

**Report from Chair of City of York Safeguarding Children Board to the meeting 18<sup>th</sup> March 2015 - Covering the period Aug 2014 to Feb 2014**

**Summary:**

**1.1 Improvements Identified**

- The City of York Safeguarding Children Board (CYSCB) Development day was held in October 2014 Board structure and governance reviewed
- Meeting held in September to identify synergies in working with Adult Safeguarding Board and joint specification for support provided to the Chief Executive
- Joint CSE Summit held in September Board received assurance and update report for CSE Sub Groups
- Proposals to resolve budget pressures for 2015/18 sent to key funders and positive responses received
- CCG have now provided an update assurance report for the Board
- The Joint protocol on Missing Children has been refreshed
- A joint S11 Audit challenge day was held jointly with NYSCB in February 2015 this identified overall improvement by all agencies in meeting the standards
- Improvements
- A successful “No wrong door conference” held
- CYSCB Website redesigned and active
- CDOP prepared a short review on suicide and are linking with similar work undertaken in greater Manchester and nationally commissioned work being

undertaken by Manchester University

- Working groups on CSE and Missing children now linked

## **1.2 Further Areas for to Consider for Development in 2015/16**

- Business planning, board support and forward planning for meetings to ensure proportionate time is given to prepare for and consider key Board
- Performance scrutiny of frontline practice in agencies other than social care
- Quarterly meeting of Chairs of key partners to ensure cooperation and strong governance
- Collation of evidence of impact of the work of the Board
- Continue to press for joint work on children affected by domestic abuse

## **1.3 Next Steps**

- Collate information for Annual report 2014/15 for publication by September 2015
- Finalise budget and structure for 2015 -18
- Prepare for joint conference on domestic abuse with North Yorkshire SCB
- Disseminate S11 Audit outcomes and require action plans to address areas of improvement from agencies
- Arrange meeting of key partnership meeting chairs to discuss and affirm Governance arrangements for safeguarding children priorities

Members are reminded that more detailed information can be found on the Safer York Website

<http://www.saferchildrenyork.org.uk/>

## **Main body of the report**

### **2.1 Priorities**

The Key priorities for 2014/15 are:

#### **Early help:**

Making sure problems are identified early and that families are provided with the right help at the right time. The CYSCB believes that where families receive the right help early later more serious problems can be prevented.

#### **Neglect:**

The CYSCB identified child neglect as a priority in the thematic review in 2012. However, despite some progress the findings of audits and reviews means that considerably more needs to be done if children are going to be protected from the long term damaging effect of neglect.

#### **Domestic abuse:**

The CYSCB recognises that there are still too many children living in families where there is domestic abuse. We also know that domestic abuse can be an indicator for neglect and has a long lasting impact on children and will often coexist with other forms of abuse

#### **Child sexual abuse:**

Child sexual exploitation (CSE) has received a lot of attention nationally and locally. Whilst CSE remains a priority, the CYSCB believes that child sexual abuse is underreported with reviews telling us that professionals need a better understanding of sexual abuse.

#### **Children who go missing:**

Children who go missing from home, care and education are vulnerable to abuse and exploitation. We also know that children go missing for a reason; often due to difficulties at home or in care.

From the data, too many children go missing in York and that there is a need to improve the way all agencies respond. This may also be an indicator of neglect.

**The committee is asked to provide a view on whether these should be retained for 2015/16 and make any other suggestions for consideration by the Board.**

## **2.2 National Consultations**

The DfE issued a consultation document on proposed changes to Working Together 2013. This includes linking the LADO role to the social care front door service, further definitions of serious harm and criteria for undertaking Serious Case Reviews. This consultation concluded on the 2<sup>nd</sup> February.

NHS England has published a consultation on a draft refresh of the Accountability and Assurance Framework for Safeguarding in the NHS. The consultation will run until Thursday 26 March 2015. The CYSCB have circulated this and will coordinate a response from the Board.

