

## READING BOROUGH COUNCIL

### REPORT BY DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN, EDUCATION & EARLY HELP SERVICES

TO:	Health and Wellbeing Board		
DATE:	27 <sup>th</sup> January 2017	AGENDA ITEM:	17
TITLE:	Reading Local safeguarding Children Board Annual Report		
LEAD COUNCILLOR:	Cllr Jan Gavin	PORTFOLIO:	Children's Services
SERVICE:	Children's Services	WARDS:	Boroughwide
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#### 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 The Reading Local Safeguarding Children Board is the key statutory mechanism for agreeing how the relevant organisations will co-operate to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in Reading and for ensuring the effectiveness of what they do (Working Together To Safeguard Children 2015).
- 1.2 This Annual Report is being presented to the Health and Wellbeing Board to ensure members are informed about the achievements of the LSCB for the 2015/2016 financial year. The Annual Report has a wide distribution and is sent to key stakeholders and partners so that they can be informed about the work and use the information in planning within their own organisations to keep children and young people safe.

#### 2. RECOMMENDED ACTION

- 2.1 That the Health and Wellbeing Board note the attached annual report.

#### 3. POLICY CONTEXT

- 3.1 As required by Working Together 2015, the LSCB Chair is required to publish an annual report on the effectiveness of child safeguarding and promoting welfare of children in Reading.
- 3.2 In line with this statutory guidance the report is presented to the Health and Wellbeing Board for information. It has also been presented to the Adult Social Care, Children's Services and Education Committee and the Children's Trust Board.

#### 4. THE PROPOSAL

4.1 Partnership working is a vital ingredient for an effective LSCB and this report contains information on some of the activities and achievements which have taken place that demonstrate this. Board members both champion and lead the safeguarding agenda within their agency and bring to the LSCB issues regarding safeguarding that relate primarily to their own agency, but which have implications for the co-operation between agencies and the monitoring role of the Board.

4.2 This report focusses on the achievements and ongoing challenges for the LSCB and partners specifically against our priorities. The priorities for the 2015/16 year were:

Priority 1. Domestic Abuse

Priority 2. Strengthening the Child's Journey and Voice

Priority 3. Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and other Particularly Vulnerable Groups

Priority 4. Neglect

Priority 5. Effectiveness and Impact of Reading LSCB

4.3 Evidencing the impact of safeguarding work is key to understanding what works and how we can improve. Throughout this report the impact of work is highlighted, alongside what has been delivered.

4.4 The annual report in previous years has focused on work being carried out individually by LSCB partners, however it is positive that this year the content reflects more widely the work undertaken in partnership.

4.4 In summary, key LSCB achievements for 2015/16 are listed below under the priority headings. Also listed are the ongoing concerns which the LSCB will continue to challenge in 2016/17, all of which are included within the LSCB Improvement and Development Plan for 2017.

#### 4.5 **Priority - Domestic Abuse**

##### *Achievements:*

- LSCB input and endorsement of the Domestic Abuse Strategy 2015-18, managed through the Domestic Abuse Strategy Group (sub group of the Community Safety Partnership).
- Continued support for the Family Choices Programme for families affected by domestic abuse.
- Support, through Public Health, for the IRIS project to support and training GP practices in how to identify domestic abuse and make referrals.
- Domestic Abuse Challenge session identified key areas of progress required in 2016/17.

##### *Ongoing Challenges:*

- A consistent and comprehensive approach to deliver information and support to schools needs to be further developed.
- Establish a system which allows schools to receive domestic abuse notifications.

#### 4.6 **Priority - Strengthening the Child's Journey and Voice**

##### *Achievements:*

- The Youth Cabinet carried out a domestic abuse survey which was presented to the Board and recommendations discussed and agreed.
- Emotional Health and Wellbeing was identified as a key issue by children and young people and is a key priority for 2016/17.
- LSCB has continued to fund the MoMo app which provides young people an easy way to get in touch with Children's Social Care. Up to April 2016 46 submissions had been made.

