

60th Meeting of the Safeguarding Board for Northern Ireland

Wednesday 14 February 2024

2.20pm – 4.20pm – Zoom Virtual Platform

P u b l i c M i n u t e s

R E C O R D O F A T T E N D A N C E

| Name | Title & Organisation | Present | Apology |
|------------------------------------|---|----------------|----------------|
| Ms Bernie McNally | Independent Chair, Safeguarding Board for Northern Ireland | ✓ | |
| Mr Tom Cassidy | Director of Women & Children's Services, WHSCT | ✓ | |
| Dr Naoimh White | GP representative of N.I. General Practice Committee | ✓ | |
| Ms Bronagh Muldoon | Head of Services NI, NSPCC | ✓ | |
| Ms Mary Aughey | Director of Woodlands JJC, YJA | ✓ | |
| T/D/Superintendent Jordan Piper | T/Detective Superintendent, Public Protection Branch, PSNI | ✓ | |
| Ms Paddy Kelly | Director, Children's Law Centre | ✓ | |
| Ms Amanda Stewart | CEO, Probation Board NI | ✓ | |
| Ms Pauline Leeson | Chief Executive, Children in N. Ireland | | ✓ |
| Ms Una Turbitt | Assistant Director of Pupil Wellbeing and Protection, EANI | ✓ | |
| Mr Dale Hanna | Director (Interim) Children and Young Peoples Services, EANI | ✓ | |
| Mr Brendan Whittle | Director of Hospital and Community Care and Social Services, SPPG | | ✓ |
| Ms Catherine Cassidy | Deputy Director of Social Care, SPPG (deputising OBO Mr Brendan Whittle) | ✓ | |
| Ms Lyn Preece | Director of Children's Services & Executive Director of Social Work, SEHSCT | ✓ | |
| Mr Colm McCafferty | Director of Children & Young People's Services, SHSCT | | ✓ |

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| Ms Stella Kelly | Assistant Director for Corporate Parenting, SHSCT (deputising OBO Mr Colm McCafferty) | ✓ | |
| Dr Joanne McClean | Director of Public Health, PHA | | ✓ |
| Ms Heather Reid | Interim Director of Nursing, Midwifery and Allied Health Professions, PHA | | ✓ |
| Ms Emily Roberts | Designated Nurse for Safeguarding Children and Young People, PHA | ✓ | |
| Ms Lorna Ballard | Director NI, Action for Children | ✓ | |
| Ms Maura Dargan | Director of Women, Children & Families Division/Executive Director of Social Work, NHSCT | ✓ | |
| Ms Michele Janes | Director of Barnardo's NI | | ✓ |
| Ms Monica McCann | Assistant Director of Children's Services, Barnardo's NI (deputising OBO Ms Michele Janes) | ✓ | |
| Ms Kerrylee Weatherall | Interim Director of Children's Community Services, BHSCT | ✓ | |
| Dr Jacqui Montgomery-Devlin | Head of Safeguarding, Council for Social Witness, Presbyterian Church in Ireland representing the SBNI Interfaith Committee | | ✓ |
| Ms Dawn Shaw | Chief Executive Officer, Children's Court Guardian Agency for Northern Ireland | ✓ | |
| Mr Richard Harvey | Acting Director of Environmental Services, Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council | ✓ | |
| Ms Diane Hill | Chief Executive Officer, Include Youth | ✓ | |
| Mr Andrew Thomson | Independent Chair of the CMR Panel | ✓ | |
| Ms Yvonne Adair | Independent Safeguarding Panel Chair, Southern, South Eastern and Belfast Areas | ✓ | |
| Ms Mary Rafferty | Independent Safeguarding Panel Chair, Western and Northern areas | ✓ | |
| Mr Simon Rogers | Non-Executive (Lay) Member | ✓ | |
| Mr Gerard Guckian | Non-Executive (Lay) Member | ✓ | |
| In Attendance | | | |
| Ms Alex McCoy | Board Secretary, SBNI | | |
| Ms Helen McKenzie | Director of Operations, SBNI | | |

