

Report to the Cabinet

Meeting to be held on Thursday, 13 September 2018

Report of the Independent Chair of the Lancashire Safeguarding Boards

Part I

Electoral Division affected:
(All Divisions);

Lancashire Safeguarding Boards - Annual Report 2017/18

(Appendix 'A' refers)

Contact for further information:

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Executive Summary

This report is being presented to the Cabinet prior to publication of the Lancashire Safeguarding Adults Board/Lancashire Safeguarding Children Board Annual Report, to allow for comment on the draft report before it is finalised.

The draft Annual Report is attached at Appendix 'A'.

Recommendation

Cabinet is asked to:

- (i) Note the contents of the report.
- (ii) Comment on any key issues and consider the implications for the conduct of council business.

Background and Advice

Current statute requires that in every local authority administrative area there must be both an Adult Safeguarding Board and a Children Safeguarding Board. Key local agencies are represented on the Boards at a senior level, but the Boards have an Independent Chair. At present in Lancashire, both Boards have the same Chair.

Both Boards are required to produce and publish an annual report which reflects on safeguarding practice and issues in the area. The draft Annual Report which covers the period from April 2017 to end of March 2018 is attached at Appendix 'A'. Cabinet is asked to note that Appendix 'A' includes a number of embedded documents which have not been printed for the purposes of this agenda. These documents can be made available on request.

The report begins with contextual information drawn from Public Health data. The data highlights the complexity of the population in Lancashire, with higher incidence of poor health and well-being indicators being seen in the areas of highest deprivation. The report then seeks to set out what we know about the vulnerability of the people in terms of safeguarding, what we know about the quality of safeguarding activity in local services, and how the Board has sought to make a positive impact on services.

In Lancashire, a single business unit supports both Boards and every attempt is made to maximise the potential benefits this brings. Common approaches have been developed for the conduct of business and, as far as possible, we strive to do things once. As was the case last year, the Annual Report will be published as a single report covering both Boards. If required, for example by Ofsted, it can be split into a Children's or Adults report.

1.1 Positive progress has been evidenced in the course of the year in respect of the following:

Adult Services:

- High quality practice tools and guidance have been developed in respect of when to raise a safeguarding alert; covert medication; cardiopulmonary resuscitation; and pressure ulcerations. Guidance in relation to Self-Neglect and Hoarding have recently been agreed by the Lancashire Safeguarding Adults Board and will be launched in the coming months, and pan-Lancashire guidance for the management of allegations against people in a position of trust is also nearing completion.
- Funding has been identified to develop and deliver multi-agency Safeguarding Adult Training. Recruitment to a multi-agency training pool is in progress for delivery of the training programme.
- A Leadership programme has been launched to support registered managers in the care home sector to improve quality of care in Lancashire. This programme has been provided by a nationally recognised leadership programme 'My Home Life'.
- Further progress has been made in respect of the implementation of the Mental Capacity Act. This includes research into practitioner experiences of working with the Mental Capacity Act and Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards; development of an Mental Capacity Act Learning and Development Framework and resources; awareness raising with carers and the public; development of a best practice sample Mental Capacity Act and Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards policy for use across agencies; and a multi-agency audit against the Association of Directors of Adult Social Services Improvement Tool.
- Some investment has been made against the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub for Adults but the backlog of referrals, although reduced, remain high. A review of the Adult Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub has been commissioned in order to improve efficiency and effectiveness.

Children's Services:

- Through membership of the Children's Services Improvement Board the Lancashire Safeguarding Children Board has seen and supported continuous improvement.
- Significant positive change has been evident in the Children's Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub and continues to progress
- Improvements in range and timeliness of services is evident in respect of Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services, though there is more to do.
- Communication with looked after children has been improved through the introduction of Mind of My Own– a mobile phone app for participation.
- Pathways for responding to Female Genital Mutilation have been improved and rolled out via a multi-agency conference.
- A pathway for identifying and offering timely support to children with a parent or carer in prison has been implemented and actions taken to capture and record this information through case management systems.
- A review of the Standard Operating Procedures for Child Sexual Exploitation has been initiated during reporting year and has made good progress in bringing procedures up to date and suitable for working practice across the Pan-Lancashire area. This is due to be finalised and formally agreed shortly.