##### *Ongoing Challenges:*

- To better include the direct voice of young people at our Board meetings.
- A review of the MoMo app is required to ensure it is value for money and effective.

#### 4.7 Priority - CSE and other Particularly Vulnerable Groups

##### *Achievements:*

- A clear multi-agency LSCB CSE strategy is in place with a live action plan.
- The CSE toolkit and screening tool was rolled out in June 2015 attended by 100 practitioners and managers from across the partnership.
- The LSCB funded productions of Chelsea's Choice in all Reading secondary schools reaching approximately 2000 pupils.
- CSE training continues to be offered to LSCB partners at universal, targeted and specialist levels, with attendees reporting that their knowledge has either significantly or very significantly improved.
- 7,000 CSE Safeguarding Business Cards, produced and funded through the LSCB have been distributed across the partnership.
- There has been increased referrals to SEMRAC (Sexual Exploitation and Missing Risk Assessment Conference) as professional knowledge of CSE indicators increases.
- Improved notification and recording of missing children information and the creation of a dedicated Missing Children Coordinator since January 2016 has enabled better reporting and understanding of the issues and better inter-agency sharing of information.
- The number of successful missing children interviews has been steadily increasing, and issues identified through these meetings have been reported to Children's Social Care. However the timeliness of these interviews needs to increase.
- An LSCB task and finish group was established to gain a better understanding of the risk of Female Genital Mutilation in Reading, establish the processes already in place and what improvements are required. An action plan and strategy were written, which led to reviewing and improving training opportunities for front line practitioners, production of a clear risk assessment tool with identified pathways for all front line staff to follow.

##### *Ongoing Challenges:*

- Further training on CSE is required for schools and the voluntary sector to improve knowledge of indicators and pathways.
- A revised CSE risk assessment tool needs to be rolled out and embedded.
- The timeliness of missing children interviews needs to improve to ensure vital information can be captured as soon as possible after the child/young person returns home.
- The FGM guidance and tool kit needs to be embedded in front line practice, with available training opportunities.

#### 4.8 Priority - Neglect

##### *Achievements:*

- The LSCB produced a Neglect Protocol with clear recommendations for all partners.
- Information from the LSCB regarding neglect was produced and disseminated, this included:
  - the production of a booklet that identified signs, symptoms and effects of neglect
  - introduction of a 'neglect' page on the LSCB website

- training template written to help practitioners understand, identify and respond to neglect
- neglect briefing session delivered to school designated safeguarding leads.
- The Thresholds document was significantly reviewed and revised in late 2015, with new posters and guidance booklets distributed to all partners. Over 350 front line staff attended launch workshops, and threshold information is now a key part of universal safeguarding training.

*Ongoing Challenges:*

- The LSCB recognised that there had been a lack of progress in this priority area and as a result task and finish group has been set up for 2016/17 to push this work forward. This group has written a strategy and action plan.
- The regular review of thresholds needs to target key areas of the partnership where inappropriate or no referrals are being made.

#### 4.9 Priority - Effectiveness and Impact of Reading LSCB

*Achievements:*

- A risk and concern log has been established and embedded which is reviewed at each Board meeting to ensure any concerns are kept live until resolved.
- Boards meetings reflect greater challenge and Board members feel more confident in expressing views and holding partner agencies to account.
- LSCB Sub Groups have been restructured to ensure a local focus on quality assurance and performance. Performance data and auditing outcomes are expected and presented at every Board meeting.
- The LSCB training offer has been discussed at Board level to ensure all Board members had oversight of this vital element of the LSCB.
- Reading LSCB has funded Reading Children and Voluntary Youth Services (RCVYS) to provide a range of safeguarding training courses directly to the voluntary sector. In 2015/16 64 different organisations attended training courses which includes universal safeguarding training, managing safeguarding within your organisation, trustee's awareness training and train the trainer training for voluntary sector early years providers.
- LSCB communications has improved with:
  - a revised website with dedicated pages to key safeguarding priorities
  - 'Safeguarding is Everyone's Business' video created and disseminated to partners
  - CSE Safeguarding business cards and threshold documentation disseminated to front line practitioners
  - regular newsletters and weekly information bulletins are produced and sent out for dissemination via the Board.

