

# AGENDA

## Cabinet

Date: **Thursday 9 October 2014**

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Time: **2.00 pm**

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Place: **The Hall, Shire Hall, St Peters Square, Hereford, HR1 2HX**

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Notes: Please note the **time, date** and **venue** of the meeting.

For any further information please contact:

**Governance Services**

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# **Agenda for the Meeting of the Cabinet**

**Chairman**

**Councillor AW Johnson**

**Councillor H Bramer  
Councillor JW Millar  
Councillor PM Morgan  
Councillor GJ Powell  
Councillor PD Price  
Councillor P Rone**

**AGENDA****PUBLICINFORMATIONFIREINFO****1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

To receive any apologies for absence.

**2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

To receive any declarations of interest by Members in respect of items on the Agenda.

**3. MINUTES**

To approve and sign the minutes of the meeting held on 11 September 2014.

**4. BUDGET MONITORING REPORT - AUGUST 2014**

To provide Cabinet with an updated position on the projected outturn for 2014/15.

**5. HEREFORDSHIRE SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN BOARD ANNUAL REPORT AND BUSINESS PLAN**

To inform Cabinet of Herefordshire Safeguarding Children's Board (HSCB) assessment of safeguarding in Herefordshire and of its own effectiveness within the Annual Report 2013-2014 and present to them the finalised Business Plan 2014-2015.

**6. OUTCOME OF ADULT SOCIAL CARE PEER CHALLENGE AND ACTION PLAN**

To note the outcome of the Adult Social Care Peer Challenge undertaken in June 2014 and to consider the council's response to the areas for improvement identified.

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# HEREFORDSHIRE COUNCIL

The Shire Hall, St Peters Square, Hereford

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HEREFORDSHIRE COUNCIL

**MINUTES of the meeting of Cabinet held at Committee Room 1, The Shire Hall, St Peters Square, Hereford on Thursday 11 September 2014 at 2.00 pm**

**Present:** Councillor AW Johnson (Chairman)  
Councillor (Vice Chairman)

Councillors: H Bramer, JW Millar, PM Morgan, GJ Powell and PD Price

**In attendance:** Councillors CNH Attwood, J Bartlett, S Bowen, JA Hyde, TM James, RI Matthews, AJW Powers

**Officers:** Steve Burgess, Helen Coombes, Jo Davidson, Geoff Hughes, Alistair Neil, Bill Norman, Peter Robinson, John Roughton

**23. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Councillors: JG Jarvis, FM Norman, RJ Phillips, P Rone

**24. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

**25. MINUTES**

**RESOLVED:** That the Minutes of the meeting held on 31 July 2014 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

**26. LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN 4**

Cabinet received a report proposing the approach to developing Local Transport Plan 4 (LTP4) and also seeking to recommend to council that the Local Transport Plan 3 (LTP3) be extended until after the council's Core Strategy is adopted, or to 31 March 2016, whichever is the earlier.

The Head of Transport and Access Services confirmed that by extending the LTP3 the council meets its statutory requirements whilst avoiding the premature adoption of LTP4 ahead of adoption of the Core Strategy. The LTP4 will continue to be developed ready for adoption after the Core Strategy is adopted.

The Cabinet Member for Infrastructure confirmed the timetable for the new Core Strategy. This indicates it should be in place by late 2015 but this depends on the length of time taken by each stage of the adoption process.

In reply to councillors enquiries The Head of Transport and Access Services confirmed an annual progress report will continue to be made for LTP3 during the extension period.

**Resolved:**

**THAT:**

- (a) **It be recommended to Council that the current Local Transport Plan 3 (LTP3) (2013/14 – 2014/15) time period be extended until after the Core Strategy is adopted, or to 31 March 2016, whichever is the earlier, to enable Local Transport Plan 4 (LTP4) to reflect the adopted Core Strategy; and that**
- (b) **The process to enable adoption of the LTP4, including consultation, as set out in this report, is approved.**

## **27. OUTCOME OF CHILDREN'S SAFEGUARDING OFSTED INSPECTION AND ACTION PLAN**

The Head of Safeguarding and Review Children presented Cabinet with the outcome of the Ofsted Inspection of services for children in need of help and protection, children looked after and care leavers, which was conducted between 29 April 2014 and 21 May 2014. Cabinet were asked to note the outcome of the inspection and consider the council's response to the areas for improvement identified. The inspection judged the council's services to be 'Requires Improvement'.

In order to clarify the ongoing progress since the 30 June 2014 (the date of the report) it was confirmed that consultation had been undertaken to create an action plan for each of the 28 areas for improvement listed in the report. A number of the areas for improvement relate to strategic recommendations.

Each area of improvement has been allocated to a lead officer with a progress plan for monitoring and evaluation. It was confirmed that action has already been taken and the department had not been waiting for sign off before making progress.

The objective for the Council and its partners is that good safeguarding services will be being delivered by 2016/17.

The council currently remains in Government intervention. In December 2014 a Department of Education review will take place and will make recommendations to Ministers as to if this should remain the case based on the progress made at this time.

In reply to a members query concerning corporate parenting the Cabinet Member for Young People and Children's Wellbeing advised, in August 2014, he produced a paper for group leaders to assist them with more effective corporate parenting and safeguarding, a seminar on corporate parenting for all members is taking place next week. He confirmed that, following the elections in May 2015, all councillors will have to undertake compulsory training in corporate parenting and safeguarding within one month of the election. Refresher training will then take place every year.

The Cabinet Member for Young People and Children's Wellbeing also wished to bring to the attention of members the Children's Pledge which is going to be signed at Full Council on 26 September 2014.

Concern was raised by members about children who go missing and how agencies work together to deal with this issue.

The Head of Safeguarding and Review Children advised Police take the lead in this area however the strategic board, of which he is head, make sure all agencies respond. The council is also part of the West Mercia Strategic Alliance, as missing children is a problem that crosses county borders. It was confirmed work with partners is vital as there is a link between missing children and those at risk of sexual exploitation.



With regard to the inspections of partners, the Director for Children's Wellbeing confirmed they are not inspected at the same time as the council but are subject to their own inspections. Currently, in different parts of the country, a new programme of multi-agency inspections is being piloted.

The Director of Children's Wellbeing went on to advise members that the council has a statutory duty to ensure other agencies co-operate with raising issues surrounding missing children. This matter is not just about passing information between partners but ensuring everyone involved in governance, including police and councillors, are clear on strategic issues and procedures. All agencies have to have an awareness of what it is like to be a child in Herefordshire. Members need to question and scrutinise the service in the same way it would do other services.

The Chairman of the Health and Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee confirmed to the cabinet the Task and Finish Group concerning children's safeguarding was still ongoing. The group is continuing to look at issues surrounding children's safeguarding and will ensure further questions are raised as a result of this inspection.

In response to questions about the use of temporary staff within the department The Director of Children's Wellbeing confirmed that in the 15 months following the previous Ofsted report the percentage of interim staff in the department had risen from 4% to 50% for a variety of reasons. There has been since a reduction in staff turnover with a long term view in growing and developing the workforce and use of longer term agency staff. It was also confirmed that all staff are performance managed.

The Chief Executive went on to confirm that the use of intern staff is a national issue and it is important that the culture within the authority is that they are made to feel welcome and not to look upon the use of them as negative.

**Resolved:**

- THAT:**
- (a) note the outcome of the inspection attached at Appendix 1;**
  - (b) approve the action plan attached as Appendix 2 as the response to the areas for improvement identified;**
  - (c) make recommendations for any further actions to be added to the action plan;**
  - (d) authority be delegated to the Director of Children's Wellbeing to agree any final amendments to the action plan following consideration by other boards including the safeguarding and improvement boards.**

**28. UPDATE ON HEREFORDSHIRE UNITED FOOTBALL CLUB**

In reply to a question from members The Chairman advised a statement concerning Hereford United Football Club will be made in the near future.

The meeting ended at 3.04 pm

**CHAIRMAN**





<b>MEETING:</b>	<b>CABINET</b>
<b>MEETING DATE:</b>	<b>9 OCTOBER 2014</b>
<b>TITLE OF REPORT:</b>	<b>BUDGET MONITORING REPORT – AUGUST 2014</b>
<b>REPORT BY:</b>	<b>CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER</b>

### **Classification**

Open

### **Key Decision**

This is not a key decision

### **Wards Affected**

County-wide

### **Purpose**

To provide Cabinet with an updated position on the projected outturn for 2014/15.

### **Recommendation(s)**

#### **THAT:**

- (a) Cabinet notes the council is projected to spend within its budget for this financial year;**
- (b) Cabinet notes the capital and treasury projected outturns; and**
- (c) Cabinet agrees the virement of 2014/15 revenue and capital contingency budgets to meet in year pressures within Directorates**

## Alternative Options

- 1 There are no alternative options

## Reasons for Recommendations

- 2 The forecast outturn for the year, based on spend to the end of August 2014 is break-even.

## Key Considerations

### Revenue Outturn

- 3 This report sets out a forecast break-even position at year-end based on information at the end of August 2014. Directorate pressures' being mitigated by underspends in corporate budgets. This compares with a forecast £4.5m over-spend forecast in 2013/14 at the same point in the year. External Audit consider the authority to be in a much stronger financial position than it was 12 months ago and has rated all areas of financial performance as green.
- 4 There are in year pressures in relation to Adults, £1m and Children's, £0.5m. Additional spend of £600k Learning Disability transitions, including £300k pressure relating to young people in residential educational and care setting, £320k on Colwall school temporary accommodation needs and £400k on grass cutting have been partially mitigated by using the revenue contingency of £700k. The treasury management budget will underspend due to continued low interest rates and the corporate managing change budget of £2m will underspend by an estimated £1m as voluntary leavers have reduced the need for redundancies.
- 5 The overall council budget made allowance for slippage on savings, taking into consideration the reductions required, £15m. This will mean the 2014/15 budget remains on target, however caution must be exercised in reviewing the realism of savings and budgets set out in the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) when reviewing the 2015/16 budget over the coming months. This may mean other savings initiatives need to be considered above those planned.
- 6 As well as the revenue contingency the council budget includes £1.6m set aside for the 2013/14 anticipated overspend that could be used if other unforeseen items occur that otherwise will be used to increase reserve levels. This has not been used in the forecast to mitigate pressures.

Service	Budget Exp.	Budget (income)	Net budget	August Forecast Outturn	Projected Over/ (under) spend
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Adults and Wellbeing	78,274	(22,908)	55,366	56,338	972
Children's Wellbeing	43,616	(22,179)	21,437	21,921	484
Economy, Communities & Corporate	124,583	(71,456)	53,127	52,902	(225)
<b>Directorate total</b>	<b>246,473</b>	<b>(116,543)</b>	<b>129,930</b>	<b>131,161</b>	<b>1,231</b>
Treasury management	16,060	(180)	15,880	15,350	(530)
Other budgets and reserves	6,759	(6,434)	325	(675)	(1,000)
<b>Total</b>	<b>269,292</b>	<b>(123,157)</b>	<b>146,135</b>	<b>145,836</b>	<b>(299)</b>

### Adults and Wellbeing

7. The latest forecast predicts an over-spend against budget of £972k at the year-end.
8. The Directorate has a target of £5.5m savings to deliver in 2014/15 and the majority of transformation and project plans are underway to address these efficiencies. Of the £5.5m savings target the main shortfalls in delivery relate to £1.1m demand management savings and £900k that was assumed to be delivered from reassessments leading to exits from care following the introduction of the new FACE RAS.
9. The area of main risk continues to relate to growth in adult social care, specifically the growth in residential and nursing home admissions, which has again continued during the last month. In addition additional costs associated with transitions, young people moving into adult social care is £300k higher than was previously forecast.
10. The trend of increased activity within nursing and residential care, and demand for social care assessment across older people, is reflected across the health system and in particular the acute and urgent care system. During August, the hospital was reporting its highest level of occupancy and had to activate major incident plans due to demand. This has inevitably led to pressure on the adult social care system to move more people into residential and nursing care rapidly, rather than look at alternative community based options. Other areas that require further investigation and action put in place are community equipment, older people and working age mental health costs. Actions have already been put in place to accelerate savings plans in these areas.

- 11 The majority of the contracts in Public Health need to be procured in 2014/15. The commissioning and procurement programme is now in place with the first tendering process due to start in October 2014.

### **Children's Wellbeing**

- 12 The latest forecast predicts an over-spend against budget of £484k at the year end, an increase of £364k since May.

The Directorate has a target of £2.5m savings to deliver in 2014/15 and the majority of the actions have been concluded and savings delivered across the whole directorate, or are underway to address this. Of the target the main shortfalls in delivery and also growing pressure relate to £986k of children in care costs and £480k of staffing costs in Safeguarding Services. These two areas remain the highest areas of risk for the Children's budget.

- 13 The number of children in care currently stands at 265, a 12% increase since this point last year (235). Significant effort has been made to control these costs, despite the growth in numbers. This work has seen a reduction in the use of independent foster agency placements which are more costly than the Council's own fostering service; no new residential placements since May; and little variation in spend for the last six months. The Herefordshire Intensive Placement Support Service has now been commissioned and commences work this autumn, with a specific remit to reduce costs and improve outcomes in this area of the children's system.
- 14 The Council still has a planned significant reliance on long term agency staff. The turnover of permanent staff has slowed down. The commitment to keep caseloads at a manageable level has led to an increase in the number of front line staff. The staffing budgets are currently being reprofiled to ensure the year end forecasts accurately reflect the management savings, and changing profile of permanent and agency staff. In the past six months staffing costs have remained relatively stable despite halving the number of cases per worker and achieving a positive outcome from OFSTED.
- 15 The Directorate is finalising a series of further transformation projects to address over the medium term the underlying pressures within the Children's budget, which currently has an overreliance on individual grants such as the Education Support Grant (£1.7m) used to support the safeguarding position.

### **Economy, Communities and Corporate**

- 16 The projected outturn of £225k underspend is after providing for additional grass cutting of £400k; £250k for children's play areas and £150k verge cutting. This was partially funded by use of £200k corporate revenue contingency.
- 17 Car parking income is expected to exceed income budget by £225k based on current trends. Income from the Old Market site is currently being monitored and is expected to increase the forecast underspend in future months.
- 18 Planning Income continues to increase and is currently expected to exceed income budget by £510k. There are further large applications expected over the next 24

months which may improve the current year position dependant on the timing of these.

- 19 There are further in year pressures in relation to property repairs and maintenance £125k, energy costs £120k and legal services £90k. Improvement plans are currently being developed to reduce these pressures.
- 20 Further detail on the current projected position for the year within Directorates are summarised in Appendix A.

### **Treasury Management**

- 21 The treasury management budget is forecast to underspend by £530k this year as a result of deferring the take up of prudential borrowing and obtaining short term loans at a lower interest rate, further detail is provided in Appendix C.

### **Other budgets and reserves**

- 22 Earmarked reserves and contingency budgets are set-aside for in year pressures. Of the £2m change management budget a £1m underspend is predicted due to less than forecast redundancy costs. The revenue contingency budget of £700k will be vired to:

	£000
Colwall School temporary accommodation (CWB)	200
Grass cutting	200
Learning Disability transitions - Adults	<u>300</u>
Total	700

- 23 Following the 2012/13 Audit of our Accounts in September 2013 Grant Thornton rated the following areas as amber:

- Key indicators of financial performance
- Strategic Financial Planning
- Financial Governance
- Financial Control

The assessment for levels of reserve was assessed as red.

Their report to the Audit and Governance Committee, 29 September 2014, all areas were re-assessed as green, meaning adequate arrangements are now in place. The External Auditor commented that both financial discipline had improved and that budget monitoring arrangements were much stronger than in previous years.

### **Capital**

- 25 It is forecast that capital spending will be £8.8m higher than budgeted, £85.3m for 2014/15, changes relate to government grants or re-profiling expenditure between years.
- Transfer of £0.6m to Children's Wellbeing from the Capital Contingency contributing towards the temporary building costs of Colwall School.

- An increase of £3.87m on highways improvements relating to additional funding announced by the Department for Transport. This consists of Pot Hole Funding of £2.57 million; and Severe Weather Repair Funding of £1.3 million.
- An additional £1.3m relating to the purchase of wheeled bins which are to be funded by transfer from the Waste Reserve.
- Re-profiling of expenditure on Leisure Centre Improvements, an increase of £2m to £5.3m in 2014/15 with a corresponding reduction in 2016/17.

Further detail is provided in Appendix B

## **Community Impact**

26 None

## **Equality and Human Rights**

27 The recommendations do not have any equality implications

## **Financial Implications**

28 These are contained within the report.

## **Legal Implications**

29 The Local Government Finance Act 1988 makes it a legal requirement that the council's expenditure (and proposed expenditure) in each financial year must not exceed the resources (including sums borrowed) available to the authority. If this principle is likely to be breached, the Chief Financial Officer is under a statutory duty to make a formal report to Members.

## **Risk Management**

30 Monthly reporting gives the Chief Finance Officer assurance on the robustness of budget control and monitoring, highlighting key risks and identifying any mitigation to reduce the impact of pressures on the council's overall position

## **Consultees**

None

## **Appendices**

Appendix A - Revenue Forecast

Appendix B - Capital Forecast

Appendix C - Treasury Forecast

## **Background Papers**

- None identified



## Appendix A

### Revenue Forecast

Directorate Net Budget	Net Budget August £000	August Variance £000	May Variance £000	Difference £000	Explanation
Adults and Wellbeing	55,366	972	250	722	Mainly due to under-delivery of saving targets relating to demand management and numbers of service users exiting care following the implementation of FACE RAS
Children's Wellbeing	21,437	484	120	364	Ongoing pressure on placement costs and the need for agency staff.
Economy, Communities & Corporate	53,127	(225)	90	(315)	Grass cutting pressure increased by £310k to £400k, partly mitigated by £200k revenue contingency
<b>DIRECTORATES TOTAL</b>	<b>129,930</b>	<b>1,231</b>	<b>460</b>	<b>771</b>	Increased income in Planning £510k and Parking £225k
Treasury Management	15,880	(530)	(520)	(10)	Further reduction in borrowing costs
Other budgets and reserves	325	(1,000)	0	(1,000)	Underspend on Managing Change reserve
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>146,135</b>	<b>(299)</b>	<b>(60)</b>	<b>(239)</b>	

	<b>£000</b>
<b>Movement in respect of budget changes is comprise as follows:</b>	
<b>ADULTS &amp; WELLBEING</b>	
Transfer from revenue contingency budget	300
Transfer of Healthwatch budgets to Adults & Wellbeing	107
Adjustments to match centralised budgets to grant funded budgets	36
<b>CHILDRENS WELLBEING</b>	
Transfer from revenue contingency budget	200
Adjustments to match centralised budgets to grant funded budgets	(5)
<b>ECONOMY, COMMUNITIES &amp; CORPORATE</b>	
Transfer from revenue contingency budget	200
Transfer of Healthwatch budgets to Adults & Wellbeing	(107)
Adjustments to match centralised budgets to grant funded budgets	(31)
<b><u>Allocation form Revenue Contingency budget</u></b>	<b><u>(700)</u></b>
<b><u>TOTAL</u></b>	<b><u>NIL</u></b>

## Adults & Wellbeing

Service	Annual Budget				August	
	Budget Expenditure £000's	Budget (Income) £000's	Net Budget £000's	August Forecast Outturn £000's	Projected Over/ (Under)spe nd £000's	Main reasons for change since May
Learning Disabilities	17,042	(1,692)	15,350	15,777	427	Young People placements - Transitions
Memory and Cognition	6,332	(1,272)	5,060	5,047	(13)	
Mental Health	3,151	(741)	2,410	3,201	791	6% Increase in care package approvals
Physical Support	25,456	(4,953)	20,503	21,276	774	5% Increase in care package approvals. £100k increase in Residential Care weekly fee rates.
Sensory Support	579	(107)	472	748	276	8% Increase in care package approvals
<b>Client Sub-Total</b>	<b>52,559</b>	<b>(8,766)</b>	<b>43,794</b>	<b>46,049</b>	<b>2,255</b>	
Operations	8,779	(1,541)	7,239	6,937	(301)	Vacancy savings identified. Slippage on training.
Commissioning	7,206	(727)	6,479	6,162	(317)	
Directorate Management	285	(3,886)	(3,601)	(3,601)	0	
Public Health	8,075	(7,989)	86	86	(0)	
Transformation and Safeguarding	1,369	0	1,369	1,169	(200)	Vacancy savings identified.
Use of one off reserves/grants	0	0	0	(465)	(465)	
<b>Non Client Sub-Total</b>	<b>25,715</b>	<b>(14,143)</b>	<b>11,572</b>	<b>10,289</b>	<b>(1,284)</b>	
<b>Adult's Wellbeing</b>	<b>78,274</b>	<b>(22,908)</b>	<b>55,366</b>	<b>56,338</b>	<b>972</b>	

## Children's Wellbeing

Service	Annual Budget				August Forecast Outturn £000's	August Projected Over/ (Under) spend £000's	Main reasons for change since May
	Budget Expenditure £000's	Budget (Income) £000's	Net Budget £000's	August Forecast Outturn £000's			
Directorate Costs	7,757	(8,266)	(509)	(1,352)	(843)	One off grant funding and refund of £73K due from Worcs for YOPS service	
<b>Directorate Costs</b>	<b>7,757</b>	<b>(8,266)</b>	<b>(509)</b>	<b>(1,352)</b>	<b>(843)</b>		
Additional Needs - less DSG	6,660	(4,331)	2,329	2,263	(66)	Vacancy savings identified	
Children's Commissioning	1,405	(106)	1,299	1,298	(1)		
Commissioning Management	493	(83)	410	250	(160)	Business support costs now included here	
Development and Sufficiency	9,121	(7,661)	1,460	1,562	102		
Education Improvement	698	(451)	247	257	10		
<b>Education &amp; Commissioning</b>	<b>18,376</b>	<b>(12,632)</b>	<b>5,745</b>	<b>5,630</b>	<b>(115)</b>		
Safeguarding & Review	797	(81)	716	758	42		
Early Help & Family Support	2,360	(908)	1,452	1,550	98		
Fieldwork	3,019	(5)	3,014	3,394	380	Continued use of agency staff, originally only forecast for 6 months now assumed to be in post until year end	
Looked After Children	7,178	(257)	6,921	6,653	(268)		
LAC External placements	2,666	(30)	2,636	3,622	986	Placements currently under review with a hope that some young people will move to the HIPPS programme by the end of the financial year	
Safeguarding training	720	0	720	775	55		
Safeguarding Management	742	0	742	891	149	Business support costs now included here	
<b>Safeguarding &amp; Family Support</b>	<b>17,483</b>	<b>(1,282)</b>	<b>16,201</b>	<b>17,643</b>	<b>1,442</b>		
<b>Children's Wellbeing</b>	<b>43,616</b>	<b>(22,179)</b>	<b>21,437</b>	<b>21,921</b>	<b>484</b>		

## Economy, Communities and Corporate

Service	Annual Budget			August Forecast Outturn £000's	August Projected Over/ (Under)spend £000's	Main reasons for change since May
	Budget Expenditure £000's	Budget (Income) £000's	Net Budget £000's			
Economic, Environment and Culture	9,652	(8,853)	799	168	(631)	Increased income in car parking £225k and planning £510k.
Placed Based Commissioning	42,117	(3,990)	38,127	38,364	237	Pressures for Grass cutting increased from £90k to £400k of which £200k will be met from contingency budget.
Finance & ICT	56,217	(52,708)	3,509	3,476	(33)	
Community and Customer Services	3,716	(696)	3,020	3,009	(11)	
Governance	4,424	(826)	3,598	3,687	89	Pressures within Legal Services after centralisation
Directorate Support	457	(36)	421	424	3	
Property Services	6,930	(4,267)	2,663	2,784	121	Pressures in relation to rates and repairs
<b>Economic, Communities and Corporate</b>	<b>123,513</b>	<b>(71,376)</b>	<b>52,137</b>	<b>51,912</b>	<b>(225)</b>	
Public Relations Office	624	(80)	544	544	0	
Chief Executive	446	0	446	446	0	
<b>Chief Executive</b>	<b>1,070</b>	<b>(80)</b>	<b>990</b>	<b>990</b>	<b>0</b>	
<b>Total ECC and Chief Executive</b>	<b>124,583</b>	<b>(71,456)</b>	<b>53,127</b>	<b>52,902</b>	<b>(225)</b>	



## 2014/15 Capital Forecast Outturn

The capital outturn forecast for 2014/15 totals £94.2m as summarised below.

