

Report to: Health and Wellbeing Board
Date: 10th December 2019
By: Director of Children's Services
Title of report: East Sussex Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) Annual Report 2018-19
Purpose of report: To advise the Health and Wellbeing Board of the multi-agency arrangements in place to safeguard children in East Sussex

RECOMMENDATION

The Board is recommended to consider and note the report

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](#) 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 2018/19 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 and the three safeguarding partners: the local authority, police, and clinical commissioning groups, published the new arrangements in June 2019 which took effect from 1st October 2019. [East Sussex Safeguarding Children Partnership Arrangements](#).

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 well local services are ensuring that children are kept 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 judged 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) in July 2018 and the Local Authority was judged overall to be 'Outstanding'. This is a new inspection framework which was introduced in January 2018 and no longer has a judgement for the LSCB. However, 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 2018/19.

2.3 The key issues addressed by the LSCB in 2018/19 are highlighted in the report, 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 multi-agency safeguarding practice.
- Pan Sussex Conference on developing approaches to safeguarding adolescents.
- Effective scrutiny of the multi-agency Quality Assurance dashboard and escalation reports to the board.
- New record keeping guidance issued for schools.
- A significant range and volume of training was delivered reflecting the local and national safeguarding agenda.
- No Serious Case Reviews were concluded in 2018/19.
- Purposeful Lay Member activity and attendance at board as well as observing sub-groups and case review practitioner events.

2.4 This year's priorities have necessarily included work for the transition to the new arrangements, but the practice focus has been retained, particularly on child exploitation and on safeguarding in schools. Here are just two examples;

- Following a pilot in Hastings Operation Encompass is being adopted across the county. This enables, and requires, police to inform schools immediately where a child has been exposed to domestic abuse so that schools can give appropriate support.
- With the support of the University of Sussex the LSCB has led a move to adopting a local culture and approach of 'contextual safeguarding'. This is a multi-agency approach to understanding and responding to children's experience of significant harm beyond their families. It recognises how the different relationships that children and young people form in their schools, neighbourhoods, and the online world can feature abuse and that effective intervention has to work at that level.

3 Conclusion and Reason for Recommendations

3.1 An effective LSCB is in place in East Sussex with an Independent Chair.

3.2 The Health and Wellbeing Board is recommended to consider and note the LSCB Annual Report 2018/19, and to note the new Safeguarding Children Partnership Arrangements.

STUART GALLIMORE

Director of Children's Services

Contact Officer: Douglas Sinclair, Head of Children's Safeguards and Quality Assurance

Tel: 01273 481289

Background Documents:

None