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| Ms Teresa McAllister | Professional Officer, SBNI |
| Ms Sheina Rigg | Professional Officer, SBNI |
| Ms Orla Connolly | Trauma Informed Practice Implementation Manager, SBNI |
| Ms Aine Morrison | Chief Social Work Officer, DoH |
| Dr Suzanne Mooney | Senior Lecturer in Social Work, Queen's University Belfast |
| Dr Montserrat Fargas | Research Fellow, Queen's University Belfast |
| Ms Emy Robertson | Project Worker, Refugee Support Service, Barnardo's NI |

Summary of Actions

| Action No. | Action: | To be completed by: |
|-------------------|--|----------------------------|
| 1 | The SBNI Business Plan 2024-2025 will be sent to the Department of Health for their review. | SBNI CST |
| 2 | The Executive Summary of the Trauma Informed Approaches: QUB Research Presentation; 'We are on a Journey': Implementing Trauma Informed Approaches in Northern Ireland' will be circulated to members. | SBNI CST |
| 3 | The Review of the SBNI Central Support Team (CST) will be sent to the Department of Health. | SBNI CST |
| 4 | The presentation delivered by Barnardo's in relation to Cultural Kitchen will be shared with members. | SBNI CST |

Summary of Board Approval

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| The minutes from the Board Meeting on 06 December 2023 were approved as an accurate record of the meeting. |
| The SBNI Business Plan 2024-2025 was approved. |
| The repurposing of the CSE Committee was approved. |
| The SBNI Mental Health Learning and Development Framework was approved. |

Preliminaries: Apologies, Quorum, Conflict of Interest, Complaints

The chair welcomed SBNI members to the meeting. Apologies were noted from Ms Pauline Leeson, Dr Joanne McClean, Ms Heather Reid, Dr Jacqui Montgomery-Devlin and Mr Richard Harvey. The chair noted that Ms Catherine Cassidy is deputising on behalf of Mr Brendan Whittle, Ms Stella Kelly is deputising on behalf of Mr Colm McCafferty and Ms Monica McCann is deputising on behalf of Ms Michele Janes. The chair further welcomed Mr Dale Hanna to the membership of the SBNI. Mr Hanna has commenced his role of Interim Director of Children and Young Peoples Services in the Education Authority. Ms Una Turbitt was in attendance, alongside Mr Hanna and the chair welcomed Ms Turbitt. Ms Diane Hill was further welcomed to the membership of the SBNI. Ms Hill has recently taken up the position of Chief Executive Officer of Include Youth. The chair welcomed Ms Aine Morrison to the meeting and thanked her for attending in an observational capacity. In addition, the chair welcomed the member of the public who was in attendance.

Conflict of Interest

The chair requested that members declare any Conflicts of Interest as and when they arise throughout the meeting.

Complaints

The chair advised that no complaints have been received.

Chair's Business

The chair did not raise any additional business.

1 60/24P Previous Minutes

- 1.1 Members agreed the minutes from the last Board meeting on 06 December 2023 as a factual and accurate representation of the meeting.

2 60/24P Matters Arising

- 2.1 Complete

- 2.2 Complete

2.3 Complete

2.4 Complete

3 60/24P SBNI Business Plan 2024-2025 (Please refer to Board Paper BM60-02.24P1A & BM60-02.24P1B)

- 3.1 Mr Guckian advised that the SBNI Business Plan has been developed by the SBNI Committees, Panels and the Central Support Team (CST) and has been approved by the Governance Committee. The plan is now presented to the Board for approval. Mr Guckian highlighted that the development and approvals timeline for the Plan has been brought forward in 2024-2025, in order to address recommendations detailed in the Internal Audit review of Sponsorship Arrangements – Safeguarding Board for Northern Ireland, namely recommendation 3.1 ‘Compliance with Memorandum of Understanding and Departments Guidance to SBNI’ which references the timeliness of the Business Plan in the annual cycle.
- 3.2 Mr Guckian noted that the draft Business Plan is costed as per the recurrent funding provided from the Department of Health (DoH) for £734,819, with additional budget streams to support resources for the delivery of the Executives Online Safety Action Plan (OLS), Trauma Informed Practice (TIP) and Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE). He noted that there is an increase by 50% in the funding for TIP and 100% for CCE. However, both of these allocations relate to staff costs and the process of recruitment is still to be determined. As such, Mr Guckian acknowledged that until fully resourced, the SBNI will be unable to fully participate in the delivery of Business Plan objective 1.2 in relation to the recommendations made in the Child Protection Senior Official’s Group (CPSOG) CCE Report.
- 3.3 The chair commented on the very effective collaborative working between members and the SBNI CST in order to develop the Business Plan.
- 3.4 There were no further comments or queries in relation to the SBNI Business Plan 2024-2025.

