

Cabinet

Meeting to be held on 8 October 2015

Report of the Corporate Director, Operations and Delivery

Electoral Divisions affected: All

Lancashire Safeguarding Children Board Annual Report 2014/15

(Appendix 'A' refers)

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Executive Summary

Lancashire County Council is a significant member agency of Lancashire Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB). This report presents, at Appendix A, the Annual Report of the Lancashire Safeguarding Children Board for 2014-5. The production of this report fulfils a statutory requirement and its contents are, to a large extent, determined by the legal framework and this results in a document of some size. A group of young people are currently working on an alternative version with a target audience of children and young people themselves.

The report records a number of positive indications that some areas of risk have reduced and identifies a number of strengths in respect of the Board itself. There remain, however, a number of key areas for further consideration. The above are summarised on page 4 of the report.

Recommendation

The Cabinet is asked to consider the content of the Annual Report and identify any areas they may wish to comment on and any action they may wish to take.

Background and Advice

The LSCB has a statutory responsibility to ensure the effectiveness of work undertaken by agencies to safeguard children in Lancashire. This Annual Report reflects on the work undertaken in this regard in Lancashire for the 2014-15 financial year. The report is attached at Appendix A for information. The Board is required to have an Independent Chair and has the responsibility to promote and protect the welfare and interest of children, young people and their families. The Chair of the Board is accountable to the Council's Chief executive who is, in turn, responsible for ensuring its effectiveness.

Protocols are in place which establish the relationship between the LSCB, the Children and Young People's Trust Board and the Health and Well-being Board and to strengthen this link the Independent Chair of the LSCB has recently joined the Health and Well-being Board.

The Director of Children's Services is a statutory member of the LSCB along with the Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Schools who is a 'participating observer' on the Board. Cabinet will see that a great deal of effective work to safeguard children has taken place during the last twelve months. However, there are several areas that the LSCB remains concerned about:

- Ensuring equality of services given the complexity and diversity of the administrative area especially in relation to deprivation rates
- Poor health outcomes, especially child obesity, tooth decay and hospital attendance
- Increasing self-harm in young people
- Increasing numbers of CLA from other local authorities (approaching 1000)
- Significant reduction in CPP to below the national average
- Number of CLA above national average
- Increasing number of CSE referrals but no increase in recorded crime
- Continuing development of effective early intervention and preventative
- Disproportionate levels of child deaths from Asian Pakistani heritage
- Achieving successful engagement by the LSCB with schools and early years settings.

The level of concern regarding services for children experiencing emotional and mental health issues resulted in the LSCB reporting its concerns to the Health and Well Being Board who responded by requiring a comprehensive review with the intention re-commissioning services from April 2016..

The LSCB will continue to work with partner agencies to address all areas for development identified in the Annual Report and Lancashire County Council is a key organisation in all this work.

Priorities identified in the current Business Plan are:

- Priority Area 1: Improve the effectiveness of agencies and the community in preventing child sexual exploitation
- Priority Area 2: Improve the effectiveness of agencies in meeting the needs of Children Missing for Home, Care and Education
- Priority Area 3: Improve the effectiveness of safeguarding activity for children in specific circumstances:
 - Children placed in Lancashire from other areas, and in other areas from Lancashire
 - Children whose parents are in prison
 - Children in need of support for emotional and mental health issues
 - Children who are Privately Fostered

The Cabinet will also note that it proposed to align the business functions of both the adult and children safeguarding boards to achieve greater efficiency and improved synergy with shared functions and responsibility.

Consultations

The LSCB has consulted with all partner organisations in the preparation for the Annual Report and with young people in the development of an alternative version.

Implications:

This item has the following implications, as indicated:

There are no additional direct implications for finance or human resource management further to those already provided by LCC and partner agencies for LSCB purposes.

Risk management

All partner agencies need to be fully engaged with services and support to safeguard children and young people in order that children in Lancashire grow up happy, healthy and safe from harm.

List of Background Papers

Paper	Date	Contact/Directorate/Tel
Lancashire Safeguarding Children Board Annual Report 2014/15	September 2015	Paul Hegarty/01772 538352

Reason for inclusion in Part II, if appropriate

N/A