

WANDSWORTH BOROUGH COUNCIL

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SERVICES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY  
COMMITTEE – 11TH SEPTEMBER 2007

EXECUTIVE – 17TH SEPTEMBER 2007

Report by the Chief Executive and Director of Administration (also Chairman of the Wandsworth Safeguarding Children Board (WSCB)) on progress on Safeguarding Children and Young People in Wandsworth, the work of the Wandsworth SCB, and recent Government publications and consultation on Safeguarding.

Summary

Under the Children Act 2004, Local Safeguarding Children Boards (LSCBs) were created with new duties placed on councils, the Police and other agencies to develop a broader approach to safeguarding children than previously existed under Area Child Protection Committees (ACPCs). Authorities were required to establish independent LSCBs by 1st April 2006 with duties to oversee local policies, practice and standards on safeguarding, to monitor compliance with the Act, and to promote safeguarding in a proactive manner. The Wandsworth Safeguarding Children Board (WSCB) was established following extensive local consultation, and has had a successful first year of operation, building on the high standards and commitment of agencies that already existed in the Borough. Membership of the WSCB is broad and at a senior level, and includes the voluntary and community sector.

This annual report of the first year of operation summarises the work of the WSCB and the various multi-agency sub groups it has established by the WSCB, lists the main achievements to date in settling local policies, standards and procedures on safeguarding, and provides some background information on the serious case reviews that the WSCB has also had conducted. Generally the WSCB has achieved a high standard of compliance with Children Act safeguarding duties locally, as demonstrated by a first audit of partner agencies. A work programme for 2007/08 has been agreed and is now being progressed.

The Government has recently conducted and published a Priority Review of LSCBs, and the main findings and concerns are summarised – none of the concerns were of significance for the WSCB.

The Government has also very recently launched a new wide consultation on safeguarding – 'Staying Safe'. It is proposed the WSCB compiles a response in consultation with local partner agencies: this can be reported to the next cycle of OSCs in November and, if necessary, any separate Council response (from the Director of Children's Services) also submitted for consideration.

<u>Glossary</u>	
LSCB	Local Safeguarding Children Board
ACPC	Area Child Protection Committee
CSCI	Commission for Social Care Inspection
DCS	Director of Children’s Services
DCSF	Department for Children, Schools and Families
DfES	Department for Education and Skills
DMS	Designated Member of Staff
DoH	Department of Health
GOL	Government Office for London
JAR	Joint Area Review
PCT	Primary Care Trust
SHA	Strategic Health Authority
VCS	Voluntary and Community Sector
WPPA	Wandsworth Primary Play Association
WSCB	Wandsworth Safeguarding Children Board

**Recommendations**

1. The Children and Young People’s Overview and Scrutiny Committee are recommended to support the recommendations in paragraph 3.
2. If the Overview and Scrutiny Committee approve any views, comments or recommendations on the report, these will be submitted to the Executive for their consideration.
3. The Executive are recommended:-
  - (a) to note the report on the successful first year of operation of the Wandsworth Safeguarding Children Board and the generally strong base position it started from in April 2006;
  - (b) to note that the Government have concluded a Priority Review of LSCBs but their main concerns (listed in Appendix 1) do not apply significantly in Wandsworth;
  - (c) to note the independent and regulatory status of the WSCB, but that the Government nevertheless hopes the Lead Member for Children and OSCs will become engaged with LSCBs because of the need to advance safeguarding through Children’s Trust arrangements;
  - (d) to note that the Government have very recently issued a consultation on safeguarding – “Staying Safe”, and that the WSCB will compile a response with local consultation; and
  - (e) to delegate to the Director of Children’s Services to prepare and submit any separate response from the Council to the same consultation (if needed) and to report to the next OSC cycle on any consultation

responses so that any Council response can if necessary be amended by the Executive.

