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February 2013
Emily Warren
(029) 2046 8681
Emily.warren@wlga.gov.uk



Julie Rogers
Deputy Director
Welsh Government
Cathays Park
Cardiff

Dear Julie,

Re: Regional Safeguarding Children Boards

I am writing in response to your letter to local authorities dated November around LSCB collaboration. This is set out in Annexe A.

As set out in the WLGA and ADSS Cymrur response to the consultation on collaboration at a regional level- where there is a business case to do so, increasing efficiencies. In many areas across Wales this approach has to find a solution that meets the distinct needs of the two largest areas in Wales, and North Wales.

We therefore welcome the pragmatic approach adopted by WG, which regional level, prior to legislation being enacted. This provides a critical approaches, to ensure they are safe, improve outcomes and retain the of Directors and Cabinet Members in safeguarding vulnerable children.

2012, requiring a progress update

the Bill, we see the value of enhanced through improving outcomes and already been adopted, but we are keen the public service footprint, Mid & West

enables boards to come together at a opportunity to test different regional professional and political accountability

Steve Thomas
Chief Executive
Prif Weithredwr

To support this, the WLGA, in partnership with ADSS Cymru have commissioned Professor Jan Howarth, (Sheffield University) to undertake a national piece of work. The objective is to support the Boards to develop an approach, which manages risk and maximises collaborative advantage.

We expect that this work will inform the drafting of the Bill, and subsequent guidance and regulations, to ensure that any prescribed areas are safe, effective and remain locally accountable. We expect the work to be completed by the summer of 2013, with interim reports available prior to publication.

We do however remain concerned that whilst regional collaboration is progressing, the continued lack of progress around a National Funding Formula, remains a significant risk in the operation of Boards. We would welcome discussions with WG colleagues to determine the potential for a voluntary national formula to be established, as proposed at the WLGA Seminar on Safeguarding in 2008, and supported by key partners in Health and Police.

We would welcome the opportunity to discuss with you the issues raised in this letter, and Professor Howarth's work, and to this end would welcome your attendance at the Safeguarding and Protection Policy group, which will next meet on 28TH March at 3pm.

Kind Regards



Emily Warren
WLGA Policy Lead

Simon Burch
Chair, ADSSC Safeguarding and Protection Policy Group

Annexe A

Progress Update on Regional Collaboration

Area	Progress
Cardiff and the Vale	Discussions underway to establish a joint Board
Cwm Taf	Joint Board established and operational
Gwent	Shadow Board established, Chair Appointed
North Wales	Two tier approach, Shadow Board Established, 3 LSCBs remain underneath
Mid and West Wales	Discussions underway and options appraisal in progress
Western Bay	Shadow Board established



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Leading Social Services
in Wales
Yn arwain
Gwasanaethau Cymdeithasol
yngh Nghymru

TRANSFORMING GOVERNANCE INTO COLLECTIVE ACTION TO SAFEGUARD CHILDREN: DEVELOPING A SHARED KNOWLEDGE BASE FOR REGIONAL SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN BOARDS BRIEFING PAPER

As outlined in 'safeguarding' (Part 7) of the Social Services and Well-Being (Wales) Bill the 22 Local Safeguarding Children Boards (LSCBs), established in 2007, are to come together as regional boards with a new National Independent Safeguarding Board. Given that the regional boards have to deliver effective strategic-level collaboration, it is important to identify the factors that contribute to, or limit, their ability to do so in a way that improves outcomes for children. The Joint Inspectorate (2011), drawing on the Self-Assessment and Audit Tool (SAIT) developed by Professor Jan Horwath and the late Dr Tony Morrison, identified issues that local boards encountered when attempting to collaborate to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. It is not yet clear, however, what governance arrangements and systems the larger regional boards will need to have in place to ensure they avoid these issues and promote effective practice that safeguards children and promotes their welfare.

With this in mind, Professor Jan Horwath from the University of Sheffield, has been commissioned by WLGA/ADSS Cymru to support the regional boards in their development. More specifically she will work with members of the boards to identify not only how regional boards can

conduct their business to achieve effective safeguarding outcomes for children and young people but also what regulations and guidance will facilitate and support the regional boards develop safe systems and safeguard children. In order to achieve this, by working collaboratively with the regional boards, she will attempt to answer the following questions:

- How do regional boards agree on a shared vision and strategic direction?
- How do they establish limited, shared priorities that take account of different local needs and priorities?
- How can members of regional boards hold each other to account and ensure a culture of challenge?
- What governance frameworks, guidance and support are required to assist the achievement of the above?