Some examples of impact from Audit and Review:

- A Child Protection Strategy meetings re-audit shows actions implemented and improved practice.
- An audit of Under 65s mental health case Safeguarding Investigations initially showed very poor practice. This led to immediate changes and a re-audit showed improvement.
- An audit of domestic abuse referrals and a Safeguarding Adult Review highlighted specific issues for elderly dementia sufferers and their carers, which has resulted in the development of guidance for those working with adults with care and support needs.
- A number of Serious Case Reviews raised concerns about practitioners' confidence in assessing the potential impact of drug use on parenting. A new course was developed and delivered to over 600 multi-agency practitioners. The course content is currently being transformed into an e-learning module, and a supporting resource pack is in development. Articles in the press also highlighted this issue to the public.
- Serious Case Reviews also raised concerns around concealed and denied pregnancy. A multi-agency protocol has been in development during the reporting year and has recently been formally agreed for roll out.
- The Boards' audit process requires agencies to complete a self-assessment to establish the extent to which they meet the safeguarding requirements and standards set out in Section 11 of the Children Act 2004 and the Care Act 2014. This has been a welcome change and allows the collection of information regarding all-age safeguarding compliance.

Additional time is also being invested in quality assuring the returns receiving and offering challenge to single agencies.

1.2 At the end of the 2016/17 reporting period, we reported that the following areas were of concern and presenting as challenges to the Lancashire Safeguarding Adults Board in respect of Adults Safeguarding:

- Backlog of Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards applications and safeguarding referrals;
- Understanding of thresholds to ensure adults with care and support needs receive the correct service at the correct time;
- Ensuring “Making Safeguarding Personal” underpins all adult safeguarding work throughout all settings.

At the end of 2017/18, the position is as follows:

- The backlog of Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards applications remains an issue of concern with the local authority unable to respond to all cases falling within the Association of Directors of Adult Social Services highest priority. It should be noted that this problem is not specific to Lancashire and is common to other authorities. The Lancashire Safeguarding Adults Board has received assurance in regard to revisions made to the prioritisation tools when applications are received but, whilst this enables a proportion of the highest priority cases to be considered, the underlying issue is one of capacity. During 2018-19, the Lancashire Safeguarding Adults Board plans to support the Local Authority in engaging in a Peer Review with a high performing council; is conducting an audit of cases to test the appropriateness of the revised prioritisation tools; and encouraging the care sector to ensure users rights are protected by continuing to make appropriate applications.
- With regard to the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub backlog of safeguarding referrals, the Lancashire Safeguarding Adults Board receives monthly data relating to the number of cases outstanding and there is evidence that improvements have been made and appropriate monitoring is in place. Whilst the "multi-agency" hub is in place to address adult safeguarding referrals, it should be noted that it is currently resourced and staffed by the local authority only and is not strictly "multi-agency" function as it stands. The Lancashire Safeguarding Adults Board is supporting agencies to undertake a further review which will be reported to the Board in the Autumn.
- Referrals into the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub continue to be high. The Lancashire Safeguarding Adults Board launched a thresholds guidance tool in 2016/17, to assist practitioners in making appropriate referrals in response to safeguarding concerns. After a year of implementation, feedback on the use of the tool has been gathered and provided positive findings, highlighting that the tool has been well received and well regarded by practitioners. Some minor changes are currently being made based on the feedback provided, which will further strengthen the tool.

- Compared to other areas, Lancashire has a high percentage of people in residential and nursing care and a significant number of homes which do not get good or outstanding ratings on inspection. In order to improve both leadership and safeguarding in these homes, the Lancashire Safeguarding Adults Board is supporting the council in delivering a targeted development programme designed to improve standards.

The following areas were of concern and presenting as challenges to the Lancashire Safeguarding Children Board in 2017-18 in respect of Children's safeguarding:

- Embedding access to early help as the first response;
- Ensuring the redesign of the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service results in a more accessible and equitable service;
- Ensuring the improvements made in Children's Social Care are sustained;
- Piloting new approaches to the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub and developing a locality based service;
- Embedding the lessons from audit and Serious Case Reviews into practice.

During 2017/18, the following activity has taken place in order to address such issues:

- Early help approaches remain a priority for the Lancashire Safeguarding Children Board with a number of mechanisms in place to strengthen the approach. Following the roll out of an updated Common Assessment Framework, the Board commissioned a number of Train the Trainer events, providing training to over 160 multi-agency staff to roll out further training across the county. A school engagement project was commissioned in January 2017, with a key objective around strengthening the links between school and Early Help/Early Action Teams and Children's Social Care. The Continuum of Need was reviewed in July 2017, to provide a consistent pan-Lancashire approach to strengthen assessment levels across the local authority areas. This led to Lancashire undertaking a further review of the supporting Thresholds Guidance which is now nearing completion.
- The Lancashire Safeguarding Children Board receives regular updates from the Children and Young People's Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health Transformation Programme, with regard to the activity being undertaken to improve service provision. We are pleased to be able to report that progress demonstrates clear improvements and it is evident that positive changes are being made in ensuring a more accessible, timely and equitable service provision for children and young people. Overall, however, financial investment in this service still does not compare well nationally.
- Improvements in Children's Social Care continue to be made, with substantial investment and capacity increase made by the local authority, particularly for the reorganisation of the Child Sexual Exploitation Teams. Whilst reorganisation has brought a period of

intense change, the Lancashire Safeguarding Children Board is confident that progress has been, and continues to be made. At the time of writing this report, Ofsted published the findings of the recent inspection, with an overall inspection judgement of "Requires Improvement" meaning the local authority is no longer subject to Department for Education intervention.

- Following a service redesign, a locality-based model has been introduced into the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub, with multi-agency partners co-locating on a North, Central and East footprint in one large office. The implementation of this model has strengthened relationships between partner agencies; increased the understanding of roles and responsibilities; and made improvements in information sharing and decision making between partner agencies. The Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub is now the single point of contact for any concerns relating to a child who is not open to Children's Social Care. The Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub Strategic Board continues to further develop the model, reporting into the Lancashire Safeguarding Children Board regularly. A refreshed plan is in place for the Strategic Board, focusing on quality of practice.
- Audit and case review activity often present reoccurring themes for learning, which results in a challenge for the Boards in ensuring our methods to embed learning are effective in preventing the same issues arising over time. The Board has recently commissioned a specialist in impact measurement workshop to provide briefing sessions to Board and Sub Group members to refresh our approaches.

The Board completes a range of quality assurance activities which are reflected in the Annual report. Serious Case Reviews concerning children and Safeguarding Adult reviews are published (where there are no legal constraints) and the Boards always publish learning briefings. A programme of audits is completed each year on subjects linked to the Boards' priorities. Partner agencies which provide services for children and families complete an annual self-assessment against an Lancashire Safeguarding Children Board template and a proportion are subject of detailed challenge.

The governance arrangements for the Boards is set out in the annual report, as is the work of the sub-groups. Lessons from case reviews and audits are outlined. Partner agencies have also provided a summary of their work in respect of safeguarding and these are embedded in the report.

Revised governmental guidance around the arrangements for safeguarding children was published on 5 July 2018. The guidance removes the current arrangements for a Local Safeguarding Children Board, and requires the three 'safeguarding partners': the local authority; the police; and the Clinical Commissioning Groups to agree future Multi Agency Safeguarding Arrangements. The guidance also brings changes to current approaches for Serious Case Reviews, which will be replaced with Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews; and changes to Child Death Overview Panels which become Child Death Reviews led by the local authority and Clinical Commissioning Groups.

Safeguarding partners must agree and implement arrangements for Multi Agency Safeguarding Arrangements on or before 29 September 2019. New processes for Child Practice Reviews should be followed from 29 June 2018, with a grace period of up to 12 months to publish existing Serious Case Reviews. Existing Child Death Reviews should be published within four months.

Consultations

All Board partner agencies have been consulted during the preparation of the Annual Report. The report reflects comments made and includes information directly provided by the agencies.

Implications:

While there is evidence of good practice, significant challenges remain in ensuring services that provide safeguards for vulnerable children and adults are sufficiently resourced to meet demand on a timely basis.

Risk management

The risks are as set out in the report.

Legal

Failure to meet the statutory requirements in the provision of services could increase the risk of harm. It would also impact on the reputation of the council and partner agencies.

Equality and Cohesion

Any deficits in service are likely to impact more significantly on those living in areas of high deprivation.

Financial

The Board's Business unit and activity is financed from multi-agency contributions. For the year 2017/18, a small deficit of £0.088m was met from reserves, in achieving the reforms required by Working Together 2018 support for the Boards will be structured to fall within available resources. A breakdown of income and expenditure in 2017/18 is included in the annual report.

List of Background Papers

Paper	Date	Contact/Tel
Working Together to Safeguard Children	2015 / 2018	Jane Booth Victoria Gibson
The Care Act 2014	2016	

Board minutes and reports

Member Agency Feedback Reports 2017/18
(section 3.1 of Appendix A refers)

Laura Parkinson

Service Area Annual Reports 2017/18
(section 3.5 of Appendix A refers)

Laura Parkinson

Reason for inclusion in Part II, if appropriate

N/A