



Sandwell Safeguarding Children Board Communication and Participation Strategy

1. Introduction

This Strategy aims to provide a plan of action for improving and strengthening communication and participation with the following groups of people:

- Children and young people resident in, visiting, or accessing services/ support from Sandwell LSCB partner agencies
- Parents and carers resident in, visiting, or accessing services/ support from Sandwell LSCB partner agencies
- Board partners and statutory agencies
- Professionals and volunteers in Sandwell's children's workforce
- The media

2. Legal Context

The LSCB has a statutory duty under the Children Act 2004 and the statutory regulations, which came into force on April 1st 2006 to ensure that its functions are discharged having regard to the need to safeguard children and young people and promote their welfare. The communicating function is described in Regulation 5(b):

b) Communicating to persons and bodies in the area of the authority the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, raising their awareness of how this can best be done, and encouraging them to do so [5b of LSCB regulations (2006)]¹

3. Benefits

The main benefits that will result from the communication and participation strategy are:

- **Raise the awareness** of the community, professionals and volunteers about
 - Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people
 - The role and responsibilities of Sandwell LSCB
- **Improved partnership working** across agencies and other LSCBs will be derived from shared information (shared understanding and key priorities)
- Provide a **mechanism for feedback** to and from the community and stakeholders.
- **Support** for other LSCB Priorities

¹ The Local Safeguarding Children Board Regulations 2006, Statutory Instrument No. 90

4. Responsibilities

The following LSCB staff and Sub-groups have aspects of 'improving communication and participation' within their remit and each have their individual communication plans (Appendices 1 to 7):

- Child Death Overview Panel
- Serious Case Review Panels – who should work in partnership with the Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council press office to formulate a separate policy for the publication of SCRs and the management of resulting press interest.
- Quality of Practice and Performance
- Learning and Development
- Health Forum
- Early Help and Prevention
- CMOG (including MOG & YPSE Operational)

5. LSCB meetings

- In their membership agreement LSCB members have a specific responsibility to ensure that information from the LSCB is cascaded to all relevant people within their organisation. They also are responsible for ensuring that any issues raised by members of their organisation are fed up to the LSCB.
- Meetings of the LSCB and its subgroups should be seen as a forum for the discussion of concerns about interagency or single agency practice and for highlighting and promoting examples of good practice. Any organisation with an interest in child protection and safeguarding can raise an issue for discussion at any of these meetings.
- Anyone wanting to raise an issue for consideration by the board should speak to either the LSCB Chair or the LSCB Business Manager. Contact the LSCB Business Unit in the first instance – telephone 0121 569 4800

6. Communication – Key messages

| Target groups | Key messages |
|---------------|--|
| Everyone | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• What safeguarding is• Safeguarding is a responsibility shared across the whole community• What the different responsibilities to safeguard are and how they should be fulfilled• A basic understanding of the role of the LSCB and how it can be accessed |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key changes in safeguarding nationally and locally and the implications of these |
| Children and Young People | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How to keep safe • What to do if you / someone you know is being harmed / harming themselves • For those involved in it – a basic understanding of the child protection system and what it means to them • For those involved – the process of a child protection investigation |
| Voluntary and Community Organisations | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What support / help the board can provide (help with developing and accessing training programmes and with developing child protection policies and procedures) • How to access advice and help • What good safeguarding practice is and how this can be improved • How to access board events • How to access the multi-agency shared child protection procedures • How to recruit staff and volunteers safely and deal with an allegation made against them |
| Parents and Carers | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How to provide safe parenting • Sources of parenting advice • How to protect your children and others you are responsible for • For those involved – the process of a child protection investigation • For those involved in it – a basic understanding of the child protection system and what it means to them • How to access child protection procedures |
| Board Partners and Statutory Agencies including Schools, Settings and GP Surgeries | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The role of the LSCB • How to contact the board • Access to multi-agency training • Access to the shared child protection procedures • Recommendations from Serious Case Reviews |
| Other Partnerships | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The LSCB Business Manager will update key forums about the LSCB's work. Representatives from the Business Unit will be available to attend other forums and meetings to discuss their role and the role of the LSCB. |