- 3.5 The SBNI Business Plan 2024-2025 was approved.

ACTION 1 – The SBNI Business Plan 2024-2025 will be sent to the Department of Health for its review.

4 60/24P SBNI Finance Update (Please refer to Board Paper BM60-02.24P2A & BM59-12.23P2B)

- 4.1 The chair drew members attention to the Finance Update Report that was circulated to members in advance of the meeting. On discussion of same, the chair noted that all budget for the financial year 2023-2024 has been profiled for spend and a break-even position is anticipated at financial year end.
- 4.2 Ms McKenzie advised that this information will be included in the SBNI End of Year Assurance Statement, which is provided to the PHA.
- 4.3 There were no further comments or queries in relation to the SBNI Finance Update.

5 60/24P QUB Research Presentation; ‘We are on a Journey’: Implementing Trauma Informed Approaches in Northern Ireland’ (Please refer to Board Paper BM60-02.24P3)

- 5.1 The chair welcomed Dr Suzanne Mooney and Dr Montserrat Fargas to this meeting of the SBNI Board and thanked them for their attendance.
- 5.2 Mr Rogers reported that the Trauma Informed Practice (TIP) Committee, which he chairs, has continued to pursue a number of workstreams in relation to Trauma Informed Approaches (TIA) within both member agencies, and a wider selection of organisations. In reviewing its work, the TIP Committee determined that it would be beneficial to run a ‘diagnostic test’ to establish how far organisations have travelled on the trauma-informed journey, and to determine if there are any changes on the international landscape which could glean transferrable lessons for Northern Ireland, as well as to seek recommendations in relation to any new approaches that could be taken. Subsequently, the SBNI

commissioned Queen's University Belfast (QUB) to undertake research, led by Dr Suzanne Mooney, to gauge the current status of TIA across the system in Northern Ireland, and to explore enablers and barriers to the embedding of TIA. A formal launch of the research will be held on Thursday 22 February 2024 and members have been invited to attend this launch.

- 5.3 Dr Mooney showcased a PowerPoint presentation in relation to the QUB Research entitled; 'We are on a Journey': Implementing Trauma Informed Approaches in Northern Ireland'. She advised that an Executive Summary will be made available to SBNI Board Members following the Evidence Review Launch on Thursday 22 February 2024, and the full report will be available to be accessed online.

ACTION 2 – The Executive Summary of the QUB Research; 'We are on a Journey: Implementing Trauma Informed Approaches in Northern Ireland' will be circulated to members.

- 5.4 On discussion of same, Mr Rogers commented that when the report is made available, the TIP Committee will consider how recommendations can be implemented.
- 5.5 There were no further comments or queries in relation to the QUB Research Presentation.
- 5.6 The chair thanked Dr Mooney and Dr Fargas for their presentation. She reported that the SBNI is extremely pleased that the research has progressed to this stage, and is committed to considering the implications that it will have for Northern Ireland and how an action plan can be developed and implemented.

6 60/24P Review of SBNI Central Support Team (CST) (Please refer to Board Paper BM60-02.24P4A & BM60-02.24P4B)

- 6.1 The chair advised that the SBNI had commissioned the HSC Leadership Centre to undertake a review of its Central Support Team (CST), in line with the

commitment to apply a trauma informed approach to all of its activity. There was a specific need to understand the demand associated with work that the CST is undertaking and to define, if appropriate, the band and skill set of any additional resource needed for the SBNI CST team to meet its business deliverables. The chair reported that she is very pleased with the positive outcome of the review, in particular the finding which indicated that staff show considerable dedication to their role and the partnership.