### **Introduction**

4. The Government's White Paper 'Every Child Matters' published in 2003 contained proposals to strengthen the protection of children and young people by the establishment of a Local Safeguarding Children Board to replace the then current Area Child Protection Committees. It also proposed this move – in response to Lord Laming's report following the death of Victoria Climbié – would be accompanied by new and wider statutory duties to safeguard children and young people for both local authorities and their relevant partners, such as the police and health trusts. The Children Act 2004 subsequently established Local Safeguarding Children Boards (LSCBs) and placed a duty on each children's services authority to establish such a Board. These duties, contained in Section 11 of the Act, came into effect on 1.10.2005. Guidance on safeguarding was extensively revised along the broader lines envisaged in Every Child Matters and was subsequently published on-line as "Working Together to Safeguard Children" in April 2006. This effectively incorporated the earlier guidance based on the Laming Report and the findings of a subsequent Joint CSCI/DOH Inspectors' Report in 2005.
5. The Council has been kept fully informed about plans and progress on the developing Safeguarding agenda, and the 2006-08 Children and Young People's Plan (Paper Nos. 06-362 to the Corporate Resources OSC, and a revised version, Paper No. 07-450, to the Children and Young People's Services OSC) set out a number of objectives for both safeguarding in particular, and the broader Government objective for children of 'Staying Safe'. A specific report on the progress in establishing the Local Safeguarding Children Board (Paper No. 06-539) was presented to the Children and Young People's Services OSC on 20th June 2006. This report presents an overview of the role and first year of operation of the Wandsworth Safeguarding Children Board (WSCB).

### **Government Priority Review of early LSCB operations**

6. The DfES published this summer a priority review of LSCBs' early progress within their first year of operation, to find out how LSCBs were meeting their objectives and how LSCB partners were working together effectively to safeguard children. The report can be accessed on [www.everychildmatters.gov.uk](http://www.everychildmatters.gov.uk) and a copy has been placed in the Member's Room. Although limited in scope it provides a checklist of concerns in relation to some LSCBs and some detailed recommendations for improvement. Some summarised details of the twelve main findings are included in Appendix 1, together with comments on the Wandsworth position relative to the concerns listed. None of the twelve concerns applied to any significant extent in Wandsworth. It was however recommended each LSCB aims to ensure a good level of senior attendance from partners and set attendance targets.

**Membership of the LSCB and its Sub-Groups**

7. The WSCB membership is shown in Appendix 3 and represents both a wide extent of local agencies covered and a high level of seniority among all agencies. A 100% attendance target has been now set. Attendance of key agencies in 2006/07 has been excellent. It has been seen as highly important to secure the involvement with the safeguarding agenda in Wandsworth of the voluntary and community sector. Faith communities also need to be positively engaged and this is an area for development in 2007/08.

It will be noted that there are two voluntary/community sector (VCS) representatives on the full Safeguarding Children Board, from Welcare and WPPA. There are also VCS representatives on the Training, Personnel Issues and Anti-Bullying Sub-Groups, and on the Domestic Violence Forum, which reports via its Children's Sub-Group to the WSCB. The Development Manager is in discussion with the VCS about further representation on Sub-Groups. The Development Manager has assisted a number of VCS organisations with reviewing their Safeguarding and Child Protection Policies and ensuring they are compliant with all safeguarding requirements. There is also a Member on the Education and Standards Sub Group from the non-maintained and private schools sector.

8. A number of individual congregations from different faith groups have also responded to the WSCB's request to meet with them and discuss the safeguarding agenda, and their role and responsibilities in this area, and the Development Manager has attended the Inter-Faith Forum. It is recognised that the WSCB is at a relatively early stage of a dialogue with the Inter-Faith Forum to explore the most effective and appropriate ways of engaging with the different faith groups within the Borough.

