

ANNUAL REPORT 2016 - 2017



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Introduction by Independent Chair of the Board - David Archibald

I am pleased to present this Annual Report for 2016/17 as the new Independent Chair of Thurrock Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB).

The LSCB is required to publish an Annual Report on the effectiveness of safeguarding in its area, including an assessment of local safeguarding arrangements. This report also sets out the progress and achievements over the last year and those priority areas the Board will focus on over the next 12 months.

This has been a challenging year and the Board continues to rise to meet these challenges with a strong commitment by our partners to the LSCB's work. This report captures some of the excellent work the Board has achieved supporting and challenging the improvement of services for children and its work of raising awareness within all elements of the community.

Partnership working has strengthened despite personnel changes within the Board, with a greater sense of the Board functioning as a multi-agency forum. Alongside our Business Plan the LSCB continues its wider programme of work responding to new challenges as they arise.

Our vision is that every child and young person in Thurrock should grow up safe from maltreatment, neglect and criminal activity. We want to further improve our safeguarding system with the focus firmly on the experience of the child or young person's journey. Over the next year there will be a strong focus on early help provision and partners' response to neglect.

I am pleased with the progress made locally during this period and we will continue to be vigilant in providing a level of challenge to partners responsible for keeping Thurrock children and young people safe, as we approach implementation of revised safeguarding arrangements.

I would like to thank all those who have contributed to the LSCB this year for their hard work and commitment. I would particularly like to thank our Business Team and Business Manager, for supporting me to keep the LSCB operating smoothly.



David Archibald



Overview of the Annual Report

I write this report on behalf of the Independent Chair.

Its content provides evidence and examples from our 2016 /17 Business Plan, which drives the focus of our activities along with information which highlights the Board involvement in policy, auditing and reviews of services across agencies working with children.

The way the Board functions to support and challenge partners in safeguarding are changing. The introduction of new safeguarding arrangements is expected to take place over the next 18 months and will create new opportunities. These new arrangements will need to deliver 'more for less 'and make best use of contributions from those agencies involved. We have already begun that journey, streamlining our existing structure and building our processes with our colleagues across Southend, Essex and Thurrock (SET), but we still have a long journey ahead.

The Ofsted Inspection in 2016 graded the Board as "Good". Our aim this year was to build on those high standards the Board expects of those organisations working for or with Children's Services. And we continue to develop towards that aim.

The world of safeguarding children is a continual cycle of change. The Board needs to ensure that it is fit to meet those needs. This report will show some of the further progress we have made. If you know of new ways of improving our services whether you are a statutory, commissioned, voluntary or receiver of services, we welcome feedback and looking for new inspiration, our contact details are on our website www.thurrocklscb.org.uk and within this report.

A P Cotgrove

Alan Cotgrove
LSCB Business Manager



About The LSCB

Thurrock Local Safeguarding Children Board is a statutory body which has a range of roles scrutinising and challenging local safeguarding practice as part of its responsibilities under Section 14 of the Children Act 2004.

The role of the Board is to have an independent co-ordinating and challenging role around safeguarding practice across its partner agencies. These functions are carried out through the Full Board and each of its Sub Groups, whose activities are outlined later in this report. While the LSCB do not have the power to direct partner agencies, the Board have a key role in making clear where improvement is needed. Each Board Partner retains their own existing line of accountability for safeguarding (Working Together to Safeguard Children, 2015).

During this reporting year we have continued to receive good support at our meetings from all agencies.

We continue to work on improving our systems and structures on our journey to be an outstanding Safeguarding Board and have made further changes this year to the structure of the Board, amalgamating roles and responsibilities for greater efficiency.

To support our activities the Board has made some structural changes during the year and now comprises of:-

- ❖ Full Board
- ❖ Management Executive Group
- ❖ Performance Improvement Panel
- ❖ Serious Case Review Sub Group
- ❖ Learning & Improvement Framework
- ❖ Audit Group
- ❖ Training Group
- ❖ MASE (Missing and Sexual Exploitation) Group
- ❖ Risk Assessment Group
- ❖ CDOP (Child Death Overview Panel - SET)

To ensure the Board is aware of all cross cutting safeguarding impacts, representation on other boards and multi-agency groups includes:



- ❖ Health & Well Being Board
- ❖ Community Safety Partnership
- ❖ SET CSE Strategic Group
- ❖ SET Procedures Group
- ❖ Regional LSCB Chairs and Managers Group
- ❖ VAWG - Violence against women and girls Group
- ❖ Signs of Safety Group
- ❖ Graded care Profile2 Group
- ❖ Integrated commissioning Group

LSCB Business Plan 2016/17

This year the Board agreed to consolidate its plan for the year into four strategic Aims:

- ❖ Safeguarding is Everyone business
- ❖ Reduce the number of children and young people in need of responsive safeguarding through effective help and support at an earlier stage
- ❖ Voice of the child
- ❖ A Board fit to meet future demand.

Through this approach we aim to ensure that local services working together are effective in safeguarding children and supporting their parents.

Our plan sets out the Boards priorities for the year. Progress of the plan was monitored by the relevant Board Sub Group to ensure accountability and outcomes were achieved. The plan is available to view on our website www.thurrocklscb.org.uk

Alongside these priorities we sought to improve our Quality Assurance and Learning and Improvement Framework through more involvement of frontline practitioners and also our work across the Southend, Essex and Thurrock partnership approach (SET)

These areas included:

- ❖ Child sexual exploitation
- ❖ Children who go missing



- ❖ Self-harm and poor mental health
- ❖ Suicide
- ❖ Children at risk of radicalisation and violent extremism
- ❖ Children at risk of serious youth violence and gangs
- ❖ Action of the SCR Harry Review
- ❖ Review and publication of SCR James
- ❖ Updating of SET Safeguarding Procedures
- ❖ Walk On Line Roadshow delivered to 2,100 children
- ❖ Learning and improvements programmes for practitioners
- ❖ Distributed 130,110 items of safeguarding information

Reports and procedures reviewed by the Board included:

- ❖ Private Fostering
- ❖ Local Authority Fostering
- ❖ Child Death Review
- ❖ Community Safety Partnership
- ❖ Independent Reviewing Officers responsibilities
- ❖ Local Area Designated Officer role
- ❖ MASH (Multi Agency safeguarding Hub)
- ❖ MARAC (Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference)

Safeguarding Thurrock Children

- ❖ Thurrock has a higher proportion of children and young people aged 0-19 years (26.84%) than the national average (23.9%).
- ❖ The number of young people aged 0-19 years in Thurrock is predicted to increase from 42,700 in 2012, to 50,500 in 2037 (ONS)
- ❖ The largest increase will be in 10-14 year old age group
- ❖ The population is increasingly diverse
- ❖ Among school-age children, more than one in four (30%), are from a black and minority ethnic group. (Education Commission)



- ❖ Thurrock experiences significant pockets of deprivation and inequality, with several areas falling within the 20% most deprived areas in England.
- ❖ Infant and child mortality rates in Thurrock are consistent with national averages.
- ❖ Thurrock has above the national average of children on Child Protection Plans



Safeguarding Context

The LSCB are pleased to acknowledge some of the excellent work undertaken in safeguarding children and young people by agencies and partnerships across the Borough. The list is not exhaustive but includes recognition of the work undertaken by the Community Safety Partnership, Adult Safeguarding and local community and voluntary organisations that contribute to making Thurrock a safe place and supporting Thurrock's overarching vision

Highlights

- ❖ PREVENT Agenda
- ❖ Adult Safeguarding support for Serious Case Reviews and audits
- ❖ FGM
- ❖ Understanding and responding to gangs



Safeguarding Thresholds

Thurrock continues to apply its thresholds rigorously and the Board reviews its published document annually. Following the Ofsted Inspection of Children's Services, Children's Social Care commissioned a review of the Early Offer of Help, incorporating the step up and step down processes, to review the thresholds and appropriateness of referrals. This follows a steady increase in Child Protection Plans and Child in Need cases. The outcome of the review and sample audits undertaken will assist in determining that risk assessments are being appropriately applied.

Looked After Children

The rate of Children in Care has continued to remain at a consistent level compared to the previous year. The actual number of Looked After Children was 338 (April 2017) compared to 335 (April 2016). The significant trend in the increase in Unaccompanied Asylum Seekers (UAS), which saw an increase from 31 (2015) to 69 (April 2016), has continued to place pressures on Children's Social Care with 57 LAC representing the UAS cohort. The demands of this cohort should not be underestimated and have the potential of having a significant impact on our services. To support that demand Children's Social Care has introduced a specific team to oversee their requirements. This element of LAC will need continued close monitoring.

