

Health and Wellbeing Board

23 November 2016

Report of the Independent Chair of the City of York Safeguarding Children Board

2015/16 Annual Report of the Independent Chair - City of York Safeguarding Children Board (CYSCB) and Safeguarding Update to October 2016

Summary

1. The purpose of this report is to present the CYSCB Annual Report 2015/16 and provide an update on key issues between April and October 2016 as agreed in the protocol with the Health and Wellbeing Board (HWBB).

Background

2. The Independent Chair of the Safeguarding Children Board is required by statutory guidance to publish an annual report on the effectiveness of child safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in the local area. The report should be submitted to the Chief Executive, Leader of the Council, the local Police and Crime Commissioner and the Chair of the Health and Wellbeing Board.
3. The City of York Safeguarding Children Board has the statutory objective set out in Section 14 of the Children Act 2004 *to coordinate* what is done by each person or body represented on the Board for the purposes of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in the area; and *to ensure the effectiveness of what is done by each such person or body for those purposes*
4. To provide effective scrutiny, the CYSCB should be independent. It should not be subordinate to, nor subsumed within, other local structures.

5. The Health and Wellbeing Strategy includes the key objective of 'Enabling all children and young people to have the best start in life'. Delivery of this will significantly strengthen safeguarding arrangements for the children of York. Member organisations of the Health and Wellbeing Board and the YorOk Board are represented on the Safeguarding Board.

Main/Key Issues to be Considered

Annual Report 2015-16 (Annexes 1a and 1b)

6. This annual report of the City of York Safeguarding Children Board (CYSCB) covers the year ending 31 March 2016.

The work of the Board is driven by its vision:

“For all the children of York to grow up in safety and to always feel safe”

7. The last two years have been characterised by continuous improvement and steady forward progress, coupled with growing partnership involvement, purpose, and respect. Consequently, the Board is able confidently to set its priorities for action in 2016 and beyond.
8. Within this report we have set out the achievements made this last year but also identified the improvements that we must continue to address.
9. The Board is confident that safeguarding arrangements in York are robust – but they can always be further strengthened. The challenge will be to maintain the progress of the last three years, at a time of unprecedented pressures on public finances, and through a period of national policy changes (including to the focus and remit of safeguarding boards) without losing sight of what matters most: the safety and wellbeing of children in York.

Safeguarding Update – April to October 2016

Current National Issues

Proposed Government changes to safeguarding arrangements in the Children and Social Work Act 2016

10. These changes are contained within Chapter 2 of the Children and Social Work Bill. The Bill has completed grand committee stage in the House of Lords and is now at report stage. It will then pass to the Commons. There were many objections in the Lords to the process. There is a long list of amendments raised.
11. The primary change is a proposal to abolish LSCBs (Local Safeguarding Children's Boards) in their current form, however there will still be a statutory framework for local safeguarding arrangements as set out below:

“(1) The safeguarding partners for a local authority area in England must make arrangements for (a) the safeguarding partners, and (b) any relevant agencies that they consider appropriate, to work together in exercising their functions, so far as the functions are exercised for the purpose of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in the area.

(2) The arrangements must include arrangements for the safeguarding partners to work together to identify and respond to the needs of children in the area.” “Safeguarding partner”, in relation to a local authority area in England, means:

- (a) the local authority;
 - (b) a clinical commissioning group for an area any part of which falls within the local authority area;
 - (c) the chief officer of police for a police area any part of which falls within the local authority area.”
- The arrangements must include arrangements for scrutiny by an independent person of the effectiveness of the arrangements.
 - Annual report - At least once in every 12-month period, the safeguarding partners must prepare and publish a report on:
 - (a) what the safeguarding partners and relevant agencies for the local authority area have done as a result of the arrangements, and
 - (b) how effective the arrangements have been in practice.”