*Ongoing Challenges:*

- Further strengthen the governance of the LSCB and its sub groups to ensure better communication with the Board and members.
- Continue to strengthen the auditing and performance review function to ensure the Board can hear and discuss the learning/issues raised.
- Ensure the LSCB Training offer within Reading has a more specific focus on the needs of the Reading workforce.
- Further communication and awareness raising is targeted, such as thresholds information to those practitioner groups that currently make inappropriate or no referrals.
- Learning from audits and reviews are better disseminated to front line practitioners to support improvements in practice.

- 4.10 The Annual Report relates specifically to the 2015/16 year, however there have been a number of developments since March. These include:
- FGM resource pack (including guidance, risk assessment tool and pathways) was successfully launched to 100 staff from across the partnership.
  - A range of factsheets on topics such as FGM, thresholds, Prevent and Private Fostering have been produced and can be found on the website.
  - School Designated Safeguarding Leads have been running through out 2016 and are routinely attended by up to 40 school colleagues. These focus on specific topics identified by attendees but also provide an opportunity to disseminate safeguarding information direct to schools.
  - The Thresholds document has been reviewed by partners and updated in line with current key priority areas such as CSE, FGM and neglect. Updated guidance, posters have been produced and disseminated, along with a new 'top tips for making safeguarding decisions' sheet and thresholds business cards.
  - A Safer Recruitment e-learning package has been created in Reading and shared with partners across the west of Berkshire. An FGM e-learning package to support practitioners in understanding the pathways and completing the risk assessment tool is currently being produced.
  - New induction packs have been created and distributed to all Board members, plus to sub-groups, to support new members of the LSCB understand their roles and responsibilities. Board members have also signed the revised member compact and agreed a revised Learning and Improvement Framework.
  - CSE Training has been revised to include practical application of CSE tools. CSE short courses have been developed and CSE champions trained to deliver these in schools and to the VCS.
  - Processes and forms in relation to missing children have been revised to enable the collection of better information in a more timely way.
  - Neglect strategy and action plan written and progress is being made, for example guidance on completing chronologies is being produced and training options are being explored.
  - A range of training opportunities are being progressed to compliment the traditional LSCB safeguarding programme, such as LSCB Forums which will be short two hour sessions.
  - A twitter account was launched in April, currently with 226 followers.
- 4.11 Ofsted Inspection May/June 2016 - Ofsted agreed that progress had been made within the 2015/16 year citing 'positive change' and that 'the challenge and concern log facilitates active challenge, and has led to practice improvements'. Ofsted graded the LSCB as 'Requires Improvement' and made five recommendations which have been clearly included within the highlighted ongoing challenges for the Board. All challenges are included as part of the LSCB Improvement and Development Plan for 2017.

## 5. CONTRIBUTION TO STRATEGIC AIMS

- 5.1 The work of the LSCB aligns with the Council strategic aim of Narrowing the Gap and two of its service priorities:
- Safeguarding and protecting those that are most vulnerable and;
  - Providing the best life through education, early help and healthy living.

## 6. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND INFORMATION

6.1 This report has been written with contributions from all LSCB partners and circulated to the Board. It will be disseminated to all partners, the Health and Wellbeing Board and Children's Trust Board.

## **7. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

7.1 An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) has not been carried out for this report however, equality and diversity continues to be a key theme for the LSCB.

## **8. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

8.1 There are no legal implications with this report. Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015 requires that the LSCB to produce an annual report and that it be submitted to the Chair of the Health and Wellbeing Board.

## **9. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

9.1 None

## **10. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- Reading LSCB Annual Report 2015/16