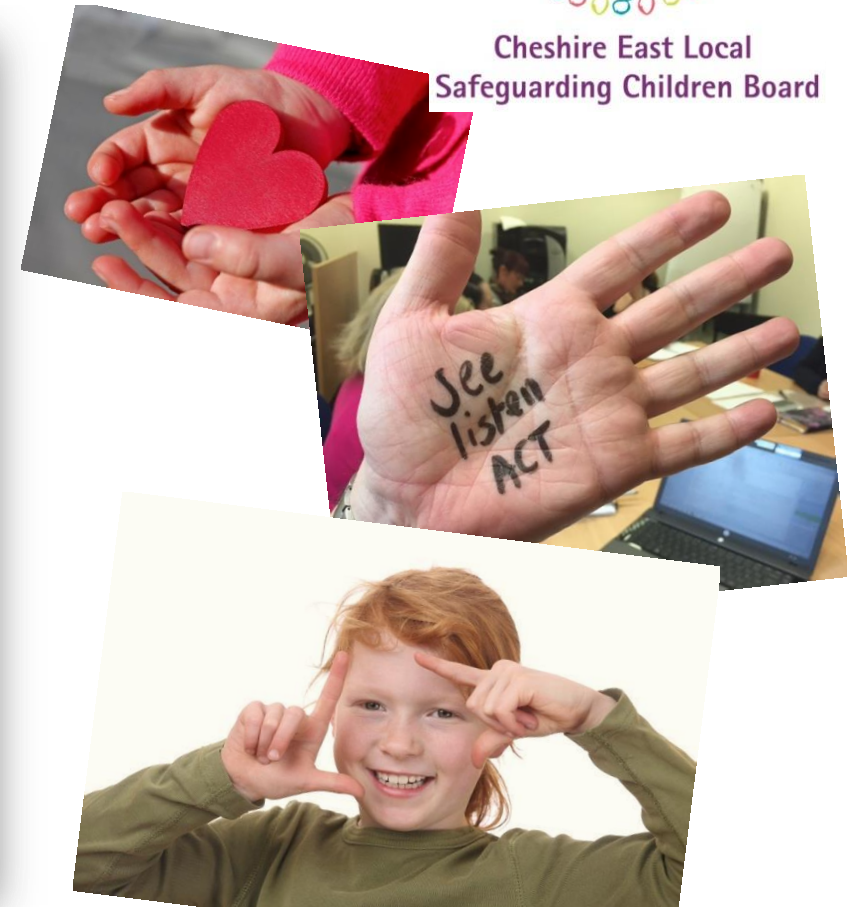


Cheshire East Local Safeguarding Children Board



Cheshire East Local
Safeguarding Children Board



**Annual Report 2015-16
& Business Plan Priorities 2016-2018**

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Foreword from the Independent Chair

This is Cheshire East Safeguarding Children Board (CESCB) annual report. You will find comprehensive information about our work for the year 2015-16. We have broken this down into each of our key strategic objectives, set at the beginning of the year, and have commented on the progress we think we have made against each. This report isn't just looking back though; it identifies the key challenges we face in the coming year and beyond.

Cheshire East local authority was inspected by Ofsted last July; at the same time, Inspectors reviewed CESCB. The inspection lasted one month and was the most intensive ever experienced by either the local authority or the board. The outcome of both was that the grading of inadequate awarded by Ofsted in the previous inspection (2013) were changed to 'requires improvement'. As a consequence of this, the children's minister at the Department for Education removed the Statutory Notice of Improvement on Cheshire East Council and its partners in January 2016. These developments recognised the significant progress made in improving safeguarding in Cheshire East since 2013.

Ofsted commented on the progress made by the board in relation to child sexual exploitation (CSE), our work in consulting and taking account of the views of children and young people in our area, and a renewed commitment to tackle neglect. Inspectors also made recommendations in

areas where they felt the board needed to continue their progress made to date. These included a better focus on early help (something we had identified ourselves, in our previous annual report) and providing regular scrutiny of services for looked after children and young people, particularly regarding their safety. We encourage you to read the [Inspection report](#) on Ofsted's website.

Whilst we were pleased to receive such formal acknowledgement about our efforts to make progress and improve, we are still not yet "good", and all members of the board felt that overall Ofsted's judgement was accurate and in line with our own self-assessment. So we cannot in any way be complacent and need to continue to prioritise safeguarding in all partner agencies if we are to become, and remain, a good LSCB.

As we look to the forthcoming year, we will continue to focus on CSE (and sexual assault of all kinds to children and young people) and neglect remain the overarching twin priorities of the board. But there are several others which we feel we have made progress on the last 12 months; these include the risks posed to children and young people living in the digital age, our "Prevent" strategy to identify young people who may be at risk of radicalisation in Cheshire East, young people at risk of forced marriage or honour based violence, and children at risk of female genital mutilation. You can read details about our work in all of the above areas, and a number of others, in the main body of the report.

This is a lengthy report, necessarily so because we strongly believe that transparency in the board's work and activities is paramount. There is a summary, or 'youth proofed', version of this report specifically for young people.

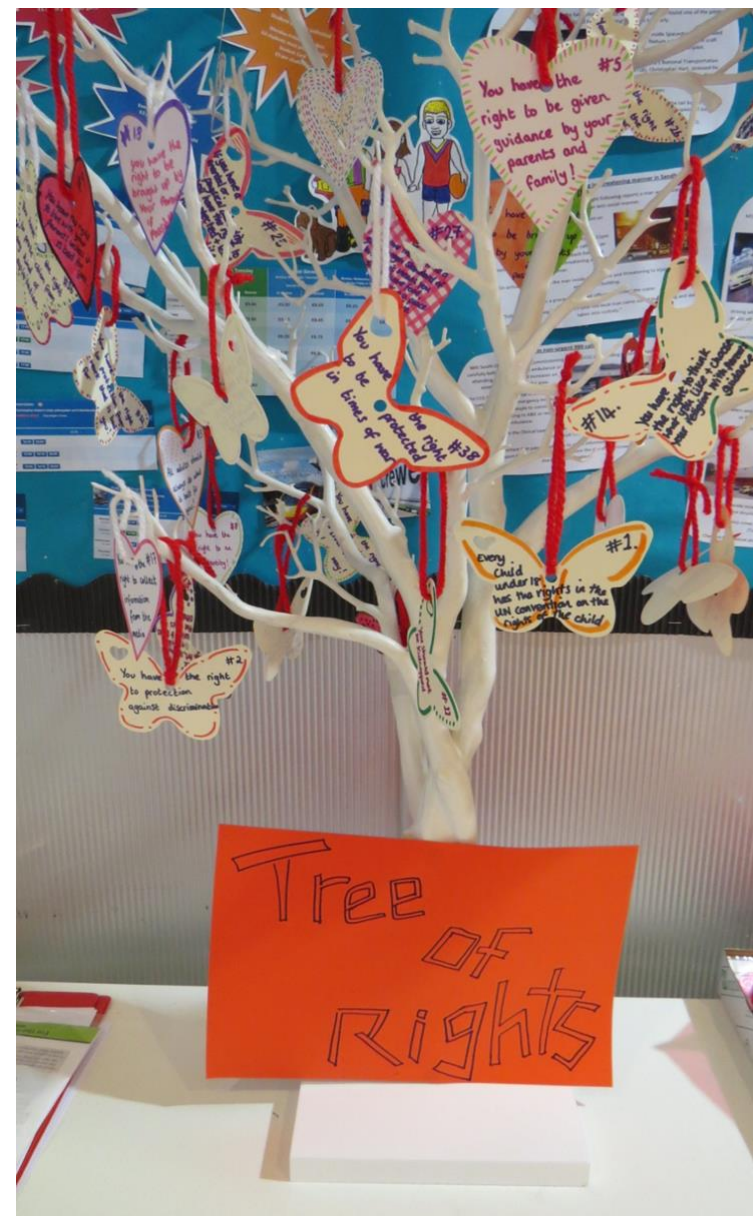
Acknowledgements to a very talented pupil from Scholar Green Primary School, whose award winning poster from the primary safeguarding conference is featured on our front page.

I hope you find this report informative; I also hope it makes you think about the role we all have to play in protecting and ensuring good futures for all children and young people, so that together we can make sure that Cheshire East is a great place to be young.

If you have any questions about the report or the information contained in it, please contact me at

LSCBEast@cheshireeast.gov.uk

Ian Rush,
Independent Chair, Cheshire East Safeguarding Board



A. Cheshire East Local Safeguarding Children Board

Background

[Working Together, 2015](#) (WT15), the statutory guidance for Local Safeguarding Children Boards (LSCBs), requires each area to produce and publish an Annual Report on the effectiveness of the arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people in their local area. This report sets out what we have done over the past year and also what we plan to do next year to make Cheshire East a safer place for children and young people.

This report is aimed at everyone involved in safeguarding children, including members of the local community as well as professionals and volunteers who work with children, young people and families.

A copy of this Annual Report will be sent to senior leaders and stakeholders in our area, including the Chief Executive of the Council, the Leader of the Council and the Executive Director of Children's Services. The report will also be sent to the Health and Well-being Board, Children and Young People's Trust Board, Community Safety Partnership, Corporate Parenting Board and the Council's Children and Families Scrutiny and Overview Committee. Individual agencies will also be encouraged to present this report through their internal Boards and scrutiny arrangements.

The Board

Cheshire East Safeguarding Children Board (CESCB) is made up of senior representatives from agencies who work with children and young people from the local authority, schools, health, the police and others. The Board members work together to keep children and young people safe from harm.

CESCB is responsible for scrutinising the work of its partners to ensure that services provided to children and young people actually make a difference.

In order to provide effective scrutiny, CESCB is independent from other local structures and has an independent chair that can hold all agencies to account. The main roles for the CESCB are set out in its constitution and are:

To co-ordinate and ensure the effectiveness of what is done by each agency on the Board for the purposes of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in Cheshire East.

Governance

CESCB has three tiers of activity (see Appendix 1):

Main Board – this is made up of representatives of the partner agencies as set out in WT15. Board members must be sufficiently senior to ensure they are able to speak confidently and have the authority to sign up to agreements on behalf of their agency.

Executive – is made up of representatives from key statutory member agencies and has strategic oversight of all Board activity. The Executive takes the lead on developing and driving the implementation of the CESCB's Business Plan. It is also responsible for holding to account the work of the sub groups and their chairs.

Sub groups (Cheshire East) – the sub groups work on the various areas of concern to the CESCB on a more targeted and thematic basis. They report to the Executive and are ultimately accountable to the Main Board. The main subgroups operating at March 2016 were:

- Quality and Outcomes
- Audit and Case Review
- Learning and Improvement
- Neglect
- Safeguarding Children Operational Group
- Policy & Procedures
- Private Fostering

- Child Sexual Exploitation, Missing from Home & Care and Trafficking
- Early Help

The Communication and Engagement group was dissolved in Autumn 2015 to ensure that communications became a priority for each sub group; as a result, this is now a standing agenda item for each of the sub groups.

Sub groups (Pan-Cheshire) – Cheshire East works closely with the other Cheshire LSCBs on certain areas to maximise impact.

The following pan-Cheshire sub-groups are currently in operation:

- Pan-Cheshire Child Death Overview Panel
- Pan-Cheshire Policies and Procedures
- Pan-Cheshire CSE, Missing from Home and Care and Trafficking

Key Roles

Independent Chair – The Independent Chair for Cheshire East is Ian Rush.

The Independent Chair is accountable to the Chief Executive of the local authority and in Cheshire East this is **Mike Suarez**. The Chair meets regularly with the **Chief Executive** through the Safeguarding Review Meeting to raise safeguarding concerns and be challenged on the performance of the Board.

Deputy Chief Executive and Executive Director of Children's Services – Kath O'Dwyer joined Cheshire East in 2015. The Executive Director of Children's Services is a Member of the main Board and has responsibility to ensure that the CESC B functions effectively and liaises closely with the Independent Chair who keeps her updated on progress.

