

## READING HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD

DATE OF MEETING:	19 January 2018	AGENDA ITEM:	10
REPORT TITLE:	Reading Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) Annual Report 2016/2017		
REPORT AUTHOR:	Esther Blake	TEL:	X73269
JOB TITLE:	Business Manager	E-MAIL:	Esther.blake@reading.gov.uk
ORGANISATION:	Reading LSCB		

### 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 The Reading Local Safeguarding Children Board is the key statutory partnership whose role is to oversee how the relevant organisations co-operate to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in Reading and to ensure the effectiveness of the arrangements. (Working Together To Safeguard Children 2015).
- 1.2 This Annual Report is being presented to the Health and Wellbeing Board to ensure members are informed about the work of and achievements of the LSCB for the 2016/2017 financial year. The Annual Report has a wide distribution and is sent to key stakeholders and partners so that they can be informed about the work and use the information in planning within their own organisations to keep children and young people safe.

### 2. RECOMMENDED ACTION

- 2.1 That the Health and Wellbeing Board note the attached annual report.

### 3. POLICY CONTEXT

- 3.1 As required by Working Together 2015, the LSCB Chair is required to publish an annual report on the effectiveness of child safeguarding arrangements and promotion of the welfare of children in Reading. The report must be presented to the Health and Wellbeing Board, the CEO of the Local Authority and the Police and Crime Commissioner.
- 3.2 In line with this statutory guidance the report is presented to the Health and Wellbeing Board for information. It was also be presented to the Adult Social Care, Children's Services and Education Committee in December 2017.

### 4. THE REPORT

- 4.1 Partnership working underpins an effective LSCB and this report contains information on some of the activities and achievements which have taken place that demonstrate this and the impact this has on practice. Board members both champion and lead the safeguarding agenda within their agency and bring to the LSCB issues regarding safeguarding that relate primarily to their own agency, but which have implications for the co-operation between agencies and the monitoring role of the Board.

#### 4.2 **Priority areas for 2016/2017:**

The report focusses on the achievements and ongoing challenges for the LSCB and partners specifically against the priorities identified for the 2016/17 year. These were:

**Priority 1. Children's Emotional Health and Wellbeing** - there are increasing numbers of children and young people presenting with emotional health and wellbeing issues, both locally and nationally.

**Priority 2. Strengthening the Child's Journey and Voice** - we need to evaluate the effectiveness of different aspects of the child's journey into help and services, the quality of the decisions made by individual agencies and the quality of multi-agency processes.

**Priority 3. Child Sexual Exploitation** - we must ensure that all children and young people who are vulnerable to exploitation are identified and protected through the co-ordination and provision of effective multi-agency service provision.

**Priority 4. Neglect** - neglect is the persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect is the highest category for children and young people in Reading on a Child Protection Plan (53.8% in 2016/17) and has been for some time.

**Priority 5. Improving Cultural Confidence and Competence in our Workforce to meet Children's Needs** - Reading is hugely diverse made up of many cultures and ethnicities. We need to ensure all children and young people are protected, no matter what their ethnic group.

4.3 The LSCB achievements and progress for 2016/17 are listed within the annual report under the priority headings. Also specified are the ongoing concerns which the LSCB will continue to challenge in 2017/18, and associated actions, all of which are included within the LSCB Business Plan or via other partnership groups.

#### 4.4 **Ofsted Inspection in May 2016**

In May and June 2016 Ofsted undertook a review of the effectiveness of Reading LSCB as part of the inspection of services for children in need of help and protection, children looked after and care leavers in Reading. The inspection determined that Reading LSCB requires improvement and made five recommendations which were incorporated into an action plan. More information can be found on page 13 of the report.

4.5 The Ofsted inspection found that RBC Children's Services were inadequate and the recommendations made were incorporated into the Children's Learning and Improvement Plan. The LSCB Chairs sits on the Children's Services Improvement Board, and the LSCB is actively involved in the improvement journey, especially with regards to threshold application and early help services. The LSCBs role is to engage and bring together partners to progress solutions and changes in practice and to monitor improvements.

