

North Tyneside Council

Report to Cabinet

13 October 2014

ITEM 6(e) Safeguarding and Education Panel

Portfolio: Children, Young People and Learning
Adult Social Care

Cabinet Member: Cllr Ian Grayson
Cllr Lesley Spillard

Report from Service Area

Children, Young People and Learning, Adult Social Care

Report Author: Jean Griffiths
Jacqui Old

Tel: (0191) 6438782
Tel: (0191) 6437317

Wards affected: All

PART 1

1.1 Purpose:

The purpose of the report is to provide Cabinet with information about the proposal to establish a new Elected Member Panel. The proposed panel will support Elected Members to fulfil one of their key statutory responsibilities of safeguarding children and adults and promoting their welfare. The panel will enable Members to consider confidential and sensitive safeguarding, care and education issues. It will also provide opportunities to scrutinise issues in depth relating to the performance of children's and adults' safeguarding services.

1.2 Recommendation(s):

It is recommended that Cabinet

1. notes the report;
2. agrees to the Authority establishing a Safeguarding and Education Panel and;
3. authorises the Head of Children Young People and Learning and Adult Social Care in consultation with the Cabinet Members for Children Young People and Learning and Adult Social Care to finalise the terms of reference of the Panel and the necessary administrative arrangements to establish the Panel.

1.3 Forward Plan:

28 days notice of this report has been given and it first appeared on the Forward Plan that was published on 21st July 2014.

1.4 Council Plan and Policy Framework

This report links to Our North Tyneside Plan through the priority place upon Our People and our Economy

Our People will:

- Be supported to achieve their full potential, especially our children and young people
- Be cared for and kept safe if they become vulnerable.

We will be successful if:

- The gap in educational attainment across the borough has been reduced
- More people who use our care services feel safe

1.5 Information:

This report summarises the reasons for establishing a Safeguarding and Education Board. It also provides information on the proposed role and remit of the Panel.

1.5.1 Background

Current scrutiny arrangements in North Tyneside for protecting and caring for both children and adults include the Health and Wellbeing Board (HWBB); the North Tyneside Safeguarding Children Board (NTSCB) and the Safeguarding Adult Board (SAB). These boards deal effectively with challenges and issues that can be discussed publically. However they are open meetings and therefore, because of issues of sensitivity or confidentiality are subject to standard restrictions of discussion.

In order to provide appropriate challenge to service support and delivery it is proposed, in line with best practice, that a closed panel be established made up of experienced and specially trained elected members. The panel will be serviced by senior staff from Adult Services and Children, Young People and Learning.

1.5.2 The panel will provide members with the opportunity to scrutinise issues in depth relating to the performance of children and adults safeguarding services. It will include but not be limited to:

- The quality and effectiveness of social work practice in safeguarding vulnerable residents
- The quality and effectiveness of commissioned services in complying with safeguarding and welfare requirements
- Allegation management in relation to staff members and members of the wider children and adult workforce
- Significant incidents of concern or those attracting media attention
- Local partnership and safeguarding arrangements.

1.5.3 The panel will also have within its terms of reference:

- Accountability of underperforming care providers in relation to the welfare and safeguarding of vulnerable users and residents
- Accountability of underperforming schools in relation to issues of wellbeing and care of children and young people.

1.5.4 It is proposed that the panel will report directly to Cabinet and will have the power to recommend urgent action if it has concerns about the effectiveness of local services. It will also formally report to the Health and Wellbeing Board (HWBB) requesting that the board consider matters it judges to be of concern. The panel will also advise the North Tyneside Safeguarding Children Board and the Safeguarding Adult Board of its work and seek advice and guidance from the chairs of the respective boards where necessary. The Authority's Overview and Scrutiny Sub-Committees, including the Children, Education and Skills Sub Committee and the Adult Social Care Health and Wellbeing Sub-Committee will be formally appraised of the panel's work and the progress made against any recommendations and priorities.

1.6 Decision options:

The following decision options are available for consideration by Cabinet:

Option 1

Cabinet may agree to establishing a Safeguarding and Education Panel

Option 2

Cabinet may not agree to establishing a Safeguarding and Education Panel and can request Officers to look for alternative options to provide for Member involvement.

Option 1 is the recommended option.

1.7 Reasons for recommended option:

If Cabinet agree to the recommended option the Safeguarding and Education Panel will be established. This will lead to strengthened accountability through more effective monitoring and evaluation of safeguarding practices.

1.8 Appendices:

There are no appendices.

1.9 Contact officers:

Jean Griffiths, Head of Children, Young People and Learning; tel: (0191) 643 8782
Jacqui Old, Head of Adult Social Care; tel: (0191) 643 7317
Alison Campbell, Financial Business Manager; tel: (0191) 643 7038

1.10 Background information:

The following background papers/information have been used in the compilation of this report and are available at the office of the author:

- Statutory guidance on the roles and responsibilities of the Director of Children's Services and the Lead Member for Children's Services
https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/271429/directors_of_child_services_stat_guidance.pdf
- Framework and evaluation schedule for the inspections of services for children in need of help and protection, children looked after and care leavers.
<http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/framework-and-evaluation-schedule-for-inspection-of-services-for-children-need-of-help-and-protectio>

PART 2 – COMPLIANCE WITH PRINCIPLES OF DECISION MAKING

2.1 Finance and other resources

The only additional costs to the council would be for car mileage and subsistence, where appropriate, for Members serving on this Panel and these costs can be contained within existing resources. Attendance at the Panel's meetings would be classed as an 'approved duty' under the Members Allowances Scheme.

2.2 Legal

Local Authorities have statutory duties under the Children Act 1989 and the Care Act 2014 to safeguard and promote the welfare of children who are in need and adults. It is proposed that the establishing of the Safeguarding and Education Board will assist with those duties.

It is intended that the meetings and the information considered will be confidential and therefore not opened to the public. It should be noted however that the Authority does have duties under the Data Protection Act 1998 and the Freedom of Information Act 2000 therefore if any of the information is requested under these Acts then this would have to be considered and a decision made regarding its release.

2.3 Consultation/community engagement

2.3.1 Internal Consultation

The proposal to establish a Safeguarding and Education Panel has been discussed with the Senior Leadership Team, the Deputy Chief Executive and the Chief Executive. The Cabinet Member for Children Young People and Learning (Councillor Ian Grayson) and the Chair of the North Tyneside Safeguarding Children Board (Richard Burrows) have also been part of this consultation process.

2.3.2 External Consultation/Engagement

The proposal to establish a Safeguarding and Education Panel has been discussed at the North Tyneside Safeguarding Children Board, which comprises representatives from Police, Health, Community and Voluntary Sector and the Probation Service.

2.4 Human rights

There are no direct human right implications flowing from this report.

2.5 Equalities and diversity

There are no equality and diversity implications associated with this report.

2.6 Risk management

There are no risk management issues arising from this report.

2.7 Crime and disorder

There are no crime and disorder implications flowing from this report.

2.8 Environment and sustainability

There are no environment and sustainability implications associated with this report.

PART 3 - SIGN OFF

- Deputy Chief Executive x
- Head of Service x
- Mayor/Cabinet Member(s) x
- Chief Finance Officer x
- Monitoring Officer x
- Head of Corporate Strategy x