

# Children, Sports and Leisure Policy and Scrutiny Committee

<b>Date:</b>	17 October 2016
<b>Classification:</b>	General Release
<b>Title:</b>	Local Safeguarding Children Board Annual Report 2015/16
<b>Report of:</b>	Independent Chair of the Local Safeguarding Children Board
<b>Wards Involved:</b>	All
<b>Policy Context:</b>	City for Choice
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## 1. Executive Summary

A draft version of the Annual Report for the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) 2015/16 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

The Committee is asked to review and comment upon the contents of the draft Annual Report. It is suggested that the Committee considers the degree to which the report provides them with sufficient information to understand and assess the effectiveness of multi-agency safeguarding arrangements in Westminster. It is also suggested that the Committee identifies additional information that it would find helpful to include in this or future Annual Reports.

### **3. Background**

- 3.1 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. The annual report should be published in relation to the preceding financial year and should fit with local agencies' planning, commissioning and budget cycles.
- 3.2 The report should be submitted to the Chief Executive, Leader of the Council, the local police and crime commissioner and the Chair of the health and well-being board. The report should provide a rigorous and transparent assessment of the performance and effectiveness of local services. It should identify areas of weakness, the causes of those weaknesses and the action being taken to address them as well as other proposals for action. The report should include lessons from reviews undertaken within the reporting period.
- 3.3 The annual report for the LSCB for Westminster, Hammersmith & Fulham and Kensington and Chelsea is currently being finalised and so what is currently a draft version has been provided to be considered by the Policy and Scrutiny Committee. It was also circulated to LSCB members prior to its most recent meeting on 11 October 2016. The Committee will be advised at its meeting on 17 October of any significant changes that have since been made to the draft presented.

### **4. Contents of the report**

- 4.1 The report includes details of:
- The local background and demographics of Westminster and the other two local authorities.
  - Statements of the activity of key partner agencies in relation to safeguarding children and self- assessments of their effectiveness.
  - Details of core activities of the Board (including "Section 11" audits of arrangements agencies make to ensure that their functions are discharged with regard to the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children; multi-agency audits; the Child Death Overview Panel and others).
  - Governance and accountability arrangements and a report on activity and progress made by the various sub-groups which report to the LSCB. This includes a summary of Westminster's "Partnership Group" activity and developments this has resulted in, particularly in the areas of serious youth violence, child sexual exploitation, female genital mutilation and radicalisation of young people.
  - An overview of serious case reviews initiated in the course of the year (neither of which involved children with connections to Westminster) and a summary of serious case review reports which were concluded, three of which were in relation to children with connections to Westminster.
  - A review of the priorities of the LSCB and progress made and the priorities identified for 2016/17.
  - Details of the LSCB budget (income and expenditure)

## **5. Contextual information**

- 5.1 The Policy and Scrutiny Committee may wish to note two key developments which have influenced the current and future developments of local LSCB arrangements. Firstly the LSCB was reviewed by Ofsted as part of the inspection of services for children in need of help and protection and care leavers which took place in January and February 2016. The inspectors found the LSCB to be “good”. Approximately a third of the 109 LSCBs to have been reviewed to date have received this judgement with only one recently found to be “outstanding”. In the review of our LSCB, Ofsted recognised the “significant benefits for young people and for all partner agencies” resulting from the shared arrangement with the “right balance between shared and local functions” which “ensures that children are effectively safeguarded.”
- 5.2 In May 2016, the government published a national review of LSCBs led by Alan Wood, a former Director of Children’s Services. This made a number of recommendations regarding future arrangements to coordinate safeguarding activity at the local level. Many of these were accepted by the government and these are expected to be enacted through the Children and Social Work Bill currently progressing through Parliament. The government has announced its intention to introduce a more flexible statutory framework that supports local partners to work together more effectively to protect and safeguard children. The framework is expected to set out clear requirements for the key local partners, while allowing them freedom to determine how they organise themselves. The key local partners will be the local authority, the police and health (Clinical Commissioning Groups).
- 5.3 There is some appetite among partner agencies to review and where possible improve local arrangements. There is a variety of views, often informed by the size of agencies who participate in our LSCB. Some board members need to represent their agency in LSCB arrangements across numerous other local authority areas as well as the shared LSCB while some other smaller agencies see the LSCB and its sub-group structure as a key way to participate in and stay informed about local safeguarding developments. There is also a desire to review the overall purpose of the LSCB across the three boroughs and the way that we involve and have an impact upon frontline staff, children, families and the wider community. The LSCB is considering messages from the review and has started to assess opportunities for developing local arrangements to meet the needs of all partner agencies. Options will be considered and developed alongside developments at the national level.

## **6 Future priorities**

- 6.1 Informed by progress made in 2015/16 and the wider views of partners, the Annual Report summarises the LSCB priorities for the current year. These include:

- To build on partnerships to improve safeguarding practice with a particular focus on increasing the capacity of vulnerable parents to safeguard their children effectively**

This seeks to continue to focus the Board's attention on the key reasons why children need protection from significant harm, i.e. as a result of parental mental health difficulties, parental substance abuse and domestic abuse. There is an aim to improve engagement with other partnerships which have a role in coordinating and addressing such issues as they affect adults.
- Improving communication and engagement**

There is an ongoing need to continue to find ways to effectively involve frontline staff from all agencies, children and families and the wider community in the activity of the Board.
- Demonstrating our impact and knowing where more effective practice is required**

This seeks to make better use of data to target activity and increase the coordination of learning and action plans resulting from serious case reviews. There are also important areas of practice such as the Focus on Practice programme, the tackling of Neglect and development of early help which the Board need to maintain its overview of.
- Improving the effectiveness of the Board**

As well as ongoing forward planning and work to analyse the effectiveness of multi-agency training, this priority will also be informed by local developments resulting from the Alan Wood Review and the government's response.

## **7 Conclusion**

- 7.1 The LSCB welcomes scrutiny of its activity by the Children, Sports and Leisure Policy and Scrutiny Committee and where required will provide additional commentary in the Annual Report for 2015/16 or ensure what is suggested is reflected in future annual reports.

**If you have any queries about this Report or wish to inspect any of the Background Papers please contact Report Author [steve.bywater@rbkc.gov.uk](mailto:steve.bywater@rbkc.gov.uk)**

## **APPENDICES:**

Draft LSCB Annual Report 2015-16