**Relationships between the Government's 'Staying Safe' objective, general safeguarding work and the LSCB**

9. It is important to understand the role of the LSCB, and its relationship with wider programmes of safeguarding work for children and young people maintained by local agencies themselves. The wider objectives for safeguarding children were set out not only in the 'Staying Safe' objective in its 'Every Child Matters' guidance but also under other objectives as well.
10. Prior to the advent of this broader safeguarding role, the predecessor ACPCs had a fairly specific and narrow role in relation to child protection issues. Importantly, however, they had a duty to engage with all the agencies involved at a local level and deal with proactive and preventative work as well as more routine aspects such as providing advice on cases and allegations, co-ordinating investigations, training staff, settling agreements on protocols, procedures and information sharing between agencies, and conducting serious case reviews. The Wandsworth ACPC was successful in achieving excellent commitment from all partners, carrying out extensive training and publicity, and mounting specific proactive campaigns (e.g. the publication of the highly

acclaimed ‘Safe Parenting’ Handbook, the “Don’t Shake the Baby” campaign directed at all new parents, and the “Pyramid Project” working with vulnerable children within targeted schools). The Wandsworth ACPC achieved recognition for its standards, including a high rating by CSCI. These activities already went beyond the strict definition of Child Protection as undertaking work to protect specific children who were suffering, or were at risk of suffering harm.

11. The new Safeguarding Children Boards have been established on a statutory footing. The WSCB is the key statutory mechanism for agreeing how the relevant organisations within Wandsworth co-ordinate services and co-operate to safeguard children and promote their welfare, and for ensuring the effectiveness of what they do. LSCBs have a wider membership and a broader and more proactive role in promoting children’s welfare in three broad areas:
  - (a) responsive work to protect specific children who are suffering, or at risk of suffering harm or maltreatment;
  - (b) proactive work aimed to target particular groups or issues i.e. children “in need” under the Children Act 1989, children with disabilities, or groups of children that are potentially more vulnerable; and
  - (c) activity aimed at identifying and preventing maltreatment or impairment of health and development of children, and ensuring children are growing up with safe and effective care.
  
12. The specific functions of the LSCB are set out in the regulations and were reported in June 2006 in Paper No. 06-539. The main functions concerned were the following six themes.
  - (a) Developing policies and procedures for:
    - training of persons working with children;
    - recruitment and supervision of persons working with children;
    - safety and welfare of privately fostered children;
    - investigations of allegations against those working with children; and
    - action to be taken when there are concerns about a child’s safety or welfare, including the thresholds of intervention.
  - (b) Communicating and raising awareness within the wider community, including faith and minority communities, about how everybody can contribute to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.
  - (c) Monitoring the effectiveness of the local authority and partner agencies, and ensuring they are fulfilling their statutory duties under the safeguarding requirements (Section 11) of the Children Act.

- (d) Participating in the local planning and commissioning of children’s services, ensuring that safeguarding and promoting welfare are fully taken into account.
- (e) Conducting ‘serious case reviews’ where a child has died or suffered serious harm, neglect or abuse.
- (f) To collect and analyse information about the deaths of all children in the local area; and to develop procedures for ensuring there is a co-ordinated response to the unexpected death of a child (both from April 2008).

**Independent regulatory and monitoring role of LSCBs**

- 13. The LSCB thus has a role in setting safeguarding policies, standards and procedures locally, in monitoring compliance with these by all local agencies, for proactive publicity, and on detailed reviews. It has therefore an independent and regulatory status under the Children Act, outside of the agencies themselves that provide services to children locally under the broad ambit of the local Children’s Trust arrangements.

