

Leeds Safeguarding Children Partnership - Update

Date: 8th March 2023

Report of: Head of Democratic Services

Report to: Scrutiny Board (Children and Families)

Will the decision be open for call in? Yes No

Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? Yes No

Brief summary

- In February 2022, the Children and Families Scrutiny Board learned that the Leeds Safeguarding Children Partnership (LSCP) Executive had commissioned a review of the processes supporting the Notification of Serious Child Safeguarding Incidents, which was being undertaken by a group consisting of representatives from each of the three key statutory partner agencies and led by West Yorkshire Police.
- In May 2022, the LSCP Executive updated the Scrutiny Board on the notifications review and discussed the key issue of decision making in relation to Serious Child Safeguarding Incidents. The LSCP Executive gave a commitment to return to a future meeting of the Scrutiny Board to provide a further progress update reflective of the review findings.
- During the Scrutiny Board's meeting in November 2022, Members agreed to hold a formal meeting dedicated to the issue of safeguarding, which would involve receiving an update on the review of the notification process while also providing an opportunity for the LSCP Executive to discuss its general priorities, with particular reference to key cross cutting themes identified through the LSCP review processes.
- The LSCP Executive has provided relevant background reports which are appended for the Board's consideration.

Recommendations

Members are requested to consider the content of the attached reports by the Leeds Safeguarding Children Partnership Executive and determine appropriate next steps.

What is this report about?

1. In February 2022, the Children and Families Scrutiny Board considered an urgent matter of business relating to an issue which had been brought to the attention of the Children and Families Scrutiny Board Chair in respect of the processes supporting the Notification of Serious Child Safeguarding Incidents.
2. The Scrutiny Board was advised that the Chair had been made aware of instances where differing views were evident within the Leeds Safeguarding Children Partnership (LSCP) in relation to whether or not to categorise a case as a notifiable Serious Child Safeguarding Incident. The Board also learned that the LSCP Independent Chair had recommended a review of the notification process, which was approved by the LSCP Executive and was being undertaken by a group consisting of representatives from each of the three key statutory partner agencies and led by West Yorkshire Police.
3. The Scrutiny Board had agreed to maintain a watching brief and in May 2022, the LSCP Executive updated the Scrutiny Board on the progress of the review and the key issue of decision making in relation to Serious Child Safeguarding Incidents. The LSCP Executive also gave a commitment to return to a future meeting of the Scrutiny Board to provide a further progress update reflective of the review findings.
4. During the Scrutiny Board's meeting in November 2022, Members agreed to hold a formal meeting dedicated to the issue of safeguarding, which would involve receiving an update on the review of the notification process while also providing an opportunity for the LSCP Executive to discuss its general priorities, with particular reference to key cross cutting themes identified through the LSCP review processes.
5. The LSCP Executive has provided relevant background reports which are appended for the Board's consideration.

What impact will this proposal have?

6. The information presented to the Scrutiny Board will assist Members in determining appropriate next steps.

How does this proposal impact the three pillars of the Best City Ambition?

Health and Wellbeing Inclusive Growth Zero Carbon

7. One of the eleven priorities set out within the existing Leeds Children and Young People's Plan is ensuring that the most vulnerable are protected.

What consultation and engagement has taken place?

Wards affected:

Have ward members been consulted? Yes No

8. The Director and Deputy Director of Children and Families; the Chair of the Leeds Safeguarding Children Partnership (LSCP); the Executive Member for Adult and Children's Social Care and Health Partnerships; and the legal adviser to the LSCP had attended the Scrutiny Board's meeting in February 2022 to contribute to the discussion and address any questions from Board Members.

9. In May 2022, the Chair of the Leeds Safeguarding Children Partnership was joined by other partner members of the LSCP Executive in providing an update to the Scrutiny Board.
10. All partner members of the LSCP Executive have again been invited to today's meeting to present the appended reports and address any questions from Board Members.

What are the resource implications?

11. This report has no specific resource implications.

What are the key risks and how are they being managed?

12. Details of any associated risk management implications will be reflected as part of the appended reports from the LSCP Executive.

What are the legal implications?

13. The Wood Review of 2016 led to an amendment of The Children's Act 2004, resulting in the removal of the statutory requirement of local authorities to have a Local Safeguarding Children Board and placed the responsibility for safeguarding equally with local authorities namely children and family services, police and health (Clinical Commissioning Groups).
14. The Children Act 2004 (as amended by the Children and Social Work Act 2017), the associated regulations and statutory guidance, 'Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018' set out the duties placed on the three agencies to work in partnership and to define the local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements. It also places a duty on other partner agencies to co-operate with the new arrangements albeit the local authority is designated as the accountable body for the Notification arrangements.
15. Members are requested to note that given the legal restrictions it will not be appropriate for there to be any discussion of and/or reference to individual cases which fall within the notification arrangements.

Appendices

- Appendix 1 – Report of the Leeds Safeguarding Children Partnership Executive on the LSCP Notifications Process (March 2023)
- Appendix 2 – Report of the Leeds Safeguarding Children Partnership Executive on Cross Cutting Themes from Review Processes (March 2023)
- Appendix 3 – LSCP Annual Report Overview

Background papers

- None.