#### 4.6 **Board Structure:**

The Board has nine sub-groups that drive forward the business of the Board. These sub-groups report directly into the Reading LSCB, although six work across either the west of Berkshire or pan Berkshire to ensure consistency and efficiencies with our neighbouring LSCBs. Two LSCB sub groups have significantly improved their review processes during the year. The revised cases for consideration process for the West of Berkshire Case Review Group has ensured clear and timely documentation has been presented to the group for review and decide if a formal case review (or Serious Case Review) is required. The Pan Berkshire Policy and Procedures Sub Group have taken a pro-active role in identifying chapters of the child protection procedures that require review and ensuing updates are agreed and key local issues addressed.

#### 4.7 **Progress since April 2017:**

The Annual Report relates specifically to the 2016/17 year; however there have been a range of developments since April. These include:

- The appointment of a new LSCB Chair from September 2017, Alex Walters.

- The Children's Single Point of Access continues to improve with new pathways including CSE, missing children and domestic abuse. Partner involvement with this service is vital to ensure success.
- Briefings are taking place regularly to encourage partners to find out more about Children's Single Point of Access, who works there, what they do and how to make contact.
- Thames Valley Police have implemented a fortnightly disruption meeting to identify and plan all CSE related disruption activity
- LSCB Forum sessions have continued to be organised and well attended from across the partnership. These free two hour sessions have included topics on disguised compliance, Fabricated and Induced Illness and CSE.
- Training sessions are organised for the Graded Care Profile. This is an assessment tool that helps professionals measure the quality of care being given to a child and helps them to spot anything that's putting that child at risk of harm.
- A pilot multi-agency reflective case meeting for families where long term neglect is an issue is being organised.
- Use of a multi-agency chronology will be piloted on a few selected cases of neglect to assess how this can be used and identify improvements in decision making.
- The Reading Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities Strategy has been written. There is a strategy group chaired by the RBC Director with 4 work strands (and associated working groups) - Data/needs analysis, early intervention, utilising specialist resources and transition to adulthood.

#### 4.8 The future of the LSCB:

National: Consultation is currently underway on the new version of Working Together 18, the statutory guidance for children's services and LSCBs. It contains a range of changes for LSCBs, including the requirement for the three Safeguarding partners (Local Authority, Clinical Commissioning Groups and Police) to agree and publish arrangements to safeguard children and LSCBs will no longer be a statutory requirement. The establishment of a new national Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel to undertake reviews of serious cases and the transfer of responsibility for child death reviews from LSCBs to new Child Death Review Partners under the governance of the Department of Health. The three safeguarding partners will be expected to jointly ensure safeguarding practices are maintained, monitored and improved. The changes will be considered by the Reading LSCB when it meets on 7<sup>th</sup> December.

4.9 Local: In line with recommendations made by partners involved in the three West of Berkshire LSCBs (Reading, West Berkshire and Wokingham), the new LSCB Chair is developing and proposing plans to merge the three Boards into one Berkshire West Safeguarding Children Board. Initial discussions are taking place with the Directors of Children's Services in each Local Authority, and leads in the key partner agencies. Proposals will initially be discussed at the LSCB meeting in January 2018.

## 5. CONTRIBUTION TO STRATEGIC AIMS

- 5.1 The work of the LSCB aligns with the Health and Wellbeing Strategy by contributing to the Strategy's priority to 'Promoting positive mental health and wellbeing in children and young people'.
- 5.2 The report also supports the fact that Reading's 2017-20 Health and Wellbeing Strategy is built on three foundations - safeguarding vulnerable adults and children, recognising and supporting all carers, and high quality co-ordinated information to support wellbeing. The LSCB specifically addresses the first statement in all the work that it does.

## **6. COMMUNITY & STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT**

6.1 The Annual report has been written with contributions from all LSCB partners and circulated to the Board. It will be disseminated to all partners.

## **7. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

7.1 An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) has not been carried out for this report however, equality and diversity continues to be a key theme for the LSCB.

## **8. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

8.1 There are no legal implications with this report. Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015 requires that the LSCB to produce an annual report.

## **9. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

9.1 None

## **10. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- Reading LSCB Annual Report 2016/17