

MEETING:	Health and Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee
MEETING DATE:	1st October 2014
TITLE OF REPORT:	Herefordshire Safeguarding Children Board Annual Report and Business Plan
REPORT BY:	Director for Children's Wellbeing Services

Classification

Open

Key Decision

This is not a key decision.

Wards Affected

County-wide

Purpose

To inform Scrutiny of Herefordshire Safeguarding Children's Board assessment of safeguarding in Herefordshire and of their own effectiveness within the Annual Report 2013-2014 and present to them the finalised Business Plan 2014-2015.

Recommendation(s)

THAT:

- (a) the effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements in Herefordshire as assessed by the Safeguarding Boards be noted;**
- (b) the priorities of the Boards in relation to specific safeguarding issues in Herefordshire be acknowledged;**
- (c) how the Council is contributing to service improvement through commissioning within Herefordshire with regard to safeguarding issues; and**
- (d) any comments to the safeguarding boards about their future work programmes be noted.**

Alternative Options

- 1 There are no alternative options as this report is to inform and enable Cabinet to consider the HSCB Annual Report and Business Plan.

Reasons for Recommendations

- 2 To ensure that Cabinet have oversight of the prioritised development work for Herefordshire Safeguarding Children Board during 2014-2015.
- 3 To ensure Cabinet are able to make informed decisions with regard to providing and commissioning services for Herefordshire which support the safeguarding children's agenda.

Key Considerations

4. Local Authorities are legally obliged to establish an effective Safeguarding Children Board. Further detail is in paragraphs 8-10 below. The annual report of Herefordshire Safeguarding Children Board enables Cabinet to understand and assess Herefordshire's multi-agency safeguarding arrangements.
5. Herefordshire Safeguarding Children Board has set the following strategic priorities for 2013-2016:
 - Improving the experience of children, young people and families when they are supported in safeguarding systems (i.e. CAF, Social Care)
 - Improving multi-agency case work.
 - Tackling evidenced safeguarding issues in Herefordshire.
 - Improving the functioning of Herefordshire's Safeguarding Boards.
6. Within the framework of the strategic priorities and as a result of the annual report, and the OFSTED inspection, the Board has a specific focus on:
 - Ensure that multi-agency responses to children at higher risk of sexual exploitation and those who go missing are increasingly effective;
 - Understanding the impact domestic abuse within Herefordshire and improve the county's response to the issue;
 - Using the voice of children and families to be used to improve services;
 - Developing the Board's safeguarding training offer;
 - Ensuring Hereford's Child Protection Policies remain up-to-date and fit-for-purpose;
 - Strengthening the impact of improvements resulting from the Board's extensive learning activity including performance monitoring and audit work;
 - Improve the strategic governance of the Board, including its accountability to and influence upon other local partnerships (including the Children and Young People's Partnership and the Health and Wellbeing Board).
 - Ensure that the Board is effectively supported by agencies to ensure the ongoing improvement work is sustainable.

Community Impact

- 7 The recent Ofsted inspection confirmed that there are no widespread or serious failures that create or leave children being harmed or at risk of harm in Herefordshire. The inspection report evidences ongoing improvements in the delivery of services to children and their families in line with the Council's statutory responsibilities and the statutory duties to cooperate placed on other partners..
- 8 The Business Plan (Appendix 2) includes expectations of how and when impact will be measured and what the expected impact will be.

Equality and Human Rights

- 9 Different aspects of the implementation of the Business Plan pay due regard to the public sector equality duty as set out below:

Under Section 149, the "General Duty" on public authorities is set out thus:

"A public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to -

eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct ... prohibited by or under this Act;

advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;

foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it."

Financial Implications

- 10 In order to enable the delivery of the HSCB Business Plan, the Council will need to maintain its current contribution to the Business Unit of £127,016 per annum. Discussions are being had across the Board's partners to review contributions and identify if these need to increase to maintain improvements across HSCB and Herefordshire Safeguarding Adult Board.

Legal Implications

- 11 Section 13 of the Children Act 2004 requires each local authority to establish a Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) for their area and specifies the organisations and individuals (other than the local authority) that should be represented on LSCBs.
- 12 Section 14 of the Children Act 2004 sets out the objectives of LSCBs, which are:
 - to coordinate what is done by each person or body represented on the Board for the purposes of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in the area; and
 - to ensure the effectiveness of what is done by each such person or body for those purposes.
- 13 Regulation 5 of the Local Safeguarding Children Boards Regulations 2006 sets out that

the functions of the LSCB, in relation to the above objectives under section 14 of the Children Act 2004, are as follows:

- (a) developing policies and procedures for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in the area of the authority, including policies and procedures in relation to:
 - i. the action to be taken where there are concerns about a child's safety or welfare, including thresholds for intervention;
 - ii. training of persons who work with children or in services affecting the safety and welfare of children;
 - iii. recruitment and supervision of persons who work with children;
 - iv. investigation of allegations concerning persons who work with children;
 - v. safety and welfare of children who are privately fostered;
 - vi. cooperation with neighbouring children's services authorities and their Board partners;
 - b. communicating to persons and bodies in the area of the authority the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, raising their awareness of how this can best be done and encouraging them to do so;
 - c. monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of what is done by the authority and their Board partners individually and collectively to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and advising them on ways to improve;
 - d. participating in the planning of services for children in the area of the authority; and
 - e. undertaking reviews of serious cases and advising the authority and their Board partners on lessons to be learned.
- 14 Regulation 5 (2) which relates to the LSCB Serious Case Reviews function and regulation 6 which relates to the LSCB Child Death functions are covered in chapter 4 of this guidance.
- 15 Regulation 5 (3) provides that an LSCB may also engage in any other activity that facilitates, or is conducive to, the achievement of its objectives.

Risk Management

- 16 There are no risks contained within the recommendations.
- 17 The main risk is that failing to have a strong and effective Safeguarding Children Board will leave children and young people more at risk of suffering harm.

Consultees

- 18 HSCB Strategic Board
- 19 HSCB Steering Group Sub Group Chairs
- 20 Herefordshire Safeguarding Children Improvement Board

Appendices

Appendix 1 - HSCB 2013-2014 Annual Report

Appendix 2 - HCSB 2014-15 Business Plan

Background Papers

- None identified.