

Report of: Corporate Director of Children's Services

Meeting of:	Date	Ward(s)
Children's Services Scrutiny Committee	11 January 2017	All

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SUBJECT: Islington Safeguarding Children Board Annual Report 2015/16

1. Synopsis

- 1.1 The attached report shows that safeguarding activity is progressing well locally and that the Islington Safeguarding Children Board (ISCB) has a clear consensus on the strategic priorities for the coming year (p.11)
- 1.2 The ISCB has worked well in fulfilling its statutory functions under 2015 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' statutory guidance. Statutory and non-statutory members are consistently participating towards the same goals in partnership and within their individual agencies.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 That the Islington Safeguarding Children Board Annual Report 2015/16 and the Key Messages (pp. 35-36) be noted.

3. Background

- 3.1 The Independent Chair of the ISCB has a statutory duty to provide an annual report about the effectiveness of local arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of Islington's children.
- 3.2 The Board has done well to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding within Islington with the limited resources that have been made available. This work needs to be kept constantly under review to ensure our monitoring and evaluation functions are properly resourced to be able to help inform The Board of what difference it is making to keep children safe in Islington
- 3.3 The London Child Protection Procedures and Practice Guidance to keep children safe are well embedded in Islington, which allow agencies to have a clear reference point to undertake single-agency and multi-agency work. We are confident that these ensure children are best protected from harm and

their families offered the right support when they most need it. Our local policies and procedures also enable the right decisions to be made about the safe recruitment, induction and supervision of frontline staff, as well as respond to allegations against staff.

3.4 Our learning culture has been enhanced by a programme of undertaking both single-agency and multi-agency case audits. These give a valuable insight into the child protection system and how single agency service delivery and working together impacts on outcomes for children.

3.5 There continues to be challenges for the Board, which includes:

- Evaluating the effectiveness of our local approach to early help to be assured that timely responses to any child care concerns are made appropriately and therefore reduce the need for statutory interventions;
- We need to raise the profile of the ISCB with the wider communities of Islington. Along with our ongoing communications strategy, we have appointed two new lay members to assist in this task;
- We need to facilitate new ways of getting feedback from the public and frontline staff on 'what works' and what could be done better or differently;
- Public services will continue to be operating in an environment of financial constraint, which looks to be even more challenging in future years, as a Board we must continue to ensure the safety of children is not compromised;
- Partner agencies need to ensure their in-house safeguarding training arrangements are effective and consistent with the ISCB Training Strategy. In addition, the Board needs to develop more sophisticated means to effectively evaluate the impact of training;
- Our response to children affected by neglect, child sexual abuse and child sexual exploitation in terms of identification and interventions needs to be constantly reviewed and improvements made where necessary;
- Our response to families affected by domestic violence needs to remain a high priority. Islington has the second highest rate of reported domestic violence offences in North London and therefore continues to be of concern for many children and families;
- We need to strengthen our approach to understanding e-safety as the advancements in social media technology have created new negative opportunities for children and young people to harm each other by 'cyber bullying';
- The Board needs to fully understand the impact of serious youth violence, knife-crime and gang-related activity across Islington in order to put in place strategies and action plans which will help to protect and safeguard young people from harm. The introduction of the 'Islington Gang Protocol' which highlights young people as being gang affiliated to be considered as still requiring safeguarding will need to be closely monitored within the business of the board;
- The Board needs to reflect the voice and experiences of young people more effectively.

4. Implications

4.1 Financial implications

There are no direct financial implications arising from the report.

4.2 Legal implications

The Local Safeguarding Children Board must prepare and publish an annual report about safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in Islington (section 14A Children Act 2004).

The objective of the LSCB is to co-ordinate what is done by public bodies offering safeguarding services to children who are being provided with care by others (section 14 (1) Children Act 2004; regulation 5 The Local Safeguarding Children Boards Regulations 2006/90).

The report should provide an assessment of the performance of local services, identify areas of weakness, set out proposals for action and include lessons from reviews (Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015).

4.3 **Environmental implications**

There are no direct environmental implications arising from the report.

4.4 **Resident Impact Assessment**

The council must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation, and to advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations, between those who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not share it (section 149 Equality Act 2010). The council has a duty to have due regard to the need to remove or minimise disadvantages, take steps to meet needs, in particular steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities, and encourage people to participate in public life. The council must have due regard to the need to tackle prejudice and promote understanding.

An RIA has not been completed because an assessment is not necessary in this instance. The Committee is asked to receive the report, note the ISCB priorities and utilise the priorities to inform its future work. No negative equalities implications for any protected characteristic, nor any human rights issues, are envisaged as a result of these recommendations. The report proposes actions which are intended to strengthen the Council's safeguarding measures. Should the Scrutiny Committee decide to take any other specific actions in response to the report, separate consideration of the impacts of these actions may be required.

5 **Conclusion and reasons for recommendations**

5.1 The ISCB Annual Report 2015/16 is appended for information and consideration by the Committee.

Appendices

- Appendix 1: ISCB Annual Report 2015/16

Background papers: None.

Final report clearance:

Signed by:



Carmel Littleton
Corporate Director of Children's Services

Date: 21/12/2016

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