The breakdown of LAC shows that 230 (68%) are male and 108 (32%) female with the main age profile being 12-16 year olds accounting for 142 (42%).

The placement of our LAC remains a challenge for Thurrock, with 203 of the 338 being accommodated outside of the Borough due to a lack of in Borough placements available. Some concerns have been highlighted in the Serious Case Review James regarding a shortfall in scrutiny and oversight of placement provision for over 16 year olds. The Board is aware that a lot of activity has been and continues to be undertaken to identify and increase the number of placement options available within the Borough. The Board acknowledge the efforts being made and will support services in promoting good placements.

Child Protection Plans

The rate of children subject to Child Protection Plans (CP) has increased slightly on the



previous year. The actual number of children subject of a plan in Thurrock has increased from 289 (April 2016) to 294 (April 2017) which represents 0.72% of Thurrock's child population. This figure is back in line with the previous figures of 288 in 2013/14.

This position reaffirms the need to look more closely at early intervention, thereby reducing the number of children requiring Social Care interventions at this level. The Board will be seeking positive change from the introduction of the refreshed approach to Thurrock Early Help provision through the "Brighter Futures" programme.

Looking for any learning or trends, of the 294 cases there is a fairly even spread of 51% male, 48% female and 1% for unborn cases. The open cases have undergone an extensive programme of audit and performance management scrutiny by Children's Social Care and the Board has conducted its own audits. This has supported the position of having the right children on the right plans and category.

The Board are determined to ensure that CP plans are timely and effective in achieving better outcomes for our children, and acknowledge the work undertaken by Children's Social Care in reviewing the category of multiple, which is no longer used, and also the work undertaken in reducing the timescales a young person remains on a plan.

This is now reflected in the timeframes that a young person remains on a plan being significantly reduced, which the Board will continue to monitor.

There had been an identified trend in the category of CP cases shifting from the more prominent neglect category to more cases of emotional abuse. This trend has reverted back and the current data shows 143 (48%) cases for neglect, 129 (44%) for emotional abuse, 15 (5%) physical abuse and 10 (3%) for sexual abuse.

The age profile of cases show the majority of cases falling within the 5-11 age bracket 128 (44%) 0-4yrs: 89 (31%) age 5-11yrs: 128 (44%) age 12-16yrs: 66 (23%) age 17yrs: 6 (2%)

Child in Need

CIN cases have remained fairly static with 618 cases compared to the previous year.



New Policies and Procedures

The Board has contributed to the development of practice and process to improve services to children.

- ❖ Supporting the introduction and implementation of The Graded Care Profile 2 as part of the Board's Neglect Strategy
- ❖ Supporting the introduction and implementation of "The Signs of Safety" Model for improving our partner's response to safeguarding practice.

Lay Members

The challenge still remains to fully incorporate lay membership within the Board. We currently have one lay member who is an active member on the Full Board. The Business Team promote and support the role through a variety of sources and publicity with the community.

Allegations Management

The Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) has close links with the LSCB, which monitors the recommendations and outcomes of allegations of abuse against those who work with children ensuring completion within timescale. The LSCB has a duty to ensure that all allegations of abuse or maltreatment of children by a professional, staff member, foster carer or volunteer will be taken seriously and treated in accordance with consistent procedures. The Board needs to ensure that there are effective inter-agency procedures in place for dealing with allegations against people who work with children and receive an Annual LADO Report to keep the Board appraise of trends and the activities the LADO undertakes.

Agencies Voices

The Board felt it was important to have a section in the Annual Report to show how our partner agencies have contributed to the vision of the Board and in improving safeguarding outcomes for Thurrock's children and young people. This process has been helpful in focussing both partnership and single agencies priorities. Ofsted Inspectors in 2016



welcomed this approach, during their review of the Board, and we have requested partners to contribute again to this year's report. Agencies were asked to respond to the four key headings below and responses received have been included:

- ❖ What did your agency do in 2016/17 which promoted safeguarding and how can you evidence the impact on improved outcomes for children and young people as a result. Please include data where possible
- ❖ What challenges as a single agency have you faced in trying to achieve improved outcomes and how have you addressed them?
- ❖ What challenges around multi-agency working have you faced to achieve improved outcomes and how have you addressed these?
- ❖ What are your safeguarding priorities for the year 2017/18?

Section 11

The requirement to provide responses to the key questions has helped to validate the Section 11 returns. The Boards Section 11 process is robust and provides good assurance regarding the quality of partner's commitment and prioritisation of safeguarding. The commitment to safeguarding is further scrutinised through the Performance Improvement Panel which requires each agency to answer questions from a panel of the Board on its contribution to safeguarding.

Education 157/175 Audits

It is pleasing to report that an excellent response from all our schools has taken place again this year along with the requirement for additional information supporting the PREVENT agenda

Children's Social Care

What did your agency do in 2016/17 which promoted safeguarding and how can you evidence the impact on improved outcomes for children and young people as a result. Please include data where possible.

Ofsted judged children to be safe in Thurrock as part of the safeguarding inspection. The Ofsted report highlights various examples of good practice in relation to safeguarding. Since



the inspection, Thurrock has also completed a self-assessment - as part of the regional peer challenge process. Some examples of the evidence have been listed below:

Workforce

- ❖ Two additional teams have been added to the service to reduce size of caseloads.
- ❖ Turnover rate for social workers is 7.8%, this compares favourably in comparison to 11.63% for the council as a whole
- ❖ Sickness is at a relatively low level with only 4.32 days lost on average per employee in the last 12 months. This is below the Council's target of 9 days per employee and significantly lower than the Council-wide figures which were at 10.16 days lost per employee.
- ❖ In August 2016 agency workers made up 42% of the workforce. Out of the 67 agency staff 58 were outside of the Memorandum of Corporation. This position has significantly improved. As of June 2017, 28% of the workforce is made up of agency staff. This equates to 42 agency staff, out of which 2 were outside of the Memorandum of Corporation.
- ❖ Signs of Safety training was rolled out and more has been planned for 2017/18

Schools

The Local Authority organises a termly Safeguarding Leads Meeting for schools and academies which provides a successful forum for the exchange of information relating to safeguarding in schools. Work in this area has included consultation on the Multi Agency Assessment Hub, Anti Bullying work and work on the Emotional Well Being and Mental Health Service. This work continues to be well supported by schools.

Early Help

A new multi-agency Brighter Futures Board has been established to oversee service integration and strengthen the offer to families in need.

Posts in the MASH service were established and this has enabled permanent recruitment and sustainability of the service.

The processes for the improved service (Brighter Futures) are still under development; however a streamlined referral form has been drafted for partners to make direct referrals to



the service via one point of contact when there are emerging needs. The use of the CAF will be restricted to the making of safeguarding and child protection referrals to the MASH. It is anticipated that all referrals to the service will be dealt with within 24 hours and the family allocated to a member of the team who will, alongside the Lead Professional, co-ordinate a TAF meeting and develop a Family Plan.

The monthly Multi Agency Planning Panels will co-ordinate and manage the resources that have been specifically commissioned to meet the needs of families in line with the JSNA.

Youth Offending Service

In the last two inspections by HMIP, Thurrock YOS has been commended for its awareness and actions in respect of safeguarding issues. Please see quote below from 2015 Short Quality Screening Inspection.

'Key strength:-

The genuinely holistic work by case managers integrated safeguarding, public protection and offending behaviour interventions. There was effective liaison and joint work with other agencies. It was apparent that there was excellent staff commitment to children and young people and their parents/carers resulting in more effective interactions'

Child Sexual Exploitation

The quality of CSE RAs has improved over the past 18 months, and via CSE Risk Management Plans, (CSE RMPs), plans in respect of safeguarding individual children at risk and supporting and enabling their families, continues to develop. Equally, the focus upon including possible perpetrators is increasingly present in assessments and plans to safeguard.

The SET CSE Disruption Toolkit is used to inform and bolster the collective multi-agency response to possible perpetrators. The statutory and voluntary partnership has been coordinated by Social Care and has successfully worked in the community to disrupt a developing CSE hotspot of concern; collaboration is imminently planned for a further identified hotspot.



Performance and Quality

Children's Services implemented a new Performance Framework in September 2016 which is aligned with the new quality framework. Both these improvements have highlighted areas of improvement and promoted sharing best practice.

