

BARNSELY METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

This matter is not a Key Decision within the Council's definition and has not been included in the relevant Forward Plan

REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR CHILDREN'S SERVICES TO CABINET ON 22 SEPTEMBER 2021

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE BARNSELY LOCAL SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN PARTNERSHIP (2020/21)

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

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

2.0 RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 **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.**

3.0 INTRODUCTION

- 3.1 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.
- 3.2 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.
 - The chief officer of police for any area in which a part falls within the local authority area.
- 3.3 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 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 new local arrangements
- 3.4 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.

3.5 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 Barnsley Clinical Commissioning Group.
- 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 as an observer and as the Borough's statutory Lead Member for Children's Services.

4.0 PROPOSAL AND JUSTIFICATION

4.1 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 this year, it approved a proposal for a combined Independent Chair and Independent Scrutineer for the Borough's LSCP which will become effective during 2021/22.

4.2 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.

4.3 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.

4.4 The LSCP's latest annual report (*Please see Appendix 1*) is the second to be published following the revised, statutory guidance. 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.

4.5 The LSCP's annual report also outlines the local, multi-agency arrangements concerning contextual safeguarding, including tackling child criminal exploitation together with protecting children and young people with complex needs and those at risk of neglect. The annual report also indicates the progress made towards improving the quality of evidence informed practice particularly through its

programme of multi-agency training, together with the lessons to be learned through initiatives, such as the annual National and Local Safeguarding Awareness Week.

- 4.6 These considerations are founded upon the four Strategic Priorities of the LSCP, namely:

Strategic Priority 1: Sharing and Engaging

Strategic Priority 2: Helping, Empowering and Supporting

Strategic Priority 3: Prevention

Strategic Priority 4: Ensuring Accountability

Further detail on the LSCP's Strategic Priorities is outlined particularly in Pages 5 and 6 of the Annual Report.

- 4.7 Notably, the Annual Report begins by retrospectively outlining the focus of its work during this period which was to identify, track and protect children and young people who may be potentially experiencing '*hidden harm*' due to the impact of lockdown upon school attendance and face to face contact with children's social workers.

- 4.8 The Annual Report then proceeds to indicate its strategic priorities as we move forward during 2021/22. These are summarised particularly in Pages 25-26 of the Annual Report and includes closely collaborating with schools and settings to tackle peer on peer sexual abuse and online harm. This follows the recent publication of Ofsted's rapid thematic review and report into this matter.

5.0 CONSIDERATION OF ALTERNATIVE APPROACHES

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

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR LOCAL PEOPLE/SERVICE USERS

- 6.1 The LSCP's annual report will provide assurance of the robust arrangements for safeguarding children and promoting their welfare in all areas of the Borough. In terms of prevention, both Elected Members and the public all have a valuable role to play in acting as the "*eyes and ears*" of their local communities in spotting the tell-tale signs of abuse, criminal exploitation or neglect and to inform the LSCP in order to prevent children and young people from being exposed to further risks.

7.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 A summary of the LSCP's annual budget during this period is shown in Page 29 of the Annual Report.

8.0 EMPLOYEE IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 There are no employee implications directly arising through consideration of this report.

9.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

9.1 There are no unanticipated legal considerations emerging for the Council through this report.

10.0 CUSTOMER AND DIGITAL IMPLICATIONS

10.1 There are no implications for accessing the range of Council services or for the onus towards digital transactions arising through the report.

11.0 COMMUNICATIONS IMPLICATIONS

11.1 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 and exploitation whilst online

11.2 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 them

12.0 CONSULTATIONS

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

13.0 THE COUNCIL PLAN AND THE COUNCIL'S PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK

13.1 The role and responsibilities of the LSCP in safeguarding children and young people from harm and to promote their welfare, accords with both the *'Healthy Barnsley'* and *'Growing Barnsley'* outcomes of the *'Be Even Better'* Strategy

14.0 PROMOTING EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND SOCIAL INCLUSION

14.1 The Partnership is subject to the Public Sector Equality Duty and will ensure that the development of key strategies, policies and procedures are underpinned by a full equality impact assessment

14.2 As part of the Partnership's multi-agency programme, training continues to be offered to practitioners and front line staff, to improve their understanding of complex needs, together with cultural and faith issues in order to help them ensure that the specific needs of children and young people, including from diverse communities are met

15.0 TACKLING THE IMPACT OF POVERTY

15.1 In promoting the welfare of children and young people, the Partnership has had a crucial role in helping co-ordinate the monitoring and tracking of vulnerable children in the Borough during the Covid-19 Pandemic as part of preventing the risk of any harm, including hidden harm such as neglect. This has enabled vulnerable children to attend school and maintain their health and wellbeing. This is so that they are better placed to fulfil their aspirations and are equipped with the skills that will enable them to participate in the employment market, shield themselves from the impact of worklessness and enhance social capital in our communities.

16.0 TACKLING HEALTH INEQUALITIES

16.1 The LSCP will continue to perform an important role in helping improve the health outcomes of children in care through its oversight of the performance of partners in undertaking timely health assessments and, thereby, closing the gap in health inequality

17.0 REDUCTION OF CRIME AND DISORDER

17.1 In complying with its statutory responsibilities, the LSCP not only ensures that children and young people are safeguarded from harm, the Partnership also performs a crucial role in helping identify and bring to account those responsible for harming children through cruelty, neglect, violence or exploitation

18.0 RISK MANAGEMENT ISSUES

18.1 Where any risks emerge to the progress of its Strategic Priorities, remedial action will be taken to ensure there is no impact on vulnerable children and young people in the Borough and that the needs of children requiring help or protection are met without delay

19.0 HEALTH, SAFETY AND EMERGENCY RESILIENCE ISSUES

19.1 Please see Paragraph 15.1.

20.0 COMPATIBILITY WITH THE EUROPEAN CONVENTION ON HUMAN RIGHTS

20.1 The progress achieved by the LSCP, in compliance with the responsibilities upon the statutory safeguarding partners, accords with the Articles and Protocols of the Convention, particularly the rights of the child to be kept safe from serious harm

21.0 CONSERVATION OF BIODIVERSITY

21.1 There are no implications for the local environment, tackling climate change or the conservation of biodiversity arising through consideration of this report.

22.0 GLOSSARY

22.1 None, applicable.

23.0 LIST OF APPENDICES

23.1 Appendix 1: Annual Report of the Barnsley Local Safeguarding Children Partnership (2019/20)

24.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

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

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Financial Implications/Consultation



Joshua Amahwe (08/09/2021)

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(To be signed by senior Financial Services officer)