

Report to:	EXECUTIVE CABINET
Date:	7 February 2018
Executive Member / Reporting Officer:	Cllr Jim Fitzpatrick – Executive member for Childrens James Thomas – Director of Children’s Services (DCS)
Subject:	GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS – CHILDREN’S SAFEGUARDING IN TAMESIDE
Report Summary:	<p>The Improvement Board has brought together senior strategic leaders both from the Council and from all those partners key to safeguarding children in Tameside. There have been many examples where the Board has made effective challenges to the pace and effectiveness of improvement actions. However, through the course of 2017 there has been a growing concern on the part of Tameside Council, the independent Improvement Board Chair and Ofsted, that the pace of improvement has been too slow. Therefore it is appropriate to review the extent to which the Improvement Board itself can strengthen its effectiveness in the year ahead. This report outlines proposed changes to the terms of reference of the Improvement Board for 2018.</p> <p>The government is proposing to replace Local Children’s Safeguarding Boards with new local safeguarding arrangements determined by the three lead statutory partners, namely the Council, the CCG and the Police. This report outlines the direction of travel for proposals in Tameside.</p> <p>The Department for Education is negotiating new Improvement Advisors for Tameside, a role that is likely to be taken up by Stockport alongside the development of an improvement partnership with them. This report provides an update.</p>
Recommendations:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) It is recommended that the Executive Board agree that the revised terms of reference for the Improvement Board outlined in this report (and attached at Appendix 1) are taken forward to Executive Cabinet on 7 February 2018 for approval and adoption. (ii) It is recommended that the Executive Board agree the principles for future local safeguarding arrangements as outlined in this report. Once the new statutory guidance is enacted, full detailed proposals will be taken forward to Executive Cabinet. (iii) It is recommended that the Executive Board agree to the development of an improvement partnership with Stockport. Once detailed proposals are ready, these should be taken forward to Executive Cabinet.
Links to the Corporate Plan:	The Corporate Plan outlines the priorities for improving the borough of Tameside including the quality of life for children and families, particularly those who are most vulnerable and in need of help. The Improvement Board is an essential element of the improvement approach and the programme of work supporting the delivery of those priorities.

Financial Implications:
**(Authorised by Section 151
Officer)**

There are no direct financial implications arising from this report

Legal Implications:
**(Authorised by Borough
Solicitor)**

A the Executive Cabinet set up the Board and agreed original terms of reference there is a requirement that they review and agree any changes.

Risk Management:

A failure to have appropriate challenge and oversight of the improvement process creates a risk to the effectiveness and quality of safeguarding services provided to children in Tameside in need of help and protection. The changes proposed in this report help to strengthen the challenge and oversight provided by the independent Improvement Board.

Access to Information :

The background papers relating to this report can be inspected by contacting the report writer Simon Brunet:



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1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Following the Ofsted inspection of services for children in need of help and protection; children looked after; and care leavers in late 2016 an independently chaired Improvement Board was established.
- 1.2 The purpose of the Improvement Board has been to drive improvement at the strategic level across the multi-agency partnership in Tameside. As such the membership was broad based and included agencies directly and in-directly responsible for the ensuring the quality and effectiveness of safeguarding services provided to vulnerable children in Tameside and those in need of help and protection.
- 1.3 In the twelve months since it was established there have been many examples where the improvement board has made effective challenges to the pace and effectiveness of improvement actions. However, through the course of 2017 there has been a growing concern on the part of Tameside Council, the independent Improvement Board Chair and Ofsted, that the pace of improvement has been too slow. Therefore it is appropriate to review the extent to which the Improvement Board itself can strengthen its effectiveness in the year ahead.
- 1.4 Given the concerns outlined above it is proposed to revise the terms of reference for the Improvement Board to ensure continued focus on driving improvement at both pace and scale. The proposals are outlined in this report and are supported by the independent chair.
- 1.5 Ofsted judged Tameside's Local Safeguarding Children's Board as Requires Improvement in their report published in December 2016. In parallel with concerns about the slow pace of improvement in Tameside's services, there has been growing concern about the slow pace of improvement in the work of the LSCB. A decision has been taken to bring new interim leadership to the LSCB to support the early adoption of new local safeguarding arrangements once the statutory guidance changes as expected in April 2018.
- 1.6 The Children and Social Work Act (2017) set out provisions which will replace Local Safeguarding Children Boards with new flexible local safeguarding arrangements led by 3 safeguarding partners (local authorities, chief officers of police, and clinical commissioning groups), and places a duty on those partners to make arrangements to work together and with any relevant agencies for the purpose of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in their area.
- 1.7 Under the new legislation, the responsibility for Serious Case reviews (SCRs) will also change. Responsibility for SCRs will move to a National Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel. The Panel will commission and publish reviews of serious child safeguarding cases which it thinks raise issues that are complex or of national importance. Local safeguarding partners will still be required to complete local reviews where the partners believe there are lessons to be learned.
- 1.8 At the end of October the Department for Education published a revised draft version of the 'Working Together to Safeguard Children Guidance' for consultation, which closes on the 31st December. The final version is expected to be published in spring 2018 and will accompany the Children and Social Work Act (2017).
- 1.9 LSCBs must continue to carry out all of their statutory functions, until the point at which safeguarding partner arrangements begin to operate in a local area. Safeguarding partners have up to 12 months from the publication of the 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' guidance to publish their local arrangements and must notify the Secretary of State for Education when they have done so. Following publication of their arrangements, safeguarding partners will have up to three months to implement the arrangements. Local