- Serious Case Reviews (SCR) will be undertaken by a National Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel which will be appointed by the Secretary of State. It anticipates undertaking 20-30 reviews a year.
- Local child safeguarding practice reviews will continue but the arrangements for decision making are yet to be published. The decision around local reviews will include national consideration.
- Within the bill itself, there is a proposal for the Secretary of State to have the power to exempt councils from legislation, but the Secretary of State must consult with certain bodies before doing that.
- There are proposed statutory arrangements to allow for devolution of responsibilities between local authorities and Clinical Commissioning Groups.
- Transfer arrangements for Child Death Overview Panel (CDOP) to the Department for Health are still to be agreed and published.
- Authorities can continue to have joint CDOP working arrangements across local authority areas as we currently have in York & North Yorkshire County Council in the Bill “child death review partners”, in relation to a local authority area in England, means— (a) the local authority; (b) any clinical commissioning group for an area any part of which falls within the local authority area.”

Local considerations to date

12. At CYSCB meeting on 22nd June the CYSCB agreed the recommendations below and mandated the Chair to follow up these on behalf of the Board.

- The Independent Chair, working with the safeguarding Chief Officers Reference and Accountability Group (CORAG) should initiate discussions on any potential changes to local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements in York. This promotes continuity and reduces risk. (This has been completed)
- Consider how independent scrutiny will be visible in future arrangements.

- Should local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements re-focus their work on local assurance, scrutiny and challenge?
 - Consider which multi-agency safeguarding functions or cross cutting issues could benefit from a joint, sub-regional or regional basis.
 - Consider an inter-board protocol to reduce duplication, clarify strategic leadership and use partner agency input and business support more effectively. (This is now completed)
 - Consider how to plan for the proposed changes in respect of CDOP (Child Death Overview Panel).
13. At the CORAG meeting in October it was agreed that CYSCB is well-placed in respect of new arrangements, with no current concerns as to the compliance of existing arrangements with emerging proposals contained within the Children and Social Care Bill. During 2017 plans for future arrangements will be developed to ensure they are compliant with the new legislation and regulations which are expected for consultation in the autumn of 2017. It was agreed further planning will take place to consider the following questions:
- a) How the proposed statutory safeguarding partners of LA (Local Authority), Police and CCG (Clinical Commissioning Group) wish to make decisions on new arrangements post the legislation.
 - b) How arrangements will be supported and funded in future.
 - c) How the wider engagement of other partners that currently exists should be sustained.
 - d) Should the statutory safeguarding partners have an executive strategic board with the current LSCB (Local Safeguarding Children Board) arrangements amended to be focused on delivery and implementation?
 - e) How the proposed statutory safeguarding partners of LA, Police and CCG wish to make decisions on new arrangements post the legislation.
 - f) How arrangements will be supported and funded in future.
 - g) How the wider engagement of other partners that currently exists should be sustained.
 - h) Should the statutory safeguarding partners have an executive strategic board with the current LSCB arrangements amended to be focused on delivery and implementation?

New Joint Targeted Area Inspections

14. In August 2016, Ofsted, the Care Quality Commission, Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation started the second round of Joint Targeted Area Inspections (JTAI) of services for vulnerable children and young people. This will involve jointly assessing how local authorities, the police, health, probation and youth offending services in an area provide "front door" services and are working together to identify, support and protect children affected by domestic abuse. The next round of inspections is expected to focus on neglect.

Government Consultation on Mandatory Reporting and acting on child abuse and neglect

15. This Government consultation concluded on 13th October. It was discussed at the Board in August and it was agreed that individual organisations should consider making their own representations and that it was unlikely that there would be sufficient consensus across the Board members to provide a common response on behalf of the Board.
16. Below is a short extract from the ADCS (Association of Directors of Children's Services) and LGA(Local Government Association) position for your information:

"ADCS and the LGA oppose the introduction of mandatory reporting or a duty to act for the following reasons:

"There is no evidence that mandatory reporting systems will provide greater protection for children and young people nor lead to better outcomes. We are concerned that the resulting increase in inappropriate contacts / referrals risks weakening the child protection system in this country, a system that is widely recognised as one of the safest and most successful in the world."

