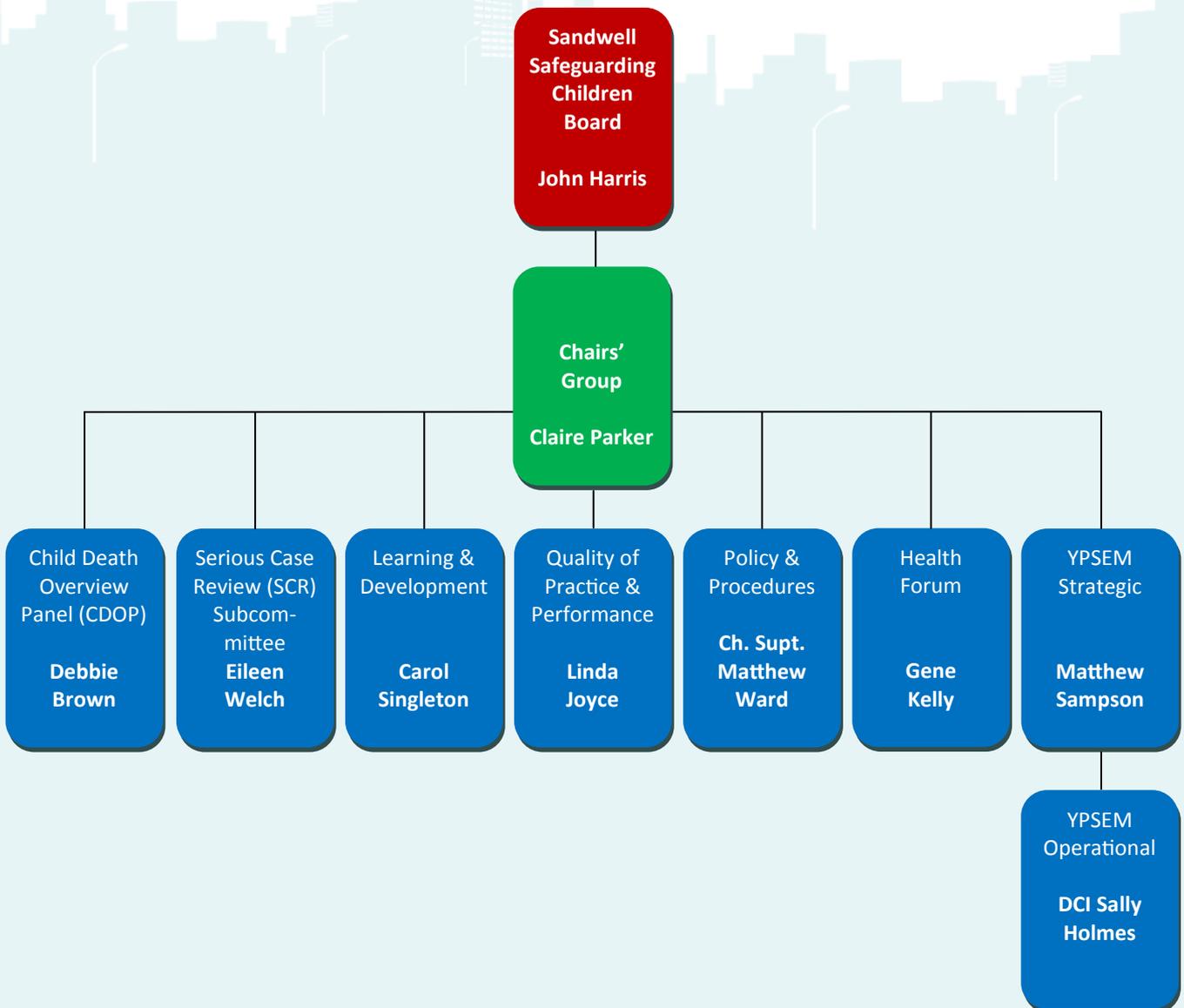
The subgroups are chaired by Board members drawn from Sandwell and West Birmingham CCG, Children’s Social

Care and West Midlands Police.

The Executive Group, or Chairs’ Group, as it is known has the responsibility of monitoring and coordinating the work of the LSCB, agreeing and overseeing the strategic plan, and driving forward im-

provements in multi-agency safeguarding practice.