Changes from the last report include:

- £0.6m transferred to Children's Wellbeing from Capital Contingency towards the capital costs of Colwall School.
- Additional road funding announced by the Department for Transport in June 2014: Pothole Funding of £2.57m; and Weather Repair Funding of £1.3m. Both these amounts have been treated as extra funding increasing both forecast spend and grants receivable.
- Additional £1.3m of capital spend relating to the purchase of wheeled bins which is to be funded by transfer from the revenue Waste Reserve.
- Forecast expenditure on Leisure Centre Improvements (and the associated Prudential Borrowing) has been increased for 2014-15 from £2m to £5.3m, with a corresponding reduction in 2016/17 (the year of completion).

**Table A –Summary forecast and sources of funding 2014/15**

	Budget £'000	May Forecast £'000	August Forecast £'000
<b>Directorate Forecast</b>			
Adults Wellbeing	483	3,291	3,291
Children's Wellbeing	9,048	8,184	9,319
Economy, Communities & Contingency	75,501 319	72,239 695	81,469 95
<b>Total</b>	<b>85,351</b>	<b>84,409</b>	<b>94,174</b>
<b>Funding</b>			
Capital Grants	24,905	30,049	34,848
Prudential Borrowing	57,237	49,457	53,123*
Capital Receipts	3,209	4,903	4,903
Revenue (from Waste Reserve)	-	-	1,300
<b>Total</b>	<b>85,351</b>	<b>84,409</b>	<b>94,174</b>

\*£6.5m of Prudential Borrowing is currently included for the link road awaiting confirmation of the grant receivable from the Marches Local Enterprise Partnership.

**Table B - Schemes with a forecast exceeding £500k in 2014/15**

<b>Scheme</b>	<b>Total Scheme Budget £'000</b>	<b>Capital Budget Dec 13 MTFS £'000</b>	<b>August Forecast £'000</b>	<b>Comments</b>
<b>Children's Wellbeing</b>				
Leominster Primary School	10,617	5,729	4,674	New school to open in October 2014
Condition property works	-	-	1,748	Annual programme of works at various school sites committed on a highest need first basis, grant funding confirmed post MTFMS
Affordable Housing Grants	-	317	935	Housing improvement grant programme includes re-profiled budget.
Westfield's SEN school	184	184	831	Grant funded extension work
Disabled Facilities Grants	-	462	1,216	Individual grants awarded through an application process, enabling independent living. Grant funding confirmed post MTFMS
Colwall School	-	-	900	Budget vired from Condition Property Works (£300k) and Contingency (600k)
Corporate accommodation	16,860	6,211	6,564	Works nearing completion at Plough Lane and continuing on the new heritage, archive and record centre and Civic hub
Leisure Centre Improvements	8,670	2,000	5,300	Works at Leominster, Ross and Hereford leisure sites. Work progressing more rapidly and budget re-profiled.
Local Transport Plan	10,645	10,645	10,645	Annual programme of capital works to highways, footways and bridges. Additional grant funding received since initial budget was set.
Fastershire Broadband	20,200	7,600	10,093	Investment in broadband infrastructure includes re-profiled budget (grant funded)
Yazor Flood Alleviation	4,876	450	400	Continued improvement works.
Hereford Enterprise Zone	3,434	1,967	2,203	Utilities, access and Skylon Court works underway to enable plot sales and unit rentals
Link Road	27,000	10,708	6,500	Acquisition costs and start of construction works.
Destination Hereford	3,261	1,054	1,044	Grant funded cycle improvement schemes
LED Street Lighting	5,655	5,655	3,260	Phased installation of LED street lighting
Solar Panel Installations	2,134	1,841	1,286	Photovoltaic instalment at various locations
Masters House, Ledbury	4,025	606	606	Continuing refurbishment works



Road investment	20,000	15,000	15,000	Investment into the highway infrastructure
Pothole Funding	-	-	2,572	Additional grant funding received
Weather Repair Fund	-	-	1,299	Additional grant funding received
EnviRecover	40,000	11,000	10,700	Energy from Waste plant construction
Wheeled Bins			1,300	Purchase of Wheeled Bins funded by transfer from revenue Waste Reserve.
<b>Chief Executive</b>				
Electronic Record & Document Management System	1,100	700	736	Supporting the better ways of working programme
<b>Sub Total</b>	<b>178,661</b>	<b>81,418</b>	<b>89,812</b>	
<b>Schemes with a forecast &lt;£500k in 2014/15</b>	<b>6,002</b>	<b>3,933</b>	<b>4,362</b>	
<b>Total</b>	<b>184,663</b>	<b>85,351</b>	<b>94,174</b>	

Note:

The capital budgets for 2014/15 were set in December 2013 before cumulative expenditure to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2014 was confirmed for ongoing schemes.

Therefore actual budgets for 2014/15 may vary due to:

- Re-profiling budgeted expenditure over the years of the scheme;
- Additional grant funding being announced; or
- Budget virements.



This report ensures the council demonstrates best practice in accordance with CIPFA's recommendations in their Code of Practice for Treasury Management, by keeping members informed of treasury management activity.

**1. The Economy**

1.1. Little change in the economic climate and statistics since previously reported:

- The first estimate of GDP for the second quarter shows GDP growing by 0.8%. The economy has now been growing by 0.7% to 0.8% for each of the last five quarters.
- The year-on-year Consumer Price Index (CPI) was 1.5% in August 2014, down from 1.6% in July.
- The latest statistics released for the quarter to July 2014 show the UK labour market continuing with employment gains, albeit at a slower pace, and the headline unemployment rate falling to 6.2%, the lowest since late 2008. However, earnings growth remains weak.
- There has been no change in the Bank Base Rate.
- With slack in the labour markets, low inflation and weak earnings growth, the council's treasury advisers, Arlingclose, forecast the first increase in the Bank Base rate to be in the third quarter of 2015.

**2. The Council's Investments**

2.1 At 31<sup>st</sup> August 2014 the council held the following investments:

Investment	Term	Maturity Date	Interest Rate	Amount invested	
				£m	£m
<u>Instant Access Bank Accounts:</u>					
Handelsbanken	N/A	N/A	0.45%	5.00	5.00
<u>Instant Access Money Market Funds:</u>					
Ignis	N/A	N/A	0.46%	4.58	4.58
<u>1 Month Notice Account</u>					
Close Bros	N/A	N/A	1.00%	5.00	5.00
<u>Fixed Term Deposits:</u>					
Nationwide	81 days	22/09/14	0.47%	1.00	
Barclays	81 days	22/09/14	0.47%	1.00	
Santander	98 days	24/10/14	0.47%	1.00	
Nationwide	298 days	23/01/15	0.72%	2.00	
Barclays	365 days	19/02/15	0.85%	1.00	
Nationwide	279 days	25/03/15	0.79%	2.00	
Barclays	279 days	25/03/15	0.79%	1.00	
Lloyds	364 days	27/03/15	0.95%	1.00	
Barclays	364 days	27/03/15	0.86%	1.00	
Bank of Scotland	364 days	30/03/15	0.95%	2.00	
Barclays	364 days	30/03/15	0.86%	1.00	14.00
<b>Total</b>			<b>0.71%</b>		<b>28.58</b>

Shaded investments represents term deposits made in the two months since 30<sup>th</sup> June 2014.

2.2 There has been little change in investment rates over the last two months, with the exception of

the council's instant access account with Handelsbanken where the interest rate fell from 0.60% to 0.45% with effect from 7<sup>th</sup> July 2014.

- 2.3 There has been no change in the council's current eligible UK counterparties and their associated maximum maturity periods (as recommended by the council's treasury advisers, Arlingclose) since previously reported. These are as follows:

Counterparty	Maximum maturity period from:	
	01/04/14	01/07/14
Close Brothers Ltd, Goldman Sachs International Bank, 15 of the stronger building societies	100 days	100 days
Santander UK	6 months	13 months
Bank of Scotland and Lloyds TSB	12 months	13 months
Nationwide	12 months	13 months
Barclays	12 months	13 months
HSBC and Standard Chartered Bank	12 months	13 months
Nat West and RBS	Overnight	Overnight

- 2.4 The only non-UK counterparty that the council is using is Handelsbanken which has a recommended maximum maturity limit of 13 months.

- 2.5 The council has earned interest on its investments as follows:

Month	Amount invested		Average rate of interest earned		Amount of interest earned / Forecast £	Budget £	Actual Surplus / Forecast £
	Actual / Forecast £m	Budget £m	Actual / Forecast %	Budget %			
Apr-14	35.09	20	0.68	0.60%	19,442	10,000	9,442
May-14	40.21	40	0.63	0.60%	21,584	20,000	1,584
Jun-14	33.96	40	0.67	0.60%	19,151	20,000	-849
Jul-14	37.30	40	0.66	0.60%	20,896	20,000	896
Aug-14	38.29	40	0.63	0.60%	20,652	20,000	652
					<b>101,725</b>	<b>90,000</b>	<b>11,725</b>
Sep-14		40		0.60%	20,000	20,000	-
Oct-14		30		0.60%	15,000	15,000	-
Nov-14		30		0.60%	15,000	15,000	-
Dec-14		30		0.60%	15,000	15,000	-
Jan-15		20		0.60%	10,000	10,000	-
Feb-15		20		0.60%	10,000	10,000	-
Mar-15		10		0.60%	5,070	5,070	-
<b>Budget and projected outturn</b>					<b>191,795</b>	<b>180,070</b>	<b>11,725</b>

- 2.6 Investment balances in April were higher than budgeted resulting in a surplus for the month of £9,442. In more recent months actual investment income has been more in line with the budgeted amounts.

**3. The Council's Borrowing**

**Short-term borrowing**

- 3.1 The council is continuing its policy of utilising short-term borrowing from other local authorities to fund its capital programme and for short-term liquidity needs. These short-term interest rates are significantly below levels available from other sources.
- 3.2 Historically the council has always borrowed for longer periods at fixed interest rates. Whilst achieving stability in the amount of its interest payments, the council currently has a large cost of carry when comparing its fixed interest debt to current (variable) investment rates.
- 3.3 It is considered good practice to have an element of variable rate borrowing that removes or reduces this cost of carry and, to the extent that the level of short-term debt does not exceed the level of the council's investments, when interest rates rise increased investment income provides a hedge against increased borrowing costs.
- 3.4 The council can only borrow up to its Capital Financing Requirement, which represents the need to borrow for capital spend, and cannot borrow beyond this to finance the revenue budget.
- 3.5 At the end of August 2014 short-term borrowing from other local authorities consisted of eight loans totalling £29 million with an average rate of interest payable of 0.46%. Loan periods and interest rates (including brokers' commission) ranged from 87 days to one year and 0.36% to 0.58% respectively.

**Long-term borrowing**

- 3.6 No long-term loans have been taken out in the period to date.
- 3.7 The budget includes provision to take out up to £10 million of longer term loans from the Public Works Loan Board. This is still a possibility although analysis suggests that PWLB rates will have to fall significantly from their current levels for any savings in future years to outweigh the associated cost of carry in the short-term.
- 3.8 The current position is summarised below.  
(The forecast is unchanged from the June 2014 position)

<b>Summary of Borrowing Budget</b>	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Forecast</b>	<b>Savings</b>
	<b>£m</b>	<b>£m</b>	<b>£m</b>
<b>Minimum Revenue Provision</b>	<b>10.19</b>	<b>9.93</b>	<b>0.26</b>
<b>Interest on existing longer-term PWLB and bank loans</b>	<b>5.52</b>	<b>5.52</b>	-
<b><u>Variable rate borrowing</u></b>			
<u>Budget</u> Borrowing required £68 million Rate 1.00%	0.55		

<u>Forecast</u> Borrowing required £60 million Average rate used 0.80%		0.29	0.26
<b><u>Fixed rate borrowing</u></b>			
<u>Budget</u> Provision for longer term-borrowing	<b>0.10</b>	<b>0.10</b>	-
<b>Less capitalised interest (see 3.11 below)</b>	<b>(0.30)</b>	<b>(0.30)</b>	-
<b>Forecast savings compared to budget</b>	<b>16.06</b>	<b>15.54</b>	<b>0.52</b>

- 3.9 The reduction in the Minimum Revenue Provision required for 2014/15 is due to slippage in the capital spend for 2013/14, as reported in June.
- 3.10 The external borrowing requirement is calculated after maximising internal borrowing by offsetting usable reserves. The usable reserves as at 31 March 2014 (of £41 million) were higher than forecast leading to an upward revision of the usable reserves available for 2014/15. The borrowing requirement shown above has been prudently calculated assuming usable reserves throughout the year of at least £30 million, whereas a figure of £20 million had previously been used.
- 3.11 The council is able to capitalise interest costs relating to interest paid on borrowing used to fund large capital schemes that take substantial periods of time to get to the point at which the assets may be utilised. Such interest, incurred at the construction or installation phase, may be added to the cost of the associated asset. As can be seen from the table above, capitalised interest of £300,000 has been included in the 2014/15 budget for capital financing costs.

#### **4. Summary of Outturn Position**

- 4.1 The current net treasury position, compared to budget, is estimated to be a surplus of £530,000.

<b>Summary of Budget Over/(Under) Spend</b>	<b>£m</b>
Treasury Management investment income receivable	(0.01)
Interest payable on borrowing	(0.52)
<b>Total savings</b>	<b>(0.53)</b>

- 4.2 The savings will be £100,000 greater if no longer-term fixed rate borrowing is taken out.
- 4.3 The savings will also be higher/lower if capitalised interest is more/less than £300,000.



<b>MEETING:</b>	<b>Cabinet</b>
<b>MEETING DATE:</b>	<b>9 October 2014</b>
<b>TITLE OF REPORT:</b>	<b>Herefordshire Safeguarding Children Board Annual Report and Business Plan</b>
<b>REPORT BY:</b>	<b>Director for Children's Wellbeing</b>

## Classification

Open

## Key Decision

This is not a key decision.

## Wards Affected

County-wide

## Purpose

To inform Cabinet of Herefordshire Safeguarding Children's Board (HSCB) assessment of safeguarding in Herefordshire and of its own effectiveness within the Annual Report 2013-2014 and present to them the finalised Business Plan 2014-2015.

## Recommendation(s)

### THAT CABINET:

- (a) Notes the effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements for children and young people in Herefordshire as assessed by the HSCB;
- (b) Acknowledges the priorities of HSCB in relation to specific safeguarding issues in Herefordshire;
- (c) Considers how Herefordshire Council is contributing to service improvement through commissioning within Herefordshire with regard to these safeguarding issues; and
- (d) Makes any comments to the board about its future work programme.

## Alternative Options

1. This report is to inform and enable Cabinet to consider the HSCB annual report and business plan. The Cabinet could therefore suggest alternative activities for consideration by the Board.

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Further information on the subject of this report is available from  
Andy Churcher, HSCB Business Manager on Tel (01432) 260278

## Reasons for Recommendations

2. To ensure Cabinet is clear about the assessment of the state of safeguarding children in Herefordshire from the perspective of the Herefordshire Safeguarding Children Board and the independent chair.
3. To ensure that Cabinet has oversight of the prioritised development work for Herefordshire Safeguarding Children Board during 2014-2015.
4. To ensure Cabinet is able to make informed decisions with regard to providing and commissioning services for Herefordshire, which support the safeguarding children's agenda.

## Key Considerations

5. Councils are legally obliged to establish an effective Safeguarding Children Board. Further detail is in paragraphs 10-14 below. The annual report of Herefordshire Safeguarding Children Board enables Cabinet to understand and assess Herefordshire's multi-agency safeguarding arrangements and to consider specific messages from the Board and the independent chair about the quality and effectiveness of the multi-agency work to protect children from harm.
6. Herefordshire Safeguarding Children Board has set the following strategic priorities for 2013-2016:
  - Improving the experience of children, young people and families when they are supported in safeguarding systems (i.e. Common Assessment Framework, social care).
  - Improving multi-agency case work.
  - Tackling evidenced safeguarding issues in Herefordshire.
  - Improving the functioning of Herefordshire's safeguarding boards.
7. Within the framework of the strategic priorities and as a result of the annual report and Ofsted inspection, HSCB's Business Plan documents the following specific developmental areas. Cabinet reviewed the draft business plan in their meeting on 31 July 2014. Since then additional actions have been added within items a, c, d, e and f:
  - a) Ensuring that multi-agency responses to children at higher risk of sexual exploitation and those who go missing are increasingly effective.
  - b) Understanding the impact of domestic abuse within Herefordshire and improve the county's response to the issue.
  - c) Using the voice of children and families to improve services.
  - d) Developing HSCB's safeguarding training offer.
  - e) Ensuring Herefordshire's child protection policies remain up to date and fit for purpose.
  - f) Strengthening the impact of improvements resulting from HSCB's extensive

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learning activity including performance monitoring and audit work.

- g) Improving the strategic governance of HSCB, including its accountability to and influence upon other local partnerships (including the Children and Young People's Partnership and the Health and Wellbeing Board).
  - h) Ensuring that HSCB is effectively supported by agencies to ensure the ongoing improvement work is sustainable.
8. Cabinet will see from the annual report that there has been progress in improving the quality and effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements, although there is still work to do until services are of consistently good quality.
9. Cabinet will also see that during the year there has been a growing number of children who have been experiencing neglect, along with other trends in relation to domestic abuse, including emotional abuse. Child sexual exploitation is also an area requiring sustained focus. It is important that every agency involved in safeguarding arrangements also focusses its activity on the issues which cause children to be harmed, or be at risk of harm, in the first place. These are issues which the Herefordshire Community Safety Partnership, the Health and Wellbeing Board, and every agency responsible for working together to protect children from harm needs to give attention to over the next year.

## **Community Impact**

- 10. The recent Ofsted inspection confirmed that there is no widespread or serious failures that create or leave children being harmed or at risk of harm in Herefordshire. The inspection report evidences ongoing improvements in the delivery of services to children and their families in line with the council's statutory responsibilities and the statutory duties to cooperate placed on other partners.
- 11. The annual report identifies important aspects of safeguarding in Herefordshire, which require a sustained focus to reduce things which cause children to be harmed or at risk of harm.
- 12. Families and communities bring up children and protect them from harm. There are also important issues for communities.
- 13. The Business Plan (Appendix 2) includes expectations of how and when impact will be measured and what the expected impact will be.

## **Equality and Human Rights**

- 14. Different aspects of the implementation of the business plan pay due regard to the public sector equality duty as set out below:

Under Section 149, the "General Duty" on public authorities is set out thus:

"A public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to -

eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct ... prohibited by or under this Act;

advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected

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Further information on the subject of this report is available from  
Andy Churcher, HSCB Business Manager on Tel (01432) 260278

characteristic and persons who do not share it;

foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it."

Further development of the quality of the data and information provided to the Board will increasingly enable it to consider the different characteristics of children and families engaged in the safeguarding system, to establish whether there are specific groups who are likely to be more at risk of harm or being harmed, than others, and to monitor how, over time, those groups are better protected.

## **Financial Implications**

15. The business plan contains activity from a range of partners; the annual report describes some of the impact of that activity. The council costs are contained within the costs of the safeguarding and family support service, which has had significant investment in the past two years. The council also makes a contribution of £143k to the business unit of the safeguarding boards, which is 65% of the current costs. Partner agencies contribute 35%. The expansion of the work of the children's board and the adults' board, in the light of changing legislation and the need to improve quality in this area, mean that every agency is currently considering an increase in the resourcing of the unit.

## **Legal Implications**

16. Section 13 of the Children Act 2004 requires each local authority to establish a Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) for their area and specifies the organisations and individuals (other than the local authority) that should be represented on LSCBs.
17. Section 14 of the Children Act 2004 sets out the objectives of LSCBs, which are:
  - to coordinate what is done by each person or body represented on the Board for the purposes of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in the area; and
  - to ensure the effectiveness of what is done by each such person or body for those purposes.
18. Regulation 5 of the Local Safeguarding Children Boards Regulations 2006 sets out that the functions of the LSCB, in relation to the above objectives referred to above.
19. As set out in the Statutory Guidance issued by the Department of Education, Working Together to Safeguard Children, March 2013 (chapter 3 paragraphs 16 – 18), the Chair of a LSCB must publish an annual report on the effectiveness of child safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in the local area. The report should be submitted to the Chief Executive, Leader of the Council, the Local Police and Crime Commissioner and the Chair of the Health and Wellbeing board.
20. This report can be considered by Cabinet under the provisions set out in Part 3 of the Constitution, specifically paragraph 3.3.4.2 C – "Cabinet should only take decisions that are ... significant in terms of economic, environmental or social wellbeing of the county or a substantial part of it or of its communities".

## **Risk Management**

21. There are no risks contained within the recommendations.
22. The main risks are:
  - Messages from the Board are ignored.
  - The Board is not well functioning and does not assure the quality and effectiveness of the safeguarding system.
  - The Board fails to exercise leadership in clarifying safeguarding issues and addressing quality and impact.
  - These risks would all leave children and young people more at risk of suffering harm. The Business Plan and the governance arrangements are the mitigations against these risks.

## **Consultees**

23. HSCB Strategic Board
24. HSCB Steering Group Sub Group Chairs
25. Herefordshire Safeguarding Children Improvement Board

## **Appendices**

Appendix 1 - HSCB 2013-2014 Annual Report

Appendix 2 - HSCB 2014-2015 Business Plan

## **Background Papers**

- None identified.





**Annual  
Report**

**2013 -  
2014**

Herefordshire  
**Safeguarding Children Board**

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## About the Board and the Annual Report

Herefordshire Safeguarding Children Board (HSCB) includes appropriate senior representatives from a range of key partner agencies and organisations including schools, colleges, health service providers, children’s social care and the police.

The Annual Report provides an assessment of safeguarding in the County and an analysis of the Board’s activity during the year. It is written by the Board’s Business Manager in collaboration with the Independent Chair. Members of the Strategic Board are then asked to finalise and approve the report before its publication in September. Organisations and sectors represented on the Board are expected to distribute the Annual Report to the appropriate officers within their organisations and the report will also be available on the Board’s website at [www.herefordshiresafeguardingchildrenboard.org.uk](http://www.herefordshiresafeguardingchildrenboard.org.uk).

More information can be found on the Board’s website or on request from the Business Unit. The Business Unit can be contacted via email at [admin.hscb@herefordshire.gov.uk](mailto:admin.hscb@herefordshire.gov.uk) or by phoning on 01432 260100.

More details about the Board, its membership and its Business Unit are available on our About HSCB webpage<sup>1</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> Available for download from the [About HSCB](http://www.herefordshiresafeguardingchildrenboard.org.uk) page at [www.herefordshiresafeguardingchildrenboard.org.uk](http://www.herefordshiresafeguardingchildrenboard.org.uk).



## Introduction

### What Annual Reports should do?

Working Together to Safeguard Children<sup>2</sup> is a document which outlines how the government expects all organisations working with children and young people in an area to co-operate to ensure children are kept as safe as possible in England. It governs the work of local safeguarding children boards including setting out the requirements for our Annual Report.

