


## REPORT TO CHILDREN'S SERVICES AND EDUCATION SCRUTINY BOARD

**13 November 2017**

<b>Subject:</b>	Presentation of 2016-17 Sandwell Safeguarding Children Board (SSCB) Annual Report
<b>Cabinet Portfolio:</b>	Councillor Simon Hackett - Cabinet Member for Children's Services
<b>Director:</b>	Executive Director of Children's Services – Jim Leivers
<b>Contribution towards Vision 2030:</b>	
<b>Contact Officer(s):</b>	Raj Bector; Business Manager Raj_bector@sandwell.gov.uk

### DECISION RECOMMENDATIONS

#### **That Children's Services and Education Scrutiny Board:**

1. Considers the 2016-17 Sandwell Safeguarding Children Board (SSCB) Annual Report.
2. Makes any recommendations as necessary.

## **1 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

### **1.1 To present to the Children's Services and Education Scrutiny Board:**

- the Sandwell Safeguarding Children Board Annual Report
- and
- a presentation of the SSCB 2016/17 Annual Report by Audrey Williamson - Independent Chair. The presentation outlines:
  - key milestones and challenges leading to the present position;
  - what's working well;
  - what we are concerned about;

- what we have learned
- SSCB Strategic Priorities 2017-2018 and
- What happens next – 10-point action plan.

1.2 Working Together to Safeguard Children, 2015 (the statutory guidance to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children), requires the Chair of the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) to publish an Annual Report on the effectiveness of child safeguarding in the area served by the Board. The attached report details the Sandwell Safeguarding Children Board's (SSCB/ Board) activities but, more importantly, it provides an overview of the effectiveness of multi-agency safeguarding arrangements in Sandwell.

## 2 **IMPLICATIONS FOR SANDWELL'S VISION**

2.1 The work of SSCB, and the annual report itself, provides a transparent assessment of the performance and effectiveness of local services. This enables an holistic view in respect of the Council's Vision 2030 and in particular:

Ambition 4: Our children benefit from the best start in life and a high quality education throughout their school careers with outstanding support from their teachers and families.

Ambition 5: Our communities are built on mutual respect and taking care of each other, supported by all the agencies that ensure we feel safe and protected in our homes and local neighbourhoods.

Ambition 10: Sandwell has a national reputation for getting things done, where all local partners are focused on what really matters in people's live and communities.

## 3 **BACKGROUND AND MAIN CONSIDERATIONS**

3.1 The SSCB annual report for 2016/17 is a transparent assessment on the effectiveness of safeguarding and the promotion of child welfare across Sandwell.

3.2 Chapter 1 (page 4) introduces the annual report by way of a foreword from the Independent Chair.

3.3 Chapter 2 (page 5) provides background information about the annual report.

3.4 Chapter 3 (page 6 - 8) summarises broad information about SSCB with a focus on key roles and relationships.

- 3.5 Chapter 4 (pages 9 - 11) sets the context for safeguarding in Sandwell by providing high level statistical information; details of governance and accountability arrangements; and information about business priorities and actions from the 2016 LGA peer review.
- 3.6 Chapter 5 (pages 12 - 23) summarises performance against the three 2016/17 strategic priorities) with a particular focus in respect of the Board's key safeguarding areas of CSE, Domestic Abuse; Early Help.
- 3.7 Chapter 6 (pages 24 - 34) highlights key activity and the lessons that SSCB has identified through its Learning & Improvement Framework. The chapter draws on the work of the L&D Subgroup; SCR Subcommittee; and CDOP.
- 3.8 Chapter 7 (pages 35 - 48) scrutinises the effectiveness of safeguarding children in Sandwell by discussing work undertaken by the Quality of Practice and Performance Subgroup in respect of s175 and s11 audits; as well as multiagency and single agency audits. The chapter also uses information from the Board's performance reports to identify key trends. Private fostering, elective home education and the Local Authority Designated Officer role are also referenced in the chapter.
- 3.9 Chapter 8 (page 49) sets out the key priority areas going forward.
- 3.10 Chapter 9 (pages 50 - 51) sets out the key messages from the Independent Chair of SSCB to key people involved in the safeguarding of children and young people.
- 3.11 Appendix 1 (pages 52 - 76) details the safeguarding assurances provided by partners.
- 3.12 Appendix 2 (page 77) sets out the Board's structure during 2017/18.
- 3.13 Appendix 3 (page 78) provides information about Board attendance and financial arrangements.
- 3.14 Appendix 4 (page 79) provides a glossary of terms.

