

St.Helens Safeguarding Children Board

CONSTITUTION 2008

The partners on the
St Helens Safeguarding Children Board are
working hard to make sure all our children are
protected from harm, and able to grow up
enjoying their childhood, achieving as young
people, and succeeding as adults.

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1. Title

The Board shall be known as the St Helens Safeguarding Children Board (STHSCB) and shall consist of a Main Board, Executive and a number of sub groups.

2. Purpose

The LSCB is the statutory mechanism for agreeing how agencies will cooperate to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in its locality and for ensuring the effectiveness of its activity.

The work of the LSCB fits within the wider context of the Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership and Children's Trust arrangements, with the aim of improving the five key outcomes for all children and young people; this is embodied within the St Helens Children and Young People's Plan (CYPP).

The LSCB has a particular focus on the 'staying safe' outcome and seeks to ensure all children and young people in St Helens are safeguarded and have their welfare promoted.

3. Management and Support

The LSCB will employ staff within its resources to discharge its function(s).

The Business Manager will be accountable to the LSCB and will report to the Safeguarding Children Manager within CYPS. This post is agreed and included in the budget paid by all partners.

At the present time St Helens CYPS acts as the employer of staff who work for the LSCB in order to achieve its objectives. They will be subject to the Council's terms and conditions of employment, unless they are seconded by another agency.

4. Functions of the Safeguarding Children Board

The StHSCB has the responsibility for ensuring that all agencies and organisations within the area, that provide services to children and young people, have appropriate arrangements in place to ensure that those children are safeguarded, and that their welfare is promoted. The Board is not responsible for the operational work of each of these organisations, but is responsible for:

- coordinating, across the local authority area, what each organisation does to safeguard and promote the welfare of children
- ensuring the effectiveness of what these organisations do

4.1 The main functions of the Safeguarding Children Board

The two main functions of the StHSCB are:

1. Safeguarding – protecting children from maltreatment and preventing impairment of their health and development
2. Promoting welfare – ensuring that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care, and with optimal life chances

4.1.1 Safeguarding

In carrying out this function to safeguard and protect children from harm, the Board will focus on all children who are resident in, or receiving services from, St Helens, from the point of their conception (pre-birth) through to 18 years (or 25 years where there is a continuing duty of public care), and where:

- they are at risk of suffering harm (at least Level 4: St Helens Continuum of Children's Needs)
- they are identified as having complex needs arising from compromised parenting. (High Level 3 and Level 4: St Helens Continuum of Children's Needs)
- they are in need of multi-disciplinary assessment, planning, intervention and review (High Level 3: St Helens Continuum of Children's Needs)

The StHSCB will also focus on the safe recruitment of staff that work with children and young people, consistent with the recommendations of the Bichard Report.

4.1.2 Promoting welfare

This promotional function will focus on:

- promoting the availability of services in St Helens for children with complex needs
- ensuring that all agencies understand their own accountabilities in relation to safeguarding children, and that they effectively report to the StHSCB on their discharging of these duties
- being a focal point for auditing and commissioning services that promote the welfare of all children in St Helens
- working with other agencies and the community to ensure that the wider, promotional safeguarding agenda is delivered, in focusing on issues such as children having safe playing areas and being protected from road traffic accidents
- work with other agencies in raising public awareness of safeguarding issues such as bullying, smoking, immunisation, drugs and alcohol misuse, anti-social behaviour, crime, children missing from home, teenage pregnancy, and infant mortality. Some of this work will be undertaken within the Stay Safe Outcome Group.

4.1.3 The work of the Safeguarding Children Board

In carrying out its responsibilities, the Board will develop policies and procedures for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in the St Helens area in relation to the recruitment and supervision of persons who work with children, investigations of allegations against persons working with children and the safety and welfare of children who are privately fostered.