Working Together, updated in 2013, states that our Annual Report should:

- ✎ Assess the effectiveness of child safeguarding and the promotion of the welfare of children in the local area.
- ✎ Provide a rigorous and transparent assessment of the performance and effectiveness of local safeguarding arrangements.
- ✎ Identify areas of weakness, the causes of those weaknesses and the action being taken to address them as well as other proposals for action.
- ✎ Include lessons from reviews undertaken within the reporting period.
- ✎ List the contributions made to the local safeguarding children board (LSCB) by partner agencies and details of what the LSCB has spent, including on Child Death Reviews, Serious Case Reviews and other specific expenditure such as learning events or training.

Herefordshire Safeguarding Children Board also uses its Annual Report to demonstrate what it is doing to:

- ✎ Develop policies and procedures for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.
- ✎ Communicate to persons and bodies in Herefordshire the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, raise awareness of how this can best be done, and encourage them to do so.
- ✎ Collect and analyse information about the deaths of all children in Herefordshire.
- ✎ Provide assurance that procedures are in place for co-ordinated responses by the authority, their Board partners and other relevant persons into any unexpected death of a child.

### How Annual Reports should be used?

Organisations working with Children and Young people can use this report to develop their understanding of safeguarding in Herefordshire and the work Herefordshire Safeguarding Children Board is doing to support them and to be aware of the critical safeguarding issues relevant to their organisation.

The public can use this document to develop their understanding and see how there can be wider community engagement in safeguarding issues.

The annual report is published in relation to the preceding financial year in order to influence local agencies' planning, commissioning and budget cycles for the forthcoming financial year.

It is submitted to the Chief Executive of the Local Authority, Leader of the Council, the Local Police and Crime Commissioner and the Chair of the Health and Wellbeing Board.

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<sup>2</sup> Working Together to Safeguard Children can be downloaded from [www.workingtogetheronline.co.uk](http://www.workingtogetheronline.co.uk)

## The Board's Vision, Mission and Values

The Board works to the following shared vision, mission and values.

### Our Vision

Children and young people in Herefordshire grow up in an environment in which their well being needs are met and they are safe from harm.

### Our Mission

To work together effectively, as organisations and with children and families, to ensure that local services and arrangements are effective in promoting the well being of children and young people in Herefordshire and keeping them safe from harm.

### Our values

- 🧵 The impact on the well being and safety of children and young people in Herefordshire will be at the centre of all HSCB activity.
- 🧵 We will learn and be willing to develop, responding to evidence and best practice.
- 🧵 We will work in an open and honest manner with children, young people, their families and with each other.
- 🧵 We will address the well being needs of children and young people at the earliest opportunity and prevent the need for later child protection intervention whenever possible.
- 🧵 We will challenge each other and be ready to receive challenge as we work together in a spirit of mutual respect.



## Reviewing the Year: April 2013- March 2014

This year has been a positive and significant one in terms of the progress of safeguarding children services in Herefordshire. There needed to be considerable improvement in the way in which children are safeguarded in the county, recovering from a long period during which they have not been good enough. This Annual Report sets out the wide range of activity that has taken place in the last twelve months with the express intention of enabling Herefordshire Safeguarding Children Board (HSCB) to ensure that what is done in Herefordshire to safeguard and protect children has been both well co-ordinated between all of the relevant organisations and effective.

The publication of this Annual Report and the Business Plan for the Board in the year 2014-15 has deliberately been delayed because HSCB was subject of a Review by Ofsted as part of its inspection of safeguarding arrangements in Herefordshire in May. Such inspections provide invaluable insight into how Board plans are progressing in terms of effectiveness and informing the development of those plans, so the Ofsted conclusions are reflected in both documents.

The key building block of good safeguarding practice is the effectiveness of all aspects of work to protect children suffering or at risk of significant harm.

### How we know what practice is like – Audit and Review

In order to be fully aware of how effective day-to-day work is, an ambitious audit and review programme examining front line child protection practice was managed through the year by the Board's sub groups including:

- ✎ Eight thematic reviews of specific areas of work undertaken by the Quality Assurance and Evaluation sub group totalling forty cases (see page 15);
- ✎ Four multi-agency individual case audits undertaken by the Quality Assurance.
- ✎ Four significant case learning processes facilitated by an independent author including one Serious Case Review undertaken by the Joint Case Review group (see page 18); and
- ✎ Five child death reviews undertaken by the Child Death Overview Panel (see page 23).

This provided the board with an accurate view of how well child protection work was being managed. The picture was one of steady improvement, but with more than isolated examples of inadequate work and insufficient consistently high quality practice being evident. In September 2013, upon the request of Herefordshire Council, a 'Peer Review' process was instigated with experienced professionals from a range of agencies in other areas coming in and scrutinising how local organisations were working together to protect children. This team provided some useful support in assisting HSCB to make the step change in performance that has been required for us truly to develop the consistently high quality child protection service that Herefordshire children deserve. The Ofsted Inspection Team later found that since the Peer Review, the speed of improvement has accelerated. This pace of improvement is very positive and needs to be sustained. Crucially, the Ofsted Inspection Team, which examined circumstances of many children in local safeguarding processes, found no cases in which children were suffering continuing harm.

### Knowing whether children are being supported by the right services at the right time

High quality child protection practice is reliant on those having contact with children having a clear joint understanding of the thresholds at which agencies respond to meet the needs of those children.

It also relies on the main agencies sharing information effectively and appropriately and co-ordinating their activity to ensure that each child in need receives services tailored to their particular circumstances. In June 2013, Herefordshire implemented a 'Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub' (MASH), in which identified representatives of all the main organisations (police, social care, health, education and the voluntary sector) work in the same place, receive reports of concerns about children, share information appropriately, make informed and co-ordinated decisions on what needs to be done and provide advice and support as required. The implementation of the MASH was managed in a staged manner and was not without its challenges. Evidence from the Board's own audit activity, and external review, including Ofsted's inspection, show that it is now effective in delivering better co-ordination between relevant organisations and more children receiving the services that they need.

### **The Voice of Children and Families**

The HSCB is clear that it wants to ensure that the voice of children and families is heard, and that this is used to improve how services work and the impact they make. During the course of the year, the HSCB received evidence to show that representatives of all the organisations working with children and families engage with them and listen to their experiences. However, the accounts of those experiences are not cohesively recorded, analysed and then used to assess and develop safeguarding services. This was a key priority for HSCB over the last year and there has been disappointing progress with this.

### **Cooperation and Coordination between Partners**

There have been notable strides forward in how organisations work together. In addition to the implementation of the MASH, most of the groups of HSCB have been well supported and Ofsted recognised the engagement of multi-agency partners. The management of the ambitious local audit framework, serious case reviews and the reviewing of child deaths as a means of learning and improvement have all benefited from good multi-agency support. Safeguarding children is a priority for all HSCB partner organisations. Issues such as Child Sexual Exploitation and Trafficking have been the subject of focus led by HSCB with workshops spreading awareness.

Strategically, Ofsted recognised that HSCB does meet its statutory responsibilities. Governance arrangements are well established, with appropriate links to other strategic bodies locally. My independence as Chair was recognised. An increasing readiness to challenge is apparent across the board, which is becoming more hard edged and prepared to hold member organisations to account. There is a core of excellent lay members who represent the views of our communities thoughtfully and assertively.

### **Safeguarding Training**

HSCB delivers a range of safeguarding training. Training of our workforce and awareness raising among the local population must be further developed to ensure that children whose welfare is being compromised are recognised and well supported. The Training and Workforce Development sub-group, although well led, is insufficiently supported and this agenda is suffering further through not having a training co-ordinator because of delays recruiting to this position in The Business Unit.

### **Data and Intelligence**

Although the use by HSCB of performance information has improved this year, it is relatively dependent on performance information provided by Herefordshire Council Children's Social Care, and despite much remedial work having been done, data provided during the year

Herefordshire Safeguarding Children Board: Annual Report 2013-2014 remains too often inaccurate and unreliable. Although most recently there has been evidence of improvement, the Board wishes to see this become consistent in the long term

As confidence in local child protection work rises, there must be a wider focus by HSCB, for example on how well families are supported to prevent children slipping into the child protection arena. The Board needs to become better at examining and measuring the impact of work that is being done to further improve the maturity of its learning and development. This must include actively listening to the voices of children, families and the people working with them. There must be a particular emphasis on looking at the welfare of disabled and deaf children and those from diverse backgrounds to ensure that they are being supported appropriately and not disadvantaged. Children who go missing from their carers must be responded to so as to better mitigate their vulnerability. All these issues are priorities within next year's Business Plan.

Although it is important to acknowledge that HSCB has travelled a long way in the right direction over the past year, it must be recognised that it still has a very long way to go before it can be content that safeguarding services are functioning fully as they need to be. HSCB needs to further influence other strategic bodies to prioritise the safeguarding of children. Action Plans must be relentlessly followed through. Training of our workforce and awareness raising among the local population must be further developed to ensure that children whose welfare is being compromised are recognised and well supported. The Training and Workforce Development sub-group, although well led, is insufficiently supported and this agenda is suffering further through not having a training co-ordinator because of delays recruiting to this position in The Business Unit.

The HSCB Business Plan for 2013-14, formulated in line with agreed strategic development priority areas, was ambitious and far reaching. This Annual Report documents that much of the planned activity was delivered successfully and my thanks go to all those who worked tirelessly to achieve this. HSCB is now considerably better placed to understand the quality of safeguarding work that is being done in the county, there is a significant drive to develop that quality and the co-ordination in the way it is being managed is also considerably improved. This is explicitly recognised in the recent Ofsted Inspection.

Finally, as the work of HSCB has gathered pace and volume, it has created additional pressures on the Business Unit that supports and co-ordinates that work. This pressure is exacerbated by the unit having also to support a similarly burgeoning Safeguarding Adults Board agenda. If the current momentum is to be maintained, it relies on that unit having additional capacity to continue to provide that vital support. Options to resolve this issue are currently under consideration.



Dave McCallum, Independent Chair



## How effective are our local Safeguarding arrangements?

All agencies and organisations that work with children and young people should have appropriate safeguarding arrangements in place. This expectation was made a legal requirement through Section 11 of the Children Act 2004<sup>3</sup> for a range of public agencies. Through engagement of organisations directly, or through sector representatives, Herefordshire Safeguarding Children Board reassures itself that these arrangements are in place.

Ofsted's Review of Herefordshire Safeguarding Children Board in May 2014<sup>4</sup>, stated that:

- 🔗 *"Safeguarding is appropriately prioritised by partner agencies and this is confirmed through the safeguarding audits that agencies completed in 2013, under Section 11 of the Children Act 2004"*.
- 🔗 *"Partners from all agencies are well-represented at the right level on the Board and its sub-groups. Strong commitment and enthusiasm to work collaboratively to improve safeguarding services is now evident."*
- 🔗 The Board *"has undertaken regular multi-agency audits of safeguarding practice"* and *"also considers performance information from partner agencies"*.

These comments demonstrate how Herefordshire Safeguarding Children Board is now much better placed to assess the effectiveness of local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements and illustrate the significant improvements made since 2012 when Ofsted commented that the Board was not *"sufficiently effective at either identifying deficits or improving practice within child protection services"*.

### Staffing Resources and Quality of Practice

A key concern for Herefordshire Safeguarding Children Board are our comparatively high rates of children who are on Child Protection Plans or who become Looked After in Herefordshire. While these may be concerning in their own right, these elevated numbers also put additional pressure on staff involved with safeguarding across agencies and especially in children's social care.

The Board's audit and quality assurance work has consistently told us that generally, the right children are getting the right level of support for their current situations. The local authority has undertaken a significant piece of work over the past six months to reduce the caseloads of its social workers through some targeted additional input to improve the situations of a number of children so that they can be supported appropriately without the need for a child protection plan.

Significant demands from the child protection system have also placed strain on other agencies. For example, during the year, the Board received a report from Public Health who had recently become the commissioners of the school nursing service in Herefordshire and who were unable to meet the increasing demands. More information about this is given in Section A *Evaluating the effectiveness of Child Safeguarding through performance monitoring*.

Audit work also tells us that in the main, agencies work well together to safeguard the children they work with. During the year, schools funded a post within the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) to manage the interface of schools with the MASH safeguarding professionals, and increase communication with safeguarding leads in schools. This reflects similar

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<sup>3</sup> The Children Act 2004 can be access at [www.legislation.gov.uk](http://www.legislation.gov.uk)

<sup>4</sup> The full report is available at [www.ofsted.gov.uk/local-authorities/herfordshire](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/local-authorities/herfordshire)



arrangements made by police, Herefordshire Council and health partners to resource their involvement in the MASH.

### Interagency Challenge and Cooperation

Herefordshire Safeguarding Children Board has also developed its *Three Steps to Safeguard Children*<sup>5</sup> and have promoted this in a number of communications during the year. The rationale behind this is to support practitioners to use informed professional judgement to take action in response to safeguarding concerns, make referrals to the MASH appropriately in line with Herefordshire's Levels of Need and to and to empower them to escalate their concerns should there be professional case disagreements. Escalations of case disagreements support the development of improving services as well as progressing work in individual cases. The Board monitors all escalations which reach senior management level and during 2013-2014 there were only two escalations which have reached this level. Single agency audit work indicates that the majority of case disagreements are effectively resolved prior to the level at which they need to be reported to the Board indicating that joint working and challenge between agencies is effective.

In order to ensure greater learning from the monitoring of escalations, Herefordshire Safeguarding Children Board has revised its Escalation processes to capture learning at an earlier stage and the new process will be implemented during 2014-2015.

The range of information available to the Board suggests that safeguarding arrangements are generally more effective and organisations do work together to support children in receipt of their services. However, the Board is aware that further improvements do need to be made to ensure children in receipt of child protection and safeguarding services consistently receive the best possible support.

To this end, during 2013-2014, Herefordshire Safeguarding Children Board identified further areas for development in addition to its 3 year strategic priorities agreed in 2013. These additional priorities, listed below, are included within its 2014-2015 Business Plan:

- ✚ Private Fostering
- ✚ Governance arrangements between the Board and the Improvement Board
- ✚ The capacity of the Business Unit
- ✚ Evaluation of training provided by the Safeguarding Board.

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<sup>5</sup> More information is available from the [Three Steps to Safeguard Children](http://www.herefordshiresafeguardingchildrenboard.org.uk) page at [www.herefordshiresafeguardingchildrenboard.org.uk](http://www.herefordshiresafeguardingchildrenboard.org.uk).

## The Board's ongoing improvement journey

Over the past two years Herefordshire Safeguarding Children Board has pursued the following key areas of our development through our Business Plans and associated work.

Here, observations made by Ofsted regarding the local safeguarding children board (LSCB) in their inspections in 2012 and 2014 are mapped against those key areas. The Board's work in these areas is also highlighted throughout the annual report.



## The context of safeguarding children in Herefordshire

Herefordshire is a rural county with a population of 184,900<sup>6</sup>, approximately, 36,100 of whom are under 18 years old.

The County's Integrated Strategic Needs Assessment, Understanding Herefordshire<sup>7</sup>, provides an evidence base to inform commissioning decisions, particularly those relating to priority setting and resource allocation. Using a wide range of data, Understanding Herefordshire identifies the most significant concerns for the county as well as noting performance against historical issues of concern.

Overall, there are few concerns being highlighted by Understanding Herefordshire around the safety and well-being of children indicating that Herefordshire continues to be a safe and supportive place for children to grow and develop. Furthermore, the assessment shows that there have been improvements in a range of components that affect the wellbeing of children including the standard of housing in Herefordshire over the past 10 years, road safety over the past 15 years and in the proportion of children reaching expected levels of attainment in reading, writing and mathematics in primary schools.

Understanding Herefordshire does however highlight the following areas of concern around the safeguarding and wellbeing of children:

- ✎ The rate of child protection referrals is above national average.
- ✎ The rate of children in poverty in Herefordshire has increased slightly although it is significantly below the national average.
- ✎ The rate of repeat instances of domestic abuse is high compared to the national average.

Following concerns raised by Herefordshire Safeguarding Children Board (HSCB) and the Children and Young People's Partnership that Understanding Herefordshire was not adequately focussed on the needs of children and young people, Public Health led a Children's Integrated Needs Assessment during the year. Interim results, presented to Herefordshire Safeguarding Children Board's Strategic Board meeting in April, raised the following specific concerns:

- ✎ Inequalities in health, education and safety exist within the county and some cohorts of children are more likely to experience these including:
  - Children in receipt of disability living allowance
  - Children who are carers; 301 are currently on the carers register
- ✎ Herefordshire has a higher rate of first time entrants to the youth justice system than the regional or national figures. There were 176 first time entrants into the youth justice system in 2013-2014. The latest national comparator data (up to September 2013) converts the numbers into a rate-per-10,000-population for comparison. Herefordshire's rate was 589 compared to the national rate of 464.
- ✎ Herefordshire has a higher rate of homelessness than national and statistical neighbours and 201 children are part of homeless families.
- ✎ Data quality continues to be a concern within safeguarding case management systems with reasons for safeguarding intervention not easily reportable.

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<sup>6</sup> 2012 Population & household estimates for Herefordshire  
(<http://factsandfigures.herefordshire.gov.uk/1847.aspx>)

<sup>7</sup> Understanding Herefordshire is available at <http://factsandfigures.herefordshire.gov.uk/1922.aspx>

Herefordshire Safeguarding Children Board is also aware of these issues and is working with partners who are working to reduce these concerns. Where appropriate they have been included within the Board's Business Plan priorities or Risk Register for action and monitoring.

The Board's understanding of the context of safeguarding in Herefordshire is developed through its [Learning and Improvement](#)<sup>8</sup> processes including its quality assurance programme. The programme includes regular submissions of data about safeguarding themes from a range of agencies as well as themed and case audits throughout the year. More information on these themes is available in Section A *Evaluating the effectiveness of Child Safeguarding through performance monitoring*.

Herefordshire Safeguarding Children Board continues to engage in external scrutiny and governance processes to support its ongoing improvement agenda including working with the Health and Wellbeing Board, Herefordshire Council and Herefordshire Safeguarding Adults Board. In addition, during 2013-2014, the Board was involved in a Peer Review and continues to work closely with the Herefordshire Supporting and Protecting Children Improvement Board.

### **Levels of Need, Co-ordinated Early Help and Referrals to Social Care**

Herefordshire Safeguarding Children Board, in cooperation with its regional partners, maintains multi-agency procedures<sup>9</sup> to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and with the aim of encouraging close working between agencies to facilitate early intervention and support to meet the needs of children, young people and their families.

These are supplemented locally by The Herefordshire Levels of Need and Service Response Guidance<sup>10</sup> which gives all practitioners across partner agencies clear guidance as to when they should be providing appropriate responses on their own; engaging the early help services of a range partner organisations through use of the Common Assessment Framework and Herefordshire's Multi-Agency Groups and when it is appropriate to make a referral to Social Care.

Embedding the Levels of Need guidance into practice across the children's workforce remains a focus for Herefordshire Safeguarding Children Board. During the year, the Levels of Need have been promoted across the Board's newsletters, promotional materials and website. The Board's audit work has suggested that the Levels of Need are being used more consistently by partner organisations and within the MASH, although its performance management analysis suggests that there are still inconsistencies within this. For that reason, the Board is undertaking a redevelopment of the Levels of Need during 2014-2015 which will further support professional decision making by the children's workforce and bring greater clarity for families and the public.

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<sup>8</sup> More information is available from the [Learning and Improvement](#) page at [www.herefordshiresafeguardingchildrenboard.org.uk](http://www.herefordshiresafeguardingchildrenboard.org.uk).

<sup>9</sup> <http://westmerciaconsortium.proceduresonline.com/index.htm>

<sup>10</sup> Available for download from the [Policies and Procedures page](#) at [www.herefordshiresafeguardingchildrenboard.org.uk](http://www.herefordshiresafeguardingchildrenboard.org.uk).



## What have we done to improve the effectiveness of child safeguarding in Herefordshire?

### a. Evaluating the effectiveness of Child Safeguarding through performance monitoring.

A significant amount of data is received and analysed by the Quality Assurance and Evaluation sub group in the form of reports on the safeguarding performance for member organisations and on specific safeguarding themes. The Quality Assurance and Evaluation sub group analyses the data presented in the reports, where possible triangulating that against data and intelligence derived from other quality assurance activity and identifies areas of concern for further monitoring or investigation. Performance Reports received by the group include the following quarterly reports:

- ✎ Children's Social Care and Early Intervention
- ✎ Health
- ✎ Police
- ✎ Youth Offending Service
- ✎ Domestic Abuse
- ✎ Safeguarding in Education (Termly)
- ✎ Effectiveness of Child Protections Conferences
- ✎ Case Escalations
- ✎ Safeguarding Training and Development

In addition, the following annual reports are also received by the Quality Assurance and Evaluation sub group:

- ✎ Sexual Assault Referral Centre
- ✎ Missing Children
- ✎ Private Fostering
- ✎ Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)
- ✎ Independent Reviewing Officers (for children's social care)
- ✎ Sexual Exploitation and Trafficking
- ✎ Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC)
- ✎ Education
- ✎ Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA)
- ✎ Youth Homelessness

It is expected that Herefordshire Safeguarding Children Board members from the above organisations maintain ongoing processes to monitor and quality assure their own safeguarding activity. The nature of that monitoring is set out in the internal safeguarding practice presentations, which were refreshed during 2013-2014 and which form part of the Board's Commitment to Safeguarding document<sup>11</sup>.

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<sup>11</sup> Available for download from the [About HSCB](http://www.herefordshiresafeguardingchildrenboard.org.uk) page at [www.herefordshiresafeguardingchildrenboard.org.uk](http://www.herefordshiresafeguardingchildrenboard.org.uk).

Performance  
Monitoring

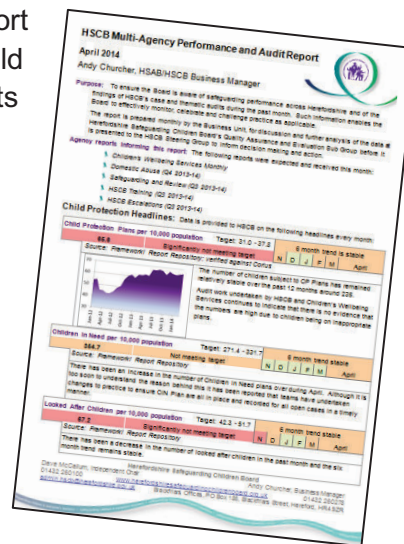
Voice of the  
Child

The ongoing monitoring of performance data through quarterly reports enables Herefordshire Safeguarding Children Board to challenge partners where analysis of the data identifies safeguarding concerns. The Quality Assurance and Evaluation Sub Group undertake the initial analysis of the performance data and communicate this analysis to members of the Strategic Board (via the Steering Group) to enable holding to account.

To ensure the effectiveness of this process during the year Herefordshire Safeguarding Children Board developed a Performance Highlight report communicating monthly data and analysis around ten Child Protection Headlines, areas of concern from quarterly reports and the findings of the Board's audits.

The ten Child Protection Headlines are:

- 🔗 Child Protection Plans per 10,000 population
- 🔗 Children in Need per 10,000 population
- 🔗 Looked After Children per 10,000 population
- 🔗 Contacts processed within 24 hours
- 🔗 Conversion Rate of Contacts to Referrals
- 🔗 Timeliness of Assessments
- 🔗 Timeliness of Child Protection Visits
- 🔗 Timeliness of Looked After Children Visits (two measures)
- 🔗 Percentage of Child Protection Plans lasting 24 months or more



October's Performance Highlight Report highlighted a concern around data from West Mercia Youth Offending Service (YOS) showing, that while there is long term ongoing decline of First Time Entrants to the Youth Justice System, our numbers are still higher than the newly available comparator data. Concern over this resulted in the Youth Offending Service making a specific presentation to the Board's Steering Group which then directed Police and YOS to work together to test the hypothesis given as to why this is the case.