Lead Member – the Lead member for Children's Services has responsibility for making sure that the local authority fulfils its legal duties to safeguard children and young people. For most of 2015-16 this was **Councillor Rachel Bailey**. Her successor, **Councillor Liz Durham** currently holds this role. The Lead Member contributes to the CESC B as a 'participating observer', i.e. she takes part in the discussion, but is not part of the decision making process.

Lay Members – **Sam Haworth** and **Alana Eden** are lay members and support the LSCB voluntary and community members to promote and raise awareness of safeguarding.

Children and Young People's Challenge Champions – the Board has a commitment to ensure that the voice of children and young people is a key focus of the Board. **Jodie Morris** and **Liam Hill** from **Voice for Children** are care leavers who are members of the Board and work with young people in Cheshire to represent their voices on the Board.

Key Relationships

CESC B has a number of key relationships with other Boards. A Memorandum of Understanding is in place that sets out safeguarding arrangements between these key strategic partnerships in Cheshire East.

Children and Young People's Trust Board (CYPT) – this is a partnership Board that aims to improve outcomes for all children and young people in Cheshire East. The Children and Young People's Plan is a key mechanism to provide strategic leadership, determining joint priorities, joint planning, and ensuring integrated working. Priority 2 of the plan, 'Children and young people feel and are safe', is largely delivered by CESC B. The Chair of CESC B is also a member of the Trust.



Corporate Parenting Board (CPB) – When children and young people are brought into the care of the Local Authority, Cheshire East Council becomes their 'Corporate Parent'. To ensure that the Council and its partners effectively discharge its role as Corporate Parent for all their Children in Care, key officers from the Council and partner agencies are brought together in the Corporate Parenting Board. In Cheshire East this is co-led by children in care.

Health & Wellbeing Board (HWBB) – The CESC links with the Health & Wellbeing Board and is held to account for key safeguarding issues for children in Cheshire East. Priorities within the Health and Wellbeing strategy are delivered by CESC and this annual report and business plan will be presented to the Health and Wellbeing Board.



Cheshire East Safeguarding Adults Board (CESAB) - The CESAB carries out the safeguarding functions in relation to adults 18 years and over. A number of members of the LSCB also sit on CESAB.

Safer Cheshire East Partnership (SCEP) – SCEP is responsible for the commissioning of Domestic Homicide Reviews (DHR's), which are undertaken on its behalf by the CESAB. It receives reports on domestic abuse and sexual violence. SCEP is the lead partnership for 'Prevent' (the approach to tackling extremism and radicalisation) in Cheshire East and works with the other partnership boards to ensure that the Prevent strategy is being implemented across all agencies and in the community.

Member Agency Management Boards – CESC members are senior officers within their own agencies providing a direct link between the CESC and their own single agency management boards to ensure that high quality multi-agency practice is embedded.

Police and Crime Commissioner – The Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) provides support to vulnerable young people at risk.

The Participation Network is a multi-agency group that brings together engagement and participation workers across the partnership to share and develop good practice and to join up services in engaging with children and young people. The CESC is represented on this Network.

Partnership Key Lead areas

Key partnerships agreed the following leads for shared priority areas.

Shared priority area	Strategic governance lead
Domestic Abuse	Safer Cheshire East Partnership (SCEP)
Prevent	SCEP
Reducing Offending	SCEP
Anti-social Behaviour	SCEP
Organised crime	SCEP
Hate Crime	SCEP
Child Sexual exploitation (CSE)	CESCB
Trafficking and Modern Slavery	Local Safeguarding Adults Board (CESAB)
'Mate crime'	CESAB
Substance misuse	Health & Wellbeing board (HWBB)
Mental Health	HWBB
Improving outcomes for children and young people	Children and Young People's Trust (CYPT)

Board Membership and Attendance

A summary of Board membership and attendance for 2015-16 is in Appendix 2.

Financial Arrangements 2015-16

The finances of the Board for 2015-16, including member contributions are at Appendix 3.



B. Children and Young People in Cheshire East

Our Child Population

Cheshire East is a generally affluent area and, for the vast majority of children and young people, it is a good place to grow up. However, there are pockets of deprivation in Cheshire East where we know that children and young people do not enjoy the same outcomes, and the gap in attainment between more vulnerable groups and their peers, although reducing, remains too great.

- There are approximately 75,100 children and young people under the age of 18 in Cheshire East, 51% are male and 49% are female. Children and young people make up approximately 20% of the total population. This is the same as last year. This is slightly lower than the England average of 21% and a reflection of the aging demographic profile across the local authority.
- 9% of primary pupils are entitled to free school meals (an indicator of deprivation), compared to 16% nationally and 7% of

secondary pupils compared to 14% nationally.

- Overall 92% of individuals are of British ethnicity. The biggest minority groups in Cheshire East are 'white other' (2.5%), Asian/ Asian British (2%), and mixed/ multiple ethnicities (2.6%).
- The vast majority of pupils' ethnic background are reported to be White British (88% of primary pupils and 91% of secondary pupils).
- There are just under 100 different first languages recorded for primary and secondary pupils, although only 6% of primary pupils and 4% of secondary pupils have a first language other than English, compared to national figs of 19% and 15%, respectively.
- At the end of March 2016, 2220 children and young people were identified as being in need of a specialist children's service which is line with 2015.
- The number on a child protection plan has reduced from 308 to 273; an 11% reduction.
- 387 children and young people were cared for by Cheshire East; 39.5% of these live outside Cheshire East. The majority of cared for children and young people, 288 or 74%, live with foster families. 28 live in residential children's homes and 22 live with their parent. 18 children and young people were adopted in 2015.



C. The Child's Journey in Cheshire East

Cheshire East Consultation Service (ChECS)

ChECS is the 'front door' to access services, support and advice for children, young people and their families; from early help and support through to safeguarding and child protection. All services are required to have a telephone discussion with a qualified social worker (consultation) and are advised on the level of need for the child and family and the appropriate next steps. Co-location of the police, the missing from home service and voluntary domestic abuse services with the ChECS 'front door' team has been achieved through close collaboration, and is improving multi-agency responses.

	Consultation activity	No. converted to referral
2013-14	6788	2444 (36%)
2014-15	7493	2783 (37%)
2015-16	9843	3687 (37%)

Table 1: Number of consultations over the past three years and the percentage that resulted in a referral to children's social care

There has been a 45% increase in consultation activity in the last 2 years and a 31% increase from last year. However, conversion to referral has remained static; suggesting that overall the volume of need is rising.

There has been an average of 820 consultations and 307 referrals a month over the past year. There were 728 individuals that were the subject of more than 2 consultations in the year. Cheshire East LSCB will be looking in more detail at consultation and referrals at

the front door in 2016-17 as Cheshire East's 'demand strategy' develops.

Early Help

Early help is about getting additional, timely and effective support to children, young people and their families to help them as early as possible before issues become more serious. Over the past year there has been an improved understanding and support from agencies in providing children and families with early help. This is also better coordinated, mainly through the use of the common assessment framework (CAF). However, Ofsted found that some contacts that were identified for early help were not progressed as quickly as they could be at ChECS as cases for referral to social care were prioritised. Work is underway to address this through the set up of the Early Help Brokerage service (EHB).

The Early Help Brokerage Service went live in October 2015. This service is a dedicated team, with increased capacity, to ensure the swift allocation of early help cases. This ensures timely referrals to early help, and identifies the best service to meet the needs of the child or young person and their family.

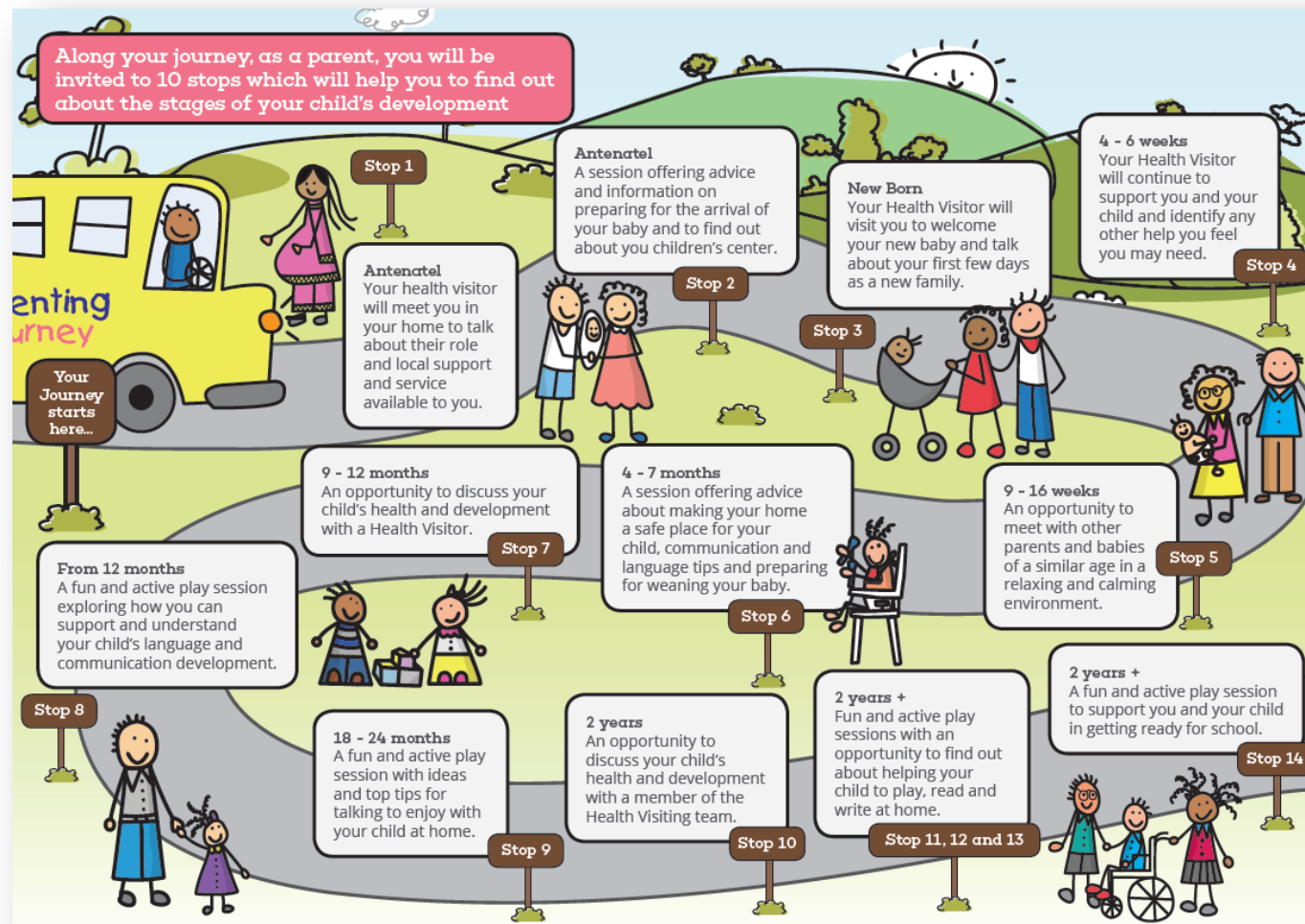
For 2015-16, a total of 2,061 cases were passed from ChECS to the EHB, 1,107 alone in quarter 4. Initially, these accounted for approximately 30% of ChECS outcomes, but some months have shown this to be nearer to between 45% and 49%. A business analysis of the front door process has shown that this requires further investigation when comprehensive figures about outcomes from EHB are available.

CESCB will continue to scrutinise the effectiveness of the front door and responses to early help in 2016-17.

Parenting Journey

Work on the Parenting Journey took place in 2015-16 for a planned launch in April 2016. This is part of a phased roll out which will be completed by April 2017. The Parenting Journey is a universal offer of parenting support from pre-birth to starting school based on best practice and research. It is delivered by Family Support Workers, Health Visitors and Health Visiting Skill Mix, members of the

Early Years and Childcare team and other health partners. It embeds the Healthy Child programme and the Cheshire East 8 stages of assessment, culminating in 14 parenting stops supporting every child to have the best possible start in life.



