

---

# ***Auditing Across Public Sector Partners***

Southend-on-Sea Borough Council  
Cliff Nicholson Award Winners

---

Linda Everard, Head of Internal Audit

# *What will the session cover?*

- Introduce the Audit Team
- Explain the basis of the submission
- Highlight its impact and benefits
- Provide tips on how to do this

# *Introducing the Audit Team*



# *How did it all start?*



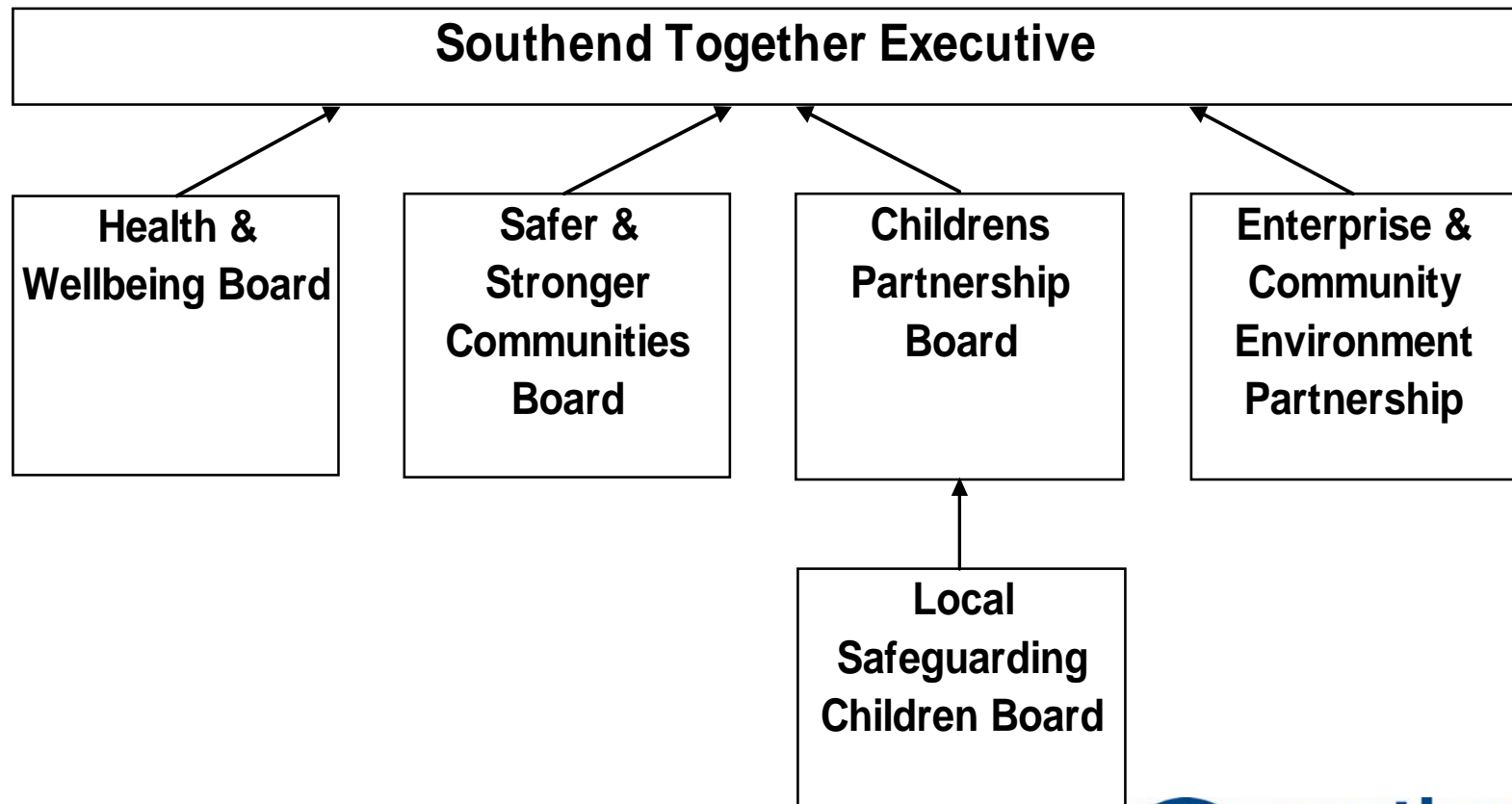
- Concerns
  - How reliable are other service providers' governance arrangements?
  - Are partners working well together to provide cost effective services?
- Question
  - Is there a role for internal audit here?

# *So what did we do?*

- Establish the Cross Partner Internal Audit Working Group (the Group)
- Provide a mechanism to:
  - audit the services and systems across organisations
  - develop common work programmes
  - co-ordinate timing of reviews

# *What is the partnership structure?*

## LOCAL STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP



# Who are our key partners?

Southend-on-Sea Borough Council

Castle Point Borough Council

Rochford District Council

Essex County Fire & Rescue Services

Essex Police Authority

Essex Probation Service

South Essex Partnership University NHS Foundation Trust

Southend University Hospital NHS Foundation Trust

NHS South East Essex

South Essex Homes

Southend Association of  
Voluntary Services



# ***What has the Group delivered?***

1. Cross Partner Audit Committee Member Workshop: Governance and Partnerships.
2. Governance Arrangements of Key Strategic Partnerships
3. Local Safeguarding Children Board: Serious Case Review

***Align internal audit with key assurance requirements of partners' chief officers***

# ***Audit Committee Member Workshop***

- Question: How do we ensure other service providers' governance arrangements are OK?
- Agreed to:
  - share assessments of specific processes
  - use a common framework to do this
- Raised awareness of audit committee and the role of internal audit in this