What challenges as a single agency have you faced in trying to achieve improved outcomes and how have you addressed them?

Following discussions with Directors Management Team the following challenges have been identified:

- ❖ Recruitment – there is a need to have the right staff in the right posts to do effective safeguarding. Recruitment of agency staff members pose a risk of short notice periods and competency levels are wide ranging.
- ❖ Out of Borough placements – Cost of out of Borough placements is higher than placing children in Thurrock. Placing children out of Borough increases placement costs and makes it harder for the council to keep a connection with Thurrock children.
- ❖ High demand – Thurrock has experienced one of the highest demand pressures on its Social Care service. Rates in Thurrock are much higher than the eastern region. In turn this is impacting the pressure on resources.
- ❖ Asylum seeking children – Thurrock has the highest number of asylum seeking children
- ❖ Partners – need for partners to work with social care to strengthen the prevention work

To address these challenges, DMT have agreed to the following:

- ❖ Recruitment: although good progress has been made, DMT will aim to move to a position where the ratio of permanent to agency staff is at the same level of 'good' and 'outstanding' Boroughs.
- ❖ Out of Borough placements: Placement Panel will be chaired by the AD for Social Care. DMT will be actively analysing all high cost placements. Options for alternative provision being sourced more locally will be a priority.
- ❖ High demand – DMT will ensure the Brighter Futures Programme is implemented in 2017, which will promote an improved early intervention offer.



- ❖ Asylum Seeking Children – Numbers have reduced to 42 as a result of the service negotiating a transfer protocol with other LAs in the eastern region. However this remains a challenge for the After Care Service. Work is underway to ensure the status for Asylum Seeking Children is resolved and cost effective accommodation is provided
- ❖ Partners – DMT will be seeking support from partners through the Brighter Futures Programme Board and the LSCB

What challenges around multi-agency working have you faced to achieve improved outcomes and how have you address these?

There has been an increase in the number of Ofsted Section 8 inspections following the receipt of qualifying complaints from parents sent to Ofsted. A qualifying complaint is one which raises significant safeguarding concerns in the school/academy and usually requires two HMI to visit the setting to investigate the complaint. In the last year there have been a number of Section8 inspections in Thurrock and all, except one have resulted in a positive outcome and the setting has remained good. Where the setting was found to be failing this results in the inspection being extended to day two. In the case in question Olive Alternative Provision Academy was subsequently placed in Special Measures in January 2017. The LA and the academy sponsor have worked in partnership with the RSC and there is an agreed action plan. From September 2017 the Olive Academy will no longer deliver primary provision in the Borough. New arrangements are now in place to make provision for primary excluded pupils.

Involvement of health - school nurses and health visitors at CP Conferences and the Lead Professional role in prevention/early intervention has been an issue with the current provider NELFT. However these have been addressed within the new service specification for the Brighter Futures 0-19 Healthy Families Programme, whereby increased capacity had to be identified to meet the demand for attendance at Conferences and the implementation of the Child Protection Plans where health professionals need to be responsible for certain actions. There is also an expectation that Health Visitors and School Nurses will take the Lead Professional role if appropriate and be fully integrated into the Prevention and Support Service.



What are your safeguarding priorities for this year 2017/18?

The following priorities have been agreed:

- ❖ Improve the quality of social work practice
- ❖ To ensure the right children are within the CP process – intervening at the right time
- ❖ Reduce levels of CP Plans so children's needs are met in Early Help
- ❖ CIN processes need to be more robust
- ❖ Implementation of Signs of Safety and Graded Care Profile 2
- ❖ To implement the Brighter Futures agenda to ensure that Prevention is the priority for all agencies and partners with a shared vision of providing the right support to the right families, at the right time when there are emerging needs, therefore reducing the demand on statutory Social Care Teams.
- ❖ Make Thurrock Council a choice of employer for social workers

Essex Police

What did your agency do in 2016/17 which promoted safeguarding and how can you evidence the impact on improved outcomes for children and young people as a result. Please include data where possible.

Essex Police is committed to delivering improved outcomes for vulnerable people including children. The force was re-inspected in 2016 following the National Child Protection Inspection of 2015. Significant improvements were recognised in Investigation of child abuse and case audits showing a real commitment from senior leaders to improve in this area of vulnerability. The majority of the force has received The Public Protection Awareness course. The Crime and Public Protection Command restructure in September 2016 provides a more efficient and modern approach to vulnerability and is subject to a review in the summer. This sees the implementation of the Operations Centre where referrals are received and assessed for activity. The force is good at identifying vulnerability and processes within the force control room and the operations centre highlight and flag vulnerabilities so incidents can be prioritised. An Assessment Team embedded within the Operations Centre ensures intelligence checks are complete and decisions made using all available data. The Operations Centre liaises with other agencies to ensure information is shared and Adult Social Care are now embedded within the team. Child cases specific to Thurrock are dealt with by the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub.



Sexual offences has seen an increase. Essex is 7th nationally and is one of 38 forces that have seen year on year increases. This increase is also seen in sexual offences against children.

The new model increases the resource within the Child Abuse Investigation Teams, provides Investigative Support Officers to support investigators in criminal investigations but also to support partnerships in Child Protection Conferences. Essex Police attend all Initial Child Protection conferences in line with SET procedures.

Other areas of improvement include the Police Protection Protocol with Thurrock Children's Social Care, provision for children in custody, ensuring the response to children at incidents of domestic abuse is robust.

The SARC services the County and provides victims of abuse with a safe haven to report and access support services. Waiting lists for provision of Independent Sexual Abuse Advisors are reducing and the service provision increasing. Referrals for child ISVAs has increased significantly ensuring all victims of abuse are provided with the support they require.

What challenges as a single agency have you faced in trying to achieve improved outcomes and how have you addressed them?

Challenges of increases in reported offences against children, especially historic cases where victims are now adults. This has been addressed by increasing Child Abuse Investigation Teams but remains a challenge to forces nationally.

Child Protection work leads to issues of recruitment and retention for all agencies due to the high levels of stress and nature of the work and remains an area of concern. The police actively recruit and had recent success in transferees from other forces. The level of trained detectives working within Child Abuse is high as we support officers with specialist courses and Continuous Professional Development.

The force has developed the Detective Career Pathway to professionalise investigations and Continuous Professional Development around investigation and file quality. The force has a cohort of officers trained in the forensic questioning of children which enhances their



specialist qualifications and provides expertise when dealing with very young children or complex cases. A Detective Sergeant has been embedded within the Crown Prosecution Service to improve file quality and maximise prosecutions.

Domestic abuse incidents across the County are significant and provide a challenge to all agencies. A large proportion of these involve children. Effective identification of risk and information sharing is key to protecting those at risk. The DASH Risk Assessment Tool is being reviewed and a streamlined version anticipated this year. Partners have worked hard throughout the year to improve timeliness of referrals to Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conferences (MARAC) which has greatly improved.

Gangs and risks of Child Sexual Exploitation is an area which challenges the county including Thurrock. The introduction of Operation Raptor teams, to tackle gangs and their links to the Crime and Public Protection Command, has been an area of development. Ensuring partners are joined up in the response to these issues is a challenge.

Levels of missing children are of concern and shared with partners. Thurrock LSCB Risk Assessment Group focus on missing children and other risks, coordinating activity and support to prevent them coming to harm and reduce missing episodes. Families housed from London Boroughs or children being placed in Essex remain a concern.

What challenges around multi-agency working have you faced to achieve improved outcomes and how have you addressed these?

Essex Police continues to support the MASH with a Detective Sergeant and two Detective Constables in the team. The Local Policing Team are members of the Community Partnership Hub. Neighbourhood Officers, Police Community Support Officers, Licensing and Youth Officers work together with agencies to protect the community. The Hub has good operational links to the MASH. The Operations Centre has responsibility for all referrals linked to vulnerability and consumed the CSE Triage Team, providing a more efficient model aligned to the Thurrock MASH with shared management. The MASE and RAG Group work well in reducing risk to young people and Essex Police continue to be a key member.

Thurrock Children's Social Care are represented on the Public Protection Programme Board, supporting Essex Police in developing policy and improvement work. This includes a Police Protection Protocol, provision of an appropriate adult service for children in custody and



provision of accommodation for those few children who pose a high risk of offending.

What are your safeguarding priorities for this year 2017/18?