Furthermore, this data then informed a wider discussion about the potential effect on Safeguarding of service redesign and cuts within multi-agency universal and early help services. Agencies agreed that they will inform Herefordshire Safeguarding Children Board, the Children and Young People's Partnership and the Health and Wellbeing Board when they are reducing or redesigning their services so that these proposals can be scrutinised by partners.

As a result, the Board's Steering Group received a report from Public Health around the current capacity of School Nursing services who were taking responsibility for meeting a specific area of health providers' statutory duties. The report asked the Board to agree to proposed changes to the service. The Steering Group challenged Public Health about their understanding of their statutory responsibilities and that these shouldn't be compromised within any service redesign. Public Health reported back to the Board, outlining the way in which they had rectified the issues to ensure children could continue to access appropriate safeguarding services from them which may otherwise have been reduced.

Voice of the  
Child

Developments for the Board or its partners has not progressed as expected and will be carried through into 2014-2015.

**Performance  
Monitoring**

**Voice of the  
Child**

An area that has not been developed as planned at the beginning of the year is the Board's commitment to understanding the way that partner agencies listen to and use the voice of children in receipt of their services as a significant indicator of quality and to inform improvements. Each reporting agency, listed above, is expected to report how they seek and take account of children and families in their service delivery. Reporting during 2013-2014 was inconsistent, highlighting the relatively under-developed processes used by partners. The Board is also aware of the fact that it also needs its own mechanisms for understanding the voice and experience of the child and has included this within its 2014-2015 Business Plan.

Wye Valley NHS Trust and YOS have processes which are beginning to inform service design and all partner agencies see the development of their work in this area as a priority. Herefordshire Safeguarding Children Board will also develop its own processes to seek the views of children and young people through 2014-2015.

Through developing its ability to test, triangulate and analyse performance data, Herefordshire Safeguarding Children Board is now more empowered to identify concerns around data quality. Children's Wellbeing Services, who provide the majority of data around child protection

**Performance  
Monitoring**

The Board, now more able to test data presented is aware of inconsistencies in data quality and are seeking to improve this.

processes are undertaking a significant transformation project of its electronic case recording system. By the end of 2013-2014 the Board was more confident in certain data items being provided and this project is continuing into 2014-2015. Data quality across partners has been identified as an action area for development within the 2014-2015 Business Plan.

The Board's Learning and Improvement Framework has been developed to combine performance monitoring with a programme of case and thematic audits to ensure the best possible understanding of the effectiveness of safeguarding services in Herefordshire.

The Board proposes themes for thematic audits in advance; including the scheduling of quarterly review audits approximately 6 months after the initial audit is carried out to identify how learning has made an impact on practice. The programme of thematic audits began in April 2013 and during 2013-2014 the Board undertook the following review audits.

Thematic audits take an in depth and searching review of practice in the cases audited. It should therefore be noted that this approach means that sample sizes are small and some care must be taken when extrapolating findings across cohorts. This is only done when triangulated against other supporting evidence such as the analysis of performance data.

**Thematic and Review Audit of the Children's Social Care front door**

Following multi-agency audits of referrals made to children's social care (April 2013) and Strategy Discussions/Meetings (May 2013) the Board undertook a review audit of both elements in October 2013. The following overarching learning was identified and impact of progress checked:

Initial Finding (April/May)	Review Finding (October)	Impact Assessment
The quality of some referrals was compromised through empty sections of the form. An action was agreed to update the Multi	An updated MARF was used for the majority of the referrals audited and no sections were left empty.	By updating the MARF there has been an increase in the quality of information included in some referrals.

Performance Monitoring	Voice of the Child	
Initial Finding (April/May)	Review Finding (October)	Impact Assessment
<p>Agency Referral Form to remind referrers to note Not Known if that is the case to improve the quality of information within referrals and ensure gaps are not left unnecessarily.</p>	<p>Where appropriate a note was made that specific information was not known or not relevant.</p>	<p>Higher levels of confidence can be placed on initial screening decisions and strategy discussions where there is an increased level of assurance that key information is not missing.</p>
<p>The Levels of Need were not consistently complied with by the referrer or the team receiving the MARF within children's social care. Therefore the guidance was reissued and promoted heavily by HSCB across all communications channels and training and development opportunities.</p>	<p>Cases audited in October all showed greater alignment to the Levels of Need Guidance in the referrals and within the MASH where they were received.</p>	<p>A targeted campaign to increase knowledge and use of the Levels of Need guidance has increased the appropriateness of responses by agencies to safeguarding concerns. Further work is needed and is ongoing in HSCB's the Levels of Need refresh programme.</p>
<p>One agency was using a standardised form to make referrals which risked wrong information being included within the MARF and jeopardised the quality of decision making at initial screening.</p>	<p>Referrals from the agency involved were in the correct format and assurance given that the standardised form is no longer being used.</p>	<p>The robustness of referrals made by the agency has increased as the standardised form has been removed from use.</p>
<p>Concerns were raised about the consistency of the quality of Strategy Discussions and their compliance with Working Together. The Safeguarding and Review Service were required to assure the Board of how they would increase levels of quality.</p>	<p>The review audit showed similar inconsistencies within the practice of strategy discussions within the MASH and that work to increase the quality of Strategy Discussions had not been successful at this stage.</p>	<p>These further findings concurred with the findings of the Peer Review, undertaken at around the same time, and since then the quality of Strategy Discussions and the recording of them has improved as noted through further audit and QA work.</p>
<p>There was little evidence of the voice and experience of the child being captured adequately in strategy decisions. HSCB highlighted the need to increase the level of use of the voice of the child within referrals and decision</p>	<p>Cases audited showed an increased level use of the voice of the child within referrals which was then reflected in part within the recorded strategy decisions.</p>	<p>While work with the voice of the child is ongoing and improvements need to be made, decisions are being made with greater emphasis on the voice of the child in case</p>

Performance Monitoring	Voice of the Child	
Initial Finding (April/May) making within its work programme.	Review Finding (October)	Impact Assessment assessments.

**Thematic and Review Audit of Child Protection Conferences**

Building on learning from thematic audits of ICPCs (July 2013) and RCPCs (September 2013) Herefordshire Safeguarding Children Board undertook a review audit of all conferences in February 2014. The following overarching learning was identified and impact of progress checked through this process:

Initial Finding (July/September)	Review Finding (Feb)	Impact Assessment
Multi-agency involvement (attendance and submitted reports) in conferences is not consistent enough. Safeguarding and Review were asked to investigate the length of notice given to agencies invited to ICPCs and propose actions for improvements.	Audit findings suggest that invites to agencies are being sent with an increased period of notice and conferences are more likely to go ahead as planned without last minute rescheduling.	While improvements have been made in process to support greater engagement by agencies, performance information suggests little improvement in attendance and reports submitted to conferences. Further work is underway to improve this.
Inconsistencies in the quality of conferences was raised as an issue with specific concern around the management of invites and minutes. HSCB agreed to support Safeguarding and Review in the development of resources for Chairs and attendees at conferences.	Overall, the audit identified a greater level of consistency in the quality of conferences from the previous audits, notably in the quality of chairing and clarity in decision making.  Distribution of minutes remained a concern.	The quality of multi-agency decision making seems to have improved at conferences at the same time as the audit identified greater levels of consistency in the quality chairing and recording within minutes.

Herefordshire Safeguarding Children Board is aware that its programme of audits is very ambitious and, as observed by Ofsted in May 2014, is probably too ambitious to be able to ensure all learning generated through them is converted into improvements in safeguarding practice or the supporting frameworks. During 2014-2015 the Quality Assurance and Evaluation sub group, under the governance of the Steering Group, will develop its auditing processes to ensure more time is given to ensuring improvements are planned and actioned.

**Audit and Case  
Analysis**

HSCB will now be reviewing and developing its audit processes to ensure all learning is converted into improvement.



**b. Learning and Improvement through Case Reviews.**

The Joint Case Review (JCR) group oversees learning and improvement through case reviews by providing advice and management of Serious Case Reviews for both adult and children’s safeguarding boards and domestic homicide reviews (DHR). The group makes initial decisions about multi-agency reviews into cases where multi-agency failings may have contributed to someone experiencing significant harm and makes a recommendation to the Independent Chair of Herefordshire Safeguarding Children Board on cases involving children who has the final decision on the review process in each case. Following new guidance released in Working Together to Safeguard Children (April 2013)<sup>12</sup>, the group also makes decisions about undertaking reviews for cases which do not meet the criteria for an SCR but which do merit review.

During 2013-2014, the Joint Case Review Group has developed processes for the undertaking of reviews in Herefordshire. The Significant Incident Learning Process (SILP) has been used to date on four occasions by Herefordshire Safeguarding Children Board, including in undertaking its serious case review, and the process has been evaluated by those involved. In addition, the Board has also developed a Herefordshire Evaluation and Learning Process (HELP) which incorporates key activities from established learning processes. The HELP methodology has so far not been used to review cases from the Children’s Board. It is currently being used to review two cases by Herefordshire Safeguarding Adults Board.

Outcome of Referral to JCR	Children	Adults	DHR
Referrals Received	7	3	1
Serious Case Reviews	1 (SILP)	0	0
Independently chaired multi-agency review	2 (SILPs)	2 (HELPS)	0
Internally chaired multi-agency review	0	0	0
Single Agency Review	1	0	0
Did not meet criteria for review	3	1	1
Reviews completed during the year following referrals made in 2012-2013	1	0	0

The Joint Case Review Group had eleven cases referred to it during the year in comparison to seven in 2012-2013 reflecting the new guidance.

A key theme that has been common in two independently chaired multi-agency reviews undertaken by Herefordshire Safeguarding Children’s Board, and also identified in a number of its case audits is that of neglect. The effect of the neglect is different within the two reviewed cases, but it had a significant role in the final outcomes of both. As a result, neglect has become a priority action area of the Board’s 2014-2015 Business Plan and new guidance and training will be developed during the year to

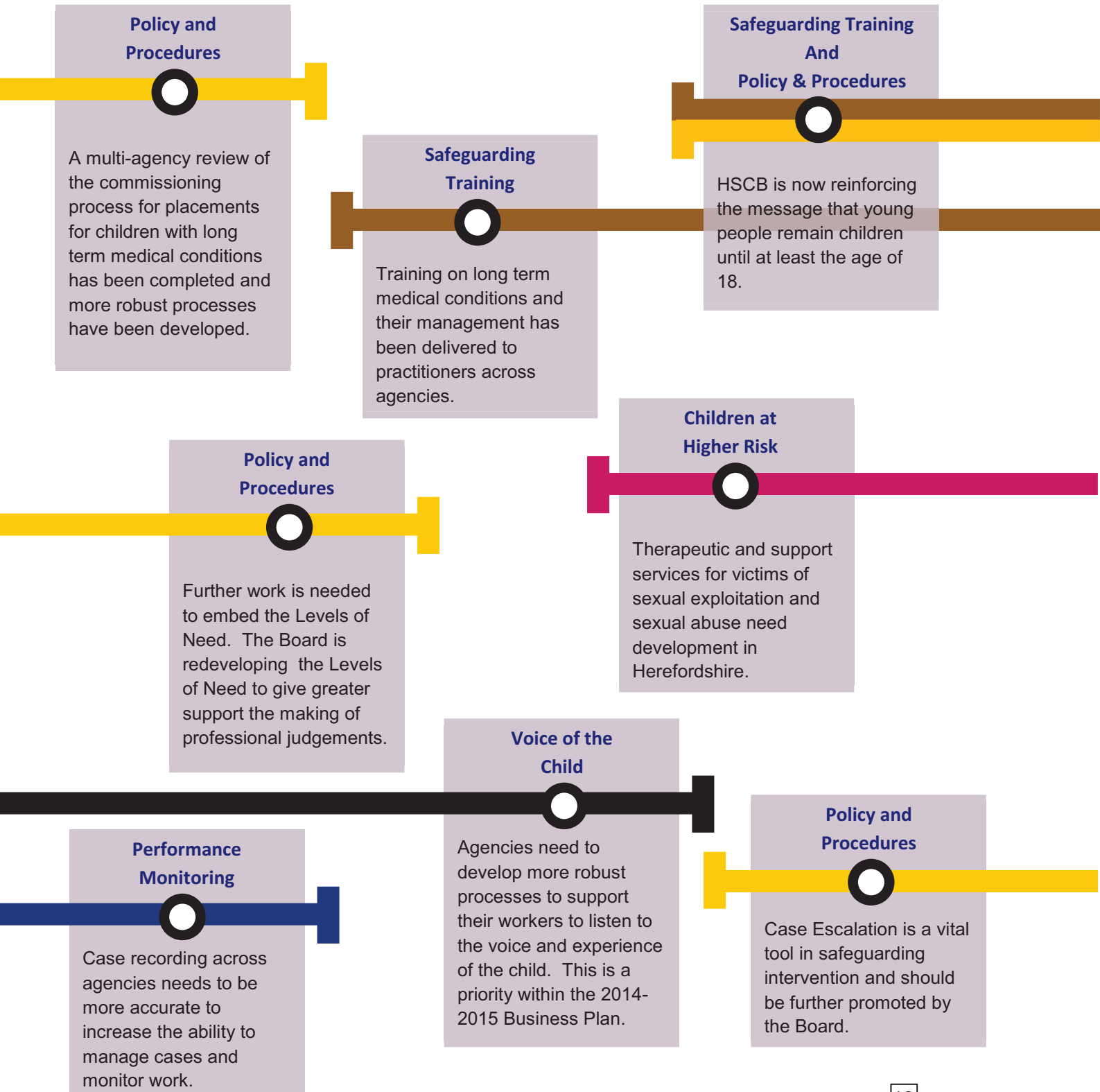
**Safeguarding Training  
And  
Policy & Procedures**

HSCB is now developing new guidance on neglect which will be supported by training.

<sup>12</sup> Working Together to Safeguard Children can be downloaded from [www.workingtogetheronline.co.uk](http://www.workingtogetheronline.co.uk)

ensure the workforce are more able to identify neglect and understand the potential additional risks that it can have on children.

The Board maintains a composite learning and improvement action plan, overseen by its Steering Group, which includes all the agreed actions arising from the recommendations made through case reviews alongside those which have resulted from the Board's thematic and case audit programme. Some of the additional actions resulting from the Board's Case Review processes are outlined below:



### c. Workforce Development: Training and Communication.

Herefordshire Safeguarding Children Board communicates with organisations across Herefordshire through it's:

- 🔗 Membership from partner organisations
- 🔗 Newsletter
- 🔗 Business Plan
- 🔗 Training
- 🔗 Events
- 🔗 Website

The Board progresses the County's joined-up approach to safeguarding in Herefordshire by bringing together directors and strategic leaders across organisations working with children. Organisations represented include:

- 🔗 Herefordshire Council, incorporating Children's Social Care, Education Services, Housing and the Community Safety Partnership
- 🔗 NHS Herefordshire
- 🔗 West Mercia Youth Offending Service
- 🔗 West Mercia Probation Trust (superseded in June 2014 by the National Probation Service and the West Mercia Community Rehabilitation Company )
- 🔗 Herefordshire Voluntary Organisations Support Service
- 🔗 Hoople
- 🔗 Wye Valley NHS Trust
- 🔗 2gether NHS Foundation Trust
- 🔗 Education establishments
- 🔗 West Mercia Police
- 🔗 Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (CAFCASS)
- 🔗 Strategic Health Authority

Further third sector organisations are represented as appropriate within the Board's sub groups. Members of the Board and its sub groups have a range of responsibilities as laid out in its Constitution<sup>13</sup> including representing the Herefordshire Safeguarding Children Board within their organisation, and ensuring that the organisation is meeting its obligations to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

Therefore, members of the Board have a responsibility to ensure that their organisations understand what the Board is doing and is working towards the priorities of the Board.

The development and publishing of the Board's Business Plan also supports members in ensuring the Board's priorities are promoted among partner agencies. In 2013-2014 the Board produced its poster of priorities for practitioners working in Herefordshire as



<sup>13</sup> Available for download from the [Policies and Procedures page](http://www.herefordshiresafeguardingchildrenboard.org.uk) at [www.herefordshiresafeguardingchildrenboard.org.uk](http://www.herefordshiresafeguardingchildrenboard.org.uk).



an aide memoir to the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

Through meeting its statutory responsibility to ensure the availability of inter-agency safeguarding training, and through providing additional training and e-learning to meet the needs of Herefordshire, Herefordshire Safeguarding Children Board maintains an on-going line of communication to front line staff across the children's workforce in Herefordshire.

Inter-agency safeguarding training was delivered through the Board to 1583 practitioners during the year, which includes a number of people who have been trained to deliver training within their own organisations. The main purpose of all of this training is to ensure all partners understand the most effective ways to promote the safety and welfare of children and young people. Training courses delivered have focussed on a range of safeguarding themes including:

- ✎ Universal Introduction to Safeguarding
- ✎ Universal and Specialist Sexual Exploitation and Trafficking
- ✎ Targeted Multi-Agency Working Together to Safeguarding Children
- ✎ Specialist Safer Recruitment and Designated Member of Staff Training for Education
- ✎ Specialist Safeguarding in Leadership

Sexual Exploitation and Trafficking was identified as a key development area for Herefordshire Safeguarding Children Board in the 2013-2014 Business Plan based on intelligence gathered by partners during the previous year. One element of the action plan was to raise awareness across the children's workforce and as part of those activities the Board provided the following learning opportunities:

In June 2013 Herefordshire Safeguarding Children Board held two half day multi-agency events (with 249 attendees) to raise awareness of the issue with speakers from Barnardo's, the Police, the third sector and children's social care. All Herefordshire's secondary schools and further education colleges sent attendees and all attendees were given resources to take back to their workplaces to provide information to colleagues.

- ✎ At the events the Board launched its Universal Sexual Exploitation and Trafficking e-learning which, by the end of Q4 had been undertaken by 177 practitioners.
- ✎ The Board has developed a Sexual Exploitation and Trafficking module within all our Targeted Working Together Training since June 2013 which by the end of Q4 had been delivered to 212 practitioners.
- ✎ Bi-monthly Specialist Sexual Exploitation and Trafficking Training courses have been commissioned by the Board and provided at subsidised rates to members of children's workforce. 5 courses were delivered to 77 trainees during 2013-2014 and these are continuing into 2014-2015.

Attendees at all of these learning events receive information including copies of Herefordshire Safeguarding Children Board's Signs and Indicators poster which can then be displayed within the workplace.

Of the 77 trainees on the Specialist Sexual Exploitation and Trafficking training during 2013-2014, twenty-two secondary schools, secondary pupil referral units and further education

#### Safeguarding Training and Children at Higher Risk

The Board committed significant resource to raising awareness of Sexual Exploitation and Trafficking through training and events.

colleges have been represented and those who have not been represented have now received targeted communications from the Board to encourage engagement:

Having undertaken a review of comments from education staff within their course evaluations it is clear that the course content has been sufficiently engaging to ensure wider dissemination of learning across the establishments they represent. Areas identified as key learning within those evaluations include:

- ✎ The fact that sexual exploitation is an issue, “even in Herefordshire”;
- ✎ The importance of information sharing, especially in regard to safeguarding children and young people from sexual exploitation;
- ✎ Specific vulnerabilities of children including those at higher risk and the signs and indicators staff should be looking for;
- ✎ The legal framework supporting intervention work;
- ✎ How to speak to young people effectively to support them in understanding and communicating if they are being exploited.

The following specific comment was made by a member of staff at one of Herefordshire’s further education colleges and highlights how the training has supported an increase in the identification of cases of children and young people affected by sexual exploitation and how the workforce is being supported to act appropriately to it:

“The signs of trafficking was especially useful. During a de-brief on the training to colleagues later that week, a member of staff recognised a situation with a student and we acted on our suspicions and the case was accepted.”

All trainees from education who completed evaluations stated that the content was pertinent and that they would be sharing learning within their establishments to other staff. Some trainees also stated that they would be using some of the learning to raise awareness among their students.

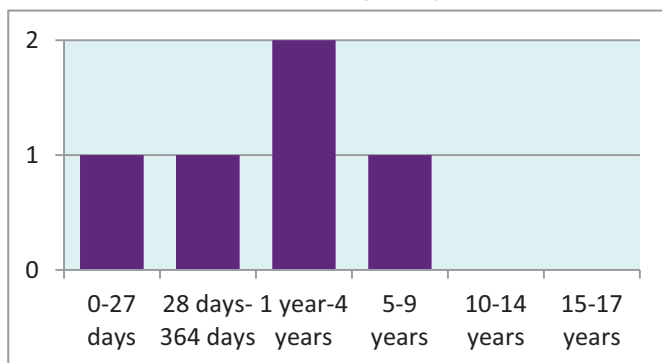
During the year Herefordshire Safeguarding Children Board has launched a termly Safeguarding Leads in Education Forum to ensure a regular two way conversation is facilitated between the Board and education providers to increase the effectiveness of safeguarding work.

The Board’s Accommodation Providers Safeguarding Forums have been attended by representatives from the county’s fostering agencies, residential schools and looked after children’s homes. They have focussed on a range of safeguarding issues including sexual exploitation and trafficking due to the evidenced increased risks to children in the looked after system, children missing from care and developing processes for notification of new placements in line with new statutory guidance introduced in 2014. It is vital that the Board accommodation providers within its work as there are over 200 looked after children who have been placed in the care of these providers by other local authorities.

**d. Learning and Improvement through reviews into Child Deaths.**

Herefordshire Safeguarding Children Board hosts the Child Death Overview Panel (CDOP) which reviews all child deaths in Herefordshire whatever the cause of death. CDOP is a multi-agency panel led by Public Health and includes members from health services, Children’s Social Care, the Police and the Coroner’s Office. They determine whether deaths were preventable and whether there are any lessons to be learnt or issues of concern.

There were a total of eleven deaths of Herefordshire children from April 2013 until the end of March 2014. Of those, CDOP was able to complete its reviews of 5 of them during the year, three male and two female. The graph shows the ages of those children where the reviews of the deaths concluded during the year:



Of the five cases, CDOP concluded that one of the deaths could potentially have been prevented<sup>14</sup> and there were factors identified which, if modified, could help to prevent similar deaths in future

Whilst it is positive that the county has few child deaths, it is not possible to draw any meaningful analysis or conclusions to determine emerging themes in relation to

causes of death. Herefordshire Safeguarding Children Board therefore shares its CDOP information with regional partners to identify any specific learning.

Lesson Learnt	Action Taken by HSCB
Co-sleeping was a factor in a child death although numbers have continued to reduce.	Education for all of recommendations for safe sleeping (co-sleeping death) and ensuring information is readily available.
Following a child deaths in 2012-2013 and 2013-2014 where the children had different long term health conditions, the need for specific training was identified.	Continued Education and professional development of health professionals and across agencies in the management of long term health conditions and the medications involved.
Referral pathways for vulnerable young adults were not clear and there was evidence that agencies were unclear on when young people should be counted as adults in the planning and delivery of services.	Clear guidance has been reissued making it clear that all young people under the age of 18 should be supported as children within health services. Referral pathways have also been reviewed and updated.

<sup>14</sup> Section 5.8 of Working Together to Safeguard Children 2013 states that preventable child deaths are defined as “those in which modifiable factors may have contributed to the death. These factors are defined as those which, by means of nationally or locally achievable interventions, could be modified to reduce the risk of future child deaths”.

