

## **Cabinet**

**18 November 2015**

### **Durham Local Safeguarding Children Board Annual Report 2014-15**



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### **Report of Rachael Shimmin, Corporate Director of Children and Adults Services**

### **Councillor Ossie Johnson, Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Children and Young People's Services**

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#### **Purpose of the Report**

1. The purpose of this report is to present Cabinet with the Durham Local Safeguarding Children Board Annual Report 2014-15 (attached at Appendix 2).

#### **Background**

2. Durham Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) is a statutory body established under the Children Act 2004. It is independently chaired (as required by statute) and consists of senior representatives of all the principal stakeholders working together to safeguard children and young people in Durham.
3. Its statutory objectives are 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
  - ensure the effectiveness of what is done by each such person or body for those purposes
4. The LSCB's primary responsibility is to provide a way for local organisations who have a responsibility in respect of child welfare, to agree how they will work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people in County Durham and to ensure that they do so effectively.
5. Working Together (2015) requires each Local Safeguarding Children Board to produce and publish an Annual Report evaluating the effectiveness of safeguarding in the local area. It also requires that the Annual Report 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.
6. During 2014/15 the LSCB has seen a year of restructure and development for the Board. This includes the appointment of a new independent chair, a review of LSCB sub-groups and the alignment of the partnership structure of the LSCB Business Unit from Children's Services to Planning and Service Strategy in Children and Adults Services.

7. In line with national requirements, the Board continues to be chaired by an independent person, an arrangement that has been in place since 2011. The Chair has a crucial role in making certain that the Board operates independently and secures an independent voice for the LSCB. Jane Geraghty became the new Independent Chair of the LSCB Board in October 2014. The LSCB has also recruited two lay members to the LSCB Board to provide further independent scrutiny.
8. Throughout August and September 2015 the draft LSCB Annual Report 2014/15 has been presented to the LSCB Board, partner agencies and stakeholders for consultation and comment. The feedback received has been incorporated into the final document.

## **Annual Report**

9. The Durham LSCB Annual Report 2014/15 sets out the work of multi-agency partners to ensure effective arrangements are in place to safeguard and protect vulnerable children and young people from abuse and neglect.
10. The report describes the work undertaken against the 2014-15 priorities and sets out the future priorities for 2015-16. It describes the local governance arrangements and structure of Durham LSCB, the linkages to other strategic partnerships across County Durham and work with other LSCBs.
11. The report provides an overview of the performance monitoring framework and quality assurance plan as well as providing a brief summary of safeguarding privately fostered children, the use of restraint in secure centres, Serious Case Reviews, Child Death Reviews and the single and multi-agency training provision.
12. The LSCB has reviewed its vision, which has been agreed as: **'Every child and young person in County Durham feels safe and grows up safe from harm'**.
13. Some achievements and progress highlighted in the Annual Report are as follows:
  - Development of the Early Help Strategy
  - The introduction of a County Durham Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)
  - Development and implemented the 'Collaborative working and information sharing between professionals to protect vulnerable adults and children' information sharing protocol
  - Developed a Safeguarding Framework to improve links with Health & Wellbeing Board, Children & Families Partnership and Safe Durham Partnership
  - Development of a Child Sexual Exploitation Strategy and delivery plan
  - Developing and implementing a Child Sexual Exploitation audit and sharing the information through other council and partnership structures
  - Supported 'Never Do Nothing' training (a safeguarding standard for voluntary and 3rd sector organisations)
  - Set up a Young People's Reference Group for the LSCB
  - Developing a new LSCB website, with input from young people

