

## REPORT TO COUNCIL

14 January 2020

<b>Subject:</b>	<b>2018/19 Sandwell Safeguarding Children Board (SSCB) Annual Report</b>
<b>Director:</b>	Executive Director of Children's Services – Lesley Hagger
<b>Contribution towards Vision 2030:</b>	
<b>Contact Officer(s):</b>	Lesley Hagger Lesley_hagger@sandwell.gov.uk

### DECISION RECOMMENDATIONS

**That Council:**

1. Considers the 2018/19 Sandwell Safeguarding Children Board (SSCB) Annual Report.
2. Makes any recommendations as necessary.

## 1 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015 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) activities during 2018/19 and provides an overview of the effectiveness of multi-agency safeguarding arrangements in Sandwell during that period.
- 1.2 The report also describes the way in which the Child and Social Work Act 2017 and the subsequently revised Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 guidance changes the arrangements for local Multi-Agency Safeguarding Arrangements (MASA), and the way in which Local Safeguarding Children Boards must transition to Safeguarding Partnerships and Child Death Review Partner arrangements by 29 September 2019.

## **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 2018/19 describes the effectiveness of child safeguarding and the promotion of child welfare across Sandwell.
- 3.2 The Board met on four occasions to manage the Board's ongoing business, held an Extraordinary meeting to discuss the new Multi-Agency Safeguarding Arrangements (MASA), and met on a further 4 occasions to plan the transfer from the Board arrangement to the new (MASA) Partnership arrangement.
- 3.3 The Board was well attended by key partners to monitor the effectiveness of delivery against the three key strategic priorities:  
SP1: Improving the performance of the Board;  
SP2: Improving services for Sandwell's children;  
SP3: Improving the response to exploitation.
- 3.4 The performance of the Board has benefited from the transition to the new MASA arrangements by reducing bureaucracy and sub-groups, bringing more focus to meetings. The business management of the Board was transferred to the newly established Sandwell Children's Trust on 1 April 2018.
- 3.5 The establishment of Sandwell Children's Trust and the relationship with the Sandwell Children's Improvement Board has enabled the SSCB to maintain a strong and robust focus on improving services for children.
- 3.6 The creation of the Sandwell Early Help Partnership has significantly supported a community response to safeguarding children.

- 3.7 A new Child Exploitation Board has improved the understanding of exploitation beyond child sexual exploitation. For the period of the Annual Report, the Child Exploitation Board was in its early stage of development; it has continued to develop a holistic approach to understanding, assessing, responding to, and disrupting child exploitation.
- 3.8 Areas for development or assurance action, relevant to each agency, are set out in the Annual Report. The delivery of these actions continues to be monitored, together with impact on outcomes.
- 3.9 The Chair of the SSCB during the 2018/19 period stepped down from her role at the end of March 2019.

## **4 THE CURRENT POSITION**

- 4.1 The Sandwell Safeguarding Children Board (SSCB) ceased its operation in March 2019 and the new MASA arrangements have been in place since 1 April 2019 and the Sandwell Children's Safeguarding Partnership was established on that date.
- 4.2 The new Partnership has redefined its priorities to reflect the prevalent needs of Sandwell's children: neglect and exploitation. There continues to be a focus on ensuring that those working with children receive effective learning and development. The procedures for children that have died are now located in a Black Country arrangement. The new Partnership benefits from an external, independent Scrutineer.
- 4.3 The new Partnership will present its Annual Report in June 2020.

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

- 5.1 The partnership has been widely consulted on the annual report which was ratified by the new Sandwell Children's Safeguarding Partnership on 17 December 2019.

## **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**

- 8.1 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.

## **10 DATA PROTECTION IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

- 10.1 There are no data protection issues arising from this report or the 2018/19 Sandwell Safeguarding Children Board Annual Report.

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

- 11.1 There are no crime and disorder or risk implications arising from this report.

## **12 SUSTAINABILITY OF PROPOSALS**

- 12.1 Areas for development or assurance action, relevant to each agency, are set out in the Annual Report. The delivery of these actions continues to be monitored, together with impact on outcomes.

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

- 13.1 Ensuring that partners work together to keep children safe underpins their right to enjoy health and wellbeing.
- 13.2 Sharing intelligence and data about the prevalence of safeguarding concerns provides opportunities to intervene earlier to protect children from harm.
- 13.3 Understanding the impact of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) has been a priority for the Health and Wellbeing Board.

## **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 2018/19 SSCB Annual Report

**16 BACKGROUND PAPERS**

16.1 None.

**17 APPENDICES:**  
2018/19 SSCB annual report

**Lesley Hagger**  
**Executive Director of Children's Services**