"An unintended consequence of mandatory reporting could be distortion of social responsibility. Communities should be empowered to recognise the early signs of all forms of abuse and neglect and be confident in responding appropriately to this risk instead of being reliant on the state to act at all times."

17. When the results of the consultation are published the Board will consider any local impact which may occur as a result of any legislative change that follows.

CQC - A review of the arrangements for child safeguarding and health care for looked after children in England

18. The Care Quality Commission (CQC) undertook a 2-year programme of Looked After Children & Safeguarding reviews. (*Annex 2*) The CQC overview report was published in July 2016. This was discussed at the CYSCB in August with a presentation from the CCG.
19. The report is being shared with clinical safeguarding governance meetings and safeguarding networks. York and North Yorkshire are in a good position with all children in care work commissioned from Harrogate and District NHS Foundation Trust. To continue to improve, the Board agreed to coordinate an "is it true for York" exercise to assess ourselves (and particularly our health partners) against the key recommendations as an additional consideration of the Annual Section 11(S11) of the Children Act (2004) Audit (see below for information on S11 Audit).

Progress on CYSCB priorities April to October 2016

Neglect

20. Neglect remains an ongoing challenge both nationally and locally. At the end of 2014-15, 46.4% of the children subject to a Child Protection Plan in York were under the category of "neglect". This percentage has risen during the year and is higher than last year (37%)
21. The combined factor of 'neglect', 'parental substance misuse' and 'absent parenting' (all of which could be considered as 'neglect') is the most prevalent factor in referrals and enquiries to CSC.
22. Neglect has been found to be a risk factor for a range of longer-term impacts in adolescence and adulthood. Neglect may be one reason why young people go missing from home. Currently, missing children are the often focus of concerns around CSE but once a child has been found, all reasons – including neglect – should be considered

23. The range of indicators, and the evidence about the long-term impacts of neglect, emphasise the importance of early identification to prevent significant deterioration of emotional and physical health and development in children. All professionals have a responsibility to act when they suspect neglect
24. This is an area where there is still a need to accelerate work to update plans and ensure we have a clear strategy, action plan and measures in place to monitor impact over time.
25. The Board sub group has made progress led by the Director of Public Health and a successful seminar was held in July. Around 70 practitioners from many agencies and organisations discussed ideas on addressing neglect and heard from Professor Jan Horwath, Emeritus Professor of Child Welfare from the University of Sheffield.
26. A new assessment tool 'The Graded Care Profile' is being introduced in York this to identify and address neglect.

Early Help

27. The Early Help sub group is informed and steered by the YorOk the sub group of the HWBB, however, in accordance with the statutory guidance Working Together 2015 this sub group also reports to the LSCB on issues of quality, effectiveness and outcomes.
28. Local Area Teams and a new operating model should be in place by December 2016 for launch in 2017. Threshold Guidance: This is being updated by the Children's Advice Team and will be presented to the CYSCB in December

Domestic Abuse

29. The leadership and governance of Domestic Abuse sits with the Safer York Partnership. The CYSCB set up a sub group to give additional attention to children affected by Domestic abuse. This group will complete its work by the end of the financial year.
30. It aims to gather a clearer understand of:
 - The child/young person's experiences of agency responses to domestic abuse

- Professional awareness of the impact of Domestic Abuse for children / young people
- The ability of the wider children's workforce to identify and respond to children and young people who experience domestic abuse
- The availability and access to specialist interventions for children/young people who experience domestic abuse.
- The CYSCB are also pleased to report that Operation Encompass (a scheme to inform schools of domestic abuse incidents) is being piloted some York schools. This is being led by the police. The Local Area Teams will be involved in Operation Encompass and midwives are being informed of DA happening in the family home, so will potentially also be involved with Operation Encompass.