Child abuse, exploitation, domestic abuse, gangs and organised crime linked to CSE are in the force's "Plan on a Page" and Police and Crime Commissioner's priorities. Their inclusion evidence the commitment by Chief Officers to safeguarding children which has been highlighted in the HMIC re-inspection report. Improving the quality and streamlining information sharing processes around child abuse and domestic abuse remains a priority. Investment is being made in ensuring the quality of referrals remains high and thresholds are adhered to. The provision of high level data across partners is a key area of work that the County are working towards. Improved sharing of data to identify those children at risk leads to better early prevention of harm. This work is significant and issues such as shared IT, data sharing and analytics all have to be worked through. Refinement of the Police tasking and coordination process ensures individuals at risk or who pose a risk are identified early, prioritised and supported by the appropriate allocation of resources. The Crime and Public Protection pro-active team are focused on CSE and linking in with the region around best use of assets. The force continue to improve on the delivery of safeguarding and the post implementation review of the restructure will provide further development and improvement to this service. The police continue to be active partners in the pan Essex Domestic Abuse and CSE Boards and work with partners to ensure the best support and safeguarding is available for those at risk.

Primary Schools (combined response)

What did your agency do in 2016/17 which promoted safeguarding and how can you evidence the impact on improved outcomes for children and young people as a result. Please include data where possible:

- ❖ All staff receive Level 1 Safeguarding Training – including Prevent and FGM
- ❖ Level 3 Safeguarding training for HT/DHT
- ❖ Safer Recruitment training for HT/DHT/Bursar
- ❖ Year 5 pupils attended Walk online Roadshow
- ❖ Links on school website to safeguarding information
- ❖ Assemblies, PSHE lessons and workshops on safeguarding related issues such as bullying, 'PANTS'
- ❖ E-safety workshops for parents



What challenges as a single agency have you faced in trying to achieve improved outcomes and how have you addressed them?

- ❖ Engagement with parents can be a challenge – have introduced regular coffee mornings and drop in visits to the classrooms after school.
- ❖ Attendance is an issue and there is a need for ongoing activity to ensure the EWO support has the appropriate impact.
- ❖ High volume of possible safeguarding concerns and therefore difficulties with staff capacity in terms of recording, reporting and following up concerns – have increased number of staff but stretched budget means this is difficult to maintain

What challenges around multi-agency working have you faced to achieve improved outcomes and how have you addressed these?

- ❖ The high level of demand for services to support children in school and the capacity of the services to meet this need.
- ❖ The timescale to access services which are heavily subscribed.
- ❖ Ensuring there is consistency of communication following a referral being made.
- ❖ Ensuring that there is access to clear information and advice from statutory agencies when concerns are raised.
- ❖ Ensuring there is timely sharing of information regarding cases to all involved agencies.

Board Response - During this year, the Board have been working with partners to improve the flow of information and review operating procedures. This has resulted in the Introduction of the Brighter futures Programme providing a fresh approach to early help provision, incorporating the newly established Prevent and Support Service creating a greater joined up approach and a range of commissioned services to tackle the root cause of demand.

Other areas of improvements which will be developed over the coming 18 months include the introduction of the safeguarding models of signs of safety for child protection processes and Graded Care Profile 2 for neglect processes which will enhance the existing systems and processes currently in place. The Board will be receiving reports from the relevant services to ensure that these new processes are implemented in a timely manner



The Board see these changes as a positive step in providing services to Thurrock children and improving the flow of information sharing and communication.

What are your safeguarding priorities for this year 2017/18?

- ❖ E-Safety for all pupils
- ❖ Up-dating Prevent
- ❖ Improving attendance
- ❖ Ensure up to date training for all staff

Thurrock CCG

The CCG supports the CCG's Safeguarding Children and Looked after Children statutory functions and requirements.

These are grouped under three key areas:

- ❖ Safeguarding Children: Vulnerable/CIN/CP
- ❖ Looked After Children
- ❖ Child Death Review Processes.

Training

In addition to the intercollegiate requirement:

The CCG Safeguarding Children Team continue to support the SCR work streams and have delivered training this year on lessons learnt from local SCR's Megan, Alex, James and Harry at GP forums and time to learn sessions. This has increased Primary Care awareness on:

1. Recognition and response to adolescent neglect,
2. Need for robust information sharing across health providers and external agencies, seeking and recording the Voice of the Child, Capturing the Voice of the Child and Professional challenge, respectful questioning and professional curiosity.
3. GP referrals to EWMHS for children and young people with identified mental health issues.



We have also delivered training on lessons learnt from Serious Incidents and increased awareness on:

1. Recognition and responding to concealed pregnancy
2. Responding to bruises in an immobile infant.
3. Recognition and responding to suspected Genital Warts and referral routes

The training has led to increased advice, GP telephone consultations to CCG Safeguarding Children Team, increased referrals and challenging agencies and escalation.

FGM & CSE training - GP's awareness of FGM mandatory reporting, FGM practice registration with NHS Digital, CSE Risk Assessment Tools, Intelligence Information Sharing and what to do.

Fabricated & Induced Illness (FII) - CCG has received a further three referrals in Thurrock for cases of suspected FII which has raised further awareness of FII amongst local GP's in Thurrock. GP's have provided health chronologies and engaged in initial health professional's meetings to discuss concerns and collate factual health information to support escalation to Children's Social Care.

Supervision - the Safeguarding Team provides quarterly supervision for all providers Named Professionals, and the team receives external supervision.

Audit - An audit was completed to evaluate the effectiveness of GP Level 3 Safeguarding Children Training. The results enabled the safeguarding team to identify future training needs and have led to more scenario based learning events which was identified from the audit results.

Section 11 for all GP Practices – All GP practices have now completed and submitted their Section 11. This is being reviewed and analysed by the Safeguarding Team. Practices needing face to face support will be contacted and visits arranged.

Local Operational Group (LOG) - LOG meetings are held quarterly with internal CCG staff and external providers (including some private providers) to discuss local safeguarding, Looked after Children and national issues. The meetings have raised awareness and provided good working networking relationships. This has improved safeguarding working



together across South West Essex and provided opportunities to share good practice.

Providers Internal Safeguarding Assurance Meetings:-

The CCG Safeguarding Team has regular Providers Safeguarding Assurance meetings with its main providers (BTUH and NELFT). These meetings are held every other month, where key statutory safeguarding agenda/arrangements are discussed and scrutinised.

Safeguarding Clinical Network (SCN):-

The CCG is a member of the collective and collaborative (Health) Network across SET. The Network hold the SARC and other providers to account, by improving access, safety and information sharing with Primary Care.

What challenges as a single agency have you faced in trying to achieve improved outcomes and how have you addressed them?

- **Voice of the Child (VOC)** – SCR findings have identified Primary Care are not all recording the VOC – CCG Safeguarding Team are working with GP's and SystmOne lead to develop and encourage use of a template to capture the voice of the child.
- **Safeguarding referrals** – Supporting and ensuring GP's send quality Section 47 referrals to MASH which outline all risks to the child/young person to meet threshold criteria.
- **Improving information sharing between our local providers and primary care staff** – CCG Safeguarding Children Team have encouraged at local GP forums the use of MDT meetings for safeguarding children – many practices are now holding regular MDT meetings with Health Visitors/School Nurses. This is promoting collaborative working and sharing of information across universal services and Primary Care and enabling practitioners to effectively work together to safeguard and reduce risks to children and young people.

LAC – Challenges in relation to timeliness of Initial Health Assessments. Regular meetings are now in place between health and social care to monitor assessments.

Monthly LAC Health Steering Group now being held to address all areas of health, especially SDQ scores and action required.

What challenges around multi-agency working have you faced to achieve improved outcomes and how have you addressed these?



