

REPORT TO: Health and Wellbeing Board

DATE: 4th November 2015

REPORTING OFFICER: HSCB Independent Chair

PORTFOLIO: Children, Young People and Families

SUBJECT: Halton Safeguarding Children Board Annual Report 2014-15

WARDS: Boroughwide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 The purpose of this report is to present the Health and Wellbeing Board with Halton LSCB Annual Report 2014-15 for information.

2.0 RECOMMENDED: That the contents of the report and associated Annual Report (Appendix 1) be noted.

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 Keeping children and young people safe and promoting their welfare continues to be a high priority for the Council and partner agencies. The Lead Member for Children, Young People and Families attends the LSCB Main Board as a participant observer, and the LSCB Chair meets with the Lead Member, Chief Executive and Strategic Director on a quarterly basis to ensure there is an effective working relationship between the Children's Trust and LSCB, and that the LSCB is working effectively.

3.2 The LSCB Annual Report provides a rigorous and transparent assessment of the performance and effectiveness of local services to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people. It should identify areas of weakness, the causes of those weaknesses and the action being taken to address as well as other proposals for action. The report includes lessons from learning and improvement activity within the reporting period including: Serious Case Reviews, Practice Learning Reviews, Child Death Reviews and audits. The report also lists the contributions made to the LSCB by partners and details the LSCB's expenditure.

3.3 From November 2013 LSCBs become subject to the review of their effectiveness and in November/December 2014 the LSCB was reviewed by Ofsted alongside the inspection of services for children in need of help and protection, children looked after and care leavers. The LSCB Annual Report is a grade descriptor within the inspection framework. It is published in the public domain.

3.4 In terms of the report's content:-

- The **Chair's Introduction** references the challenging economic environment and changes in public services which impact on safeguarding; Ofsted review of the LSCB which recognised that partners work together to address safeguarding, but that the LSCB needs to do more to engage with the faith sector and children and young people.
- The **LSCB Structure** which has evolved to address the increased focus upon Child Sexual Exploitation, Trafficking and Missing children; and the efficiencies provided by bringing together sub groups on a Pan Cheshire basis where appropriate; the governance arrangements between the Children's Trust, LSCB and Health & Wellbeing Board;
- The **Demographics of Halton**
- The **Key Priorities 2014-15** provides examples of the work of partners to achieve the LSCB's 5 key strategic priorities and the 5 areas of focus;
- **Safeguarding Activity** includes data across the safeguarding continuum from Early Help to Child Protection, Children in Care, including Children in the Care of Other Local Authorities living in Halton and Adoption; alongside data on key vulnerable groups: Private Fostering, Missing Children, Child Sexual Exploitation and Domestic Abuse;
- **Work of the Sub Groups** section outlines progress and forthcoming priorities of the Sub Groups – Scrutiny & Performance, Child Sexual Exploitation, Missing and Trafficked Children, Health, Learning & Development, Safer Workforce, Policy & Procedures and Child Death Overview Panel;
- **Training Activity** summarises multi-agency training and impact on outcomes for children and families;
- The **Local Authority Designated Officer** provides information on allegations management;
- **LSCB Challenge** section provides examples of where individual organisations or strategic partnerships were challenged by the LSCB on key safeguarding issues;
- **Learning and Improvement** includes reviews and;
- **Key Priorities 2015-16** outlines areas for improvement following Ofsted's review of the LSCB and the strategic priorities for the Business Plan 2015-17;
- The **Budget** reports on the financial viability of the Board.

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

Section 13 of the Children Act 2004 requires each local authority to establish an LSCB and specifies the organisations and individuals that should be represented on the LSCB. The LSCB should work with the Health & Wellbeing Board, informing and drawing on the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment. The Chair must publish an Annual Report on the effectiveness of child safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in the local area. (Section 14A of the Children Act 2004.) The report should be submitted to the Chair of the Health & Wellbeing Board.

5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 The LSCB is currently funded via contributions from the Council, Schools, Cheshire Constabulary, NHS Halton CCG and Cafcass. Contributions have reduced during recent years with the LSCB losing contributions from Connexions, the Child Death Grant and year on year reductions from the Schools Forum. The LSCB is undertaking work with partners to uplift financial contributions and increase in kind contributions, as well as approaching partners who do not currently contribute financially to the Board. The current financial contributions cover staffing, but leave little additional resources to support the Board in undertaking its objectives and functions.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

6.1 Children and Young People in Halton

The LSCB and Children's Trust have a formal protocol in place that sets out the accountability arrangements between the two. The Safeguarding Children Board is a formal consultee of the Children & Young People's Plan. Also, the Safeguarding Children Board's priorities are referenced in the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment, which the LSCB provided significant input towards developing the section on safeguarding children.

6.2 Employment, Learning and Skills in Halton

The LSCB has statutory functions regarding training, supervision and safer recruitment to support a skilled, competent and confident workforce across the partners working in the borough with children & young people, families and adults who may be parents/carers.

6.3 A Healthy Halton

The safeguarding of children is fundamental to their health and well-being. The LSCB is expected to influence the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment by ensuring it takes into account safeguarding children priorities. The LSCB has established a Health Sub Group to provide focus upon safeguarding children across the health sector. The LSCB has also directed the Emotional Health & Wellbeing of Young People Board to provide assurances regarding the Mental Health Strategy and service provision for children and young people.

6.4 A Safer Halton

The effectiveness of safeguarding children arrangements is fundamental to making Halton a safe place of residence for children and young people. The LSCB has identified the impact of domestic abuse on children and young people as a priority area of focus and has supported Halton Domestic Abuse Forum with training delivery for staff.

The LSCB has undertaken work with Licensing to raise awareness amongst taxi drivers of Child Sexual Exploitation. However developing reporting in relation to other areas of licensed activity has been less successful.

Going forward duties regarding Prevent and Channel will be a priority.

6.5 Halton's Urban Renewal

None.

7.0 RISK ANALYSIS

The LSCB Annual Report is expected to provide a rigorous and transparent assessment of the performance and effectiveness of local services to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people. This includes identifying areas of weakness which impact on outcomes for children in the borough, and is a focus for Ofsted inspection of the Local Authority. Following the Ofsted inspection in November/December 2014, the risk is that an inspection may take place again before there is evidence that the work being undertaken to address priority areas for improvement has evidenced impact. In addition, future inspections will be undertaken on a multi-agency basis. Therefore all partners need to be prepared to evidence the work the effectiveness of the work they have undertaken to safeguard children and young people.

The key risk for the LSCB in undertaking its functions is to secure the necessary financial contributions from partners to support the work of the Board going forward.

8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

An Equality Impact Assessment is not required for this report.

9.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

Document	Place of Inspection	Contact Officer
Children Act 2004	Gov.UK Website	Tracey Holyhead
Working Together to Safeguard Children (2015)	Gov.UK Website	Tracey Holyhead