Task and finish groups are convened as required in order to undertake specific pieces of work. These groups are well supported by LSCB members



Quality of Practice & Performance

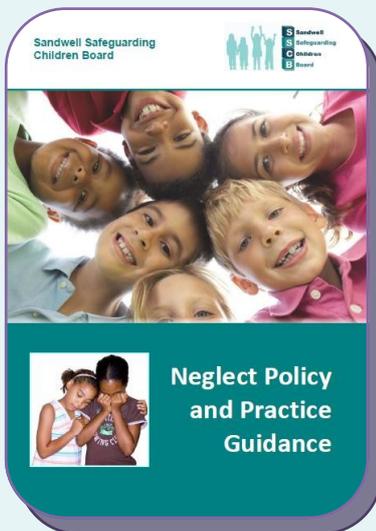
Multiagency Auditing

As part of the 2014-2015 SSCB multi-agency audit schedule, an audit to assess the effectiveness of Sandwell's Multi Agency Response to Neglect was undertaken on 25 February 2015

Key recommendations included:

- Ensuring all partner agencies are working to, and have a good understanding of, the SSCB Neglect Policy
- All agencies to be reminded of their duty to identify and refer children missing education (not on a school roll)

In order to address the above recommendations, the Learning & Development Subgroup have commissioned 7 days of Neglect Training (to be delivered by Child & Family Training during June & July 2015).



Further details of the training will be made available in due course (although the dates are detailed on

page 7). Additionally, an email reminding agencies of their duty to identify and refer children missing education was widely circulated across Children's Social Care on 17th March and to Board members on 18th March.

Forthcoming multiagency audits will be focusing on Domestic Abuse, Child Sexual Exploitation and compliance with regional cross boarder protocols. The Safeguarding Board is also presently giving consideration to commissioning an independent audit to assure itself that thresholds are being correctly applied and that children are receiving services that address risk and needs.

S11 Auditing

Section 11 of the Children's Act 2004 places a duty on key persons and bodies to make arrangements to ensure that in discharging their function, they have regard to the need to Safeguard and promote the welfare of Children

The SSCB is in the final stages of developing its online S11 audit tool which will be rolled out across the partnership during May/ June 2015 so that the Board can assure itself that partners are fulfilling their statutory safeguarding duties. A series of 'assurance panels' will follow the submission of the audits in order for SSCB to further explore and challenge the submissions from partners.

S175 Auditing

Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 requires school governing bodies, local education authorities and further education institutions to make arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. Following the roll out of the SSCBs online s175 audit tool in September 2014, 93% of Sandwell schools have signed up to the tool (as at 31st March 2015) with 'assurance panels' having taken place providing greater challenge to schools. Key themes arising include:

- More support being provided to undertake the role of 'Lead Professional'
- The need for the Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) curriculum to be broadened to take into account Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and extremism

Feedback about the process has been very positive as it allows schools an opportunity to showcase their work, and reflect upon areas of development (which will be followed up by the Board)

Dataset and Quality Assurance Framework

SSCB is in the process of implementing its new multi-agency data set and quality assurance framework which will provide the Board with a clear understanding of the performance of agencies and the findings from audit. SSCB will scrutinise partners' use of audits in driving improvement.

Serious Case Reviews / Management Reviews

“The fundamental aims of a SCR should be to find out what went wrong in the care of a child, when and why it did so, and what can be done to minimise the chance of the same mistakes being repeated”

First annual report - National panel of independent experts on serious case reviews (July 2014)

It is important that learning from local serious case reviews (SCRs), learning reviews and key national serious case reviews is routinely disseminated across partner agencies, that it is used to inform the development of policies and procedures and that learning and recommendations from action plans have been implemented.

Local SCR and Management Reviews

SSCB recently completed a serious case review relating to the neglect of a 6 year old boy who had moved to Sandwell with his family from a neighbouring Local Authority. Whilst the report will not be published until after the period of purdah (subject to the status of any criminal investigation) lessons learnt include: ensuring compliance with the West Midlands Regional cross border protocol; the importance of recording prior interventions, accurate family histories and chronologies; ensuring training commissioned by schools is consistent with local practice models which have been approved by SSCB.