The Board is also responsible for the following:

- Develop clear thresholds for intervention
- Ensure multi-agency training and development
- Ensure cooperation with neighbouring Children's Services authorities and their Board partners
- Communicate to persons and bodies in the area the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children
- Monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of what is done by the Local Authority and Board partners
- Participate in the planning and commissioning of children's services
- Undertake Serious Case Reviews
- Develop and implement procedures to ensure a coordinated response to an unexpected child death, and the collection and analysis of information from each death

The key elements of work undertaken by the Board will be contained within the Business Plan and link to a number of strategic objectives as outlined in 'Working Together' guidance 2006.

The Business Plan will be reviewed and updated on an annual basis.

There is a strong link to the Stay Safe Outcome Group, which reports into the Children and Young People's Partnership. The Chair of Stay Safe Outcome Group also chairs the LSCB Executive.

The emerging E-safety agenda has also been taken on board by the LSCB and the work of this group will feed into Executive and Stay Safe Outcome Group.

5. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

- 5.1** If at any time a LSCB member has a personal interest in any matter being considered by the Board, he/she shall declare the existence and nature of that interest to his/her agency and decide whether such

interest is deemed to also be prejudicial (seeking advice where necessary)

- 5.2** Declarations of interest will be recorded and steps taken to ensure the individual concerned has no involvement in decision making or consequent action in relation to the matter in question when the interest is felt to be both personal and prejudicial.