- 6.2 The chair further noted that the review did outline some recommendations and an Action Plan is now in place to progress these. These recommendations suggested that consideration should be given to the provision of additional staffing to address capacity issues, as well as the standardisation of processes and wider clarity of roles. The chair noted that the SBNI has core funding which covers its central practice, and additional workstreams will carry additional funding. The chair will now send the report to the DoH.

ACTION 3 – The Review of the SBNI Central Support Team (CST) will be sent to the Department of Health.

7 60/24P Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) Committee Update

- **Completion of the Leonard Review Report Recommendations**
- **Repurpose CSE Committee**

(Please refer to Board Paper BM60-02.24P5)

- 7.1 T/D/Superintendent Jordan Piper advised that the Marshall Enquiry 2014 and Pinkerton Review 2015 highlighted the need for SBNI member agencies to respond in greater depth to child exploitation. The Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) Committee, which was established by the SBNI in 2013, coordinated the response to the Marshall and Pinkerton Reviews in order to embed a strategic approach to CSE in Northern Ireland. In addition, upon request from the DoH, the SBNI commissioned 'An evaluation of how the Safeguarding Board for Northern Ireland member agencies are effectively responding to and managing Child Sexual Exploitation within Northern Ireland' (the Leonard Review Report), which was published in July 2020. This review report also incorporated some corresponding recommendations from the Criminal Justice Inspection Northern

Ireland (CJINI) report published in the same year. Within the aforementioned SBNI commissioned Report, 14 recommendations were made and the SBNI was assigned the task of completing these through the CSE Committee. These recommendations have now been completed.

- 7.2 T/D/Superintendent Piper further noted that in addition to the specifics of the recommendations made by Leonard, member agencies and partners have also developed a range of training resources co designed and specific to Northern Ireland, as well as resources which have been adapted from other UK regions to a NI context. In addition, specific resources, such as the Invictus play have been developed for schools.
- 7.3 T/D/Superintendent Piper highlighted that members and partners are to be commended for meeting the Leonard recommendations. However, she is conscious that there is a continuous need to develop knowledge, skills and collaborative working to protect children and young people from CSE. She reported that there is growing evidence to indicate that CSE is a complex and multi-layered form of child abuse that co-exists with other forms of exploitation. Subsequently, it has been proposed that the Board consider repurposing the CSE Committee, enabling it to widen its scope to include other forms of exploitation, such as Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE), in line with the Child Protection Senior Officials Group (CPSOG) Report.
- 7.4 The chair thanked CSE Committee members for the excellent work which has been undertaken to complete recommendations made in the Leonard Review Report. The chair further agreed that repurposing the CSE Committee would be beneficial.
- 7.5 On discussion, Ms Muldoon advised that some members of the CSE Committee had raised concern with widening its scope, particularly in relation to capacity and resourcing, as well as associated tasks. Committee members had also raised concern in relation to membership, and suggested that consideration would be required as to whether current members would have the knowledge and expertise to contribute if other forms of exploitation are considered.

- 7.6 The chair accepted these concerns and agreed that resourcing does need to be provided to enable the CSE Committee to widen its scope. However, she reminded members that CSE is not currently a strategic priority of the SBNI and following completion of the Leonard recommendations, it would normally be managed through the “business as usual” of member agencies. In this instance, both the Department of Health (DoH) and the Department of Justice (DoJ) are keen to progress the CCE agenda. The chair indicated that if resources are made available to the SBNI, it provides an opportunity to progress work on child exploitation in general.
- 7.7 T/D/Superintendent Piper advised that frameworks have been developed in England to consider CSE in addition to other forms of exploitation and these could be useful for Northern Ireland. She noted that further work does need to be carried out in relation to awareness raising.
- 7.8 Mr Guckian advised that although he accepts concerns raised in relation to the capacity of the CSE Committee to widen its scope, the recommendations made in the CPSOG CCE report emphasise the need for work to be undertaken in relation to CCE and he feels that the Committee would provide its natural home. He agreed that this is an opportunity for the SBNI, particularly as resourcing will be attached to its delivery. He further agreed that the membership of the Committee will need to be considered, and noted that a revised Terms of Reference will require to be approved by the Board.
- 7.9 Ms Dargan enquired as to whether there is a robust evidence base in relation to the prevalence of CCE in Northern Ireland, as this is the information that is required to determine if it should be considered as a strategic priority of the SBNI in the next four-year cycle. Ms McKenzie clarified that this data is not yet available, but the collection and analysis of this data is being considered within the CPSOG Implementation Group for CCE. Ms McKenzie added that when work on CSE commenced in 2013, the specific data was not available and this was later manifested from Operation Owl.

