

THURROCK LOCAL SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN BOARD

Thurrock Local Safeguarding Children Board Annual Report 2013-2014





Forward by Dave Peplow, Independent Chair,

I am pleased to introduce the LSCB Annual Report for 2013-2014. LSCB's are required to publish an Annual Report on the effectiveness of safeguarding in their area, including an assessment of local safeguarding arrangements, achievements made and the challenges which still remain. This report sets out the progress and achievements over the last year and those priority areas which the Board will focus on over the next 12 months.

Our Business Plan continues to develop, responding to new challenges as they arise. There is still work to be completed and this forms part of our forward plans for the coming year to enable our targets and aspirations to be achieved and acknowledged.

Our vision remains clear - that every child and young person in Thurrock should grow up safe from maltreatment, neglect and criminal activity. Keeping children safe requires a culture, across all agencies, where staffs are open to challenge and new ideas. That ethos has again been tested during the year. I am privileged to work with partners who share my commitment to this vision and are willing to analyse their performance to ensure it improves outcomes for children. We now need to build on a safeguarding system where the focus is firmly on the voice and experience of the child or young person's journey from needing, to receiving information, help and support.

As we move forward in 2014, there will be a strong emphasis on early help and prevention. We will see the development of a Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) and greater focus on our early help provision to ensure that we do all we can to prevent children and young people meeting crisis point before interventions are available.

I would like to thank the members of the Board for their work during this reporting period and particularly to all the front line practitioners and managers in Thurrock for their dedicated work in safeguarding children.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Dave Peplow'. The signature is stylized and fluid, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Dave Peplow



Comments by the report author

I write this report on behalf of the Board as a reflection of the progress made in improving safeguarding for the children and young people of Thurrock during 2013/14. It takes into consideration the views of Board members, data and some personal reflections. The report provides evidence and examples from the 2013 Business Plan, the progress and activity the Board is making across safeguarding and the way it works to support and challenge our partners in safeguarding our children and young people.

The aim to deliver 'more for less' and make best use of contributions from partner agencies continues to be a challenge. A tight reign has been maintained on LSCB finances again this year which has enabled the Board to maintain a standstill financial contribution position for the fourth year running as we move into 2014/2015.

As part of our continuous improvement, we commissioned an independent review of the Board which reported back in November 2013. The review highlighted the need for some change and reflection on our current governance and practice. Some changes have already started to take place and we shall continue to develop our approach and processes as we move into 2014.

The Board was pleased to see Children's Social Care conduct a mock inspection on its services in readiness for future Ofsted inspections and to ensure that learning takes place to improve outcomes to safeguard Thurrock's children and young people. The Board commend the Local Authority for this approach and will be looking to see the benefits for our children and young people.

This report will show that overall the Board is carrying out its duties to a good standard and effectively carrying out its statutory functions, as well as identifying areas where it can make an impact. There are always areas for development, which the Board acknowledge and form the basis of our future work.

It is not practical to capture in words all activity within this report, in particular the mind-set and culture that is developing across agencies, but the report aims to highlight and evidence the main aspects.

As you read through this report whether a Board member or interested party there are three questions I ask you to consider:-

Question 1: Are we doing the right things?

Question 2: Are we doing things right?

Question 3: Are we making a difference?

A P Cotgrove

Alan Cotgrove

LSCB Business Manager





Background to Children’s safeguarding in Thurrock

Thurrock lies to the east of London on the banks of the River Thames and within the Thames Gateway growth zone. The Borough is host to one of the biggest growth and regeneration programmes in the UK which over the next few years will create 26,000 jobs and 18,000 new homes. The programme includes the creation of the Grays Campus for South Essex College (opening September 2014) which will mark a change in the town’s economy and future prospects, providing a learning centre for local young people to gain the qualifications and develop the skills for the new jobs being created in the Borough.



Thurrock’s population is 157,700, having grown by over 22.5% since 1990. The population is projected to rise to 207,000 by 2033. Thurrock has a young population by national standards.