#### **4 THE CURRENT POSITION**

In identifying the priorities Sandwell LSCB will take forward into 2017/18, the Board has considered the range of learning and information presented during the year and summarised in the annual report. We have looked in detail at the experience of individual children through Serious Case Reviews, local learning reviews, audits of multiagency work and listening to staff working every day with vulnerable children. This has improved our understanding of the need to focus on specific areas of work.

This has enabled us to conclude that we must retain our existing priorities:

- (i) **SSCB communicates effectively** to ensure that the work of the Board is well publicised, that learning is disseminated and that the voice of children, young people, practitioners and the wider community (including minority groups and faith groups) are able to influence the Board's work.
- (ii) SSCB is assured that **effective arrangements are in place for responding to key safeguarding risks** including early help, child sexual exploitation (abuse), neglect, domestic abuse, mental health of children and young people and that there is consistently good practice across safeguarding services.
- (iii) SSCB has a clear understanding of the **effectiveness of the safeguarding system** in Sandwell and can evidence how this is used to influence the Boards priorities.

4.2 We must however ensure a clearer focus on specific key areas of work including neglect (a theme reflected in our Serious Case Reviews and Significant Incidents); ensuring the partnership delivers high quality "core business"; supporting the transition to a Childrens Trust.

4.3 The Board have developed a 10-point action plan (see page 50 of the report) to drive forward the priorities

## 5 **CONSULTATION (CUSTOMERS AND OTHER STAKEHOLDERS)**

5.1 The partnership have been widely consulted on the annual report which was ratified at the Board meeting on 12 September 2017.

## 6 **ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS**

6.1 There are no alternative options.

## 7. **STRATEGIC RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

7.1 There are no specific financial implications arising from this report.

7.2 The formulation of the annual report was met from existing resources

## 8. **LEGAL AND GOVERNANCE CONSIDERATIONS**

- a. In accordance with Working Together 2015, a copy of the report has been sent to the Chief Executive of Sandwell MBC, Leader of the Council, Chair of the Health & Well-being Board and Police and Crime Commissioner.

## **9 EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

- 9.1 The SSCB annual report is the responsibility of the SSCB and is a summary and assessment of the work of all partners in meeting the safeguarding agenda. This report is for information only and the actions contained within the boards plan will have their own Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) as required.

The Corporate Risk Management Strategy (CRMS) has been complied with – to identify and assess the significant risks associated with this decision/project. This includes (but is not limited to) political, legislation, financial, environmental and reputation risks.

## **10 DATA PROTECTION IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

- 10.1 There are no data protection issues arising from this report, the 2016-17 Sandwell Safeguarding Children Board Annual Report or the attached presentation/summary.

## **11 CRIME AND DISORDER AND RISK ASSESSMENT**

- 11.1 There are no crime and disorder implications arising from this report.
- 11.2 The Corporate Risk Management Strategy (CRMS) has been complied with – to identify and assess the significant risks associated with this decision/project. This includes (but is not limited to) political, legislation, financial, environmental and reputation risks.

## **12 SUSTAINABILITY OF PROPOSALS**

- 12.1 “What Happens Next” contains 10-point Action Plan up to March 2018.

## **13 HEALTH AND WELLBEING IMPLICATIONS (INCLUDING SOCIAL VALUE)**

- 13.1 The annual report was presented at the Health and Wellbeing Board on 9 November 2017.

**14 IMPACT ON ANY COUNCIL MANAGED PROPERTY OR LAND**

14.1 There are no implications on any Council managed property or land.

**15 CONCLUSIONS AND SUMMARY OF REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS**

15.1 That members note the content of the 2016-17 SSCB Annual report

**16 BACKGROUND PAPERS**

16.1 None.

**17 APPENDICES:**

2016-17 SSCB annual report.

Presentation/ Summary presentation by Audrey Williamson – Independent Chair.

**Jim Leivers**

**Executive Director of Children’s Services (Interim)**

