

MUNICIPAL YEAR 2017/2018 REPORT

MEETING TITLE AND DATE:

Overview and Scrutiny Committee
6th September 2017

REPORT OF:

Executive Director of Children's Services

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Agenda - Part:	Item: Update Report
Subject: ESCB Annual Report	
Wards: All	
Cabinet Member consulted: Cllr Orhan	

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2016-2017 has been another very busy year for the Safeguarding Children Board. It has, to some extent, been a year of uncertainty following the publication of the Alan Wood review of local safeguarding children boards in May 2016. The review recommended significant changes to the way safeguarding arrangements were structured across the country.

Overall it has been a very positive year for the board despite changes and challenges. Importantly there remains a very strong commitment to the board and its activity from all its member agencies and organisations. This is evidenced both from the strong collaborative ethos and commitment to working together as well as by the single agency safeguarding activity undertaken by all members which is detailed in the Statements from ESCB partner agencies section in the report.

Effective responses to specific safeguarding concerns

Child Sexual Exploitation / Missing / Trafficking

There has again been much activity and positive progress in this important area in 2016/17. The ESCB has established a new subcommittee; the Vulnerable Young People (VYP) subcommittee which met for the first time toward the end of the year. The VYP replaces the Trafficking, Sexual Exploitation and Missing (TSEM) group which had been in place since 2012.

Domestic Abuse / Violence Against Women & Girls (VAWG)

The board has continued to monitor and support activity related to VAWG throughout 2016/17. Iterations of the new Domestic Abuse strategy have been presented to the board on three occasions and board members have offered advice, direction and guidance. In early 2016 the new Joint Targeted Area Inspection (JTAI) framework was introduced. The purpose of this framework is to understand how effectively agencies in a local area are able to respond to specific issues. From September 2016 to March 2017 the theme was children living with Domestic Abuse. Whilst Enfield was not inspected there was much activity across the partnership to map, understand and enhance our response to Domestic Abuse in Enfield. There is more details about work undertaken in this area in the Quality Assurance of the report

Radicalisation and Prevent

The board has continued to work closely with the Prevent service in the Community Safety Unit to ensure there is a high level of understanding of issues relating to Radicalisation and the response to it in Enfield. A key move has been incorporating a focus on Radicalisation as part of the new Vulnerable Young People subcommittee,

recognising that this is one of many potential challenges and issues that young people in Enfield face.

Early Help

The board has closely monitored the development of the Enfield Family Resilience Strategy which is the basis for the local response to Early Help. Board members have offered scrutiny, challenge and direction as the strategy has developed. The ethos of the strategy is that we want all our children to be safe, confident and happy, with opportunities to achieve through learning and reach their full potential as they become adults.

Effective safeguarding structures & systems

As referenced above there have been some changes to the way the ESCB is structured both in response to national changes (the Wood Report and Children & Social Work Act) and a local shift in the way we are trying to address the challenges and issues experienced by young people in a consistent and joined up way (Vulnerable Young People subcommittee.)

Our Quality Assurance subcommittee continues to monitor data relating to safeguarding across the partnership and to oversee audits on a range of relevant topics. The group has pushed forward our Section 11 / Section 175 structure and programme this year to ensure we have the widest possible understanding of safeguarding activity across all agencies including in our schools. We have conducted a range of 'challenge interviews' all of which have concluded with feedback and action plans where required. There is more about activity in the area and view some of the data considered by the QA group in the Quality Assurance section of the report.

The board itself has effectively offered challenge to partner agencies throughout the year and sought assurances that action was taken to ensure children and young people are safeguarded.

Communication & Learning

The Board has continued to lead on and steer the direction of the Signs of Safety across the borough. We began our Signs of Safety implementation journey in the autumn of 2015 and since then a tremendous amount of progress has been made towards fully embedding the model within children's services and among partner agencies in Enfield. Over 800 professionals across the borough have not attend a Signs of Safety training or briefing session and there have many structural and process changes which have helped ensure the model and its principles are a core part of the way we work with children and families across Enfield. There is more about Signs of Safety in the Enfield Children's Social Care section of the report

This year the board has taken the innovative step of merging its Learning and Development subcommittee with that of the Safeguarding Adult Board ensuring consistency, reducing duplication and improving quality. There have been a number of joint ventures including joint Domestic abuse sessions and a joint conference on Modern Slavery. There has once again been an extensive programme of Safeguarding Training across the partnership, ensuring that all staff have access to good quality training, which helps support sustained improvements across all safeguarding services. Across the year, we once again delivered training and learning sessions to well over 1000 people professionals. There is more on training in the learning and the development section

Conclusion

The annual report clearly demonstrates that safeguarding activity is being maintained across the partnership in challenging times and that the ESCB continues to have clear agreement and focus on the strategic priorities and ongoing challenges. Reports from our partners demonstrate that statutory and non-statutory members are consistently working towards the same goals as part of the multi-agency partnership and within their individual agencies.