- Ensuring effective multi agency attendance at LSCB Audit Group to ensure effective audits are completed to identify if agencies are following procedures and to identify areas of good practice and those practice areas requiring improvement.
- To ensure effective multi-agency attendance at LSCB Training Group and to ensure LSCB delivers and commissions enough and appropriate Level 3 multi-agency training to meet the identified needs of local agencies.
- Ensuring GP's are consistently being formally notified when children/young people are subject to CIN/CP procedures – recent SCRs and Sis have identified that not all GPs are being formally invited to CIN meetings and are also not receiving copies of CP/CIN plans and minutes from safeguarding meetings held. GPs are encouraged to challenge and escalate this to Children's Social Care and to inform the CCG Safeguarding Children Team if they experience any conflict/barriers.
- Ensuring GPs are providing quality reports for Section 17/47 checks – what constitutes a good referral has been discussed at GP Forums and GPs are aware that reports need to identify all safeguarding risks for the child and include information on factors impacting on parenting capacity.
- Differences in Threshold and standards. These have been addressed by telephone discussions, and mainly highlighting the risk and welfare of the child and or young person. Thurrock Children's Social Care Manager and MASH lead attend GP forums on a regular basis to discuss CP referral pathways and processes, and all GPs have an opportunity to raise issues. All GPs are encouraged to follow SET escalation pathway.
- All GPs have an opportunity to visit the MASH to develop a better understanding of the process. This offer has been taken up by some GP practices to promote collaborative working.
- Ongoing work in relation to timeliness of initial health assessments for Looked after Children between the CCG, health providers and the Local Authority to ensure robust oversight of health assessments if delayed or outstanding. Escalation processes are embedded within practice. Monthly LAC Health Steering Groups with all agencies are now embedded. Strength and Difficulties questionnaires (SDQ) scores form part of this meeting where children with high scores are discussed to review their plan of care and ensure appropriate services are in place to meet their identified need.
- Challenges in relation to completion of statutory health assessments are also a concern in relation to Looked after Children placed out of area, particularly out of



Essex. 60% of Thurrock Looked after Children are placed outside of Thurrock, with the majority, 40%, placed within Essex boundaries. Therefore, 20% of Thurrock Looked after Children are placed outside of Essex, which can affect timeliness and the quality of health assessments as some areas are refusing to undertake assessments for children in their area. Escalation processes are in place to address all refusals by other areas to prevent delay. This issue has been escalated to NHSE, the CCG also liaises with the Local Authority to advise of areas refusing to undertake health assessments in order to influence placement planning for children.

What are your safeguarding Looked after Children priorities for this year 2017/18?

- Sustainability and Transformation Programme (STP) – The CCG Safeguarding Team to work closely with colleagues and influence the decision of the Joint STP Commissioning Committees to ensure consistent Safeguarding Looked after Children standards are maintained across Acute Hospitals (BTUH, Broomfield and Southend).
- Improve working arrangements with Commissioners (internal and external) and Contracts Teams.
- The CCG Safeguarding Team to work collaboratively with the Thurrock and Essex Local Authority and Public Health who commission 0-19 services and to ensure consistent risk areas are flagged to the Chief Nurses and Children and Young People Commissioners.
- Evidence commissioned service, including at procurement stage, have effective safeguarding arrangements in place and the views of children and young people and front line staff inform service development.
- To facilitate patient participation with the Thurrock Children in Care Council to influence commissioning and service provision.
- Work collaboratively with the Adult Safeguarding Lead to ensure transitional safeguarding issues are identified and responded to in a timely manner.
- Continue to work with Social Care and Primary Care Teams to improve GP engagement with child protection/LAC services.
- Work collaboratively with Children Social Care to influence placement provision for Looked after Children.



NELFT

What did your agency do in 2016/17 which promoted safeguarding and how can you evidence the impact on improved outcomes for children and young people as a result. Please include data where possible.

Safeguarding Service Delivery Mode

NELFT Safeguarding Advice Service is the central hub into which all safeguarding enquiries from members of NELFT staff, or relating to NELFT service users/patients are received. The service provides advice and support to NELFT staff in relation to safeguarding concerns and assists operational teams in escalating concerns to the Local Authority/other agencies when appropriate.

The service operates 9am – 5pm, Monday to Friday, excluding Bank Holidays receiving enquiries in one of four ways:

- ❖ Telephone calls to the Duty Desk
- ❖ Email enquiries into the Safeguarding generic email account.
- ❖ Datix notifications via the generic email account of any Datix raised which indicates, “Yes” or “To be determined” for a safeguarding concern.
- ❖ Face to face between the Safeguarding Children Duty Worker and a member of NELFT staff.

Training

NELFT safeguarding children training has been updated reflecting the competency requirements in the Intercollegiate Document, SET procedures, Working Together, Prevent and FGM . Safeguarding Children training is mandatory and provided to all staff at levels appropriate to their role. NELFT is compliant with the Care Quality Commission target of 80% for all levels of Safeguarding training. Training targets are monitored through performance reports at monthly safeguarding meetings. The Safeguarding Team responds to requests from services to provide training in addition to the annual programme, in particular where there are access issues.

Thurrock staff uptake of training at 31/03/2017 was: Level 1 - 96%, Level 2 - 94.47% and



Level 3 - 95.08%. Level 2 training was revised in 2016/17 and includes strengthened references to DV, CSE and FGM.

Level 3 training includes specific subjects of Domestic Violence and Harmful Practices, CSE and FGM. In these sessions, practitioners learn to use the Safe Lives DASH Risk Assessment Tool and use of the NELFT Risk Assessment Matrix developed for CSE and FGM. A core Level 3 training package is being developed to enhance learning.

NELFT is committed to partnership working and promoting collaborative working. A senior Safeguarding Advisor is an active member of the LSCB Training Sub Group.

Prevent

All NELFT staff complete PREVENT training and committed to the prevent agenda. Training enables staff to have increased awareness to identify young people at risk of radicalisation and terrorism. Staff access either Prevent 1 (E-learn) or Prevent 2 (classroom) as determined by the NELFT Statutory and Mandatory Training Matrix. As of 31/03/2017, the uptake was: Prevent 1 96.73% and Prevent 2 92.74%. The Safeguarding Advice Service regularly takes calls regarding concerns about radicalisation. In Q4 2016- 2017, there were 12 enquiries made and 10 cases then referred on to Channel.

Policies and Procedures:

The Safeguarding Team developed the NELFT Safeguarding Children Standard Operating Procedure (June 2016). This is an intranet resource available to staff 24/7.

Safeguarding Supervision

All staff working directly with children are required to access safeguarding children supervision quarterly. KPI target is 85% and compliance figures for March 2017 (Q4) were: Group supervision 97% and individual 97%.

Audits



Safeguarding children audits carried out in 2016/ 2017 were the:

- ❖ Safeguarding Record-keeping (children) to include Quality of Child Protection Supervision and Domestic Violence Practice and CSE
- ❖ Quality of Multi- Agency Referrals
- ❖ Practitioner compliance with advice and actions from the Safeguarding Advice Service
- ❖ Survey of practitioner experience of safeguarding children supervision

What challenges around multi-agency working have you faced to achieve improved outcomes and how have you addressed these?

Partnership working in the MASH including Early Offer of Help

NELFT continues to be fully committed to the Thurrock MASH. This has involved maintaining an establishment of 1.2wte senior health practitioners from children's universal service working within the MASH. In addition to MASH duties, these staff also attend MARAC meetings on a weekly basis.

RAG:

NELFT continues to be fully committed to attending RAG. This two weekly multi-agency group is attended by the NELFT LAC nurse, or a deputy. Despite staffing pressures NELFT has always ensured appropriate attendance.

LSCB Sub- Groups:

NELFT remains committed to ensure there is appropriate representation at all LSCB Sub-Groups including the Management Executive Committee, MASE meeting, Training Group and Audit Group. NELFT has also worked closely with the LA in piloting and rolling out the Graded Care Profile 2 Neglect Tool.

What are your safeguarding priorities for this year 2017/18?

- ❖ To complete and publish the Safeguarding Adult and Children 2017 – 2019 Strategy and Action Plan.
- ❖ Achieve 50% compliance for 1:1 safeguarding Children Supervision provision for



EWMHS staff by September 2017 (priority was given to implementing group supervision sessions as an interim arrangement, which has now been achieved).

- ❖ Review the historical abuse guidance for staff in Q4 to reduce the numbers of enquiries and datix reports generated where the abuse has already been appropriately investigated and actioned.
- ❖ Develop a Foundation Level 3 Safeguarding Children Training Package and commence delivery in September 2017 which will ensure that practitioners have the opportunity to explore safeguarding scenarios and improve their risk assessment skills.

National Probation Service

What did your agency do in 2016/17 which promoted safeguarding and how can you evidence the impact on improved outcomes for children and young people as a result. Please include data where possible.

The NPS is an active member of the LCSB Board and Executive.

The NPS has been involved in establishing and participating in multi-agency sexual exploitation groups represented by an NPS manager with clear line of feedback to the Head of Probation in South Essex.