Emotionally Healthy Schools Programme

The Emotionally Healthy Schools Programme has been in development for approximately 18 months. It is a whole school approach to improving children and young people's mental health.

A pilot in six secondary schools started in January 2016. Support has been commissioned from Cheshire and Wirral Partnership (CWP) and Visyon (in partnership with Just Drop In and The Children's Society). They have supported the six schools to develop plans and test out different activities and interventions. A strategy group is learning from this pilot and developing plans to roll the programme out to primary schools, the remaining secondary schools, colleges and private schools.

These developments allowed us to successfully be part of the national Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) School Link pilot. 20 Cheshire East schools (the six pilot secondary schools and 14 primary schools) engaged in two workshops with CAMHS colleagues, school nurses and educational psychologists to improve understanding of each other's roles and to develop ideas to improve the system.



Children in Need and Child Protection

Assessment timescales

4,224 social care assessments were completed in 2015–16. As at 31st March 2016, 2,220 of these were identified as being formally in need of ongoing specialist support after the assessment period ended.

2015-16 saw improvements in the timeliness of assessments at both 35 days (the Cheshire East standard) and 45 days (the national standard). As at March 2016, 74% of assessments were completed within 35 days and 88% within 45 days, compared to 63% and 72%, respectively, in the previous year. This indicates a reduction in risk and delay for some of our most vulnerable children and young people.

Improvements in timeliness in Cheshire East means that we now compare well nationally and with our statistical neighbours (see Table 2 overleaf).



Local authority	2014 -15 Completed in 45 days	2015-16 Completed in 45 days
England	81%	
North West	82%	
Cheshire East	72%	88%
Cheshire West & Chester	84%	
Warrington	88%	
East Riding of Yorkshire	78%	
North Yorkshire	91%	
Solihull	57%	
Warwickshire	85%	
Central Bedfordshire	97%	
Hampshire	79%	
West Berkshire	71%	
North Somerset	56%	

Table 2: Percentage of assessments completed within 45 days nationally, regionally and for our statistical neighbours

Children in Need

A child in need (CIN) is defined¹ as; a child who is unlikely to reach or maintain a satisfactory level of health or development or whose health or development is likely to be significantly impaired without provision of services from the local authority or he/she has a disability. The number of CIN in Cheshire East was 1133 at the end of 2015-16, compared to 1184 the previous year, however, this figure has fluctuated throughout the year between 1050 and 1215 -

¹ Children Act 1989

likely reasons for this include large families and/or a delay in assessment. The number of children in need in Cheshire East is in line with our statistical neighbours.

Project Crewe

Project Crewe was established in August 2015 as a result of a successful Innovation Bid by Cheshire East to the Department of Education (DfE). This service aims to achieve positive sustainable outcomes for families with children in need aged 0 to 19 years old. Catch 22 delivers this service in partnership with Cheshire East Council. CESCIB continues to monitor and challenge the impact of this service on vulnerable children and young people.

Child Protection

The number of children and young people who are on a child protection (CP) plan has reduced by 11% over the last 12 months, following a significant increase the previous year. This remains comparable with statistical neighbours and audit findings suggest this level is appropriate. Table 3 shows CP numbers from 2013-16:

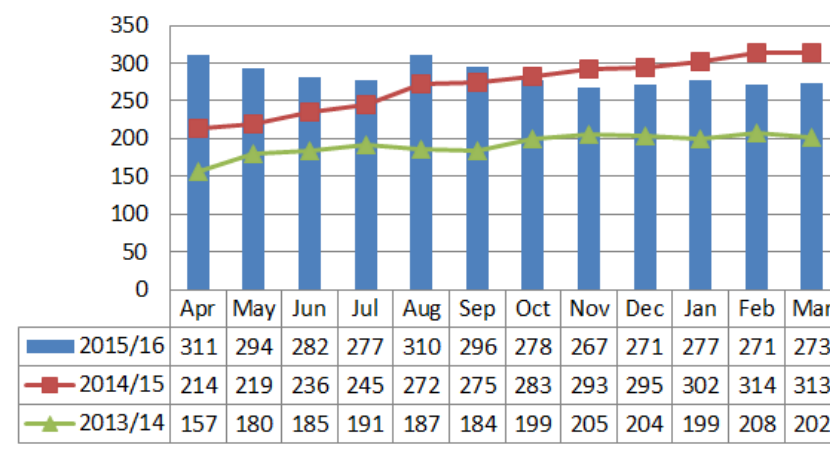


Table 3: Child protection numbers 2013-16

Those who are subject to a plan for over 15 months has also reduced from a position of 11.9% of the CP cohort at the start of 2015-16 to 5.9% as at 31st March 2016. The focus on this is around appropriate and timely intervention and ensuring plans have SMART objectives which are making a difference.

Over the last year, there has been challenge over the most appropriate category of abuse. Neglect continues to be the highest category. Table 4 below shows CP categories since 2014:

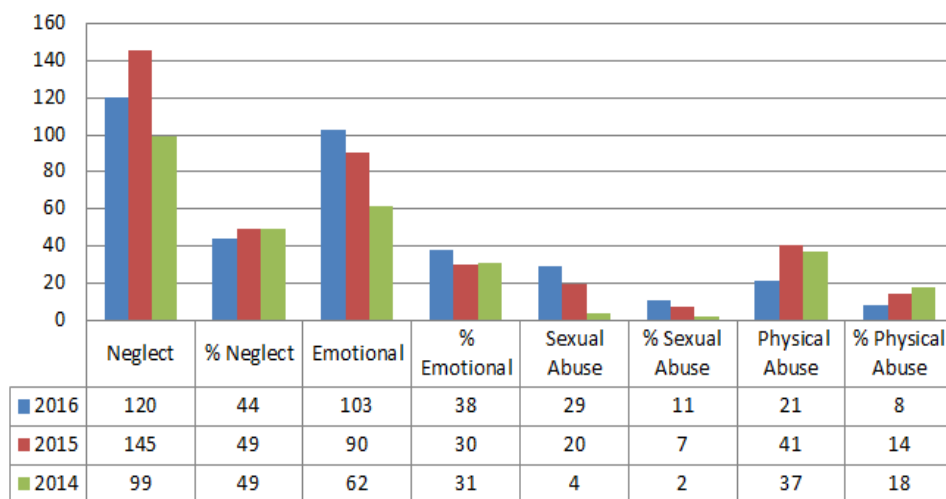


Table 4: Child protection categories 2014-16

A recent audit on cases where the category was emotional abuse highlighted a number of issues around categorisation and these will be scrutinised by CESCIB over the coming year.

Cared for Children

Cared for children are those that are looked after by the local authority either voluntarily or through a statutory order. As at 31st March 2016, 387 children and young people were being cared for by the local authority, an increase of 8.4% from the previous year. Of this number:

- 153 (39.5%) live outside the local authority area
- 28 live in residential children's homes; of whom 53.5% live outside of the local authority area
- 6 live in residential specialist schools; of whom 83% live outside of the local authority area
- 288 children and young people in foster placements; of these 113 (39%) live out of the local authority area.
- Fewer than 5 children are unaccompanied asylum seekers

The figures show a high number of young people live out of the area, in reality they may actually live nearby but across Cheshire East's border.

Extensive work is underway to ensure there are enough local foster carers in Cheshire East to ensure where possible local placements are made and that children stay in the area.

In the last 12 months a total of 141 children have ceased to be cared for by the Local Authority. Of these, there have been 18 adoptions, 26 children became subject of special guardianship orders and 32 returned home. 39 individuals have left care due to turning 18 and a total of 16 individuals are in a range of 'staying put' arrangements (where they are 18 or older but have chosen to stay in the care of the Local Authority).

The table below is a comparison of cared for children based on the 2014-15 statutory returns (which is the latest data available for all comparators).

Cheshire East's proportion of cared for children is lower than the England average, North West average and our statistical neighbour average, and although we have increased slightly to 51.5, our performance is still at the lower end of our comparator group.

	As at 31st March 2015, Rate of Cared for Children per 10,000
England	60
North West	82
Statistical neighbour Average	59.8
Cheshire West & Chester	75
Solihull	74
Warrington	67
Warwickshire	61
North Somerset	55
Cheshire East	49.4
Hampshire	48
Central Bedfordshire	47
West Berkshire	47
East Riding of Yorkshire	46
North Yorkshire	38

Table 5: Rate of Cared for Children per 10,000 at the end of 2015

The LSCB has increased its scrutiny and challenge around cared for children in 2015-16 and will continue to do so in 2016-17.

"Corporate Parenting Board is passionate and committed – they know the borough and their children well"

Cared for Children and Care Leavers Peer Challenge May 2015

Care Leavers

As at 31st March 2016 there were 225 care leavers in Cheshire East. This has remained static over the last 12 months and is marginally lower than the 232 in March 2015. 16 young people are being supported in 'staying put' arrangements post-18.

There are some positive outcomes for care leavers - they have access to a wide range of helpful advice and support for their health needs. A recent benefit has been introduced where they do not have to pay council tax. CESCIB is working with the Corporate Parenting Board to ensure these young people are receiving the support they need.

Care leavers produced the Easy Pleasy cookbook to support others and provide tips on what makes a tasty meal.

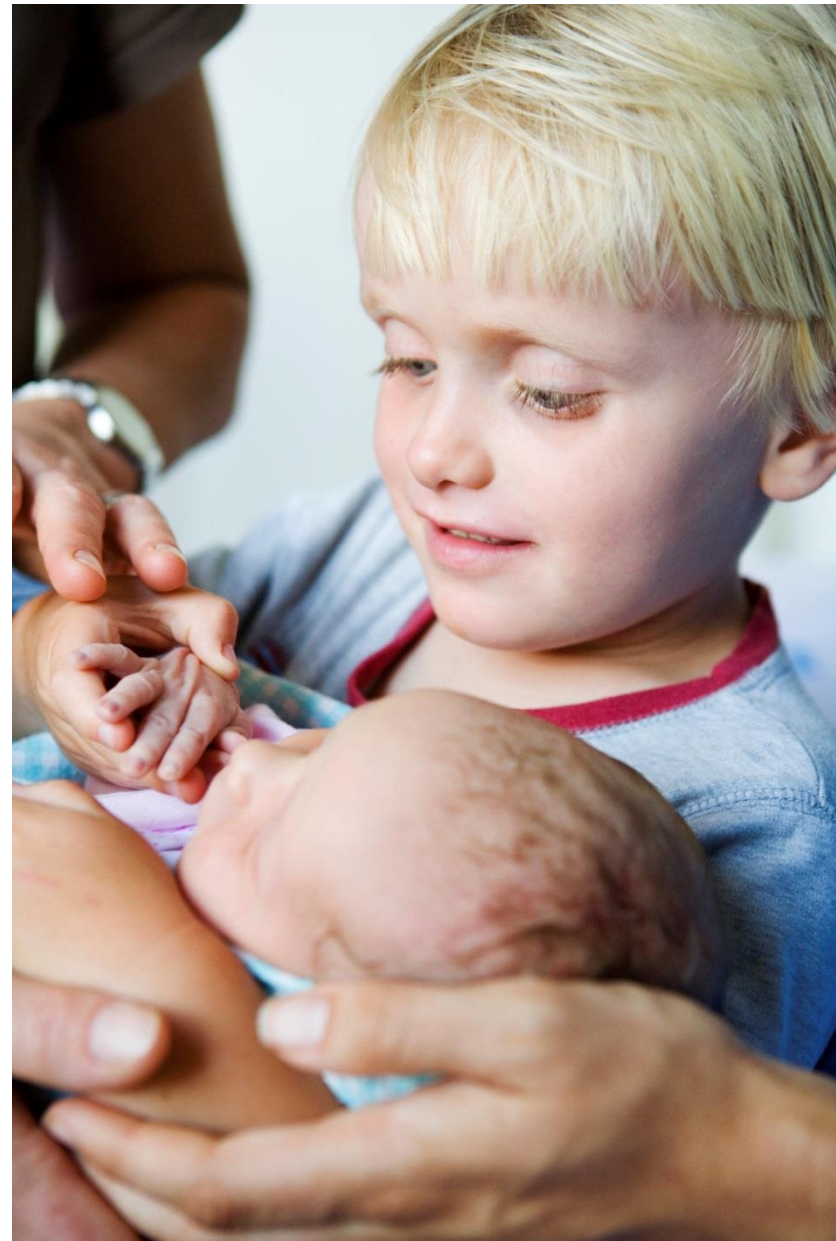


Child Death Overview Panel

The death of any child is a tragedy. It is vital that all child deaths are carefully reviewed. The death of any child under the age of 18 is reviewed by a Child Death Overview Panel on behalf of the Local Safeguarding Children Board.

