

DRAFT ANNUAL REPORT OF THE HILLINGDON SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN BOARD

**Contact officer Paul Hewitt
Telephone ext 0410**

REASON FOR ITEM

The Committee is invited to note and comment on the Annual Report as part of its scrutiny function of Council services, and as part of the overall Council responsibilities to safeguard children and young people.

OPTIONS AVAILABLE TO THE COMMITTEE

To comment and query the report prior to final sign off of by the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) on 25th Nov 2011 and presentation to Cabinet in January 2012.

INFORMATION

1 Background and context

- 1.1 The LSCB is a statutory multi-agency body established with the overall aim of monitoring, overseeing, supporting and challenging the work of all agencies with regard to their responsibilities to safeguard and protect children. LSCBs are required to produce an annual report which comments on the effectiveness of local arrangements to safeguard children. (The Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009) This is the first annual report under the new requirements and we are required to publish this report by 1 April 2012.
- 1.2 The following areas are required elements of the Report (Working Together 2010)
 - An assessment of local arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, to include achievements and challenges
 - An assessment of the effectiveness of policies and procedures to recruit and train frontline staff
 - An assessment of progress in implementing lessons from Serious Case reviews and child death reviews
 - An assessment of progress in key priority areas (e.g. child trafficking)
 - A challenge to the work of the Children's Trust Board in driving improvements in safeguarding

2 Summary of findings

- 2.1 Overall, evidence available to the LSCB indicates that children are well safeguarded with some areas for development that are in hand. There is evidence of strong multi agency working and commitment and a large number of tasks and actions have been progressed under the auspices of the LSCB
- 2.2 The increase in child protection activity noted in 2010 has stabilised at a high level. This increase in child protection activity has had an impact on all agencies, particularly specialist services. This workload has to be absorbed in order to ensure that children are kept safe, but the workload, along with staffing capacity to deal with it, is putting a strain on all services.
- 2.3 This will be exacerbated by reductions in available resources and in changes in partner agencies, particularly Health.
- 2.4 The LSCB is continually developing ways of scrutinising services to ensure that these changes do not place children at unnecessary risk, and the annual report includes in its recommendations those targeted areas of activity that are likely to achieve most benefit
- 2.5 The LSCB also strongly recommends that resources are secured and protected for specialist front line services who work with children at risk of harm.
- 2.6 The Council is currently leading on the development of early intervention services. The LSCB recommends that these are multi agency and that they have clear pathways and provision for co-ordinated plans and services, targeted at those most in need .
- 2.7 The LSCB would also welcome the opportunity to contribute to service commissioning, particularly health services for under fives and mental health services.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Working Together to Safeguard Children 2010. Chapter 3

Lynda Crellin
Independent Chairman
Hillingdon LSCB
Nov 2011