areas will therefore have until the summer of 2019 to implement their new arrangements, at which point their Local Safeguarding Children Board will cease to exist.

- 1.10 In early 2018 the Department for Education will be seeking expressions of interest from local areas that want to be considered as an early adopter and to implement their new safeguarding arrangements at an earlier date. Tameside would like to be considered as an early adopter and therefore needs to set out its preliminary safeguarding arrangements upon which more detail about the primary functions, resources, roles and responsibilities can be determined.
- 1.11 The Department for Education appoints Improvement Advisors when a Council's services have been judged Inadequate, who report back to the DfE on the progress of improvement. The DfE has ended their contract with the previous Improvement Advisors.

2. CASE FOR CHANGE

- 2.1 There is a clear case for change in order to ensure that the Improvement Board is more effective in 2018, and there is an opportunity for changes to be made in line with other key changes including:
 - The separation of the Director of Adult and Director of Children's Services role to create a dedicated Director of Children's Services role with an interim appointment for the next 12 months
 - A new lead Executive Member supported by two other members of the Executive Cabinet to ensure sufficient elected member input in the improvement programme
 - A new Improvement Plan – agreed by the Improvement Board in December 2017 – with a clearer focus on the basics that need improvement, the leadership to deliver this, and a clearer reporting framework of performance and quality
 - A revised Tameside Safeguarding Children Board (TSCB) improvement plan
 - Review of the TSCB arrangements and effectiveness ahead of changes to the statutory framework that will come into effect this year (2018)
 - Review by the Department for Education of their arrangements for reporting on progress.
 - Recognition of the possible risk that demands to serve governance and oversight can drain capacity from the direct improvement work thus needing a re-balancing of need and resources.
- 2.2 A review of the current terms of reference has been undertaken to assess the effectiveness of the Improvement Board in meeting the objectives of its terms of reference and in light of the points highlighted above. The output from that review is a series of proposed changes to the terms of reference and thus the ways of working of the Improvement Board.
- 2.3 The work of the LSCB has too often been characterised by superficial scrutiny across a large number of topics, and the high level of activity of meetings, sub-groups and papers has not been matched by a corresponding level of impact. In Tameside there is a view from Board Members that the current membership of the Board is too big and that only a small number of those members are active participants/contributors. Not all partners could be reasonably expected to be fully engaged in the majority of the safeguarding work being

undertaken. There is a sense that there are too many sub-groups, that often the same representatives are expected to attend and that some of those sub-groups are not effective.