**Relationship between the LSCB and the Children’s Trust and the Children and Young People’s Strategic Partnership**

- 14. With the significant regulatory and monitoring role and independent accountability of LSCBs, it is important to understand their formal relationship to the Children’s Trust. The Government, under the Children Act 2004 and the Every Child Matters agenda requires each Children’s Service Authority to set up formal Children’s Trust arrangements by 2008, bringing together all local agencies working with children under a single strategy and local Children and Young People’s Plan (CYPP). To facilitate this a Children and Young People’s Strategic Partnership (CYPSP) was initially required in each area to enable the local agencies to work together in an integrated way, to deliver the CYPP. In Wandsworth, the Children’s Trust arrangements (currently undergoing consultation) plan to rely on a new Children and Young People’s Strategic Board which replaces the CYPSP and acts as the main regular co-ordinating body for the Trust, with a high level Children’s Trust Strategy Board (a sub group of the Local Strategic Partnership) meeting as necessary to provide strategic direction.
- 15. Although therefore the Council is required to provide support for both the Children’s Trust and the LSCB and there is a degree of overlap with the same agencies being involved in each, the LSCB has a distinct and independent role in relation to safeguarding, which it must apply in monitoring, regulating and agreeing safeguarding policies for all the Trust’s partner agencies to follow. The Children’s Trust however has a strategic, planning and delivery function for all services for Children and Young People in the area (not just those relating to safeguarding). The independent role of the LSCB is stressed in the Government’s recent review of the first year of Safeguarding Children Boards (see paragraph 6), as will be seen from some of their findings in Appendix 1.

The review raised a concern that some LSCBs had insufficient seniority of membership and status to carry out their regulatory function adequately. This is not the case in Wandsworth, as will be seen from the broad extent and high seniority of WSCB membership (see Appendix 3).

#### **Progress to date in Wandsworth**

16. Paper No. 06-539 in June 2006 reported that a team to conduct the core business of the WSCB had been approved and a pooled budget of £165,170 set up for 2006/07. An inaugural meeting of the WSCB was held on 11th May 2006, and agreed an initial set of Terms of Reference and policy statement. A structure, consisting of the main Safeguarding Children Board, a small Executive Board, and six multi-agency sub-groups, all chaired by different members of the main WSCB and with their own Terms of Reference had already been approved following extensive local consultation, and the establishment of the Executive Board in April. A work programme for 2006/07 was also agreed.

#### **Recruitment of staff for core team**

17. It proved difficult to recruit to the key post of Practice Development Manager, who reports to the Manager of the Independent Practice Standards Unit. However the post was filled by early 2007 with a staff member of the requisite experience and knowledge. The 2.5 staff reporting to the Unit Manager are now therefore all in post.

#### **Progress on the 2006/07 Action Plan and Work Programme**

18. The Action Plan adopted by the WSCB contained 31 main actions set out in 4 strands – Governance, Core Functions, Strategy and Joint Planning. By their very nature, those in the Core Functions strand are on-going, with the Action Plan covering achievement of particular milestones and setting of new tasks. Generally the achievements of the first year of activity have been excellent across all 4 strands with the establishment of the sub-groups and significant contributions from them with the exception of the Prevention Sub-Group. The creation of this has currently been deferred and its functions subsumed by the WSCB and its Executive Board (see para 38 below). Two additional multi-agency sub-groups (for Private Fostering and for Anti-Bullying) have also been established during the year and are making progress. Because the recruitment of the Practice Development Manager took place later than anticipated, progress in some areas was less than had been planned originally in May 2006. Nevertheless contributions from many partner agencies and the Sub Groups have exceeded expectations, and therefore overall progress has been well up to the required level, bearing in mind the high standards set, with all key tasks being addressed. A summary of some of the key features of the 2006/07 work is given in Appendix 1.

19. **Work of the Sub-Groups**

**Training Sub Group**

The training Sub-Group took over from the similar group previously reporting to the ACPC. It fulfilled its 2006/07 training programme, providing training for the various partner agencies via 33 courses with 538 attendees. The Training Sub-Group evaluated the 2006/07 training programme before commissioning the 2007/08 programme. The priorities within the 2007/08 action plan include:

- (a) delivering the 2007/08 training programme, having published the WSCB Training Booklet advertising the multi-agency courses for the next 12 months.
- (b) developing and implementing specific training for multi-agency teams, in relation to the Common Assessment Framework, and Lead Professional Training;
- (c) developing safer recruitment training;
- (d) developing guidance on training for voluntary/community organisations and faith groups;
- (e) finalising the WSCB training policy (an outline draft was approved at the May 2007 WSCB).

