

**Report to:** East Sussex Health and Wellbeing Board

**Date of meeting:** 19 December 2017

**By:** Director of Children's Services

**Title:** East Sussex Local Safeguarding Children Board Annual Report 2016/17

**Purpose:** To provide the Board with an overview of the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) Annual Report 2016/17

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## **RECOMMENDATION:**

**The Board is recommended to consider and comment on the report**

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### **1. Background**

1.1 Section 13 of the Children Act 2004 required each local authority to establish a Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) for their area and specifies the organisations and individuals (other than the local authority) that should be represented on LSCBs.

1.2 Section 14 of the Children Act 2004 sets out the objectives of LSCBs, which are: (a) to coordinate what is done by each person or body represented on the Board for the purposes of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in the area; and (b) to ensure the effectiveness of what is done by each such person or body for those purposes.

1.3 Working Together 2015 states it is the responsibility of the Chief Executive to appoint or remove the LSCB chair with the agreement of a panel including LSCB partners and lay members. The Chief Executive, drawing on other LSCB partners and, where appropriate, the Lead Member will hold the Chair to account for the effective working of the LSCB. The Lead Member for Children and Families should be a participating observer of the LSCB. In practice this means routinely attending meetings as an observer and receiving all its written reports.

1.4 The LSCB Chair should work closely with all LSCB partners and particularly with the Director of Children's Services. The Director of Children's Services has the responsibility within the local authority, under section 18 of the Children Act 2004, for improving outcomes for children, local authority children's social care functions and local cooperation arrangements for children's services.

1.5 The Chair must 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. 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 wellbeing board.

1.6 The purpose of this report is to assess how we are doing in ensuring local services are keeping children safe. This is done in three main ways:

- Holding organisations to account at regular Board meetings
- Providing vital training to professionals through the ESSCB training programme
- Driving improved practices by conducting targeted reviews and audits of cases.

### **2 Supporting Information**

2.1 The Ofsted inspection of the LSCB published in January 2014 found the LSCB to be 'good', one of the first boards in the country to receive this grading under the then new inspection

framework.

2.2 The annual report and business plan of the LSCB (**Appendix 1**) is submitted to the Health and Wellbeing Board as part of the accountability arrangements for ensuring effective safeguarding and promotion of the welfare of children and young people in East Sussex. It outlines the work undertaken by the East Sussex LSCB in 2016/17 and covers the second year of the 3 year business plan for 2015-18.

2.3 The key issues addressed by the LSCB in 2016/17 are highlighted in the report's introduction together with the key achievements, future challenges and priorities for 2017/18, including:

- A commitment to listen to children and young people is central to how we seek to improve.
- Emerging challenges and progress made in understanding the risk to groups of children, especially those who are new on the safeguarding radar. These include child asylum seekers, children educated at home and those in language schools
- Significant progress in our priority areas, namely in tackling child sexual exploitation, firmly embedding safeguarding practice in schools, raising awareness of the impact of domestic abuse on children and offering a number of links to resources for staying safe online
- Effective scrutiny of the multi-agency Quality Assurance dashboard and escalation reports to the board
- A significant range and volume of training was delivered reflecting the local and national safeguarding agenda
- Embedding the learning from case reviews
- East Sussex LSCB published 1 Serious Case Review (SCR) in 2016/17. Published in November 2016 the SCR concerns the services provided for a child who is referred to as Child M and was a Looked After Child at the time of her death. Child M was aged 17 in March 2013 when she died as a result of a drug overdose taken while in the company of at least one adult. Child M grew up in Surrey and lived there for the majority of her life. In September 2011, when she was 16 years old, Child M moved to East Sussex.
- The LSCB strongly reinforces the message that safeguarding children is everyone's business, not just the job of professionals
- The LSCB has 2 dedicated, skilled and effective Lay Members, although one retired from the board during this year and a new Lay Member will be recruited.
- The Children and Social Work Act 2017 aims to improve local child safeguarding arrangements by giving greater scope and authority to the key agencies (the local authority, police and health agencies) to determine the best arrangements for local areas.

2.4 The plan has four priorities;

- Tackling Child Sexual Exploitation
- Improving Safeguarding in Education
- On-line safety
- Tackling the impact of domestic abuse on children.

### **3 Conclusion and Reason for Recommendations**

3.1 An effective Local Safeguarding Children Board is in place in East Sussex with an Independent Chair. The business plan for 2015-18 meets the statutory requirements for the LSCB.

3.2 The East Sussex Health & Wellbeing Board is recommended to consider the LSCB Annual Report 2016/17, and to make any constructive observations, comments and recommendations that will assist the LCSB in its future work.

**STUART GALLIMORE**  
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Background Documents: None