7. Communication methods

| Website | |
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| <p>Access: www.sandwellscb.org.uk</p> | <p>Principle method of accessing information about the board/ Contains all board published information. Provides information about all LSCB multi-agency training courses. SCR audit- professional support/information.</p> |
| Newsletters | |
| <p>Access: available on board website and electronically to all those on the LSCB contact list</p> | <p>Quarterly newsletters provide up to date information about board activities; new publications and any external information concerning the broader aspects of safeguarding children.</p> |
| Publications | |
| <p>Access: most board publications are available on the website and promoted in the newsletter</p> | <p>The board publishes a range of guidance intended to provide additional tools for frontline workers. Information leaflets for parents are published and available on the website. All executive summaries of Serious Case Reviews are published on the board website. This is subject to the conclusion of any court proceedings.</p> |
| Board events | |
| <p>Access: Information circulated via Distribution lists and via attendance</p> | <p>A themed annual LSCB Conference provides an opportunity to look at safeguarding issues in depth and for staff from across the borough to attend and take part.</p> |
| Multi-agency training | |
| <p>Access: Full details are contained in the LSCB training programme published on the board website</p> | <p>A substantial programme of multi-agency training is run by the SSCB. Training provides the opportunity to meet with other professionals to discuss ways of multi-agency working. Additions to the training programme are circulated by email and the SSCB website.</p> |

Minutes of meetings- Sub-groups

Access: All those present at board meetings will receive copies of minutes

Minutes will be taken of all board and subgroup meetings.
Board members have a responsibility to cascade all relevant information to staff within their agencies. Information that requires to be more broadly disseminated will be published in the LSCB newsletter. Each member should provide feedbacks to their agency and ensure the share the action log.

Media releases

Access: All LSCB members via email distribution list. Media via relevant Board member's Communications Team.

For media releases in response to safeguarding issues see Appendix 1. This may include serious safeguarding incidents which have generated press interest. Planned media releases will be issued to raise awareness of safeguarding within the community.

Annual Report

Access:
www.sandwellscb.org.uk

The Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009 introduces a requirement for LSCBs to produce and publish an annual report
Responsibility for writing and compiling the report rests with the Business Manager with contributions from the LSCB team, sub groups and partner agencies. This report will provide a comprehensive analysis of safeguarding in the local area.

8. Accessibility

The board will seek to ensure that any communications can be made available in other languages and formats on request

9. Participation

- Sandwell LSCB is committed to listening to the views of parents and families, voluntary and community organisations, partner agencies and members of the public, and will involve them wherever possible in planning, developing and improving policy and training.
- In addition to ensuring communication (detailed in sections 6 and 7) is appropriate, the LSCB will seek and use feedback in order to continually review and improve our communication and participation strategy.
- Where possible, the LSCB will use participation to help inform the development of policy, procedures and training.

Appendix 1: Child Death Overview Panel (CDOP) Communication Plan

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This is the first Sandwell Child Death Overview Panel Sub group communication plan.
- 1.2 Its aim is to provide a plan of action for improving and strengthening communication and participation with the following groups of people:
 - Children and young people resident in, visiting, or accessing services/ support from Sandwell LSCB partner agencies.
 - Parents and carers resident in, visiting, or accessing services/ support from Sandwell LSCB partner agencies.
 - Professionals and volunteers in Sandwell's children's workforce.
 - The media
- 1.3 The key areas of communication for the sub group will be to disseminate learning from child death reviews.

2. Benefits

- 2.1. There are a wide range of benefits that will result from the communications plan:
 - To ensure partnership working is effective and all key partners are well engaged and make an active contribution to improve the delivery of services for children and young people
 - Inform the community and other external stakeholders of the findings from audits
 - Strengthen partnership working across agencies.
 - Share information and identify lead partners for different aspects of communication.
 - Develop a shared understanding about safeguarding with wider safeguarding stakeholders and gain commitment around shared key priorities.
 - Encourage the local community to be mindful of safeguarding at all times.
 - Provide a mechanism for feedback to, and from, the community and stakeholders.
 - Support for other LSCB priorities

