

SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN IN HEREFORDSHIRE

Report By: Director of Children's Services

Wards Affected

County-wide

Purpose

1. To update the Committee on "Staying Safe" improvements since the Joint Area Review and to advise on the criminal record policy and practice locally.
2. To provide an opportunity for checking on progress on the Joint Area Review (JAR) improvement plan and to confirm best practice on criminal record checks.

Financial Implications

3. The Directorate budget for 2006-07 has an allocation of £100 k. to contribute to improvement on safeguarding and funds have been secured to deliver further safeguarding checks.

JAR - Staying Safe

4. The attached JAR action plan was considered by Cabinet on 30th March.
5. It is currently being revised to ensure that it is more focussed for managers and staff locally and that the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) is content it is more robust.
6. An update on the DfES assessment of our improvement so far and our capacity to continue to improve will be given at the meeting.
7. The latest progress note is attached for information.
8. The code on the progress note means that green indicates completed, amber means in progress and on target but not fully completed.
9. The annual performance self-assessment for the Council's Children's Services will include an assessment of progress on safeguarding and capacity to improve. This will be sent to Ofsted and the Commission for Social Care Inspection on 31st May. Copies of the submission will be available at the meeting.

Safeguarding - Criminal Records Check

10. The Children and Young People's Directorate is compliant with the recently issued revised guidance from DfES. In addition, the policy has been extended to cover re-checking existing staff on a rolling programme. It is anticipated that this best practice locally will become a national requirement. This policy includes schools.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT Committee are asked to note the improvement following the Joint Area Review and the current safeguarding practice.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

None identified.