## **2.3 CCG Assurance Report**

In October the Board received the first report from the health commissioners responsible for the services across Yorkshire, including the Yorkshire Ambulance Service (YAS), Leeds and York Foundation Partnership (L&YFT) and York Teaching Hospital Foundation Trust (YTHFT). From the CCG quality assurance perspective there was not sufficient operational capacity to fulfil its duties, however an appointment had been made to the post of Deputy Designated Nurse for Children's Safeguarding for the VOYCCG, to start in the new year and the role of Designated Nurse for Safeguarding Children across NY and Y has also now been filled

The three providers were mostly fully compliant, with minor concerns for YAS and L&YFT around DBS checks and the evidence of children's voice, which it was hoped would be solved with further training. YTHFT had merged last year with Scarborough and could only provide a report based on the previous year, which they hoped to update following the S.11 update and provide further assurance.

An area of concern highlighted was the waiting time for assessment and diagnosis of autism in children.

## **2.4 Early Help Progress Report**

The Chair of CYSCB and YorOK agreed that the YorOK Board will take the lead in monitoring the effectiveness of the Revised Threshold guidance as part of its role in monitoring Early Help. The YorOK Board report was presented to the CYSCB at the meeting in January 2015.

Key points raised in the discussion were :

- the role of Public Health in assessing the prevalence of need
- the national update to child health profiles
- the trend away from the CAF assessment to a range of Early Help assessment and strategies
- the failure to make sufficient progress on identifying the prevalence of and strategies to tackle neglect in 2014

**The YorOk Board Have been asked to prepare an assurance report on effectiveness of early help and revised threshold arrangements for 2014/15 by the end of May for inclusion on the CYSCB Annual Report 2014/15**

## **2.5 Child sexual abuse and exploitation**

In the autumn The Minister wrote to Leaders of all Councils asking them to assure themselves that the issues arising from the Jay report are being addressed in their area. The North Yorkshire Police attended the National Working Group (NWG) on 14-15 October and subsequently their report has been provided to the Board to get a full picture of the current position. The Chair made a presentation to the Board “Learning from Jay and others” this was based on sources including the Jay Report, Home Office Select Committee report and the Office of the Children’s Commissioner report.

Key points to note are:

- Bleak prognosis for victims – how can agencies help put in place a structure and support system for children going into adulthood to break the cycle
- Lack of engagement – vulnerable children are flattered by the attention of perpetrators, convinced they are special, and frequently do not accept that they are victims and avoid contact with agencies (the Rotherham LSCB were assured work was being done but failed to challenge agencies to give evidence)
- Accountability to the Board – in Rotherham the Board was too big and accountability was widely shared, making it difficult for the Chair to give due weight to every interest and allow full debate.
- LSCB Structure – the Rotherham LSCB conducted their own diagnosis of the problem and found the Board structure was difficult to understand and there was confusion over the roles and responsibilities of various bodies with a risk of overlap.
- Special recommendation to Rotherham included ensuring delivery of a post-abuse service, resourcing QA work, developing an approach to CSE, identifying both gaps and effective practice and ensuring an ongoing review cycle
- Specific actions recommended – mapping the extent of the problem, training the workforce to recognise CSE, solving

the issues around the 16-18 age group at A&E departments, focusing mental health services, and supporting the voluntary and community sector as young people often have more confidence in these than the statutory agencies

The Board received an update report from Children's sexual abuse and exploitation York sub-group.

The sub group presented a detail story board outlining the excellent multi agency work being undertaken

York agencies approach CSA by dealing with the prognosis for all children threatened with sexual abuse, not those at risk of exploitation. The majority of sexual abuse is perpetrated by someone known to the child or within the family. The additional group of children suffering sexual exploitation is important but part of a wider picture. The CSA&SE group have adopted a Venn diagram showing the sub-categories of sexual harm to help social workers and other front-line workers identify which procedures to follow in a particular case. Organised abuse requires a different approach.