All NPS staff has to complete mandatory Safeguarding Training (Level 1). All practitioners have to complete two day classroom based training on Safeguarding Children and Domestic Abuse.

All NPS practitioners must identify any risk to children and be able to identify possible CSE risk indicators within the supervision of offenders. The Sentence Plan reflects risk to children with objectives to identify how the risk will be managed. The NPS uses the ASPIRE model – Assess, Plan, Implement, Review and Evaluate. The NPS have developed quality improvement tools to ensure all assessments meet a sufficient or good standard with a focus on all aspects of safeguarding.

In managing offenders, home visits are used as a source of information and a means of managing risk and any concerns about safeguarding shared with relevant agencies. Staff are aware of and refers to the HMIPP interim safeguarding children guidance (available on



HMIPP intranet) and the HM Government guidance on information sharing. All cases with safeguarding concerns are discussed with Line Manager in monthly supervision with practitioners.

Sex Offenders at high risk of reoffending should have a licence condition to comply with Polygraph testing. Polygraph examinations can be particularly helpful if there are concerns an offender is continuing to have contact with children/other members of the group or gang with whom they committed the index offence and where they are forbidden to do so. They can also be used to monitor compliance with other licence conditions or monitor dynamic risk factors.

The NPS contribute to local RAG on missing children, where information is known. Cases that involved gangs are managed in a way that ensures the fact that the offending was committed as part of a gang is not lost. The NPS has representation at Gang Related Violence meetings. The NPS has a single point of contact in the Thurrock MASH and provides timely and relevant information related to risk.

What challenges as a single agency have you faced in trying to achieve improved outcomes and how have you addressed them?

Staffing pressures have had their impact on both performance and quality across the SEE division.

After staffing the most pressing issue affecting offender management is that of securing safe and suitable accommodation for offenders to allow effective risk management planning and delivery. The NPS is developing accommodation support for NPS offenders through our case management support resource. The NPS in Thurrock works with the Essex CRC/Sodexo from whom we purchase interventions. The timeliness and quality of these interventions is being monitored.

Meeting our local partnership requirements continues to be a challenge for senior and middle managers given the range of partnership structures and the management resource to draw upon.

The NPS provides information on Safeguarding Children through a national intranet (EQUIP), which provides information on processes and policies. The NPS has produced



guidance for staff which has been shared through team briefings. These include:

- ❖ Safeguarding and Promoting the Welfare of Children (January 2017)
- ❖ Understanding Child Sexual Exploitation (June 2016)
- ❖ Guide for Staff on working with perpetrators of CSE (June 2016)

What challenges around multi-agency working have you faced to achieve improved outcomes and how have you address these?

- ❖ The NPS ensures operational staff are provided with relevant training and development opportunities to identify signs of CSE including amongst victims and perpetrators. A guide for team briefing has been produced to accompany this guidance
- ❖ The NPS produces risk assessments and risk management plans for partner agencies including during court and parole processes.
- ❖ Practitioners check and verify all details relating to relationships with children with Children Services.
- ❖ The NPS contributes to MAPPA and Child Protection Conferences. Making sure links are made between risk management plans and Child Protection Plans. The process for MAPPA has recently changed and these changes have been communicated through team briefings.
- ❖ Delivering specialist interventions.
- ❖ The NPS contributes to GRV and RAG meetings when the perpetrator is on supervision to NPS
- ❖ The NPS have a single point of contact for the MASH and provide information where required
- ❖ Practitioners have regular liaison with Police from the IOM and MOSOVO teams to manage risk and share intelligence. MOSOVO officers spend a day a fortnight in the local delivery unit.
- ❖ NPS contributes to Local Safeguarding Children Board strategy and action plans for CSE.

What are your safeguarding priorities for this year 2017/18?

This is an interesting question to ask agencies as, technically, it is for the LSCB to clearly set



out in their Annual Business Plan what the safeguarding priorities should be for the LSCB. This will often have been discussed and agreed by the LSCB members.

This said, our priorities will be to:

- ❖ Ensure that the relevant policy and practice guidance are embedded (this will be evidenced by findings from NPS quality audit tools: PAROM 1, ROSH, etc.).
- ❖ Ensuring that 95% of our workforce receives child protection/ safeguarding training.
- ❖ Ensuring that we continue, through the work we do with offenders and their families, to help reduce and prevent child sexual abuse.
- ❖ The National Group are undertaking a piece of work aimed at getting practitioners to ensure that their assessments are informed by the 'voice of the child'.
- ❖ The National Group are also doing a piece of work to improve practitioner's understanding of Care Leavers' needs with a view to improving outcomes for care leavers.

Finally, it is worth mentioning that our divisional delivery plan makes clear reference to one of our aims is to:

- ❖ Protect the right of a person, whether a child or an adult, to live in safety, free from harm, abuse and neglect.

One could, therefore, arguably cite any of the objectives in the plan (which includes both direct and indirect actions) to evidence our safeguarding priorities for 2017-18.

Essex Community Rehabilitation Company (Essex CRC)

What did your agency do in 2016/17 which promoted safeguarding and how can you evidence the impact on improved outcomes for children and young people as a result. Please include data where possible.

In the 2016/17 year Essex CRC developed and deployed a practitioner guide to working with vulnerable people. This including guidance on Child Sexual Exploitation and Female Genital Mutilation. This was deployed with an updated Safeguarding Children Practice Instruction to all staff.



Our new starters have undergone safeguarding training, while our managers responsible for recruitment have undergone a safer recruitment e-learning refresher course. The latter was an action we introduced after completing our Section 11 Audit this year.

In Thurrock we have continued to be committed to the LSCB and its sub-committees, with senior or middle management representation at all groups. At a practitioner level, we are represented at the Thurrock gangs group and are present in the MASH.

Unfortunately, this year we are transitioning between case management systems, and so it is not possible to accurately quantify activity or outcomes at present. We will be able to do so in the future.

What challenges as a single agency have you faced in trying to achieve improved outcomes and how have you addressed them?

In the last year we have continued to implement the changes of the Transforming Rehabilitation programme. This has required changes to teams, estates and IT. In the main we have been able to mitigate potential disruption to service delivery in Thurrock by having consistency in our practitioners and management. Our office move has been a successful one, and our new location in Civic Offices gives us opportunities for closer working with the Local Authority and other partners.

What challenges around multi-agency working have you faced to achieve improved outcomes and how have you address these?

The Transforming Rehabilitation programme necessitated the break-up of one single Essex Probation Trust into two providers of probation services in Essex; the National Probation Service (NPS) and Essex Community Rehabilitation Company. New interfaces for information exchange now exist between the two organisations, such as at sentence, breach of community sentences and arrangements for risk escalation. Over the last year we have worked closely with the NPS to ensure key information is exchanged accurately and without undue delay. Our practitioners and middle management groups work to resolve issues and improve services, while regular senior management interface meetings are also held.

What are your safeguarding priorities for this year 2017/18?



This year will be implementing our new case management system, which will enable us to accurately quantify our safeguarding activity and outcomes. A key aspect of our new system is the Justice Star; strengths based needs assessment with specific attention for family and parenting factors. We have a schedule for quality assurance for this new assessment.

We are currently recruiting for a new practitioner to represent Essex CRC in the Thurrock MASH

Further Education

Palmers College

What did your agency do in 2016/17 which promoted safeguarding and how can you evidence the impact on improved outcomes for children and young people as a result. Please include data where possible.

- Induction to students
 - Regular tutorials throughout the year to all students touching on subjects such as Esafety, Consent, PREVENT, Drugs & Alcohol, Personal Safety etc.
 - St Giles Trust invited in to speak to students on 3 separate occasions about Gang Culture
 - Annual training to staff with regular updates via staff newsletter
 - Posters – regularly updated. New ‘make nothing happen’ Prevent posters are up.
 - Information on moodle
 - ‘Help’ button on student intranet
 - Smoothwall – software to monitor student use of internet. 6 students seen due to being flagged as searching suicide methods. All students seen and 5 were genuine wellbeing concerns and now being supported via Student Services
 - Safeguarding card updated to issue to all visitors
- Up to end of April 2017 there have been 112 Safeguarding incidents recorded and dealt with
- Appointed a new post of welfare officer to join the Safeguarding team for September 2017



What challenges as a single agency have you faced in trying to achieve improved outcomes and how have you addressed them?

- As a single agency we have prioritised good networking as support when necessary, ie Social Services, other colleges, EWMHS etc.
- Funding – as with everyone, lower funding of public services is having an effect.

