

For General Release

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| REPORT TO: | CABINET 18 November 2019 |
| SUBJECT: | Croydon Safeguarding Children Board Annual Report 2018/19 |
| LEAD OFFICER: | Di Smith Independent Chair CSCB |
| CABINET MEMBER: | Councillor Alisa Flemming Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Learning |
| WARDS: | ALL |
| CORPORATE PRIORITY/POLICY CONTEXT/ AMBITIOUS FOR CROYDON To safeguard children and promote their welfare in line with the Council's ambition for independence of children and their families. | |

FINANCIAL IMPACT

There are no direct financial implications arising from this report

FORWARD PLAN KEY DECISION REFERENCE NO.: Not a key decision

The Leader of the Council has delegated to the Cabinet the power to make the decisions set out in the recommendations below

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1.1 Cabinet is asked to note the Croydon Safeguarding Children Board (CSCB) Annual Report for 2018/19 which sets out:
- The work undertaken by the CSCB to secure further improvement in partnership working following the Ofsted inspection of 2017
 - Progress relating to the priorities of the CSCB
 - Arrangements for managing the transition to the new multi-agency safeguarding arrangements as required by the Children and Social Work Act 2017.

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 2.1 The CSCB Annual Report 2018/19 fulfils the statutory duty required of all LSCBs to publish an annual account of the work undertaken to safeguard and promote the welfare of local children. It is customary for LSCBs to publish their reports in the Autumn following information gathering over the Summer.

- 2.2 This is the final Annual Report of the CSCB as the legislation in respect of Local Safeguarding Children's Boards ceased with effect from September 2019. As the CSCB has been replaced with the new multi-agency safeguarding children arrangements from 1st September 2019, this report covers a period of 17 months from 1st April 2018 and includes an evaluation of activity up to the conclusion of the CSCB on 31st August 2019.
- 2.3 The Annual Report contains an evaluation of the progress made by partners against the CSCB Business Plan 2018/19 and will be used to inform the work and priorities of the new Croydon Safeguarding Children Partnership (CSCP) Throughout this period the CSCB has continued to contribute to Croydon Children's Improvement Plan and progress is monitored through the Children's Improvement Board. The Independent Chair of the CSCB is a member of the Children's Improvement Board and provides regular updates to the monthly meetings.
- 2.4 The Annual Report outlines progress in relation to the establishment of the new multi-agency safeguarding arrangements and describes the work undertaken to manage the transition effectively.

3. STATUTORY ROLE OF THE LSCB AND INDEPENDENT CHAIR

- 3.1 The statutory roles, objectives and functions of LSCBs are set out in Section 14 of the Children Act 2004. An LSCB must be established for each local authority area. The LSCB has a range of roles and statutory functions including the developing of local safeguarding policy and procedures and scrutinising local arrangements.
- 3.2 The statutory objectives of LSCBs are;
- to coordinate what is done by each person or body represented on the Board for the purposes of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in the area;
 - to ensure the effectiveness of what is done by each such person or body for that purpose.
- 3.3 The functions are as follows:
- developing policies and procedures for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in the area of the local authority;
 - communicating to persons and bodies in the area of the authority the need to safeguard and protect the welfare of children, raising awareness of how this can best be done and encouraging them to do so;
 - monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of what is done by the authority and their Board partners individually and collectively to safeguard
 - and promote the welfare of children and advising them on ways to improve;
 - participating in the planning of services for children in the area of the authority; and
 - undertaking reviews of serious cases and advising the authority and Board partners on lessons to be learned.

- 3.4 In order to provide effective scrutiny, the LSCB should be independent. It should not be subordinate to, or subsumed within, other local structures. Every LSCB should have an independent chair who can call all agencies to account.
- 3.5 The LSCB Chair reports to the Chief Executive and works closely with all LSCB partners, particularly the Director of Children's Services.
- 3.6 The Chair must publish an annual report on the effectiveness of child safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in the local area.

4. IMPROVING THE PERFORMANCE OF THE CSCB

- 4.1 Throughout 2018/19 the CSCB has maintained its focus on securing improvement in all areas identified by Ofsted in 2017 and has continued to make a significant contribution to the development, monitoring and implementation of the Improvement Plan and to the work of Croydon Children's Improvement Board. The role of the CSCB has been pivotal in terms of securing improvements in multi-agency working and promoting and embedding learning from serious case reviews.
- 4.2 The Annual Report also outlines progress in relation to the three CSCB priorities; Neglect, Vulnerable Adolescents and Children with Disabilities.
- 4.3 The most significant achievement of the CSCB this year has been the publication of the Vulnerable Adolescents Review. This is the largest piece of work ever undertaken by the CSCB and has been widely praised both locally and nationally for the unique insight it provides into the lives of vulnerable young people in Croydon. The review has attracted widespread interest and is being used by partners in Croydon to develop a preventative approach to youth crime, strengthening families and helping our young people to make positive choices. The response to this bold and innovative piece of work is now being led by the Vulnerable Adolescents Priority Group of the new Croydon Safeguarding Children Partnership.
- 4.4 One of the biggest challenges facing partners is securing a suitably skilled, stable and permanent workforce. At a time of population growth and increasing demand this is essential to effective partnership collaboration and robust multi-agency safeguarding arrangements. Some progress has been made in relation to the recruitment and retention of frontline social workers and health visitors but this remains one of the most significant challenges across the partnership.

