



# **Your Safety Sub Group Annual report**

**2016 - 2017**

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## **1. Introduction/context/background**

During 2016, the Northamptonshire Corporate Parenting Group oversaw four thematic Sub Groups, each with its own individual action plan:

- Your Safety (focussed on safeguarding issues and placement sufficiency);
- Your Future (developing education, employment and training opportunities);
- Your Education; and
- Your Health.

Due to its focus on safeguarding, the Your Safety group reported to the safeguarding board as well as the Corporate Parenting Board. Foster placement stability and sufficiency were also key areas of scrutiny.

By the end of 2016, a number of weaknesses in the structure as a whole were apparent, including:

- Plans duplicating other work streams, particularly the NCC Improvement Plan;
- Sub group chairs and members being overly burdened with an extensive number of actions and priorities;
- Sub group meetings proving a drain on busy schedules;
- Plans not reflecting current priorities; and
- Poor attendance of meetings.

By the start of 2017, the Sub Groups and their action plans were replaced with five key objectives, each with a dedicated lead officer and small number of targeted actions, set down in an annual strategy document. Lead officers were tasked with pursuing their objectives in whichever manner was most appropriate, while remaining accountable to the Board.

This document summarises the impact of the Your Safety Sub Group over the year, its weaknesses, factors which complicated the groups' work and details of how ongoing work of the group is now being addressed.

## **2. Outcomes/performances/successes/achievements**

- Challenges to the service in thematic areas, such as radicalisation, drug and alcohol misuse and CSE. Largely, the responses received from the service were satisfactory;
- Close working with the RISE team including scrutiny of safeguarding arrangements in relation to looked after children specifically;
- Promotion of safety of young people in the criminal justice system, through a dedicated task and finish group; this fed into the Youth Offending Service's annual strategy;
- Strong scrutiny and challenge of Section 20 placements;
- Specific challenge to the service regarding safeguarding measures for agency foster placements;
- Close working with the Children in Care Council, providing opportunities for young people to share what makes them feel unsafe;
- Redressed some issues around placements with parents; ensuring that Schedule 3 assessments were in place; and
- Increased NCC foster carer applications.

### **3. Challenges/issues/developments/opportunities**

- Some attendance issues were apparent with a number of meetings cancelled;
- Delays in some areas of work such as around sexually problematic behaviour; and
- The Your Safety individual action plan became very large, not least because many of the actions from the new Improvement Plan were assigned to it.

### **5. Next steps/plans/priorities/actions**

- The majority of the Your Safety action plan continues to be pursued through the Improvement Plan;
- Safeguarding of children in care is explicitly stated as being integral to the new Board strategy;
- Other areas which the group scrutinised are now reported directly to the Board, such as the annual LADO report and CSE update; and
- The group does not intend to continue meeting but this option remains open if the need arises.