3. Communication – Target audience

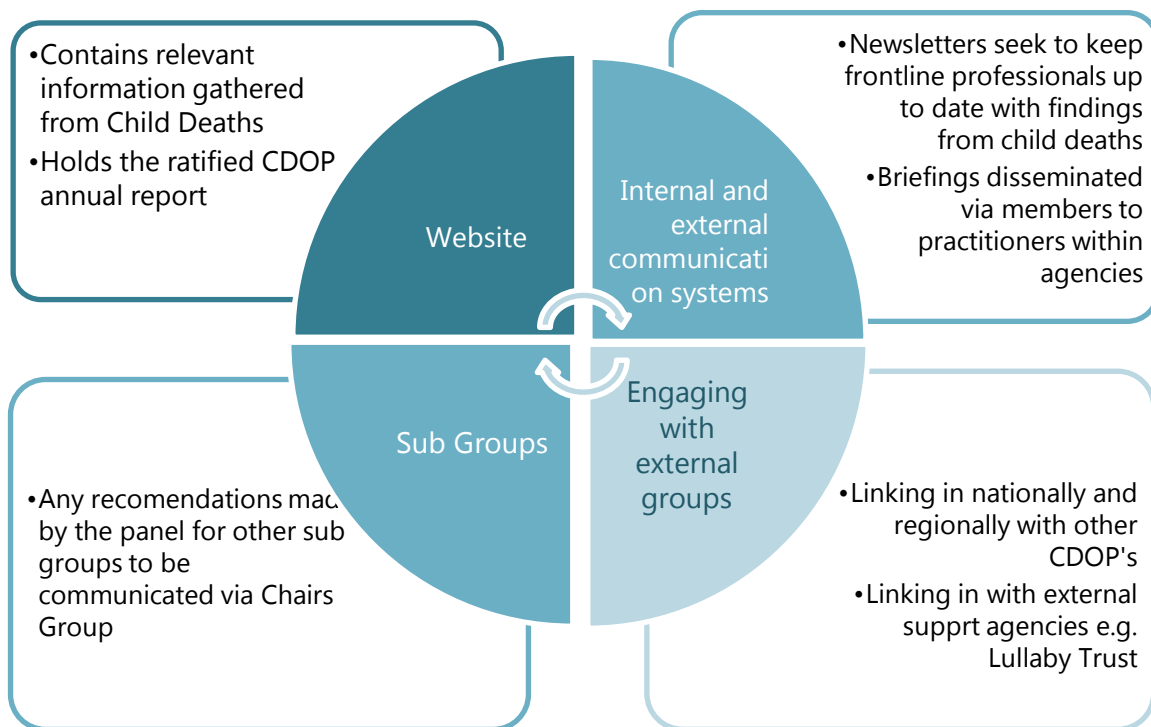


What will be communicated?

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| • The number of child deaths reported | Child deaths and details are collected and |
|---------------------------------------|--|

| | |
|---|---|
| | reported on at each CDOP Meeting by the Child Death Coordinator and CDOP Chair |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The number of child deaths reviewed | The Child Death Overview Panel will receive collated information on child deaths and review them at sub group meetings. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Modifiable Factors | Any identified modifiable factors will be recorded, themes identified and reported to QPP group for inclusion within SSCB dataset |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Campaigns | Messages from child death reviews will be communicated to wider audiences through structured campaigns |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> National Notes for awareness | Shared understanding of dangers to babies, children and young people nationally |

4. Communication methods



Monitoring & Reviewing

SSCB will ensure that child deaths have been regularly reviewed through SSCB governance and challenge structures and by the acceptance and ratification of the CDOP Annual Report.

SSCB aims to create a learning organisation whereby key information and learning is disseminated, built into learning and training and embedded in practice, policies and guidance.

Appendix 2 - Serious Case Review Subcommittee (SCR) Communication Plan

1. Introduction

1.3 This is the first Serious Case Review subcommittee communication plan.

1.4 Its aim is to provide a plan of action for improving and strengthening communication and participation with the following groups of people:

- Children and young people resident in, visiting, or accessing services/ support from Sandwell LSCB partner agencies.
- Parents and carers resident in, visiting, or accessing services/ support from Sandwell LSCB partner agencies.
- Professionals and volunteers in Sandwell's children's workforce.
- The media

1.3 The key areas of communication for the subcommittee will be to disseminate learning from national, regional and local serious case reviews, local management reviews and table top reviews.