Specific consideration has also been given to the training needs of GPs.

20. Following a high level seminar for seminar managers on safeguarding, Wandsworth Council has been delivering training on Section 11 responsibilities and duties for all front line staff that may come into occasional contact with children or families. The Housing Department have piloted this with a fully comprehensive approach, and training is now being rolled out across all Departments. Other agencies have been invited to use this as a template and will have access to the same training programmes.

Safeguarding training is provided at a range of levels to meet the needs of different professionals and different agencies.

**Personnel Issues Sub Group**

21. A major piece of work for the Sub Group was the preparation of revised procedures in relation to safe recruitment practice for Wandsworth Council and schools, based on DfES safe recruitment standards and those of the National Network of Allegations Management Advisors. This was also designed to be a useful template for all local agencies to use and was approved by the WSCB for this purpose. The Group as part of this process has focused on the key component issues of the recruitment process such as applicants'

work histories, gaps in employment, references, any previous allegations, CRB checks, induction on safeguarding for new staff, and publicity in advertising.

22. A second major piece of work has been the issue of procedures to the WSCB for managing allegations against staff or volunteers working with children. These are a local customised version based on national and pan-London guidance. The WSCB has approved these procedures.

The allegations management and recruitment procedures have been independently assessed by the specialist Allegations Management Advisor to GOL (Mr. Keith Driver) who visited Wandsworth in July 2007. He accorded the WSCB 'Green' status and commented: "Wandsworth Local Authority and WSCB have been proactive in their approach to the requirements regarding the management of allegations and safer recruitment. Areas for development were identified at an early stage following the publication of Working Together and related guidance, many of which have been completed. Other areas are the subject of work in progress."

### **Publicity and Communications Sub Group**

23. The Sub Group has primarily focused on developing a communications strategy and is directing its activities towards developing an independent web-site for the WSCB, which is hosted by Wandsworth Council's web site, but has a separate brand and logo (in the same manner as the web sites of the Local Strategic Partnership and the Drug Action Team). The site is developing three main classes of information:

- general advice and information about safeguarding for the public and parents etc;
- more detailed information, including protocols and procedures for those professionals working with children and families; and
- detailed reports and guidance and notes of confidential meetings for use by professional staff.

The web-site has been designed and was formally launched on 4th July 2007, and the content is being further developed.

24. The Sub Group has also considered general publicity reflecting the WSCB's proactive role. It has been decided that rather than develop a separate newsletter, it will be more effective if news, articles and features are placed in other existing publications such as the Council's 'Brightside' and School Brightside and the Health Trusts' own newsletters. There will also be some independent publications planned. An early initiative has been to update and reissue of the Safer Parenting Handbook, originally issued in 2003. Following extensive consultation on additional topics to be covered, with staff and 300 parent governors, 28,000 hard copies of a new version have been produced for circulation, plus an electronic PDF version for the new website. The 'Change for Children' newsletter is regularly circulated (produced by the Children's

Trust Development Officer) and a special edition with a focus on ‘Safeguarding’ has been produced, which contained a general explanation of the work of the WSCB, with 4,500 copies circulated to staff in all agencies and the independent and voluntary sector.

**Private Fostering Sub Group**

25. A main aim of this sub group currently is to promote the identification and referral of children thought to be privately fostered and generally publicise the requirement for all such placements to be statutorily assessed and vetted by the Children’s Services Authority. In relation to the WSCB, this sub-group fulfils a valuable monitoring role in reporting regularly on how local agencies are meeting their responsibilities under the National Standards on Private Fostering. Beyond this, work extends to ensuring high standards of assessment and audits, and that ongoing support is available, together with the monitoring of the health and educational attainment of privately fostered children.
26. It is known that there is a high degree of un-notified and unidentified private fostering (i.e. not formally notified to any authority), especially in inner London, and difficulties of identifying such children are exacerbated by the high mobility of many of the children concerned. While the Council has a duty to assess all notified cases, the Sub Group gives valuable access to front line services in all local agencies which can assist information gathering on potential cases for assessment.
27. As part of the Council’s training of its front line staff in their Section 11 Safeguarding duties (see paragraph 20), the opportunity has been taken to also explain to them the need for vigilance to identify further unregistered cases of private fostering. It is hoped that this can not only significantly increase the notification level, but also similarly provide a model for the front line staff of other agencies to assist in this process.