What challenges around multi-agency working have you faced to achieve improved outcomes and how have you address these?

- Difficulty due to workload – if I attend a multi-agency social services meeting for example, I would not be here at College seeing students. Funding cuts have affected us all and at times I need to prioritise and put the safeguarding of College students first – I would submit a welfare report rather than attending in person. This is not ideal but is a reasonable compromise at times.

What are your safeguarding priorities for this year 2017/18?

- Merging with another College and need to ensure safeguarding and PREVENT remain high priorities
- Continue to support students in a variety of ways and adapting to current need/issues for example mental health, whilst in a climate of reduced funding.

South Essex College

What did your agency do in 2016/17 which promoted safeguarding and how can you evidence the impact on improved outcomes for children and young people as a result. Please include data where possible.

The College has seen an increase in 130% of students known to the Safeguarding & Pastoral Service. The main reason for referral is due to health & wellbeing with mental health being the primary reason for concern. 29 students have accessed our in-house counselling service with support with mental health through to home life. The College has made 8 high level safeguarding referrals this year.

The College have been involved in a number of events and campaigns that have contributed to keeping young people safe in Thurrock. We have worked in partnership with the Virtual



School, the Community Safety Partnership, Essex Police, Youth Offending and CRI WizeUp amongst many.

The College has ensured that there have been a range of events that have supported our young people to improve their awareness of certain topics and access support if need be, hence the increase in students known to the service. CRI WizeUp have fortnightly drop ins at the College and have reached over 223 students through workshops. The Sexual Health Team are also a regular service students can access.

The College hosted the Gang Prevention talks for the second year running. Junior Smart from the St Giles Trust gave an engaging and hard-hitting talk on the dangers of gang life. This talk reached 103 students in Thurrock which supported the College in spreading a positive message about ending youth and gang violence and the support they can access.

The College has been proactive in developing the relationship with the Children & Young People's Officers at Grays Police Station. The Officers are regularly on site speaking to young people and helping to make the campus a safe place to study. In partnership the College and the Police developed a Community Safety Event which saw a positive presence of Police Officers, PSCO's and British Transport Police in and around Grays area engaging with young people and the Community. An aim was to tackle substance misuse and with support from Essex Police's Passive Dogs Team and CRI WizeUp, young people were educated about the harms of substance misuse and the potential impact on their studies and future.

Due to the older age group of our young people the College have been proactive in promoting key issues such as e-safety, mental health and bullying. Feedback Walls and Pledge Walls have proved very effective in hearing our young people's views on topics and what they would like to see changed.

What challenges as a single agency have you faced in trying to achieve improved outcomes and how have you addressed them?

The College has seen an increase in the number of young people accessing the service a decision was made to restructure the team and the Safeguarding & Pastoral Team was created. This service now sees a dedicated Pastoral Coach at Thurrock as well as support



from Safeguarding Advisers and a Manager. This service has positively impacted on our students as we have continued to see the increase in the number accessing the service.

The College have also had an increase in the number of Looked After Children studying at the College, especially our Grays Campus where we have 32 LACs out of 68 at the whole College. As a result we have introduced a new role, Designated LAC Adviser, to support this vulnerable group of young people. The role started in January 2017 and we have already seen a positive impact on communication and the quality of the PEPs. The Designated LAC Adviser has worked with tutors to encourage participation in a range of enrichment including the setting up of a football team.

Our work with the Community Safety Partnership in Thurrock has allowed us to access a range of training sessions especially around radicalisation and extremism. Increasing the understanding of radicalisation is a priority for the College and being able to send staff and students to the You & Me workshops enabled the Student Union to have positive discussions with students about the vulnerabilities displayed as well as the threats from online grooming.

What challenges around multi-agency working have you faced to achieve improved outcomes and how have you address these?

The College is very focussed on multi-agency working to provide the best outcomes for our students. We proactively build relationships across the borough to this effect.

Substance Misuse in young people is on the increase with more experimenting with substances. The College has seen a number of young people coming forward to get support or ask questions so working with CRI Wize Up has been great multi-agency working.

The number of Looked After Children has been a challenge for the College. Alongside the internal changes our partnership working with the Virtual School has provided every LAC with a strong team around the child approach. The College has proactively involved themselves in the workings of the Virtual School by joining their Governing Board. We are seeing an improving picture of outcomes for LACs especially with regards to progression.



What are your safeguarding priorities for this year 2017/18?

- Proactively engaging in work to end gang and youth violence
- Increase the awareness in staff and students of gang prevention, Child Sexual Exploitation and Domestic Violence
- Engage young people and staff in positive conversation about British Values and the risks/vulnerabilities associated with radicalisation and extremism
- Build upon our work on Mental Health support and awareness by increasing activities that promote wellbeing and mindfulness
- Continue working on improving LAC outcomes and the experiences for those that are UAS.
- Staff training and understanding of thresholds for referrals
- Student education on personal development, behaviour and welfare topics through engaging events, workshops and blended learning



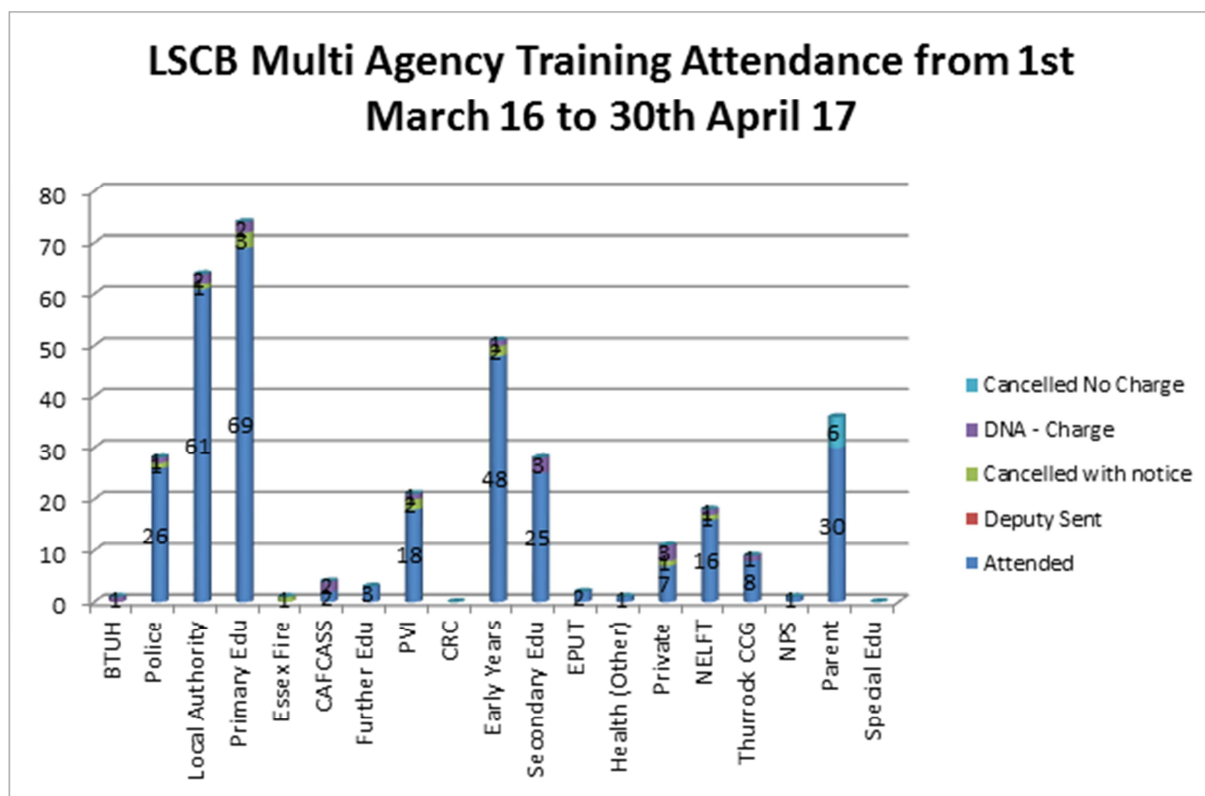
Learning and Improvement Programme

At the beginning of the year we published our current learning and training programme on the LSCB Website. During the course of the year we added additional programmes identified through audits and serious case reviews that would benefit practitioners in improving outcomes for children.

