

Corporate Parenting Board

Meeting to be held on Thursday, 30 January 2020

Report of the Director of Children's Social Care

Electoral Division affected: (All Divisions);
--

Lancashire Safeguarding Model

Contact for further information: Sharon Hubber, Director of Children's Social Care , Tel: 01772 538956, sharon.hubber@lancashire.gov.uk

Executive Summary

This report is to provide an overview of the Lancashire Safeguarding Model proposals and next steps

Recommendation

The Board to note the information and receive further updates as the Lancashire Safeguarding Model work moves forward.

Background and Advice

Over the last twelve months Lancashire have been working with Hertfordshire to understand the model they developed to support families within the safeguarding arena in an asset based way allowing families to succeed and keep their children safe.

The model in Hertfordshire has been highlighted by the Department for Education (DfE) as good practice and they invited Local Authorities to consider if they thought the model would help them in moving forward. Lancashire believed the model supported the direction it wanted to travel and expressed an interest in adopting and adapting the model to suit Lancashire's needs.

In September 2019, the Council were delighted to learn that the Department for Education wanted to support Lancashire and would make the change possible by providing finances to begin the journey of change. This is a whole system change bringing together partnerships and using motivational interviewing across all the disciplines working with families.

The Council's plan is to roll out the new way of working in October 2020 but the lead up to this will be the time of greatest change.

Why Are We Doing This?

By adopting the model Lancashire believe it will allow practitioners across the County to spend more time with families, increase the skills and knowledge needed to work effectively and provide a whole family response allowing parents and children to have issues addressed collectively. It is believed this way of working will keep more high risk families together by reducing physical and emotional harm and engaging with families offering help and support from adult services that is coordinated and immediate, improve the health and educational outcomes of children, strengthen information sharing and provide high quality services at a lower cost.

What Will Be Different?

At the moment social workers in Lancashire have caseloads that cover, Child in Need (CIN) Child Protection (CP) Children who are Looked After (CLA) and young people who have left care.

To undertake the new way of working social workers will work in defined teams dealing with children and families where safeguarding has been identified. Research shows that a great deal of the families the Council work with experience Domestic Abuse, Alcohol or Drug problems and Mental Health issues. To improve the service Lancashire presently offers, specialist adult workers will join the social work teams alleviating the need to refer into services as is presently done. This will enable families to receive the right level of support in a timely manner helping support a different way of thinking.

How Will We Do This?

The Council will increase the numbers of social workers working within the safeguarding teams who will have caseloads of 15. Specialist adult roles will be recruited to who will co-locate with the safeguarding teams. These roles will lead on Mental Health, domestic abuse working with perpetrators, domestic abuse working with victims and substance misuse practitioner. To enable all staff to make the change Lancashire will be using motivational interviewing, a thorough training programme is being produced for both county council staff and partners. Systems will be introduced to make the way it records and undertake assessments far less process driven allowing for direct work to take place with families.

What Next?

Although Lancashire will not start the new model until October 2020 a great deal of work will be taking place to ensure the infrastructure is in place to support the implementation. A project team will be established in January.

January 2020

Victoria Gent appointed to the role of Transformation Lead for 12 months

Bernadette Pike appointed to the role of Policy and Procedure lead

Natalie Williams appointed to the system lead post

Brendan Lee has the lead on Children in our care and Care Leavers