# ***Governance Arrangements Review***

---

- Task: Were governance arrangements robust and being consistently applied?
- Value: Presented a unified view and shared good practice
- Impact: Improved governance arrangements, using common standards

# ***Serious Case Review***

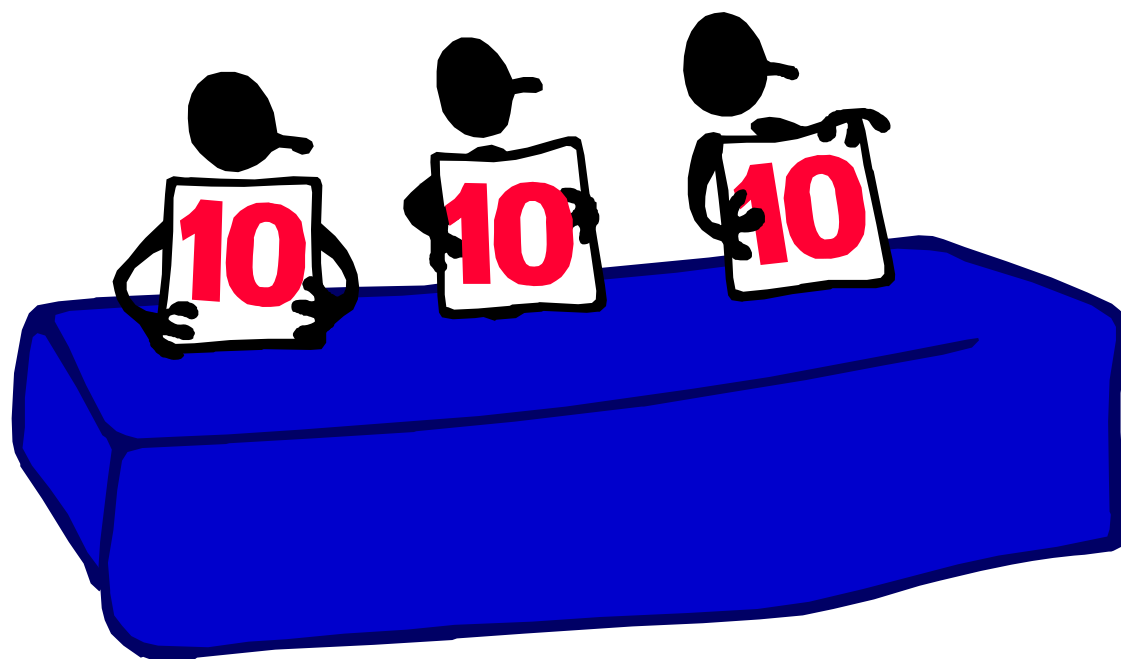
- Task: Are serious case review action plans being implemented effectively?
- Key findings:
  - national focus on initial investigation
  - less on ensuring recommendations implemented
  - action required not always well defined
- Value: Presented an evidenced based opinion covering the whole process

# *Serious Case Review*

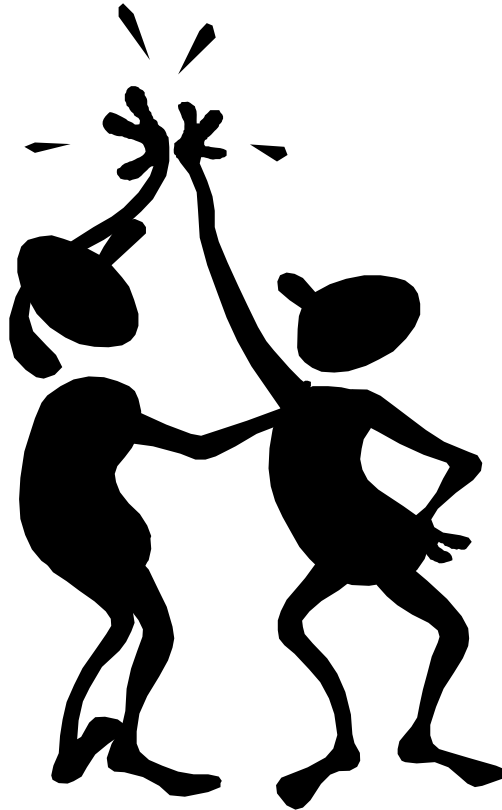
- Identified:
  - actions requiring further work
  - ways to strengthen monitoring arrangements
  - an ongoing role for internal audit

*By working together we have helped partners strengthen these arrangements, directly contributing to improving the overall safety of children in our area.*

*And the verdict on the serious case  
review audit was.....*



*And how did we feel about that...?*



# ***So what are the benefits?***

- Audit a whole activity at a point in time
- All use the same work programme
- Consistency of audit judgements
- Understand all partners' issues
- Identify and share good practice

***A simple, cost effective way of providing assurance on collaborative working arrangements.***

---

## ***But the challenges are***

---

- Deciding on the membership
- Selling the concept
- Identifying audits
- Securing funding
- Dealing with operational issues

*So has it all been plain sailing?*



## *But is it worth the effort?*

**Yes!**

- Because we can:
  - really make a difference to people's lives
  - help improve services
- Because it's fun.....!

# *Questions?*

Linda Everard

Head of Internal Audit

Southend-on-Sea and Castle Point Borough Councils

Tel: 01702 534015 / 01268 882482

E-mail: [lindaeverard@southend.gov.uk](mailto:lindaeverard@southend.gov.uk) /  
[leverard@castlepoint.gov.uk](mailto:leverard@castlepoint.gov.uk)

