

Cabinet

12 October 2011

Annual Report of Local Safeguarding
Children Board



Report of Corporate Management Team

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Councillor Claire Vasey, Cabinet Portfolio Member for Children's Services

Purpose of the Report

1. The purpose of this report is to share with Cabinet the Annual Report of the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) for information.

Background

2. The LSCB has, since its inception produced an annual report to advise partners and key stakeholders of its key activities, achievements and priorities for the coming year.

Current Position

3. From April 2011 each LSCB is now required to produce and publish an annual report on the effectiveness of safeguarding in the local area. The report should provide an assessment of local safeguarding arrangements set against an analysis of the local area safeguarding context. The report should recognise achievements and progress in the local authority area as well as providing a realistic challenge of the challenges that still remain.
4. Durham LSCB decided to move towards this method of reporting in advance of the April 2011 timescale, and this is the second annual report prepared in this format. This has been achieved through the Board's continued engagement with the Children's Trust and other partnership arrangements in addressing key issues and identifying progress made. Specifically the LSCB has identified key challenges against which the Children's Trust need to deliver.
5. The key priorities identified in County Durham for the coming year include:
 - The continued need to improve the quality of **information sharing** between all professionals (this was a priority last year but is still a problematic area, highlighted in the majority of serious case reviews);
 - **Sexual exploitation** of young people, recognised as an increasing area of concern – particularly in relation to internet grooming;

- **Mental health** as a parental risk factor, which features in 31% of Child Protection Plans
 - **Early Help**. This is outlined in the Munro report where the evidence of the benefits for children of early intervention is emphasised as delivering better outcomes than in situations where a response to more serious matters is necessary
6. The LSCB will continue to drive forward progress in these key areas, by working alongside the Children's Trust and will robustly address any potential blockages to progress in order that all agencies play a full and effective role in safeguarding children in County Durham.

Recommendations

1. Cabinet is asked to note the information contained in the report.

Background Papers

The Annual Report of County Durham LSCB 2011/12

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Appendix 1: Implications

Finance

There are no specific additional costs to the county council arising from this report. LSCB funding is already committed on an ongoing basis from the council who is the lead agency with responsibility for child protection

Staffing

No additional costs arising from this report. The council will respond to the report with resources and budget provision that are already in place

Risk

Safeguarding and child protection are inevitably high risk areas of work for the council, in that this requires identification and response to the needs of the most vulnerable members of the community. These are addressed and monitored through the Children and Young People's plan, service improvement plans, the priorities set out in this report by the LSCB, LSCB procedures and the councils risk register

Equality and Diversity / Public Sector Equality Duty

None. All service planning and delivery take equality and diversity issues into account. The work of the LSCB is instrumental in ensuring that all children care kept safe.

Accommodation

No issues

Crime and disorder

None

Human rights

None

Consultation

Continual work takes place with groups of young people to share thinking about priorities and seek their ideas and input into this area of work.

Procurement

None

Disability Issues

See equality and diversity (above)

Legal Implications

None