

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

Annual Report of the City of York Safeguarding Board 2013/14

Summary

1. This report will give the Committee an indication of key areas of progress in implementing actions from the previous annual report and business plan between 1 April 2013 and 31 March 2014. It identifies areas for further improvement and key priorities for safeguarding across the City for 2014/15. The Committee are asked to consider these priority areas in its scrutiny activities where appropriate.

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 published in relation to the preceding financial year and should fit with local agencies' planning, commissioning and budget cycles. 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.

Main/Key Issues to be considered

3. The report at Appendix A describes the activity during 2013/14 that informs judgement about the effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements within the City of York during that period and indicates areas for further attention in the coming year. The report was considered and approved by the Safeguarding Board on the 23 July 2014 and is due for publication in September, this will be supported by a comprehensive reference document.

Consultation

4. Members of the Safeguarding Board have provided information for inclusion in the report. The Performance Sub group and Executive for the Board have provided input into the report which was co-ordinated by Children's Services Safeguarding Business Unit. The Health and Wellbeing Board were consulted on 16 July.

Analysis

5. This year has been a period of significant change; the introduction of the revised national guidance Working Together 2013, the start of a new Ofsted Inspection regime that, for the first time, includes a judgement about the effectiveness of the LSCB.
6. In the first quarter of 2014 The Board appointed a new Independent Chair, the City appointed a new Director of Children's Services and the Vale of York Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) appointed a new Chief Nurse. These are positive opportunities for further creative thinking and challenge to ensure the Board continues a culture of continuous improvement in 2014 /15.
7. As at 1 April 2013, the CCG took on its full powers but had some conditions to be met. One of which was to ensure a clear line of accountability for safeguarding is reflected in CCG governance arrangements and that there were arrangements in place to co-operate with the local authority in the operation of the Local Safeguarding Children Board and the Safeguarding Adults Board. Having provided assurances about this the CCG was fully authorised in January 2014.
8. During the summer of 2013 a peer review of the Board was commissioned which made a number of suggestions for improvement. An action plan has been implemented to respond to this. I have taken the opportunity as a new Chair to review the budget, support arrangements, structures and governance of the Board. The Safeguarding Board will consider these at a planned development day in October.
9. As Chair I have also prioritised developing the relationships with the YorOk Children's Trust and the Health and Wellbeing Board with the aim of making accountability more transparent, identifying synergies, reducing duplication of effort and ensuring safeguarding remains a key priority in the current financial context when all partners have reducing resources. This will continue for the rest of this year and into 2015/16.

10. In particular the Chair of the Adult Safeguarding Board and I are jointly committed to working together as that Board moves towards statutory status in April 2015.
11. Local Safeguarding Children Board's are now responsible for ensuring the effectiveness of early help. An Early Help strategy and action plan has been approved by the Board and the YorOk Board. In York the CYSCB has formally agreed through the Health and Wellbeing Board that the YorOK Children's Trust Board will lead on this area and will provide assurances to the CYSCB.
12. In the past year the York Health and Wellbeing Board has established a domestic violence strategy group with membership from all the relevant agencies and representatives from the CYSCB. This must ensure that responding children affected is central to the work and will provide crucial leadership for a key priority area for development. The Safeguarding Board has initiated joint work with the Police and Crime Commissioner and North Yorkshire Safeguarding Board to help shape commissioning intentions for 2015/16 in this area.
13. The Director of Public Health ensures that the needs of vulnerable children are a key part of the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) that is developed by the Health and Wellbeing board. The CYSCB will work with the Health and Wellbeing Board, informing and drawing on any updated Joint Strategic Needs Assessment which should in future include an understanding of the prevalence of neglect in the City.

Strategic/Operational Plans

14. The Health and Wellbeing strategy and The YorOk Board plan "Dream Again" 2013-16 includes the key objective of "Ensuring children and young people always feel safe" and states that Safeguarding lies at the heart of all our work, as does ensuring that there are "arenas of safety" at home, at school and in the community.
15. YorOK Board has detailed how it will deliver the principles and actions for this priority in 'Dream Again', York's Strategic Plan for Children, Young People and their Families, 2013-2016.
 - Helping children and young people to always feel safe;
 - Supporting those who need extra help at the earliest

16. The Health and Wellbeing Board is currently refreshing its strategy and the Safeguarding Board have been invited to contribute to this. This positive engagement provides the Safeguarding Board an opportunity to influence the work of the Board to ensure key priorities for safeguarding children are aligned.

Implications

17. **Financial** - Statutory Guidance; Working Together 2013 states, "All Local Safeguarding Children Boards (LSCB member organisations have an obligation to provide LSCBs with reliable resources (including finance) that enable the LSCB to be strong and effective. Members should share the financial responsibility for the LSCB in such a way that a disproportionate burden does not fall on a small number of partner agencies.
18. There is a forecast shortfall of funding for the Safeguarding Board over next three years which will need to be addressed if the current support systems and Board activity is to be maintained at the current level. This is already the subject of consideration by the key funders.
19. **Human Resources (HR)** - All partner agencies are required to provide assurances to the Safeguarding Board that they adhere to Safe Recruitment standards.
20. **Equalities** - There are no specific implications
21. **Legal** - In order to provide effective scrutiny, the CYSCB should be independent. It should not be subordinate to, nor subsumed within, other local structures.
22. **Crime and Disorder** – Without Walls Strategy 2011-2015 states "An essential factor affecting people's quality of life is that they feel safe and secure in their home and local area." Although this was written in the context of crime reduction it should also apply to safeguarding children. The Safer York Partnership is currently developing a new Community Safety Plan. The LSCB would want to see this include children and young people as a priority, particularly in relation to protecting them from crime.

Recommendation

23. The Learning and Culture Scrutiny Committee are asked to note the content of the report at Appendix A and include the Safeguarding Board priorities set out on page 14; Early Help, Neglect, Child Sexual Abuse, Domestic Abuse and Missing Children in future scrutiny activity where it deems appropriate.

Reason: To allow Members to be fully informed on areas for further improvement and key priorities for safeguarding across the City.

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Wards Affected:

All



For further information please contact Joe Cocker

Annexes

Annex A – Annual Safeguarding Children Board Report 2013/14

Abbreviations

(CCG) - Vale of York Clinical Commissioning Group
(LSCB) - Local Safeguarding Children Board
(CYSCB) - City of York Safeguarding Children Board
(JSNA) - Joint Strategic Needs Assessment