**Anti-Bullying Sub Group**

28. As mentioned it was decided early on to dedicate extra effort to anti-bullying work and create a Sub Group for this purpose. The focus has been on working with schools to promote anti-bullying initiatives and procedures, and a draft anti-bullying strategy has been produced which is being piloted in approximately one third of schools.
29. The strategy has been out to consultation over the summer term with schools and young people: WSCB agencies have also been consulted (this element closed in August). The strategy is not only for application in schools but for young people themselves and in relation to other settings that young people use. One option under consideration is to produce a separate version of the strategy for use by young people themselves. Comments from the various consultation strands are now being reviewed and an action plan for the Sub Group is being produced in the Autumn Term.

**Monitoring Sub Group**

30. This is a key Sub Group which meets frequently (approximately 4-weekly) and exercises on an executive level the LSCB's highly important monitoring function on the standards and procedures being achieved locally on safeguarding. It also oversees the issue of guidance on practice relating to safeguarding at a local level. Its Terms of Reference reflect its remit to develop policy, procedures and practice guidance and monitor the effectiveness with which agencies are adopting them in practice.
31. During 2007 a main task for the Sub Group has been overseeing an audit of the arrangements in place in each local statutory agency, for discharging their Section 11 safeguarding duties and meeting the "Working Together" guidance. The review has been conducted by the completion of self-audits supplemented where necessary by additional investigation of progress and practice in specific areas. The audit was completed by the end of July 2007 and a report made to the September LSCB. Generally progress is considered to have been good and work to address specific shortcomings and gaps will feature in the 2007/08 work programme
32. An important function of the Monitoring Sub Group is to consider individual management reviews in circumstances where a serious case review may not be necessary. The group also monitors individual cases and makes practice recommendations as appropriate.
33. One particular individual case review of a serious incident was conducted by the Monitoring Sub Group, which raised a number of learning points which were followed up by the Mental Health Trust and Children's Services staff.

**Serious Case Review Panel**

34. This Panel is chaired by the Assistant Director (Children's Specialist Services), and considers the review of Serious Case in accordance with guidance published in Working Together. The Panel makes recommendations to the Chair of the Safeguarding Board as to whether the criteria for holding a Serious Cases Review have been met. The Panel will make reports and propose serious case action programmes to the LSCB. It liaises with local agencies and the appropriate sectors of the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) and the Government Office for London (GOL).
35. The Serious Case Review Panel has considered four cases over the past year. In one case a formal Serious Case Review has been completed; in another a Serious Case Review is likely but confirmation awaits further police investigations. Two cases considered by the panel have resulted in Internal Management Reviews being completed on behalf of the WSCB.

The cases which warranted a formal Serious Case Review have been

- (a) The murder of a 10 week old boy by his father

- (b) The death of a newly born baby found apparently abandoned on a roof in Wandsworth.

Whether the cases have been dealt with by Serious Case Review or Internal Management Review, action plans have been drawn up to ensure that the recommendations from the reviews are implemented and the lessons learnt by relevant agencies.

All these cases are reported to and considered by the full WSCB. There has been regular liaison with the appropriate sectors of the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) and the Government Office for London (GOL)

### **Pan-London Serious Case Reviews**

36. The Pan-London Safeguarding Children Board undertook an ‘Action Research’ Review of London Serious Case Reviews over a two year period from 2004 to May 2006 and has recently published its report. A draft of this ‘Review of Reviews’ report was considered by the WSCB and noted as a useful source of information, both on the processes of the case reviews themselves, and for the learning points on practice it furnished.
37. For most of 2006/07 CSCI continued its previous role of being the notifiable body for all serious case incidents, and monitoring reviews and consequential actions. This role has now been formally adopted by the new DCSF, with the monitoring and scrutiny roles delegated to teams in Regional Government Offices – the Government Office for London in Wandsworth’s case.