When vulnerable people are exploited by groups or through an exploitative relationship they often do not see themselves as victims. A worker must assess whether they are suffering significant harm or not.

It was agreed that this was a very positive response to the Jay report from the Board. It was agreed to be a useful tool. School representatives welcomed it and other Board members hoped it would be widely disseminated beyond the obvious parties, e.g. also to licensing committees for taxis and through libraries.

Health representatives agreed it was on the right track and were aware of gaps in post trauma provision, for mental health for young people for example, which would need to be commissioned.

A suggestion was made to promote the “Say Something if you See Something” initiative and ‘It’s not OKAY’ website – the Board is asked to endorse development of a local version of the Greater Manchester website which was promoted by the Chair as a member of the Greater Manchester Safeguarding Partnership

The Group has revised the guidance and procedures for professionals and had published them on the CYSCB website

### *National Response*

In March 2015 the Government published their response on CSE this includes plans for :

- A new whistleblowing national portal for child abuse related reports to help to bring child sexual exploitation to light enable Government to spot patterns of failure across the country.
- A new national taskforce, and a centre of expertise, will support areas that are struggling to get it right.
- An intention to eradicate the culture of denial: actions include consulting on an extension to the new ‘wilful neglect’ offence to children’s social care, education and elected members.
- To help tackle offenders we have given child sexual abuse the status of a national threat in the Strategic Policing Requirement so that this is prioritised by every police force.
- To support survivors an additional £7 million this year and in 2015/16 to organisations which support those who have experienced sexual abuse.

The Government have also committed to improve the quality of central Government data collection to include data on the prevalence of child sexual abuse and publish this data to inform the LSCB assessments so that the performance of local agencies is more transparent to the communities they serve.



To strengthen accountability the Government will introduce an expectation that all Local Safeguarding Children Boards will conduct regular local assessments on the effectiveness of local responses to child sexual exploitation and publish the outcome of those assessments through their annual reports. They should set out in this analysis how the local partners have used their data to drive their response to vulnerable children and families.

Although this is not yet enshrined in statutory guidance the Independent Chair of CYSCB intends to include this in the Chair's Annual report for 2014/15 to be published in the autumn.

## **2.6 Social Care Assurance Report**

The Board received an Individual Agency Assurance from the City of York Council The report provided a detailed scrutiny of Children's Social Care Front Door arrangements, showing the strength of the Front Door arrangements and the capacity of the agency to provide a social work response without creating an unmanageable caseload. Other developments included a high level scrutiny of assessments, and of social work practice covering caseloads, supervision and quality assurance work and the development of scorecards.

Senior managers had sat in on supervision and seen high quality, reflective supervision. The CIN teams had been established providing a robust response to children who were not necessarily needing safeguarding but needed a family support response. A report on looked after children showed the authority was concentrating effectively on keeping families together and keeping children safe A new system for DBS arrangements has been established and all CSC staff are up-to-date.

The Board welcomed an excellent report and the Chair confirmed that monthly reports received by himself and the Lead Member for children and families showed how monitoring had identified problems and how they had been resolved e.g. by the establishment of a third Referral & Assessment team.

The Chair commented it would be good to get a sense of how other agencies were coping with workload pressure, supervision and oversight as a further engagement with the Board. The Board noted the increase of looked after children in external residential placements and reiterated the need for extra supervision and care where this meant children were at a distance from York.

## **2.7 National Update**

### **Multi-inspectorate Inspections**

Multi- inspectorate inspections of child protection services were due to begin in April 2015. However following pilot inspections it has been concluded that the integrated methodology did not add enough inspection value to enable a proper multi-agency evaluation of services for vulnerable families, children and young people living in that local authority area.

