

BARNSELY METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT OF: THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR - CHILDREN'S SERVICES

TITLE: ANNUAL REPORT OF THE BARNSELY LOCAL SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN PARTNERSHIP (2022/2023)

REPORT TO:	CABINET
Date of Meeting	16 August 2023
Cabinet Member Portfolio	Children's Services
Key Decision	No
Public or Private	Public

Purpose of report

To present for Cabinet's consideration the latest annual report of the Barnsley Local Safeguarding Children Partnership (LSCP).

Council Plan priority

The role and responsibilities of the Barnsley LSCP primarily support our priority for a **Healthy Barnsley** and the outcome of ensuring children and young people stay safe from all forms of harm

Recommendations

That Cabinet receives the Annual Report of the Barnsley LSCP and notes the progress made by the LSCP in relation to its statutory role and functions, as part of Cabinet's continued consideration of the Borough's arrangements for safeguarding vulnerable adults and children.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Children and Social Work Act (2017) followed by the amended statutory guidance for safeguarding children (*"Working Together to Safeguard Children": July 2018*) paved the way for significant changes in responsibilities for safeguarding children and promoting their welfare in local areas.
- 1.2 This included the abolition of local safeguarding children boards and the formal introduction of new multi-agency, safeguarding arrangements. From September 2019, responsibility for safeguarding children and promoting their welfare in the Borough has rested with the three designated, safeguarding partners identified in Chapter 3 of the Children and Social Work Act (2017) as follows:

- The local authority.
- NHS clinical commissioning group for an area any part of which falls within the local authority area (*Please see Paragraphs 1.3 and 1.5 below*).
- The chief officer of police for any area in which a part falls within the local authority area.

1.3 In Barnsley, these three statutory safeguarding partners have combined to form the Borough LSCP. Whilst the revised statutory guidance applies to all schools and other education providers, they are currently designated as ‘*relevant agencies*’ under the 2017 Act and part of the role of the LSCP is to set out how relevant agencies will comply with this ongoing statutory responsibility within the current local arrangements. Following the enactment of the Health and Care Act (2022) clinical commissioning groups were dissolved and their responsibility within the context of safeguarding children in Barnsley has been taken over by the South Yorkshire Integrated Care Board (South Yorkshire ICB)

1.4 The LSCP is also expected to set out, in writing, how the three statutory local partners will work together and with relevant agencies as well as develop processes and procedures to safeguard children and promote their welfare. This should include reference to the interface with other strategic partnerships, including the Borough’s Health and Wellbeing Board, Safeguarding Adults Board and Safer Barnsley Partnership.

1.5 The revised guidance identifies the lead representative for each of the 3 safeguarding partners all of whom will be expected to play an active role. In Barnsley, these are as follows:

- The Executive Director (Children’s Services) of the Local Authority as the statutory director of children’s services.
- The accountable officer of the South Yorkshire Integrated Care Board and Barnsley Place Health Partnership.
- The District Commander for South Yorkshire Police.

All 3 statutory safeguarding partners should have equal and joint responsibility for local safeguarding arrangements. The Cabinet Spokesperson for Children’s Services attends meetings and receives all reports of the LSCP both as an observer and as the Borough’s statutory Lead Member for Children’s Services.

2.0 PROPOSAL

2.1 The revised statutory guidance makes provision for the independent scrutiny of these new, local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements and Cabinet will recall that at its meeting held on 21st April 2021, it approved a proposal for a combined Independent Chair and Independent Scrutineer for the Borough’s LSCP which became effective during 2021/22.

2.2 The revised guidance also states that the designated safeguarding partners should agree an equitable and proportionate level of funding to be derived from each partner to support the new arrangements.

- 2.3 As well as the publication of arrangements for safeguarding children and promoting their welfare, the Barnsley LSCP is also required to publish an annual report on the effectiveness of these arrangements and the progress achieved which should be presented for consideration by the Council's Chief Executive and by Cabinet. The LSCP's latest annual report has been published and is attached as Appendix 1 to this report.
- 2.4 This is the fourth annual report to be published following the revised, statutory guidance of 2018. It sets out the work of the Partnership in relation to the changes made to local area arrangements for the safeguarding of children and promoting their welfare. This includes the conducting of local child safeguarding practice reviews and child death reviews, together with reporting any instances of child abuse or neglect to the National Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel as well as informing additional organisations, such as local sports clubs and faith organisations, of their responsibility concerning the safeguarding of young people, whilst also raising awareness among communities and business particularly through Safeguarding Awareness Week, held during 21st-25th November last year.
- 2.5 The work of the LSCP focused upon the following Strategic Priorities of the LSCP during 2022/2023, namely:
- (1) Implementing the recommendations of the Joint, Targeted Area Inspection (JTAI) on the multi-agency response to the identification of initial need and risks to vulnerable children and young people which took place in 2022.
 - (2) Addressing child neglect as a concomitant of the Pandemic and lockdown
 - (3) Tackling bullying, harassment and online harm
 - (4) Tackling child criminal exploitation
 - (5) Applying learning derived from local and national child practice reviews in everyday practice.
 - (6) To continue to focus upon the effectiveness and take-up of early help and support to families, particularly among families experiencing poverty and deprivation as we continue to recover from the Covid-19 Pandemic.

Moreover, the Partnership continued to support and protect vulnerable groups of children and young people, including children who had gone missing from home; children who had experienced or witnessed domestic violence together with children whose parents had elected to educate them at home. Further detail on the LSCP's Strategic Priorities during this period, is outlined particularly Pages 16-19 of the Annual Report.

