

16 January 2024		ITEM: 9
Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee		
Progress Update on Peer Review and Case Review - Action Plans		
Wards and communities affected: All	Key Decision: N/A	
Report of: Priscilla Bruce-Annan, Local Safeguarding Children Partnership Business Manager		
Accountable Assistant Director: Janet Simon, Assistant Director Children's Social Care and Early Help		
Accountable Director: Sheila Murphy, Corporate Director, Children's Services		
This report is Public		

Executive Summary

This report presents Overview and Scrutiny Committee Members with an update on the range of work of the LSCP and progress made on case review action plans.

The responsibilities of the LSCP are laid out in Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023. The purpose of these local arrangements is to support and enable local organisations and agencies to work together in a system where:

- children are safeguarded and their welfare promoted
- partner organisations and agencies collaborate, share and co-own the vision for how to achieve improved outcomes for vulnerable children
- Organisations and agencies challenge appropriately and hold one another to account effectively
- there is early identification and analysis of new safeguarding issues and emerging threats
- learning is promoted and embedded in a way that local services for children and families can become more reflective and implement changes to practice
- Information is shared effectively to facilitate more accurate and timely decision making for children and families'.

Serious Case Reviews (SCRs) were established under the Children Act (2004) to review cases where a child has died and abuse or neglect is known or suspected. SCRs could additionally be carried out where a child has not died, but has come to serious harm as a result of abuse or neglect. The aim of SCRs was to establish

learning for agencies and professionals to improve the way that they work together to safeguard children.

Working Together to Safeguard Children (DfE, 2018), changed the structure of SCRs, these reviews are now known as Local Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews (LCSPRs). Responsibility for learning lessons lies with a national panel – the Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel (the Panel) – and with local safeguarding partners.

1. Recommendation(s)

1.1 That the Committee note the update on the work of the LSCP and the progress made on Thematic Review Action Plan to date.

2. Update on LSCP Work

2.1 The Independent Scrutineer carried out scrutiny of Child Protection Medicals in Thurrock. A range of professionals including commissioners and providers of Child Protection Medicals were interviewed along with a review of related documents. Conclusions were that procedures and processes work well and are timely, medicals are child friendly, context and family history are provided when known and medical, police and social care professionals work well together. Section 47 enquires and meetings take place as appropriate alongside the child protection medical process. The existing resource issue for medical photography has been addressed. Work to address the pathways for Child Protection medicals within the health providers across the wider SET area has been recognised and is in progress. The pressure of work within health providers was recognised by participants, although there was no evidence at the time of the review that it was impacting on the timeliness or quality of work undertaken. The medical Peer Review process was highlighted as good practice.

The next area of scrutiny will consider the effectiveness of multi-agency meetings on multi-agency working in Thurrock to improve outcomes for children and families.

2.2 During two days in November 2023, just over 2,500 Year 5 children from Thurrock schools attended the annual Walk Online Road show event, held at the Civic Hall Blackshots in Grays. The children took part in interactive online safety presentations and received information on known and emerging risks online and in the community. Input was delivered by an external e-safety provider, Essex Police and members of the Youth Offending Team, Thurrock Council. Evaluations show that both the children and their teachers welcomed the content and feel better equipped to keep themselves safe and who they can contact if they experience negativity online.

To complement the workshop for children an evening virtual session was delivered to share online safety information with parents, carers and practitioners to ensure they had the information required to best support the children in their care.

- 2.3 Multi-agency case audits on Early Offer of Help (EOH), Prevention and Support Services (PASS) cases Stepped Up and Down and Multi-agency contributions to Children in Need (CIN), Child Protection (CP) and Looked After Children (LAC) have been the themes of the last two LSCP multi-agency case audits. Outcomes include good examples of strong multi-agency working, looking more closely at Trauma Informed Practice, contingency planning, exploring family networks using the Think Family approach and Professional Curiosity.

The audits focused on how well agencies work together to support children, young people and their families. The LSCP has a programme of audits that are carried out annually and identified learning or suggestions for improvements are discussed and implemented by agencies via their Audit Group representative or by Partnership wide actions.

- 2.4 Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023: statutory guidance, was published on 15th December 2023. The updated document sets out the changes to statutory guidance. Safeguarding Partners will over the coming months make the changes to strengthen how the partnership works to safeguard and protect children locally, including relevant agencies.

[Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023](#)

- 2.5 The LSCP Learning and Development Programme offers training on Common Assessment Framework (CAF), Think Family, an Approach, Working with Families Who are Uncertain, Neglect and Professional Curiosity.

In the six months from July to December 2023, the LSCP delivered 33 Learning and Development events which was attended by 465 delegates. Evaluations are completed both pre and post event to measure individual need, learning and to capture what future events are required. Feedback shows that delegates find courses good to very good and the content of courses match their needs.

- 2.6 The LSCP Management Executive Board have had the annual reports from Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) Service and Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO) presented. Board members had the opportunity to scrutinise both reports to ensure oversight.
- 2.7 Statutory Safeguarding partners have begun the process of considering the Partnership Priorities for 2024-2026. This includes analysis of the multi-agency dataset, consulting with practitioners, parents, carers, children and young people.

3. Thematic Reviews Action Plan Update

All case review action plans are developed through meetings attended by multi-agency representatives, to identify actions required by the partnership to address the recommendations. These action plans have been ratified and are monitored through the LSCP Learning Practice Review Group, Management Executive Board and Statutory Partners.

- 3.1 This action plan has been devised to identify actions to be taken to meet the recommendations from the Thematic Review into Serious Youth Violence and Gang Related Crime. The plan has been ratified and is monitored through the LSCP governance process. Six recommendations were made following the review that have been further divided into sub-sections totalling 15 actionable areas. Progress to date shows that the plan is almost complete with five amber areas of ongoing work remaining within timescales.

Agencies have continued to work on this to ensure practice changes have been embedded this includes,

- work within the Youth Offending Services (YOS) within Thurrock, London borough and Essex to share information in relation to the flow and interaction of youths between them,
- developing work across the whole Health organisation to share transfer in and out of records,
- ongoing workshops delivered across the partnership on Gangs and Serious Youth Violence,
- agencies working with children and young people at risk of youth violence capture in their assessments the views of the parents and carers view of risk as well as those of the children and young people.

4. Issues, Options and Analysis of Options

- 4.1 None

5. Reasons for Recommendation

- 5.1 To update members on the range of work carried out by Thurrock LSCP and progress on case review action plan. The action plan is a multi-agency documents that is monitored through the LSCP governance structure.

6. Consultation (including Overview and Scrutiny, if applicable)

- 6.1 Not applicable.

7. Impact on corporate policies, priorities, performance and community impact

7.1 There is no impact.

8. Implications

8.1 Financial

Implications verified by: **David May**
Head of Financial Management

There are no substantial financial implications arising from the action plan which have not been accounted for in the LSCP budgets and delivery plan.

The LSCP is funded by the three statutory partners and small contributions from other members of the partnership.

8.2 Legal

Implications verified by: **Petrena Sharpe**
**Safeguarding Lawyer and Team Leader for the
Social Care and Education Legal Team**

The Children and Social Work Act 2017 and Working Together 2018 dissolved the requirement for Local Safeguarding Children's Boards (LSCB). The three Strategic Partners, determined under the Children and Social Work Act 2017, comprise Thurrock Council, Essex Police and Thurrock Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG). Thurrock's new arrangements as the LSCP, came into effect on the 7th May 2019.

The statutory criteria for a serious child safeguarding case is set out in Children Act 2004 (as amended by the Children and Social Work Act 2017) with statutory guidance in Working Together 2018 & Working Together 2023. The commission and oversight of the review of these cases, (a local child safeguarding practice review formerly Serious Case Review) and the auditing and monitoring of the 'programme of action' following the findings of the review continues to be the role of the LSCP.

Independent scrutiny is required by the Act as a part of the local safeguarding arrangements.

8.3 Diversity and Equality

Implications verified by: **Roxanne Scanlon**

Community Engagement and Project Monitoring Officer

Supporting our children and young people who are disadvantaged is a key strategic priority for Thurrock Council. The Partnership promotes practice to achieve equality, inclusion and diversity, and will carry out its duties in accordance with the Equality Act 2010 and related Codes of Practice and Anti-discriminatory policy. All Partners are signed up to these principles.

- 8.4 **Other implications** (where significant) – i.e. Staff, Health Inequalities, Sustainability, Crime and Disorder, or Impact on Looked After Children)

No implications identified.

9. **Background papers used in preparing the report** (including their location on the Council's website or identification whether any are exempt or protected by copyright).

None.

10. **Appendices to the report**

None.

Report Author:

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Thurrock Local Safeguarding Children Partnership