The population is increasingly diverse. According to the 2011 Census the non-white ethnic population was 15.7% – a significant increase from the 2001 Census of 4.7%. Among school-age children, more than one in four (26.5%) are from a black and minority ethnic group. Recent data indicates this rate has now increased to 30% (Education Commission Report 2013). Much of this change is being driven by the new homes that have been, and continue to be built across Thurrock. Three-quarters (75%) of the working age population are in employment. Unemployment among young people has risen steeply in recent years and supporting young people into employment and minimising long-term unemployment is a key challenge and agenda for both Children’s Services and the Children’s Partnership. This work is now starting to impact with a downward trend beginning to show.



Average house prices in Thurrock are historically lower than both national and regional averages. The council manages its own stock of over 10,000 homes. The availability of affordable housing and its inclusion in new housing developments is a focus for the Council to ensure sustainable growth.

Overall levels of deprivation in Thurrock are consistent with the national average however, Thurrock experiences significant pockets of deprivation and inequality, with several areas falling within the 20% most deprived areas in England.

Just over one in five children in Thurrock is growing up in poverty (21.9%) – just slightly above the national rate (21.1%). The gap between the highest and lowest areas of deprivation in respect of child poverty is wide. For example, in Tilbury 55% of children are living in poverty, 25 times the level of child poverty in the least deprived ward of Corringham and Fobbing. The areas in Thurrock with the highest levels of child poverty also experience the lowest educational attainment and have more people in poor health or with disabilities which prevent them from working; higher proportions of workless families and higher numbers of adults with poor basic skills or who lack qualifications.

Infant and child mortality rates in Thurrock are consistent with national averages.

Children in Thurrock have average levels of obesity. 10.0% of children aged 4-5 years and 21.1% of children aged 10-11 years are classified as obese (9.2% and 19.2% nationally respectively).



About the Thurrock LSCB

Thurrock Local Safeguarding Children Board exists as a statutory body and has a range of roles including developing policies and procedures and scrutinising and challenging local safeguarding practice. Section 14 of the Children Act 2004 sets out the Objectives for the LSCB as:

- To co-ordinate what is done by each person or body represented on the Board for the purposes of



safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in the area and;

- To ensure the effectiveness of what is done by each such person or body for these purposes.

While the LSCB do not have the power to direct partner agencies, they have a 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, 2013). The role therefore of the Board is to have an independent co-ordinating and challenge role around safeguarding practice across its partner agencies. This is carried out through the Full Board and each of the sub groups, details of which are outlined later in this report.

For 2013-14, membership of the Board and representation from all agencies on each of the sub committees was good and we saw a number of changes over the year of individual representatives and a welcome improvement of education engaging in both sub groups and the Board. We reviewed the way meetings were run, how information was shared and how the Board can more effectively challenge practice. The commissioned review of the Board provided an independent view of our governance and procedures to ensure that we were “fit for purpose” and work has begun on the outcomes of that review to improve our systems and structures even further.

Those changes have included:

- New governance structure of the Board
- More direct challenge of services to individual organisations
- Greater focus on outcomes for children

The LSCB continues to participate in the local planning and commissioning of children’s services to ensure all members implement their duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in the delivery of all their services and reflect on practice and policy.

These are the main areas the Board have been involved in

- Policy development and refresh of the Pan Essex Child Protection Procedures
- Development of the Early Offer of Help and a member of the EH Project Board
- Development and supporting the implementation of the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)
- Developing a new threshold and pathways to service document.
- Development of joint working protocols



The LSCB also contributes and continues to work closely with the Children and Young People Partnership (CYPP) developing local policy and procedures.



Our Business plan for 2014-2015

A review of the Business Plan in March 2014 showed that in most key areas progress had been made against the actions set. Where any actions were delayed or not completed within the predicted timescale a review was undertaken to challenge why this was the case and they were actioned, accounted for or carried forward to the current year.

It was felt also that new and emerging themes needed to be incorporated into the plan moving forward to reflect the priorities in the Borough, in particular child sexual exploitation as well as identifying local impact and trends emerging nationally arising from Serious Case Reviews and Independent Management Reviews. These approaches will form the basis of individual work plans for the Serious Case Review Group and where local issues arise, the Audit Group and the Performance Panel in 2014 will focus on achieving better outcomes for Thurrock children.

