

**Report of** Jane Held, Independent Chair Leeds Safeguarding Children Board

**Report to** Executive Board

**Date:** 7 November 2012

**Subject:** LSCB Annual Report on the Effectiveness of Safeguarding  
Arrangements for Children and Young people in Leeds (July 2012)

Are specific electoral Wards affected? If relevant, name(s) of Ward(s):	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for Call-In?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? If relevant, Access to Information Procedure Rule number: Appendix number:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

### Summary of main issues

1. This cover report introduces the attached LSCB Annual Report (July 2012), published on the LSCB website in August 2012.

### Recommendations

The Executive Board is asked:

1. To note and comment on the content of the LSCB Annual Report.
2. To note the challenges for 2012/13, including those accepted by the Children's Trust Board.

## **1 Purpose of this report**

- 1.1 To update the Executive Board on the progress being made by and through the Leeds Safeguarding Children Board to improve safeguarding children practice in Leeds.

## **2 Background information**

- 2.1 It is a statutory requirement under the Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009 for the LSCB to publish an annual report evaluating the effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements for children and young people in the local area.
- 2.2 An outline report, including challenges for 2012/13, was received and accepted by the Children's Trust Board on 09.07.12. The final report was approved by the LSCB on 20.07.12 and was accepted by the CTB on 21.09.12.
- 2.3 The CTB must take account of the report in preparing and refreshing the Children & Young people's Plan.

## **3 Main issues**

### **3.1 Effectiveness of the LSCB:**

- 3.1.1 The report indicates that the LSCB has made good progress in addressing the challenges it set for itself in 2011/12.

### **3.1.2 Priority challenges to address for 2012/13 include:**

- Implementation of the Voice & Influence Strategy for C&YP.
- Appointment of Lay members to the Board
- Widening multi-agency input into the Performance Management System

### **3.2 Performance against challenges to CTB for 2011/12:**

- 3.2.1 The overarching challenge to the CTB was to 'rebalance the safeguarding system' to reduce the need for statutory intervention to safeguard C&YP.

### **3.2.2 Two key indicators provide evidence of progress made in the year:**

- Stabilisation of the number of C&YP who need to be 'looked after'
- Stabilisation and then reduction of the number of C&YP subject to Child Protection Plans

### **3.3 Summary of the Effectiveness of Safeguarding arrangements:**

- 3.3.1 Since the Ofsted inspections in 2009/10 a 'whole system' review of safeguarding services for C&YP has been undertaken by Children's Services and the CTB. In 2011/12 this resulted in a significant service restructure, the introduction of cluster

working, the development of 'early help' services and the implementation of a 'strengthening families' approach to child protection conferences. That this work has resulted in a positive direction of travel is evidenced by the outcomes from Ofsted inspections in 2011/12 and the subsequent lifting of the Improvement Notice by Central Government.

3.3.2 The LSCB Annual Report acknowledges the progress made and expects to receive evidence of improved services and outcomes for vulnerable C&YP in 2012/13 as these significant changes are completed and embedded.

### 3.4 Challenges for 2012/13:

3.4.1 The coming 6 – 9 months are likely to be characterised by increasing financial constraints and organisational turbulence across the partnership.

3.4.2 As a consequence, managing 'risk in transition' will be both critical and a high priority whilst maintaining forward progress in our priorities.

3.4.3 The LSCB, in response to changes in guidance (Working Together 2012), will need to evidence it has increased the rigour of its challenge to partners and more explicitly driven (and understood) improvements in outcomes for C&YP.

3.4.4 At the same time it needs to seek to work more collaboratively with the Safeguarding Adult Board and the Community Safety Partnership to identify things we can do better together and support each other with.

3.4.5 Challenges accepted by the CTB for 2012/13 include the following:

- To embed changes to the safeguarding system that:
  - Increase the use of early help (ie early intervention and prevention) services
  - Reduce the number of C&YP who need to be 'looked after'
  - Improve outcomes for C&YP
- To ensure high quality services are delivered for C&YP within statutory systems (CP Plans & LAC)
- To manage risk appropriately in the context of:
  - The continued development of Children's Services
  - Changes in the provision of Health Services.

## **4 Corporate Considerations**

### **4.1 Consultation and Engagement**

4.1.1 Active interest from CLT and Corporate Leaders in the work of the LSCB has made a significant contribution to the improvement journey. There is a shared expectation within the Council that a Child Friendly City also has to be a Safe City. This enables

the LSCB to take some assurance about the direction of travel. The work to ensure the whole council is self aware about its practice has begun with the support of Alan Gay.

#### **4.2 Equality and Diversity / Cohesion and Integration**

4.2.1 The work of the Board contributes to improved community cohesion. Over the next year part of the public engagement work the Board plans will be initial steps to engage with the wide range of faith communities in the City to support their work on safeguarding children.

#### **4.3 Council Policies and City Priorities**

4.3.1 The work of the LSCB is central to the Council's priorities and policies for children and young people.

#### **4.4 Resources and Value for Money**

4.4.1 The financial out-turn statement for 2011/12 indicates that whilst expenditure was in line with that budgeted for (£521,000), there was a £21,000 shortfall in income; a shortfall that is expected to continue in 2012/13. The LSCB has drawn down from its strategic reserve to ensure that the books balance and will do so again for the current year.

4.4.2 The strategic reserve is predicted to reduce to £50,000 by the end of 2012/13. A review of funding and value for money is being undertaken by the LSCB Business Unit to inform budgeting for 2013/14.

#### **4.5 Legal Implications, Access to Information and Call In**

4.5.1 No specific implications

#### **4.6 Risk Management**

4.6.1 The Board has completed its Annual Review focusing on how well we work together to improve outcomes for vulnerable C&YP. This has identified many positives and a number of areas for improvement. The 'Effective Governance' scorecard in the performance Management System indicates that significant progress was made in 2011/12 to tighten governance and system wide processes.

### **5 Conclusions**

5.1 Overall a guarded welcome can be given to this report, which indicates sustained progress over the past year. There is still much to do and the Board recognises that as it improves, the expectations can and should get greater. The external context is also changing so new challenges are arising at the same time as the need to maintain the direction of travel with the priorities already identified. The degree of organisational and financial turmoil across all partners over the next 12 months will create an additional degree of risk to progress which will be carefully managed and mitigated.

## **6 Recommendations**

The Executive Board is asked:

- 1) To note and comment on the content of the LSCB Annual Report.
- 2) To note the challenges for 2012/13, including those accepted by the Children's Trust Board.

## **7 Background documents<sup>1</sup>**

7.1 None

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<sup>1</sup> The background documents listed in this section are available to download from the Council's website, unless they contain confidential or exempt information. The list of background documents does not include published works.