The pan-Cheshire Child Death Overview Panel is made up of a group of professionals who meet several times a year to review all the child deaths in their area. There were a total of 63 child deaths across Cheshire during 2015-2016 notified to the panel; of these 20 were from Cheshire East.

The Panel has a role to identify any trend or themes and to make recommendations to the LSCB on learning from the reviews and how to prevent and reduce child deaths. The panel has an independent chair who provides regular updates to the LSCB and produces an [annual report](#) that summarises the key themes arising from child deaths, progress against actions and priorities for the coming year.



D. Review of Priorities for 2015-16

The following three partnership objectives underpin the key plans for children and young people; the children and young people's plan, the children and young people's improvement plan and the LSCB business plan:

- **Frontline Practice is consistently good, effective and outcome focused**
- **Listening to and acting on the voice of children and young people**
- **The partnership effectively protects and ensures good outcomes for all children and young people in Cheshire East.**

CESCB agreed the following priorities to deliver these objectives in 2015-17:

We will improve frontline multi-agency practice through:

- Improving Board engagement direct with frontline staff
- Continuing to drive developments around key safeguarding areas including children at risk of CSE, missing from home, female genital mutilation, radicalisation and extremism, forced marriage/honour based abuse and privately fostered children and young people
- Embedding strengthening families
- Implementing our neglect strategy
- Implementing changes around the integrated front door
- Improving safeguarding arrangements for disabled children
- Improving identification and response around children and young people with mental health issues, including self-harming

We will continue to improve the participation of young people in LSCB business through:

- Ensuring that the voice of children and young people is central to LSCB business
- Establishing a Challenge and Evidence Panel of children and young people
- Engaging children and young people in co-producing information and support relevant to them
- Ensuring that the LSCB celebrates children's rights and participation and the contribution of children and young people to safeguarding
- Ensuring the voice of children and young people is central to the LSCB's training programme

We will strengthen the partnerships through:

- Engaging the community through links with voluntary and faith sector
- Improving the board's role and traction in relation to developing early help



Summary of Improvements against the Priorities

Improve Frontline Practice

Improving CESC's engagement with frontline staff

The establishment of the Safeguarding Children Operational Group (SCOG), a multi-agency group of first line managers, provides an opportunity to disseminate key messages to frontline staff, discuss implementation of new policies, and agree good practice models. SCOG has carried out a number of pieces of work in 2015-16, including the development of multi-agency practice standards. Regular frontline newsletters provide information direct to the frontline. Frontline visits also provide a forum to hear first-hand any issues around communication. All the LSCB audits have involved workshops with frontline practitioners to triangulate findings.

Continuing to drive developments around CSE

During the year there were 10 individuals made subject of a CSE child protection plan; 70% of whom were female. There were a further 6 individuals made subject to a child protection plan under a separate category, but where a CSE specific plan was also considered. The youngest was 12 and the eldest was 16.

The LSCB's CSE Operational group is multi-agency and considers all children for whom there are concerns in respect of CSE who fall below the threshold for a CSE child protection plan. The group also considers persons of interest and potential locations that present a CSE risk. The CSE screening tool informs referral into the group and the completing professional is invited to attend the multi-agency forum to share information and agree a plan of intervention that will safeguard, manage and minimise the risk, promote welfare and prevent future harm.

During 2015-2016 the CSE operational group held 12 meetings, and considered 93 referrals (up from 22 in 2014-15); 73 of which were concerning young people at risk, and 20 concerning potential perpetrators or persons of interest. Referrals were received from the Police, Cheshire East Council (ChECS, Social Workers, Family Support Workers, Youth Engagement Service), schools, commissioned services, and Sexual Health Workers. The increased number of referrals in 2015-2016 indicates that practitioners generally have a good understanding of CSE and are recognising and responding to the indicators, supported by the CSE risk screening tool. Four locations where children and young people are thought to be particularly at risk were identified. Two of these are in Crewe.

Positively, 73% of those flagged in 2015-2016 have been closed to the group as they are satisfied and reassured that the young person is being protected by the plans in place. 10% of cases were escalated as requiring consideration for a child protection plan, which demonstrates that the group is effectively safeguarding young people and ensuring the risks are responded to appropriately, and 4% were considered for a CSE child protection plan.

Work in these key areas is regularly reported into the LSCB to ensure focus. Significant work has been completed over the last 12 months with regards to the individuals who go missing from home and care who are also presenting with risk associated with CSE.



Continuing to drive developments around children missing from home

Most children who go missing in Cheshire East go missing once and go missing from their home. Some children go missing many times and this includes children who have moved between care and home/semi-independent living and those who are cared for.

In 2015-16 Cheshire East received 270 missing notifications, which equated to 123 Individuals. This compares to 253 notifications and 96 individuals this time last year, or a 12% reduction.

Continuing to drive developments around children in home with domestic abuse

Domestic abuse continues to be a significant safeguarding issue for children and young people in Cheshire East who are harmed through exposure to parent/carer abuse, directly hurt by the same perpetrator and/or develop teenage relationships which are abusive. The impacts on their safety, health, wellbeing and achievement are multiple and can be long lasting. Domestic abuse is often linked to substance misuse and mental ill health resulting in a degree of complexity and interrelated harm which makes safeguarding and co-ordination both challenging and vital across a range of agencies and Boards. Strategy and delivery of responses to domestic abuse and sexual violence are the responsibility of Cheshire East Domestic Abuse Partnership.

Multi-agency Risk Assessment Conferences (MARAC) continue to provide an effective process for information sharing and action planning in high risk cases. The number of cases has risen again in the last year to 574 adults with 782 children which means we have almost reached our estimated in need population of 600+. This continued upward trend reflects the success of efforts to ease access to services and is largely a result of the secondary risk assessment at 'the Hub' of victims identified by police who have seen domestic abuse incidents almost double. The Hub itself had



around 1,300 referrals and increased their contact rate steadily throughout the year. This is evidence that the co-location of police, children's services and the Domestic Abuse Hub has improved our response to domestic abuse.

The Hub is jointly staffed by a lead member of the IDVA service and commissioned service providers. Not only does this support continuity for service users on their journey to recovery but enables the capture of all domestic abuse specialist data in one place. The service has used this data at end of year to send to agencies along with client feedback posing some key questions regarding referral levels and user experience. This provides an increased means of holding one another to account for the effectiveness of individual and multi-agency intervention

There have been four key further developments in the year:

- The set up of www.actonitnow.co.uk which is a young person's 'Teen Relationship Abuse' website providing information, stories and resources to support young people and those who care about and work with them. This website was developed in partnership with young people and responds in part to concerns raised by the LSCB's Challenge and Evidence Panel about simplifying access to support for relationship issues. The challenge was made following a young person's survey which, together with work done by the Youth Council, highlighted domestic abuse as a serious and substantial concern.
- Operation Encompass, whereby schools are informed of incidents in the previous 24 hours in the homes of pupils, has gone live across the whole borough. This has been pioneered by Police and our Safeguarding Children in Education Settings (SCIES) team who have been able to prepare schools for calls and follow up.

- In partnership with the Youth Engagement Service the service have trialled a new programme 'Tandem' addressing child to parent violence. This is intensive work involving parallel and joint child and parent work. While the number of completers is small at four families the early results are significant, especially as these families had attempted change work previously which had resolved their difficulties
- Responding to the LSCB's Domestic Abuse Audit and to the Improvement Plan, the service have also developed a Domestic Abuse Risk and Needs Identification Tool for children which is part of Guidance on the co-presentation of Domestic Abuse, Mental Ill Health and Substance Misuse (Toxic Trio)

CEDAP continues to support LSCB workforce development through the provision or contribution to three of its core programmes which account for almost one third of the LSCB training offer. Evaluations continue to be very positive. In addition the service has delivered Teen Relationship Abuse programmes as well as MARAC/Risk Assessment workshops and Adult Safeguarding workshops where the safety and wellbeing of children is also addressed as part of a 'family response'.

Finally, the service have re-commissioned non IDVA services – refuge, outreach, recovery and change programmes, peer support groups and easy access 'clinics' in Crewe and Macclesfield. Procurement delays have meant the service will be fully operational in July 16. This delay has led to a regrettable gap in programme delivery for some children and young people which is expected will be regularised by September.

Continuing to drive developments around Female genital mutilation (FGM)

It is illegal in the UK to subject a child to FGM or to take a child abroad to undergo FGM. WT15 states that each LSCB should agree with the local authority and its partners the levels for the different types of assessment and services to be commissioned and delivered. This should include services for children who have been or may be sexually exploited, children who have undergone or may undergo FGM and children who have been or may be radicalised. Policies and procedures are in place and work has taken place to raise awareness of FGM with practitioners through the LSCB website and workshops.

In April 2016 new statutory guidance was produced, it sets out clearly the expectations for practitioners and named professionals. This guidance has been sent to all partners and work is nearly complete on the pan-Cheshire practitioner guidance which makes clear the pathways for referrals.

Partners in health, police and the local authority are working together to ensure that data is now collected and reported so the LSCB is clear on action taken in relation to FGM and prevalence of this across Cheshire East. As part of our awareness-raising, over 100 people attended a multi-agency event on FGM organised by NHS England to learn more about FGM and to be reminded of the reporting process.

A pan-Cheshire Strategy for tackling FGM is being developed in line with statutory guidance that sets out requirements for organisations around reporting, recognition and training.

Continuing to drive developments around Radicalisation and extremism

The Prevent agenda is a national initiative. Recent high profile cases nationally have highlighted the risks to children and young people from radicalisation and extremism. The 'grooming' process used by extremist groups is similar to that used in other forms of child abuse and exploits the same vulnerabilities. The LSCB has a key role to play in ensuring that children and young people are effectively safeguarded against this form of exploitation. During the last year, significant work has taken place to raise awareness amongst professionals of the risk associated with radicalisation and extremism.

Prevent' has been a focus on the LSCB board meeting agenda, the police channel panel coordinator and prevent officer have attended a board meeting to raise awareness amongst all partners. Following this all organisations who are part of the LSCB were asked to confirm the Prevent Lead within their organisation.

The Prevent Lead for the LSCB is Lisa Cooper of NHS England. Her role as strategic lead is to ensure all agencies are kept up to date with latest developments and to monitor that the Cheshire East Prevent action plan is completed. Partner agencies been asked to ensure they follow the Prevent training strategy by ensuring their staff and volunteers receive appropriate training. The Home Office has a variety of resources and e-learning materials that LSCB members have been asked to disseminate. Several LSCB members who are Chancel Panel members will be undertaking workshops to raise awareness of prevent (WRAP) training to increase their knowledge of this subject.

The LSCB website has been updated with a [Prevent page](#) where information on resources and training is available.

A Channel Panel was established in 2015-16 to safeguard individuals at risk from being radicalised or being groomed into becoming involved in acts of violent extremism. Channel is a cross-Cheshire initiative, led by Cheshire Police through community safety. The multi-agency Channel Panel manages risks on a 'case by case' basis through meetings. The panel is chaired by a senior manager from the Safer Communities Partnership. They have developed clear terms of reference and will be regularly reporting into the LSCB.

Continuing to drive developments around forced marriage/ honour based abuse

The Police are leading a multi-agency group to develop an action plan around harmful practices; these include honour based violence and forced marriage. To support this, a two day event is planned to look at the demographics and prevalence across Cheshire; key strategic leaders will be invited to identify gaps and agree the action plan and how to raise awareness across all agencies.

