

Report of Mark Peel, Independent Chair, Leeds Safeguarding Children Partnership (LSCP)

Report to Leeds City Council Executive Board

Date: 27th June 2018

Subject: LSCB Annual Report (2017/18) Evaluating the Effectiveness of Safeguarding Arrangements in Leeds



Are specific electoral Wards affected?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
If relevant, name(s) of Ward(s):		
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" 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?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
If relevant, Access to Information Procedure Rule number:		
Appendix number:		

Summary of main issues

The LSCB Annual Report (2017/18) Evaluating the Effectiveness of Safeguarding arrangements in Leeds identifies that:

- Leeds is a city that has robust safeguarding arrangements which reflects strong safeguarding partnerships and the commitment to protecting children from harm and promoting their welfare
- The LSCP (formally the LSCB) is progressing its plans and addressing its priorities and can evidence the contribution it is making to improving practice, multi-agency working and outcomes for children and young people.
- The changes to the Children and Social Work Bill 2018 has meant that the statutory functions of LSCB's have been removed. It is important that Leeds ensures that the future of safeguarding partnerships continues to be ambitious and set high expectations of its partners.
- The importance of ensuring continued investment into the Early Help strategy for Leeds.

Recommendations

The LCC Executive Board is asked to consider

- The contents of the LSCB's Annual Report,
- The safeguarding priorities for the city identified in the LSCP Annual report

1 Purpose of this report

1.1 This report introduces the key learning from the LSCB Annual Report (2017/18).

2 Background information

2.1 Leeds 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 principle stakeholders working together to safeguard children and young people in the City.

2.2 Its statutory objectives are to:

- Co-ordinate local work to safeguard and promote the welfare of children
- To ensure the effectiveness of that work.

2.3 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 states that the LSCB Annual Report 'should provide a rigorous and transparent assessment of the performance and effectiveness of local services. It should identify areas of weakness, the causes of those weaknesses and the action being taken to address them as well as other proposals for action'. The Report should:

- Recognise achievements and progress made as well as identifying challenges.
- Demonstrate the extent to which the functions of the LSCB are being effectively discharged.
- Include an account of progress made in implementing actions from Serious Case Reviews.

2.4 The LSCB Annual report is sent to the local Police and Crime Commissioner and the Chair of the Health and Well Being Board. There is also a local agreement to submit it to Leeds City Council Scrutiny Board for Children and Families and to the governance bodies of all partner organisations to support their governance of safeguarding practice in Leeds. The report is also submitted to the Chief Executive and Leader of the Local Authority, reflecting that overall accountability for the safety and welfare of children and young people is led by them. There are however, changes to legislation (following the Wood Review) which has meant that overall accountability to safeguarding children will be shared between three key statutory agencies, Leeds Childrens Services, Leeds Clinical Commissioning Group and the Police. Further information on these new safeguarding arrangements will be made clear when Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 is published in June 2018.

2.5 The LSCB Annual Report is the result of an Annual Review process which ran from February to April 2018 and it includes information from partners and LSCB sub groups.

2.6 The LSCB Annual report contains detail about work to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people in Leeds. It contains key issues, messages and challenges developed in order to ensure that these are accessible to the professional partnership and the wider community. This summarises the progress made by Leeds LSCB in 2017/18 **through** and **with** its partners and analyses the effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements in the city

3 Main issues

3.1 The Report notes the continued effectiveness of the Partnership to support children, young people and families in Leeds. Central to this is a partnership agreement that the children's safeguarding system needs to be 'rebalanced' in order to improve outcomes for children and young people by intervening earlier and more effectively in the life of a problem.

This involves:

- An effective early help approach providing 'the right service at the right time'.
- Maintaining the Cluster Model in Leeds to ensure a local coordinated response to children and family's needs.
- A restorative approach to working with children, young people and their families.
- The implementation of its Neglect Strategy for Leeds.
- Further development and refinement of its Risk and Vulnerability Strategy.
- A commitment to a culture of continuous learning and improvement.
- A multi-agency commitment to shared principles, behaviours and ways of working with families and each other.

3.2 Overall, the need for statutory intervention has stabilised whereas nationally it has risen. The LSCB has also maintained a focus on these interventions through its quality assurance programme. This has allowed a focus on quality and outcomes for children rather than just the timeliness of processes.

