

Public Health

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Report of: Statutory Partners of Islington Safeguarding Children Partnership
(Local Authority, Police and Health)

Meeting of: Health and Wellbeing Board

Date: 31st October 2023

Ward(s): all wards

Subject: Islington Safeguarding Children Partnership Annual Report 2021-2022

1. Synopsis

1.1 Over the past year, the partnership has made significant progress in addressing key challenges, notably through the establishment of two task and finish groups. The Transitional Safeguarding group showcased effective collaboration, while the group addressing disproportionality and inequality initiated crucial data analysis and action planning.

1.2 Despite our advancements, we understand that challenges, especially in neglect, remain. Recognizing this, we've emphasized the need for targeted training, auditing, and a detailed neglect strategy. Our audit activities have incorporated insights from both local and national reviews, including significant findings from the JTAI (Joint Targeted Area Inspection) in Solihull.

1.3 A hallmark achievement has been amplifying the voice of children in our initiatives. This is evident in our consistent commitment to placing them at the core of our decisions, as seen in collaborative projects like the Young Black Men and Mental Health initiative.

1.4 We've transitioned to daily safeguarding meetings (DSM), which have surpassed the efficiency of our earlier MARAC (Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference) meetings. Notably, the DSM has fostered improved feedback from women and girls impacted by domestic abuse, enhancing our services.

1.5 The annual report also highlights the success of our youth strategy, which has led to a decline in knife crime among youth and the inception of an action plan targeting disproportionality within the Youth Justice service.

1.6 While celebrating these successes, we're also mindful of areas that require improvement. One such area is the SEMH (Social, Emotional Mental Health) section, which has identified the challenge of prolonged waiting times for services. A strategic plan is in place to expedite these wait times.

1.7 The partnership's training on safeguarding and information sharing has been commended by delegates for its emphasis on collaboration and equipping professionals with vital knowledge. Daily safeguarding meetings (Violence Against Women & Girls) have significantly bolstered multi-agency collaboration in intervening in cases where domestic abuse is a risk, swiftly addressing emerging concerns and solidifying a united approach to child protection.

1.8 Overall, the Islington Safeguarding Children Partnership has displayed strong leadership, openness to feedback, and a balance of support and challenge. This annual report celebrates their exceptional work over the past year, and their dedication to the welfare of children is commendable. A heartfelt appreciation is extended to all entities and individuals in Islington who contribute to the safety and well-being of children and families.

2. Recommendations

2.1 The committee is asked to note this report and the future priorities for the ISCP.

3. Background

3.1 Safeguarding children partnerships in London (and throughout the UK) have a statutory obligation to produce an annual report based on legal frameworks and guidance primarily set out in the Children Act 1989 and 2004 and further detailed in the "Working Together to Safeguard Children" statutory guidance.

3.2 Aim of the Annual Report: The "Working Together to Safeguard Children" guidance details the core responsibilities and expectations for the safeguarding partners. One of these responsibilities is to publish an annual report. The report should:

- **Provide Transparency:** Detail what the partners have done as a result of the arrangements, including on child safeguarding practice reviews, and how effective these arrangements have been in practice.
- **Highlight Learning:** Include evidence of the effectiveness of local training, including multi-agency training, and how it is being evaluated.
- **Ensure Accountability:** Detail how findings from local reviews have influenced practice and informed their report.
- **Assess Performance:** Provide a robust and objective assessment of the performance and effectiveness of local services. This might include data on child health, the impact of domestic abuse, or outcomes for children in need.

- Voice of the Child: The report should also highlight how they have gathered and used the views of children and families to inform their work.
- Future Plans: Identify priorities for the coming year and how they propose to meet them.

3.3 The annual report encompasses the core responsibilities and expectations from the statutory partners and relevant agencies who conduct reports where needed to measure the effectiveness of safeguarding children within the ISCP. Relevant agencies who have shared and contributed their reports to the ISCP have made recommendations for their service and will give updates on how effective their actions have been in the next reporting cycle (next year).

4. Implications

4.1. Financial Implications

4.1.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report. The measures and recommendations proposed in this report are not currently quantifiable. Any recommendations from this report, if adopted, will need to be expanded upon and reviewed with the financial implications assessed.

4.2. Legal Implications

4.2.1 The Children Acts of 1989 and 2004 set out specific duties. Section 9a of the Children Act 2004 empowers the secretary of state to define criteria for targets for safeguarding in a local authority's area.

4.2.2 Section 17 of the Children Act 1989 puts a duty on the local authority to provide services to children in need in their area, Section 47 requires the investigation of potential significant harm to children in its area and Sections 31 and 38 permit the application to court for care or supervision orders to protect children.

4.2.3 In addition the Local Authority has a power to promote wellbeing in the community through itself and with its partners pursuant to Part 1 of the Local Government Act 2000 as amended.

4.2.4 The proposals in this report conform to these obligations.

4.3. Environmental Implications and contribution to achieving a net zero carbon Islington by 2030

4.3.1 There are no environmental implications that arise from this report.

4.4. Equalities Impact Assessment

4.4.1 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.

4.4.2 An Equalities Impact Assessment is not required in relation to this report. This is an update to the Health & Wellbeing Board on the already published annual report.

5. Conclusion and reasons for recommendations

5.1 The ISCP rightly places a high priority on safeguarding and promoting the welfare of vulnerable children in Islington. The annual report provides assurance about the quality and effectiveness of services provided. Through a range of scrutiny of services to Islington's most vulnerable children the ISCP ensures that children are as safe as they can be.

Appendices:

Islington Safeguarding Children Partnership Annual Report 2021-2022

Background papers:

As above.

Final report clearance:

Signed by:

Jon Abbey - Director of Children's Services People Directorate

Date: 29th September 2023.

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