Child sexual abuse including CSE

31. A particular highlight this year has been the Board's work, in partnership with the NSPCC, to initiate and carry out a very successful campaign - 'It's Not Ok' - to raise awareness about child sexual abuse and exploitation.
32. The CYSCB Chair wishes to thank all concerned for the excellent work and partners for providing funding and in kind support. Schools have requested a continuation of the programme for new year groups and the Chair agreed to explore opportunities via school reps and the DCS.
33. Sarah Arnott Commissioner from the Police & Crime Commissioners Office attended the CYSCB meeting in October and gave an overview and summary of the services (relevant to CSA & E) which have been commissioned by the PCC. There is still a need to sustain therapeutic support available over a significant period for adults who were child victims of abuse.

Multi Agency Safeguarding Audit (S.11 Audit)

34. Section 11 of the Children Act 2004 places a specific duty on named agencies to comply with standards set out in the S11 Guidance. A key element of the CYSCB Learning and Improvement Framework is the Section 11 audit tool.

The audit tool is a review process based on self-evaluation by partner agencies helping to identify areas of good practice and areas that need to be improved. The CYSCB is undertaking the audit jointly with North Yorkshire Safeguarding Children Board. A joint multi-agency event will be held on 9th March 2017 with North Yorkshire Safeguarding Children Board to share and discuss the initial findings. Each agency represented will be expected to provide their self-assessment and a brief action plan on how they are going to progress any areas for development. A separate self-audit format has been produced for schools.

Peer Review

35. A peer review of the CYSCB as part of the regional sector led improvement programme, has been commissioned and was undertaken in late October. When received, the learning from this will be discussed at a board development day in late November and will inform future planning. The Chair of the HWBB, along with the Chairs of other key boards provided input to the review

Consultation

36. This section is not applicable to this report.

Options

37. The report is for information only and as such there are no options for the Board to consider.

Analysis

38. This section is not applicable to this report

Strategic/Operational Plans

39. This topic relates to the theme of the CYC Council Plan "Protect vulnerable people".

Implications

40. **Financial** - an agreement is in place for the budget for 2017/18. Costs for any serious case reviews undertaken are not factored into the core budget and will therefore be allocated to funders on the same proportion as core funding.

41. There are no other known implications associated with the recommendations in this report.

Risk Management

42. Any national proposals emerging from the national review may impact on Board partner commitment and require further review of the structure, priorities and work of the Board during the 2017.

43. We are still awaiting our Ofsted inspection with the programme further delayed; to be completed by December 2017.

Recommendations

44. The Health and Wellbeing Board are asked to:

- Receive the Annual Report of the Independent Chair of the CYSCB and reflect on the key messages and priorities when considering plans.
- Note the update on progress on safeguarding priorities between April and October 2016.

Reason: To ensure the HWBB Board demonstrates it gives full consideration to the advice from the CYSCB

Contact Details

Author:

Simon Westwood
Independent Chair
City of York Safeguarding
Children Board

Chief Officer Responsible for the report:

Jon Stonehouse
Director of Children's Services,
Education and Skills
City of York Council

Report
Approved



Date 02.11.2016

Specialist Implications Officer(s) None

Wards Affected:

All

For further information please contact the author of the report

Background Papers:

- More detailed information can be found on the Safer York Website <http://www.saferchildrenyork.org.uk>
- Working Together 2015
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children--2>
- York Children & Young People's Plan
<http://www.york.org.uk/workforce2014/Dream%20again%20and%20YorOK%20Board/dream-again---the-children-and-young-peoples-plan.htm>
- York Health and Wellbeing Strategy
https://www.york.gov.uk/downloads/file/858/joint_health_and_wellbeing_strategy

Annexes

Annexes 1a and 1b: Executive Summary and Full Annual Report of City of York Safeguarding Children Board 2015/16

Annex 2: CQC Report 'Not Seen Not Heard'

Glossary

ADCS	(Association of Directors of Children's Services)
CCG	Clinical Commissioning Group
CDOP	Child Death Overview Panel
CORAG	Chief Officers Reference and Accountability Group (Safeguarding)
CQC	Care Quality Commission
CYSCB	City of York Safeguarding Children Board
HWBB	Health and Wellbeing Board
JTAI	Joint Targeted Area Inspections
LSCB	Local Safeguarding Children Board
LGA	Local Government Association
YorOK	York Children's Trust