Continuing to drive developments around privately fostered children and young people

CESCB has continued to raise awareness of private fostering over 2015-16 through its active private fostering subgroup. Awareness raising is now routinely carried out and recorded. Materials and posters have been used to support a publicity campaign and are included in a pack which is provided to all social work teams.

In 2015-16, the number of privately fostered children and young people we are aware of in Cheshire East has almost doubled; from 6 to 11 new arrangements and 3 carried forward from 2014-2015. We can attribute this to the awareness raising efforts of the LSCB Private Fostering Sub Group who have ensured that private fostering recognition is on the agenda in Cheshire East. In particular, we have seen an increase in education referrals regarding private fostering.

Data on compliance with DBS Checks has been compiled to inform the LSCB, which revealed that there are still significant delays in obtaining DBS checks. The lead for Private Fostering is developing a process for obtaining timely Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks and management sign off, which will be formalised in the Private Fostering policy and procedure.





The LSCB Private Fostering Sub Group has sought previously privately fostered young people's views on service to inform service evaluation and development. The three young people interviewed were very positive about the support they had received from their social workers, "They wanted to know what was going on for me, I felt listened to", and reported that they felt cared about and safe. They were all visited very quickly following the initial referral; however the first visit was not used to full effect in that a lot of

information sharing and gathering at that point was missed out. All three young people felt this was important they wanted to know they could stay as quickly as possible. Two of the young people expressed concerns about the financial implications their care had on their carers, and said that they didn't like to ask for things like toiletries and make-up and this caused them stress. The young people felt that process for receiving additional monetary support needed to be dealt with far quicker and advice in this area should be improved. An action plan to improve services based on this feedback has been developed to address these areas.

Performance on Private Fostering is monitored through the LSCB scorecard and a progress report from the Chair of the Sub Group is received by the LSCB Executive. A private fostering stocktake is planned for June 2016.

Embedding strengthening families

One of the priorities in the 2015-16 business plan was to embed the strengthening families model of child protection conferences. Following further work this year, a decision was made instead to adapt the 'three houses model' for use in Cheshire East. The new model called 'Making Children Safer' provides a way to include the family in planning, and focuses on the strengths of the family as well as the areas that need to improve, which helps to engage children, young people and families in the planning process. It also helps families to understand why the plan is in place and what needs to happen to achieve it. Improved understanding and engagement with the plan and agencies delivering it should lead to improved outcomes for children, young people and families. A mid-point review of the model is currently underway but, anecdotally, it appears that the model has been well received as an improvement in addressing the issue of drift and improving planning.

Implementing changes around the integrated front door

The multi-agency integrated team at the front door has continued to develop in 2015-16. The establishment of the Early Help Brokerage service has strengthened the team's response to early help. A robust front door is an essential part of a good safeguarding service; changes to improve in this area will continue to be a focus for 2016-18.

Improving safeguarding arrangements for disabled children

Significant progress has been made in this area. There is now information available on the LSCB website. A children with disabilities social work team has been established to provide greater focus and expertise. A 0-25 special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) partnership board is planned for 2016-17 to develop an integrated 0-25 SEND service. The number of disabled children on a plan has risen steadily in 2015-16.

Implementing our neglect strategy

CESCB's neglect strategy was launched in January 2015, however, during the Ofsted inspection in July 2015, Inspectors felt that more could be done by the Board to evidence impact of the strategy. During 2015-16, a neglect task and finish group has been re-established to drive implementation of the strategy and to measure its impact.

A neglect scorecard has been developed that contains the key measures set out in the strategy and is being used to inform the LSCB on impact of the strategy. Graded care profile training is now a mandatory training course for all ASYEs (Social Workers in their assisted and supported year of employment).

A new LSCB multi-agency training programme on neglect was launched in January 2015, and 235 practitioners have received the training so far. This is not yet having sufficient impact on practice,

as graded care profiles are still not being used routinely to assess and evaluate the extent of neglect. Neglect will continue to be a focus for the Board in 2016-18.



Improving identification and response around children and young people with mental health issues, including self harming

The priority around mental health arose following a thematic review of a number of teenage suicides in Cheshire East in 2014-15. A suicide and self harm prevention group is now well established and has worked on developing a prevention strategy, identifying resources and training. The group received input from the CAMHS Young Advisers to ensure the voice of the child is considered when developing the strategy.

Listening to Children and Young People

The LSCB sponsored a conference with young people from primary schools in November 2015.

The day involved a number of activities based around safeguarding and children's rights. As part of the day, Children also wrote post cards to the Prime Minister, David Cameron asking how he intends



to protect children's rights. Primary schools produced a poster designed around staying safe.

The voice of the child has continued to influence the work of the board in 2015-16; each board meeting starts with a representative from Voice for Children to keep the meeting child centred. Representatives from the Children's Society and the NSPCC are members of the board and influence our work through feedback from children and young people. The annual Act Now conference is a good example where young people organise, plan and lead the conference to ensure the work of our partners is young people led.

In 2015-16, CESCIB made presentations regionally and nationally on its work around involving children and young people in its work. CESCIB has also submitted an application to be awarded 'Investors in Children'; the outcome from this is imminent.

Annual Survey of Safeguarding

In 2015-16 the LSCB piloted an annual survey with a small group of young people based on the findings from audits and engagement sessions with young people. This identified some of the areas where young people had concerns and wanted more to be done by the LSCB. This led to the challenge and evidence panel (see below).

Establish a "Scrutiny" Panel of young people

Young people decided that they wanted to call the scrutiny panel a 'challenge and evidence' panel and the first meeting took place on 12th October 2015.

The young people put a number of questions to board members, based on the issues that came up in the annual survey. CESCIB has worked closely with the Safeguarding Children in Education and Settings (SCIES) Team to feed back to these young people.

A 'you said, we did' approach has been adopted and the LSCB is tracking an action plan to address the areas for development agreed with the young people. The key areas challenged were:

- Wider participation with cared for children, e.g. foster carer recruitment
- Confusion between CSE and sexual abuse
- Domestic abuse – more info for young people
- Legal highs – lack of understanding
- Young people's access to safeguarding advice
- Availability of school based policing in Cheshire East



Annual celebration of children & young people's contribution to safeguarding

CESCB agreed to fund and help coordinate an annual safeguarding conference for professionals, co-produced by young people with the SCIES Team. In July 2015 this was called 'Act Now' and showcased and celebrated the peer led work in schools around safeguarding.

The young people presented on key safeguarding issues relevant to them to an audience of social workers, health, police, voluntary sector, and councillors. The outcomes from the young people have been used to raise awareness and promote issues across partner agencies via email, the website and key documents. More information on the conference is available on the LSCB website, including the presentations and a [video of the day](#).

CESCB arranged a follow up event with the young people to thank them for their involvement and to present them with a poster of the day.

Strengthen Partnerships

We will engage the community through links with voluntary and faith sector;

A regular meeting between lay members, the voluntary sector, including faith has been facilitated to ensure we are aware of the safeguarding work carried out by this sector. Through improving communication, a regular update on the LSCB meetings is reported on in the CVS newsletter. These meetings share good practice and identify where there are knowledge gaps.

We will strengthen relationships with other key partnerships to improve the reporting, accountability and sharing of good practice

Considerable work has been undertaken looking at reporting lines to partnerships boards to ensure improved communication. One of Ofsted's recommendations was for CESC B to improve its influence in the work of the Health and Wellbeing Board to ensure that safeguarding is embedded within its priorities. The Health and Wellbeing Board (HWBB) is the accountable body for the Children and Young People's Improvement Plan and have received a number of reports on the outcome of the Ofsted inspection and the improvement plan. They also received a presentation on the LSCB Annual report 2014-15 and business plan for 2015-16.

Key updates from Children's services have been scheduled on the forward plan for the Health and Wellbeing Board to ensure they have strategic oversight and scrutiny of the quality of children's services and the key issues for children and young people in Cheshire East.

The Health and Wellbeing Strategy is currently being refreshed, and this will align with the areas of the Cheshire East Children and

Young People's Plan, which is already aligned with the LSCB Business Plan.

The memorandum of understanding between the partnerships is currently under review and will be considered by a new Partnership Chairs Group that will be established from June 2016.

Performance, Scrutiny and Challenge

CESC B has a comprehensive quality assurance framework, which can be found on our website. In 2015-16 this has provided CESC B with a range of quantitative and qualitative information in relation to the effectiveness of safeguarding in Cheshire East.

Performance Monitoring

Following a recommendation from Ofsted, the LSCB scorecard has been further developed and strengthened; it covers a range of measures from all partners and has been aligned with the areas of focus for the LSCB and the partnership from the Ofsted Inspection Report. It now gives a robust oversight of safeguarding practice across the partnership. The LSCB Quality and Outcomes Sub Group is effectively scrutinising and challenging partnership performance, and is driving improvements to partnership working. This includes identifying risks to improving outcomes across the partnership that are subsequently added to the LSCB's risk register where they are monitored and challenged until progress is made.

A range of quality assurance activity supports performance monitoring. Arrangements for this are robust, and support and supplement partnership performance monitoring. This includes the LSCB multi-agency audit programme, LSCB frontline visits, and the annual LSCB Children and Young People's Challenge and Evidence Panel. The Challenge and Evidence Panel is run by



young people, who challenge LSCB members on the key safeguarding issues that are important to children and young people in Cheshire East. This is informed by the themes highlighted in the Children and Young People's Safeguarding Survey.

LSCB audits have shown that further work is needed to improve SMART planning, and ensuring that the progress against plans is evaluated and tracked in meetings. In the last LSCB thematic audit on parental mental health, 60% plans were considered to be clear, but all other indicators of a SMART plan were considerably lower with 54% considered to be outcome focussed, 58% focussed on risk and need, 56% clear about professional roles, and with contingency arrangements outlined in just 37%. In response to this, all LSCB multi-agency training now includes references to SMART planning, and the Safeguarding Children Operational Group (SCOG) are reviewing and updating the one minute guide on SMART planning so this can be communicated widely across the

partnership to support good practice. Improvements to SMART planning and the quality of plans are also being driven through Children's Social Care which is discussed in detail in section 9.

Findings from LSCB audits are driving improvements to practice. The need to improve communication between GPs and the safeguarding unit so that GPs are aware of the concerns and inform child protection planning was a recurring theme from the last two LSCB audits. The named GP has visited the majority of GP practices in Cheshire East completing direct work with the practice managers to improve their processes and arrangements. Work has been completed between the safeguarding unit and the named GP which has resulted in strengthened data reporting. Quarterly reporting has now been established to monitor the impact of the work to improve communications. As a result of this work, the percentage of initial case conferences informed by GP reports has improved from 35% in quarter 2 to 62% in quarter 3. This still needs to improve and further work is being carried out to ensure progress in this area continues to be made. Quarterly updates are received and scrutinised by the LSCB Quality and Outcomes Group to drive and monitor the progress in this area. Work is underway within Children's Social Care to ensure GPs are notified of children in need (CIN).

LSCB frontline visits have shown that there is commitment to engage children and young people in service planning across the partnership, and some good examples of this were found such as children and young people's participation in developing the new child protection conference model. Frontline staff welcomed the feedback from LSCB audits through the staff newsletter and said they used this to improve their practice. Most organisations provided examples of how they have learned from SCRs and this was cascaded well throughout the teams via team meetings and bulletins. Most staff felt confident in raising a challenge and some have experienced their service challenging another agency or

partner agency challenging them. However, staff were unclear on the policy and procedure for resolving professional disagreements. This policy and procedure has now been reviewed and strengthened, and the resolution process has been incorporated within the child's record system. Awareness raising of the new policy and procedure has been completed with frontline managers through the Safeguarding Children Operational Group (SCOG) and through the Multi-agency Practice Standards.