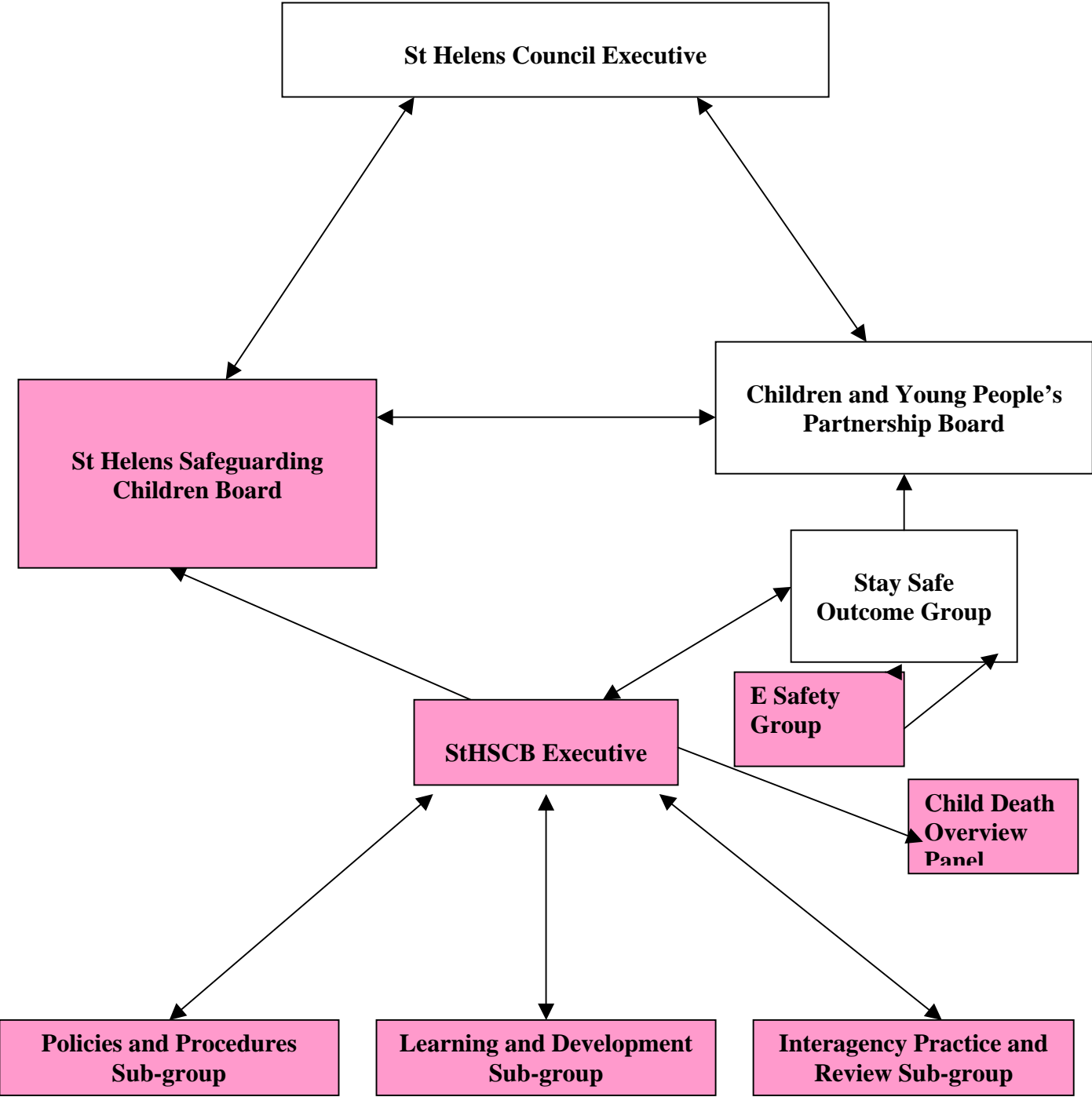
6. Governance and reporting

6.1 Strategic structures

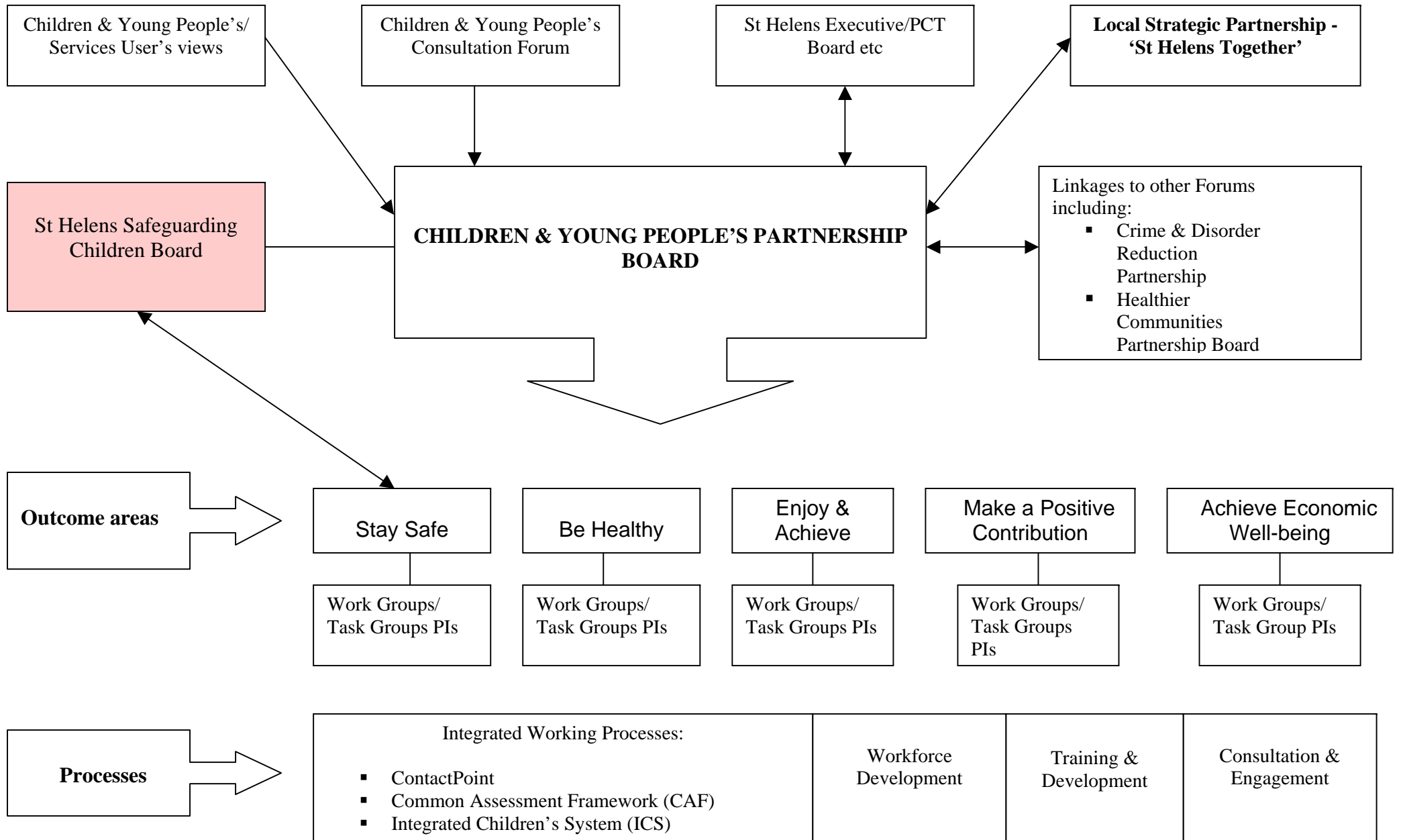
The StHSCB is accountable to the local authority through both the Lead Member for, and the Director of, Children and Young People's Services. In addition, it reports regularly to the Children and Young People's Partnership Board – and, where appropriate, to the St Helens Council Executive - to provide key performance and monitoring information that will inform wider planning and commissioning processes across the borough, including the development of the St Helens Children and Young People's Plan.

