

Title of paper:	Report of the Independent Chair of the Nottingham City Safeguarding Children Board (NCSCB)	
Report to:	Children's Partnership Board	
Date:	30 th May 2012	
Relevant Director:		Wards affected: All
Contact Officer(s) and contact details:	Paul Burnett, Independent Chair (pr.burnett@btinternet.com)	
Other officers who have provided input:		
Relevant Children and Young People's Plan (CYPP) objectives(s):		
Stronger safeguarding – With a key focus on ensuring that there are high standards of safeguarding across all agencies and that the Partnership takes a pro-active approach to the elimination of domestic violence.		√
Healthy living – With a key focus on increasing the proportion of children and young people who have a healthy weight.		
Reducing substance misuse – Partnership work to lessen the impact on children of parental drug and alcohol misuse and to reduce drug and alcohol misuse amongst children and young people.		
Raising attainment – Raising the attainment levels and increasing engagement in employment, education and training.		
Improving attendance – Improving rates of attendance at both Primary and Secondary as a key foundation of improving outcomes.		
Summary of issues (including benefits to customers/service users):		
<p>The report has two purposes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> To inform strategic leaders of children's services of work undertaken and key issues addressed by the NCSCB that are relevant to the Children's Partnership or to individual members of the Partnership; To provide an opportunity for the NCSCB and the Children's Partnership to hold one another to account for their contribution to safeguarding children and young people in Nottingham. <p>The report covers the period May 2011 to May 2012 and sets out recommendations for partners' consideration.</p>		
Recommendations:		
1	To note the report of key developments over the last twelve months in relation to inspections, national legislative and policy developments, serious case reviews and changes to local safeguarding governance arrangements.	
2	To consider the areas of future work headlined in this report and the means by which continued dialogue between the two Boards might be secured to ensure appropriate alignment of activity and continued scrutiny and challenge between the two Boards	

3	To recognise the risk to safeguarding performance posed by the significant change taking place in agencies across the partnership and take steps to ensure that action is taken to manage and mitigate this risk both individually and collectively.
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1. BACKGROUND AND PROPOSALS

1.1 The NCSCB and the Children's Partnership Board arrangements provide for two reports to be presented each year by the Independent Chair of the Safeguarding Board of which one is the presentation of the LSCB annual report. This is the first report since the Annual Report was presented in September 2011.

1.2 The NCSCB has two statutory functions: to ensure the effectiveness of arrangements to safeguard children across the City and; to co-ordinate multi-agency arrangements to protect children and young people in Nottingham.

1.3 The NCSCB consists of senior representatives of all the statutory agencies that have a responsibility for safeguarding children along with specialist advisers and representatives from professional groups and third sector organisations.

1.4 Whilst the Board is responsible for ensuring and co-ordinating safeguarding arrangements it is not operationally responsible for safeguarding services. That remains the responsibility of the chief officers of participating agencies/organisations

1.5 Key Work and Issues 2011/12

Inspections that have taken place since the last NCSCB Report

1.6 Since the last NCSCB report to the Children's Partnership Board there have been three inspections by Ofsted touching on areas of work in which the LSCB has an interest. The first was the Unannounced Inspection of Contact, Referral and Assessment that took place on 16/17 August 2011. The report identified one area of strength, 15 areas that were meeting the requirements of statutory guidance and 5 areas for development. There were no areas identified for priority action. The Board has been monitoring progress in those areas identified as requiring development.

1.7 In December 2011 the authority received its Inspection of Fostering Services. The overall outcome of this inspection was 'Good' as was the grading for protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe. There were no recommendations specifically relating to safeguarding.

1.8 In April 2012 the authority was the subject of a thematic inspection of services to children with disabilities that included coverage of arrangements to safeguard disabled children. The outcomes of this inspection have yet to be confirmed.

1.9 A new inspection framework for child protection has now been issued by Ofsted and will replace the current announced and unannounced inspection regime from May 2012. The NCSCB is in the process of considering any action required in response to the new

framework and will be building any recommendations from this work into the NCSCS Business Plan for 2012/13 and beyond.

- 1.10 In addition to the Ofsted inspection framework, the NCSCB has received briefings on the regional sector-led inspection and peer review arrangements that have now begun in the East Midlands. This will include peer reviews of safeguarding arrangements.