2. Benefits

2.1. There are a wide range of benefits that will result from the communications plan:

- To ensure partnership working is effective and all key partners are well engaged and make an active contribution to improve the delivery of services for children and young people
- Inform the community and other external stakeholders of the findings from audits
- Strengthen partnership working across agencies.
- Share information and identify lead partners for different aspects of communication.
- Develop a shared understanding about safeguarding with wider safeguarding stakeholders and gain commitment around shared key priorities.
- Encourage the local community to be mindful of safeguarding at all times.
- Provide a mechanism for feedback to, and from, the community and stakeholders.
- Support for other LSCB priorities

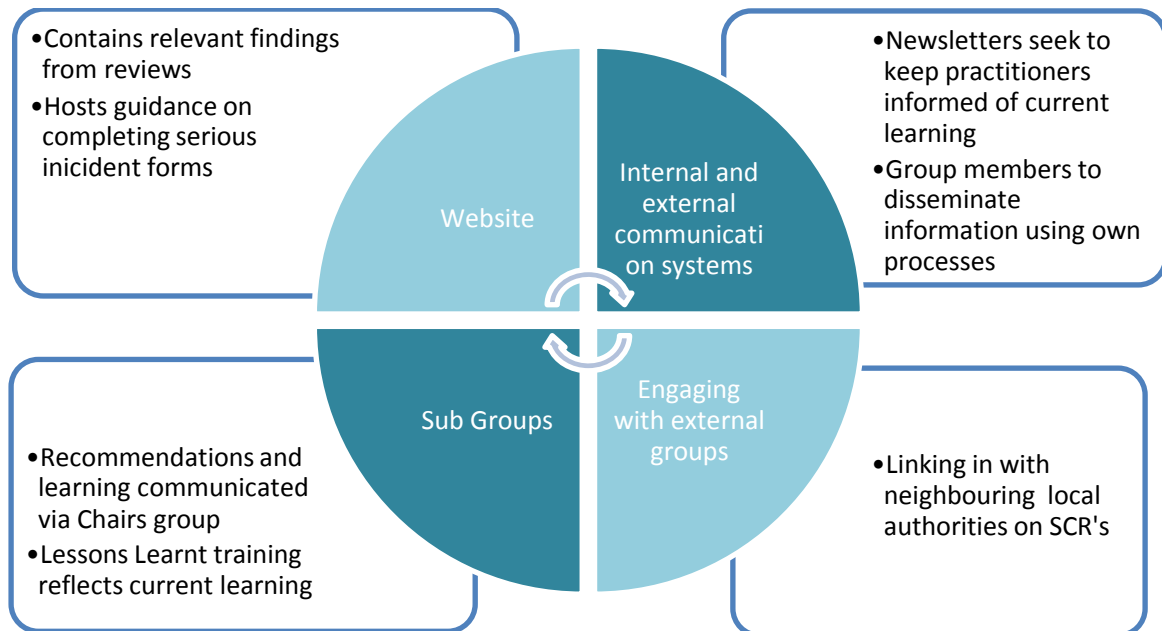
3. Communication – Target audience



4. What will be communicated?

- Recommendations
- Themes
- Relevant lessons to be learned

5. Communication methods



5.1 Media Communications

- a. Much of the work undertaken by the LSCB partner agencies is confidential, and this confidentiality is fundamental. It is the intention of the LSCB to be open and honest about its work, while protecting the personal details of clients.
 - b. From time to time issues may arise that are of interest to the media. These issues may be of a negative nature, and may have a damaging impact on the reputation of the LSCB and of partner agencies; they may also damage staff morale.
 - c. If the enquiry relates specifically to Sandwell LSCB, then the response should come directly from the LSCB Chair
 - d. The LSCB commits to ensuring joint responses to media enquiries, wherever possible. This should be established at the initial contact stage.
- a. All proactive safeguarding related information issued directly by any one organisation in the LSCB will be agreed by the LSCB Executive BEFORE it is sent to the media.

6. Monitoring & Reviewing

The SSCB will ensure that recommendations and associated action plans are regularly reviewed at sub group meetings. The SSCB aims to create a learning organisation whereby key information and learning is disseminated, built into learning and training and embedded in practice, policies and guidance.