- 7.10 The chair noted that CCE was highlighted in a report undertaken by the Children's Commissioner, but emphasised that this does not necessarily mean it will be a priority for the SBNI. The chair further agreed that work needs to be commenced in relation to data mining, in order to understand the prevalence of CCE and to best determine who the lead agency should be.
- 7.11 Ms Stella Kelly commented that the issue of CCE usually co-exists with other vulnerable factors for children within family settings. While she accepts that Frameworks have been developed within England, Scotland and Wales, she emphasised that CCE needs to be fully considered within the local context in Northern Ireland, particularly as there is an emerging trend in relation to paramilitary involvement. The chair agreed and added that some of this work is ongoing within the Executive Programme on Paramilitarism and Organised Crime (EPPOC) and is also linked to the SBNI's work on trauma informed practice . Ms McKenzie further reassured members that the work on CCE is funded through the EPPOC.
- 7.12 Ms McKenzie noted that all statutory member agencies of the SBNI are represented on the CCE Implementation Steering Group and have been party to discussions at the CPSOG Sub-Group where the CCE Report was finalised. The recommendations made within this report were then accepted at a cross-departmental level.
- 7.13 The repurposing of the CSE Committee was approved by Board members, subject to all aforementioned caveats.

8 60/24P CMR Review Update

- 8.1 Mr Thomson reported that the CMR Review is underway. This work is being led by Mrs Marie Roulston, a former director of children's services. A workshop with members of the Case Management Review Panel (The chair, HSCT (x1), PSNI, SPPG, EA, PBNI, PHA), NSPCC and a CMR author was convened in January 2024.

- 8.2 Ms McAllister added that a follow up workshop with Ms Roulston has been scheduled for 07 March 2024. Ms Roulston will also speak with some Board members to better understand their experience of the CMR process, from a governance and accountability perspective. Ms McAllister confirmed that she has contacted some Board members in relation to this, and these members have indicated their willingness to participate. It is anticipated that the CMR Review Report will be presented for approval at the Board Meeting in April 2024.

9 60/24P Barnardo's Cultural Kitchen (Please refer to Board Paper BM60-02.24P6)

- 9.1 Ms McKenzie advised that the SBNI is working with Barnardo's NI to support the continuation of their Cultural Kitchen Project. Ms McKenzie further welcomed Ms Emy Robertson, a member of the Northern Ireland Refugee Support Service (NIRSS) from Barnardo's NI to present on the Cultural Kitchen Project.
- 9.2 Ms Robertson showcased a PowerPoint presentation in relation to Barnardo's NI Cultural Kitchen project. She advised that the project provides families, who have recently arrived in Northern Ireland and live in contingency accommodation, with an opportunity to prepare, cook and serve a culturally appropriate meal to their children, alongside other families. Barnardo's Children's House is used as a venue for the project and in this venue, children also have space to play and explore, with volunteers providing supervision and support.

ACTION 4 – The presentation delivered by Barnardo's NI in relation to Cultural Kitchen will be shared with members.

- 9.3 On discussion of same, the chair commented on the opportunity for positive interaction that this project affords to children and parents. It is striking that some families have indicated that they have not been able to cook, for years in some instances, and the strengthening of the connection between families when being able to provide a meal for their children is incredibly powerful.