SSCB have also recently completed two Management Reviews. These are undertaken when it is felt that the threshold to undertake a SCR has not been met but there are nevertheless important lessons to be learnt. Lessons learnt include: the need for a clear policy and pathway for the handover from Health Visiting to School Nursing; developing a neglect training programme and raising the profile of the Board's Neglect Policy & Practice Guidance; SSCB

to assure itself that thresholds are being correctly applied and that children are receiving services that address risk and needs

National SCR

Walsall Safeguarding Children Board has published a serious case review into the death of a 17-year-old girl in a house fire at a children's home. Lessons learnt include: the need to take a holistic, proactive, co-ordinated multi-agency approach to meeting a young person's complex needs; more robust challenge and review of care plans; timely provision and funding of mental health services for children and young people. Further information is accessible at the following link: [W4](#)

Southampton Safeguarding Children Board has published a serious case review into the death of a seven-year-old boy as a result of a serious head injury. Key issues include: the physical, emotional and sexual abuse and neglect of the child; domestic violence; and the child's cheerful resilience masking the severity of his abuse. Lessons learnt include: being alert to the possibility that a parent who is a victim of domestic abuse can also be abusive toward their children; professionals remembering that if they feel intimidated themselves by a parent or carer it is very likely a child would feel similarly threatened. Further information is accessible at the following link: [Child K](#)

Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children Board has published a seri-

ous case review focusing on the experiences of six girls aged 12-16 who were the victims of offences between May 2004 and June 2012. Learning points identified include: lack of understanding of child sexual exploitation, insufficient use of child protection processes, lack of organisational overview, difficulty managing missing children, and a focus on young people's behaviour rather than their risk of being harmed. Recommendations include: all agencies should review escalation procedures, and all agencies should raise awareness of guidance around children's ability to consent to sexual activity. Further information is accessible at the following link: [Children A, B, C, D, E and F](#)

Thematic Briefing

The NSPCC has recently published a thematic briefing about learning from case reviews related to **hidden men**. Learning includes: professionals should make active inquiries about the men in the child's life, professionals should encourage the father's involvement in child care and the potential of estranged fathers to offer protective care should be explored. Further information is accessible at the following link: <http://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/child-protection-system/case-reviews/learning/hidden-men/>

Sandwell Safeguarding Children

Board (SSCB) Newsletter

www.sandwellscb.org.uk

Policy & Procedures

Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015 states that SSCB must develop policies and procedures for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in Sandwell.

The Policy & Procedures Subgroup is currently undertaking a comprehensive review of all of the Board's procedures to ensure that they are fit for purpose and reflective of current practice. It is envisaged that an initial update of the procedures - all of which are accessible at the following link: <http://>

sandwellscb.proceduresonline.com/index.html - will take place during August 2015.

In addition to the review of existing procedures, the subgroup will also coordinate the development of new policies and procedures. The first of these is a 'pre-birth protocol' which is currently in development.

On 26th March 2015, the Department for Education (DfE) published a set of new and revised safeguarding documents. This included revisions to

'*Working together to safeguard children*' and '*Keeping children safe in education*', as well as new publications: '*What to do if you're worried a child is being abused*' and '*Information Sharing*'. All are available on the DfE website and an online seminar to explain the changes (aimed primarily at the education sector) is available at <http://www.safeguardingschools.co.uk/seminar-statutory-safeguarding-guidance-march-2015/>

Child Death Overview Panel (CDOP)

CDOP is a statutory requirement of any LSCB. Established in 2008, the purpose of CDOP is to review the interventions leading up to and surrounding all child deaths, ensuring that any potential learning from those deaths is implemented effectively by partners.

The subgroup have developed a number of campaigns including safer

sleeping, shaken baby and awareness raising in respect of household poisons. Over the coming months CDOP will be launching its most recent campaign - *In There First (ITF)* - which aims to promote various safety messages e.g. dog safety; home safety; water safety.

In May 2015, CDOP will be submitting its annual return to the Department of Education detailing information about the

deaths reviewed by the subgroup during 2014-2015.

CDOP welcomes guest speakers and visitors to the panel (by prior arrangement with the Panel Chair) so please speak to your agency representative if you would like to apply to attend.

Health Forum

The Health Forum provides an opportunity for representatives from health organisations across Sandwell to work collaboratively to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people. Membership includes representatives from provider organisations, Sandwell & West Birmingham Clinical Commissioning Group and Public Health.

