

Safeguarding children peer review – Torbay 21 – 25 May 2012

Feedback

Safeguarding Peer Review programme for today

- The peer team
 - The process
 - Feedback
 - Strengths
 - Areas for Further Consideration
 - Discussion
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The peer team

- **Jo Davidson** - Strategic Director, Herefordshire Council
 - **Clare Chamberlain** - Independent Chair, Hampshire LSCB and Independent Consultant
 - **Bernie Halford** - Independent Consultant (former Designated Safeguarding Nurse, LB Brent)
 - **Jon Chapman** – Business Manager Hertfordshire SCB (Ex-Detective Superintendent, Hertfordshire Constabulary)
 - **Tanya Foley** - Safeguarding Manager, Dorset County Council
 - **Jim Collins** - Assistant Director - Education, Culture and Skills, Telford and Wrekin Council
 - **Cllr Deborah Shears (Con)** - Leader of the Conservative Opposition, LB Merton
 - **Jonathan Trubshaw** – Associate, Local Government Group (Review Manager)
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Peer review

- Peer review is based on the established signposts
 - Not an inspection – invited in as “critical friends”
 - Information is confidential and non attributable
 - People were open and honest
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The Process

- Case file mapping group
 - Document and data review
 - Early thoughts discussion
 - Interviews, case files and visits
 - Feedback and exploration of key priorities
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Summary - Strengths

- Clear and visible leadership
 - Credible and coherent plan
 - Enthusiasm and people being up for it
 - Approach has introduced much needed systems, processes and security
 - Early help projects and approaches
 - Positive front-line relationships across agencies
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Summary – Areas for Further Consideration

- **Pace, consistency and demonstrating impact on children and families**
 - **Effective relationships support; they also need to challenge and drive improvement**
 - **Moving from control to empowered decision making**
 - **Sell your strengths, tell your improvements and impact, focus on the future, don't be frightened of your past**
 - **Recruitment and retention of safeguarding social work staff – be brave; market 'the brand'; use your staff as advocates; work with others to develop the career offer**
 - **Sustainability – you can't afford to stay as you are. Make more use of the whole system**
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Children's Case Files

- **Examples of good analyses in core assessments**
 - **Evidence of thoughtful dialogue from social workers and from other agencies**
 - **Use of evidence based programmes to help families change**
 - **Urgent need to streamline paperwork to make it more user friendly and to release time for social workers to do social work**
 - **Inconsistent frequency of supervision (although improved more recently)**
 - **Practice is good where permanent staff in place but high turn-over still a major problem that impacts on families**
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Outcomes - Strengths

- **Outcomes for teenagers – low offending rates; numbers in education employment and training at 16; significantly improved educational outcomes for children in care**
 - **Political support for safeguarding children**
 - **TellUs Survey – most children feel very safe at home**
 - **Financial and accommodation commitments made, followed through and having positive impact**
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Outcomes – Areas for Further Consideration

- **It is not too soon for evidence of impact of the changes made**
 - **Impact on outcomes – the ‘so what’ question**
 - **High numbers of children with Child Protection Plans and in the care system is not sustainable and is likely to impact on outcomes and safety**
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Vision, Strategy and Leadership - Strengths

- **Cross-party support and commitment to improve safeguarding – particularly corporate parenting**
 - **Strong, clear vision and actions in the Children's Partnership Improvement Plan**
 - **Confidence in the stable 'top team' leadership**
 - **Addressing cultural change – honesty, frankness, inclusivity**
 - **Recognition of need for sustained action on recruitment, development and retention**
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Vision, Strategy and Leadership – Areas for Further Consideration

- **Challenge and pace of action, for example recruitment and retention**
 - **Children as a long term political priority against competing demands: economic development, tourism, link road**
 - **Other partners understanding, engagement with and leadership of both the Improvement plan and the future strategy/use of resources**
 - **Clarify and communicate the early help strategy and offer in order to secure on-going investment in the right places**
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Working Together and Local Safeguarding Children Board - Strengths

- **Child's Journey/Threshold Matrix – clear, strong roll out and visible support**
 - **Remodelling and strengthening of TSCB with clarity of priority areas for change and openness to challenge and development**
 - **Collaboration with other LSCBs on training**
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Working Together and Local Safeguarding Children Board – Areas for Further Consideration

- **Demonstrate consistent involvement and challenge of all agencies**
 - **Lack of clarity about ownership of SCR/IMR actions between TSCB and CIB**
 - **Develop capability and capacity through further learning and joint work with other LSCBs**
 - **Case audit framework needs further development to demonstrate an impact on practice/outcomes**
 - **Improve relationships with the Voluntary Sector to draw upon their strengths and expertise**
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Service Delivery and Effective Practice - Strengths

- **Evidence of good practice and things to be proud of**
 - **Front-line relationships/co-location**
 - **NQSW/Grow your own/Training and Development**
 - **Developing use of own staff to lead training**
 - **Safeguarding Hub**
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Service Delivery and Effective Practice – Areas for Further Consideration

- Risk that positive developments will become swamped without the broader strategy – Hub/IFSS/CAF
 - Balance between assessment and intervention
 - On-going commitment to reducing caseloads
 - Equality and Diversity issues – not well understood and embedded
 - CWD geographically and structurally too separate from social care
 - Decide and communicate the level of partner access to PARIS
 - **MARAC and SERF**
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Managing Performance - Strengths

- **Evidence of some decisive action regarding poor performance**
 - **Evidence of increasingly intelligent commissioning to improve quality, outcomes and value for money**
 - **Evidence of managerial direction in case work**
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Managing Performance – Areas for Further Consideration

- **Develop systematic approaches throughout the partnership and at every level which ask the ‘so what’ question and rigorously look at the impact of changes**
 - **Corporately use existing PM systems to drive improvement**
 - **Consider how good performance is identified and communicated**
 - **Evidence the impact of improved, reflective supervision and developing peer support**
 - **Sustainability of too many children in social care system**
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Balance – things are not mutually exclusive

- **Torbay is unique-----Torbay is not unique**
 - **Informed performance discussions -----RAG/targets**
 - **Sustained improvement-----Rapid actions**
 - **Telling success-----Confronting failure**
 - **Good relationships-----Decisive and challenging conversations**
 - **Good partnership-----Holding to account/ playing your part**
 - **Empowered staff/managers-----Maintaining control**
 - **Every child safe-----Affordability/financial rigour**
 - **Every child safe-----Early Help**
 - **Children-----Economic prosperity**
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Conclusions

- **Positive change has definitely happened**
 - **Staff report the situation is safer than it was**
 - **Urgent action to recruit and retain social workers is critical**
 - **Your longer term strategy for life after the improvement notice, needs on-going and sustained development, involving all partners. This is not a social care or children's services problem or solution alone**
 - **Communicate to partners that things are moving**
 - **You've calmed and controlled – now empower!**
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**Opportunity for questions
and clarification**
