

Meeting Title	Children and Young People’s Scrutiny Committee
Report Title	Nottingham City Safeguarding Children Partnership (NCSCP) Annual Report 2022/23
Meeting Date	26 th October 2023

Corporate Director(s)/Director(s):	Catherine Underwood, Corporate Director for People Ailsa Barr, Director for Children’s Integrated Services
Portfolio Holder(s):	Councillor Cheryl Barnard
Report author and contact details:	Ben Osifo NCSCP Business Manager ben.osifo@nottinghamcity.gov.uk

<p>Summary of issues:</p> <p>This report is a statutory requirement for the Nottingham City Safeguarding Children Partnership (NCSCP) to publish each year.</p> <p>Overview</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is the fourth annual report of the Nottingham City Safeguarding Children Partnership in its delivery model, covering 1st April 2022 to 31st March 2023. • The strategic lead responsibility for safeguarding is shared between three statutory partners: the Local Authority, Nottinghamshire Police and Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Integrated Care Board. • An Independent Scrutineer is in place and provides constructive critical friend challenge to the partnership.
<p>Recommendation(s): The Committee is asked to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Agree any comments or recommendations that it wishes to make to the Safeguarding Children’s Partnership 2. Identify any issues or evidence relevant to the Committee’s work programme and the work of the Safeguarding Children’s Partnership and how to take this forward.

1. Background

Nottingham City Safeguarding Children Partnership is established in accordance with the Children and Social Work Act 2017 and Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018. It provides the safeguarding arrangements under which the safeguarding partners and

relevant agencies work together to co-ordinate their safeguarding services, identify, and respond to the needs of children in the city, commission and publish local child safeguarding practice reviews and provide scrutiny to ensure the effectiveness of the arrangements.

The safeguarding partners responsible for the safeguarding arrangements under the Partnership are Nottingham City Council, Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Integrated Care Board and Nottinghamshire Police. An Independent Scrutineer acts as a constructive critical friend to the Partnership, encouraging reflection on practice. Other relevant agencies also support the Partnership.

There is a statutory requirement for the Partnership to publish an annual report highlighting work undertaken and plans for the future. The 2022/23 Annual Report is attached and representatives of the three statutory partners and the Independent Scrutineer have been invited to the meeting to discuss its contents with the Committee.

2. Information Only:

This annual report reviews the work of the NCSCP for the period April 2022-March 2023. It highlights the key strands of work undertaken and our plans moving forward.

This is an important report, as it highlights the work and challenges that we all face in protecting and supporting our Nottingham children.

In 2022/23 the Nottingham City Safeguarding Children Partnership focused on the following work specifically:

- To promote, monitor, coordinate and evaluate multi agency effectiveness in safeguarding children across the child's journey
- To strengthen and support a competent and equipped workforce that is committed to learning and developing safeguarding practice with the assurance that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility
- To evidence the impact of the Nottingham City Safeguarding Children Partnership

The overarching key strategic priorities of the NCSCP are:

1. Protecting vulnerable Children and Young People with the objective of minimising the risks of harm to children and young people
2. Learning and improving to ensure that children and young people influence the strategic planning on issues that affect them, that we learn from scrutiny of multiagency practice, and that practitioners have the skills and knowledge to be effective in their practice.
3. Leadership to ensure that NCSCP continuously improves on its effectiveness, has clear lines of communication, works strategically with partners, and has effective governance arrangements in place, which support a robust planned approach to its work.

The annual report details work undertaken, progressed, and achieved throughout the last year.

Business Plan Priorities

The NCSCP identified the following seven priorities in its business plan for 2022-2023.

Priority One: Tackling and reducing Child Exploitation. To further strengthen the partnership response for children and young people experiencing contextual risk factors, including child sexual exploitation, child criminal exploitation, County Lines, gangs, honour-based violence, female genital mutilation, and children who do not have access to education.

Priority Two: Following on from IICSA, implement the Harmful Sexual Behaviour Action Plan, identified by the NSPCC with purpose of further strengthening our response to Harmful Sexual Behaviour.

Priority Three: To ensure the voice and lived experience of children is integral to the development and delivery of services to children and families across Nottingham City. The NCSCP engages with children, young people and families to inform its work and uses partner agencies existing consultation mechanisms to assist them with this.

Priority Four: Recognise and respond to the diverse population of Nottingham City's children, targeting work where necessary. This includes all children and young people with protected characteristics, for example, those from Black, Asian and minority ethnic backgrounds, children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) and young people from the LGBTQIA+ community.

Priority Five: To deliver the Nottingham City Safeguarding Children Partnership Neglect Strategy. Child neglect has a lifelong impact on a person's wellbeing, and it is vitally important that as a Partnership we do all we can to prevent it. Both the Nottinghamshire and Nottingham City Safeguarding Children Partnerships recognise that tackling neglect must continue to be a priority if we want to improve our children's life chances and prevent poor outcomes later in life.

Priority Six: To understand the impact of Covid-19, paying particular attention to Domestic Abuse / Domestic violence and children and young people's mental wellbeing, but also learning from the positive impacts of changes in working practices.

Priority Seven: Providing leadership and ensuring core duties are met in line with Working Together 2018 and other relevant legislation.

