

		AGENDA ITEM 4
		SSC/02/10
Committee:	Children and Young People Policy and Scrutiny Committee – Safeguarding Sub-Committee	
Date:	3 June 2010	
<u>Position on Safeguarding Recommendations</u>		
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### **Purpose of the Report:**

To set out the position to date on Safeguarding Recommendations

### **POSITION ON SAFEGUARDING RECOMMENDATIONS – 1 JUNE 2010**

<b>Recommendation</b>	<b>Position</b>
<p>(1) The CYP P&amp;SC should continue to fulfil its role of ‘critical friend’ by monitoring the implementation of the SCF business plan at three monthly intervals, focussing on specific issues identified in the Director’s report.</p> <p><b>Owner:</b> Chairman of CYP P&amp;SC</p>	<p>(1) The Committee had received regular updates from the lead officers of the Directorate, relating to the management and structure of the Service and to statistical data.</p>
<p>(2) The Chairman of the Essex Safeguarding Children Board (ESCB) would be asked to present an annual report on the Board’s activities and a copy of its business plan between February and May each year.</p> <p><b>Owner:</b> Chairman of the ESCB</p>	<p>(2) The Chairman gave an update at the May 2010 Committee meeting. The Annual Report and Business Plan would be produced by ESCB in September 2010.</p>

<p>(3) In order to provide continuity, the Cabinet Member may wish to consider appointing the Chairman of the ESCB on a three-year contract. <b>Owner:</b> Chairman of the ESCB</p>	<p>(3) Although contracts continued to be on an annual basis, the ECSB's Chairman's contract had been increased from 30 days per year to 45 days per year, to reflect the additional workload.</p>
<p>(4) It was recommended that the Chairman of the ESCB and the Cabinet Member for Children's Services review the induction process for new members who join the Board. <b>Owners:</b> Cabinet Member and Chairman of the ESCB</p>	<p>(4) Statutory training for members of Local Safeguarding Children's Board would be put in place from June 2010. This training would be available for all partners and would be ongoing, to take account of any new legislation. Induction training for any new members of this Board would also take place. Although there was only a small cost for the induction training there would be a significant cost for the training for all members of the Essex Board.</p> <p>All members of ESCB were now provided with job descriptions and briefing documents on how to disseminate information from the ESCB to 'their' organisation (see also comments on 5 below).</p>
<p>(5) The Chairman of the ESCB should consider how to encourage continuity of attendance and processes for reporting back to all organisations, particularly to district/borough councils and their elected members. <b>Owner: ESCB Chairman</b></p>	<p>(5) The Lead Member for Children's Services (currently Councillor Candy) would be entitled to attend ESCB meetings as a "participatory observer".</p> <p>Generally, attendance levels were high and consistent.</p> <p>The size of the County had bought challenges for the ESCB on how to disseminate information effectively. Originally Board Members would disseminate the information through their own structures. To improve on this system, the Chairman of the ESCB proposed to write to senior officers in all member agencies after each meeting, outlining the key decisions and action to be taken by</p>

	all agencies. The Policy and Scrutiny Committee would also receive a copy of this letter via the Committee Officer.
(6) The CYP P&SC Committee should commission a periodic sampling of how issues discussed at the ESCB were disseminated between and within partner organisations. <b>Owner:</b> Chairman CYP P&SC	(6) Issue for Safeguarding Sub-Committee to consider.
(7) The Committee would support an investigation by the Cabinet Member into the best ways of involving representatives of the voluntary sector within the ESCB's activities. <b>Owner:</b> Cabinet Member	<p>(7) The ESCB membership review would look at ways to both include voluntary sector representatives and improve communication with the voluntary sector.</p> <p>It had been confirmed that the voluntary sector was involved with a number of bodies relating to the safeguarding of children. Given the complexity of current arrangements, Committee members would be provided with of a "map" of the different Boards and how the work /information flowed between them.</p> <p>The Committee (or on its behalf the Safeguarding Sub-Committee) can scrutinise the work of the Children's Safeguarding Board and the Children's Trust Board should it wish.</p>
(8) The Executive Director of SCF may wish to promulgate the approach undertaken by the Salvation Army in providing training on child protection issues throughout the voluntary sector, and for this to be used as a benchmark. <b>Owner:</b> Executive Director of SCF	<p>(8) The position on this recommendation needs clarifying.</p> <p>The general ESCB training was available for designated persons in all organisations, with responsibility for training being transferred to the Children's Trust.</p> <p>The introduction of E-learning for safeguarding training was also being considered.</p>

