

Leeds Safeguarding Children Partnership - Update

Date: 4 October

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 2022/23, the Board considered a number of work items in relation to the Notification of Serious Child Safeguarding Incidents. The board requested and received a number of updates from the LSCP Executive throughout this period the last of which was during the meeting on 8 March 2023.
- The 8 March 2023 public meeting provided an opportunity for an update on the review of the notification process and for the LSCP Executive to discuss its general priorities, with particular reference to key cross cutting themes identified through the LSCP review processes and general activity through an overview of the then forthcoming annual report. At that meeting it was agreed that a further update item from the LSCP would be considered in Autumn 2023 and some specific areas of interest were also identified and included in the minutes.
- The Board may wish to consider having an update of LSCP activity as a standing item for the Board's annual work programme which would enable an annual 'check in' on activity and could be complemented by future iterations of the LSCP annual report.
- In addition, the LSCP Executive has provided an update report which is appended for the Board's consideration at Appendix 1.

Recommendations

1. Members are requested to consider the content of the attached report from the Leeds Safeguarding Children Partnership and determine appropriate next steps, if any.
2. Consider whether an annual update on LSCP activity would be an appropriate standing item for the Board's work programme.

What is this report about?

1. In March 2023, the Children and Families Scrutiny Board held a public meeting dedicated to safeguarding and the work of the LSCP in the city with a particular focus on cross cutting themes and learning from the review of notifications processes that had taken place in 2022 along with an overview of the then forthcoming LSCP Annual Report.
2. Following a constructive discussion in March, the Chair sought Board agreement for next steps on this issue. Following discussion, and recorded in the minutes from March 2023, the following were agreed as areas of focus for an update report in September or October 2023:
 - The findings from the LSCP Executive's twelve-month review of its revised notification processes, which will be undertaken in July 2023.
 - Progress on the work being undertaken around practitioner escalation and resolution of concerns.
 - Capturing the voice of the child and evidencing how the learning stemming from reviews is being disseminated and is improving outcomes for children and young people.
 - Addressing the use of language and jargon and understanding the use of definitions used in the sector.
 - The work being undertaken to ensure the use of accurate and timely risk assessments and improving awareness and understanding amongst practitioners around differing risk assessment processes.
 - The Leeds input into the review of the Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 guidance, with an update on progress dependent upon the timing of the national review process.
 - Clarification of the levels of oversight, including democratic oversight, that surrounds those Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews that are notified to the National Safeguarding Practice Review Panel.
3. This item has therefore been brought forward to reflect the agreed position taken by the Children and Families Scrutiny Board in municipal year 2022/23.
4. Furthermore, as noted above Board members may wish to consider a more regular update approach to consideration of issues and activity related to the LSCP, potentially through an annual work item that can be included in the Work Programme as a standard item each municipal year.

What impact will this proposal have?

5. The information presented to the Scrutiny Board will assist Members in determining appropriate next steps and will ensure that actions agreed by the Board in previous years are taken account of and dealt with appropriately and to agreed timescales.

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

Health and Wellbeing

Inclusive Growth

Zero Carbon

6. 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

7. 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 March 2023 and previous public meetings that have considered these issues to contribute to the discussion and address any questions from Board Members.
8. In addition, the former 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.
9. 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?

10. This report has no specific resource implications.

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

11. Details of any associated risk management implications will be reflected as part of the appended report from the LSCP.

What are the legal implications?

12. 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).
13. 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.
14. 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 – Update Report of the Leeds Safeguarding Children Partnership
- Appendix 2 – Partnership Serious Child Safeguarding Incident Notification Form

Background papers

- None.