**e. Developing and maintaining Policies and Procedures<sup>15</sup>.**

During 2013-2014, Herefordshire Safeguarding Children Board identified the need to extend its processes for maintaining its policies and procedures which at the time were the responsibility of its Steering Group. While the majority of these are shared with regional partners in West Mercia there is significant work to do to keep the policies fit for purpose and, with an increasingly demanding role for Steering Group, the Board decided to re-establish its Policy and Procedures sub group.

In response to inconsistencies in practice identified through the Board's learning activities, the following policies and procedures have been developed during 2013-2014:

- 🔗 Herefordshire Safeguarding Children Board's Risk and Resilience Assessment Tool;
- 🔗 The standard script and supporting documentation for Strategy Meetings;
- 🔗 Minimum Standards for Supervision across agencies;
- 🔗 Guidance for members of Child Protection Core Groups

**Policy and  
Procedures**

The following policies and procedures are scheduled for development during 2014-2015:

- Levels of Need & Service Response Guidance
- Suite of Assessment/conference policies/procedures
- Pre-Birth Planning Processes
- Risk for Adolescents Policy
- Neglect Guidance
- Quick Guide to CP Procedures

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<sup>15</sup> All policies and procedures mentioned are available to view through the [Policies and Procedures page](#) at [www.herefordshiresafeguardingchildrenboard.org.uk](http://www.herefordshiresafeguardingchildrenboard.org.uk).

## 2013/14 Strategic Priorities

The Herefordshire Safeguarding Children Board's (HSCB) Business Plan 2013/14 set out the Board's strategic aims and specific objectives. The strategic priorities were based on the Board's analysis of priority areas for development and improvement. This section describes the progress made against these specific priorities.

### Priority Improvement Area 1

We said we would improve the experience of children, young people and families when they are supported in safeguarding systems (i.e. CAF, Social Care).

How we said we would achieve this:

- Ensuring all agencies improved the way they listened to and used the voice of children in receipt of their services
- Improve the quality of reflective supervision and the involvement of management in case decision making.
- Implement changes in safeguarding practices and HSCB functioning to meet the statutory changes within Working Together

What did we do?

- Required all partner agencies to regularly report to us how they listened to children and families in receipt of their services and what that was telling them.
- Developed a shared minimum standard for supervision to ensure managers are involved in case decision making.
- Increased the number of in depth case reviews that we undertake to ensure an greater amount of inter-agency learning is generated to inform service improvements.

What difference has this made?

- This accountability mechanism has encouraged agencies to develop their services through decisions, in part informed by the experiences of children and families.
- Frontline workers who are supporting children and young people are supported to make more empowered decisions.
- Direct improvements in the knowledge of the workforce with regard to long term health conditions, referral pathways and needs of children and young people placed in specialist care.

### Priority Improvement Area 2:

We said we would improve multi-agency case work.

How we said we would achieve this:

- Improve multi-agency case decision making.
- Improving multi-agency case assessments within Children's Social Care.

What did we do?

- Ensured that agencies not in on-going support relationships with children and families were inputting effectively into early help assessments (e.g. Common Assessment Framework and Multi-Agency Groups).
- Fully implemented Herefordshire's Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub.
- Understood how agencies were involved in Strategy Discussions/Meetings and ensured that the MASH supported these.

What difference has this made?

- Increased multi-agency involvement in early help and initial decision making ensures the most appropriate packages can be put in place for children and families in need of support.

### Priority Improvement Area 3:

We said we would tackle evidenced safeguarding issues in Herefordshire

We said we would achieve this by improving the quality of multi-agency work with:

- Children affected by Domestic Abuse
- Children affected by Sexual Exploitation and Trafficking
- Children Missing from Care
- Children Placed in Herefordshire by Other Local Authorities.

What did we do?

- Developed our understanding of Domestic Abuse through additional focusses on this area within our audit and performance monitoring processes.
- Influenced the partnership in Herefordshire to put additional emphasis on Domestic Abuse and influenced the commissioning of additional services.
- Raised the profile of sexual exploitation in Herefordshire, developing support resources for professionals in order to identify and respond to children affected by it.
- Developed support processes for those who have been involved in sexual exploitation.
- Ensured accommodation providers understand the responsibilities they have which support multi-agency safeguarding frame works for children placed in Herefordshire and those who go missing from care.
- Developed the Board's Missing Children Action Plan with the aim of reducing incidences of children going missing and reducing the safeguarding impact on them when they do.

What difference has this made?

- Additional services have been commissioned to support families affected by Domestic Abuse.
- Increased the number of referrals being made for children involved in sexual exploitation and developed more effective multi-agency interventions for such children.
- Increased the number of notifications of children being placed in Herefordshire by other local authorities so that social care and accommodation providers can work together to safeguard children more effectively.
- Improved the working relationships between police and children's social care in response to incidence of children missing.



#### Priority Improvement Area 4:

We said we would improve the effectiveness of the Safeguarding Children Board

How we said we would achieve this:

- 🔗 Develop the culture of constructive challenge within the Board
- 🔗 Develop an evidence base of safeguarding casework to demonstrate and learn from good practice
- 🔗 Agree a model of SCRs and significant case reviews in Herefordshire

What did we do?

- 🔗 Members of the Board were empowered to make more informed challenges of partners through the development of our monthly performance bulletin, developing training available to Board members and monitoring attendance across Board meetings.
- 🔗 Processes of collating and documenting good practice and excellent outcomes were developed.
- 🔗 Methodologies for undertaking significant case reviews were used and/or reviewed and a local framework was developed for use as appropriate alongside the Significant Incident Learning Process.

What difference has this made?

- 🔗 Ofsted identified an appropriate level of challenge within Board meetings which over the year has ensured partners give adequate resource and support to their safeguarding responsibilities.
- 🔗 Increased numbers of significant case reviews has generated a range of learning which is beginning to translate into improvements in multi-agency safeguarding case work.

## Appendix 1: Herefordshire Safeguarding Children Board Membership at March 2014

Agency	Role/Job Title
HSCB	Independent Chair
HSCB	Lay Members (x3) Contact via the Business Unit
2gether NHS Foundation Trust	Deputy Director of Nursing
CAFCASS	Head of Service
The Brookfield School & Specialist College	Head Teacher, Representing Schools
NHS England Area Team	Assistant Director Patient Experience
Herefordshire Council	Lead Member: Young People and Children's Wellbeing
Public Health, Herefordshire Council	Assistant Director
CW Services, Herefordshire Council	Director of Children's Wellbeing Services
CW Services, Herefordshire Council	Assistant Director, Safeguarding and Family Support
CW Services, Herefordshire Council	Head of Additional Needs
Adult's Wellbeing, Herefordshire Council	Head of Transformation and Safeguarding, Adults' Well-Being
Ministry of Defence	HR Manager
Herefordshire CCG	Executive Lead Nurse
Herefordshire CCG	Head of Safeguarding
Herefordshire CCG	Designated Doctor, Child Protection
West Mercia Police	Head of Protecting Vulnerable People
West Mercia Probation Trust	Assistant Chief Officer
West Mercia Women's Aid	Chief Executive, Representing 3rd sector
Wye Valley NHS Trust	Director of Nursing and Quality
West Mercia Youth Offending Service	Commissioning, Performance & Quality Assurance Manager



## Appendix 2: Herefordshire Safeguarding Children Board Structure and Attendance

	Strategic Board	Steering Group	QA Sub Group	Joint Case Review	Child Death Overview Panel	MASH Governance	T&WD Sub Group	Policy and Procedure	SET Task and Finish
HSCB (Chair and/or Lay Members)									
2gether NHS Foundation Trust									
Education Establishments									
Herefordshire Council (Elected Member)									
Herefordshire Council	Education								
	Children's social care								
	Sustainable Communities								
	Adult social care								
	Public Health								
Ministry of Defence									
Herefordshire CCG									
NHS England Area Team <sup>16</sup>									
West Mercia Police									
West Mercia Probation Trust									
Third Sector									
Wye Valley NHS Trust									
Youth Offending Service									
CAFCASS <sup>17</sup>									
Attendance Key	Not attended 30% or more meetings		Apologies sent and rep attended 30% or more meetings			Attended more than 70%		Not on group membership	

65

<sup>16-17</sup> The agencies are not expected to attend all Strategic Board meetings and attendance rating is calculated on their agreed attendance.

## Appendix 3: Herefordshire Safeguarding Children Board Budget Summary

Working Together states that all local safeguarding children board (LSCB) member organisations have an obligation to provide LSCBs with reliable resources (including finance) that enable the LSCB to be strong and effective. Members should share the financial responsibility for the LSCB in such a way that a disproportionate burden does not fall on a small number of partner agencies.

The following table states how our member organisations contribute financially to the work of the Board.

<b>Agency contributions</b>	<b>2013/14</b>
Herefordshire Council	£127,016
NHS Herefordshire	£45,203
West Mercia Police	£30,165
Youth Offending Service	£645
West Mercia Probation	£4,612
CAFCASS	£550
Funding Carried Forward	£39,306
Total income	<u>£247,497</u>

<b>Expenditure</b>	<b>2013/14</b>
Independent Chair	£22,000
Business Unit Staff and Costs	£142,512
Additional Business Costs	£7,478
Training and development (including HSCB Multi-Agency Trainer)	£20,192
Independently Authored Case Reviews	£20,928
Meeting expenses	£778
Publicity, information provision and participation	£6,630
Funding Carried Forward	£ 26,979
Total expenditure	<u>£247,497</u>



**Business  
Plan  
2014-2015**

**Development  
Priorities  
2013-2016**

Herefordshire  
**Safeguarding Children Board**

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## Foreword by the Independent Chair

This is the second of a three year strategic period for Herefordshire Safeguarding Children Board. In order to make significant progress, it was important that The Board carefully prioritised its activity. This year, our priorities continue to be improving the experiences of children and families in safeguarding systems, improving the way in which organisations work together, tackling specific safeguarding issues that we know are in need of local focus and improving the way that The Board discharges its responsibilities.

The HSCB Business Plan for 2013-14 was ambitious and far reaching. Much of the planned activity was delivered successfully and my thanks go to all those who worked tirelessly to achieve this. HSCB is now considerably better placed to understand the quality of safeguarding work that is being done in the county, there is a significant drive to develop that quality and the co-ordination in the way it is being managed is also considerably improved. We now need to sustain and accelerate the momentum that has been achieved so far. There remain important areas in which HSCB plans were not fully delivered. One notable such area relates to how HSCB member organisations use the voices and experiences of children and families to improve how they work.

The constituent organisations of HSCB work together more effectively than they did and the level of mutual challenge and reflection has increased since our adoption of HSCB's vision, mission and values. In addition to the implementation of the MASH, most of the groups of HSCB have been well supported and Ofsted recognised the engagement of multi-agency partners. The management of the ambitious local audit framework, serious case reviews and the reviewing of child deaths as a means of learning and improvement have all benefited from good multi-agency support. Our quality assurance of safeguarding children activity is a priority for all HSCB partner organisations and that activity is now to become even more focused so that audits are repeated with greater frequency to more quickly assess the pace of development. Child Sexual Exploitation, children who go missing and child trafficking are areas requiring particular attention nationally, as illustrated by The Jay Report into child sexual exploitation in Rotherham.

HSCB has travelled a long way in the right direction over the past year but it still has a very long way to go before it can be content that safeguarding services are functioning fully as they need to be. HSCB will be influencing other strategic bodies to prioritise the safeguarding of children. Action Plans will be relentlessly followed through. Training of our workforce and awareness raising among the local population will be further developed to ensure that children whose welfare is being compromised are recognised and well supported. HSCB's use of performance information has improved last year and this improvement must be sustained. Herefordshire Council is working hard to ensure that the performance information it generates is what is required and accurate and HSCB will continue to hold it to account in achieving this.

As independent chair of HSCB for two years now, I have seen the evolution of The Board into a hard edged body that challenges itself and others and that increasingly knows what it is seeking to achieve and how to successfully achieve it. We are now at a defining point and the successful delivery of our plans this year will collectively leave us increasingly good at ensuring that what is done to safeguard children in Herefordshire is both well co-ordinated and effective.



**David McCallum, Independent Chair  
Herefordshire Safeguarding Children Board**



**Endorsed by Jo Davidson,  
Director of People's Services**

## Introduction

The significant work undertaken by Herefordshire Safeguarding Children Board (HSCB) during 2013-2014 (documented within the Annual Report<sup>1</sup>) along with the 2013-2016 Development Priorities form the basis for the actions agreed within the Business Plan. These are designed to improve the experiences of children, young people and families receiving safeguarding services across our partner agencies and to support the Board in meeting its statutory objectives and functions<sup>2</sup>. The actions have also been influenced by observations made by Ofsted regarding HSCB in their inspections in 2012 and 2014 are mapped here against those key areas.



<sup>1</sup> Available to download from the Board’s website: [www.herefordshiresafeguardingchildrenboard.org.uk](http://www.herefordshiresafeguardingchildrenboard.org.uk).

<sup>2</sup> The statutory objectives and functions of Local Safeguarding Boards are outlined in Section 3 of [Working Together to Safeguard Children](#) and described in detail in Section 14 of the [Children Act 2004](#) in Regulation 5 of the [Local Safeguarding Children Boards Regulations 2006](#) respectively.



## HSCB's Vision, Mission and Values

The Board works to the following shared vision, mission and values.

### Our Vision

Children and young people in Herefordshire grow up in an environment in which their well being needs are met and they are safe from harm.

### Our Mission

To work together effectively, as organisations and with children and families, to ensure that local services and arrangements are effective in promoting the well being of children and young people in Herefordshire and keeping them safe from harm.

### Our values

- 🧵 The impact on the well being and safety of children and young people in Herefordshire will be at the centre of all HSCB activity.
- 🧵 We will learn and be willing to develop, responding to evidence and best practice.
- 🧵 We will work in an open and honest manner with children, young people, their families and with each other.
- 🧵 We will address the well being needs of children and young people at the earliest opportunity and prevent the need for later child protection intervention whenever possible.
- 🧵 We will challenge each other and be ready to receive challenge as we work together in a spirit of mutual respect.

## Membership

Through delivery of the Herefordshire Safeguarding Children Board progresses the County's joined-up approach to safeguarding in Herefordshire by bringing together directors and strategic leaders across organisations working with children. Organisations represented include:

- 🧵 Herefordshire Council
- 🧵 Herefordshire Clinical Commissioning Group
- 🧵 2gether NHS Trust
- 🧵 Wye Valley NHS Trust
- 🧵 CAFCASS
- 🧵 West Mercia Youth Offending Service
- 🧵 West Mercia Probation
- 🧵 West Mercia Police
- 🧵 Education establishments

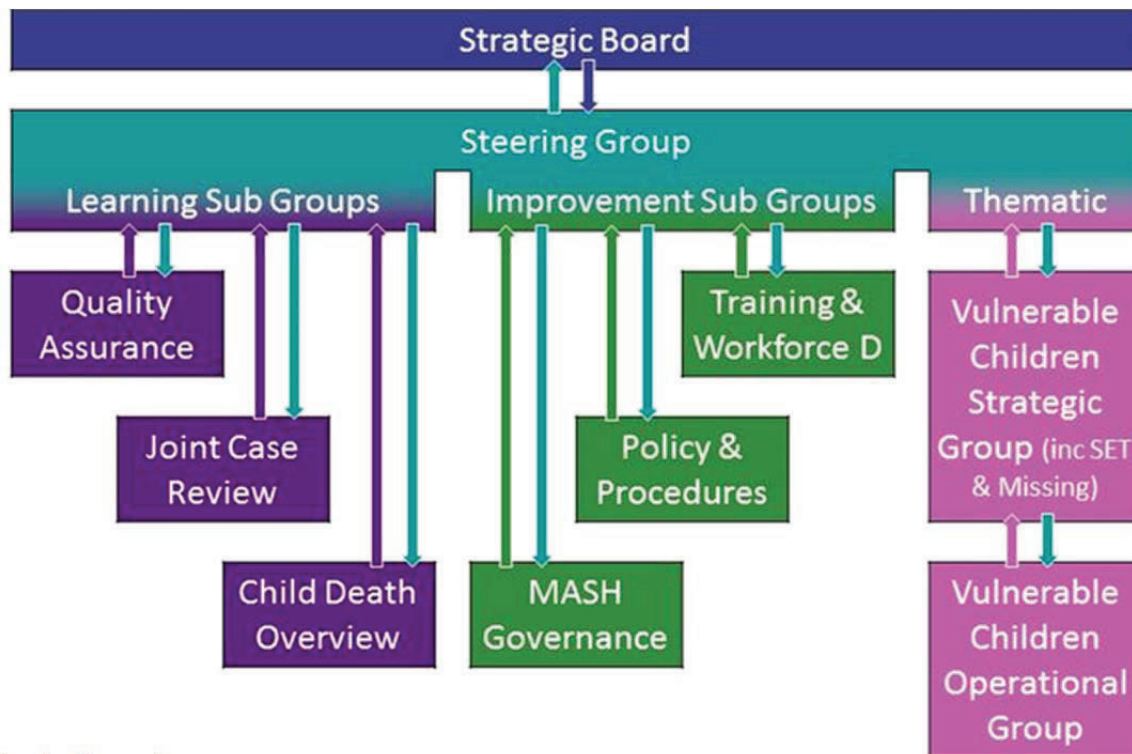


## Structural Arrangements

Herefordshire Safeguarding Children Board sits within a developing framework of other statutory and non-statutory multi-agency structures including the Children and Young People's Partnership Forum, the Health and Wellbeing Board and the Community Safety Partnership.

The Board also works in close collaboration with Herefordshire Safeguarding Adults Board and arrangements have been made to ensure they support each other's work and respond appropriately to their work and findings. These arrangements include a Business Unit, Joint Case Review sub group, joint Risk Register and aligned development priorities.

The structure of Herefordshire Safeguarding Children Board is as follows:



### Strategic Board

The Strategic Board sets the direction of HSCB and is responsible for ensuring its effectiveness. Specific work is directed to the Steering Group and Sub Groups which are ultimately accountable to the Strategic Board. The Strategic Board has responsibility for ensuring compliance with the duties set out in the Children Act 2004 and consequential Regulations and Statutory Guidance. Included within these duties it must:

- ✚ Set the strategic direction for HSCB, taking account of any developments in national policy, practice and legislation through the National Safeguarding Delivery Unit;
- ✚ Ratify, adopt and monitor the Annual Business Plan;
- ✚ Set the Annual Budget;
- ✚ Oversee the Learning and Improvement Framework (including responsibility for Serious Case Reviews and Child Death Reviews) including the ratification of all individual SCR's and considering regular reports from the panels;
- ✚ Ensure the planning and commissioning arrangements for all partner agencies takes into account safeguarding and the promotion of children's welfare; and
- ✚ Challenge and scrutinise the Children and Young People's Partnership Forum on its arrangements to safeguard children and young people.



## Steering Group

As the operational arm of the Strategic Board, the purpose of the Steering Group is to govern the work programmes and effectiveness of HSCB's sub groups as they progress the development priorities, learning activities and improvement actions of the Board set out in the:

- Current year Business Plan; and
- Learning and Improvement Framework.

## Quality Assurance and Evaluation Sub-Group

As a learning group of the HSCB the Quality Assurance and Evaluation Sub Group undertakes their assigned tasks within the HSCB Learning and Improvement Framework (as set out in the Quality Assurance Programme) and additional actions assigned to it through the current business plan and the Boards ongoing learning and improvement work.

## Child Death Overview Panel (CDOP)

Through a comprehensive and multidisciplinary review of child deaths, Herefordshire Safeguarding Children Board's Child Death Overview Panel (CDOP) aims to better understand how and why children in Herefordshire die and to use these findings to take action to prevent child deaths and improve the health and safety of our children and young people.

In carrying out its activities the CDOP meets the requirements set out in Chapter 5 of Working Together to Safeguard Children 2013, in relation to the deaths of any children normally resident in Herefordshire. This includes collecting and analysing information about each death with a view to identifying:

- Any case giving rise to the need for a Serious Case Review not previously identified.
- Any matters of concern affecting the safety and welfare of children in Herefordshire.
- Any wider health, public health or safety concerns arising from a particular death or from a pattern of deaths in Herefordshire.

## Joint Case Review Sub-Group

The Joint Case Review Sub Group (JCR) acts as a learning sub group for and is accountable to:

- Herefordshire Safeguarding Children Board (HSCB)
- Herefordshire Safeguarding Adults Board (HSAB)
- Herefordshire Community Safety Partnership

Herefordshire Safeguarding Children Board has a legal duty to undertake reviews of serious cases (SCRs) where children have died or suffered serious harm, the criteria for such reviews is set out in Working Together 2013. The chair of HSCB has the responsibility for decision making about whether to conduct a review in individual cases.

Herefordshire Safeguarding Adults Board has a responsibility to undertake reviews of cases where an adult at risk has died or suffered serious harm. Though there is currently no statutory requirement to do so, this is in line with ADASS (Association of Directors of Adult Social Services) recommendations on best practice. The criteria for such reviews are set out in the West Midlands Regional procedures. The chair of HSAB has the responsibility for decision making about whether to conduct a review in individual cases.

Herefordshire Community Safety Partnership (or Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership) has a statutory duty to undertake a Domestic Homicide Review (DHR) when a person (over 16) is murdered either by an intimate partner or a member of their household. The chair of HPEG has the responsibility for decision making in individual cases. The criteria are set out in the Home Office Domestic Homicide Review Guidance 2010.

### **Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) Governance Group**

As an improvement group of the HSCB the MASH Governance Sub Group undertake their assigned tasks within the HSCB Business Plan in relation to the Learning and Improvement Framework and additional actions assigned to it through the Boards ongoing learning and improvement work.

### **Policy and Procedures Sub-Group**

As an improvement group of the HSCB the Policy and Procedures Sub Group ensures that staff across the partnership have access to the necessary range of multi-agency safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures through the development of new policies and the review and maintenance of existing policies.

### **Training and Development Sub-Group**

As an improvement group of HSCB, the Training and Workforce Development Sub Group provides evidenced assurance to HSCB that robust, effective and comprehensive training and workforce development processes (including supervision) are in place, to ensure people working with children in Herefordshire understand their responsibilities to children with regard to safeguarding and to oversee the production of the Training Strategy and Programme for the Board.

### **Children at Specific Additional Risk Strategic Group**

As a thematic group of HSCB, the overall purpose of this meeting is to reduce the incidence of child sexual exploitation and missing episodes in Herefordshire through a coordinated multi-agency response to child sexual exploitation, trafficking and missing children.



## HSCB Development Priorities 2013-2016

The Board's Business Plan is structured around the four strategic priority development areas for 2013-2016 as follows:

- ✎ Improving the experience of children, young people and families when they are supported in safeguarding systems (i.e. CAF, Social Care)
- ✎ Tackling evidenced safeguarding issues in Herefordshire.
- ✎ Improving the functioning of Herefordshire's Safeguarding Boards.
- ✎ Improving multi-agency case work.