3. PROPOSED CHANGES TO THE TERMS OF REFERENCE – IMPROVEMENT BOARD

3.1 Following a review of the current terms of reference for the Improvement Board the following changes are proposed:

Objectives

- Simplify to have a clearer focus upon holding the Director of Children's Services (DCS) and team to account for progress in driving improvement. Likewise for the Tameside Safeguarding Children Board chair and colleagues across the multi-agency safeguarding partnership environment

Membership

- The current level of multi-agency engagement in the Improvement Board is a strength, but there is also a risk that this mitigates against effective participation in the discussion by everyone, and reduces the focus and depth of discussion at the meetings.
- Reduce the number of Improvement Board members and others attending (up to 32 at present) currently
- Core membership (agencies at the heart of safeguarding children in Tameside) is to be defined, and wherever possible one senior representative should suffice

Frequency

- Monthly meetings doesn't allow for sufficient time between meetings to take forward actions and activity, plus there is a risk of governance overload
- Change to 6 weekly – which can be kept under review pending the timing of future handover to the new local safeguarding arrangements

Reporting

- Clarify that reporting responsibility primarily lies with the statutory Director of Children Services (DCS)

Agenda and Forward Plan

- Introduce a much more structured forward plan
- Progress performance and quality scorecard to provide a much clearer picture of impact alongside progress monitoring of the Improvement Plan
- Board meetings to alternate between comprehensive performance and progress reporting and deep dive into specific thematic priorities

Accountability

- The Improvement Board will provide challenge and oversight for the Improvement Plans for both Children's Services and the Tameside Safeguarding Children Board (TSCB)

Ways of Working

Good terms of reference don't automatically mean effective working and impact. As such there needs to be a renewed focus upon the Improvement Board's ways of working, and a shared responsibility held by all Improvement Board members to ensure:

- Clarity of view – ensuring that progress or lack of progress can be clearly understood, and that the welfare of Tameside's children remains as the central focus of the Board's work
- Challenge – effective challenge leading to effective action and impact

- Rigour – to show persistence in not letting go of an issue until it is resolved
- Collaboration – demonstrating shared responsibility for improvement

3.2 The proposed new Improvement Board terms of reference are attached at **Appendix 1**.

4. LOCAL SAFEGUARDING ARRANGEMENTS

4.1 The Chief Executive has made an interim appointment of a new Chair of the LSCB, Gill Frame, who brings a wealth of experience to the role and is currently the LSCB Chair in both Stockport and Cheshire East.

4.2 The Chief Executive, the Director of Children's Services, the Director of Quality and Safeguarding for the Tameside and Glossop Single Commission, and the Chief Superintendent of GMP for Tameside have discussed and agreed the following principles for our new local safeguarding arrangements:

- * Principle One - The rights and interests of children need to be at the heart of the arrangements.
- * Principle Two – The local safeguarding arrangements exist to improve outcomes for children and all measures of success should be toward that goal.
- * Principle Three - The responsibility for effective safeguarding lies with each partner agency, it does not lie with the TSCB or with the future governance body for our local safeguarding arrangements. The TSCB and the future governance arrangements are responsible for holding each partner individually to account for their safeguarding work, which includes their responsibility for effective multi-agency working.
- * Principle Four - An Executive Committee will carry out the primary function of holding each other and all relevant partners to account, and for developing the local arrangements which make clear the shared vision and objectives for Tameside's children.
- * Principle Five - The wider partnership is responsible for delivery and improvement.
- * Principle Six - The need for improvement will be informed and driven by the input from service users and practitioners.
- * Principle Seven – The Executive Committee should keep in scope Early Help services as defined in the revised statutory guidance.

4.3 Further work needs to be carried out to determine how the following statutory requirements will be addressed most effectively:

- * Independent Scrutiny – will be a requirement but without prescription as to how this is carried out, including no requirement for an Independent Board Chair
- * Sub-groups – have never been a requirement but have become an orthodoxy in how LSCB's carry out their work – in line with the principles set out above, it is envisaged that we will keep sub groups to a minimum, potentially limited to two for the functions of Check and Review (providing the clear analysis of performance data and quality assurance findings) and Case Review
- * Case Reviews – the requirement for Serious Case Reviews will change to a new system of national and local reviews

4.4 Once the new statutory guidance for local safeguarding arrangements is enacted by government, which is expected in April 2018, the detailed proposals for Tameside will be drafted and brought back to Cabinet for approval.

5. DFE IMPROVEMENT ADVISOR ROLE AND IMPROVEMENT PARTNERSHIP

5.1 The DfE has ended the contract with the previous Improvement Advisors and has agreed in principle to appoint Stockport to carry out this role.