In recent months the Forum has:

- Developed and embedded a Safeguarding Node within electronic health records enabling professionals to document and share safeguarding information relating to families.
- Established a single point of contact to receive and distribute invitations to health professionals for ICPC's.
- Developed an action plan to address the Lead Professionals Role within health
- Established a task & finish group to create a 'health response' to the CSE strategy

Learning & Development

“There should be a culture of continuous learning and improvement across the organisations that work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, identifying opportunities to draw on what works and promote good practice”

Working Together to Safeguard Children (March 2015)

Thresholds

SSCB has continued to deliver multi-agency thresholds training to accompany the threshold document.

Attendees now receive a copy of the threshold document as well as an A5 key ring of the threshold matrix.

It is important that everyone in Sandwell who works with children who has not already attended a training session, does so in order to ensure that we are all working together effectively with children and families at the right time and in the right way

Neglect



In light of SSCBs recent Serious Case Review and Management Reviews, coupled with the fact that Neglect features as a Board priority, the Learning & Development Subgroup has commissioned neglect training from Child &

Family Training on the following dates:

Full Day Training (9.30 - 4.30)

- 29th May
- 22nd June
- 29th June
- 7th July

Half Day Training

- 8th June (9.30 - 12.30)
- 8th June (1.30 - 4.30)
- 25th June (9.30 - 12.30)
- 25th June (1.30 - 4.30)
- 30th June (9.30 - 12.30)
- 30th June (1.30 - 4.30)

Please visit our Learning Pool site for more details on these courses, and to book a place <http://sandwell.learningpool.com>

For more details on the application process visit <http://www.sandwellscb.org.uk/site/training.html>.

Domestic Abuse (DA) & Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) Launch Event

The joint SSCB/ Domestic Abuse Strategic Partnership (DASP) DA & CSE Launch Event took place on 5th March 2015. In excess of 200 front-line practitioners from across the partnership attended the

event to watch two theatre productions and learn about new resources (DA handbook/ additional training) being launched in respect of DA and CSE. Over 81% of delegates rated the event as excellent and the SSCB has subsequently received many requests to repeat the event in the future.



2015-2016 Training Catalogue

The 2015-2016 training catalogue is currently in development and will be made available on the Board's web site over the coming months.

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

CSE as part of the Strategic Review

A review of the Board’s CSE Strategy was a key part of the Strategic Review of the Board.

An assurance report on CSE was commissioned by the Independent Chair at his first meeting with the Board on 28th August 2014. The assurance report scrutinised information from partner agencies about their capacity to respond to CSE; challenged schools about PSHE provision; challenged West Midlands Police about its track record in disrupting and prosecuting perpetrators; and highlighted important issues about the help and protection for children and young people who had been sexually exploited or were at risk. The report led to changes in the leadership of the YPSEM subgroup, a re-focusing of its work, and a recognition of the need to revise and update the Board’s CSE strategy.

CSE Audit

OFSTED’s thematic inspection report on CSE (November 2014) highlighted that many local authority areas had failed to audit the effectiveness of CSE casework. SSCB however had initiated an audit of CSE cases as part of the assurance report commissioned in August 2014.



Assurance about findings from the Audit

The findings from the audit were fully considered by the Board at

subsequent meetings. One consequence of the case audit was that the local authority initiated a CSE screening review of all children over 10 in all parts of the service. This approach, which provided more information about incidence of CSE and those at risk, has been identified nationally as an effective way to gauge the level of CSE in the area. The learning from the screening informed the operational arrangements for the multi-agency CSE team that came into being in January 2015

National Evaluation Project

Sandwell (along with Brighton and Hove, and Oxfordshire) is taking part in a national evaluation project with the Office of the Children’s Commissioner to implement the ‘See Me, Hear Me’ framework and evaluate its impact. This further highlights the commitment and ambition of the SSCB and partner agencies to tackle CSE.

“Joined-up working and information sharing are vital for protecting children from sexual exploitation. No single agency possesses a complete picture of the intelligence regarding a particular child or young person”

*“If it’s not better, it’s not the end” – Inquiry into Child Sexual Exploitation in Gangs and Groups: One year on
 Office of the Children’s Commissioner (February 2015)*