There remains a commitment to find ways of the inspectorates working together and they intend to complete six targeted inspections in a locality area before March 2016. These targeted inspections will evaluate how local agencies work together to protect children, focused on specific areas of concern such as the sexual exploitation of children and young people.

A letter has been sent from the DfE, HO, DCLG, MoJ and DH to the Chief Executives of local authorities, Directors of Children's Services, Police and Crime Commissioners, Local Safeguarding Children's Boards, Health and Wellbeing Boards and GPs. This reinforces the importance of interagency working and information sharing.

Government intend to publish by the end of March a comprehensive package of information sharing guidance. The package will include:

Her Majesty's Government '*Working Together to Safeguard Children*'

statutory guidance which spells out the legislative requirements and expectations on individual services to safeguard and promote the welfare of children; and provides a clear framework for Local Safeguarding Children Boards (LSCBs) to monitor the effectiveness of local services.

*Information Sharing: Advice for practitioners providing safeguarding*

*services to children, young people, parents and carers specifically for*

all frontline practitioners and senior managers working in child and/or

family services who have to make decisions about sharing personal

information on a case by case basis. This simplifies current legislation

and guidance into six overarching principles, and dispels common

information sharing myths.

**A key area for further review is identifying evidence of impact of the work of the Board.**

LSCB effectiveness is considered by looking at how recommendations/conclusions of the Board result in a firm resolution. Impact is key and inspectors will want to know how the LSCB is driving forward business priorities, and; whether the LSCB is respected, heard and generate actions.

Whilst there are good examples of how lessons identified by the Board have been adopted (e.g. Children's Social Care's incorporation of the findings of case audit and reviews into their improvement plan and reference to the thematic review in the Early Help Strategy) there is a need for more evidence of how the Board's work is impacting on practice.

## **2.8 Safeguarding Board Membership, Compacts and Budget**

A review of the structure and governance of the Safeguarding Board has been undertaken and formal consultation on future working arrangement completed. Final proposals will be presented to the April Board for immediate implementation.

### **Key points**

#### **Board functions:**

- Ensure effective multiagency safeguarding arrangements are in place
- Drive and influence practice at the interface between agencies
- Setting partnership priorities
- Satisfy itself that accountability is understood and acted upon

#### **Delivery:**

##### **LSCBs Do**

- Develop local interagency policy and procedures
- Scrutinise multi agency practice – esp. at the point of interface between agencies
- Maintain an intelligence / data function to identify need and impact

##### **LSCBs Do not**

- Commission nor deliver direct frontline services (though they may provide training)
- Assume individual agency accountability for safeguarding

#### **Principles of review –**

The development day identified the desired direction of travel:

- Clear accountability to the appropriate agencies and individuals
- Have clear and demonstrable influence

- A minimum of bureaucracy
- Clarified relationships between groups
- Equal and fair contributions

### **Recommendations**

- To note the update report of the Independent Chair of the CYSCB
- The Committee provide their views on the continuation of priorities for the CYSCB for 2015/16

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### **Abbreviations**

CYCSB-City of York Safeguarding Children Board

CSE – Child sexual exploitation

CCG- Clinical Commissioning Group

NYSCB- North Yorkshire Safeguarding Children Board

CDOP- Child Death Overview Panel

SCB-Safeguarding Children Board

DfE- Department for Education

LADO-Local Authority Designated Officer

NHS –National Health Service

YAS- Yorkshire Ambulance Service

YTHFT-York Teaching Hospital Foundation Trust

VOYCCG-Vale of York Clinical Commissioning Group

L&YFT- Leeds and York Foundation Trust

DBS- Disclosure and Barring Service  
CAF –Common Assessment Framework  
NWG-National Working Group  
LSCB - LocalSafeguarding Children Boards  
CSA- Child Support Agency  
DfE- Department for Education  
HO- Home Office  
DCLG- Department for Communities and Local Government  
MoJ- Ministry of Justice  
DH-Department of Health  
GPs- General Practitioners