

COUNCIL MEETING – 5 NOVEMBER 2014

Agenda Item 6 - Questions

**Written correction to statement made by Mr Barnbrook at Council meeting
5 November 2014:**

Mr Barnbrook has clearly misunderstood the Serious Case Review (SCR) process and has consequently made an incorrect statement/allegation to the Council meeting on the 5 November 2014. As Head of Paid Staff, it is important that a correction is made to the statement made at that meeting.

The commissioning of a SCR is the responsibility of the Independent Chairman of the Bexley Safeguarding Children Board (BSCB), it is not the responsibility of Bexley Council or individual officers of the Council. The BSCB's responsibility regarding SCRs and the appointment of the independent people required for SCRs is set out as a statutory requirement, at that time the relevant guidance was 'Working Together to Safeguard Children (2010)'. Mr Brian Boxall was the independent Chairman of the BSCB in January 2011 at the time of Rhys Lawrie's death.

During February 2011 the BSCB Manager (independent role), as directed by Mr Boxall, made arrangements to appoint the independent people who are required to contribute to the conduct of SCRs. The BSCB Manager was also tasked to ensure that a multi-agency SCR Panel was set up as required in Working Together to Safeguard Children (2010).

Mr Rory Patterson was commissioned as Independent Chairman of the multi-agency SCR Panel, this appointment was ratified by Mr Boxall on behalf of the BSCB. Mr Patterson was considered to be well qualified to undertake the independent chairing of the multi-agency SCR Panel re this case. Mr Patterson's connection to Bexley Council had ceased nine years previously and therefore was considered to be independent of all agencies undertaking the SCR Review.

Mr Kevin Harrington was commissioned to produce the written SCR Overview Report by Mr Boxall on behalf of the BSCB. Since 2003 Kevin Harrington has worked as an independent consultant to health and social care agencies in the public, private and voluntary sectors. He has a particular interest in Serious Case Reviews and has contributed to more than 30 such reviews across the country.

The BSCB constituted a multi-agency SCR Panel to manage and oversee the conduct of the Review. That SCR Panel had members from across a number of agencies including education, health, voluntary sector, social care, youth and inclusion and the police.

There were a number of independent checks and balances in the process of this SCR that ensure the integrity of the SCR process and the production of the SCR Overview Report. The SCR Overview Report was also submitted to Ofsted (a requirement at that time) as a further check regarding independence and it was given a 'Good' overall judgement.

Will Tuckley
Chief Executive