The strategic mapping of the St HSCB, and its relationship with the CYPPB, can be seen as follows:

Strategic mapping of the StHSCB



The StHSCB's relationship with the Children & Young People's Partnership Board



7 Accountabilities

The StHSCB has the statutory responsibility and authority to hold member agencies to account in relation to safeguarding activities, but this does not mean that it will be accountable for the operational work of members.

Board members and partners are required to establish clear and explicit lines of accountability in relation to the safeguarding of children within their own agencies.

8. The St Helens Safeguarding Board Approach - Compact and underpinning principles

StHSCB has produced a Compact that embraces the Government's Every Child Matters agenda, and commits all partner agencies to developing services that place children's needs at the centre, promoting their optimal life chances and minimising their exposure to harm and risk.

8.1 The Every Child Matters five outcomes

The StHSCB will strive to ensure that all children and young people in the borough have an equal right to:

- be safe
- be healthy
- enjoy and achieve
- make a positive contribution to their community
- achieve economic well-being

8.2 Aim of the Compact

The central aim of the Compact is to ensure that the StHSCB and its partners work collaboratively to plan, coordinate, and deliver services so that children in St Helens:

- are safeguarded and protected from harm
- have their welfare promoted, and impairments to their health and development prevented
- grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- have opportunities that give them optimal life chances, so that they will succeed as adults

To achieve these aspirations, all services for children and young people, regardless of who the providers are, should accord with the StHSCB's underpinning principles that those services be:

- designed and delivered with children at the centre
- accessible
- responsive to the diverse needs of the local community
- coordinated across agencies
- developed in consultation with the local community
- inclusive and non-discriminatory, promoting equality of opportunity
- value for money

9. The membership and structure of the St Helens SCB

9.1 Membership of the main Board

The core membership of the main Board consists of representatives from statutory agencies and key voluntary and community sector organisations. These agencies and organisations are set out as follows:

- St Helens MBC
 - Children & Young People's Services
 - Youth Offending Service
 - Adult Social Care & Health
 - Urban Regeneration & Housing
 - Corporate & Community Safety

- Halton & St Helens PCT
- St Helens & Knowsley Hospitals NHS Trust
- 5 Boroughs Partnership
- GPs
- Merseyside Police
- Merseyside Probation
- Greater Merseyside Connexions
- CAF/CASS
- Children's Centres
- NSPCC
- Council for Voluntary Service
- Primary Schools
- Secondary Schools
- FE Colleges
- Secure Units
- The Chairs of the StHSCB Sub-groups