## **Challenge and Impact**

14. The LSCB has a role in relation to challenging partners on the impact they are making to safeguard children and young people in order to provide assurance to the LSCB. The Annual Report provides examples of challenges raised by the LSCB, the resulting progress and the impact this has had on the delivery of services and improvements in safeguarding.
15. For example, challenging partners to improve the voice of the child has resulted in collaborative work with 'Investing in Children' and the development of the Young People's Reference Group for the LSCB. These young people have met with members of the LSCB Board on a number of occasions and their views have been taken into account in the LSCB work plan and the Board's priority setting arrangements. An example of a direct impact of listening to these young people is the inclusion of the self-harm priority for the LSCB for 2015-16.
16. Other examples within the report include a challenge to partners to:
  - improve Early Help responses leading to the development of a Multi-agency Safeguarding Hub
  - improve links with wider strategic partnerships structures leading to aligning work on cross-cutting Strategies such as the Alcohol Harm Reduction Strategy, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Abuse Strategies
  - ensuring the work on Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) led to a CSE audit identifying risk factors and a subsequent action plan
  - Improve joint training and alignment of training programmes leading to joint delivery of Domestic Abuse training and Child Sexual Exploitation training and the delivery of e-learning training for Counter Terrorism and Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)

## **LSCB Priorities for 2015-18**

17. The Durham Local Safeguarding Children Board has agreed the following priorities for 2015/16:
  - Reducing Child Sexual Exploitation
  - Improving Early Help
  - Reducing Neglect (contributory factors are domestic abuse; alcohol misuse; substance misuse; parental mental health)
  - Reducing self-harm and improving young people's self-esteem
  - Increase the voice of the Child
  - Ensuring that each agency is accountable for delivery of its own safeguarding responsibilities
18. Alongside the identified priorities above the LSCB has highlighted areas of work for 2015/16, which include:
  - Supporting and challenging the new Children's Services Transformation arrangements for the delivery of children's services
  - Improving the performance and quality assurance information to support and improve performance on the Board's priorities

- Strengthening our engagement with children and young people especially those from vulnerable communities such as Lesbian, Gay, Bi-Sexual and Transgender, young carers, Gypsy Roma Travellers, young people who offend and children and young people with additional needs
  - Building on the Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) training offered to health professional and develop an Female Genital Mutilation Strategy and Practice Guidance
  - Work with the County Durham Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Executive Group (DASVEG) to promote the need for domestic abuse services to support children, young people and their families
  - A continued focus on information sharing supporting and promoting good practice across multi-agency teams
  - Continue a programme of self-improvement
19. The LSCB priorities above and areas of work are supported by a detailed LSCB Business Plan outlining the actions to be undertaken in 2015/16.
20. The Durham LSCB Annual Report 2014/15 was agreed at the LSCB Board Meeting on the 15<sup>th</sup> October 2015.
21. The report will be available on the Durham LSCB Website [www.durham-lscb.org.uk](http://www.durham-lscb.org.uk) and will be disseminated through partners own organisational governance structures. The report will be also be presented, for information, at the next available Children and Families Partnership, Health and Wellbeing Board and Safe Durham Partnership Board meetings.

### **Recommendations**

22. Cabinet is requested to receive and endorse the Durham Local Safeguarding Children Board Annual Report 2014/15 (attached as Appendix 2).

### **Background papers**

None

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## **Appendix 1: Implications**

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### **Finance**

Yearly financial contributions to Durham LSCB are received from partner agencies and are detailed in the LSCB Annual Report.

### **Staffing**

The priorities identified in the LSCB Annual Report will be delivered using existing resources. Durham County Council will contribute to the delivery of the priorities in partnership with other responsible authorities.

### **Risk**

No adverse implications.

### **Equality and Diversity/ Public Sector Equality Duty**

The LSCB Annual Report identifies the actions to safeguard the needs of vulnerable children and young people.

### **Accommodation**

No adverse implications.

### **Crime and disorder**

The LSCB Annual Report reflects priorities and action that impact positively on crime and disorder in County Durham. The report shows effective partnership working with the Safe Durham Partnership.

### **Human rights**

No adverse implications.

### **Consultation**

Consultation with partner agencies and stakeholders has been undertaken as part of the development of the LSCB Annual Report.

### **Procurement**

No adverse implications.

### **Disability Issues**

No adverse implications.

### **Legal Implications**

Durham Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) is a statutory body established under the Children Act 2004. Working Together to Safeguard Children (Statutory Guidance) requires each Local Safeguarding Children Board to produce and publish an Annual Report evaluating the effectiveness of safeguarding in the local area.