### **Prevention Sub Group**

38. It was intended when establishing the WSCB to convene a Prevention Sub Group when practicable. The aim will be to focus specifically on activities which affect all children and aims to identify and prevent maltreatment or impairment of health and development.

This will include:

- ensuring improved outcomes for all children, especially “staying safe”;
- increasing the understanding of safeguarding issues in the professional and wider community;
- ensuring the ongoing effectiveness of an organisation’s implementation of Section 11 duties;
- having the mechanisms to identify children as being in need; and
- appropriate links to “preventative” organisations.

39. The WSCB considered generally resources did not permit this sub-group to commence until other start up work was well underway, and main themes could be covered during 2006/07 by the WSCB itself and its Executive Board. The situation has now been reviewed for 2007/08, and it is intended to commence a Prevention Sub Group in early-mid autumn. Specific issues for this Sub Group to consider in relation to prevention include:
- (a) Internet Safety
  - (b) Child Trafficking
  - (c) Female Genital Mutilation
  - (d) Domestic Violence (in liaison with the existing Domestic Violence Forum and its Children’s Sub Group)
  - (e) Private Fostering (liaison with existing Sub Group needed).
  - (f) Safeguarding Sexually Active Children.

40. **Individual Agency Sub Groups**

In addition to the multi-agency functional sub groups, the WSCB included individual agency/divisional sub groups within its structure. These sub groups have the primary responsibility for driving forward the safeguarding agenda, in particular the Section 11 safeguarding responsibilities, within an individual agency or division, monitoring how effectively this is being done and reporting back to the full Safeguarding Children Board.

These sub groups were introduced to address a previously identified shortcoming of the Area Child Protection Committee (ACPC) that the activities of the ACPC and the practice lessons to be learned were not being disseminated to first-line managers and front-line practitioners as effectively as they might have been. The individual sub groups are designed to ensure that such information is effectively disseminated. The following agencies/divisions have individual agency sub groups

Children’s Services – Children’s Specialist Services  
Schools  
PCT  
Acute Health Care Trust  
Mental Health Trust  
Adult Social Services  
Housing Department

An example of an Individual Agency /Divisional Sub Group is the Education and Schools Sub Group.

**Education and Schools Sub Group**

41. The Education and Schools sub group meets on a termly basis and covers the important area of promoting and monitoring safeguarding in schools. Terms of reference have been agreed by the group and approved by the WSCB. The group has been monitoring safeguarding and child protection training held for Designated Members of Staff (DMS) and whole school staff groups within

schools. All services within the division have completed a safeguarding audit proforma. Each service has also been asked to identify key issues, which will be incorporated into an action plan for the sub group. There is a member of the sub group from the non-maintained and private sector, as it is important to engage all these schools in the safeguarding agenda and ensure also any special issues facing them are understood for publicity and training purposes.

42. The sub group is overseeing a safeguarding audit for schools and it circulated an audit proforma to all schools for completion over the summer term 2007. The sub group have also arranged collection of data from schools in respect of safer recruitment issues. An inter-agency protocol in relation to Procedures for Children Missing Education has been drafted and has been widely circulated for comment. A final version will be agreed by the WSCB. The group is also looking at establishing improved support systems for staff in schools (a key issue identified by staff during training).
43. The sub group has agreed ways of establishing systems to ensure that safeguarding practice is effective across schools and supporting services as well as continuing with the established system for monitoring uptake and impact of training. Finally the group has examined the recommendations from a serious case review and internal management reviews and agreed ways to ensure these are widely disseminated throughout the Children and Young People's Department's services, including schools, and to ensure that key issues are included in all training sessions provided.

