

Health and Wellbeing Board

30 November 2016

Report title	Wolverhampton Safeguarding Children Board Annual Report 2015-16	
Decision designation	AMBER	
Cabinet member with lead responsibility	Councillor Val Gibson Cabinet member for Children	
Key decision	No	
In forward plan	No	
Wards affected	All	
Accountable director	Linda Sanders People Directorate	
Originating service	Safeguarding and Quality	
Accountable employee(s)	Gillian Ming	Children Board Manager
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Report to be/has been considered by	Wolverhampton Safeguarding Board	7 September 2016

Recommendation(s) for action or decision:

The Panel is recommended to:

1. Provide assurance to Wolverhampton Safeguarding Children Board that the respective agencies represented on the Health and Wellbeing Committee report annually to their respective boards on children's safeguarding;
2. Ensure all agencies represented at the Board have internal assurance mechanisms that can demonstrate their role and performance in relation to safeguarding arrangements for children and young people.
3. Note the report and support the areas for further development in 2016-17 contained in 3.3 and 3.4

1.0 Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to report formally provide the health and Wellbeing Board with a copy of the Wolverhampton Safeguarding Children Board's (WSCB) Annual Report for 2015 -2016. The Report can be found using this link: [WSCB Annual Report 2015-16 FINAL OCT.pdf](#) or by going to the Wolverhampton Safeguarding Website.
- 1.2 In compliance to the statutory guidance; Working Together to Safeguarding Children, there is a requirement for the annual report from the Safeguarding Children Board to be presented to various bodies, including the Managing Director and leader of the Council, the Police and Crime Commissioner, the Department for Education, local strategic boards, and specifically the local Health and Wellbeing Board.
- 1.3 The report provides an overview of how board partners have discharged their safeguarding responsibilities over the preceding year, in this case, 2015 - 2016.
- 1.4 The Wolverhampton Safeguarding Children Board and the Health and Wellbeing Board together represent aspects of the partnership agenda within the City and have a responsibility to hold one another to account for safeguarding activities. This is exemplified by the introduction of a memorandum of agreement recently signed by the Chairs of a number of Boards and is included in the schedule of background papers.
- 1.5 The annual report of the Safeguarding Children Board offers a formal opportunity to ensure that this relationship in practice operates in accordance with the protocol. From the perspective of the Children's Safeguarding Board it provides an arena for challenge and an opportunity to seek assurances from members of the Health and Wellbeing Board that their constituent organisations discuss and review safeguarding at their respective Boards and, where relevant, scrutiny committees.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 Safeguarding Children's Boards are statutorily required to publish an annual report on the effectiveness of children's safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in the local area. Its statutory objectives are to: Coordinate local work to safeguard and promote the welfare of children; and Ensure the effectiveness of its work.
- 2.2 The Chair of the Safeguarding Children Board through the Safeguarding Children Board Manager is responsible for ensuring there is an Annual Report on behalf of the Wolverhampton Safeguarding Children Board. The Annual Report contains contributions from the partner agencies who are members of the Board.
- 2.3 The report provides information regarding local safeguarding initiatives, the work and structure of the Safeguarding Board, progress against previous year priorities, partner achievements, and safeguarding data performance.

- 2.4 The Annual Report was presented as a final draft at the September Safeguarding Children Board where it was endorsed by Board members and is now available on the Joint Wolverhampton Safeguarding Boards Website.
- 2.5 The Annual Report reflects the complex and wide ranging agenda that the Board, its committee working groups and partner organisations have been addressing throughout the year. In line with statutory guidance we have a Strategic Plan that identifies our priorities and aspirations for the years ahead 2016 – 2017 and beyond.
- 2.6 The Board is a broad partnership of key agencies who have a collective responsibility for safeguarding children and providing mutual assurance that the practice and arrangements relating to safeguarding children, young people and families reflects jointly agreed policies and protocols. It meets four times a year with much of its business conducted through a range of committees that report into the Board.
- 2.7 The Board is independent of any of the partners, funded in the main by the three statutory lead partners, City of Wolverhampton Council, The CCG and West Midlands Police.
- 2.8 The Board does not deliver frontline services, but has a duty to monitor, quality assure and evaluate the quality and effectiveness of safeguarding function and arrangements of the key services commissioned and delivered via the board partners in the local area.
- 2.9 This report relates to the year 2015-16 and summarises the progress made during the stated period, and also identifies the challenges facing the Board in 2016/17.

3.0 Progress since last report

- 3.1 There is no progress unless we can show that the work we have done and the assurance processes we oversee have a positive impact on children. The examples below are a small number of the improvements we have made in protecting children through partnership:
- 3.2 We have created a new shared safeguarding website with social media presence for the public, staff and organisations in conjunction with the Wolverhampton Safeguarding Adults Board. This ensures there is more accurate and up to date information to help professionals and members of the public better protect children.
- 3.3 We have been instrumental in the formation of a joint safeguarding initiative with neighbouring Black Country Safeguarding Children's Boards which offers a unified Multi-agency training programme ensuring a better and more consistently trained workforce in an area of work where issues of safeguarding frequently cross municipal and NHS Boundaries.

3.4 A Head Teacher's Safeguarding Group was established in 2014 to strengthen the WSCB's relationship with schools, and this year we have managed to extend our work in this area by hosting a conference 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' which was well received by the sector.

3.5 While we will acknowledge and celebrate the strengths and successes of the Board, we recognise that there are some areas where further work and focus is required; examples include:

- The need to further strengthen the contribution and influence of young people in the work of the Board.
- Further embed the new approaches to tackling neglect.
- Further develop our approach to child sexual exploitation.

3.6 The report also recognises that abuse and exploitation does not end at the age of 18. Keeping people safe is an inter-generational issue. We must and do 'think family'. The impact of the misuse of drugs and alcohol by adults, for example, instantly raises concerns about the safety of children. Issues such as domestic abuse, trafficking or forced marriage do not fit into neat age-related compartments and our response has to demonstrate we do not think that way.

3.7 Going forward, we aim to build and sustain a strong safeguarding culture and arrangements where the focus is firmly on the experience of the child or young person and their journey to getting the right help and support at the right time. This report also seeks to summarise the journey of the Board to become more effective and to better evidence the impact it is having.

4.0 Equalities implications

4.1 How and in what ways we safeguard children must reflect the differing cultural values and norms within communities. Although the legal framework is universal, how we ensure children and parents understand, recognise and respond to potential safeguarding issues varies and is reflected for example in our work to reach out to faith communities and through our links with the Refugee and Migrant Centre.

5.0 Environmental implications

5.1 There are no direct environmental implications arising from this report.

6.0 Schedule of background papers

6.1 Report to Wolverhampton Safeguarding Children Report 07.09.2016.CYP Panel:
05.10.2016