Key highlights and achievements 2013-14:

- The 2013 Conference on Voice of the child
- Managed Review on fabricated illness
- a responsive and reflective multi agency learning and development programme that has been cost effective
- Business Plan on target and flexible to reflect emerging issues
- Continued focus on improvement and challenge by looking at business processes in the Board and challenging agencies and practice where needed
- Launch of new LSCB website



- significant progress with engagement and links with Faith Groups across the borough
- Continued links and sharing practice with other Boards, both within Essex and throughout the region

Areas reviewed and actions

- Thematic review process for Section 11 implemented for all partners through the Full Board
- Refreshed approach to child sexual exploitation, new training provided, intelligence network implemented,
- Focus on links with young people

Reports reviewed

- Private fostering
- Local Authority fostering
- Children's Partnership activity and policy development
- Child Death Review
- CAF
- Ofsted Inspection 2012 action plan outcomes
- Sexual health service and response to sexual violence

Areas for development in 2014-15

- Greater involvement of children and young people in the work of the Board
- Review how Working Together 2013 is embedding across practice
- Inspection frameworks and findings – there is a need to ensure that the Board maintains its position as being fit for purpose to meet the challenges it faces.
- Greater focus on outcomes
- Monitor the impact of the transformation processes across a number of agencies e.g. Probation, Local Authority, Police, Health and Education with Academies and Free Schools and any potential impact on safeguarding practice
- Focus on Sexual Exploitation following the Children's Commissioner Report and local intelligence
- Need for continuous review of smarter working and better use of resources
- Consideration of more "Pan Essex" and regional working and sharing of practice in some key areas such as training and learning provision and child sexual exploitation where boundaries do not apply to perpetrators.



- Making best use of action plans, data and case examples to continue to robustly challenge areas of concern
- Improving administration and support to the Board through cloud based technology

Working with others

This year has seen the development of a joint protocol co-ordinated through the Health & Well Being Board between the LSCB, the Adults Safeguarding Board and Community Safety Partnership. This has strengthened the cross working activities and provided clarity to all three areas.

The LSCB has maintained and developed further its links with the Children and Young People Partnership (CYPP). The CYPP manage and commission the delivery of the Interagency Training element of the LSCB and also provide a number of sub groups in support of safeguarding which are intrinsically linked into the work of the LSCB. It could be debated where various support groups sit within the children's safeguarding structure in Thurrock. The LSCB recognise the most important fact is that we have the right groups with the right people and regularly review practice through reporting processes to the Board, which ensures that all elements of children's safeguarding is in place to meet the needs of Thurrock's children.

Agencies Voice

This year we have added a new section to show how our partner agencies have contributed to safeguarding Thurrock children and young people. We asked each agency to respond to four key headings.

- 1. What did your agency do in 2013/14 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.**

Children's Social Care

Children's Social Care has successfully implemented a new format for Children & Family assessments combining the Initial and Core Assessment process. Following the challenge of the mock inspection undertaken in November 2013, one of the areas for improvement was the need for more focussed and clear plans for both Child Protection and Children in Need, linking with better outcomes for children. Workshops have been held with staff to support them with this.



Independent case audits are being undertaken with action plans linking with better and timely outcomes for children. Placement stability for our LAC has improved with fewer children having 3 or more moves in placement.

As part of the transformation of the council, all of Children's Services are transferring into the refurbished Civic Centre, with new mobile technology which will have a positive impact on their efficiency.

Essex Police

Essex Police has undertaken significant work to further embed early information sharing following domestic abuse incidents where children and young people have been present. This has enabled the partnership to consider and respond to safeguarding at the earliest opportunities, ensuring that risk to children is managed and mitigated. This work is supported by the Domestic Abuse Strategic Partnership Working Group to that is working to identify meaningful and sustainable solutions to the domestic abuse agenda, including those that involve children. Significant work has been undertaken to further embed quality victim management and process to respond to young people who are victims of crime, ensuring that Essex Police works in partnership to safeguard while progressing investigative lines of enquiry.

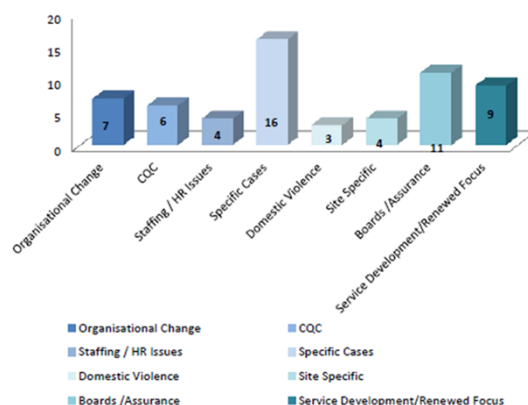
Significant work continues in the field of 'missing' children and links to child sexual exploitation. Essex police have set up a triage team to consider and develop intelligence and information sharing to identify and protect young persons who may be at risk. Significant work has been led by Essex Police in support of development of a CSE multi-agency risk assessment and notification process.

