

SLOUGH BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Education and Children's Services Scrutiny Panel

DATE: 6th December 2018

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WARD(S): All

PART I **FOR COMMENT & CONSIDERATION**

SECTION 11 AUDITS

1. **Purpose of Report**

This report provides an update of Slough Borough Council's (SBC) work to ensure compliance with Section 11 (s11) of the Children Act 2004 – to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

2. **Recommendation**

The Panel is requested to note and comment as appropriate on the report.

3. **The Slough Joint Wellbeing Strategy, the JSNA, Five-Year Plan and Housing Strategy**

3a. **Slough Joint Wellbeing Strategy Priorities applicable to this report**

S11 work directly support the following priority:

- Protecting vulnerable children
- Increasing life expectancy by focusing on inequalities
- Improving mental health and wellbeing
- Housing

3b. **Five Year Plan Outcomes applicable to this report**

The responsibilities of s11 cut across services, which support all Outcomes in the Five Year Plan. However, it is most directly relevant to the following Outcome:

- Slough children will grow up to be happy, healthy and successful

4. **Other Implications**

(a) Financial

There are no financial implications relating to this report.

(b) Risk Management

Each of the actions that comprise this update report are already contained within the service-planning framework of the relevant Council Directorates and overseen by the corporate Five Year Plan Board, Cabinet and this Panel. Monitoring reports including identification of risks and mitigating action will be reported through this governance process.

(c) Human Rights Act and Other Legal Implications

There are no Human Rights Act Implications relating to this report.

(d) Equalities Impact Assessment

None required.

5. **Supporting Information**

- 5.1 S11 of the Children Act 2004 places a duty on a range of organisations and individuals to ensure their functions, and any services that they contract out to others, are discharged having regard to the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.
- 5.2 Specifically, s11 places a duty on local authorities that provide children's and other types of services, including children's and adult social care services, public health, housing, sport, culture and leisure services, licensing and youth services. The responsibilities of s11 cut across services that support all the priorities within the Slough Wellbeing Strategy as noted in paragraph 3a. As an entity in its own right, Slough Children's Services Trust (SCST) is required to provide separate assurance on compliance with s11 duties.
- 5.3 Eight national standards are used to assess s11, reproduced below:
- 1) Senior management have commitment to the importance of safeguarding and promoting children's welfare.
 - 2) There is a clear statement of the agency's responsibility towards children and this is available to all staff.
 - 3) There is a clear line of accountability within the organisation for work on safeguarding and promoting welfare.
 - 4) Service development takes into account the needs to safeguard and promote welfare and is informed, where appropriate, by the views of children / families.

- 5) There is effective training on safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children for all staff working with or, depending on the agencies primary functions, in contact with children and families.
- 6) Safer recruitment procedures including vetting procedures and those for managing allegations are in place.
- 7) There is effective inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.
- 8) There is effective information sharing.

Chronology

- 5.4 An update on s11 was provided to the Education and Children's Services Scrutiny Panel (ECS SP) on 25th October 2017. In addition, the Corporate Management Team (CMT) and Senior Leadership Team (SLT) within the Council receive regular updates.
- 5.5 As part of s11 governance, there was a Mid Term Review submission to the Pan Berkshire Local Safeguarding Children's Board, s11 Audit Panel in June 2018. The following positive feedback was received: *"The S11 Panel were in agreement that the information provided was clear and to a high standard. The return demonstrated that your organisation understand the duties placed upon them. The Panel highlighted that even though Children's Services is managed by the Trust the Local Authority's commitment to safeguarding children is evident"*.

Current Progress

- 5.6 Please refer to Appendix 1, which sets out **exception** reporting progress against the eight national standards. The comments in Appendix 1 therefore focus only on the areas previously highlighted by the Pan Berkshire Mid Term Review as responses to other areas in the eight standards were received positively. The material in Appendix is updated on a bi-monthly basis as it contains the Council's "evidence" of s11 assurance.

6. **Comments of Other Committees**

The comments of the corporate s11 group meeting 19 November 2018 (known as "Children's Safeguarding [s11] Strategic Leads") are covered in Section 5 / Appendix 1 of this report. No other SBC committees have considered this report.

7. **Conclusion**

Members are invited to note and comment on s11 progress.

8. **Appendices Attached**

1 – Section 11 Progress (Exception Reporting).

9. **Background Papers**

Agenda papers and minutes, Education and Children's Services Scrutiny Panel (25 October 2017)

Appendix 1 – Section 11 Progress (Exception Reporting)