5. TRANSITION TO THE NEW MULTI-AGENCY SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN ARRANGEMENTS

- 5.1 The Independent Chair of the CSCB has worked closely with the safeguarding partners throughout the year as they have developed the new safeguarding partnership arrangements in response to the Children and Social Work Act 2017 and 'Working Together 2018'. The Executive Group of the CSCB has led this work and the three statutory partners (Croydon Council, NHS Croydon CCG/CHS and MPS South BCU) have demonstrated clear leadership and

ambition for the children and young people of Croydon. They have also ensured a smooth and effective transition to the new arrangements with the establishment of Croydon's Safeguarding Children Partnership.

- 5.2 Under the new arrangements there is a commitment to working closely with other partnerships. For example the CSCP Executive Group will meet with the Safeguarding Adults Board Executive twice a year to ensure coherence on joint issues and priorities e.g. Transition. Close engagement is also planned with other strategic partnerships e.g. Safer Croydon Partnership Board and the Health and Wellbeing Board particularly in relation to the development of a coherent approach to promoting the safety and wellbeing of Croydon's children and young people.

6. PRE-DECISION SCRUTINY

- 6.1 The report was presented to Scrutiny on 17 September – see link to minutes <https://democracy.croydon.gov.uk/mgAi.aspx?ID=6140>

- 6.2 Scrutiny came to the following conclusions:

- It was important that the finding of the Vulnerable Adolescence Review inform the ongoing work that was to be undertaken in children's services
- It was encouraging that the Chair of the Croydon Safeguarding Children's Board would remain to support the partners in their new arrangements.
- It was important that Members meet to discuss the suggestion made on the topic for further exploration.

7 FINANCIAL AND RISK ASSESSMENT CONSIDERATIONS

- 7.1 There are no resource implications arising from this report, as this is a retrospective report. The CSCB operates within a budget to which partner agencies contribute.
- 7.2 The total budget within which the Board is operating in 2019/20 is £373,000, with Croydon Council being the majority contributor at £283,000 which 76% of the budget.
- 7.3 It is anticipated that the budget will be fully spent in 2019/20, with the majority of that (70%) on staffing.

Approved by: Kate Bingham, Head of Finance Children Families & Education on behalf of Lisa Taylor – Director, Finance, Investment and Risk and Section 151 Officer.

8. LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 8.1 The Head of Social Care and Education Law comments on behalf of the Director of Law and Governance.

- 8.2 Under the Children and Social Work Act 2017, LSCBs are due to cease and local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements will be established in line with statutory guidance issued in Working Together 2018. The Act reframes the approach to local safeguarding by giving the three key safeguarding partners – the local authority, health services, and the police – greater autonomy to define the approach to be taken locally and the appropriate geographical reach of that approach and came into force on 1st April 2018.
- 8.3 Until multi-agency safeguarding arrangements are in place LSCBs will continue to function under current statutory guidance.
- 8.4 It is a requirement of Working Together 2015 (Government guidance on interagency working on children’s safeguarding) to submit the Annual Reports to the Leader of the Council

Approved by Doutimi Aseh, Head of Social Care and Education Law on behalf of the Director of Law and Governance & Deputy Monitoring Officer.

9. HUMAN RESOURCES IMPACT

- 9.1 There are no direct implications as a result of these recommendations. However learning from CSCB is reflected in the development of our staff.

Approved by: Sue Moorman, Director of Human Resources.

10. EQUALITIES IMPACT

- 10.1 The role of the CSCB is to safeguard all children and promote their welfare in relation to equalities and inclusion. The Board has played a crucial role in safeguarding protected groups, for example the Priority Groups have singled out key safeguarding issues for Children with Disabilities, Vulnerable Adolescents and children suffering neglect.
- 10.2 The VA Review identified issues of disproportionality being a key factor; these findings are being used to actively influence practice developments. The Children with Disabilities priority group are tackling the increased vulnerability of disabled children and improving awareness. The Neglect priority group has introduced and rolled out a neglect tool with specific training to ensure those very vulnerable children are identified as early as possible to prevent long term impact of neglect.

Approved by: Yvonne Okiyo, Equalities Manager

11. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

- 11.1 Not applicable.

12. CRIME AND DISORDER REDUCTION IMPACT

12.1 No applicable.

13. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS/PROPOSED DECISION

13.1 Cabinet is asked to note the CSCB Annual Report 2018/19.

14. OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

14.1 Not applicable.

15. DATA PROTECTION IMPLICATIONS

15.1 WILL THE SUBJECT OF THE REPORT INVOLVE THE PROCESSING OF 'PERSONAL DATA'?

NO

15.2 HAS A DATA PROTECTION IMPACT ASSESSMENT (DPIA) BEEN COMPLETED?

NO

There is no individual or confidential information contained within the report. Information has been provided in summary form from each of the relevant agencies.

Approved by: Nick Pendry, Director of Early Help and Children's Social Care

CONTACT OFFICER:

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Safeguarding Children Partnership X62366

APPENDICES TO THIS REPORT:

Appendix 1 – Croydon Safeguarding Children
Board Annual Report 2018/19

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:

None