Appendix 3: Quality of Practice and Performance Communication Plan

Introduction

This is the first Sandwell Quality of Practice and Performance Sub group communication plan. Its aim is to provide a plan of action for improving and strengthening communication and participation with the following groups of people:

- Children and young people resident in, visiting, or accessing services/ support from Sandwell LSCB partner agencies.
- Parents and carers resident in, visiting, or accessing services/ support from Sandwell LSCB partner agencies.
- Professionals and volunteers in Sandwell’s children’s workforce.
- The media

The key areas of communication for the sub group will be to disseminate learning from Single, multi-agency, S175/157 and Section 11 audits.

Communication – Target audience

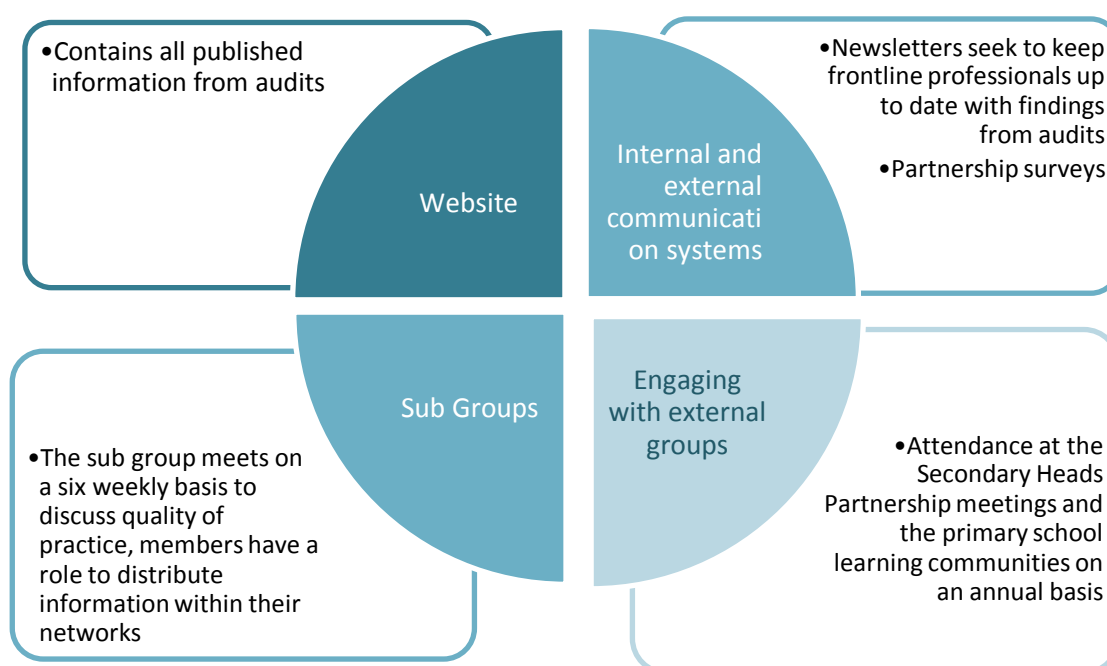
In order to ensure SSCB communications are effective, information will be targeted and tailored to specific audience needs. The audiences identified are outlined below:



| What will be communicated? | Details |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multi-Agency Audit Reports | <p>Multi-agency audits are undertaken on a quarterly basis and after each multi-agency audit a report is written, agreed by QPP and circulated by email to all SSCB for dissemination by partners within their respective organisations</p> <p>Learning is also communicated through the SSCB newsletters</p> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning Notes from Audits | <p>Following each multi-agency audit report learning notes are drafted, agreed by QPP, circulated to partners and uploaded to the SSCB website</p> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning from single | <p>Learning is communicated through the SSCB newsletters</p> |

| What will be communicated? | Details |
|--|--|
| agency audits | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learning and good practice from Section 175/157 Audits | Learning is communicated through the Secondary Heads Partnership meetings and the primary school learning communities on an annual basis, learning is also communicated through SSCB newsletters |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learning and good practice from Section 11 Audits | Learning is communicated through a report which is presented to the SSCB twice during the biennial S11 process |

Communication methods



Monitoring & Reviewing

The SSCB will ensure that the data and quality assurance outputs are regularly reviewed through SSCB governance and challenge structures. The SSCB aims to create a learning organisation whereby key information and learning is disseminated, built into learning and training and embedded in practice, policies and guidance.