National Legislative and Policy Context

- 1.11 Both LSCBs as bodies and a number of individual agencies within the LSCB partnership have, or are, experiencing changes to their legislative and policy contexts as result of government activity at national level.
- 1.12 The DfE is currently undertaking a review of 'Working Together' and the revised version is expected to be issued for consultation during May 2012. It is expected that the length of the document will be considerably reduced. It is similarly reported that the revised version will strengthen LSCBs but it is not yet clear what form this will take. It is anticipated that the revision will incorporate actions in response to the recommendations contained within the Munro Review of Child Protection.
- 1.13 In addition a number of national developments will impact on constituent agencies roles and responsibilities in relation to safeguarding and their contributions to the LSCB. This includes the transfer of responsibilities from PCTs to CCGs flowing from the Health and Social Care Bill, the introduction of Police and Crime Commissioners from November 2012, and schools ability to convert to Academy status. All partners are similarly experiencing financial challenge and seeking means of reducing costs and securing more efficient means of delivering services. Regular reports have been provided on these developments to the NCSCB and risks to safeguarding through the change processes closely monitored and managed.
- 1.14 Despite the risk associated with major organisational and structural change attendance at Board meetings and meetings of sub-groups has remained strong.

Serious Case Reviews

- 1.15 The Serious Case Review referred to in the previous report to the Children's Partnership Board has been completed but not published since criminal proceedings are not yet completed. The review received an overall judgement of "Good" from Ofsted. Action has been taken in response to the recommendations including briefing sessions for LSCB representatives, IMR commissioners and authors and staff who worked with the child. Discussions are ongoing with the DfE in relation to the publication of the overview report and a multi agency Media Strategy has been developed with all agencies. .
- 1.16 No further Serious Case Reviews have been commissioned.
- 1.17 The Serious Case Review Standing Panel continues to monitor action plans arising from Serious Case Reviews and good progress has been reported to the Board in this respect.

1.18 The Board will soon receive recommendations for the introduction of a more streamlined and shared approach to carrying out alternative learning reviews – to be known as Serious Incident Learning Process (SILP). If agreed these will be used when the criteria for a serious case review are not met but it is agreed that there would be valuable learning to be gained by reviewing a particular case. The process is based on the Serious Incident Learning Process that has been developed by the East Midlands Joint Improvement Partnership (JIP) and is a joint process for the children's and adults safeguarding boards..

1.19 Finally it is important to draw the attention of the Partnership to a serious case review that was published by North Somerset LSCB in January 2012. This SCR was conducted after the arrest of a teacher suspected of abusing children in his care. When publishing the SCR overview report and executive summary the Chair of the North Somerset LSCB recommended that the SCR be read by all head teachers, chairs of governors and LSCBs across the country in light of the recommendations that it makes. The minister for children and families, Tim Loughton, has supported this view. The report has been circulated to all Nottingham City schools and partner agencies of the boards.

1.20 Review of Children's and Adults' Safeguarding Boards

1.21 A review of the governance arrangements for the NCSCB and NCASPB has recently been completed with a view to securing greater efficiency in the operation of the two boards and to ensure better focus on shared areas of safeguarding responsibility. The approach that has been agreed retains two distinct Boards but chaired by one independent chair and meeting consecutively with a joint meeting between the two focusing on interfaces between children and adult safeguarding particularly in the context of whole-family issues.

1.22 A joint Independent Chair, Paul Burnett, was appointed earlier in May and has taken up post with immediate effect. This is a three year contract that will ensure a period of stability and development for both boards.

1.23 Further work is to be done to develop an Executive Board to support both Boards in driving forward the strategic agenda and linking into the Health & Well Being Board. In addition consideration will be given to aligning some sub-group activities. However, in light of the fact that a revised version of 'Working Together' is expected to be issued for consultation by DfE very soon and that there is a possibility that a statutory framework for adult safeguarding boards will be put in place within the next twelve months it has been agreed that consideration of further changes will be deferred until national frameworks are clearer.

1.24 Future work

1.25 Having completed the review of the children and adult safeguarding board arrangements the two Boards will now move to address a number of key issues in the next couple of months. It is anticipated that a number of these issues will need to be the subject of discussion between the Children's Safeguarding Board and the Children's Partnership. These include:

- The formulation of the Business Plan for 2012/13 that will include a section of cross-cutting priorities shared by the children and adult safeguarding boards;
- The development of a new performance and quality assurance framework including a review of the performance scorecard currently used to monitor and evaluate impact;

- The workforce development plan for 2012/13 based on the training needs analysis that is currently taking place. This will be monitored and evaluated through the recently approved NCSCB Quality Assurance Strategy for training.