In addition to this core membership, the Board can co-opt representatives from other agencies. Such agencies may include:

- The Coronial service
- Sport and leisure services
- Representatives of service users
- The Crown Prosecution Service
- Local Family Justice Council
- Local Criminal Justice Board
- Other Health providers such as pharmacists
- Housing providers
- Witness support services
- Fire and Rescue Service

9.2 The responsibilities of Board members

Representation from organisations on the main Board needs to be at a senior, strategic level. A combination of expertise, ability to make and influence decisions, and the capacity to meet the responsibilities required will be essential. Members must be able to commit resources to the StHSCB on behalf of their agency, and be able to hold the work of their agency accountable to the Board.

All Board members will receive an induction and relevant training, and will be expected to attend Development Days and other relevant events.

A job description and person specification for Board members can be found at Appendix I of these Terms of Reference.

10. Chairing arrangements

A member of the Board, elected by the other members present, currently the Director of Children and Young People's Services, will chair the Board. This arrangement will be reviewed periodically, when other options will be explored – for example, an independent chair.

The Board will appoint the Deputy Chair from a partner agency if possible. The role of the Chair is

- To coordinate the content of the agenda for LSCB meetings
- To manage the transaction of business at meetings
- To ensure opportunity to participate in debates at Board meetings
- To ensure decisions are made, and that these decisions are recorded and communicated as necessary.

Elections for both Chair and Deputy Chair will be held within the main body of the Board meeting as appropriate. Board members will elect a Chairperson and take into consideration election from an alternative agency.

11. Meetings of the Board

The Board will meet quarterly, but the Chair may call extra-ordinary meetings at any time. The agenda and associated papers will be sent out a minimum of 5 working days prior to the meeting.

St Helens Safeguarding Children Unit shall manage administration of the LSCB.

All matters to be decided by the LSCB shall be decided by consensus. Where consensus cannot be achieved, there will be a majority vote with each agency having one vote. In the event of a tie the chair shall have a second or casting vote.

Agendas must be sent to Board members and minutes maintained of the proceedings to include actions and outcomes.

The LSCB may invite or permit any person to attend its meetings to address or submit written material for consideration on agreement of the Chair. The standard (ie minimum

required) attendance at LSCB meetings is 75%, this percentage relating to agency (and not individual) attendance.

When a member is unable to attend then a substitute should attend the meeting you need to include the arrangements for nominating a substitute ie agreed in advance, CRB checked and inducted, however there may be difficulties for some agencies. Sanctions also need to be included, when a letter or a meeting will take place with the Chairperson if attendance becomes a significant issue.

12. Quoracy

A quorum of the LSCB shall be six members representing a minimum of three separate agencies, always including the chair or deputy chair. If at any time there is not a quorum present, the meeting shall not proceed.

13. The Sub-groups

In order for the StHSCB to carry out its functions effectively, the following five Sub-groups will meet and report to the main Board:

- Executive
- Learning and Development
- Policies and Procedures
- Interagency Practice Review
- Child Death Overview Panel

A further group – the E Safety Sub Group – has been established in 2008 and reports to StHSCB via the Stay Safe Outcome Group.

Appropriate representation, reflecting an appropriate balance of strategic and operational expertise, will be essential. As with the main Board, a job description detailing the remit and responsibilities of the membership has been agreed to reflect the amount of time and resources - financial and in kind - that commitment to the LSCB will involve. This can be found at Appendix 2.