We also had to make the hard decision that the current provision of free training for all courses provided was not sustainable and certain “Non-Core” programmes would incur a charge on a scaling ratio depending on the organisation. Applying these changes is in line with regional changes by other Boards and we will monitor the impact of these changes going forward and will commence in September 2017.

It continues to be a challenge as highlighted in one of the two Ofsted recommendations from our Inspection of 2016 to fully assess the impact of the learning and training we provide. In support of this we have introduced some additional business processes to assist in this task and aim over the next year to further improve the evaluation of our programmes.

Our programme of learning during the year has continued to take into account various learning techniques and has included e –learning and practitioner learning events.



Child Death Review Process

All child deaths are reviewed as part of the LSCB responsibilities to support learning outcomes. This process is undertaken jointly through the Southend, Essex and Thurrock (SET) procedures at both strategic and operational level. There is a Pan Essex Strategic Child Death Overview Panel which aims to identify any lessons to be learned from the death of a child in order to improve the health, safety and wellbeing of all children and to identify modifiable factors which may, when addressed, prevent further such deaths in the future. It provides multi-agency, sub-regional awareness raising sessions around the child death review process and ensures that parents/carers are supported following their loss and are given the opportunity to contribute any comments or questions that they might have to the review of their child's death.

An Annual Child Death Report is presented to the Board which provides an account and overview of the child death cases reviewed, makes recommendations in relation to further actions and ensures that all recommendations are accounted for and disseminated to relevant partner agencies and stakeholders. This quality assurance scrutiny by the Board of the report provides reassurance that partners are doing all they can in assessing modifying factors and implementing strategies to reduce those risks. From their findings the Board implements a number of safety initiatives and distributes literature on safer sleeping, furniture safety and water safety information in readiness for awareness campaign over the spring and summer months. The report is available on our website

www.thurrocklscb.org.uk

Finance and Resources

The LSCB is funded through statutory partner agency contributions and any income generation provision through training or events provided by the Board where recovery costs have been agreed. These monies are used to pay for LSCB business. This includes Serious Case Reviews; independent chairing of the LSCB, the LSCB Business Team, and costs associated with LSCB and sub group meetings, multi-agency training, publications and procedures relating to safeguarding.

The budget is managed through the Local Authority budgetary procedures system by the LSCB Business Manager. A breakdown of the financial position for 2016/17 is shown below



Lessons from Serious and Managed Case Reviews

The process of undertaking these serious case reviews identified some concerns on the quality and timeliness of some partner agencies responses, in particular from those from outside of the Thurrock area. These challenges have been reflected within the final reports concerned for the senior management of those agencies to reflect on the impact this can have on the SCR process. The future work programme of the group in its new format will be determined by the developing picture emerging from the Wood report and the approach to

learning reviews in the future.

The group's priorities are to ensure that all the recommendations are implemented in a timely manner and monitor for impact of change. Briefing staff on the lessons learned from SCR's will continue to be a key activity in the coming year and work is in progress to develop our website to incorporate better information. The group will also be reviewing the SCR processes undertaken considering the feedback from staff involved in recent reviews to continue to improve the process of supporting staff involved in the review process. Please see Annual Child Death Report on our website www.thurrocklscb.org.uk

The Audit Process

The LSCB Audit Group includes representation from Police, Health, YOS, Probation, Housing, Social Care and commissioned providers. The members are middle managers or professionals with a specific safeguarding brief. The group met on five occasions.

The activity and case categories selected for audit and review are selected on a rolling programme at random. Depending on the nature of the audit being undertaken, an established audit tool is used for consistency of practice tailored to the type of audit being conducted. Our audits include single and multi-agency audits which are notified in advance to each representative before the meeting. Each agency representative is then expected to review its own records in relation to the case and the identified practice point. Where relevant, notes and case files are brought to the meetings and shared with the group.

The focus of the group includes the appropriateness, quality and timeliness of each agency's involvement, not just in the immediate period but also over a longer timeframe where this is relevant. Prime concerns are whether children appear to be safe/have been safeguarded, whether they have been the main focus of activity and particularly – when age appropriate – that they have been spoken to and their views elicited. The emphasis during the early part of the year has been much more focused on whether policy and procedures had been followed and any learning has a systems approach. This is still considered important, but the theme has shifted its focus to outcomes of practice and the voice of the child.

The group have reported that they have found the audit process a learning opportunity to broaden their own understanding and knowledge of the roles and responsibilities of every



agency. The group has gradually developed a shared, appropriate expectation of what they would expect to see from safeguarding responses not just from their own agency but also from other agencies.

A learning booklet is now produced highlighting the key learning elements identified and circulated to partners. Full details of the audits are available through the LSCB Business Team.

Audit Outcomes

Minutes of the meeting are recorded with comments on each case made by the group. These identify good practice and joint working as well as noting any concerns about the work completed. If serious concerns about the safety of a child are identified, these are immediately notified to the appropriate agency and the group requests and receive updates on any such case.

The findings and outcomes of the Audit Group meetings are reported to the LSCB regularly through the Management Executive meeting and there is an annual summary of activity for the Full Board, so that the overall quality of local safeguarding practice can be evaluated and any lessons for improvement taken forward at both an operational and strategic level.

A forward plan has been agreed for future audits' to ensure all safeguarding elements are considered taking into account equality and diversity.

Each representative has been keen to ensure that the investment of their time has been an effective means of assessing how well local partners are working together to safeguard children.

Audits undertaken during 2016/2017

- ❖ CIN plans – linked with the Serious Case Review “Julia”
- ❖ Specific audit of two at risk young people
- ❖ Audit of a significant serious incident
- ❖ CSE risk assessments



Walk Online Road Show

This year saw our fourth year of road shows for our young people which included members from the Youth Cabinet taking part. This year's programme covered year 5 and reached 2,100 pupils.

The content this year covered online safety, sexting, grooming, bullying and other risky behaviours. Each child was provided with a goody bag of material for both themselves and parents covering elements of safeguarding. Having completed this year's programme the Board have now captured in excess of 12,200 pupils from across the Borough. This is an exceptional achievement and this approach of engaging with young people was recognised by Ofsted during their recent inspection in March 2016 as an item of outstanding practice and published in their spring journal as outstanding practice. The Board is proud of this achievement

Voice of the child

The Board has undertaken a range of opportunities to hear the voice of local children. The Board has strong links with the Youth Cabinet which also participated in this year's Walk on Line Roadshows highlight the issues of discrimination to over 2,100 children. We take part in the Annual Youth Conference, attend local community events such as Big Lunch and the Orsett Show providing the opportunity to engage with young people and their families and raising awareness of safeguarding through various booklets, colouring books and information on all aspects of safeguarding.

The Children and Families Act 2014 (S19) requires that children and families should be involved in decision making at every level of the system and one of Working Together 2015 key principals for effective safeguarding arrangements is to take a child centred approach. Our Audit Group when undertaking individual audits seeks out in every case the voice of the child to ensure that this element is in the forefront of our practitioners and highlighted where improvements can be made.

Our annual review of the Corporate Parent roles also provides to the Board reassurance that the needs and considerations of Looked After Children are taking place. For those children that go missing the opportunity of sharing their concerns during the return from missing



interviews offers further opportunities to understand their needs. The Board through its MASE and RAG groups are able to seek further reassurance that this particularly vulnerable group of children are heard.

Priorities for 2017-2018

- ❖ Continue to develop a board fit for change with the introduction of a Strategic Group to oversee the changes
- ❖ Support the development of the changes in outcomes of the refreshed early help provision
- ❖ Support the implementation and roll out of Signs of Safety and Graded Care Profile 2 processes
- ❖ Develop our workforce to be more effective in safeguarding



Challenges and next steps from the Independent Chair

The Board continues on its journey of continuous improvement, seeking to sharpen and focus on its priorities so we are able to fulfil our statutory responsibilities. During this year we embedded the changes made to our constitution and structure and delivering our Business Plan.

Alongside the business as usual activities we have faced a number of challenges including Serious Case Reviews both completed and initiated, and internal changes across our partners that create challenges in re-establishing individual communication networks. We are facing new challenges daily and with the proposals of new safeguarding arrangements as we move forward over the next few years the importance of maintaining a robust and solid foundation is acknowledged and required during these developments. The Board are clear that it will prioritise continuing highly effective safeguarding and interagency partnership, while implementing the change proposed by the Wood review, as set out in Working Together. As a Board we are up to that challenge and will continue to drive improvements in the quality of safeguarding through providing high quality support to our partners.



David Archibald
Independent Chair