Areas of continued challenge in 2015-16 include:

- **GP input to CP conferences** – this has improved significantly through the work of the Designated GP, but will remain a focus in 2016-17
- **Initial health assessments** for cared for children – again, whilst this has improved over the year, it remains an areas for further improvement and scrutiny by CESCOB
- **45% increase in consultations** (over 2 years) but **conversions to referral** remain static at approx 1 in 3
- **Increase in no. of cared for children** (16% increase 2yr)
- **No. of disabled children on a plan** – (5 in Q4)
- **Repeat CP plans**
- **Neglect** – high percentage of plans (clarity of appropriate category re audit of emotional abuse)

Multi-agency Audits

In the last year we have conducted 3 multi-agency thematic audits, covering the following themes:

- Step Down – May 2015
- Domestic abuse – July 2015
- Mental health – December 2015

The analysis of the audits was carried out by an independent auditor and triangulated through engagement with children, young people and their families, multi-agency practitioner workshops and telephone calls to strategic leads. Each audit resulted in recommendations and a subsequent action plan that is tracked and signed off by the Audit and Case Review Subgroup.

Overall the audits showed the following areas of improvement:

- We see our children
- We collect information from across agencies (excluding GP's)
- Parenting is assessed
- The views of children and young people are being sought



Areas for improvement include:

- The quality of practice re core groups/reports/case conferences/step up and step down decisions/early multi-agency planning:
- The analysis and assessment of risk - move from seeing child to understanding their experience
- More SMART plans that are child focused
- Contingencies for when the plan is not effective
- Challenge/escalate where the practice is not good enough (from s.47 to step down)
- Recognise disguised compliance
- Understand the cycle of change
- Demonstrate better collective responsibility, collective action and independent challenge

From the audits, children young people and their families told us that the positives were:

- It is good that we are involved and seek views
- Relationships are key
- Need to explain and make sure they have understood what is needed and what is expected to change

However, they said that:

- They were confused by the number of people involved – plans not cohesive
- We need to be honest and transparent
- We need to share information clearly in a way that they can understand and contribute to

Serious Case Reviews (SCR):

This year we have not conducted any serious case reviews arising from the death or serious injury to a Cheshire East child.

During 2015-16 the Board agreed a finance policy to fund any future SCRs.

Reflective Reviews:

This year we have had 3 children referred to the LSCB case review panel, and from that carried out 1 reflective review including one multi-agency learning forum where we considered that we still had lessons to learn about the way we could work better together to safeguard the children and young people of Cheshire East.

True for Us

CESCB has carried out one 'True for us exercise' where we looked at the recommendations from a serious case review from another LSCB area and considered if we could learn and improve our own practice from.

Early Help Challenge

Services providing early help were asked to take part in an early help challenge, where the LSCB chair and other members of the board asked questions and challenged the current work delivered. This identified some gaps in service. The gaps form the focus of an action plan that is being developed by the Early Help sub group.

Single Agency Audits

The Audit and Case Review sub group has a rolling programme of considering single agency audits and reviews. The audits are presented by the relevant agency and provide additional opportunities to share learning and to scrutinise the work of partners. In the last year audits have been received from Cheshire and Wirral Partnership, the Safeguarding Children in Education and Settings Team and the Safeguarding Unit of the Council. A practice learning review was shared by the East & South CCGs.

Frontline visits

Member visits to frontline services have been agreed as a key part of the LSCB quality assurance framework to ensure a better connection between the Board and frontline practice. Between November and December 2015, nine agencies were asked to host frontline visits by Board members. Each visit was underpinned by a questionnaire on the following key areas:

- Evidencing the voice of the child
- Understanding the agency role in safeguarding
- Audit activity in the agency
- Supervision
- Challenge and escalation
- Learning from SCR's
- Understanding the role of The Board
- Information for The Board
- Forward planning
- Support in each agency

The key themes were:

- A positive commitment to engage and listen to children and young people. Many services also evidenced a proactive approach to engaging and listening to children.
- Clear understating of each agency's role in safeguarding
- Staff confident in challenging/escalating when required

Issues identified include:

- The availability of professionals in other agencies
- Understanding/access to escalation/resolution policy
- Frontline understanding of what the LSCB does
- Understanding of thresholds in some agencies – staff felt they needed more support

Section 11 Audits

Section 11 (4) of the Children Act 2004 requires each person or body to which the duties apply to ensure they have arrangements in place to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. The Board carried out an effective Section 11 Audit in 2014, this year a follow up pan Cheshire S11 was undertaken involving;

- Cheshire Constabulary
- National Probation Service
- Cheshire and Greater Manchester Community Rehabilitation Company
- NHS England

Members of these agencies attended a Pan Cheshire review panel and were asked to present their section 11 for scrutiny. Cheshire East collaborates with pan-Cheshire for a section 11 scrutiny panel every 12 months. Unlike Cheshire East who has their own self audit toolkit, the other 3 local authorities use the virtual college tool that agencies complete online. The purpose of the Pan Cheshire panel is to scrutinise the virtual college self-audit of each of the agencies. A report on the outcome of these was presented to the LSCB board.



Section 175/157 Audits

Schools complete an annual S175/157 audit, this covers all the key areas of S11; findings from this audit are reported during the Autumn to the LSCB.

Challenge Log

The LSCB has made a number of challenges to single agencies during 2015-2016. These are collated in a challenge log that track and monitor the responses ensuring that issues are addressed.

Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)

The Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) oversees investigations into allegations against staff and volunteers who work with children and young people. Cheshire East's LADO sits within the Council's Safeguarding Unit. The Board oversees the work of the LADO through scrutiny of its annual report and activity reports to the Quality and Outcomes sub group.

There have been 322 contacts with LADO from 1st April 2015 to 31st March 2016 which is an increase of 83 contacts in comparison to the previous year. Of these: 47% were **Consultations** (Contacts and Referrals where LADO threshold is not met as per WTSC 2015 guidance); 31% were categorised as **No Further Action After Initial Consideration** (More information is needed to determine whether further action is needed under LADO procedures); 22% of contacts met the threshold for **Further action under LADO procedures** which is a slight increase on the previous year's 19%. Most referrals were received from Social Care (24%), Education (21%) and Fostering (17%).

26% of referrals related to foster carers; 18% of whom were Cheshire East Foster Carers. 25% of referrals relate to education professionals, with early years professionals accounting for 13% and residential child care workers accounting for 10% of referrals. These four agencies have had the highest amount of referrals in the previous four years.

Allegations relating to physical harm continue to account for the majority of referrals: 56% in 2015-16 and 48% in the previous year.

The LADO has continued to ensure that allegations are managed in a timely way and between 2015-16 88% of referrals meeting the threshold for further action were concluded within 3 months; a slight improvement on the previous year's 82%.

Learning and Improvement

LSCB Training and Development

[CESCB training](#) continues to develop, deliver and evaluate a robust needs led multi-agency training package.

Key achievements this year have been:

- Increase in delivery from 49 courses in 2014-15 to 62 courses in 2015-16 at no extra cost.
- Increase in overall attendance from 89% in 2014-15 to 94% in 2015-16.
- LSCB training in Cheshire East noted by Ofsted to be good.
- Delivery of "world through our eyes" training by Voice for Children highly acclaimed - outstanding evaluations for each workshop.
- Successful implementation of new evaluation and impact on practice data collection systems.
- Development of e-learning suite of courses, including bespoke CSE e-learning module.
- CSE workshops delivered to children's social care in collaboration with catch 22.
- Quality assurance and validation of 5 single agency training packages.
- Bespoke needs led workshops delivered to meet identified needs in Cheshire East: Graded Care Profile, Advanced CSE, Complex Neglect, safer sleep, RASASCS and SARC.

- Improved communication through LSCB learning and Improvement bulletin.

Suicide and Self-harm in Young People

Following a thematic review in 2014-15, a suicide and self harm prevention group has been set up led by Public Health. This group has identified training for practitioners as an area for development. There is an action plan which the group is working through, the CAMHS young people advisors have met with the group to ensure the voice of the child is evident in the action plan and the service delivery meets the needs of young people.



E. 2015-16 Annual Reports

Each partner agency is expected to meet their safeguarding responsibilities as described in the member compact and under Section 11. All agencies are expected to ensure their staff and volunteers undertake appropriate single and multi-agency training.

Partner agencies are expected to provide an annual update for scrutiny to the board, setting out any key achievements in the previous year. Extracts are included below from some of the reports on activities that have taken place over the last year by our partners.

Child Sexual Exploitation

Cafcass (the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service) have extended the **Child Exploitation Strategy** introduced in 2014/15 to include trafficking and radicalisation, research (including a study of 54 cases known to Cafcass in which radicalisation was identified as a feature).

Demand on Cafcass services grew substantially in 2015/16 with a 13% increase in care applications and an 11% increase in private law applications.

Cheshire Police has committed a CSE and missing from home (MFH) coordinator to support a multi-agency team at Sandbach house. A police officer chairs the LSCB CSE and Missing from Home and Care Sub Group.

The **National Probation Service NPS** produced its own safeguarding policy with practice guidance in mid-2015, and CSE were areas for Probation to develop confidence.

NHS Eastern Cheshire Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) and NHS South Cheshire Clinical Commissioning Groups have developed a set of safeguarding standards included in all provider contracts. These standards relate to Child Sexual Exploitation, Female Genital Mutilation, Prevent, Domestic Abuse and development of multi-agency integrated working in respect of front line staff.

The **Youth Engagement Service** held two workshops for their staff in March for National CSE day, looking at gender and CSE in working with young people.

Wirral Community NHS Trust, providers of the 0-19 service have contributed to the CSE Operational Group, and a CSE nurse specialist supports other health practitioners.

Neglect

Cheshire Police have developed a Safeguarding Action Plan which is driving forward a range of activity including awareness and response to neglect.

The **National Probation Service** has completed work with their staff around neglect and will provide staff with more guidance on home visits. These visits provide an opportunity to identify neglect at an early stage.

Participation

The Children's Society were pleased to have positive feedback on their LSCB Frontline Visit, a member of probation staff visited The Children's Society and felt it was *"Very interesting session that provided a good insight into the work of the Children's Society and the valuable work that they undertake. I fully agree and this brought home to me the need for the voice of the child/young person to be central to developing future practice."*

The participation of children and young people is central to the work of the LSCB and The Children's Society works to ensure the voice of the child is heard.

Prevent

Reaseheath College representing the Further Education Sector have been engaging with the primary and secondary sector to map delivery of the Prevent agenda and to ensure progression of the subject matter.

Training

The Faith Sector continues to provide training to promote safeguarding and share messages from the LSCB.

Cheshire and Wirral Partnership (CWP) NHS Foundation Trust is a provider of mental health services (for both adults and children and young people), the learning disability services and substance misuse service in East Cheshire.

A nurse specialist from CWP is an active participant of the LSCB training pool, having delivered a number of training sessions on the "toxic trio" course.

Cheshire Fire & Rescue Service delivered Youth Mental Health First Aid training to the Prince's Trust and RESPECT staff.

CVS Voluntary Sector provide Information & Training events designed to support volunteers in understanding the legal requirements if they involve children in any meeting or activity. It is also a way of sharing best practice to improve the overall effectiveness of the voluntary sector in Cheshire East.

Schools and settings

The **Safeguarding Children in Education Settings Team (SCiES) Team** provide safeguarding information, support and guidance in order to enhance safeguarding policy and practice in all Cheshire East schools, colleges and settings.

The SCiES team provides training in schools on key safeguarding subjects. Delegates from schools and settings at events have included all members of school and setting staff, Managers and Governors. These have been from maintained and Independent schools, early years' settings, colleges and alternative providers. A breakdown of this training is set out below:

Quarter	Numbers trained
1	589
2	868
3	1062
4	701
Total summer 2014 – spring 2015	3220

Feedback from training:

"Very good, clear & concise, reinforced previous knowledge"

"Excellent training! Up to date issues being spoken about so feel confident in this area"

Operation Encompass was officially launched in January 2016. Schools and the police work closely together to support the needs of children and young people affected by domestic abuse.



How are schools embedding the voice of the child?

Schools / colleges have strong policy and practice on including the voice of the child from school councils (often with primary/secondary links) and management groups to involving young people in interviews and/or writing policies (for example, anti-bullying), from weekly comments in a 'thought box' to attendance at case conferences, CAF meetings etc.