Highlights of the work undertaken by the partnership

- Development of a Threshold of Need Toolkit - This will strengthen the effectiveness of practice and support the need for a child and their family being offered the right support at the right time, without delay. The Threshold of Need will be promoted and supported by a programme of awareness and training sessions supported and delivered citywide. This will ensure that there is understanding of what the threshold of need is and that professionals can seek consultation when they are unclear on how to progress with a child's case.
- Continued to promote our resources on 'neglect' including the [toolkit and informative videos](#) - Child neglect has a lifelong impact on a person's wellbeing, and it is vitally important that as a Partnership we do all we can to prevent it. Tackling neglect must

continue to be a priority if we want to improve our children's life chances and prevent poor outcomes later in life. Professional and public facing videos have been completed incorporating the neglect strategy and the neglect strategy toolkit. With the aim of further embedding the need for professional's and families to 'Recognise, Respond and Reflect' when dealing with issues around neglect. The voice of the child was captured when the NCSCP undertook collaborative work with Small Steps Big Changes (SSBC) in the development of the public facing neglect video which gave a reflection of the struggles that children and their families face within Nottingham City.

- Held the Council to account in relation to the Ofsted Inspection and Assurance visit - Children's Integrated Services underwent a full Ofsted inspection in July 2022 the overall service assessment being rated as inadequate. As a result of the inadequate judgement, the Local Authority entered into a period of monitoring visits - short inspection activity focused on a specific area – between now and the next full inspection, which is likely to take place within 18 – 24 months' time. There are likely to be 3 or 4 monitoring visits each year. The Safeguarding Partnership are working together to address some of the key areas of improvement and to ensure system oversight and engagement in the improvement plan. We will continue to monitor this area and provide an update in our next annual report.
- Developed and implemented an action plan in response to the [National Panel Review Publication into the murders of Arthur and Star](#). On 26th May 2022 the Independent Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel published their review into the murders of Arthur Labinjo-Hughes and Star Hobson. The NCSCP considered how to apply the important learning that the review identified in their respective areas. The learning is of enormous importance to improving our understanding of child protection systems and practice and strengthening these to ensure that children are protected from significant harms across the country. The action plan would help ensure that the Partnership has responded to the recommendations of the National Panel.
- Developed a video resource on Professional Curiosity in collaboration with Equation. This was developed to further strengthen practice and knowledge in response to learning emerging from 'Domestic Homicide' Reviews. It requires practitioners to act upon their safeguarding responsibilities rather than passively make assumptions or taking matters at face value. This video production sought to explore the importance of professional curiosity and to encourage practitioners to embed that within their working practice. The need for Professional Curiosity is something that is identified in multiple Domestic Homicide Reviews, Safeguarding Adult Reviews and Children's Safeguarding Practice Reviews and this is something that the NCSCP alongside Nottingham Safeguarding Adults Board will continue to explore and improve on.

Much of the work undertaken in 2022/23 will continue in the year ahead with an emphasis on scrutiny and improved outcomes in the lived experience for our children, young people, and their families.

The safeguarding of children and young people is an ever-changing environment with new and emerging challenges. This year has seen us continue to learn and adapt our practice following the global pandemic and in line with government guidance on living safely with

respiratory infections such as COVID-19. Partnership working continues to be crucial in keeping children safe and to protect them from harm, abuse, and neglect.

This year has seen challenges such as the conflict in Ukraine and the impact on fuel and gas prices and resultant cost of living crisis continue to affect already stretched finances of families, the partnership will remain alert to any safeguarding implications. Despite all this, we acknowledge and reaffirm our partnership response to keeping our vision and ambitions front and centre and have continued to reflect and learn to improve our working together in support of this.

The partnership has continued to work actively to protect children from abuse and maltreatment, prevent harm to children's health or development, ensure children grow up being provided with safe and effective care and will take action to enable all children and young people to have the best outcomes.

The continued work of the NCSCP is critical in driving improved performance and outcomes in their daily lives for all our children.

3. Proposal or Issue:

This report is for information only as it is subject to the governance arrangements of the NCSCP.

4. Financial Implications:

None

5. Legal Comments

N/A

6. Procurement Comments

N/A

7. Risk Management Considerations

Keeping children and young people safe is a key responsibility of Nottingham City Council and an effective safeguarding partnership is critical to addressing this.

8. HR and EDI Considerations:

NCSCP's 2022-2023 priority four sets out its commitment to ensuring safeguarding addresses the diversity of children in Nottingham.

9. Carbon Reduction and Sustainability Considerations:

N/A

10. Input from Other Internal Departments:

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N/A

11. Next Steps: Looking Forward to 2023/24

We will work to:

- Promote the work of the Partnership ensuring we are clear how our work can support partners.
- Demonstrate how we are sharing learning from reviews and work more closely with the Quality Assurance Subgroup to measure changes to practice as a result.
- Re-focus scrutiny on the issue of safe and supportive transitions from adults to children's services.
- Have a data set and performance report which sets out activity, themes, and multi-agency risks.
- Have a quality assurance framework that demonstrates how we will effectively scrutinise key safeguarding areas using agreed methods, and how that will inform improvement.
- Develop the pace and impact of the Learning and Development Subgroup so that we can disseminate learning quickly using a range of methods to reach those who need it.
- Drive the neglect work and strategy and ensure that learning and key practice skills, including tools and integrated working are embedded.