

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

**Date of meeting:** 4 December 2018

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

**Title:** East Sussex Local Safeguarding Children Board Annual Report 2017/18

**Purpose:** To advise the Health and Wellbeing Board of the multi-agency arrangements in place to safeguard children in East Sussex

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## **RECOMMENDATION:**

**The Board is recommended to note 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 [The Department for Education's guidance document 'Working Together 2015'](#) had set out 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 should be a participating observer of the LSCB. For the period covering the 2017/18 Annual Report this legislation has remained relevant, however, in July 2018 a revised and updated version [of Working Together to Safeguard Children](#) was published following the legislative changes made within the Children and Social Work Act 2017. Working Together 2018 sets out differing arrangements which require three safeguarding partners: the local authority, police, and clinical commissioning groups, to publish new arrangements by the end of June 2019.

1.4 The LSCB Chair works 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 East Sussex Safeguarding Children's Board (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. East Sussex County Council was inspected by Ofsted in accordance with the framework and evaluation schedule for Inspections of Local Authority Children's Services (ILACS) from 16 – 20 July 2018. This is a new inspection framework which was introduced in January 2018. The report highlights the role of the LSCB and the Council in providing oversight and challenge: *'Probing oversight and challenge from the corporate parenting board, scrutiny committee and the East Sussex safeguarding children's board are routine, all closely holding senior managers to account.'*

2.2 The annual report 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 LSCB in 2017/18 and covers the third and final year of the business plan for 2015-18.

2.3 The key issues addressed by the LSCB in 2017/18 are highlighted in the report's introduction, together with a summary of key learning and achievements which includes:

- A commitment to listen to children and young people is central to how we seek to improve.
- Progress in our priority areas, including child exploitation.
- 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. During 2017/18 one Serious Case Review (SCR) was published: Family S, which concerned two children aged 7 years and 22 months who experienced hidden neglect. The children were living in home conditions that were deemed unfit for human habitation when discovered. The mother had successfully kept all professionals and wider family members away from the home. In addition the older child was found to have a significant physical impairment which had not been addressed and therefore means there will be a need for lifelong medical treatment.
- A Learning and Impact Review, to self-evaluate the impact that learning from SCRs and case audits has had.
- The use of Board 'break-out' sessions to focus on subjects such as: neglect, domestic abuse, and multi-agency working.
- The LSCB has two newly recruited Lay Members.

2.4 There have been four priorities that the LSCB has led on within the three year business plan;

- Tackling Child Sexual Exploitation
- Improving Safeguarding in Education
- Online 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.

3.2 The Health and Wellbeing Board is recommended to note the LSCB Annual Report 2017/18.

**STUART GALLIMORE**  
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