- A number of schools/ colleges have 'safeguarding students groups' who have a say in how the school delivers safeguarding education.
- Behavioural issues are resolved, as far as possible, at the earliest opportunity to avoid unnecessary escalation. At all stages the voice of the child is included and if exclusion takes place, the young person(s) involved make a statement wherever possible. A 'restorative' approach is taken in aiming to resolve

and reintegrate young people into school/college life.

- Schools, in particular, have worked hard to provide young people with opportunities to speak about their views, wishes and needs in small group and/ or one-to-one contexts. This may be through Personal, Health, Social and Citizenship Education sessions (internal and external provision), counselling (provided in-house or by external agencies for bereavement, health, mental health etc.)
- Schools are working with other agencies, for example, the police and ChECS to provide opportunities in schools for young people, frequently on a one-to-one basis, to access the support they need in a 'one-stop-shop' context.



F. Key Priorities for 2016-18

The three overarching objectives remain for 2016-18;

- **Frontline practice is consistently good, effective and outcome focused**
- **Listening to and acting on the voice of children and young people**
- **The partnership effectively protects and ensures good outcomes for all children and young people in Cheshire East**

At a Leadership Summit of the Board, members worked together to agree the following key priorities that will sit under the objectives;

- **Focus on child protection conferences** and how agencies work together to embed and be part of the decision making in the Making Children Safer conference model.
- **Focus on implementing the neglect strategy**, considerable work has been done in this area but there is still a need to ensure all agencies can identify and intervene where neglect is found.
- **Improve the board's role in relation to early help**, by making sure all agencies are engaged in the process.

In addition, the Board will continue to **implement the actions to address the recommendations from Ofsted's Inspection in July 2015**. Individual actions for these priorities can be found in the Business Plan 2016-18.

Challenges for Partners 2016-18

LSCB Members asked that the five key challenges for partners that came out of the Ofsted monitoring sessions should be included in this annual report as a reminder to all:

1. **Own a referral** – responsibility for a child starts, not ends, with a referral to Children's Social Care.
2. **Be child centred** - we need to focus on what is best for children and young people - what children and young people experience every day. What they tell us about their experiences is most important.
3. **Share risk** - we must take a collective responsibility to challenge drift or poor quality practice in all agencies – don't sit back. Speak up, escalate or take up the baton! Good partnership is not just working on the same case, it needs good communication and healthy, constructive mutual challenge.
4. **Inform plans and assessments** - don't wait to be asked - make sure you share what you know about the child or young person and take responsibility for making plans work. Even where your primary activity is with the parent/carer, the interests of the child should be paramount.
5. **Be more outcome-focussed** - core groups need to focus on what has changed for the child or young person and how risks have been reduced, rather than activity or improvements made by parents. Agree at the outset what needs to change and what will happen if these changes aren't made.

Pledges from LSCB Members on what they will change in 2016-17:

I will support the LSCB and other agencies to help embed voice of the child further

Liam Hill, Director of Voice for Children

I will develop work on the integrated front door.

Moirra McGrath, East and South CCG

I will commit to improve communication between the LSCB board and front line practitioners

Andy Hodgkinson, Chair of East Cheshire Association of Primary Heads

I will influence the culture of the LSCB to improve challenge between partners and I will simplify and prioritise the business of the LSCB.

Ros Haynes, Project Manager

I will embed practitioners understanding and use of the escalation process, and their confidence to challenge practice

Ruth Tucker, Wirral CT, 0-19 Service, East Cheshire

I will ensure strategy discussions/ meetings are multi-agency and supported by technology (video conferencing)

Nigel Moorhouse, Director of Children's Social Care, Cheshire East Council

I will, through training and supervision embed a culture of shared responsibility for safeguarding children

Mel Barker, East Cheshire Trust

I will ensure that front line practitioners are empowered and use the escalation process (and that we will monitor its use)

Andrea Hughes, Cheshire and Wirral Partnership

I will support, encourage and challenge all agencies to own and proactively participate in effective safeguarding practice both strategically and at the frontline

Kath O'Dwyer, Executive Director of People and Deputy Chief Executive, Cheshire East Council

I will make sure the LSCB focuses on driving improvements against the Children's Improvement Plan

Gill Betton, Head of Service for Children's Service Development and Partnerships, Cheshire East Council

I will work with the LSCB to ensure the LSCB and LASBs are joined up and working together

Robert Templeton, LSAB Chair

I will work to develop a demand reduction strategy

Jonathan Potter, Head of Service for Prevention, Cheshire East Council

I will ensure we use technology to improve strategy discussions and agency engagements

Nigel Wenham, Cheshire Police

I will do my best to remind partners of the shared responsibility of safeguarding and that it's everyone's role to do this not just blaming social care!

Jodie Hill, Director, Voice for Children

I will support the 0-19 service to re-negotiate their offer to the safeguarding process – focussing less on meetings and more on outcomes (particularly children's Mental Health)

Lucy Heath, Public Health Consultant

I will simplify the performance information that comes to CSE/ MFH subgroup so mentors are clearer what it is telling them and what they need to do to improve practice

Kate Rose, Head of Service for Children's Safeguarding, Cheshire East Council

I will encourage my own organisation as well as the voluntary sector to challenge other practitioners if they feel a decision has been made about a child or young person that they don't feel is safe. Also shout if not invited to meetings in regards to a child you are working with.

Sue Preston, The Children's Society

I will forge better links with Children's Social Care

Ian Smith, Cheshire and Greater Manchester Community Rehabilitation Centre

I will improve communications and links with strategic housing and housing providers

Karen Carsberg, Strategic Housing

I will work to better try to coordinate the response of the voluntary sector with the LSCB

Graham Phillips, CVS/ Cheshire Scouts

I will support the voice of the young person through co-ordinating the Further Education colleges to identify the young people of Cheshire East on register and liaise with Jodie

Dave Kynaston, representing Further Education and Colleges

I will maintain effective communication between the LSCB and frontline practitioners in secondary schools via CEASH

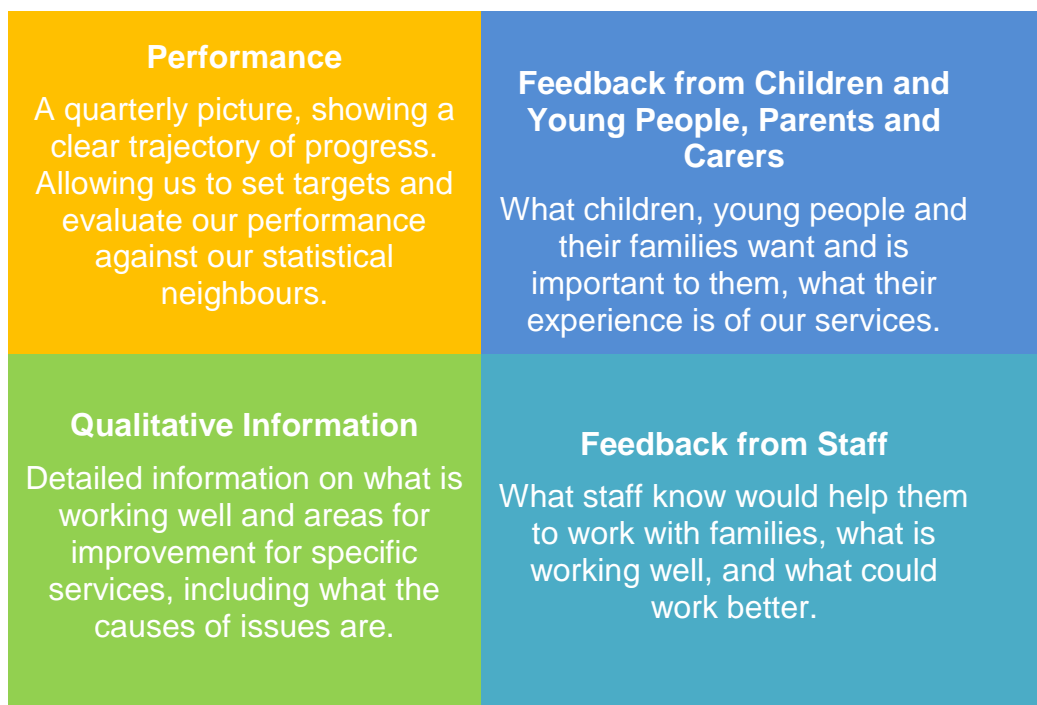
Gill Bremner, Head of Cheshire East Association of Secondary Heads (CEASH)

I will continue to work in partnership and take on personal responsibilities and explore appropriate and consistent health ownership

Judi Thorley, Eastern Cheshire Clinical Commissioning Group

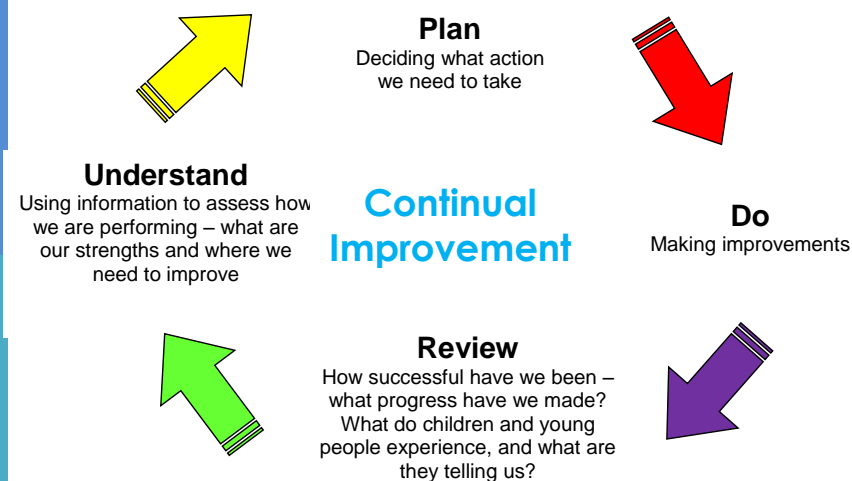
Quality Assurance Framework

CESCB's Quality Assurance Framework outlines how as a partnership we will monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of what is done by Board Member agencies, individually and collectively, to safeguard and promote the welfare of our children and young people in Cheshire East. To assess the impact of our improvements on children and young people, we will use information from four different sources.



This will allow us to triangulate the evidence so that we know the impact that multi-agency services are making, what we are doing well, and where we can improve further. The Board will take an outcome focussed approach in its scrutiny arrangements and will ask the following key questions from the above areas:

- **How much did we do (Performance or Quantity)**
- **How well did we do it (Qualitative or Quality)**
- **Is anyone better off? (Outcomes for children, young people, parents and carers)**



We think it is important to have a continual learning and self-improvement culture, and we will use information from these sources to continually evaluate and improve our services throughout the year.

Communication and Engagement

A stakeholder analysis is attached at Appendix 4.