The Board remains committed to a programme of scrutiny, monitoring and, quality assuring the quality of safeguarding activity across Enfield, and this programme of robust analysis and challenge will continue to ensure that children and young people are kept safe. The Board is proud of its successes but of course there is no room for complacency, the economic situation and organisational change affecting public services in Enfield and across the country continues to be a challenge for the Board. 2017/18 will inevitably bring more change; we are likely to see statutory changes to the way Serious Case Reviews and child death processes are managed. We will ensure we stay abreast of developments and will seek and utilise 'best practice' examples both in these areas and as new safeguarding structures emerge across the country.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

OSC to note the progress being made to safeguard children and young people and specifically note this report and the Draft Enfield Safeguarding Children Board Annual Report which is attached as a background paper to this document.

3. PLEASE SEE APPENDIX (FULL REPORT) ATTACHED.

4. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

This report is for information.

5. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

Enfield Safeguarding Children Board will require the commitment and support from multiple partners and from colleagues across the Council in order to continue to focus on improvements with the clear aim of reducing harm.

6. COMMENTS OF THE DIRECTOR OF FINANCE, RESOURCES AND CUSTOMER SERVICES AND OTHER DEPARTMENTS

6.1 Financial Implications

The ESCB is funded by its partner agencies with the London Borough of Enfield being significantly the biggest contributor. In 2016/17 the contribution of Enfield CCG was reduced due to financial challenges experienced by that organisation.

The ESCB managed to spend within budget during the year primarily because there was just one Serious Care Reviews in 2016/17 which is regularly a high area of expenditure for Safeguarding Boards. A majority of the overall budget was spent on staffing costs including the independent chair and the remainder was spent on Serious Case Reviews and Learning & Development.

6.2 Legal Implications

Section 13 of the Children Act 2004 ('the Act') places a duty on every Local Authority to establish a Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB). Section 14 of the Children Act sets out the objective of a LSCB. Section 14A of the Act requires a LSCB to 'prepare and publish a report about safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in its local area' at least once in every 12-month period. The Local Safeguarding Children Boards Regulations 2006 govern the running of an LSCB. The Government's Statutory Guidance, Working Together to Safeguard Children (2015), gives guidance on the operation of LSCBs.

6.3 Property Implications

There are no property implications.

7. KEY RISKS

The Enfield Safeguarding Children Board is reliant upon a strong commitment from partners and is financed through contributions from partner agencies. There are risks that the austere climate may impact upon the financial contributions and reduce the ability to deliver on the key priorities within the business plan. Failure to deliver the business plan would have a detrimental impact upon the Council's reputation.

8. IMPACT ON COUNCIL PRIORITIES

8.1 Fairness for All, Growth and Sustainability and Strong Communities

The work of the ESCB meets all 3 of the council's key aims and the objectives within the Children and Young People's Plan. With particular emphasis and more weighting upon improving services to those children, young people and families that require prevention and intervention from safeguarding services across a broad spectrum from early help to statutory interventions.

9. EQUALITIES IMPACT IMPLICATIONS

Corporate advice has been sought in regard to equalities and an agreement has been reached that an equalities impact assessment is neither relevant nor proportionate for the approval of the Annual report. Safeguarding forms part of the Council's programme of retrospective equalities impact assessments (EQIA) and this was completed in July 2015. The retrospective EQIA collates equalities monitoring of service users, and consider how the service impacts on disadvantaged, vulnerable and protected characteristic groups in the community. A programme of actions to address adverse impacts are devised and implemented where appropriate throughout the delivery of the project.

10. PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

This ESCB has a robust data set and annual audit programme supporting the continuous drive for improvement by the Council and its partners in relation to outcomes for children.

11. HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

N/A

12. HR IMPLICATIONS

There are no specific HR implications relating to this report. The ESCB support staff are Council employees and HR policies and principles are followed accordingly as appropriate.

13. PUBLIC HEALTH IMPLICATIONS

The ESCB has strong links with the Health and Wellbeing Board and the Director of Public Health is a standing member of the Safeguarding Children Board. The ESCB has promoted and supported a number of public health issues and the Female Genital Mutilation task group, which is chaired by a Consultant in Public Health, has become an established sub-committee of the Health and wellbeing Board.

The ESCB is working closely with the Adult Safeguarding Children Board to further strengthen the partnership working with specific emphasis upon the health areas that are key priorities for both Boards such as Domestic Abuse and Female Genital Mutilation.

The ESCB coordinates local programmes to protect and promote the welfare of children and young people in Enfield and to monitor the effectiveness of those arrangements. Improved outcomes in early life and childhood lead to healthier, successful adults and improve the health of the population. For example: protecting children and young people results in improved population health outcomes by reducing mental health issues, sexually transmitted diseases and other issues e.g. obstetric complications in FGM victims.

The work of the Child Death Overview Committee contributes to reducing infant mortality in the borough by recognising risk factors and acting to prevent such deaths where possible. This increases life expectancy in the borough population.

Background Papers

1. Draft Enfield Safeguarding Board Annual Report 2016- 2017