National s11 Standard & Detailed sub clause plus specific SBC Action required	Current Progress @t 19.11.2018	RAG
<p>1. Senior management commitment to the importance of safeguarding and promoting children's welfare – All staff or volunteers that come in to contact with children and young people are able to access supervision or support in relation to safeguarding.</p> <p>a) Develop a Corporate Volunteer Policy and Strategy that provides assurance there is consistency for Volunteers (especially those in direct contact with children and young people) with paid staff regarding recruitment and management, including safeguarding training (induction, mandatory, refresher, role-specific, support meetings and 1:1s) and ensure that this is embedded across all Directorates with the support of the Children's Safeguarding (s11) Strategic Leads.</p>	<p>i) Corporate Volunteer Policy / Strategy was approved by the Employment & Appeals Committee on 23 October 2018. This will ensure that volunteers are on a par with SBC staff in relation to the requirement for safeguarding training (induction, mandatory, refresher, role-specific, support meetings and 1:1s).</p> <p>ii) The Agresso HR Module has been specified with the functionality to produce standard reports so that managers can monitor compliance with the above. Implementation date for Agresso is to be confirmed by corporate HR (expected December 2018). Once Agresso is implemented, HR, managers and the Children's Safeguarding (s11) Strategic Leads will play an important role ensuring that this is embedded across the various service areas in the Council.</p>	<p>G</p>
<p>2. A clear statement of the agency's responsibility towards children is available to all staff – There are arrangements in place to ensure that organisations commissioned to provide services on your behalf have regard to the requirements of s11 of Children Act 2004.</p> <p>a) A comprehensive standard clause and statement relating to safeguarding children and adults needs to be inserted in all new SBC contracts with immediate effect.</p> <p>b) Refresh contract monitoring arrangements between SBC and SCST</p>	<p>i) Clause / statement agreed with Legal and Procurement and implemented.</p> <p>ii) Deed of Variation to the Service Delivery Contract was agreed between SBC and SCST and endorsed by the Department for Education.</p>	<p>G</p>

National s11 Standard & Detailed sub clause plus specific SBC Action required	Current Progress @t 19.11.2018	RAG
<p>3. A clear line of accountability within the organisation for work on safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children – Staff and volunteers are aware of their responsibilities if they are concerned about a child or young person and know the procedures to follow in such circumstances.</p> <p>a) Refer to 1(a).</p>	<p>i) As for 1(i) re Volunteers.</p>	G
	<p>ii) As for 1(ii) above (once the Agresso HR Module is implemented it will need to be embedded by HR, managers and the Children's Safeguarding (s11) Strategic Leads re compliance monitoring of staff / volunteers across all services).</p>	A
<p>4. Service development takes account of the need to safeguard and promote welfare and is informed by the views of children and families</p>	<p>i) There was no additional action required for this standard as SBC's 5-Year Plan process addresses this standard e.g. reflected in the corporate plan Outcome priorities.</p> <p>ii) The voice of children, young people and families are also taken into account through various forums e.g. Youth Parliament; Young Inspectors (young people inspecting services and reporting their findings and recommendations); Young Commissioners (young people involved in commissioning services; SCST's "Reach Out" (representing children looked after and care leavers).</p>	G
<p>5. Staff training on safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children for all staff working with or in contact with children and families</p>	<p>i) See 1(i) above. The corporate induction training (children's safeguarding) has been refreshed to ensure it is up to date with current developments. The refreshed staff recruitment and volunteer policies clarify that children's safeguarding training will apply to staff and volunteers, particularly those in roles with direct contact with children and young people</p>	G
	<p>ii) As for 1(ii) above (once the Agresso HR Module is implemented it will need to be embedded by HR, managers and the Children's Safeguarding (s11) Strategic Leads re compliance monitoring of staff / volunteers across all services).</p>	A

National s11 Standard & Detailed sub clause plus specific SBC Action required	Current Progress @t 19.11.2018	RAG
<p>6. Recruitment, vetting procedures and allegations against staff</p> <p>a) Safer Recruitment Policy in place for those roles that directly interface with children and young people.</p> <p>b) Governance processes in place for dealing with retention / disposal of records; allegations or concerns against staff / volunteers; disciplinary / grievance; named senior person for dealing with allegations / concerns.</p>	<p>i) A Safer Recruitment Policy (and related training) is in place for Slough schools. An equivalent policy for SBC has been drafted and is currently out to consultation. Once agreed it will be implemented with the accompanying training.</p>	A
	<p>ii) These are in place.</p>	G
<p>7. Inter-agency working – Staff are able to identify children who would benefit from additional services. They are clear about the circumstances in which a referral to Children's Social Care is necessary.</p> <p>a) Multi-agency thresholds for non-statutory / statutory services are clear.</p>	<p>i) Threshold were revised in summer 2018 by the LSCB. A programme of initial and refresher / ongoing training was put in place.</p> <p>ii) The Early Help model (covering non-statutory services) launched as business as usual on 25 June 2018 and will transition to cover all partners via a single front door and multi-agency referral on 1 December 2018.</p>	G
<p>8. Information sharing - All staff and volunteers who come into contact with children should understand the purpose of information sharing in order to safeguard children.</p>	<p>i) There is mandatory training for all staff covering Information Security and Safeguarding (updated for GDPR requirements effective 25 May 2018) – these emphasise that the duty to share information (in order to promote safeguarding) can be as important as the duty to protect client confidentiality. This requirement will apply to Volunteers as per the new Volunteer Policy / Strategy.</p>	G
	<p>ii) As for 1(i) above (once the Agresso HR Module is implemented it will need to be embedded by HR, managers and the Children's Safeguarding (s11) Strategic Leads re compliance monitoring of staff / volunteers across all services).</p>	A