Budget for 2016-17

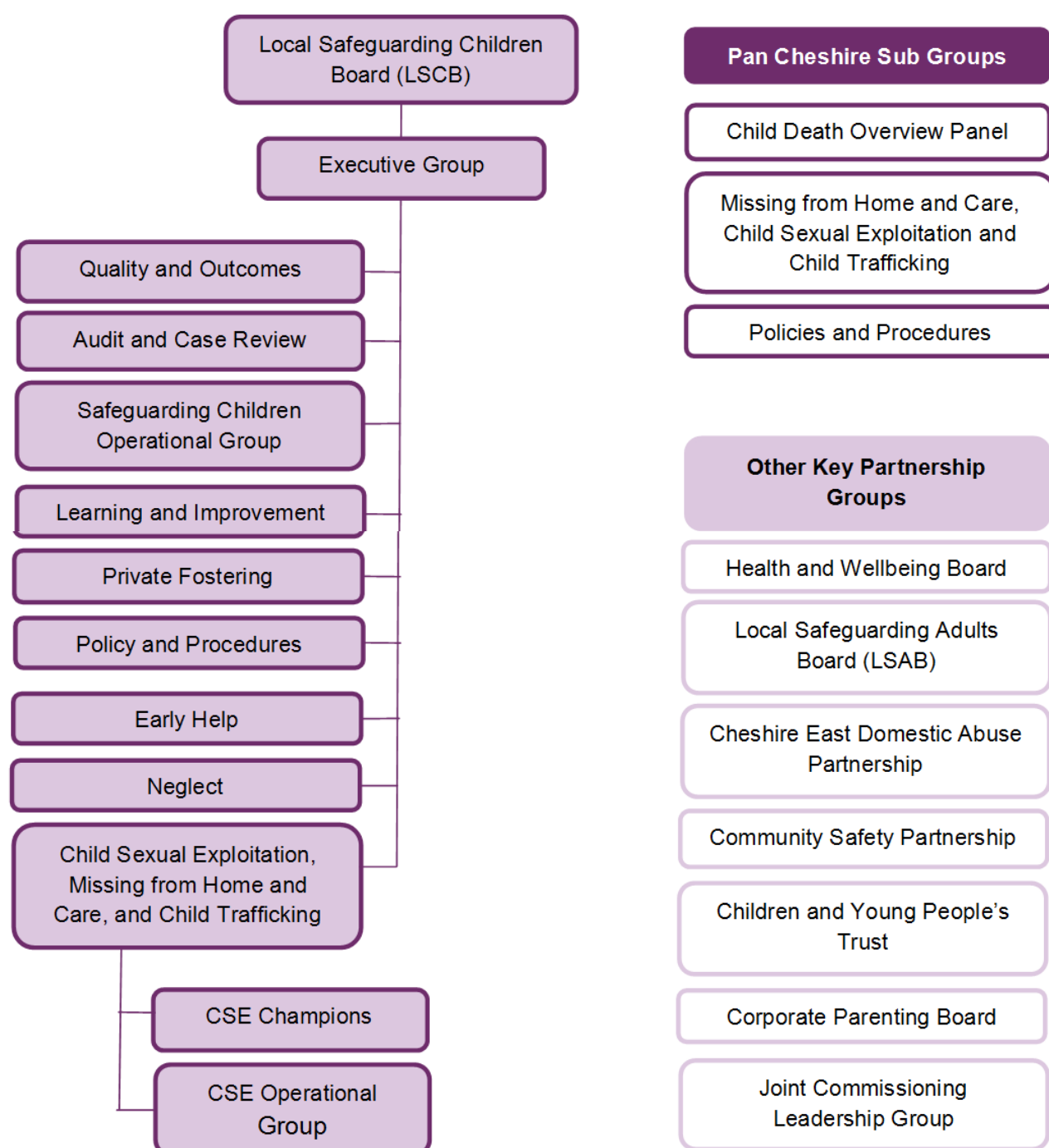
An outline budget for CESCOB's work in 2016-17 is set out at Appendix 5.

Risks and Issues

It is essential to identify, analyse and prioritise risks to ensure that these are managed effectively and do not impact adversely on the Board's plans. The Board maintains a risk register which is reviewed and updated bi-monthly at the Executive Group.



Cheshire East Safeguarding Board Structure



Board Membership and Attendance

	12.05.15	16.07.15	17.09.15	12.11.15	14.01.16	24.03.16
Independent Chair						
<i>Representing the voice of children and young people</i>						
Voice for Children						
The Children's Society						
<i>Health</i>						
South Cheshire CCG						
East Cheshire CCG						
South and Eastern Cheshire CCG Designated Nurse						
CWP NHS Foundation Trust						A
East Cheshire NHS Trust						
Mid Cheshire Hospital NHS Foundation Trust						
Wirral Community NHS Trust					A	
NHS England						A
Public Health						A
<i>Local Authority</i>						
Director of Children's Services					A	A
Lead Member for Children's Services		A				
Head of Children's Safeguarding						
Head of Early Help & Protection						
Head of Youth Engagement Service				A	A	A
Principle Social Worker for Children's Services						
Principle Manager for Early Help					A	
Representative for Adult Social Care				A	A	
Cheshire East Domestic Abuse Partnership (CEDAP)						
Legal Services Cheshire East Council				A	A	A
<i>Police</i>						
Cheshire Police				A		
<i>Education</i>						
Primary School Heads Representative					A	
Secondary Schools Head Representative					A	
Representative for Colleges and Further Education	A				A	
Independent Schools Representative						
<i>Styal Prison</i>						
HMP Styal Head of Residence and Services				A	A	A
<i>Probation</i>						
Probation - CRC				A		A
Probation - NPS					A	A

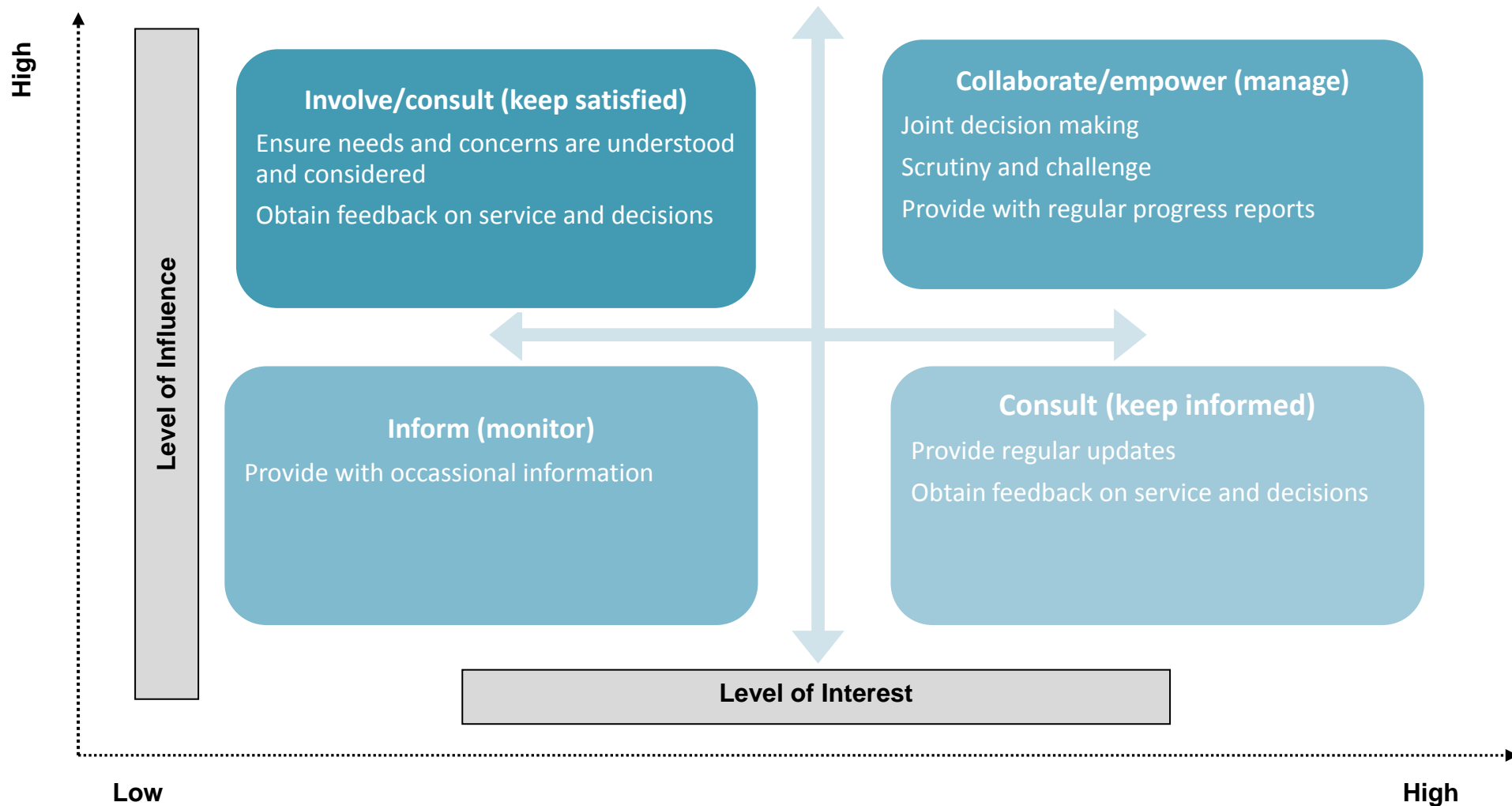
<i>Lay Members</i>						
Lay Member						
Lay Member	A		A	A	A	A
<i>National Organisations and Voluntary, Community and Faith Sector</i>						
NSPCC	A			A	A	
Voluntary Sector Representative		A				
Voluntary Sector Representative						
Cheshire CAFCASS						A

Financial Arrangements – 2015-16

The tables below sets out the LSCB's outline budget and outturn expenditure for 2015-16, along with the financial contributions from partners.

Area of Expenditure	2015-16 Actuals (£)
Direct Employee Exps	£149,454
Safeguarding Project Manager (0.50 fte)	
Performance Officer (0.75 fte)	
Training Manager (0.81 fte)	
Training Officer (0.91 fte)	
LSCB Admin (2 fte)	
Indirect Employee Exps	£2,140
Employee training	
Conferences and seminars	
Transport	£3,350
Mileage and car parking	
Premises	£6,607
Hire of rooms for training, LSCB meetings	
Supplies and Services	£87,981
Independent Chair	
Agency staffing to cover Safeguarding Project Manager post prior to appointment	
Training costs - printing, tutor and course costs	
CDOP Pan-Cheshire Chair (CE contribution)	
Peer challenge costs	
Auditor costs	
LADO funding (0.5 fte)	
Phone and mobile phone charges	
Lay member expenses	
Refreshments for meetings	
Competition prizes	
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	£249,532
Carry forward reserves from 2014-15	£127,999
Income in 2015-16	£209,840
Total available spend 2015-16	£337,839
Expenditure 2015-16	£249,532
Planned spend 2015-16	£298,720
Underspend 2015-16	£49,188
Carry forward to 2016-17	£39,691
Reserve carry forward to 2016-17	£88,307

Stakeholder Communication Analysis



Stakeholder Engagement

	Inform	Consult/Involve	Collaborate/Empower
Stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cheshire East staff from other departments General public in Cheshire East 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children and young people Parents/carers Children's Services staff Health Police Private, voluntary & independent sector Governors School staff Elected Members Department for Education 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LSCB Children and Young People's Trust Children and Families Scrutiny Committee Senior Managers
Purpose of engagement	To provide stakeholders with a general understanding of what is to be achieved through the improvement plan	To obtain feedback from stakeholders on services and impact to improve practice and to ensure that any concerns /suggestions are acted upon	To drive sustainable improvement across the Children's Services Partnership through scrutiny, challenge and key decision making
Methods of engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cheshire East website Press releases E-bulletins Facebook Twitter 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advocacy Newsletters E- bulletins Intranet Cheshire East and partner websites Press releases Factsheets, one minute and seven guides Progress updates Surveys Focus groups and forums 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> E-governance Joint planning Action plans Local governance Reports Progress updates Performance Book Impact reports Presentations Meetings Sub-groups Surveys

Proposed Financial Arrangements – 2016-17

Area of Expenditure	2015-16 Actuals (£)
Direct Employee Exps	£171,710
Safeguarding Project Manager (0.75 fte)	
Performance Officer (0.50 fte)	
Training Manager (0.81 fte)	
Training Officer (0.91 fte)	
LSCB Admin (2 fte)	
Indirect Employee Exps	£1,000
Employee training	
Conferences and seminars	
Transport	£3,000
Mileage and car parking	
Premises	£4,000
Hire of rooms for training, LSCB meetings	
Supplies and Services	£107,212
Independent Chair	
Training costs - printing, tutor and course costs, paper data (training evaluation)	
CDOP Pan-Cheshire Chair (CE contribution)	
CDOP Pan-Cheshire Admin (CE contribution)	
Auditor costs	
LADO funding (0.5 fte)	
Phone and mobile phone charges	
Lay member expenses	
Young Persons conference	
Refreshments for meetings	
Voice for Children	
Animation for child protection conferences	
New policies and procedures website (Signis)	
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	£286,922
Planned Income in 2016-17	£226,000
Reserve carry forward to 2016-17	£88,307
Total available	£314,307
Planned Expenditure 2016-17	£274,492
Planned carry forward to 2017-18	£39,815