Thurrock CCG

During 2013, meetings were held quarterly by the Designated Nurse with five healthcare professionals, resulting in a total of 20 meetings across the year (these do not include adhoc unannounced visits for discussions). This included health professionals working for providers including Basildon & Thurrock University Hospital (BTUH), North East London Foundation Trust (NELFT) and the Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC) together with CCG employees.

From these meetings, eight themes emerged as dominant topics for discussion as displayed in the chart below:-





As might be expected specific cases were the most discussed topic where actions, timeframes, advice, challenge, escalation and learning were covered. Assurance and understanding of reporting to and the function of various Committees and Boards emerged as the next concern, ensuring that they received an accurate picture of local safeguarding issues was delivered. Organisational change and new service development/renewed focus (eg, Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE), Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) and Section 11) emerged equally as the third most popular theme for discussion.

SEPT

Compliance with Safeguarding Training at three levels remained at over 95% for the year.

A presentation was given to the LSCB in March to evidence that there are improved outcomes for children attending CAMHs services. Feedback from young people included:-

- *“That I could talk about anything”*
- *“I have been listened to and my thoughts and feelings are always taken into consideration”*
- *“I feel like I am making progress”*
- *“I felt listened to and I have been offered other services as needed”*
- *“I felt for the first time someone understood what I was going through and knew how to help. They have been very understanding and made me feel better about myself”*
- *“Everyone listens, I feel comfortable with who I talk to, everyone’s really friendly, kind and welcoming”*
- *“I feel like the people here have made a significant change in my life”*

A conference was held for 189 staff in February on safeguarding. This included a number of workshops on Domestic Abuse and Parental Mental, drug & alcohol misuse and the effects on children’s welfare.



A three month follow up showed that clinical practice has improved for example- safeguarding has become a standard agenda items at adult team meetings. Risk assessments on the adult include child's welfare etc.

NELFT

Safeguarding Children Training – this is mandatory and is provided to all staff working for NELFT. Compliance reports are completed monthly by the training dept.

On 02.06.14 uptake of level 1 training was 91.6%, level 2 uptake was 87.04% and level 3 uptake was 89.52%.

Dissemination of learning events from local and national SCR's are held quarterly through 2013/2014. NELFT evidence how training has had an impact on practice and improved outcomes for children and families by use of post evaluation questionnaires.

Following completion of an LSCB Multi Agency Case Review (MACR) for a suspected case of fabricated or induced illness in May 13, NELFT took part in delivering an FII workshop across the local health economy with Social Care. This has raised staff awareness of FII and has led to staff identifying and bringing further cases for discussion in safeguarding supervision and a further case has also been taken to Social Care and identified as FII.

Safeguarding Children supervision is mandatory for all NELFT staff that comes into contact with children and young people and they must receive one to one or group supervision, dependant on their roles and responsibilities.

Compliance in May 2014 1:1 was 91.7% and group was 100%. A supervision audit was completed in February 14 to monitor the quality of supervision and staff compliance with the safeguarding children supervision policy. The voice of the child is discussed and recorded in all supervision sessions.

Voice of the Child - A Mapping exercise was completed in August 13 to identify how the voice of the child was being captured across children's services. A voice of the child action plan has now been developed and is being progressed across NELFT to ensure the wishes and feelings of children and young people are heard and involved in service provision .The voice of the child is now captured and recorded at all core contacts.

Audits - Section 11 self-assessment audit was completed to assess the effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements across NELFT and to evidence improved outcomes.



A NELFT wide audit was completed in December 13 to assess the quality, timeliness and outcomes of Multi Agency Referral Forms (MARFS's). Going forward this audit will be completed bi yearly and will enable NELFT to identify learning, improve the quality and future referral rates and improve outcomes for children.