<b>DEVELOPMENT AREA 1: Improving the experience of children, young people and families when they are supported in safeguarding systems (i.e. CAF, Social Care)</b>			
Every HSCB member organisation to ensure the voice of children, young people and their families is captured and used to improve services.	13-14	14-15	15-16
Improve the quality of reflective supervision and the involvement of management in case decision making.	13-14	14-15	15-16
Implement changes in safeguarding practices and HSCB functioning to meet the statutory changes within Working Together.	13-14	14-15	15-16
Partners work together to meet safeguarding needs as the workforce changes due to reduced funding.	13-14	14-15	15-16
Ensure learning from analysis of accurate and relevant performance information and from multi-agency case audits is actioned and the impact reviewed.	13-14	14-15	15-16
<b>DEVELOPMENT AREA 2: Improving multi-agency case work.</b>			
Improving multi-agency case decision making.	13-14	14-15	15-16
Improving multi-agency case assessments within children's social care.	13-14	14-15	15-16
Ensure that LSCB policies and procedures are up to date and incorporate issues specific to Herefordshire.	13-14	14-15	15-16
Improving multi-agency case assessments across agencies	13-14	14-15	15-16
<b>DEVELOPMENT AREA 3: Tackling evidenced safeguarding issues in Herefordshire.</b>			
Domestic Abuse.	13-14	14-15	15-16
Sexual Exploitation and Trafficking.	13-14	14-15	15-16
Missing Children.	13-14	14-15	15-16
Children Placed in Herefordshire by Other Local Authorities.	13-14	14-15	15-16
Private Fostering	13-14	14-15	15-16
<b>DEVELOPMENT AREA 4: Improving the functioning of Herefordshire's Safeguarding Boards.</b>			
Develop the effectiveness of Board meetings through constructive challenge and clear governance and ensure that the work of the LSCB operational groups is manageable and prioritised.	13-14	14-15	15-16
Develop an evidence base of safeguarding casework across all agencies to demonstrate and learn from our good practice and show how we are meeting and exceeding our statutory responsibilities.	13-14	14-15	15-16
Agree a model of SCRs and significant case reviews within Herefordshire.	13-14	14-15	15-16
Develop and review our knowledge of the children's workforce and its development needs.	13-14	14-15	15-16
Develop the resource available to support HSCB by the Business Unit through a review of its functioning and the needs of both HSAB and HSCB.	13-14	14-15	15-16
Ensure that multi-agency safeguarding training is sufficient, taken up by partners and is robustly evaluated.	13-14	14-15	15-16
Write and implement an Action Plan to embed learning from peer learning process.	13-14	14-15	15-16

# HSCB Business Plan 2014-2015

DEVELOPMENT AREA 1: Improving the experience of children, young people and families when they are supported in safeguarding systems (i.e. CAF, Social Care)				RAG		Process	An Agreed Process Is In Place	Process Planned But Not Agreed	No Progress In Agreeing Process
				Process	Completion	Completion to Timescale	Complete OR On Target	Risk of Missing Timescale	Incomplete & Outside Timescale
Lead Org & Officer	How impact and progress will be measured and how we will know when it is achieved	Time-scales	Monitoring Mechanism and Frequency			Progress as at XXX 2014.	Propose additional work to ensure all priorities are completed to timescale/development work is effective.	What impact has the progress made so far made on the lives of children and young people?	What impact is expected once Action Area is completed? How and when will impact be measured?
<b>Action area 1.1: Every agency to ensure the voice of children, young people &amp; families is captured &amp; used to improve services.</b>						Development need identified through QA's 2013-14 assessment of the effectiveness of the use of VotC.		Monitored by: <b>QA Sub Group</b> Strategic Oversight: <b>Les Knight/Oremi Evans</b>	
HSCB, Chair of QA, Lynne Renton	All members report to HSCB learning from their analysis of the views of children, young people and their families and the impact of the implementation of this learning into practice, to the QA sub group within all their quarterly reports.	Ongoing from April 2014	Through QA Sub Group's reports to Steering Group.	N	N				HSCB will be able to evidence how all partner organisations (including all statutory partners) have captured the voice of the child appropriately and used the findings of this work to improve the experience of children, young people and their families while supported in safeguarding systems. HSCB will also be able to use the findings of its own work to capture the voice of the child to improve the effectiveness of work to safeguard children and promote their welfare across organisations.
HSCB, Chair of QA, Lynne Renton	HSCB analyses and reports on common themes arising from agencies' collection of the views of children, young people and their families, proposing development actions.	Sep 14	Report to be presented to November 2014's Steering Group meeting.	N	N				
HSCB Business Manager, Andy Churcher	HSCB to develop and implement its own regular mechanisms for capturing the voice of the child with findings presented Quarterly to QA sub group.	Oct 14	Mechanisms to be in place by during Q3 with first quarterly report to be received March 2015	N	N				
<b>Action area 1.2: Improve the quality of reflective supervision and the involvement of management in case decision making.</b>						Development need identified in Ofsted's 2012 inspection report and builds upon 2013-2014 work.		Monitored by: <b>T&amp;WD Sub Group</b> Strategic Oversight: <b>Tom Currie</b>	
HSCB, Chair of T&WD Hazel Blankley	An agreed set of processes for monitoring compliance with the supervision of minimum standards across agencies will have been developed and implemented.	Dec 14	Inclusion within quarterly reports from agencies to the QA Sub Group.	N	N				Evidence submitted to HSCB QA sub group will evidence how HSCB's Supervision Standards are being applied throughout partner agencies to ensure management are involved in case decision making. The impact will be evidenced through improvements in outcomes identified through case audit and through the capturing of the voice of the child.
HSCB, Chair of T&WD Hazel Blankley	Develop HSCB's expectations of partner sectors (i.e. education and 3rd Sector) to provide enhanced assurance and support within their organisations, developing HSCB support mechanisms as necessary.	Feb 15	Through T&WD Sub Group's reports to Steering Group.	N	N				
HSCB, Chair of T&WD Hazel Blankley	Develop HSCB's expectations of partner agencies to provide enhanced assurance and support within their organisations.	Feb 15	Through T&WD Sub Group's reports to Steering Group.	N	N				
<b>Action area 1.3: Partners work together to meet safeguarding needs as the workforce changes due to reduced funding.</b>						Development need identified as partners have become aware of current organisational change.		Monitored by: <b>Steering Group</b> Strategic Oversight: <b>George Branch</b>	
HSCB, Chair of Steering Group Paul Meredith	The planned relaunch of the MASH, Levels of Need Guidance, Multi-Agency Referral Form and supporting guidance will be used by agencies and sectors to embed thresholds of intervention across the partnership to support agencies in making more effective referrals.	Oct 14	Bimonthly reporting to Steering Group on progress.	N	N				HSCB will be able to comment upon how proposed changes are likely to impact on children, young people and their families within safeguarding systems in the



# HSCB Business Plan 2014-2015

DEVELOPMENT AREA 1: Improving the experience of children, young people and families when they are supported in safeguarding systems (i.e. CAF, Social Care)				RAG		Process	An Agreed Process Is In Place	Process Planned But Not Agreed	No Progress In Agreeing Process
				Process	Completion	Completion to Timescale	Complete OR On Target	Risk of Missing Timescale	Incomplete & Outside Timescale
<b>Lead Org &amp; Officer</b>	<b>How impact and progress will be measured and how we will know when it is achieved</b>	<b>Time-scales</b>	<b>Monitoring Mechanism and Frequency</b>			<b>Progress as at XXX 2014.</b>	<b>Propose additional work to ensure all priorities are completed to timescale/development work is effective.</b>	<b>What impact has the progress made so far made on the lives of children and young people?</b>	<b>What impact is expected once Action Area is completed? How and when will impact be measured?</b>
HSCB, Chair of Steering Group Paul Meredith	All constituent partners will be required to report to the Board any significant proposed changes across organisations that are likely to impact safeguarding practices to enable the Board to challenge should this be necessary. All agencies will report current situation to September's Steering Group.	Oct 14	Reports to be received and discussed at September Steering Group.	N	N				saeguarding systems in the context of simplified referral pathways. HSCB will therefore be more able to influence the commissioning of multi-agency services.
<b>Action area 1.4: Ensure learning from analysis of accurate and relevant performance information and from multi-agency case audits is actioned and the impact reviewed.</b>				Ofsted Area for Improvement (Paragraph 151 and 153): Cross Referenced to the Ofsted Review Action Plan points 5, 6, 10 and 11.			Monitored by: <b>Steering Group</b> Strategic Oversight: <b>Phil Kendrick</b>		
HSCB, Chair of QA, Lynne Renton	Develop a multi-agency child's journey scorecard. This will clearly define what data will be received, the format and the frequency.	Sep 14	Bimonthly reporting to Steering Group on progress.	N	N				HSCB will be able to assure itself of the quality of safeguarding work across the partnership and increased accuracy within the data will be evidenced through the Board's triangulation processes.
HSCB, Chair of QA, Lynne Renton	Effectiveness of audit programme to be reviewed to ensure that it provide adequate assurance on accuracy of performance data.	Feb 15	Bimonthly reporting to Steering Group on progress.	N	N				
HSCB, Chair of QA, Lynne Renton	Provide the opportunity for triangulation across the multi-agency data set and further assurance on accuracy to be measured through audit activity	Sep 14	Bimonthly reporting to Steering Group on progress.	N	N				
HSCB, Chair of QA, Lynne Renton	QA Sub Group is reviewing its work programme and the HSCB quality assurance framework, including revised data set and scorecard, to ensure focussed audit and review audits to assess progress.	Oct 14	Bimonthly reporting to Steering Group on progress.	N	N				
HSCB, Chair of QA, Lynne Renton	Learning generated through QA sub group to be reported to Steering Group who will identify the relevant vehicle for sharing the learning and action improvement activities to the appropriate sub group.	Oct 14	Bimonthly reporting to Steering Group on progress.	N	N				
HSCB, Business Manager, Andy Churcher	The necessity of quality case recording will have been promoted through both HSCB communications to the children's workforce and through internal agency communications to managers highlighting the need to support and check this through case supervision.	Nov 14	Bi-monthly communications from July 2014.	N	N				

# HSCB Business Plan 2014-2015

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<b>DEVELOPMENT AREA 2: Improving multi-agency case work.</b>									
<b>Lead Org &amp; Officer</b>	<b>How impact and progress will be measured and how we will know when it is achieved</b>	<b>Time-scales</b>	<b>Monitoring Mechanism and Frequency</b>			<b>Progress as at XXX 2014.</b>	<b>Propose additional work to ensure all priorities are completed to timescale/development work is effective.</b>	<b>What impact has the progress made so far made on the lives of children and young people?</b>	<b>What impact is expected once Action Area is completed? How and when will impact be measured?</b>
<b>Action area 2.1: Improving multi-agency case assessments within Children's Social Care.</b>				Development need identified through QA's 2013-14 monitoring of conferences.			Monitored by: <b>Steering Group</b> Strategic Oversight: <b>David Farnsworth</b>		
HSCB, Business Manager, Andy Churcher	HSCB expectations for how agencies take responsibility for ensuring that CPC attendees have sufficient knowledge and skills to participate effectively will be agreed.	Jul 14	Report to be received for discussion at July Steering Group.	N	N				Safeguarding and Review will lead on the implementation of multi-agency feedback forms which will be included in the review of the effectiveness of child protection conferences. Overall reports on the quality of conferences will evidence an increase in the rate of those rated green. These improvements should contribute to a reduction in the length of time children are on places due to more effective decision making and purposeful direction of Core Groups which will in turn increase their effectiveness. The expected impact will therefore be that children will be supported on child protection plans which reach a desired outcome in a shorter length of time.
HSCB, Chair of T&WD Hazel Blankley	Appropriate support resources and learning opportunities for agencies and sectors with representative at CP conferences will have been scoped, agreed and implemented.	Dec 14	Through T&WD Update to Steering Group in November and December.	N	N				
Herefordshire Council, Head of Safeguarding and Review, John Roughton	A short term multi-agency action plan to improve the quality of decision making at Child Protection Conferences (including ensuring the right people are invited, the rate of attendance and the rate of reports received at conference) will have been developed and implemented by Children's Wellbeing Services.	Nov 14	Bi-monthly reports to Steering Group from July 2014 (presentation of action plan) to November 2014.	N	N				
<b>Action area 2.2: Ensure that LSCB policies and procedures are up to date and incorporate issues specific to Herefordshire.</b>				Ofsted Area for Improvement (Paragraph 150): Cross Referenced to the Ofsted Review Action Plan points 2, 3, 4.			Monitored by: <b>Steering Group</b> Strategic Oversight: <b>Michelle Clarke</b>		
HSCB, Chair of P&P, John Roughton	West Mercia independent chairs to agree sub regional approach to policy and procedure development.	Nov 14	Update to be received at October Steering Group.	N	N				HSCB will have a rolling programme which will enable the Board to refresh all policies and procedures, including those agreed regionally, to ensure they are kept up-to-date and relevant.
HSCB, Chair of P&P, John Roughton	Priority to be given to Child Sexual Exploitation and Children Missing procedures on the basis of Ofsted recommendations.	Oct 14	Update to be received at October Steering Group.	N	N				
HSCB, Chair of P&P, John Roughton	In consultation with Tri-x, three year timetable to be agreed on a regional basis for a systematic review and update of bespoke policy and procedures in consultation. This should be informed by current, and known about future, national and local priorities.	Oct 14	Update to be received at Oct and Dec Steering Group.	N	N				

# HSCB Business Plan 2014-2015

DEVELOPMENT AREA 3: Tackling evidenced safeguarding issues in Herefordshire.				RAG		Process	An Agreed Process Is In Place	Process Planned But Not Agreed	No Progress In Agreeing Process
						Completion	Completion to Timescale	Complete OR On Target	Risk of Missing Timescale
Lead Org & Officer	How impact and progress will be measured and how we will know when it is achieved	Time-scales	Monitoring Mechanism and Frequency	Process	Completion	Progress as at XXX 2014.	Propose additional work to ensure all priorities are completed to timescale/development work is effective.	What impact has the progress made so far made on the lives of children and young people?	What impact is expected once Action Area is completed? How and when will impact be measured?
<b>Action area 3.1: Domestic Abuse</b>						Development need identified through QA's ongoing monitoring of Domestic Abuse.		Monitored by: <b>QA Sub Group</b> Strategic Oversight: <b>Lynne Renton</b>	
Herefordshire Council, Community Safety Manager, Adrian Turton	Services for children & young people effected by Domestic Abuse (e.g. Crush and Great) will be scoped and recommendations to commissioners to support safeguarding will be made.	TBC - Action Area is dependent upon the work of the CSP's Domestic Abuse Steering Group. Items relevant to safeguarding children will be reported to QA through the quarterly Domestic Abuse report delivered in May, August and November 2014 and February 2015.		N	N				Additional services will be commissioned for both children and young people and perpetrators which will lead to a reduction in the number of children exposed to domestic abuse and number of children exposed to domestic abuse on multiple occasions.
Herefordshire Council, Community Safety Manager, Adrian Turton	Services for perpetrators of Domestic Abuse will be scoped and recommendations to commissioners to support safeguarding will be made.			N	N				
<b>Action area 3.2: Sexual Exploitation and Trafficking.</b>						Ofsted Area for Improvement (Paragraph 154): Cross Referenced to Ofsted Review Action Plan points 12, 13, 14.		Monitored by: <b>SET Steering Group</b> Strategic Oversight: <b>Neil Fraser</b>	
HSCB, Chair CSAR Strategic Group, John Roughton	Undertake a self assessment against the requirement of the National SET Action Plan.	Oct 14		N	N				Incidences of children being sexually exploited and trafficked will be managed by a workforce knowledgeable about the issue and skilled in dealing with it. HSCB's resulting disruption work will have resulted in prevented opportunities for perpetrators to engage with children.
	Develop a new Strategic Plan and Disruption Plan for Herefordshire.	Oct 14	Through CSAR Strategic Group's monthly reports to Steering Group.	N	N				
	Establish a CSAR Operational Group to drive forward the SET agenda in Herefordshire through the implementation of the Strategic Plan.	Nov 14		N	N				
<b>Action area 3.3: Missing Children</b>						Ofsted Area for Improvement (Paragraph 154): Cross Referenced to Ofsted Review Action Plan points 15, 16, 17.		Monitored by: <b>Steering Group</b> Strategic Oversight: <b>George Branch</b>	
Herefordshire Council, Head of Safeguarding and Review, John Roughton	HSCB is taking a leading and ensuring effective contributions across the partnership in connection with the West Mercia Joint Protocol on Missing Children and Young People.	Oct 14		N	N				Incidences of children going missing will be managed by a workforce knowledgeable about the safeguarding issues and skilled in dealing with it. Missing episodes will be dealt with effectively, in line with the WM Protocol and children will be effectively supported to reduce the likelihood of further episodes.
HSCB, Chair CSAR Strategic Group, John Roughton	HSCB's Missing Children Action Plan to be fully implemented to ensure a high quality joined up approach to incidences of children missing from home and care.	Nov 14	Through CSAR Strategic Group's monthly reports to Steering Group.	N	N				
	Develop HSCB mechanism for the ongoing strategic oversight of co-ordinated multi-agency responses for children who go missing.	Sep 14		N	N				
<b>Action area 3.4: Private Fostering</b>						Development need identified as ongoing risk in HSCB's Risk Register and through Ofsted report.		Monitored by: <b>Steering Group</b> Strategic Oversight: <b>Steve Cullen</b>	

# HSCB Business Plan 2014-2015

DEVELOPMENT AREA 3: Tackling evidenced safeguarding issues in Herefordshire.				RAG		Process	An Agreed Process Is In Place	Process Planned But Not Agreed	No Progress In Agreeing Process
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Lead Org & Officer	How impact and progress will be measured and how we will know when it is achieved	Time-scales	Monitoring Mechanism and Frequency			Progress as at XXX 2014.	Propose additional work to ensure all priorities are completed to timescale/development work is effective.	What impact has the progress made so far made on the lives of children and young people?	What impact is expected once Action Area is completed? How and when will impact be measured?
HSCB Business Manager, Andy Churcher	Private Forsteing will be included as a risk factor in the relaunched HSCB Levels of Need with appropriate supporting information made available through HSCB;s communication channels.	Sep 14	Through Steering Group's goverance processes for the Levels of Need (see 1.3).	N	N				Greater awareness of the need to report Private Fostering Arrangements will provide a more complete picture of these arrangements in Herefordshire and ensure Children's Wellbeing are able to provide suitable support, where necessary, to children and families in these arrangements.
HSCB T&WD Chair, Hazel Blankley	Promote Private Fostering to the children's workforce by including reference to it throughout appropriate training and communications to ensure they understand the need to notify children's social care services of private fostering arrangements.	Apr 15	Through Steering Group's monitoring of HSCB Communications.	N	N				



# HSCB Business Plan 2014-2015

DEVELOPMENT AREA 4: Improving the functioning of Herefordshire's Safeguarding Boards.				RAG		Process	An Agreed Process Is In Place	Process Planned But Not Agreed	No Progress In Agreeing Process
				Process	Completion	Completion to Timescale	Complete OR On Target	Risk of Missing Timescale	Incomplete & Outside Timescale
Lead Org & Officer	How impact and progress will be measured and how we will know when it is achieved	Time-scales	Monitoring Mechanism and Frequency			Progress as at XXX 2014.	Propose additional work to ensure all priorities are completed to timescale/development work is effective.	What impact has the progress made so far made on the lives of children and young people?	What impact is expected once Action Area is completed? How and when will impact be measured?
Action area 4.1: <b>Develop the effectiveness of Board meetings through constructive challenge and clear governance and ensure that the work of the LSCB operational groups is manageable and prioritised.</b>						Ofsted Area for Improvement (Paragraph 149 and 152): Cross Referenced to Ofsted Review Action Plan points 1, 7, 8, 9.	Monitored by: <b>Strategic Board</b> Strategic Oversight: <b>Jemery Millar</b>		
HSCB Independent Chair, Dave McCallum	Ensure that governance arrangements between the LSCB and the Improvement Board are clarified through the development of an agreed protocol setting out governance arrangements to ensure increased influence nurtures purposeful decision making.	Oct 14	Update reports to Strategic Board (July and October 2014)	N	N				Steering Group will receive regular instruction from Strategic Board to undertake specific work through the Board's sub groups. Evidence of this work will show the Board's ability to respond quickly to safeguarding issues in Herefordshire and influence development.
HSCB, Steering Group Chair, Paul Meredith	Terms of reference for the steering group and sub groups to be reviewed to ensure appropriate governance compliance and prioritisation.	Oct 14	Update reports to Strategic Board (July and October 2014)	N	N				
	Establish a quarterly sub group chairs meeting to ensure that activity and priorities across the sub group are in line with business plan prioritized and steering group directives.	Sep 14		N	N				
	Business Unit to support the chairs of the steering group and sub groupsto set agendas to ensure compliance with terms of reference and Business Plan / Ofsted improvement priorities.	Sep 14		N	N				
HSCB Independent Chair, Dave McCallum	Develop the governance arrangements between HSCB and the CYPFF to ensure increased influence nurtures purposeful decision making.	Nov 14	Update reports to Strategic Board (July and October 2014)	N	N				
HSCB Independent Chair, Dave McCallum	Develop the governance arrangements between HSCB and the Health and Wellbeing Board to ensure increased influence nurtures purposeful decision making.	Nov 14	Update reports to Strategic Board (July and October 2014)	N	N				
HSCB Business Manager, Andy Churcher	Provide ongoing opportunities for HSCB Strategic Board members to develop their understanding of safeguarding and the skills necessary to undertake their roles.	Jul 14	Mid year report to be presented to Strategic Board's October meeting.	N	N				

# HSCB Business Plan 2014-2015

DEVELOPMENT AREA 4: Improving the functioning of Herefordshire's Safeguarding Boards.				RAG		Process	An Agreed Process Is In Place	Process Planned But Not Agreed	No Progress In Agreeing Process
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Lead Org & Officer	How impact and progress will be measured and how we will know when it is achieved	Time-scales	Monitoring Mechanism and Frequency			Progress as at XXX 2014.	Propose additional work to ensure all priorities are completed to timescale/development work is effective.	What impact has the progress made so far made on the lives of children and young people?	What impact is expected once Action Area is completed? How and when will impact be measured?
HSCB Business Manager, Andy Churcher	Ensure incidences of challenge are clearly marked within all HSCB minutes/meeting notes.	Jul 14	Monitored when any set of minutes are agreed.	N	N				
<b>Action area 4.2: Develop an evidence base of safeguarding casework across all agencies to demonstrate and learn from our good practice and show how we are meeting and exceeding our statutory responsibilities.</b>						Monitored by: <b>Strategic Board</b> Strategic Oversight: <b>John Trevains</b>			
HSCB Business Manager, Andy Churcher	In line with HSCB's Communications Protocol, Strategic Board members will oversee the monthly submission of cases of good practice from all agencies. These will be used as appropriate to support HSCB's communications.	Jun 14	Mid year report to be presented to Strategic Board's October meeting.	N	N				HSCB will be able to evidence its good work and use it to promote the importance of high quality planning, case work and recording, in order to improve outcomes for children across Herefordshire.
HSCB Business Manager, Andy Churcher	HSCB's Business Unit to maintain a register of good practice cases submitted.	Jun 14	Mid year report to be presented to Strategic Board's October meeting.	N	N				
<b>Action area 4.3: Develop the resource available to support HSCB by the Business Unit through a review of its functioning and the needs of both HSAB and HSCB.</b>						Ofsted Area for Improvement (Paragraph 156): Cross Referenced to Ofsted Review Action Plan points 23, 24, 25.		Monitored by: <b>Strategic Board</b> Strategic Oversight: <b>Jan Frances</b>	
Herefordshire Council, Head of Safeguarding and Review, Diane Partridge	Undertake a review of the Business Unit, the expectations upon it, and the resource available to it to ensure it is able to support an increasingly effective Board.	Aug 14	Update reports to Strategic Board (July and October 2014)	N	N				HSCB will be able to evidence the effectiveness of its Learning and Improvement Framework through changes in practice which have resulted from its learning and improvement activities/
HSCB Independent Chair, Dave McCallum	Agree the response to the report ensuring an implementation plan is in place.	Oct 14	Update reports to Strategic Board (July and October 2014)	N	N				
Herefordshire Council, Head of Safeguarding and Review, John Roughton	Implement the agreed outcome of the review, ensuring that a developed Business Unit is in place.	Feb 15	Update reports to Strategic Board (October and January 2014)	N	N				
<b>Action area 4.4: Undertake a peer learning process with another Board and implement highlighted areas for improvement.</b>						Monitored by: <b>Strategic Board</b> Strategic Oversight: <b>Damian Pettit</b>			