1.26 A key element of the performance and quality assurance arrangements will be the Multi-Agency Audit programme aimed at securing qualitative evaluation of performance on safeguarding in priority areas identified by the NCSCB. The Board recently agreed the multi agency audit programme for 2012/13 would focus on cases in the following areas:

- Missing children
- Child Sexual Exploitation
- Self-Harm and Suicide Risk
- Adult Mental Health Issues
- Learning Disabled Parents
- Pre-Birth Assessments

1.27 The focus on Child Sexual Exploitation is in response both to local needs analysis and the national focus on this area as set out in the DfE CSE Action Plan issued in November 2011. A cross authority strategic group has been commissioned to take forward the expectations of the CSE Action Plan and a presentation to Full Council has been planned for June 2012.

1.28 A further focus in the coming months will be performance management of the Family Support Strategy (FSS). The Family Support Strategy and Pathway were agreed by the Children's Partnership Board and the NCSCB in 2011 with an implementation plan and NCSCB, reflecting the intentions of the Munro Review is to 'monitor the effectiveness of such services in reducing the incidence of maltreatment'. The proposed outcome measures for the FSS were considered by the NCSCB at its meeting on 3rd May and it was agreed that further discussion and development of this framework needed to be undertaken in collaboration with the Children's Partnership Board. It is hoped that this process can begin with the presentation of this report.

1.29 DART and MASH

1.30 It has been estimated that there are between 7,000 and 10,000 children in Nottingham that are at risk of from domestic abuse and both the children's and adult safeguarding boards have made this area a priority in their business plans. Both share an aim to ensure that children and vulnerable adults affected by domestic abuse are identified, protected and supported at the earlier possible opportunity.

1.31 A decision has been taken that, in the longer term, Nottingham will pilot a MASH (Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub) which is a model of sharing information across agencies to establish a more robust and yet secure response to reported incidents. The stated intent of the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub [MASH] is to improve the quality of information sharing and decision making at the earliest opportunity and to reduce the potential risk to children and young people. This was based on the premise that the value is in the collation of an intelligence assessment –gathered from information across health, education, the LA and the police – resulting in a better picture of the child and circumstances on which to inform decision making about further help and intervention. Work is being undertaken to develop the MASH with a view to it being fully in place in early 2013.

1.32 In the mean time the DART (Domestic Abuse Referral Team) has been established and will be operational from June 2012. The DART is a multi-agency team comprising:

- 2 specialist co-ordinators with management responsibility (Health and Family Communities Teams)
- 2 Family Support Workers (Children's Social Care)
- 1 Adult Social Care work
- 2 Police staff
- 1 administrative officer

1.33 The team will be co-located and will deal exclusively with domestic abuse concerns within the City where there are children or a pregnant woman in the household or where a vulnerable adult who meets the threshold for social care services is being subjected to domestic abuse. The aim of the team will be:

- to make better-informed decisions about risks to children, young people and vulnerable adults as a consequent of improved information sharing across the partnership;
- make decisions more quickly including identifying cases where early intervention could remove the risk of harm
- change existing culture based upon a more progressive information sharing and multi-agency response to improved outcomes for children , young people and vulnerable adults;
- reduce the number of referrals;
- develop a more empowered and skilled workforce, allowing for shared multi-agency decisions to take place;
- secure significant improvement in service impact

1.34 The DART will be operational from June 2012.

1. RISKS

It is a key responsibility of LSCBs to identify and manage safeguarding risk and this is built into the business planning arrangements of the Board. There are not specific additional risks created by this report.

2. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The LSCB is funded through contributions from partners. There are no financial implications arising from this report.

3. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

None specifically arising from this report.

4. CLIENT GROUP

All children and young people

5. IMPACT ON EQUALITIES ISSUES

The remit of the NCSCB is to be responsible for the effective safeguarding of all children and young people in the City and to ensure that the specific needs of individual groups of children are addressed particularly where evidence of safeguarding risk has been identified.

6. OUTCOMES AND PRIORITIES AFFECTED

Stronger safeguarding – With a key focus on ensuring that there are high standards of safeguarding across all agencies and that the Partnership takes a pro-active approach to the elimination of domestic violence

7. CONTACT DETAILS

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