

Herefordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (HSCP) Annual Report 2021-22

Meeting: Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee

Meeting date: Tuesday 13 December 2022

Report by: Corporate Director - Children & Young People

Classification

Open

Decision type

This is not an executive decision

Wards affected

(All Wards);

Purpose

To consider the annual report of the Herefordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (HSCP)

Recommendation(s)

That:

- a) **The annual report and effectiveness of the Herefordshire safeguarding Children Partnership (HSCP) be considered; and**
- b) **The committee determine any recommendations it wishes to make to relevant bodies to secure further improvement in safeguarding children and young people in Herefordshire.**

Alternative options

1. There are no alternative recommendations.

Key considerations

2. The activity of the Herefordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership is a critical element of the ongoing multi-agency approach to keep children and young people safe from harm.
3. The purpose of the safeguarding arrangements, as set out in Chapter 3: Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018, is to support and enable local organisation and agencies to work together in a system where:
 1. Children are safeguarded and their welfare promoted,
 2. Partner organisations and agencies collaborate, share and co-own the vision for how to achieve improved outcomes for vulnerable children,
 3. Organisations and agencies challenge appropriately and hold one another to account effectively,
 4. There is early identification and analysis of new safeguarding issues and emerging threats,
 5. Learning is promoted and embedded in a way that local services for children and families can become more reflective and implement changes to practice,
 6. Information is shared effectively to facilitate more accurate and timely decision making for children and families.
4. The annual report presents the work that the HSCP (and the organisations that make up the HSCP) have done to keep children and young people safe. The report covers the period 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022.
5. The Herefordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership is made up of the three statutory safeguarding partner organisations - West Mercia Police, Herefordshire and Worcestershire Clinical Commissioning Group and Herefordshire Council - and continue to be supported by a range of relevant agencies, which include:
 - Wye Valley NHS trust
 - Herefordshire and Worcestershire Health and Care NHS Trust
 - Herefordshire and Worcestershire Fire and Rescue
 - Herefordshire Voluntary Organisation Support Service (HVOSS)
 - West Mercia Youth Justice Service
6. The Statutory Partner members have joint and equal responsibility for the success or failure of its multi-agency safeguarding arrangements (MASA). The partnership understand the absolute dependence on each other and on relevant agencies to make a difference to the work with children young people and families in Herefordshire.
7. During the course of this reporting year, the HSCP underwent a review of its multiagency safeguarding arrangements. The HSCP substructure changed to reflect the new arrangements and ambition to strengthen strategic and operational activity and improve effectiveness for the children and young people of Herefordshire. Further information with regard to the HSCP's multiagency safeguarding arrangements is available on the Herefordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership's [website](#).

8. The report details progress made against the four partnership priorities and the activities that supported these priorities.
9. During the reporting period the Joint Case Review Group (JCR) a sub-group of the partnership conducted one rapid review. No Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews (CSPRs) were commissioned during this period.
10. The Partnership published a Serious Case Review and a Child Safeguarding Practice Review in February 2022. The publication of each of these reports had been delayed due to ongoing criminal proceedings.
11. This report and the activity of the strategic partners' signals a need to reset the partnership as it and the agencies that form it emerged from the Covid pandemic. Having made changes to the governance structures the report points to other challenges that it needs to address in 2022-23 such as the development of a multi-agency dataset that can be used to support and drive improvements, and an increased focus on the impact of its activities.
12. Since this report was concluded Kevin Crompton has been appointed as the Partnership's new Independent Scrutineer and the Chair of the Partnership having been briefly held by West Mercia Police following the departure of the previous Independent Scrutineer is now with Herefordshire Council.

Community impact

13. The activity of the Herefordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership has a direct and indirect effect on the lives of both current and future children and families in Herefordshire.

Environmental Impact

14. There are no specific environmental impacts arising from this report.

Equality duty

15. Under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, the 'general duty' on public authorities is set out as follows:

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

- a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
- b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

15. Under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, the 'general duty' on public authorities is set out as follows:

16. In particular, the council must have due regard to the public sector equality duty when taking any decisions on service changes.

17. Children and young people who are assessed to be 'in need' of support, protection and care are additionally vulnerable, often as a result of abuse, neglect, exploitation and a range of personal and family circumstances.
18. As individual improvement projects and service delivery progresses, and changes are designed, equality impact assessments will be undertaken, as necessary and appropriate.

Resource implications

19. There are no resource implications for consideration with this report.

Legal implications

20. None for the purposes of this report.

Risk management

21. There are no identified risks in the consideration of this report.
22. The Herefordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership maintains its own risk register and take action as required to mitigate any identified risk.

Consultees

23. There has been no public consultation on this report.

Appendices

Herefordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership Annual Review of Effectiveness 2021-22

Background papers

None identified.