Probation

Essex Probation seeks to Safeguard children in Thurrock in three main ways: firstly by managing the small number of Offenders who, by their offending, pose a High Risk of Harm to children and young people; secondly and more broadly, as an agency working with a large number of adults in Thurrock, many of whom are parents, influencing their behaviour so as to improve the Safeguarding, wellbeing and future life-chances of their children; and thirdly, as an active member of a range of statutory partnerships in Thurrock, working jointly to improve the safety of children.

East of England Ambulance Service

The Trust continues to work in partnership with the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) and the Local Safeguarding Adult Boards (LSAB) around the Eastern Region. The assistant general managers with safeguarding responsibilities have started to attend these meetings supported by the Head of Safeguarding, in order to strengthen local area networks. In some area this has been more imbedded than others as some senior managers have been undertaking this role longer than others, there are still gaps within some localities which presents a risk to statutory duties in attending meetings.

The Trust continues to support Child Death Overview Panels (CDOP) around the Eastern Region, again this is varied dependent on the area. Form Bs (a form completed by agencies who may have accessed the child prior to or at the point of death) are complete on request and attendance where invited to support CDOPs in understanding the nature and cause of the child death. The Trust has encouraged the Safeguarding Assistant General Managers (SAGMs) to participate in the CDOP meetings and to support any member of staff who may be invited to a rapid response meetings (a meeting undertaken by the CDOP multiagency professionals within 24 - 48 hours after the child death, this meeting is for practitioners from all agencies to share information regarding the child and family).

The Trust Head of Safeguarding takes responsibility to work with NHS England Area teams (X3), National Ambulance Safeguarding Forum and the Department of Health and Royal Collages regarding policy deigns, National standards and uniformity within safeguarding processes.



The Head of Safeguarding also attends the Quality Governance and Risk Directors Group (QGARD) and Ambulance Service Safeguarding Forum (NASF). The Trust Head of Safeguarding is currently Chair of this National Ambulance Safeguarding Forum.

South Essex College of Further & Higher Education

The College has a broad approach to child protection and safeguarding and this includes the following:

- Senior staff with designated child protection training, experience and skills
- A dedicated team of Safeguarding Advisers
- Online safeguarding training for new and existing staff
- General safeguarding training
- Designated Child Protection Officer Training
- Designated Child Protection Officers on main campuses
- Policies and procedures
- Staff DBS, employment and identity checks
- Multi agency working
- In-house counselling service

South Essex College have spent 2013/14 developing the way Safeguarding has been approached and also viewed across the College. A new team has been recruited and the focus they have been given is on preventative work as well as the crisis management. They have spent time ensuring they are well known across the College and staff is referring cases to them. Safeguarding Training is provided through an online tool which all new and existing staff completes. The Safeguarding Team have promoted Awareness Days regarding specific Safeguarding issues that may be occurring within the college.

The College was inspected in November 2013 and received an overall grade of 'Requires Improvement'. The full report is available here: <http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/inspection-reports/find-inspection-report/provider/ELS/130672>

The quote in the report regarding safeguarding is very good and clearly shows that the College is meeting its statutory requirements, if not going above, to safeguard children and adults at risk. The feedback given from the lead inspector for 'Effectiveness of Leadership & Management' was very complimentary of the working relationship between Student Services and HR which showed a very joint-up approach in the College.



“The college meets its legislative requirements for safeguarding well, including those that provide training on behalf of the college. Managers also provide a good duty of care for adults such as support for those who encounter hardship. They are implementing robust arrangements that reflect the importance of students’ and apprentices’ well-being and safety. These include improved centralised records and a governor with specific responsibility for safeguarding who links closely with a dedicated senior management team. They respond effectively to safeguarding concerns that arise and are constantly looking to improve their systems.”

(Ofsted, November 2013)

Thurrock is currently the smallest campus and does result in the lowest number of cases. The Campus currently has a student population of 1391; the Safeguarding Team have worked with 75 students, this equates to 5% of the student population and this percentage is reflective of our other campuses too. The most common reason for intervention is Mental Health and housing/home life concerns.

The Safeguarding Team have worked extensively with Social Workers and the Local Authority to ensure that all Looked after Children are supported whilst at college. We have supported in arranging PEP and LAC reviews between the teaching teams and Social Workers to ensure all are aware of continued progression of the student and any issues arising that are putting them at risk of not achieving their target grade.