Each agency will collate qualitative and quantitative information and feed this back to the Quality of Practice and Performance Sub Group via the Quality and Governance Officer on a quarterly basis.

Appendix 4: Learning & Development Communication Plan

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This Plan will outline how Sandwell Safeguarding Children’s Board aims to keep different groups of people informed of SSCB learning opportunities.
- 1.2 The aim is to provide a plan of action for strengthening communication and participation with all agencies working with Children and Families.
- 1.3 The key areas of communication for the sub group will be to obtain priority areas for training from all partner sub groups and to share feedback from training which may have any future impact on SSCB priority actions. Provide effective forums of communication to ensure the Children’s workforce are aware of and have access to training and event information.

2. Communication – Target audience:

In order to ensure SSCB communications are effective, information will be targeted and tailored to specific audience needs. The audiences identified are outlined below:



| Target audience | What is communicated? |
|---------------------------|---|
| Agency staff | Internal channels of communications will be established in all relevant agencies to ensure that internal audiences are well informed. |
| Partners | To raise the profile of SSCB with partners, either directly or indirectly involved with SSCB, each agencies’ corporate communication channels will be used. Key points of contact will be established and information shared on a regular basis for dissemination by each communications function. |
| Children and young people | Representative(s) of the SSCB L&D Subgroup will attend twice a year the Young Person meetings to seek views on current training programme and how we can continue to raise awareness of Safeguarding children and young people. Further, the L&D sub-group will use video-chat technology to incorporate children/young people stories and views into their training material. |

3. Communication methods:

3.1 Communication Cycle



3.2 Methods of Communication

| |
|---|
| Learning and Development Sub Group |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The sub group meets on a six weekly basis to discuss learning and development activity. Group members will also attend various sub groups to distribute information |
| Emails |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Emails will be use to keep contact with tutors and L&D sub-group members• confirmation/cancellations/reminder of courses will be send by emails to delegates |
| Website |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The SSCB L&D catalogue is available via the website and training booking and communications are online via the learning pool, delegates book courses from the dates provided. |
| Lead Tutors |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Will be sharing information with regards to future and up and coming learning events. This will identify how all the development opportunities link and give delegates guidance on appropriate development routes. |
| Publications |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Information circulated in accordance with organisational communications. |
| Newsletter |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Information circulated in accordance with organisational communications. |
| Multi-agency Training |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• SSCB produces an annual L & D catalogue raising awareness of safeguarding key priorities to the children’s workforce is fundamental in ensuring children remain safe. Frontline staff are key to recognising concerns and issues, therefore training and awareness raising needs to be communicated at the appropriate level.• SSCB annual training catalogue will be distributed during April each year. Agency representatives from the group will be responsible for ensuring their strategic link is made aware and have an agreed method of distribution which is established, effective and monitored. |

Single Agency Training

- **All agency sub group representatives are responsible for the annual completion of the Single Agency Training audit form in June each year.**

SSCB Events

- **As well as training courses, SSCB will run various events throughout the year, these events will be to raise awareness and disseminate key Information to all agencies.**

Reports

- **Learning & Development reports will be produced on a quarterly basis to give all agencies the over view of attendance and take up on learning events**

4. Monitoring & Reviewing

- 4.1 Access to training is monitored, evaluated and reviewed for non- attendance. This data will form part of a report that is presented to the SSCB L & D Subgroup requesting each agency disseminate this information
- 4.2 The communication plan identifies multi agency involvement in regards to distribution of information, single agency audits and methods of identifying workforce training needs. The communication plan will be reviewed annually to ensure it remains relevant to the SSCB L&D Sub Group agencies workforce objectives.
- 4.3 The overall outcome is to maximise training availability, access, effectiveness and reduce the rate of non- attendance (Do Not Attend DNA) across agencies. Improved communication within and between SSCB sub group agencies will contribute to supporting better outcomes for children and families across Sandwell.
- 4.4 This communication strategy runs in conjunction with the L&D strategy.