

HILLINGDON LOCAL SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN BOARD ANNUAL REPORT

Relevant Board Member(s)	Councillor David Simmonds CBE
Organisation	London Borough of Hillingdon
Report author	Stephen Ashley, Hillingdon Local Safeguarding Children Board
Papers with report	Hillingdon Safeguarding Children Annual Report

1. HEADLINE INFORMATION

Summary	The Hillingdon Local Safeguarding Children Board (HLSCB) has a statutory duty to publish an annual report on the effectiveness of child safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in the Borough. Once agreed by the HLSCB, the report is submitted each year to the Chief Executive, the Leader of the Council and the Chairman of the Health and Wellbeing Board.
Contribution to plans and strategies	N/A
Financial Cost	There are no financial costs relating to the publishing of this report.
Ward(s) affected	All

2. RECOMMENDATION

That the Health and Wellbeing Board notes the report.

3. INFORMATION

Supporting Information

The annual report sets out the work undertaken by the Board this year, and includes specific reports from each of the agencies that make up the Board. The purpose of the annual report is to provide evidence about the standard to which the agencies responsible for safeguarding children in the London Borough of Hillingdon have performed.

There has been considerable change over the last year, both to the Board and to the structure of a number of the agencies engaged in child safeguarding. In terms of the Board, we have restructured it so that it is more effective and the Executive Board now has representation at the most senior level. We have also formed a small business unit to manage not only the Safeguarding Children Board, but also the Safeguarding Adults Board. This has enabled us to develop progressive training packages for all agencies and provide administrative and project

management skill to move the Board forward. The appointment of a business manager has seen rapid development and, perhaps most importantly, the introduction of audit and performance processes to ensure we are able to properly hold agencies to account.

We are all aware that austerity measures have placed huge pressures on all agencies. Whilst we accept that this makes safeguarding children more difficult, it is not an excuse for failure and there is no doubt that organisations working together will be more likely to reach acceptable standards of safeguarding.

We will, over the coming year, continue to monitor changes to services to ensure that children are not harmed as a result of those changes. There will be a number of serious case reviews, some of which are historical, published by the Board this year relating to occasions where a child or children have been injured or lost their lives. These reports are a sad reminder that safeguarding children is a difficult task and those organisations and individuals make mistakes that can have tragic consequences. These reports will speak for themselves, but we are determined that where we have fallen short of the required standard we are able to ensure that the same mistakes are not repeated. This requires a multi-agency approach and a vigorous governance system holding agencies to account. The Board continues to provide this scrutiny, together with its partners, across the sector.

The report lays out in detail the areas where we need to make further progress, but the Board are satisfied that, despite the difficult financial circumstances, agencies in the Borough of Hillingdon are providing services that ensure our children are properly safeguarded. In particular, it is worth drawing attention to the huge investment and re-structuring of Children's Services by Hillingdon Council and the work undertaken at Hillingdon Hospital to ensure that its child safeguarding standards are now regarded as 'good' by the Care Quality Commission.

We have looked again at our priorities this year and they are set out in the report. We are determined that we do more work to listen to the views of children and young people and will be exploring ways in which we can be more responsive and better engaged with all our communities; particularly young people.

Financial Implications

There are no financial implications related to this report.

4. EFFECT ON RESIDENTS, SERVICE USERS & COMMUNITIES

What will be the effect of the recommendation?

There is no effect to local residents.

Consultation Carried Out or Required

No consultation required.

Policy Overview Committee comments

None at this stage.

5. CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

Hillingdon Council Corporate Finance comments

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

Hillingdon Council Legal comments

There are no legal issues related to this report. Pursuant to s14A Children Act 2004, the Hillingdon Local Safeguarding Children Board must, at least once in every 12 month period, prepare a report about safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in its area.

6. BACKGROUND PAPERS

NIL.