



Subject:	Consultation response on SBNI Strategic Plan 2018-2022
Date:	23 rd March 2018
Reporting Officer:	Nigel Grimshaw, Director City & Neighbourhood Services Department
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Restricted Reports	
Is this report restricted?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?	
After Committee Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
After Council Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
Some time in the future	<input type="checkbox"/>
Never	<input type="checkbox"/>

Call-in	
Is the decision eligible for Call-in?	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

1.0	Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues
1.1	The purpose of this report is to make Members aware of the Safeguarding Board for NI's consultation on their Strategic plan (2018-2022) and to seek Members' approval of the Council's draft response.
2.0	Recommendations
2.1	The Committee is asked to; <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Consider the draft response and approve its submission to SBNI subject to any comments or amendment noting that the response is subject to full Council approval at its meeting in April 2018.

3.0	Main report
3.1	<p><u>Background</u></p> <p>The Safeguarding Board for Northern Ireland are currently consulting on their Strategic Plan for 2018-2022. The closing date for response was 6th March 2018 and officers have submitted comments in draft noting this was in advance of committee consideration and subject to amendment.</p> <p>Members are also advised that officers have been approached by the National Children’s Bureau acting on behalf of the Safeguarding Board to facilitate an engagement with members of the Belfast Youth Forum to obtain their views on the Strategic plan. This consultation will be facilitated before the end of March 2018.</p>
3.2	<p><u>Summary of draft SBNI Strategic plan 2018-2022</u></p> <p>The Safeguarding Board for Northern Ireland (SBNI) was established in 2012 following the publication of the Safeguarding Board Act (2011) and replaced the Regional Child Protection Committee (RCPC) with an extended role to include the wider remit of safeguarding as well as statutory child protection. The aim of the SBNI is to support organisations to work in a more coordinated and effective way to better protect children and keep them safe from risk and harm.</p> <p>The SBNI is made up of key partner organisations from the statutory, community and voluntary sectors and the representatives on the Board aim to work together to improve learning in child protection across all agencies, enhance practice and ensure that children’s voices are at the centre of all that is done by the organisations and systems that make up the child protection system. Councils are represented on the SBNI by the Chief Executives of Mid & East Antrim Council and Newry, Mourne & Down District Council.</p> <p>The draft SBNI strategic plan sets out the strategic direction and context of the work of the Safeguarding Board over the next four years to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people in Northern Ireland.</p>
3.3	<p><u>Draft Response</u></p> <p>A copy of the draft response to the consultation is attached as Appendix 1 and a summary of the key issues are outlined below. As noted the closing date for responses was prior to Council meeting and, as such, this draft response was submitted to SBNI with the caveat that that it is still subject to amendment pending committee consideration and ratification at the full Council meeting.</p>
3.4	<p>The response notes that Council welcomes the strategy and agrees with its proposed aim, key principles and the new structures that will oversee its delivery. Officers noted that this</p>

approach fits closely with the Belfast Agenda and the work we are doing within Council to support children and young people to achieve their potential and live in safety and stability. The draft response highlights the work of the Belfast City Council Youth Forum on the issue of mental health in particular and suggests how the SBNI can make use of the Youth Forum's findings from the mental health survey and use this information to further develop their strategic priorities.

3.5 The consultation is divided into two sections: SBNI Mission, Visions and Values and the Strategic Priorities

3.6 **SBNI Mission, Visions and Values**

The SBNI mission is detailed below and organisations are asked if the mission clearly states the purpose of SBNI.

Our mission is to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people by working together in partnership to prevent and protect them from risk and harm.

Council agrees that this reflects the purpose of SBNI.

The SBNI vision is detailed below and organisations are asked if the vision clearly sets out what the SBNI is trying to achieve.

Our vision is that all children and young people are seen, heard and protected in order that they grow up in safety, thrive and fulfil their potential

Council response is that the SBNI vision should also commit to acting upon the views of children and young people and support their participation in the delivery of the plan including a commitment to provide feedback to children and young people regarding their suggestions. It is also proposed that the vision would include a commitment to families as well as children and young people.

SBNI Values:

- **We listen to children and young people, their wishes, feelings and experiences and place them at the heart of what we do.**
- **We work in partnership to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people.**
- **We develop, empower, respect and value those who work for us as we strive for excellence in what we do.**
- **We are open, honest and transparent in our dealings with children and young people, our members, partners and staff and we respect diversity and promote equality in all that we do.**
- **We are all accountable to one another and to those we safeguard and protect.**

