

Children, Environment and Leisure Policy and Scrutiny Committee

Date:	5 February 2018
Classification:	General Release
Title:	LSCB Annual Report 16-17
Report of:	Jenny Pearce – Local Safeguarding Children Board Independent Chair
Cabinet Member Portfolio	Portfolio (as listed at www.westminster.gov.uk/cabinet)
Wards Involved:	All
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1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 The independent chair of the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) is required (through Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015) to publish an annual report on the effectiveness of child safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in the local area.
- 1.2 The Annual Report for the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) 2016/17 has been provided for review and scrutiny by the Committee. The publication of such a report is a requirement of the LSCB following statutory guidance. The report includes key details about the demographics of local children, safeguarding responsibilities and activities of agencies which are represented on the LSCB, an overview of the LSCB priorities, activities and details of its budget; a review of the outcomes of Serious Case Reviews and learning that has resulted from these.

2. Key Matters for the Committee's Consideration

- 2.1 As highlighted in the report, one of the key performance indicators show a positive story for Westminster City Council, with a reduction in the number of children subject to a child protection plan from last year. The numbers of children in the care of the local authority has increased, however, this is largely due to the increase in unaccompanied asylum seeking children arriving in the Borough.

- 2.2 Westminster Partnership Group is well attended and good relationships are promoted between partners in this helpful forum. Partners share key information from their own agencies and the LSCB is able to cascade the results of its work, such as our multi-agency audits.
- 2.3 The LSCB held a successful and well attended Learning Event for the Southbank International School Serious Case Review (a Westminster independent school) , to disseminate learning to schools in both the maintained and independent sector, as well as other agencies.
- 2.4 There is still some room for progress in how the LSCB engages with children and young people to seek their views, and our new LSCB chair is very keen to help us develop this further.
- 2.5 The Policy and Scrutiny Committee may wish to note that in October 2017, the Department for Education published a consultation regarding the proposed changes to the statutory guidance 'Working Together to Safeguard Children', and the proposals include changes to Local Safeguarding Children Board multi-agency safeguarding arrangements.
- 2.6 It is proposed that in future, the key safeguarding partners (local authority, clinical commissioning group, chief officer of police) set out how they will work together and with any relevant agencies whose involvement they consider may be required to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in particular cases. Once agreed, the safeguarding partners must publish the arrangements.
The consultation also proposes some changes to Serious Case Reviews, being replaced with local and national child safeguarding practice reviews.
The consultation also proposed some changes to the Child Death Overview Panel process.
- 2.7 The consultation ended on 31.12.17 and further details will be expected in early 2018. The LSCB Independent Chair will co-ordinate potential future arrangements with key stakeholders.

3. Questions for the Committee:

- 1) What do the Committee see as priorities for Westminster's Safeguarding Partnership Group in the coming year?
- 2) What wider opportunities, eg community engagement opportunities, is the Committee aware of that could help the Partnership to advance the children's safeguarding agenda?
- 3) How could the Committee assist the Partnership to seek the voice of children and young people and communities, in order to help inform and develop our work?