The Team have worked extensively with specific students who have been at high risk in terms of their needs both from a college and Local Authority perspective. We have ensured that with high needs students, we have developed links with their previous school, created a ‘hand over’ whereby the college is informed of the supported needs of the learner and transition between school and college is easier. The student and their support needs (pastoral, academic, etc) are known to the college prior to enrolment and in place ready for the start of the course. Staff, when relevant, is notified of any safeguarding concern and know to refer to a Designated Child Protection/ Safeguarding Officer if a safeguarding concern presents itself.

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

Children’s Social Care

There has been a steady rise in the number of children subject of a Child Protection Plan and Looked After. For both CP and LAC this is 75 per 10,000 populations, significantly higher than statistical neighbours and all England. This places increasing pressure on case allocation and budget. There is



a need to understand and gather effective and relevant data to understand the reason for increased CP and LAC numbers.

We have put in place CP and CIN surgeries to ensure appropriate thresholds are applied and that children do not drift in the system and there are effective step up and down processes in place, undertaken in a timely way. A similar tracking process will be put in place for all LAC to ensure that permanency is achieved.

As with all agencies there are considerable pressures on reducing spend and considerable savings to be achieved across the service to meet the council's budget pressures.

Essex Police

Essex Police in a similar vein to other police forces has continued to see an increase in the report of sexual offences, including those against children. This largely amounts to those of a historical nature following the high profile media cases and national attention to such issues. Significant progress has been made to embed the new Victims Charter to ensure that all those who report such offences are fully supported and provided with regular and relevant information. This also supports the expectation to listen to the voice of the child. Robust supervision and management processes have ensured that enquiries have progressed as required, achieving an increase in persons charged and convicted for sexual motivated offences.

SEPT

With the many changes within the NHS there was a need to refresh the way SEPT work with other NHS colleagues in Thurrock. As such a project 'Integrated Family Working' was initiated by SEPT and there are now regular meetings between Adult Mental Health Services, Named Safeguarding Nurses and representatives from the Community Health Services for Perinatal, health visiting and School nursing services. The meetings involve raising awareness of how services operate, contact sheets and joint working processes.

NELFT

Evidencing improved outcomes - Being able to evidence that the health intervention provided has had a positive outcome on the child's health and wellbeing can be a challenge. All children subject to Child Protection/CIN plans have care plans that are SMART and are reviewed regularly to ensure risks to children are monitored and reduced.

There is a need for NELFT to further develop safeguarding children outcome measures.



Ensuring a child centred approach “ the child’s journey”– Effective safeguarding services must be based on a clear understanding of the needs and wishes of children and young people .Staff need to ensure the child / young person is seen, heard, their views taken seriously and recorded, and staff need to work in collaboration to support the child/ young person’s needs. The work we have progressed so far to capture the voice of the child needs to be further embedded in practice.

Probation

The greatest significant challenge for the Probation Service as a whole and Essex Probation as part of it, for 2013-14 – and for the first two months of 2014-15 – resulted from the changes as part of the Ministry of Justice "Transforming Rehabilitation" initiative, which have led to the dissolution of all Probation Trusts and their replacement by two new organisations.

The extent and speed of these changes has been very significant, but on 31st May 2014, Essex Probation ceased to exist and on 1st June 2014 it was replaced in Southend, Essex and Thurrock by two new organisations: the Essex Community Rehabilitation Company (ECRC) and the National Probation Service.

The statutory responsibilities laid upon the two new organisations by the Children Act and its amendments remain unchanged and both of these new organisations, therefore, will be statutory members of Safeguarding Children's Boards and a key part of Safeguarding arrangements in their area.

East of England Ambulance Service

The Safeguarding Annual Report reviews work across the whole of the East of England Ambulance Service NHS Trust (EEAST) geographical area over the last year in relation to safeguarding children, young people, and adult’s identified to be at risk, the Mental Capacity Act and also reflects multi agency partnership working and partnerships across the wider health economy. Safeguarding has continued to remain high on the agenda for all statutory organisations in relation to both adults and children. The Trust has a statement of commitment to Safeguarding on the Trust’s website.

