

LOCAL SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN BOARD: ANNUAL REPORT 2015-16

Cabinet Member	Councillor David Simmonds CBE
Cabinet Portfolio	Deputy Leader of the Council Education & Children Services
Officer Contact(s)	Steve Ashley, Independent Chairman of Hillingdon Safeguarding Children Board (HSCB) and Safeguarding Adults Partnership Board (SAPB) Tony Zaman, Children's & Young People's Services
Papers with report	LSCB Annual Report

1. HEADLINE INFORMATION

Summary	This is the Annual Report of the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) for the year 2015-16. It is for information and gives a view on effectiveness of children's safeguarding in Hillingdon. It also identifies priorities for future action and attention.
Putting our Residents First	This report supports the following Council objective of: <i>Our People</i> This report will contribute to the Health and Wellbeing Strategy in order to ensure that Hillingdon's children and young people are kept safe.
Financial Cost	The LSCB is jointly funded by the Council, local CCG and other partners. There are no additional costs linked directly to this report.
Relevant Policy Overview Committee	Children, Young People's and Learning
Ward(s) affected	All

2. RECOMMENDATION

That Cabinet note this report and takes account of its conclusions in future planning for children's services.

Reasons for recommendation

To note the work of the LSCB over 2015/16.

Policy Overview Committee comments

The Committee welcomed the comprehensive Annual Report which illustrated there was a strong commitment to safeguarding in Hillingdon.

The Committee questioned the outcomes of audits and whether further information could be provided in future reports. It was noted that it was important to ensure that a 'golden thread' ran through the activities of the Board. This would enable the effectiveness of the Board's priorities to be assessed. It was anticipated that it would soon be possible to do so, but it was acknowledged that work was required in this area. This would enable outcomes to be monitored on a quarterly basis. The audit programme would support this and would uncover the story behind the statistics. The audit process was already underway.

The Committee questioned whether the budget for 2016/17 was in place, whether it was considered to be adequate and what it was. The Chairman of the Board responded that the budget was matched to the outgoings of the Board and was considered to be sufficient. Additional funding had been requested for provision of an audit tool on the basis that this would ultimately save money by increasing the efficiency of the Board.

The Chairman said that it was clear that the Board had made significant strategic progress. This was leading to better financial management. The Chairman and officers were congratulated on progress made so far. Committee Members applauded the report and the progress made.

3. INFORMATION

Supporting Information

The Hillingdon Local Safeguarding Children Board (HLSCB) 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. It stands independently of other local bodies and its members are senior decision-makers from all local agencies who work with children. LSCBs are required to produce an annual report which comments on the effectiveness of local arrangements to safeguard children. The annual report will be presented to Cabinet in February and also go to the Community Safety Partnership.

The efficacy of Hillingdon LSCB relies upon its ability to champion the safeguarding agenda through exercising an independent voice.

The purpose is to make sure that all children and young people in our authority are protected from abuse and neglect. Children can only be safeguarded from harm if agencies work well together, follow procedures and guidance based on best practice and are well informed and trained.

Regulation 5 of the Local Safeguarding Board Regulations 2006 sets out the functions of the LSCB as per section 14 of the Children Act 2004. The Children Act 2004 places a duty on every local authority to establish an LSCB. The Government's Statutory Guidance, Working Together to Safeguard Children (2015) defines safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children as:

- Protecting children from maltreatment
- Preventing impairment of children's health or development
- Ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care

- Taking action to enable all children to have the best life chances

The following areas are required elements of the Annual Report:

- A rigorous assessment of the performance and assessment of local services;
- Identification of areas of weakness and the action being taken to address them, as well as other proposals for action;
- Lessons from reviews undertaken within the reporting period, including Serious Case and Child Death reviews;
- Contributions made to the HLSCB by partner agencies and details of expenditure.

Summary of Findings

Since the last annual report there has been a lot of positive activity to improve not only the effectiveness of the HLSCB, but also to ensure that safeguarding children and young people remain a safeguarding priority in the Borough. The Chairman of the Board noted the huge investment and re-structuring of Children's Services by Hillingdon Council over the last year and the work undertaken at Hillingdon Hospital to ensure that its child safeguarding standards are now regarded as 'good' by the Care Quality Commission.

A joint safeguarding children and adult board business unit to manage not only the HLSCB, but also the Safeguarding Adults Board (SAB) is fully established. This has enabled the development of progressive training packages for all agencies and provided business and project management skills to move the Board forward. The appointment of a Joint Board Business Manager has seen rapid development and most importantly, the introduction of audit and performance processes to ensure the Board is able to properly hold agencies to account.

The HLSCB has established an Executive Board consisting of senior lead officers from each statutory agency; it includes the Cabinet Member for Education and Children's services. This is the decision making body for the HLSCB and focuses on those issues that require senior-level decision making. The Operational Board includes additional non statutory partners, members of the third sector, and those responsible for operational delivery. The Operational Board manages the sub- committees and ensures that the Board priorities are being supported and driven forward.

All sub- committees have been reviewed. Membership and terms of reference for each sub-committee have been reviewed and individual work plans have been agreed by the Operational Board.

A case review sub-committee has been established jointly with adult services to ensure that learning and recommendations from serious case reviews, serious adult reviews and domestic homicide reviews are embedded into practice and closely monitored. Progress reports are submitted to both the HLSCB and SAB operational boards to give assurance to members of activity that is taking place.

An area that requires further development is the challenge that the Board offers to partners. The Chairman has developed a 'Chairs challenge' for agencies to report back at the next Board. Through the performance web, section 11 audit and schools audit, data will be available for scrutiny and challenge by the Board. It is also noted that there is more work to be done over the next year to listen to the views of children and young people and exploring ways in which to be more responsive and better engaged with all communities and particularly young people.

Financial Implications

The budget for 2016/17 has been set and agencies continue to contribute to this with the addition of a £5,000 contribution from the London Fire Brigade. Monthly meetings are now held with the Local Authority financial team in order for regular reports to be presented to the Executive board. The Board is now charging non contributing members for training, including schools.

4. EFFECT ON RESIDENTS, SERVICE USERS & COMMUNITIES

What will be the effect of the recommendation?

The remit of the HLSCB is to ensure that all agencies are working together effectively to keep children safe. It does this by monitoring the effectiveness of all agencies to this end and by making recommendations for priority action. This ensures that all agencies which have a statutory duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children (Children Act 2004) are able to carry out their functions. The Board's work is therefore critical in ensuring that children and young people in Hillingdon are safeguarded and that risks are minimised as much as possible.

Consultation carried out or required

HLSCB members and staff were consulted in preparation of the Annual Report. One of the continuing priorities for the HLSCB is to engage better with children young people and their families, and with staff, in developing priorities and monitoring the effectiveness of services.

5. CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

Corporate Finance

Corporate Finance has reviewed the report and concur with the financial implications set out above.

Legal

The Borough Solicitor confirms that there are no specific legal implications arising from this report. Legal Advice is provided whenever necessary to ensure that the Council meets its statutory obligations at all times.

6. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Previous Annual Reports