The functions of the Sub-groups are as follows:

13.1 The Executive

The Executive will:

- drive the Business of the StHSCB via the sub groups
- coordinate, support and review the work of the sub groups
- produce the Annual Business Plan and Annual Reports, and set standards, targets and outcome measures, ensuring appropriate links to wider planning mechanisms, such as the Children and Young People's Plan
- undertake awareness raising and public relations functions on behalf of the StHSCB
- receive case reports from Serious Case Reviews and other sources, and ensure appropriate recommendations are made to the main Board
- ensure appropriate statistical and performance monitoring information is made available to the main Board and the Children and Young People's Partnership Board
- ensure appropriate links are in place with the Children and Young People's Partnership Board and other relevant bodies
- review the effectiveness of the StHSCB against agreed outcomes, targets and measures

13.2 The Learning and Development Sub-group

This Sub-group will:

- develop, commission and ensure the delivery of multi-agency training in relation to StHSCB procedures, and in line with the needs of staff at all levels in all agencies
- identify learning needs and exchange information in relation to learning and development
- monitor and quality assure training, and maintain statistical information about attendance at, and delivery of, training
- report to the Executive via the Learning & Development Chair

13.2 The Policies and Procedures Sub-group

This Sub-group will:

- develop and set policy, within a non-discriminatory framework, in relation to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in St Helens
- respond to changes in legislation
- produce safeguarding procedures, revising as necessary

- liaise with other Merseyside LSCB Policy and Procedures Sub -Groups to promote a pan-Merseyside approach to safeguarding
- report to the Executive, via the Chair of this Sub Group

13.3 The Interagency Practice Review Sub Group:

This Sub-group will:

- undertake a quality assurance and audit function of multi, and inter-agency, safeguarding practice and management standards
- monitor the implementation of inter-agency and multi-agency safeguarding procedures, and liaise with other Sub-groups as appropriate
- report to the Executive via the Chair of this Sub-group

13.4 Child Death Overview Panel

The StHSCB established a Child Death Overview Panel to fulfil its responsibility to evaluate the deaths of all children in the area in April 2008. The statutory child death review function is set out in *Working Together to Safeguard Children*, 2006. The sub group will

- be chaired by a representative from the Health services, and have a permanent core membership drawn from key organisations that are represented on the StHSCB.
- aim to meet on bi- monthly basis.
- implement local procedures and protocols to evaluate information about all deaths of children up to 18 years.
- collect and collate information on all child deaths, in line with the national minimum data set.
- identify lessons to be learned or issues of concern with a particular focus on the effectiveness of inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.
- refer to the Chair of the StHSCB any deaths where, on evaluating the available information, it feels that there may be grounds to undertake further enquiries, investigations, or a Serious Case Review, and to explore why this had not previously been done.
- To identify any public health issues, and consider, with the Director of Public Health, how best to address these and their implications for both the provision of services and for staff training

- be responsible for reviewing 'near misses'. This will provide opportunities to promote learning and improve systems in order to prevent similar incidents occurring in the future.

13.5 Esafety group

- 1) To develop a strategy for St Helens to promote the safer use of digital technology which includes the following:-
 - Coordinate and promote safeguarding in the digital world by developing a range of policies and procedures that take into account the requirements to protect the welfare of children/young people.
 - To coordinate appropriate action where there are concerns, including escalation thresholds,
 - To establish the training needs of people who work with children in the area of digital technology in terms of raising awareness of the dangers.
 - To update people who work with children/young people about the tools available to educate them in the area of digital technology.
 - Establish a monitoring and evaluation process to ensure the strategy is regularly reviewed in line with the LSCB Business plan and updated linking into Performance Management reporting mechanisms as appropriate.
 - To consider the most appropriate mechanism for publicity and marketing of the E Safety Project.
- 2) To work in partnership to address specific areas of concern particularly where children and young people may be at risk of harm.
- 3) To provide advice and support to colleagues and the community on safeguarding aspects of the use of digital technology.
- 4) The E Safety sub group to report directly to the LSCB Executive/Stay Safe Outcome Group on a regular basis. Through the LSCB Business plan, the work of the E Safety sub group to be embedded in other sub groups such as the Policy & Procedure sub group and the Learning and Development sub group.
- 5) In line with the general guidance on subgroups an LSCB member should chair the e- Safety sub group. Members of the sub group should reflect a multi agency approach with professionals nominated from LSCB, Police, Health, Education, YOS, Probation, Housing, KCS, Head of library service, Connexions and the Voluntary sector as appropriate.

