

**Extract of minutes of Shadow Overview and Scrutiny Committee  
on 4 February 2019**

**New Safeguarding Children Partnership Arrangements**

The committee considered a report with regard to new Safeguarding Children Partnership Arrangements. The report noted that significant changes had been made to multi-agency working as part of the Children and Social Work Act 2017. The Act abolished Local Safeguarding Children Boards and created new duties and a system of collective accountability for Clinical Commissioning Groups, local authorities and police to make arrangements locally to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in their area. Senior Leaders from the relevant authorities had overseen and engaged in an option appraisal to consider potential models and the outcome of this was that a Pan Dorset Safeguarding Children Partnership would provide the most effective mechanism for addressing current and emerging safeguarding children challenges.

A report was to be considered by the Shadow Executive Committee on 11 March 2019 to formally approve the proposal and the Shadow Overview and Scrutiny Committee was invited to consider the proposals and support the recommendations to be presented to the Shadow Executive Committee.

Members considered the issues arising from the report and during discussion the following points were raised:

- Members noted the list of relevant agencies identified within the document and a question raised as to whether this should include people who had gone through the care system? It was noted that engagement with service users was in the plan, however this point would be reported back to senior leaders
- It was noted that children were sometimes looked after in police custody when there was no other safe place for them to be placed. A point was noted that responsibilities in this area needed to be reviewed. In response to these points, members noted that work had been completed and a protocol was in place
- In respect of child death reviews, new legislation and guidance had increased the number of deaths that each panel had to review in a year. Discussions were currently being held with Somerset to establish cross border working opportunities
- A discussion was held in respect of the training function in this area and it was noted that it wasn't anticipated that extra funding would be required for this
- Reference was made to funding from Dorset Police for the partnership and it was noted that the police had been part of the discussion that had agreed the arrangements. A request was made for this point to be taken back to senior leaders as there may be a risk to funding moving forward
- Lead members would be involved in the safeguarding partnership arrangements. Scrutiny of the arrangements would be undertaken through each bodies' scrutiny arrangements. Scrutiny arrangements for the Dorset Council had been considered by the Governance Working Group. One of the scrutiny committees in the Dorset Council would provide focus in this area in addition to focus through the lead member

- Ensuring and increasing the involvement and input of children and families was currently being looked at and arrangements in other areas who were early adopters of the new arrangements, were being reviewed
- A point was raised with regard to the promotion of mental health, early identification and intervention to address mental illness in children and young people. Although this was recognised as an important issue, it was outside of the scope of the report being considered
- A request was made for kinship carers to be included in engagement as well as foster carers
- Issues around dispute resolution had been considered during the consultation period but had not been included within the document. This issue would be reviewed as the partnership was formed and started to work together and a policy formed as to how disputes were resolved
- The safeguarding plan sought to establish an effective working relationship between the agencies. The responsibilities of the different agencies under relevant Acts were unchanged by the production of the plan
- A point was raised with regard to liaison with agencies in other areas of the country where this was required and again it was noted that the day to day workings in this area remained unchanged. The document set out how the agencies would work together
- The partnership arrangement set out the responsibilities of agencies and provided a facility for the agencies to look together at particular areas and see where lessons could be learnt. There may be a role for the Dorset Council People Overview and Scrutiny Committee to undertake a review once the new arrangements had been in place for a period of time
- A recent review had shown that further work was required in particular areas such as county lines and child exploitation and a joint agency action plan had been put together to address these issues
- Reference was made to the developing vision and priorities set out in the plan. The aim of the partnership was to provide an overview of what each agency was doing in order to meet need and where there was a need to collaborate in order to make improvements.

It was proposed by N Lacey-Clarke seconded by J Sewell

### **Recommendation to the Shadow Executive Committee**

1. The Shadow Executive Committee is requested to approve the Pan Dorset Safeguarding Children Partnership Plan
2. The Shadow Executive Committee is requested to provide delegated authority to the Executive Director – People (Children) for the plan to receive independent scrutiny ahead of submission to the Secretary of State for Education by 29 June 2019.