#### **Monitoring Broader Outcomes – Performance Framework**

44. At the outset the WSCB recognised the need to monitor long term progress on the wider aspects of safeguarding in addition to its focus on practice standards, serious cases and the annual audit of policies and procedures in local agencies. The WSCB therefore adopted a framework of performance indicators for regular monitoring. This comprises 67 indicators covering the 5 outcomes of the Every Child Matters guidance (e.g. Being Healthy, Staying Safe etc.) and these are reported regularly on a quarterly basis to the WSCB. The majority are selected indicators from the local Children and Young Person's Plan, and co-incide with national DCSF indications. Some are only available annually.

#### **WSCB Consultation Event – 4th July 2007**

45. The WSCB convened a consultation event and seminar, held on 4th July 2007. There was a good range of attendance from local agencies including many from the voluntary and community sector (which was a main aim). As well as a number of presentations, including one by young people from our Young Carers' Project, there were 8 specialist workshops on a variety of themes from anti-bullying initiatives to domestic violence.

The event had a range of functions including:

- publicising the work of the WSCB;

- consulting with individuals and agencies as to what safeguarding issues needed to be further prioritised and promoted;
- how communication and safeguarding could generally be improved; and
- what are individuals and agencies training requirements in relation to safeguarding.

The overall feedback and participation from agencies was very positive.

### **New Government Consultation on Safeguarding: “Staying Safe”**

46. The Government has also very recently, at the beginning of August, published a new consultation document: “Staying Safe”. The consultation is rather general in nature, and is intended for individuals, schools and all organisations working with children and young people, or with interests in them. A copy has been placed in the Member’s Room and is available from [www.dcsf.gov.uk](http://www.dcsf.gov.uk). As the consultation period runs until 31st October 2007, and it has not been possible to commence local consultation until the start of September, it is planned that the WSCB will compile a response (with consultation) on its own behalf and also publicise the consultation for individual responses locally. It is proposed that this is used as a basis for any response the Council may wish to make (if additional or separate from that of the WSCB). It is further proposed that authority be delegated to the Director of Children’s Services to compile any such separate Council response and submit it by 31st October under Standing Order 83 authority, with a summary of the consultation and the response being presented to the next meeting of this OSC on 13th November 2007 and the Executive on 26th November 2007 (it is standard practice that Government Departments will then accept any late amendments the OSC and Executive might wish to make).

### **WSCB Budget**

47. The budget for the WSCB is made up from contributions from the main member agencies: the Council, the Police, the Probation Service, the Primary Care Trust etc., with the Council being the main contributor (at around 55%) and the lead authority and hence the accountable body. As mentioned in Appendix 1, there have been no significant issues over the budget, which is above the upper quartile boundary (£141,317) of London SCB budgets at £165,170 for 2006/07. The budget covers staffing, training, publicity and other costs. Because of the delay in recruiting a suitable postholder to the Practice Development Manager post there was an underspend in 2006/07, which was carried forward to the WSCB’s 2007/08 budget. The accounts are processed and audited by Wandsworth Council on behalf of the WSCB using standard financial procedures.

### **Conclusion**

48. It will be seen that the Wandsworth LSCB is now fully established and has had a successful first year in terms of many important initial tasks that required completion. The WSCB’s recent audit of the progress made by local statutory agencies shows in general a high degree of compliance with WSCB

and Government policies and Section 11 safeguarding arrangements. A 2007/08 work programme has been agreed by the WSCB which will ensure development into more preventative and proactive working. Links have been maintained with pan-London safeguarding forums in that we have representatives on both the full London Safeguarding Children Board, and the London-wide Safeguarding Training Committee, and this ensures compatibility with London-wide Child Protection Procedures.

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G.K. JONES  
Chief Executive and  
Director of Administration  
and Chair of Wandsworth LSCB

3rd September 2007

**Background Papers**

No background papers were used in the production of this report.