- 9.4 Ms McKenzie added that this project is a very strong example of understanding interactions and connections within families. Although the project is a simple one, the benefits have been huge for all families involved. She further highlighted that the Mission, Vision and Values of the SBNI have been represented within the project.
- 9.5 Ms Paddy Kelly congratulated Barnardo's NI on an excellent project, which has helped to address concerns identified in relation to the ability of families living in contingency accommodation to access culturally sensitive and adequate food, as well as the child's right to play. However, she highlighted that a new and emerging issue has transpired in relation to the dispersal of these families into poor and inadequate housing. This is occurring without consultation and concern has been expressed by several bodies, including Councils and the Northern Ireland Housing Executive (NIHE). The chair indicated that the SBNI is aware of this issue and noted that it is a policy of the Home Office.
- 9.6 Mr Guckian commented on an excellent project and noted that it demonstrates the embedding of trauma informed practice in Northern Ireland.
- 9.7 Ms Robertson thanked the SBNI for the funding it provided to implement Cultural Kitchen. She further advised that Barnardo's NI has a wealth of ideas in relation to other work that could emanate from the Cultural Kitchen, including youth programmes for unaccompanied minors. Lottery funding is to be implemented for the project and it is hoped that this will help with its expansion.

10 60/24P SBNI Mental Health Learning & Development Framework (Please refer to Board Paper BM60-02.24P7A & BM60-02.24P7B)

- 10.1 Ms Cassidy advised that Ms Ciara McKillop (SPPG) led on the development of the SBNI Mental Health Learning and Development Framework (MHLDF). By way of background, Ms Cassidy highlighted that the SBNI adopted a trauma-informed approach to safeguarding children and young people, and as part of its Strategic Plan, there is a focus on Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACES), of which mental health is a key component. Mental health and psychological

wellbeing are areas of concern in Northern Ireland, particularly as a result of the impact of intergenerational trauma.

- 10.2 Ms Cassidy noted that the MHLDF complements the overall 'SBNI Learning and Development Strategy and Framework 2020'. The MHLDF has been designed in 4 levels and each level sets out the key minimum learning outcomes to equip staff and volunteers with the skills, knowledge and competence required to promote the safety and well-being of children and young people in respect of mental health. Ms Cassidy advised that it is the responsibility of individual agencies to determine the development requirements and appropriate timescales for their staff and volunteers to undertake training.
- 10.3 On discussion of same, the chair added that as the MHLDF has been created in conjunction with the SBNI Learning and Development Strategy and Framework, the level of training given to staff will be dependent on their access to service users, within the remit of their roles and responsibilities.
- 10.4 Ms Dargan sought clarity as to whether the expectation of the SBNI is that Trusts develop an implementation plan for the delivery of training to their staff. If this is the case, Ms Dargan expressed concern that Trusts may not have the capacity to deliver. On discussion, Ms McKenzie clarified that the MHLDF provides a guidance document for agencies, giving direction about the types of training that staff at different levels would need to be provided with in order to meet the objectives as outlined within the 'SBNI Learning and Development Strategy and Framework 2020'. Ms McKenzie further noted that the Framework has been developed with a view to standardisation across the system, as one has already been developed for CSE and another is currently being developed for Domestic Violence and Abuse.
- 10.5 The SBNI Mental Health Learning and Development Framework was approved.

11 60/24P AOB

- 11.1 It was noted that Ms Adair will be retiring from her role in the SBNI on 31 March 2024. The chair thanked Ms Adair for her contribution and commitment to the Board and wished her well for her retirement. Ms Adair thanked the SBNI and all member agencies for their support and well wishes. She wished the Board well in its important work.
- 11.2 Ms Morrison thanked the Board for allowing her to attend the meeting in an observational capacity. She commented that it had been extremely useful and informative for her. The chair thanked Ms Morrison and noted that the SBNI is very happy to engage with Ms Morrison's department, and she is welcome to attend any future Board Meetings.
- 11.2 The next SBNI Board meeting will be held on Wednesday 17 April 2024. This will be held on a virtual basis and joining details will be confirmed and circulated.
- 11.3 The chair closed the Public section of the meeting at 4.20pm and thanked members for their attendance.

Bernie McNally

Independent Chair SBNI