

# LOCAL SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN BOARD: ANNUAL REPORT

<b>Cabinet Member</b>	Councillor David Simmonds
<b>Cabinet Portfolio</b>	Deputy Leader of the Council Cabinet Member for Education and Children's Services
<b>Officer Contact</b>	Paul Hewitt, Education and Children's Services
<b>Papers with report</b>	Annual report

## HEADLINE INFORMATION

<b>Purpose of report</b>	This is the Annual Report of the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB). It is for information and gives a view on effectiveness of children's safeguarding in Hillingdon, and identifies priorities for future action and attention.
<b>Contribution to our plans and strategies</b>	This report will contribute to the Children and Young People's Plan in order to ensure that Hillingdon's children and young people are kept safe.
<b>Financial Cost</b>	There are no additional costs linked to this report, although it does highlight the potential risks to safeguarding in the current financial climate.
<b>Relevant Policy Overview Committee</b>	Education and Children's Services
<b>Ward(s) affected</b>	All –Borough wide

## RECOMMENDATION

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

### Comments of Policy Overview Committee(s)

At the request of the Cabinet Member, the draft report was considered by Education and Children's Services Policy Overview Committee on November 25<sup>th</sup> 2010. Members wished to emphasise the importance of partnership working to ensure there are adequate resourced and appropriate services to work with children in need and the increased numbers in need of protection.

## Supporting Information

1. 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 2011.
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

### 3 Summary of conclusions

- 3.1 Overall, the LSCB supports the Ofsted findings of 'good' for safeguarding children in Hillingdon ( Announced inspection 2009, grade of good, Ofsted Children's Services Assessment 2010, provisional grade 3 – performs well, an organisation that exceeds minimum requirements) 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. One particular success has been a dramatic reduction in the number of children who have gone missing whilst passing through Heathrow Airport.
- 3.2 However, there is also evidence of a large increase in child protection activity which has 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.
- 3.3 This will be exacerbated by any reductions in available resources and in changes in partner agencies, particularly Health.
- 3.4 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 preventative activity that are likely to achieve most benefit.
- 3.5 The LSCB also strongly recommends that resources are secured and protected for specialist front line services who work with children at risk of harm.
- 3.6 In addition, the workload and requirements at high levels of need, particularly children in need of protection, means that universal services, especially schools and health services, will need to develop ways of supporting those children and young people who fall below the child protection threshold.

## **Financial Implications**

There are no additional financial implications contained in this report, although it does point out the potential risks to safeguarding in the current financial climate, and indicates priorities for future resourcing.

## **EFFECT ON RESIDENTS, SERVICE USERS & COMMUNITIES**

### **What will be the effect of the recommendation?**

The remit of the LSCB 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**

LSCB members and staff were consulted in preparation of the annual report. One of the priorities for the LSCB in the future is to engage better with children young people and their families in developing priorities and monitoring the effectiveness of services

## **CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS**

### **Corporate Finance**

Corporate Finance has reviewed this report and is satisfied that there are no direct financial implications resulting from the recommendations of this report.

### **Legal**

The statutory framework behind the establishment of Hillingdon's Safeguarding Children Board is section 13 of the Children Act 2004, which was enacted in response to the report of the inquiry chaired by Lord Laming into the death of Victoria Climbié.

By section 14, the Safeguarding Children's Board's objective is:

- (a) to co-ordinate what is being by each person or body represented on the Board for the purpose of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in the area of the authority by which it is established; and
- (b) to ensure the effectiveness of what is being done by each such person or body for those purposes.

This report is prepared pursuant to section 14A (as inserted by section 197 of the Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009). Under the Council's Constitution the Cabinet has the appropriate powers to agree the recommendations proposed at the outset of this report. There are no other significant legal implications arising out of this report to bring to Cabinet's attention.

## **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Working Together to Safeguard Children 2010