3.7	<p>Organisations are asked if these values meet the expectations of a modern safeguarding public service for children and young people.</p> <p>Council agrees that these values meet the expectations of a public safeguarding service.</p>
3.8	<p>The second part of the consultation focuses on <u>Strategic Priorities</u>:</p> <p>Strategic Priority 1: To provide leadership and set direction in the safeguarding and protection of children and young people.</p> <p>1.1 To disseminate and facilitate the embedding of the 2017 Regional Core Child Protection Policies and Procedures to protect and safeguard children and young people to ensure greater consistency and standardisation of practice.</p> <p>1.2 To develop, disseminate and facilitate the embedding of the 2018 Regional Practice Guidance of the 2017 Regional Core Child Protection Policies and Procedures to ensure greater consistency and standardisation of practice in order to protect and safeguard children and young people.</p> <p>1.3 To raise awareness of child protection and safeguarding issues by developing an engagement and communication strategy to ensure that children, young people, families and communities are more aware of these issues and how to get help if concerned.</p> <p>1.4 To ensure the SBNI Safeguarding Panels engage with children and young people, parents and practitioners to hear their views on the child protection and safeguarding system in order to improve practice.</p> <p>Organisations are asked if this priority and the aims are correct for SBNI</p> <p>Council agrees Strategic Priority 1 and with its aims.</p>
3.9	<p>Strategic Priority 2: To provide a voice to children and young people affected by domestic and sexual violence and abuse.</p> <p>2.1 To work with government departments and their agencies to prevent domestic and sexual violence and abuse (DSVA) from occurring and to tackle child sexual exploitation.</p> <p>2.2 To work with partners engaged in the DSVA arena to raise awareness among parents/carers and professionals of the effect of DSVA on children and young people.</p> <p>2.3 To work with partners engaged in the DSVA arena to promote training for children and young people in how to recognise, respond and seek help in relation to DSVA.</p> <p>Organisations are asked if Strategic Priority 2 and its aims are correct for the SBNI.</p>
3.10	<p>Council has suggested to SBNI that the aims under this priority need to be expanded to ensure that parents/carers and professionals know how to recognise, respond and seek help in relation to Domestic and Sexual Violence and Abuse.</p>

Strategic Priority 3: To improve outcomes for children and young people affected or potentially affected by neglect through promoting the early recognition and improvement of agency responses.

3.1 To promote early intervention with the aim of preventing children and young people experiencing neglect.

3.2 To increase awareness of neglect with children and young people, their parents/carers and staff.

3.3 Through the Safeguarding Panels ensure the views of children and young people, parents/carers and staff inform practice in relation to neglect.

3.4 To work with partner agencies to provide training in how to improve the recognition, assessment, and responses to children, young people and families experiencing neglect.

Organisations are asked if Strategic Priority 3 and its aims are correct for the SBNI.

3.11 Council has highlighted that it may be helpful for the SBNI to make reference to Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) as part of the work on neglect and to commit to exploring ways in which neglect might be addressed across partner organisations.

3.12 Strategic Priority 4: To provide a voice to children and young people affected by mental health issues.

4.1 To work with government departments and agencies to reduce the incidence of those affected by mental health issues.

4.2 To work with partners to raise awareness among parents/carers and professionals of the effect of poor mental health on children and young people.

4.3 To work with partners to promote awareness for children and young people in how to recognise, respond and seek help in relation to mental health.

4.4 To work with partners to promote training in how to improve the recognition, assessment, and responses to children, young people and families experiencing the impact of mental health issues.

Organisations are asked if Strategic Priority 4 and its aims are correct for the SBNI.

3.13 Council has highlighted that if this priority is about providing a voice to children and young people affected by mental health issues then it will be important to include an action to ensure that the voices of children can be directly heard and acted upon.

In the response to SBNI the work of the Belfast City Council Youth Forum on young people's mental health issues is highlighted and it is suggested that the findings of this survey could be used further inform the Strategic direction of SBNI and the priorities in this area.

3.14	<p>The consultation invites organisations to identify any other strategic priorities and / or aims for the SBNI</p> <p>Council has highlighted the issue of young people being subject to community beatings or shootings and has highlighted this issue as a form of physical abuse on children. Council would welcome an acknowledgement by SBNI of this issue and asks for a commitment by SBNI to address this issue with relevant partners as part of the Strategic plan.</p>
3.15	<p>Finally the consultation asks if the draft strategic plan is easy to understand and Council's response was that a format which would meet the needs of children and young people and people with literacy difficulties or who have English as a second language would be useful.</p>
3.16	<p>At the time of writing this had not been completed but Council does acknowledge that the SBNI has produced a young people's version of the consultation and this is welcomed.</p>
3.17	<p><u>Financial & Resource Implications</u></p> <p>None associated with this report.</p>
3.18	<p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications</u></p> <p>There are no relevant equality considerations associated with this report. SBNI have completed an associated equality and human rights policy screening exercise.</p>
4.0	<p>Appendices – Documents attached</p>
	<p>Appendix 1: Draft SBNI Strategic Plan 2018-2022 Consultation Questionnaire and Belfast City Council response</p> <p>Appendix 2: Children and Young people's version SBNI Strategic Plan</p>