# HSCB Business Plan 2014-2015

DEVELOPMENT AREA 4: Improving the functioning of Herefordshire's Safeguarding Boards.				RAG		Process	An Agreed Process Is In Place	Process Planned But Not Agreed	No Progress In Agreeing Process
				Process	Completion	Completion to Timescale	Complete OR On Target	Risk of Missing Timescale	Incomplete & Outside Timescale
Lead Org & Officer	How impact and progress will be measured and how we will know when it is achieved	Time-scales	Monitoring Mechanism and Frequency			Progress as at XXX 2014.	Propose additional work to ensure all priorities are completed to timescale/development work is effective.	What impact has the progress made so far made on the lives of children and young people?	What impact is expected once Action Area is completed? How and when will impact be measured?
Director of Children's Services, Jo Davidson	Undertaken a LGA Diagnostic/Peer Challenge in Sept/Oct 2014 to assess the readiness of HSCB to take over safeguarding responsibilities from the Improvement Board and to assess initial developments following Ofsted's review of the Board in 2014.	Nov 14	Update reports to Steering Group (Aug 2014)	N	N				Peer review will result in a timely assessment of progress for HSCB and focus continued developments during 2015-2016.
<b>Action area 4.5: Ensure that multi-agency safeguarding training is sufficient, taken up by partners and is robustly evaluated.</b>						Ofsted Area for Improvement (Paragraph 155): Cross Referenced to Ofsted Review Action Plan points 18-22.		Monitored by: <b>Steering Group</b> Strategic Oversight: <b>Jo Davidson</b>	
HSCB, Chair of T&WD Hazel Blankley	Immediate course evaluation processes, will have been developed and implemented to provide improved quality of information to HSCB to inform the development of its multi-agency safeguarding training offer.	Oct 14	Monthly updates to Steering Group (Sept and Oct).	N	N				HSCB will increase its understanding of how effectively it meet the needs of the workforce through an increase in the rate of positive feedback received from courses and impact evaluations.HSCB will evidence that training providers are utilising learning from SCR, SILP and QA processes to inform their programmes.HSCB will evidence that training providers are amending programmes as a result of evaluation intelligence.
HSCB, Chair of T&WD Hazel Blankley	Impact evaluations for HSCB Training, will have been developed and implemented to provide improved quality of information to HSCB understand the impact of training on practice and to inform the development of its multi-agency safeguarding training offer.	Feb 14	Monthly updates to Steering Group (Dec - Feb).	N	N				
HSCB, Chair of T&WD Hazel Blankley	Undertake a review of multi-agency agency training needs to assess the sufficiency of HSCB's multi-agency training offer.	Apr 15	Through Quarterly Reports from Steering Group to Strategic Board (from July 2014).	N	N				
HSCB Business Manager, Andy Churcher	The board will commit to a periodic systematic evaluation of all courses led by the Workforce Development Advisor (or equivalent post) with the process engaging workforce representatives.	Oct 14 for Education Mar 15 for wider application	Through Quarterly Reports from Steering Group to Strategic Board (from July 2014).	N	N				
HSCB Business Manager, Andy Churcher	A standard process for engaging the workforce in the development of HSCB training will have been implemented and used to inform the development of training for the education workforce and then applied to other courses later in the year.	Mar 14	Through Quarterly Reports from Steering Group to Strategic Board (from July 2014).	N	N				





<b>MEETING:</b>	<b>CABINET</b>
<b>MEETING DATE:</b>	<b>9 October 2014</b>
<b>TITLE OF REPORT:</b>	<b>Outcome of Adult Social Care Peer Challenge and action plan</b>
<b>REPORT BY:</b>	<b>Director for Adults and Wellbeing</b>

## Classification

Open

## Key Decision

This is not a key decision.

## Wards Affected

County-wide

## Purpose

To note the outcome of the Adult Social Care Peer Challenge undertaken in June 2014 and to consider the council's response to the areas for improvement identified.

## Recommendation(s)

**THAT:**

- (a) **note the outcome of the review attached at Appendix 1;**
- (b) **approve the action plan attached as Appendix 2 as the response to the areas for improvement identified;**
- (c) **make recommendations for any further actions to be added to the action plans**

## Alternative Options

- 1 No alternative options listed as this is a report to enable Cabinet to consider and approve the proposed actions in response to the Peer Review team's identified areas for improvement and make further recommendations.

## Reasons for Recommendations

- 2 The council is required to submit a response to the report outlining how it intends to address each of the identified areas for improvement, the timescales for action to be undertaken, and the monitoring and evaluation arrangements.
- 3 To provide Cabinet with an opportunity to comment and make further recommendations as part of the improvement process of a key priority area for the council.

## Key Considerations

- 4 A peer challenge was undertaken in June 2014 (23 June – 26 June 2014).
- 5 The review was led by Mr David Stevens, Director of Adult Social Care, Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council and supported by the following people:
  - Keymn Whervin – Expert by Experience
  - Liam Waldron – Expert by Experience
  - Councillor Yvonne Davies – Cabinet Member Sandwell
  - Sue Alexander – Head of Service (Worcestershire)
  - Chris Lewington – Head of Service (Warwickshire)
  - Eddie Clarke – WMADASS Peer Challenge Programme Lead
- 6 The Peer Challenge team were provided with a number of key documents prior to the visit including a self-assessment completed by the Adults and Wellbeing directorate leadership team.
- 7 During the onsite visit, the review team interviewed a number of stakeholders including:
  - Service users and carers (both at the council offices and at the service locations)
  - Front line staff and managers
  - Clinical Commissioning Group Senior Leaders
  - Senior leaders within NHS provider organisations
  - Members, Health Overview and Scrutiny and Group Leaders
  - Chief Executive, Leader of the Council
  - Directorate management team
  - Commissioners
  - Project teams

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Helen Coombes, Director for Adults and Wellbeing on Tel (01432) 260048

- Finance managers
- Independent and Voluntary Sector Providers
- Key stakeholders and partners including Healthwatch, Herefordshire Carer Support Service, Herefordshire Disability United
- Making it Real Board

8 Following the publication of the findings from the Peer Challenge, the report has been shared initially with the directorate leadership team to undertake a high level analysis of where work is currently underway and where we need to further develop our work plans.

### **Scope of the review**

9 As part of the West Midlands Peer Challenge process, the host authority outlines the scope of the review. In this instance, the following questions were set to provide the focus for the review:

1. Does the Adult and Wellbeing Transformation programme have the structures and mechanisms in place to deliver its objectives including the financial plans and closer integrated commissioning and delivery set out in the Better Care Fund?
2. Do we have sufficient focus on service user and carer (families) experience and the mechanisms to allow them to influence commissioning, service redesign and audit of delivery to enabling personalisation?
3. A focus on our workforce is a key priority in the next 12 months. Will our organisational model and improvement plans for our operational staff enable us to deliver our quality, personalisation and financial aspirations?

### **Key Findings from the Review**

10 The main points identified during the Peer Challenge visit:

a) There is already much progress in developing a vision for adult social care, transformation programmes and related structures:

- Clear vision and leadership from the Director
- Strong political support
- Buy in from staff

b) There is a need for stronger links with people who use services, carers, staff and partners to deliver:

- Market shaping to extend care and support options
- Better commissioning processes and outcomes
- Effective care management and creative support planning

c) There remain important areas for further focus:

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Further information on the subject of this report is available from Helen Coombes, Director for Adults and Wellbeing on Tel (01432) 260048

- Safeguarding
- Service user/carer engagement with real co-production
- Personalisation
- Integration with the NHS
- Community capacity building
- Performance/financial reporting systems

These things together, will lead to improved individual and personalised outcomes.

### **Key Strengths**

11 As part of the Peer Challenge review, the team identified a number of key strengths within the service area including:

- Substantial activity in re-integrating adult social care back into the Council
- Clear feel of a brand new Directorate
- Strong leadership from the Director
- Sense of drive and direction from the new leadership team
- Staff stated they were up for the challenge
- Good support from lead Members and the Chief Executive
- Re-launch of engagement Boards and Groups will support better commissioning and outcomes for service users and family carers who now felt they were being heard again
- Focus on the development of the workforce (internal and external) was a real strength

### **Areas of focus**

12 Where the review team identified some of the critical areas requiring focus, these areas have been prioritised as part of the action planning process and a number of changes have been initiated. These include:

#### **a) Safeguarding**

Safeguarding practice was not in scope for the review, however the team identified that this is an area for improvement, this supports the experience of the new service lead. This area is a known weakness and a number of changes are being initiated.

These include the following:

- Restructuring of the Safeguarding Adults Board and business unit to develop a multi-agency approach to strategy, planning, process, public awareness, training and development and service user participation. This review is due for completion in November 2014.



- Implementation of new practice in line with the Making Safeguarding Personal initiative from the Local Government Association (LGA) and Association of Directors of Adult Social Care (ADASS). This enables an outcome focussed approach and will bring front line practice in line with the national expectations set out in the Care Act, which will come into force in April 2015.
- Undertaking of a Peer Challenge review of Safeguarding so that the changes identified above are implemented into practice and a set of performance measures can be analysed to review the effectiveness of the transformation. This review is planned for April 2015.

## **b) Personalisation and Service User/Carer engagement**

The Peer Challenge team found that progress made around the personalisation agenda and the drive for service users and carers to take more control over the support they receive needed acceleration. This is an area which will be at the heart of the Adult Wellbeing transformation programme and a number of changes are under way in this area.

These include the following:

- Recruitment of an Expert by Experience as a Personalisation Lead to project manage the programme of work and drive the transformation of self-directed support and personalisation.
- Re-launch of the personalisation programme with front line staff to ensure the cultural change required is understood in practice.
- Revise and refocus the Making it Real Board ensuring that the board has a clear terms of reference and work programme.
- Development of a toolkit and framework to provide guidance and support with involvement of service users and carers in all service redesign.
- Revision of the council's Direct Payment policy and embedding it into social work practice.

## **c) Integration with the NHS**

The review team identified that in order to optimise efficiency and achieve better outcomes; the development of a whole system approach must be taken.

The following work is underway:

- Key strategic partners are working together on a number of projects to design and connect services in a more coordinated way. This work will be managed through a system wide change programme and a Transformation Board.
- The Better Care Fund, System Resilience Fund and DCLG Transformation Challenge Award submission are all recent developments that have

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required integrated planning and commissioning arrangements with our Clinical Commissioning Group NHS partner to be developed. A joint Commissioning Board with the CCG is now providing a clear governance structure for integrated decision making between the two organisations.

- Redesign of integrated urgent community services to ensure the pathway supports optimum discharge from acute hospital care and prevent admissions.

#### **d) Community Capacity Building**

Herefordshire's strong community and volunteer base provides a real opportunity to develop local services led by communities. This will be a fundamental strand of the Adults and Wellbeing prevention and early intervention strategy.

As part of the System Leads Transformation Programme, there is a workstream focussed on the role of communities in the care, support and wellbeing of the population.

This workstream is being led by the Director of Adults and Wellbeing to ensure that the work currently underway within public health, housing and social care is visible and priorities and objectives across the health and care system are aligned.

#### **e) Performance and financial reporting systems**

The weakness of the reporting systems and data quality was identified and this is an area that has been a focus for the directorate over the past six months.

The following activity is in progress (or completed):

- A comprehensive integrated performance dashboard is now in place and reviewed monthly by the Directorate Leadership Team and will feed into the Quarterly Performance Reviews. The dashboard integrated operational data, with national performance reporting on outcomes, business and finance metrics and quality metrics.
- Recruitment to fill a number of vacancies in the performance team to ensure the right skills and capacity are now in place has been completed (from September 2014).
- System integration between a number of key systems to provide automated payment of invoices against care packages commissioned.
- Implementation of a "no purchase order no payment policy".
- Embedding the new resource allocation system (RAS) which went live in April 2014 to provide indicative personal budgets. This indicative budget is calibrated against the amount of financial resource within the overall Adult Social Care budget so enabling much closer monitoring and identification where overspend is occurring.
- Quarterly performance reviews being run by the Chief Executive are now in place and provide an opportunity for members and other senior officers to challenge each directorate's performance against agreed metrics.

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These will include financial targets.

- 13 The action plan, attached at Appendix 2 is an iterative process and will continue to be refreshed and updated as part of the transformation programme. Cabinet will be kept informed of progress against the action as part of the corporate performance reporting process.

## **Community Impact**

- 17 The implementation of the action plan will deliver further improvement towards achieving the council's priorities of enabling residents to live safe, healthy and independent lives.
- 18 Vulnerable adults and their carers will experience different approaches to service delivery as a consequence of the implementation of the actions set out in the plan and through the delivery of the wider transformation programme.

## **Equality and Human Rights**

- 19 As the action plan is implemented, equality impact assessments will be carried out where relevant.

## **Financial Implications**

- 20 The actions included in the plan in Appendix 2 are included within the Adult Social Care budget. Where additional resource is being procured, this is included within the planned spend against the overall transformation programme budget.

## **Legal Implications**

- 21 The local authority is required to comply with key legislation and guidance including NHS and Community Care Act (1990); Mental Capacity Act (2005); Deprivation of Liberty Safeguarding (2009); Mental Health Act (1983); No Secrets (2000). The improvements will also bring the council into line with key legislative changes in the Care Act 2014.

## **Risk Management**

- 22 The risks associated with the failure to implement the action plan are:
- Financial risk – if Adult Social Care is unable to effectively monitor closely the commissioned care packages against the overall budget
  - Reputational risk – this is both from a professional (Peer Challenge, LGA and ADASS) perspective and to the service users, staff and key partners
  - Operational and practice risk – there is a risk of failing to understand and meet the individual outcomes for service users and carers including safeguarding

Ongoing risks to the implementation of the action plan will be identified and captured as part of the risk management process within the transformation programme

## **Consultees**

- 23 The following people have been consulted on the recommendations of the review and their views incorporated into the action plan; management board, directorate staff and managers, group leaders, health overview and scrutiny and service users.

Staff and service users will continue to play an active role in the further development of this action plan. The continual improvement of services will be led by service users and carers as part of the council's commitment to coproduction in design and delivery of services.

## **Appendices**

Appendix 1- Herefordshire Peer Challenge Feedback and Recommendations

Appendix 2- Action Plan

## **Background Papers**

None identified.

Helen Coombes  
Director of Adult Wellbeing  
Brockington  
35 Hafod Road  
Hereford  
HR1 1SH

Our Ref: DS/SAG  
Your Ref:  
Matter being dealt with by: Mr D Stevens  
Telephone: 0121 569 5887  
Date: 11 July 2014

Dear Helen

I write to give you formal feedback following the Peer Challenge. This builds on the provisional feedback we shared with you at the end of the Challenge Visit on Thursday 26 June 2014.

I was pleased to lead the Peer Challenge and I was joined by Keymn Whervin and Liam Waldron, both Experts by Experience Solihull; Councillor Yvonne Davies Cabinet Member Sandwell; Sue Alexander Head of Service Worcestershire; Chris Lewington Head of Service Warwickshire; and Eddie Clarke WMADASS Peer Challenge Programme Lead.

I would like to thank you for putting Herefordshire forward to host this Peer Challenge. There were many positive things that we will take away from our visit, including the examples of good policy and practice that we all observed.

I would like to thank all the people who use services, family carers, staff, partners, the Chief Executive, and the Cabinet Member (and others) who participated in the Challenge. We were made very welcome and the process was very well organised by Meg Swain and John Gorman. We were very impressed with the way in which people embraced the peer challenge and this helped make it constructive and fruitful.

This letter provides our findings and recommendations on the 3 main subject areas on which you asked the Team to report. The headline scope was:-

Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council  
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## IL2 - Protect

1. Does the Adult Wellbeing (AWB) Transformation programme have the structures and mechanisms in place to deliver its objectives including the financial plans and closer integrated commissioning and delivery set out in the BCF?
2. Do we have sufficient focus on service user and carer (families) experience and the mechanisms to allow them to influence commissioning, service re-design and audit of delivery to enabling accelerated personalisation?
3. A focus on our workforce is a key priority in the next 12 months. Will our organisational model and improvement plans for our operational staff enable us to deliver our quality, personalisation and financial aspirations?

The following includes an Executive Summary, an initial Overview of the positives we identified and then a section on each of the three main areas of the scope.

### **Executive Summary**

The main points identified during the Peer Challenge visit are:

- ❖ There remain important areas for further focus:-
  - safeguarding
  - service user/carer engagement with real co-production
  - personalisation
  - integration with the NHS
  - community capacity building
  - performance/finance reporting systems
- ❖ Stronger links need to be forged with people who use services, carers, staff and partners to deliver:-
  - market shaping to extend care and support options
  - better commissioning processes and outcomes
  - effective care management and creative support planning
  - which together lead to improved individual and personalised outcomes
- ❖ There is already much progress in developing a vision for adult social care, transformation programmes and related structures:-
  - clear vision and leadership from the Director
  - strong political support
  - buy in from staff

### **Overview**

The Peer Challenge Team (hereafter referred to as the Team) identified a number of main strengths.

There has been substantial activity in re-integrating adult social care back into the Council following the end of the arrangement with Wye Valley NHS Trust. The Team acknowledged that this had been very onerous for the Council on top of all the other challenges faced across the country for adult social care. There was a clear feel of a brand new Directorate as a consequence.

There is strong leadership and vision from the Director and this was commented on positively by staff and partners. There is a real sense of drive and direction from the new leadership team and staff stated that they were up for change.

There is good support for Adult Well-Being (AWB) from both lead Members and the Chief Executive.

The AWB Transformation Board (internal) and the Health and Social Care Transformation Board (across the Council and the NHS) have the potential to provide effective and co-ordinated leadership on current and emerging change programmes.

The re-launch of engagement Boards and Groups will support better commissioning and outcomes for service users and family carers who now felt they were being heard again.

The focus on the development of the workforce, both Council staff and those employed by external providers, was a real strength too.

What follows are the Team's observations and recommendations on the three main areas of the scope, and the strengths and areas for consideration by the Council and its partners.

## **Main Comments and Recommendations**

- 1. Does the AWB Transformation programme have the structures and mechanisms in place to deliver its objectives including the financial plans and closer integrated commissioning and delivery set out in the Better Care Fund?**

### Strengths

The Team identified that transformation is under-pinned by clear work programme areas and reporting to the AWB Transformation Board. The new Health and Social Care Transformation Board will support a whole system focus and those supporting the new Board acknowledged the benefit to be gained from early service user/carer involvement in shaping innovation.

In discussions with Health partners there was recognition that the Council is committed to partnerships and change whilst facing its own funding and demand pressures.

The Council has some good initiatives to develop community capacity across the County such as those involving libraries.

The re-tender for reablement, including telecare and a 24/7 response service, will enhance the promotion of independence and co-ordinated care.

The Care Act will pose extra challenges and pressures for Councils, and the Team were pleased to note the establishment of a dedicated person to work on the implications of the implementation of the Care Act.

### Areas for Consideration

The Advice and Referral Team (ART), with three staff, appears under-resourced although referral demand is not high at a stated 320 average calls per month. This figure, provided to the Team during the visit, contradicted the reported ASCOF data supplied to the Team of 500+ per month. Even at the lower figure of 320 per month, 25% were going through to an answer machine. The Team did a "mystery shopper" exercise one afternoon and of four calls made in a 40-minute period at 10/15-minute intervals, 50% went through to the answer machine.

- 1. The Team recommends that an analysis is done of the demand and performance of ART in order to improve calls answered in person*



## IL2 - Protect

There are at present multiple ways by which people could receive information and advice, including welfare rights and benefits advice. The options included ART and referral on to the Council's Welfare and Financial Assessments service as well as the Citizen's Advice Bureau. With the advent of the Care Act the demand for information and advice will grow and the Team determined that there should be a single point of access.

- 2. The Team recommends that options for a single point of access for information, advice and guidance be explored as part of the preparation for the Care Act*

The Team were informed that Brokerage struggles to respond quickly and that there are delays in procurement, possibly connected to there being only two staff. Also it was stated that it should be a 7-day service. This may be necessary once the 7-day working requirements of the Better Care Fund are in place.

- 3. The Team recommends that the Brokerage Service be reviewed with a consideration of whether 7-day working is required now or in the future*

The Council acknowledged that performance and financial information systems and reporting should be more integrated. This will improve the monitoring and reporting of progress on the Transformation programme.

- 4. The Team recommends that performance and financial reporting be reviewed to ensure that that the Directorate has full and integrated reports on both activity and performance for care support and the related financial framework*

In looking at the reports for the AWB Transformation Board, the Team felt that further details on challenges and progress could be provided, and that the risk rating was at times veering on the side of being overly generous - in terms of not giving due weight to risks, particularly if savings have not yet been achieved or implementation has not yet begun. This meant that the assurance required by the Board might not be sufficiently rigorous.

- 5. The Team recommends that enhanced progress reports to the AWB Board be considered and that the risk rating be subject of greater challenge*

## IL2 - Protect

The performance on Personalisation, in terms of direct payments and the establishment of a wider range of care and support, is not strong. There was no clear and visible leadership on personalisation and areas such as support planning could be improved. A culture change is required to drive forward a different and more outcome focussed service from frontline teams.

Northamptonshire has trained over 300 staff in the last year on support planning so as to give greater impetus to personalisation and this may be useful for the Council to follow up.

- 6. The Team recommends that a re-launch of personalisation be considered which includes training and support for social work teams on creative support planning*

A number of staff stated that whilst strategic change decisions are made by the Directorate Leadership Team, the actual implementation could sometimes lag or lack full forethought and preparation. The phrase “unintended consequences” was used by staff to reflect the need to more fully understand the impact of decisions for the frontline services and staff.

- 7. The Team recommends that closer alignment be sought between strategic change and related implementation or delivery*

The Team asked for a copy of the care pathway and were given a very detailed step-by-step guide of the whole process. What was not available was a care pathway “on a page” that was based on prevention, early intervention and reablement such as that utilised by Walsall. Whilst prevention and reablement are part of the Council’s approach to adult social care there did not seem to be a consistent and comprehensive default position undertaken on early intervention and prevention.

- 8. The Team recommends that the care pathway be reviewed including the emphasis given to early intervention and reablement*

It has already been stated that the Council should seek to provide a wider range of care and support as part of its approach to personalisation. This means that there should be a greater focus on market shaping, involving both service users/carers and providers. Commissioners and operational staff should work together to make this happen.

- 9. The Team recommends that market shaping be further developed*

## IL2 - Protect

As the new Health and Social Care Transformation Board is established over the next few months there should be close alignment with the AWB Transformation Board. Without this there is the risk of duplication or for work-streams to be unsynchronised. Worcestershire has two similar programmes with its Well Connected programme across health and social care as well as the Council's own programme. It may be useful to liaise with them to see how they have tackled this risk.

- 10. The Team recommends that the AWB Transformation Board and the new Health and Social Care Transformation Board work programmes be closely aligned*

The Team were acutely aware of the history surrounding health and social care integration and the recent dis-engagement from the contractual relationship with Wye Valley NHS Trust, who had managed services including adult social care. However, the Care Act requires that integration be progressed by local health and social care partnerships, although no particular model is prescribed. Therefore, it is essential that integration options and models be explored in Herefordshire that can improve the access and care support services for local people and the outcomes they experience.

- 11. The Team recommends that integration options be explored with local Health organisations*

The local acute hospital experiences severe demand pressures similar to others such as that on A&E services and length of stay. No alleviation of these pressures can occur without a joint strategy and approach as envisaged via the Health and Social Care Transformation Board. This will take time and in the meantime there is the opportunity to work with the Wye Valley NHS Trust to examine any impact from the recent changes of re-integration of services back into the Council and the outcome from the new reablement service and rapid response.