- 5.2 Proposals are being drawn up to develop an improvement partnership with Stockport, with the initial steps likely to focus upon Social Worker Recruitment and Retention, and upon work with young people on the Edge of Care – both of which are priorities in our Improvement Plan.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 6.1 As set out on the front of the report.

5. APPENDICES

- 5.1 The following appendices are attached:

- Appendix 1 – revised terms of reference for the Improvement Board

APPENDIX 1

TAMESIDE CHILDREN'S SERVICES IMPROVEMENT BOARD – TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Tameside Children's Services Improvement Board will provide the strategic direction for delivering the required improvements in Tameside Council's Children's Services and the Tameside Safeguarding Children Board. It will provide challenge and rigour to the process whilst ensuring collaboration to achieve and sustain continuous improvement with a focus on core standards, performance, quality, impact and effectiveness of improvement activity.

The Independent Chair of the Board will oversee the effective functioning of the Board, providing appropriate external challenge and rigour to drive improvement at pace and scale. The Chair is not accountable for improvement; that responsibility lies with Tameside Council through the Director of Children's Services and the Tameside Safeguarding Children Board through the Chair of that Board (and with the new Local Safeguarding Arrangements once introduced and the leadership agreed for those arrangements by the Council, CCG and Police).

Scope and objectives:

The scope and objectives of the Tameside Children's Services Improvement Board are:

- Provide oversight and challenge of the Improvement Plans (both Tameside Council and Tameside Safeguarding Children Board) with a particular focus on the pace and scale of progress and impact of activity.
- Receive reports from the Director of Children's Service and the Chair of the Tameside Safeguarding Children Board (and subsequent leadership of local safeguarding arrangements) on progress against their respective Improvement Plans.
- Use performance and quality data to assess the effectiveness of the services provided by Tameside Council and Tameside Safeguarding Children Board for those children in need of help and protection.
- Commission and consider reports from bespoke reviews and challenge processes that assist in understanding root causes and thus informing progress against the Improvement Plan.
- Ensure that the improvement process is informed by the views of front-line practitioners and children, young people and carers.

Membership:

The core membership of the Tameside Children's Services Improvement Board is:

- Independent Chair
- Executive Leader of Tameside Council
- Executive Member for Children's Services
- Director of Children's Services
- Assistant Executive Director for Children's Services
- Chair of the Tameside Safeguarding Children Board
- Chief Executive of Tameside Council
- NHS Tameside & Glossop CCG representative
- Pennine Care NHS Foundation Trust representative

- Greater Manchester Police representative
- Tameside Integrated Care NHS Foundation Trust representative

Variations to core membership may be determined by the Executive Leader and Chief Executive of Tameside Council.

In Attendance:

The following representatives will also be in attendance to support the Improvement Board in an advisory capacity:

- Practitioners Improvement Group representative
- Greater Manchester Health and Social Care Partnership representative
- Local Government Association representative
- Department for Education representative

Others may be invited to attend specific meetings or parts of meetings in order to contribute. The Chair of the Improvement Board and the Director of Children's Services will be responsible for determining where this will be helpful, and for ensuring communication and engagement with the wider network of agencies who have an important contribution to make to the delivery of improved services to Tameside's children and families.

Frequency:

The Tameside Children's Services Improvement Board (TCSIB) will meet six weekly, until such time as there is sufficient confidence in the progress of improvement that the frequency can be further reduced. When the Council's service is no longer judged Inadequate, then there should be consideration to terminate the Improvement Board.

Changes to frequency may be determined by the Executive Leader and Chief Executive of Tameside Council.

Format:

The agenda and papers will be made available 5 working days in advance of each meeting.

Ways of working:

The Improvement Board will use the ways of working outlined below in guiding its work.

- Clarity of view – ensuring that progress or lack of progress can be clearly understood, and that the welfare of Tameside's children remains as the central focus of the Board's work – there will be consistent reporting of performance data and quality assurance findings
- Challenge – effective challenge leading to effective action and impact
- Rigour – to show persistence in not letting go of an issue until it is resolved
- Collaboration – demonstrating shared responsibility for improvement

Review:

The terms of reference, membership and frequency of meetings of the Tameside Children's Services Improvement Board (TCSIB) will be reviewed six monthly by the Improvement Board. Any changes other than those specified above in respect of membership and frequency must be agreed by the Executive Cabinet of Tameside Council.