

Report to: Children's Services Scrutiny Committee

Date of meeting: 15 June 2015

By: Director of Children's Services

Title: East Sussex Local Safeguarding Children Board Serious Case Reviews

Purpose: To brief the Committee on the findings and learning from published Serious Case Reviews 2013/14 and 2014/15

RECOMMENDATION

The Children's Services Scrutiny Committee are recommended to note the findings and learning from Serious Case Reviews

1 Background

1.1 The Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) has the statutory responsibility for undertaking and publishing Serious Case Reviews (SCRs).

1.2 This links to the priority outcome of Keeping Vulnerable People Safe in the Council Plan and informs the Pan-Sussex Child Protection and Safeguarding Procedures and council practice and policy.

1.3 The Annual Report and Business Plan of the LSCB are presented to Children's Services Scrutiny Committee by the Independent Chair. When it came to the Committee in 2014 it was agreed that the findings and learning from published reviews would be presented to the Committee on an annual basis (this report covers reports published in the years 2013/14 and 2014/15 as the Annual Report presented in 2014 refers to SCRs in 2013/14).

1.4 The Lead Member for Children and Families is a participating observer on the LSCB.

1.5 The LSCB is independent of the Council and has the responsibility for scrutinising and challenging multi-agency safeguarding practice. Therefore the Committee is not tasked to scrutinise the work of the LSCB or the SCRs, the SCR reports are submitted to the Department for Education (DfE) and Ofsted.

2 Supporting information

2.1 Regulation 5 of the Local Safeguarding Children Boards Regulations 2006 sets out the functions of LSCBs (under Working Together 2015, DfE). This includes the requirement for LSCBs to undertake reviews of serious cases in specified circumstances. Regulation 5(1)(e) and (2) set out an LSCB's function in relation to serious case reviews, namely:

5(1)(e) undertaking reviews of serious cases and advising the authority and their Board partners on lessons to be learned.

(2) For the purposes of paragraph (1) (e) a serious case is one where:

(a) abuse or neglect of a child is known or suspected; and

(b) either — (i) the child has died; or (ii) the child has been seriously harmed and there is cause for concern as to the way in which the authority, their Board partners or other relevant persons have worked together to safeguard the child.

“Seriously harmed” in the context of regulation 5(2)(b)(ii) above includes, but is not limited to, cases where the child has sustained, as a result of abuse or neglect, any or all of the following:

- a potentially life-threatening injury;
- serious and/or likely long-term impairment of physical or mental health or physical, intellectual, emotional, social or behavioural development.

2.1 Since 2013 there has been a national panel of independent experts to advise LSCBs about the initiation and publication of SCRs. The role of the panel is to support LSCBs in ensuring that appropriate action is taken to learn from serious incidents in all cases where the statutory SCR criteria are met and to ensure that those lessons are shared through publication of final SCR reports. The panel also reports to the Government their views of how the SCR system is working.

2.2 If SCRs make recommendations for individual agencies then this leads to an action plan that is scrutinised and signed off by the LSCB.

2.3 East Sussex LSCB published 1 SCR in December 2013 (Child G) and 1 SCR in April 2014 (Child H).

2.4 Appendix 1 provides a brief summary, key learning and summary of recommendations from the SCRs on Child G and Child H (the full reports can be found on the LSCB website).

3. Conclusion and reasons for recommendations

3.1 This report has been provided in order to brief Members on key learning and findings from East Sussex LSCB SCRs.

Appendix 1 – Brief summary, key learning and summary of recommendations

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LOCAL MEMBERS

All electoral divisions are specifically affected by the report.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Full SCR reports <http://www.eastsussexlscb.org.uk/professionals/serious-case-reviews/>