This project is designed to support the regional boards in their own development as well as providing information to the Welsh Government about guidance and regulation that will enable the boards to operate. With this in mind the following approach will be taken:

Briefing session for members of the regional boards on 5th June 2013

A one-day seminar targeted at the Chair, Safeguarding Manager and two other members from each Board. The purpose of the seminar will be to provide an opportunity for participants to:

- Appreciate 'what works' with regard to multidisciplinary strategic partnerships designed to safeguard children
- Consider the implications of 'what works' to the establishment of effective regional boards taking into account the boards functions
- Identify local and national factors that act as promoters and inhibitors to effective transition from local to regional boards
- Explore different models

A development session for each regional board to be held between June and September 2013

A one-day development session will be facilitated by Professor Horwath for each regional board. The aim of the session will be to:

- Ensure all board members are aware of 'what works'
- Agree on a shared vision for the board
- Establish priorities in light of this vision that take account of both regional and local needs
- Consider the governance arrangements that need to be in place to ensure members of the board are well placed to hold each other to account and ensure a culture of challenge at both regional and local levels

Six month follow on survey to be completed in January 2014

An electronic questionnaire will be circulated to all members of the regional boards via the business manager. The responses will be returned to Professor Horwath for analysis and key themes identified. The questions will be designed to obtain the following information:

- To what extent is the shared vision reflected in the work of the board?

- What work has been undertaken on the agreed priorities?
- To what extent do members of the board feel they are clear about their roles and responsibilities?
- Can they provide an example of when members of the board challenged and held each other to account?
- How do members believe the board have managed the interface between regional and local needs in terms of their work?
- What has worked well and what has not ?
- Do you believe regional boards are well placed to safeguard and promote the well-being of children in the region?

National seminar to be held in February 2014

Members from all the regional boards will be invited to a national seminar where Professor Horwath will share the findings from the survey and participants will have an opportunity to consider the implications for regulation and guidance that will support them in their endeavours.

Final Report for March 2014

This will provide a comprehensive account of the project, the survey and the findings and will be presented to the commissioners.

A Stronger Framework for Safeguarding update

The safeguarding policy group has reviewed its Terms of reference and membership and intends to re launch itself nationally to ensure there is good awareness amongst key stakeholders regarding its role and remit. The group would welcome consultation and engagement on the development of safeguarding policy in Wales.

The group met on the 28th of March and reviewed the actions outlined in the Local government Implementation Plan.

- Outcome measures for safeguarding, the lead for this action is SSIA and work is in progress which links into the national Outcomes Framework.
- The Development of Regional Safeguarding Boards has changed its focus, and is now extended to a national review of the regional boards across Wales which are in the process of being put in place at different stages. The group received updates at the last meeting from North Wales who have a two tiered model which includes 3 sub regional boards and a North Wales strategic board. Terms of reference have been agreed, and key partners are cooperating well with a good commitment to safeguarding children, ensuring process are effective and efficient and avoiding wherever possible any unnecessary waste or duplication. Gwent have adopted a totally regional approach and developed a partnership agreement to ensure clarity on roles and responsibilities of respective partners. It is the intention of the safeguarding policy group to make contact with all regional safeguarding board across Wales to ensure they have a link in. Hot off the press is the appointment of Phil Hodgson to the chair of the new Safeguarding and Protection Expert Development Panel which will be responsible for *taking forward work on the development of regulations and guidance to begin to give legal and operational effect to the safeguarding sections of the Bill*. It is the intention of the ADSSC National Safeguarding Policy group to make contact with Phil and ensure a good dialogue is in place to take the agenda forward together. The regional boards will be evaluated with WG funding, and a researcher from Sheffield University has been negotiated, and work begun on the process. This will be very helpful to consider the best options for regional working in this crucial area and also inform the development of policy and guidance flowing from the Social Services and Wellbeing Bill.
- An Education seminar was convened in Autumn 2012 and CSSIW identified a number of work stream areas to take the agenda forward in relation to clear guidance and policy in relation to Safeguarding in Educational settings. The Department for Education and Skills have already begun looking at restrictive interventions in schools and the group consider this a critical work stream in its forward plan.

- Adult Safeguarding Toolkit. Feedback on first draft is being sought from the respective professional groups and an implementation plan to be agreed.
- Communication training – IPC and SSIA will put forward models for developing training on communication abilities. These will be sent to LA's in mid May for October delivery.
- Scrutiny guide for elected members - being developed and the LWGA are leading on this.