14. Funding the work of the Board

The StHSCB will work to a 3 year budget plan that will provide the necessary security for effective development and strategic planning. The budget will be reviewed at each LSCB and linked to an annual review of the Business Plan.

The budget will be approved by the Board, and expenditure will be reported to it at regular intervals by the St Helens MBC Safeguarding Children Manager.

In addition to monetary contributions by key partner agencies, it is noted that all partners on the StHSCB will make in kind contributions, based on the indirect costs incurred through their participation in the work of the Board.

Appendix 1

Job Description for main Board members

1. Attendance Commitment:

The StHSCB is a statutory body that requires good attendance at all main Board meetings by its statutory members. A similar attendance commitment from non-statutory members, such as NSPCC, Children's Centres, Schools, Colleges and voluntary and community sector organisations is also important.

- Main StHSCB meetings will take place quarterly. In addition, there will be development events, where attendance will be expected. In certain circumstances, extraordinary Board meetings may be called.

It is accepted that attendance may be difficult on occasion, but the StHSCB will require at least an 75% attendance rate, and that a substitute from each agency is identified in a member's absence. Substitutes should be identified in advance, and they will be expected to complete an induction before they act in this capacity. If there is less than 75% attendance from a statutory agency, this will be taken up by the Chair of the Board with the relevant agency representative via letter and/or meeting.

The attendance of a substitute is acceptable, however it would be useful if that member of staff was consistent.

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- Main Board members may also be required to sit on the Executive, which will drive the business of the StHSCB.
- Attendance and support at StHSCB events such as procedural launches will also be expected.

2. Accountability:

Board members:

- are accountable for reporting to the StHSCB on the implementation of StHSCB procedures in their own organisation
- are expected to report to a senior person within their own organisation on the organisation's performance in relation to LSCB activities
- are accountable to the Chair of the StHSCB for the extent to which SCB functions are discharged in relation to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children
- are accountable to the Chair of the LSCB for the organisation's contribution to:
 - multi-agency safeguarding work
 - information sharing

- financial costs
- 'in kind' resources and time

3. Role Requirements:

Board members are expected to:

- ensure the congruity, and compliance, of their organisation's safeguarding procedures with StHSCB procedures
- contribute to the development of StHSCB policies and procedures
- ensure dissemination of StHSCB procedures, policies, guidance and other developments their organisation
- identify training requirements in their organisation in relation to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children
- ensure their staff are fully trained in StHSCB procedures, and that they are able to fulfil their single agency responsibilities
- ensure that their organisation contributes to the StHSCB multi-agency programme training programme
- provide information to the Board, when requested, on the effectiveness of their organisation's safeguarding practice

provide case specific information, where requested, in the event of a Serious Case Review / Management Review

- An expectation for an LSCB Induction to be arranged for new members is on both the Board Member and Business Manager and as a minimum requirement a pack will be provided in addition to a meeting, within a given timescale of two months of appointment to the Board.

Person Specification for main Board members

1. Qualifications:

Board members (and sub group members) must:

- be competent to represent their agency on the Board
- have sufficient seniority to influence decision-making within their organisation, and have the ability to commit resources to meet the responsibilities required of the StHSCB
- have completed multi-agency Child Protection/ Safeguarding Training or have management responsibility for those who have

- be willing to be CRB checked given the sensitive nature of the work involved
- be able to allocate sufficient time to attend meetings and undertake work on behalf of the LSCB. Minimum expectation in this regard are attendance at:
 - 4 StHSCB meetings per year (2days)
 - Development Days (2 days)
 - launches, etc. (2 days)
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2. Experience:

Board members must have:

- a minimum of 2 years experience of practice/ management of safeguarding and protection of children activities in their organisation, or management responsibility and accountability for those who have
- a minimum of 2 years experience of multi-agency work, either in practice or management.