- 2.6 Among the Partnership's strategic priorities during 2023/2024 will be the development of an outcomes-based quality assurance framework which, combined with its ongoing work, including the implementation of inspection recommendations and learning derived from both national and local reviews

of best practice, will provide further assurance on the effectiveness of safeguarding children in the Borough (*Please see Page 37 of the Annual Report*)

- 2.7 In May 2022, the outcomes of the Independent Review of Children’s Social Care included the following recommendations in relation to “*multi-agency (children’s) safeguarding partnerships*”
- For central government to clarify the role of multi-agency safeguarding arrangements as a strategic forum. To establish clearer government expectations for the operational aspects of partnership working, with co-ordination and delivery of multi-agency working overseen by the Director of Children’s Services.
 - Through the *Working Together to Safeguard Children* statutory guidance, to clearly set out the individual contributions of partners within local safeguarding children arrangements in achieving the Independent Review’s ‘Vision’.
 - The Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel and relevant *What Works* Centres to take a more proactive role in promoting evidence and supporting partnerships to improve.
 - Each of the inspectorates who regulate partners within a children’s safeguarding partnership should review their inspection framework to ensure there is a sufficient focus on the individual agency’s contributions to joint working. Where there are concerns about the functioning of partnerships, joint inspections should be instigated, with a judgement included.
 - The education sector should be added as a fourth statutory local safeguarding partner.
 - Central government should incentivise greater partner contributions towards supporting local safeguarding arrangements by requiring them to publish their financial contribution and to make receiving full funding for reform contingent on partner contributions.

- 2.8 The Government published its final response to the outcomes of the Independent Review and the reform of children’s social care, earlier this year. This has included a consultation on further proposed changes to the statutory guidance which will influence the role and responsibilities of local statutory partners. The effect of these proposed changes, in helping protect children and young people from harm, will form part of the Partnership’s next annual report.

3. IMPLICATIONS OF THE DECISION

3.1 Financial and Risk

- 3.2 There are no direct financial implications arising from the consideration of this report. The financial position for 2022/23 of the activities and functions in Children Services covered in the Barnsley LSCP Annual Report (looked after children, care leavers, safeguarding, Youth Justice, etc) have already been reported to Council’s Cabinet via the Corporate Final Accounts Report.

- 3.3 The cost of undertaking the activities of the Barnsley LSCP in 2022/23 amounts to £166k (and includes spend on staffing, independent chair costs, business support, etc) against total available resources of £212k. The underspend of £46k has been carried forward for the use by the Partnership against agreed commitments in 2023/24.
- 3.4 The LSCP costs are funded from contributions from partner organisations and includes the Council, Barnsley Place Integrated Care Board and the South Yorkshire Police and Crime Commissioner. A breakdown of costs and partner contributions is outlined on Page 32 of the attached Barnsley LSCP annual report.
- 3.5 **Legal**
- 3.6 There are no unanticipated legal considerations emerging for the Council through this report. Please also see Section 1 of the report
- 3.7 **Equality**
- 3.8 An equality impact assessment concerning the continuing role and responsibilities of the Barnsley LSCP has been prepared and is included as Appendix 2 of this report.
- 3.9 **Sustainability**
- 3.10 There are no implications for sustainability in the Borough arising through this report.
- 3.11 **Employee**
- 3.12 The Annual Report details the Barnsley LSCP's Multi-Agency Training Programme during 2022/2023. This continues to offer rich opportunities for professionals and practitioners, involved in safeguarding children and promoting their welfare, to develop their skills and knowledge as part of improving the quality of practice and provision.
- 3.13 **Communications**
- 3.14 There are no direct implications for the Council arising through the Annual Report. In considering communications, within the context of child protection, Cabinet will note that among the policies and procedures to be continually reviewed and developed by the Barnsley LSCP are those aimed at keeping children and young people safe from grooming, exploitation and abuse, whilst online
- 3.15 Equally, through engaging young people on how best they can report or raise concerns with the Partnership, statutory partners' and relevant agencies, relating to their safety or wellbeing, Cabinet is assured that communication channels are in place to enable them to do this on their terms and in ways which are most familiar to young people.

4. CONSULTATION

- 4.1 The Senior Management Team has both been consulted and endorsed the progress and achievements outlined in the Annual Report.

5. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 5.1 The purpose of this report is to comply with the provisions of current statutory guidance for safeguarding children concerning the production of an annual report by the Barnsley LSCP and its presentation to Cabinet.

6. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 6.1 Please see Paragraphs 2.3 and 5.1 of the report.

7. GLOSSARY

- 7.1 None, applicable.

8 LIST OF APPENDICES

- 8.1 Appendix 1: Annual Report of the Barnsley Local Safeguarding Children Partnership (2022/2023)

Appendix 2: Annual Report of the Barnsley Local Safeguarding Children Partnership (2022/2023) Equality Impact Assessment

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 9.1 If you would like to inspect background papers for this report, please email governance@barnsley.gov.uk so that appropriate arrangements can be made.

10 REPORT SIGN OFF

Financial consultation & sign off	Senior Financial Services officer consulted and date <i>Joshua Amahwe (25/07/2023)</i>
Legal consultation & sign off	Legal Services officer consulted and date M P Farrell Team Leader – Social Care 31 st July 2023

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