3.3 The LSCB has also considered the following factors in assuring itself that practice and multi-agency working is appropriate and safe:

- Findings from external inspections (OfSTED, CQC, HMIP, HMIC).
- Partner compliance with statutory duties under Section 11 of the Children Act to ensure they have internal governance arrangements in place to effectively safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people.
- Monitoring Safeguarding Performance data and trends.
- Quality Assurance Processes.
- Findings from multi-agency audits.
- Listening to front line practitioners

3.4 A particular focus in 2017/18 has been to better understand and improve the partnership response to Neglect across Leeds. The partnership has also reviewed its response to child sexual exploitation and related vulnerabilities. Trafficking, child criminal exploitation, Female Genital Mutilation, children who go missing and children exhibiting harmful sexual behaviour all form part of the wider work of the LSCB

3.5 The LSCB Learning and Improvement Framework (LIF) brings together a structure of continuous learning which improves practitioner responses to children and young people at risk. This is undertaken through:

- Findings and lessons from the broad range of work undertaken by the LSCB and partners are effectively disseminated across the partnership using a range of methods such as:

- Training and development programmes of work for staff across Leeds
- Learning from LLR's SCR's, Child Death reviews and audit activity shared across the partnership.
- Bulletins and website-this is tracked intelligently with statistics on whether bulletins are opened and read, hits on the LSCP website including which pages are accessed the most.
- Monitoring actions that are being undertaken to improve services such as:
 - Section 11, and Education 175/157 responsibilities
 - External Inspections
 - The monitoring of organisations internal safeguarding action plans
 - The impact on practice, multi-agency working and outcomes for children and young people.

3.6 Multi-agency policies and procedures continue to be developed and implemented to support practice and multi-agency working. This significantly helps to consolidate and improve the functioning of the children's safeguarding system in order to better support vulnerable children and young people.

3.7 The LSCP continues to take a leadership role in instigating partners to engage with the way in which professionals work together and with children, young people and their families in order to improve outcomes through earlier and more effective intervention.

3.8 The Report concludes with a series of key priorities for 2018/19 (for the consideration of the Children & Families Trust Board, Leeds Safeguarding Adults Board, Safer Leeds Executive and Health and Wellbeing Board). These are:

1. Bringing the Safeguarding Boards together, and securing a new (post Wood Review) Partnership.
2. Maintaining a strong focus on Early Help
3. Ensure that there is an appropriate response to those that seek to harm children and young people
4. To tackle Neglect through the LSCP Neglect Strategy 2017
5. Monitoring of, and appropriately responding to the wide range of vulnerabilities that adolescents are exposed to as highlighted within the LSCP Risk and Vulnerability Strategy.
6. To adopt a strength based learning approach by learning from the good and outstanding practice seen in Leeds.

3.9 Implicit in all of the above are the values and ethics of the Leeds approach, such as 'listening to the voice of the child', child centred and restorative approaches.

4 Corporate Considerations

Whilst the LSCB is a stand-alone Board which sits outside the direct corporate structure or governance of the system, much of what it does impacts directly on the corporate responsibilities and accountabilities of Leeds City Council

4.1 Consultation and Engagement

4.1.1 This is a report produced through a process of engagement and consultation with partners on the LSCB. Active interest and support from CLT and Corporate Leaders in the work of the LSCB has made a significant contribution to the work of the LSCB.

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

4.2.1 The LSCB has made significant strides in 2017/18 to engage with a range of communities in the City, including the faith communities, and with a range of local third sector organisations. There is much still to do to engage more extensively to support the development of safe cohesive communities that promote the welfare of their children, and protect them from harm. 2017 has been a year of strengthening partnerships between the LSCB, The Adult Safeguarding Board and Safer Leeds through joint working and identifying shared priorities.

4.3 **Council policies and Best Council Plan**

4.3.1 Leeds LSCB contributes to the cities strategic planning and holding partners to account to ensure that the most vulnerable children of Leeds are safe from harm. Children and Young People are a key priority for the city and the LSCB promotes and supports the Child Friendly City Initiative, the Children and Young Peoples Plan and the Best Council Plan so that the children and young people of Leeds have the best start in life and are safe, and feel safe.

4.4 **Resources and value for money**

4.4.1 LSCB annual budgets, which come from a range of partner agencies such as Health, Police and the Local Authority, reflect the Board's Independent statutory multi-agency responsibilities and agreed priorities. Expenditure is monitored through regular reports to the LSCB Executive Board. The LSCB 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 and contributing to broader planning, commissioning and delivery.

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

4.5.1 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's Services consider any implications for the work of Leeds City Council.

4.6 **Risk Management**

4.6.1 The LSCB has a statutory responsibility under Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015 to hold partners to account to ensure all children at risk of, or experiencing harm are appropriately supported. This responsibility is in line with LCC Corporate Risk Management Framework for safeguarding children and young people and ensures LCC is challenged and supported in ensuring that the relevant safeguarding governance, quality of front line practice, training, clarity of staff roles and responsibilities and the voice of the child is of the highest standard.

5 **Conclusions**

5.1 This report presents a summary of the work of Leeds Safeguarding Board in 2017/18. It sets out its key priorities and challenges for the Council and partners to the Board in 2018/19.

6 **Recommendations**

The LCC Executive Board is asked to consider:

- The contents of the LSCB's Annual Report,

- The safeguarding priorities for the city identified in the LSCP Annual report

7 **Background documents¹**

7.1 None

¹ 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.