3. Knowledge:

Board members must have a good knowledge of:

- legislation, regulations and guidance in relation to safeguarding children, or management responsibility and accountability for those who have
- StHSCB Procedures in relation to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children
- the range of local services in place to meet the needs of children and families
- Human Resources procedures in their organisation

4. Skills:

Board members must have the ability to:

- work in partnership with other senior members of the StHSCB
- understand and work with statistical information and other data
- represent their organisation in relation to Serious Case Reviews and Professional Abuse Allegations where appropriate

Appendix 2

Job Description for Sub Group members

1. Attendance Commitment:

The StHSCB is a statutory body that requires attendance at all Sub Group meetings by its statutory members. To ensure the effectiveness of the Board, a similar attendance commitment from non-statutory members, such as NSPCC, Children's Centres, Schools, Colleges and voluntary and community sector organisations is important.

- Sub-group meetings will take place on a 4-6 week basis, depending on requirements. In addition, there will be development events for the whole StHSCB, where attendance will be expected. Sub-group members may also be asked to be part of short-life working parties, or provide assistance in the event of a Serious Case Review
- It is accepted that attendance may be difficult on occasion, but StHSCB sub-groups will require at least an 75% attendance rate, and that a substitute from organisations is identified in a member's absence. Substitutes should be identified in advance, and they will be offered a StHSCB induction before they act in this capacity. If there is less than 75% attendance from a statutory agency, this will be taken up by the Chair of the sub group with the relevant agency representative via letter and/or meeting.
- Attendance and support at LSCB events such as procedural launches will also be expected.

2. Accountability:

Sub-group members:

- are accountable to the Chair the sub-group, who is, in turn, accountable to the LSCB Executive
- are expected to report to a senior person within their own organisation, on their organisation's performance in relation to the activities of the sub-group
- are accountable to the Chair of the sub-group for their organisation's contribution to:
 - information sharing
 - financial costs
 - 'in kind' resources and time

3. Role Requirements:

The Chair of each Sub-group is responsible for:

- arranging meetings and ensuring that they are minuted, and that reports are circulated to all members
- reporting activities in relation to Safeguarding to the Executive sub-group
- producing a progress report to the main Board meeting on a quarterly basis
- seeking formal approval from the StHSCB Executive and main Board in relation to issues of finance, changes and developments in policies and procedures, and any remedial action required in relation to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

Person Specification for Sub-group members

1. Qualifications:

Sub-group members must:

- hold a professional qualification relevant to the agency they represent
- occupy a post of operational relevance (middle/ senior manager, or specialist practitioner) to meet the responsibilities required of the StHSCB
- have completed multi-agency Child Protection/ Safeguarding Training or have management responsibility for those who have
- be able to allocate sufficient time to attend meetings and undertake work on behalf of the StHSCB. If unable to attend sub group meetings which are set one year in advance, the LSCB Business Manager or Administrator to be notified and a substitute arranged if possible. Depending on Sub-group membership, minimum expectations in this regard are attendance at:
 - Development Days (2 days)
 - 8 Executive meetings (3 days)
 - 8 – 12 Sub-group meetings (3-5 days)
 - 6 Serious Case Review meetings per SCR (3 days)
 - Attendance at launches, etc. (2 days)
 - Be willing to be CRB checked given the sensitive nature of the work involved.

2. Experience:

Sub-group members must have:

- a minimum of 2 years experience of practice/ management of safeguarding and protection of children activities in their organisation, or management responsibility and accountability for those who have
- a minimum of 2 years experience of multi-agency work, either in practice or management.

3. Knowledge:

Sub-group members must have a good knowledge of:

- legislation, regulations and guidance in relation to safeguarding children, or management responsibility and accountability for those who have
- StHSCB Procedures in relation to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children
- the range of local services in place to meet the needs of children and families
- Human Resources procedures in their organisation

4. Skills:

Sub-group members must have the ability to:

- work in partnership with other senior members of the StHSCB
- understand and work with statistical information and other data
- represent organisation in matters pertaining to the membership of that Sub-group