

Cabinet

Report Title:	Annual Safeguarding Reports
Meeting Date:	13 September 2016
Lead Councillor(s):	Councillor Gordon Jones, Cabinet Member for Children's Services, Education and Skills
Local Councillor(s):	All Councillors
Director:	Sue Cook, Corporate Director for Children and Adults
Assistant Director or Head of Service:	Allan Cadzow, Deputy Director, Children and Young People's Services
Author:	<i>Tina Wilson, Head of Safeguarding and Reviewing Officer Service, Tel: 01473 263112</i>

Brief summary of report

1. This is the annual report to Cabinet to provide assurance of the effectiveness of the safeguarding of children in Suffolk.
2. This contextual overview report is accompanied by:
 - a) Appendix A - The Annual Safeguarding Report from the Head of Safeguarding within CYP which provides an annual assurance statement for cabinet on how well the council is discharging its duties toward children in need and children suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm.
 - b) Appendix B - The Local Safeguarding Children's Board (LSCB) Annual Report from the Independent Chair of the LSCB which provides an independent assessment of the effectiveness of child safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in the Suffolk.

What is Cabinet being asked to decide?

- | |
|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. To receive the reports on how effective Suffolk County Council and partners are in safeguarding vulnerable children in Suffolk. 4. To receive and accept the recommended priorities in the LSCB annual report for the coming year. |
|--|

Reason for recommendation

1. Local authorities have overarching responsibility for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children and young people in their area. They have a number of statutory functions under the 1989 and 2004 Children Acts. This includes specific duties in relation to children in need and children suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm.
2. Under section 14a of the Children Act 2004 the LSCB chair must publish an annual report on the effectiveness of child safeguarding and on promoting the

welfare of children in the local area. Statutory guidance requires that this must be presented to the Leader of Council and the Chief Executive.

What are the key issues to consider?

3. Are the LSCB priorities drawn from the evidence of what is working well and what needs to improve?
4. To what extent are local agencies and organisations working together effectively?
5. How are lessons and learning implemented to improve the system?
6. How effective are services in ensuring local children and their families receive early help to reduce the need for child protection interventions?
7. Are services evidenced based?
8. How effective are child protection services?
9. What are the outcomes for children who experience abuse or neglect?
10. How well do multi-agency partners work together to protect children?
11. What do children say about their experiences of the safeguarding system?
12. How well are children supported to express their wishes and feelings?
13. What evidence is there that systems are in place to ensure that children are able to participate in decisions about their lives?

What are the resource and risk implications?

14. There are no new resource implications arising from these reports.
15. Safeguarding children is a complex and multifaceted task, requiring a highly skilled and well trained workforce, adequate resourcing and effective working together across all agencies and with families.
16. As the reports are for information only no EIA is required.

What are the timescales associated with this decision?

17. These are annual reports.
18. Priorities and actions identified in the reports are for implementation over 2015-16.

Alternative options

19. None

Who will be affected by this decision?

20. Children and Families in Suffolk.

Main body of report

21. Local authorities have overarching responsibility for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children and young people in their area. They have a number of statutory functions under the 1989 and 2004 Children Acts. This includes specific duties in relation to children in need and children suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm.

22. The Director of Children's Services (DCS) and Lead Member for Children's Services in local authorities are the key points of professional and political accountability, with responsibility for the effective delivery of these functions. They must report to the Leader and the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) in discharging these functions.
23. The DCS has the responsibility within a local authority, under section 18 of the Children Act 2004, for improving outcomes for children, local authority children's social care functions and local cooperation arrangements for children's services.
24. The CEO has the responsibility of establishing the LSCB, and ensuring its effectiveness.
25. Section 14 of the Children Act 2004 sets out the objectives of LSCBs, which are:
 - (a) 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
 - (b) to ensure the effectiveness of what is done by each such person or body for those purposes.
26. The Council's Chief Executive has met with the Cabinet Member for Children's Services, Education and Skills, the Corporate Director for Children and Adults and the LSCB to consider these reports. Information on the Youth Offending Service and additional information about domestic abuse have been included as a result. Commitment to the continuing importance of ensuring that the Council's Customer Services and IT functions support strong delivery was agreed. Plans were also made to work on improving the links with local universities in order to influence the quality of social work training and further plans to ensure continued senior partnership oversight of the work on Child Sexual Exploitation.

Sources of further information

- a) https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/419595/Working_Together_to_Safeguard_Children.pdf
- b) https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/271429/directors_of_child_services_-_stat_guidance.pdf