<p>(9) The Committee would welcome consideration by the Cabinet Member of ways of sharing lessons with all organisations who deal with children and young people. <b>Owner:</b> Cabinet Member</p>	<p>(9) The Children's Trust Board was being used as the conduit to disseminate information.</p>
<p>(10) It was recommended that the ESCB Chairman initiates a review of the way in which lessons from Serious Case Reviews were embedded into and through partner organisations. <b>Owner:</b> ESCB Chairman</p>	<p>(10) Preparation of an Individual Management Review and an Action Plan took place after a child's death or an instance of serious abuse.</p> <p>The original Essex Improvement Notice had been critical of the management of the Serious Case Reviews. The ESCB Chairman took the decision on which cases could be reviewed under the Serious Case Review system. He had one month in which to make the decision.</p> <p>Each Serious Case Review resulted in the preparation of a confidential report, which every agency had contributed to in an open and frank way. This full report was not published. The Review enabled all agencies to learn from the death or serious abuse of a child. A (publicly available) Executive Summary was published on the ESCB website for each Review.</p> <p>Recent Serious Case Reviews had been prepared in a different style, to provide clarity by only highlighting the key recommendations in the report.</p> <p>On average Reviews cost approximately £57,000 to conduct. When the current Chairman was appointed, there were 13 outstanding Serious Case Reviews. There were currently two. Both these Reviews should be completed by September 2010. The ESCB was given six months to complete a Serious Case Review, but most cases were</p>

	<p>complex and therefore took longer. Any extension of this time had to be agreed by the Government. Each Serious Case Review was also scored by Ofsted.</p> <p>The Committee had already made it clear that it was concerned that members did not receive information regarding Serious Case Reviews. As a result, all Committee Members have recently been given details of a web link where Executive Summaries of reports may be reviewed and obtained.</p>
<p>(11) The Chairman of the ESCB may wish to review with the Head of Legal Services the resources required to provide more effective support for the ESCB, including any audit and post Laming requirements. <b>Owner:</b> Chairman of the ESCB</p>	<p>(11) Approval had been given to appoint extra support staff to the team.</p>
<p>(12) The CYP P&amp;SC should monitor vacancy levels within social workers posts and the success of recruitment &amp; retention initiatives on an ongoing basis <b>Owner:</b> Chairman CYP P&amp;SC</p>	<p>(12) in May 2010, the Committee was updated on the number of unallocated caseloads and general caseload levels. The Safeguarding Sub-Committee will clearly wish to receive regular updates to satisfy itself that progress over recent months is being maintained and that individual social worker caseloads remain manageable.</p> <p>The Cabinet Member has confirmed that the Interim Director reports to her on a weekly basis about the number of unallocated cases. An assurance has been given by the Interim Director that, where cases were unallocated, the children involved were in a managed situation and that senior staff know information about every child.</p>

<p>(13) The CYP P&amp;SC should review the success of the SCF Directorate's revised foster carers recruitment campaign in September 2010</p> <p><b>Owner:</b> Chairman CYP P&amp;SC</p>	<p>(13) To date, systems had been put in place to improve recruitment levels. A number of new foster care households had been approved recently.</p> <p>The Sub-Committee may wish to undertake this review initially and pass on its comments to the Committee.</p>