

READING HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD

DATE OF MEETING:	17 January 2020		
REPORT TITLE:	Berkshire West Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) Annual Report 2018/2019		
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ORGANISATION:	Berkshire West Safeguarding Children Partnership		

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 Until March 2019, the Local Safeguarding Children Board was the key statutory partnership whose role was 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 and 2018).
- 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 in Reading for the 2018/2019 financial year. In addition, the new partnership arrangements that replaced the LSCB from April 2019 are described.

2. RECOMMENDED ACTION

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

3. POLICY CONTEXT

- 3.1 As required by Working Together 2015 and 2018, the LSCB is required to publish an annual report on the effectiveness of child safeguarding arrangements and promotion of the welfare of children in Reading, detailing the work and progress undertaken within the year, giving an account of how it has discharged its duties against statutory guidance.
- 3.2 In May 2018, the three separate LSCBs in Berkshire West (Reading, Wokingham and West Berkshire) began a trial year operating as a single Board, as part of the transition to our new partnership arrangements. In July 2018, a revised Working Together to Safeguard Children was published, which removed the statutory requirement to have an LSCB, but required statutory partners to ensure appropriate local safeguarding arrangements are in place. We published our arrangements in March 2019 and they were implemented in June 2019. However, there remained a requirement for a final LSCB annual report, which is attached for information. This is a Berkshire West report, but information in relation to Reading is specified within it.

4. THE REPORT

- 4.1 Partnership working and scrutiny underpin 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. LSCB members have both championed and lead the safeguarding agenda within their agency and brought 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 statutory partners.

- 4.2 The report provides information regarding the move towards a Berkshire West approach, work and progress made against the LSCB shared and local priorities, plus updates from various sub groups which are either local, pan Berkshire West or pan Berkshire. Also specified are the ongoing concerns which the new multi-agency partnership arrangements will continue to challenge in 2019/20, all of which are included within a revised Business Plan being currently agreed.
- 4.3 **Working Together Safeguard Children 2018**
In November 2015, the Department for Education (DfE) commissioned a review of LSCBs and Serious Case Review and Child Death functions, undertaken by Alan Wood. The subsequent legislation in response to the review is contained in the Children and Social Work Act, and in June 2018 the DfE issued a revised Working Together to Safeguard Children, which is the statutory guidance supporting the legislation. The legislation in relation to LSCBs is no longer prescriptive, with the primary change being that the three Local Safeguarding Partners (the Local Authority, Clinical Commissioning Group and Police) must take a shared and equitable responsibility to agreeing, funding, operating and publicising their local safeguarding partnership arrangements. There is no longer a statutory requirement to have an LSCB or an Independent LSCB Chair, plus there are a number of other changes relating to the Case Review and Child Death review arrangements.
- 4.4 Locally, we had already recognised the benefits of collaborative working and therefore the existing Berkshire West merger task and finish group also took on the function of establishing our preferred new multi-agency safeguarding arrangements. To support this process, the LSCB Chair submitted a bid for DfE funding for the Early Adopter programme of new safeguarding arrangements and was one of 17 sites agreed nationally. This funding provided capacity for a programme manager to lead and ensure the work streams identified to support this work were progressed. This included work on Governance and accountability, independent scrutiny and quality assurance, work with the Education Sector to enable appropriate engagement with clear dissemination pathways, and clarity on the functions and resources required of the new multi-agency safeguarding arrangements.
- 4.5 As an early adopter, our new multi-agency safeguarding arrangements were published on 30th March 2019, ahead of the national deadline. The multi-agency partnership is called the Berkshire West Safeguarding Children Partnership (BWSCP) and the published safeguarding arrangements document and a child and young people's version can be found via this link:
<https://www.berkshirerwestsafeguardingchildrenpartnership.org.uk/scp/about-the-scp/about-the-bwscp>.
- 4.6 Pages 14-16 of the annual report provide more detail of how we expect the BWSCP to be different to the LSCB, our approach to independent scrutiny without an independent Chair and our plans to embed the new arrangements. It is important to realise that bringing three different areas together in one partnership has great benefits, but does come with significant challenges. We will continue to work with all the statutory and non-statutory partners to revise and develop our arrangements over time to ensure we have an effective, coherent and efficient set of partnership arrangements.
- 4.7 Governance - attached is the structure chart for the new BWSCP multi-agency partnership arrangements. Although not explicit in this chart, there are and will continue to be links to other multi-agency partnerships such as the Safeguarding Adult Board, Health and Wellbeing Boards, and the Community Safety Partnerships in all three

areas. The statutory safeguarding partners are key members of these groups and will ensure that priority areas of work are not duplicated and that good practice or areas of concern are shared, as appropriate. The BWSCP will continue to produce an annual report, which will be shared.

5. CONTRIBUTION TO STRATEGIC AIMS

- 5.1 The work of the LSCB and the new BWSCP 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 and agreed by the Statutory Safeguarding Partners. It was disseminated to all partners and published on the Berkshire West Safeguarding Children Partnership website in November 2019.

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 and the new partnership arrangements.

8. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 There are no legal implications with this report. Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 requires that the LSCB produce an annual report.

9. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 None

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 10.1 None