- 12. The Team recommends that the relationship with Wye Valley NHS Trust be built upon through reviewing the changes in recent arrangements and the effectiveness of the new reablement service*

## IL2 - Protect

One of the national conditions for the Better Care Fund (BCF) was that “Local areas must include an explanation of how local adult social care services will be protected within their plans. The definition of protecting services is to be agreed locally.” The Team could not identify from the local submission any additional funding or investment that was being made to protect adult social care. Other Councils have used the BCF in part to sustain current adult social care services (in addition to any existing S.256 transfer) and/or to fund some of the impact from the Care Act. Neither could be identified from the Herefordshire submission, which means that the Council will be under further demand pressures without the benefit of BCF support.

13. *The Team recommends that any review or refresh of the BCF should include consideration of additional opportunities to protect adult social care in line with the national condition for the BCF*

Some examples of initiatives to develop community capacity were shared with the Team, such as at Kington, but there did not appear to be a comprehensive Council led strategy. This is a key element of prevention and early intervention for health and social care, but is not limited to these areas in terms of communities supporting themselves wherever possible.

14. *The Team recommends that the Council, with partners, consider a more extensive strategy to enhance community capacity building*

A number of people commented to the Team that they felt the impact from the Health and Wellbeing Board had been limited so far. Given the important role the Board has to play on subjects like the BCF and the overall health and social care transformation, it will be essential that the Board has a high profile and effective influence in the future.

15. *The Team recommends that the Health and Wellbeing Board considers how it can extend its impact, influence and future outputs/outcomes across health and social care*

Some elected Members stated that they felt the Scrutiny role could be strengthened, including public participation. Also, that the current Scrutiny arrangements across the Council were under-resourced. The Team also identified that the Scrutiny oversight of adult social care performance and financial plans/spend could be more rigorous.

16. *The Team recommends that:-*
  - i) *The Council consider how the scrutiny function could be strengthened and resourced in the future*

## IL2 - Protect

- ii) *The Scrutiny Panel for Adult Well-Being consider regular (at least bi-annual) reports, and consequent discussion and debate, on the budget and performance of adult social care*

### **2. Do we have sufficient focus on service user and carer (families) experience and the mechanisms to allow them to influence commissioning, service re design and audit of delivery to enabling accelerated personalisation?**

#### Strengths

Parents of people with a learning disability stated that they felt involved in some of the commissioning and shaping of services, such as supported living. They welcomed such opportunities.

The re-launch of the Making it Real Board was similarly welcomed by service users and carers. Representatives from the Voluntary and Community Sector also supported this development.

Carers see Herefordshire Carers' Support as providing strong and effective support.

Representatives from the Autism Partnership Group stated that they felt that they are now beginning to have a voice which is an important step for a group that often feels marginalised or lacking recognition across the country.

The Quality and Review and Monitoring of providers of adult social care services includes service user and staff questionnaires, as well as a provider self assessment. These are used to cross check whether there are commonly viewed strengths and issues in people's experience of their care.

#### Areas for Consideration

The Day Opportunities model introduced at Canal Road is at risk of replicating traditional day centre provision with activities such as arts and crafts and bingo. Day Opportunities should be more focussed on assisting people to improve life options, such as employment, or work experience, or micro-enterprise developments, and the promotion of their independence.

- 17. *The Team recommends that commissioners monitor new service contracts, particularly where a new model is introduced, and ensure that future day opportunities are in line with the commissioning intentions*

## IL2 - Protect

The experience of people with a direct payment was described very negatively, with people stating that they felt dictated to by the Council on what they could spend the direct payment. Examples were given of an apparent inflexible approach to expenditure. Service users said they were scared to spend the money and received inconsistent advice on appropriate expenditure. Also, that the audit of direct payments by the Council was too formal with the records kept by service users being rated by auditors.

18. *The Team recommends that the Council reviews its policy and approach to direct payments with further guidance on appropriate expenditure that offers flexible use of the monies within the policy*

The Team were informed that the Council had “clawed back” £929,000 of unspent direct payments in 2013/14. Given the comments by service users that they were scared to spend the money and received inconsistent advice, there is a risk that this money, at least in part, could have been used to meet appropriate needs.

19. *The Team recommends that the underlying reasons for the “claw back” be assessed and appropriate action be taken on any findings*

The Team were informed that service users and carers were not always involved in care assessments and support plans. People, or their representatives, should always have a copy of their assessment and should contribute fully to their support plan, which should reflect the outcomes to which they aspire.

20. *The Team recommends that the Council considers how it can ensure that service users and carers receive a copy of their assessment and that they contribute fully to their support plan*

The care pathway and processes would benefit from an end-to-end review of access, assessment, support planning and review, with a simple and clear emphasis on prevention, early intervention and reablement.

21. *The Team recommends that an end-to-end review of the care pathway be undertaken through co-production with service users and carers (see also recommendations 6 and 8)*



## IL2 - Protect

The Team asked a number of managers and staff about their understanding of co-production. Inconsistent views were received and the experience of service users and carers was expressed as more one of consultation.

22. *Team recommends that managers and staff work with service users and carers to define and shape the Councils' future approach to co-production on commissioning and service reviews*

The Team were informed that engagement and involvement mechanisms were being re-established for some service user and carer groups such as the Autism Partnership Group and the Learning Disability Partnership Board. However, other groups such as older people, people with a physical disability and people with mental health issues were not involved in similar arrangements. Representatives of Boards and Groups stated that information was not always simple, clear and with contact details.

23. *The Team recommends that engagement mechanisms be established for all service user and carer groups with clear, simple communication and always with contact details*

Both service users and staff were unclear what would happen when the Independent Living Fund (ILF) ceases. They also stated they were unclear on other policies and procedures such as that to do with direct payments.

24. *The Team recommends that:-*
- i) the position on the ILF be clarified with service users and staff*
  - ii) the Council consider how a wider knowledge of policies and procedures can be better communicated to service users, carers and staff*

The Team were informed that the previous medical model of criteria for access to the Learning Disability social work service was still in place though the team was now not an integrated team.

25. *The Team recommends that the criteria be withdrawn and new guidance be issued to managers and staff*

## IL2 - Protect

The Council acknowledged Adult Safeguarding as an area for further development. In discussion with managers it became clear that there are some significant risks for the Council on the performance of some adult safeguarding practices. Areas where risks exist are in the Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (as regards timescales for assessments/reviews), the tracking of cases through the safeguarding process, and the historic leadership of the Board (which had queried performance but not ensured that improvements had taken place).

26. *The Team recommends that remedial action is taken to ensure these safeguarding risks are reduced and that practice improvements are made in line with legislation where relevant*

One of the ways in which the Council, and the Safeguarding Adults Board, could be assured about the quality of safeguarding practice is through questionnaires for service users and family carers about their experience of the safeguarding process, and whether their desired outcomes were met. A number of Councils undertake questionnaires and this can play a key part in informing improvements in practice and achieving better outcomes.

27. *The Team recommends that the Council, its safeguarding partners and the Safeguarding Adults Board consider the use of questionnaires regarding the experience of service users and family carers*

**3. A focus on our workforce is a key priority in the next 12 months. Will our organisational model and improvement plans for our Operational staff enable us to deliver our quality, personalisation and financial aspirations?**

### Strengths

The Council has made very good progress on the re-integration of adult social care back into the Local Authority. This has been achieved alongside all the other pressures and transformation plans that are being experienced by all Councils.

There was consistent and strong support for adult social care across political parties from senior Members such as the Leader, Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing, Group Leaders and Scrutiny lead Members. This was complemented by equally strong support from the Chief Executive. The challenges for adult social care were well understood.



## IL2 - Protect

As regards the workforce there a strategic multi-agency group, which has an integrated workforce plan on adult social care.

Staff that the Team met stated they felt able to be open and honest. With the AWB Forums for staff this will support constructive dialogue and the staff contribution to service developments and transformation.

There is a good use of “I” statements in the social care commitment action plan for recruitment and staff appraisal/development, and there is a plan to develop a cultural change strategy. Again, these will support staff development and their contribution to both good practice and change initiatives.

### Areas for Consideration

The AWB Forums are a positive development although some staff stated that they were primarily information giving sessions. The Team felt that they were a real opportunity for two-way communication on the challenges and issues faced by the Directorate as well as an information-sharing event.

28. *The Team recommends that the Council consider how the AWB Forums can be utilised for real dialogue and discussion with staff on transformation and change*

Many interviewees expressed concerns about the use of interims and the changes in staffing. It was stated that the retention of staff should be a priority and that home grown talent should be supported further.

29. *The Team recommends that the Council consider how it can reduce the number of interim staff and retain and develop the existing workforce*

Reference has already been made to the important role played by creative support planning in enhancing personalised outcomes for service users and carers. Training should be considered on support planning for staff and frontline managers. See recommendation 6.

Comments were made to the Team about some of the limited functionality of the client database system – Frameworki. The Council had visited Worcestershire, as it used the same system, and had developed it to provide performance and financial data for use by both frontline managers and senior managers. The system has the capacity and capability to be developed further.

## IL2 - Protect

30. *The Team recommends that the functionality of Frameworki be expanded to assist both frontline and senior managers to receive improved reports on activity and performance*

Herefordshire has a large geographical area, and staff often have to travel many miles to visit people who have been referred or who already receive care and support. The development of broadband in the County will assist the increase in mobile and flexible working, which can be a much more efficient way of working for many staff.

31. *The Team recommends that the Council explore the additional benefits that could be realised from increased mobile and flexible working*

Whilst staff stated that they feel they can be open and honest, they also stated that they do not feel empowered to innovate and take risks. They felt that there could be more delegation to frontline staff and managers.

32. *The Team recommends that delegated authority to frontline staff and managers be considered, including both operational and budget decision making*

External provider forums have recently re-commenced with the Council. There will be areas of difference but on-going discussions will be important as transformation and market shaping progress. External providers have a key role to play in contributing to market shaping and commission intentions and they stated that they would wish to engage further with the Council.

33. *The Team recommends that the provider forums be continued and that they be involved in the planning on market shaping*

Staff stated to the Team that some of the training providers were risk averse and not up to date in their workshops and courses. This would be unhelpful in areas like personalisation.

34. *The Team recommends that training programmes are quality monitored and reviewed where necessary*

As the Directorate continues to focus on improvement and transformation, integration with the NHS will again come to the forefront. Workforce issues will emerge during the consideration of integration models and options for the future. These should not prevent the consideration of models and the consequent improvement of access to services and outcomes for service users and patients. See recommendation 11.

**Conclusion**

Finally, we have sought to make the findings of the peer challenge constructive and helpful to the Council and also to strike an appropriate balance between support and challenge. We hope that you are able to receive positively the comments in this context. We have learnt from the process ourselves and we have really appreciated the opportunity to take away many good policy and practice examples that we can share with our own Councils.

On behalf of the Team I would like to thank you for hosting this peer challenge, and for working so positively with us. I hope you will agree this has resulted in a helpful and constructive outcome.

Yours sincerely



David Stevens  
Director of Adult Social Care, Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council

cc:- Alistair Neill, Chief Executive, Herefordshire Council  
Peer Challenge Team Members



## ADULT SOCIAL CARE PEER CHALLENGE (JUNE 2014) – ACTION PLAN

### APPENDIX 2

No.	Recommendation	Lead	Our Response	Priority (H/M/L)	By When	Monitoring and Evaluation
1	The Team recommends that an analysis is done of the demand and performance of ART in order to improve calls answered in person	Head of Operations	Agreed – The council is implementing a discharge to assess urgent care model, as part of this it is modelling and analysing the front door activity	H	Oct 2014	Service Management System resilience operational group
2	The Team recommends that options for a single point of access for information, advice and guidance can be explored as part of the preparation for the Care Act.	Assistant Director of Commissioning	Agreed - The LA will be seeking in its commissioning of information, advice and guidance specification provision of a single point of access within the community and voluntary sector	M	Jan 2015	Adults and Wellbeing Commissioning Board Cabinet lead member approval
3	The Team recommends that the Brokerage Service be reviewed with a consideration of whether 7-day working is required now or in the future.	Head of Operations	Agreed- Immediately implemented, in addition the brokerage service is now the point of contact for all access to discharge to assess beds	H	Sept 2014	Service Management Directorate Leadership Team
4	The Team recommends that performance and financial reporting be reviewed to ensure that the Directorate has full and integrated reports on both activity and performance for care support and the related financial framework.	Head of Transformation and Safeguarding	Agreed and implementation started. The council has put in place a Quarterly Performance Review process, a Chief Executive service review/challenge, and the Directorate Leadership Team receive a monthly dashboard report	H	Sept 2014	Quarterly performance reviews Directorate Leadership Team

No.	Recommendation	Lead	Our Response	Priority (H/M/L)	By When	Monitoring and Evaluation
5	The Team recommends that enhanced progress reports to the AWB Board be considered and that the risk rating be subject of greater challenge.	Programme Lead	Agreed – monthly highlight reports to be reviewed to include greater consistency of analysis of progress and risks	H	Sept 2014	AWB programme Board
6	The Team recommends that a re-launch of personalisation be considered which includes training and support for social work teams on creative support planning.	Head of Transformation and Safeguarding	Agreed – The council has appointed a Personalisation Lead Project Manager who is an Expert by Experience to relaunch personalisation and lead the Making it Real Board putting person centred practice and commissioning at the heart of transformation	H	Sept 2014 onwards	Making it Real Board AWB programme board
7	The Team recommends that closer alignment be sought between strategic change and related implementation or delivery	Assistant Director of Commissioning	Agreed – A clear commissioning strategy with underpinning commissioning plans are in progress. This will be enable service users, staff, partners and providers to understand our commissioning intentions and how this will be implemented	M	Dec 2014	AWB programme board
8	The Team recommends that the care pathway be reviewed including the emphasis given to early intervention and reablement.	Assistant Director of Commissioning	Agreed- Reablement service recently re-commissioned. Further training and monitoring is underway to ensure that this service is being optimised. As part of this evaluation and training, a clear pathway will be developed to ensure staff across the health and care system are aware	M	Dec 2014	AWB Commissioning Board Service management

No.	Recommendation	Lead	Our Response	Priority (H/M/L)	By When	Monitoring and Evaluation
9	The Team recommends that market shaping be further developed.	Assistant Director of Commissioning	Agreed – Provider forums for residential and domiciliary providers are being re launched. Market Position statement will be refreshed as part of the Care Act implementation	M	Dec 2014	AWB Commissioning Board
10	The Team recommends that the AWB Transformation Board and the new Health and Social Care Transformation Board work programmes be closely aligned.	Programme Lead	Agreed – All transformation programmes will be mapped across both Boards and the Better Care Fund plans will bring together both programmes of work	L	Dec 2014	AWB programme board System Leads Transformation Board
11	The Team recommends that integration options be explored with local Health organisations.	Assistant Director of Commissioning	Agreed – The new Health and Social Care Transformation programme, and the Joint Commissioning Programme all focus on integrated pathways. An early example of this is the Integrated Urgent Care Service which will go live on 1 <sup>st</sup> October 2014	M	Dec 2014	Joint Commissioning Board (CCG and LA)
12	The Team recommends that the relationship with Wye Valley NHS Trust be built upon through reviewing the changes in recent arrangements and the effectiveness of the new reablement service.	Assistant Director of Commissioning	Agreed – At a strategic level the Health and Social Care Transformation programme, and the Better Care Fund Programme are bringing together the health and social care. At an operational level, this is been developed through the Integrated Urgent Care service	M	Dec 2014	System Leads Transformation Board

No.	Recommendation	Lead	Our Response	Priority (H/M/L)	By When	Monitoring and Evaluation
13	The Team recommends that any review or refresh of the BCF should include consideration of additional opportunities to protect adult social care in line with the national condition for the BCF.	Director of Adults and Wellbeing	Agreed – Part of national assurance process and Council submissions have been reviewed to reflect this	H	Sept 2014	National assurance process
14	The Team recommends that the Council, with partners, consider a more extensive strategy to enhance community capacity building.	Director of Adults and Wellbeing	Agreed – the is part of the Health and Social Care Transformation Supportive Communities Workstream	L	Mar 2015	System Leads Transformation Board
15	The Team recommends that the Health and Wellbeing Board considers how it can extend its impact, influence and future outputs/outcomes across health and social care.	Health and Well Being Chair	Agreed – The Health and Well Being Board terms of reference are currently being reviewed and the governance of the Health and Social Care Transformation programme will be through the HWBB	M	Dec 2015	Health and Wellbeing Board Governance Officer (Scrutiny)
16	The Team recommends that:- (i) The Council consider how the scrutiny function could be strengthened and resourced in the future (ii) The Scrutiny Panel for Adult Well-Being considers regular (at least bi-annual) reports, and consequent discussion and debate, on the budget and performance of adult social care.	Statutory Scrutiny Officer	Agreed – the council continues to review its governance structures to ensure that they remain fit for purpose and roles are performed effectively  Agreed – A cycle of reporting to Health & Social Care Overview and Scrutiny will be incorporated into the work plan.	M	March 2015	Statutory Scrutiny Officer  AWB Performance Function
17	The Team recommends that commissioners	Assistant	Agreed – Commissioning resources	M	Oct 2014	AWB Commissioning



No.	Recommendation	Lead	Our Response	Priority (H/M/L)	By When	Monitoring and Evaluation
	monitor new service contracts, particularly where a new model is introduced, and ensure that future day opportunities are in line with the commissioning intentions.	Director of Commissioning	have been realigned and an evaluation of key performance indicator will be completed to reflect this action			Board Service management
<b>18</b>	The Team recommends that the Council reviews its policy and approach to direct payments with further guidance on appropriate expenditure that offers flexible use of the monies within the policy.	Personalisation Programme Lead	Agreed – The council will be reviewing and implementing a new Direct Payment Policy as part of its personalisation refresh	<b>H</b>	<b>Oct 2014</b>	AWB board programme
<b>19</b>	The Team recommends that the underlying reasons for the “claw back” be assessed and appropriate action be taken on any findings.	Head of Operations	Agreed – the Council has already identified that support planning requiring a focus on outcomes. This is a key factor in setting the right amount of personal budget from the beginning rather than having to then reclaim unspent monies	<b>L</b>	<b>Mar 2015</b>	Directorate Leadership team
<b>20</b>	The Team recommends that the Council considers how it can ensure that service users and carers receive a copy of their assessment and that they contribute fully to their support plan.	Head of Operations	Agreed – The implementation of the Community Care policy refreshed in April 2014 will be reviewed and regular audits will take place to ensure that copies of assessments are been shared	<b>H</b>	<b>Oct 2014</b>	Directorate Leadership team
<b>21</b>	The Team recommends that an end-to-end review of access, assessment, support planning and review, with a simple and clear emphasis on prevention, early intervention and	Assistant Director of Commissioning	Agreed – The Integrated Urgent Care Service, a review of locality based social work and preparation for the Care Act are all focused on an	<b>M</b>	<b>Dec 2014</b>	AWB board programme

No.	Recommendation	Lead	Our Response	Priority (H/M/L)	By When	Monitoring and Evaluation
	reablement.		emphasis on early intervention			
<b>22</b>	The Team recommends that managers and staff work with service users and carers to define and shape the Council's future approach to co-production on commissioning and service reviews.	Personalisation Programme Lead	Agreed – see action 6	<b>H</b>	<b>Dec 2014</b>	AWB programme board Making it Real Board
<b>23</b>	The Team recommends that engagement mechanisms be established for all service user and carer groups with clear, simple communication and always with contact details.	Personalisation Programme Lead	Agreed – see action 6	<b>H</b>	<b>Dec 2014</b>	AWB programme board Making it Real Board
<b>24</b>	The Team recommends that:- (iii) The position on the ILF be clarified with service users and staff (iv) The Council considers how a wider knowledge of policies and procedures can be better communicated to service users, carers and staff.	Head of Operations	Agreed – All statutory and relevant policies and procedures will be reviewed and implemented as part of the Care Act	<b>M</b>	<b>Mar 2014</b>	AWB Commissioning Board
<b>25</b>	The Team recommends that the criteria be withdrawn and new guidance be issued to managers and staff	Head of Operations	Agreed – re-education of staff will be undertaken	<b>H</b>	<b>Oct 2014</b>	Directorate Leadership team
<b>26</b>	The Team recommends that remedial action is taken to ensure these safeguarding risks are reduced and that practice improvements are made in line with legislation where relevant.	Head of Safeguarding and Transformation	Agreed – A rapid intervention and recovery plan has been put in place to reduce risks in relation to safeguarding and this is been monitored on a	<b>H</b>	<b>Apr 2015</b>	Safeguarding Adults Board Directorate

No.	Recommendation	Lead	Our Response	Priority (H/M/L)	By When	Monitoring and Evaluation
			monthly basis by the Safeguarding adults steering Group			Leadership team
<b>27</b>	The Team recommends that the Council, its safeguarding partners and the Safeguarding Adults Board consider the use of questionnaires regarding the experience of service users and family carers.	Head of Safeguarding and Transformation	Agreed – the council is adopting Making Safeguarding Personal and is aiming to have a Peer Challenge on Safeguarding in April 2015	<b>H</b>	<b>Apr 2015</b>	Safeguarding Adults Board
<b>28</b>	The Team recommends that the Council consider how the AWB Forums can be utilised for real dialogue and discussion with staff on transformation and change.	Programme Lead	Agreed – the council has reviewed the AWB forum to ensure that it is more interactive and is continuing to do so based on feedback from each session	<b>L</b>	<b>Dec 2014</b>	AWB Programme Board
<b>29</b>	The Team recommends that the Council consider how it can reduce the number of interim staff and retain and develop the existing workforce.	Head of Operations	Agreed – the council has recently recruited a number of permanent staff, and is continuing to look at innovative ways of attracting the required workforce to come and work within Herefordshire to reduce the reliance on interim staff	<b>M</b>	<b>Oct 2014</b>	Directorate Leadership Team
<b>30</b>	The Team recommends that the functionality of Frameworki be expanded to assist both frontline and senior managers to receive improved reports on activity and performance.	AWB Performance Lead	Agreed – The council has developed performance reports and dashboards on key national indicators and is currently reviewing FWI functionality on activity and performance as part of the Care Act implementation	<b>H</b>	<b>Oct 2014</b>	Directorate Leadership Team Management Board
<b>31</b>	The Team recommends that the Council	Strategic Lead -	Agreed – the council is currently	<b>L</b>	<b>Apr 2015</b>	Directorate

No.	Recommendation	Lead	Our Response	Priority (H/M/L)	By When	Monitoring and Evaluation
	explore the additional benefits that could be realised from increased mobile and flexible working.	IM&T	trailing new mobile hardware before making a decision on the equipment required for mobile working and has a flexible working policy in place			Leadership Team Management Board
<b>32</b>	The Team recommends that delegated authority to frontline staff and managers be considered, including both operational and budget decision making.	Head of Operations	Agreed – this will be completed by the end of the financial year and budget training is been put in place for all first line managers	<b>M</b>	<b>Apr 2015</b>	Service Management Directorate Leadership Team
<b>33</b>	The Team recommends that the provider forums be continued and that they be involved in the planning on market shaping.	Assistant Director of Commissioning	Agreed – Forums are a key part of the approach to market facilitation and partnership working	<b>M</b>	<b>Ongoing</b>	AWB Commissioning Board
<b>34</b>	The Team recommends that training programmes are quality monitored and reviewed where necessary.	Head of Safeguarding and Transformation	Agreed – the council is currently refreshing its workforce strategy and implementing plan to ensure that training delivered particularly to social work staff is relevant and of high quality	<b>M</b>	<b>Dec 2015</b>	Directorate Leadership Team