

Leeds Safeguarding Children Partnership Annual Report 2021-22

Date: 21st June 2023

Report of: Director of Children and Families

Report to: Executive Board

Will the decision be open for call in? Yes No

Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? Yes No

Brief summary

The Leeds Safeguarding Children Partnership (LSCP) Annual Report is produced to provide an objective analysis of the effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements in the city. The report considers activity over a 24-month period between 2021-2023 and relates to the LSCP priorities, leadership, progress, and the impact this activity has towards improvements. It also includes learning from reviews, including child safeguarding practice reviews, undertaken by the partnership and how effective they have been in improving practice.

Further scrutiny on the findings of this report is undertaken by the LSCP Independent Chair who has highlighted four key areas that the partnership will consider as a priority. They are as follows:

- 1) To ensure that the needs of children and young people are met earlier to prevent the need for statutory intervention.
- 2) Schools remain fully engaged across the safeguarding system, as this ensures that children are effectively and appropriately escalated through the safeguarding system giving them the greatest chance of achieving their ambitions, especially care leavers who continue to experience poorer outcomes.
- 3) Ensures that statutory partners and the Third Sector are fully aware of how to escalate cases of serious concern.
- 4) Although the LSCP has a strong system of gathering learning, there is a need to ensure dissemination is monitored and can evidence impact of changes in practice, because of this learning.

This report highlights that the safeguarding system appears to be strong and partner agencies are committed in supporting the multi-agency safeguarding arrangements in the city. The LSCP Executive have maintained a focus on front line practice, developing a system for all practitioners to highlight challenges to practice and raise them through the partnership. There are opportunities for further improvement which demonstrates how the safeguarding partnership constantly challenges itself, reflects on what it does and seek solutions to improve outcomes for children and families. Furthermore, the report recognises the strengthening of the city's strategic partnerships with the Chairs of the LSCP, Local Safeguarding Adults Board and Safer Leeds Executive coming together to identify opportunities for joint working on cross cutting issues and learning from reviews. This has resulted in an increased focus of the 'Think Family Work Family' way of working, and the need to seek opportunities to collectively work in areas related to neglect, domestic abuse and transitions of young people into adulthood.

Recommendations

- a) Executive Board is asked to consider the contents of the LSCP's Annual Report
- b) To note the journey of significant improvements to the safeguarding system within Leeds
- c) To note the areas for further improvements and/or assurance

What is this report about?

- 1 This report provides the key learning from the scrutiny of the city's safeguarding arrangements. The annual report highlights areas of strength and progress as well as opportunities for further strengthening the multi-agency safeguarding arrangements. Independent scrutiny of the report is undertaken by the LSCP Independent Chair. There is a requirement that the annual report is then publicly published on the LSCP website.

What impact will this proposal have?

- 2 The learning from the annual report provides opportunities and direction for partner agencies to further enhance how they respond to children and families that require support and protection. It is presented to the Executive Members to inform them of the work of the safeguarding partnership and provide them an opportunity to seek assurance from the LSCP Independent Chair.

An Equality, Diversity, Cohesion and Integration (EDCI) form has been completed and can be found in appendix 2.

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

Health and Wellbeing Inclusive Growth Zero Carbon

- 3 The report recognises broader challenges families face through poverty and inequality, poor health, and wellbeing outcomes and how these can impact on parents' ability to support and protect their children. The bringing together of the LSCP and the Children and Families Trust Board in 2019 have provided opportunities to jointly explore these strategic challenges and the impact this has on families and carers.

What consultation and engagement has taken place?

Wards affected:

Have ward members been consulted? Yes No

What are the resource implications?

- 4 LSCP annual budgets, which come from a range of partner agencies such as Health, Police and the Local Authority, reflect the partnerships independent statutory multi-agency responsibilities and agreed priorities. Expenditure is monitored through regular reports to the LSCP Executive. The LSCP is not an operational body or one which delivers services to children, young people, and their families. Its role is co-ordinating and ensuring the effectiveness of what its member organisations do as well as contributing to broader planning, commissioning, and delivery of safeguarding services in the city.

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

- 5 The LSCP has a statutory responsibility under Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 to hold partners to account to ensure all children at risk of, or experiencing harm are appropriately protected. This responsibility ensures Leeds City Council, and its statutory partners are challenged and supported in ensuring that the relevant safeguarding governance, quality of front-line practice, training, clarity of staff roles and responsibilities is of the highest standard and the voice of the child is clearly heard and acted upon.

What are the legal implications?

- 6 The Executive Board is not being asked to make any decision arising out of the contents of this report. The Board may request that the Director of Children and Families consider any implications for the work of Leeds City Council.

Options, timescales and measuring success

What other options were considered?

- 7 Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 sets out the statutory responsibilities for local authorities to safeguard children and promote their welfare. The LSCP continue to fulfil these obligations.

How will success be measured?

- 8 Success of the safeguarding partnership in Leeds is measured through the scrutiny of its safeguarding arrangements which are then published within the LSCP annual report. The learning from the annual report, including work to further strengthen the safeguarding arrangements will be monitored through the LSCP governance arrangements with overall accountability held by the LSCP Executive. Further scrutiny on the impact of this work is undertaken by the Independent Chair of the LSCP.

What is the timetable and who will be responsible for implementation?

- 9 It is a requirement that learning, and improvements identified in the LSCP annual report will be implemented within the financial year. The LSCP Executive have overall accountability in ensuring this is undertaken and will request evidence to be assured this is done and in an effective and timely way. The LSCP Independent Chair also provides additional scrutiny that learning is being implemented across the partnership and its impact on children and families are measured.

Appendices

- Appendix 1 LSCP Annual Report 2021-23 including a forward by Jasvinder Sanghera CBE-Independent Chair of Leeds Safeguarding Children Partnership
- Appendix 2 Equality, Diversity, Cohesion and Integration (EDCI) form

Background papers

- None