The Trust continues to be registered with the Care Quality Commission and in order to remain registered it is required to demonstrate on-going compliance to the “Essential Standards of Quality and Safety”. Outcome 7 relates to safeguarding vulnerable people who use services from abuse. The Trust has taken steps to implement suitable arrangements to ensure service users are safeguarded against the risk of abuse by identifying the possibility of abuse and preventing it from happening and



by responding appropriately to any allegation of abuse. This information is monitored through the Trust's governance arrangements and through the quality schedule incorporated within the standard ambulance contract by the Clinical Commissioning Group of Great Yarmouth and Waveney.

The Trust has seen an escalation in safeguarding activity through SPOC; this increase is identified as 85% within the last 12 months. This seems to be consistent with Ambulance Trusts Nationally; it is not clear as to why this steep activity increase and especially within the last 12 months. It is, however, identified that the increase represents a more appropriate monthly figure of concerns and better representation of the needs and concerns of the local communities. This insight is informed by the Head of Safeguarding's work with the CCGs and Local Authorities in the Eastern Region.

South Essex College of Further & Higher Education

The challenges we have faced would be collaboration with specific agencies within the Local Authority. We have contacted specific groups within Thurrock (e.g. Thurrock Social Workers, Young Carers Groups, and Family Mosaic) to help develop our understanding of the support these agencies provide and ensure we can make accurate referrals and draw upon the resources within the local authority. We still need to further develop our links with local agencies and this will be furthered during the summer period.

We will be expecting an influx of students over the next few years at the new Thurrock Campus and there is a predicted increase in the amount of students who will attend the college. It is therefore important that we further develop our partnership with Local Authority agencies working together to improve our practice.

Thurrock CCG

This first year of CCG has been a year of significant change for the National Health Service, with pressures of budget reductions, service and structure reviews and developments in national and local policy agendas. NHS TCCG and health partners have risen to the challenges and continue to provide effective support and safeguarding services to the most vulnerable children and families in the health community.

As these challenges continue within the NHS, TCCG Safeguarding Team will continue to support the health economy with their statutory safeguarding responsibilities and maintain a focus on the quality and effectiveness of children safeguarding practice across the partnership, ensuring robust arrangements are in place to ensure good outcomes for the children in South West Essex and will continue to hold commissioned providers and partner agencies to account.



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

Children's Social Care

The understanding and application of threshold by partner agencies into Children' Social Care continues to be an area for attention and could explain the high numbers of CP and LAC in Thurrock. Threshold document re-launched.

On occasion there has been a lack of attendance at multiagency meetings from some partner agencies. There have been further challenges to meet the new timescales as set out and required through the implementation of the FJC reforms with considerable pressure to reduce timescales.

Essex Police

A regular process of partner communication at all levels has ensured that there is a clear understanding of responsibilities, which has led to effective working arrangements and support for young people.

SEPT

To continue to provide substantial assurance that there is effective safeguarding children process in place using audits including Section 11.

To ensure partnership working is effective for example

- The Integrated Family Working project will continue
- Thurrock LSCB minutes are standard agenda items on the Trust Safeguarding meeting

NELFT

Ensuring SMART CP/CIN plans - Front line staff sometimes needs to challenge other agencies to ensure CP / CIN plans are robust and SMART enough to ensure actions are progressed to improve outcomes for children and families. Staff are reminded, through supervision and training , to ensure actions agreed have achievable time frames and effective multi-agency plans are developed and monitored by the group to ensure children are effectively protected.

Regular Multi-agency network meetings are in some cases not always being held and CIN plans are not being effectively monitored to ensure the safety and welfare of the child. Staff advised to discuss concerns with Social Worker and ensure an agency is always available to chair the meeting.



Acceptance of referrals to Social Care - Referrals are sometimes not being accepted by Social Care, staff advised to discuss referral with safeguarding team to review quality of referral and reasons not accepted. Future MARF audits will identify any learning and establish if referrals were appropriate or CAF assessment / early help required. Staff to be referred to escalation process where appropriate.

Probation

In the course of 2013-14, Essex Probation also reviewed our internal Inspection and Quality Assurance arrangements and to focus our Inspections into practice more directly to lessons learned from Serious Case Reviews and similar reviews– in order that we are better able to check if the lessons we learn as an organisation are making a difference to the front-line Safeguarding work of our staff.

East of England Ambulance Service

Significant progress was made in 2013/14; this continued to build on the work undertaken in 2012/13.

The last year has seen regular involvement of the safeguarding team in supporting Trust staff to focus on holistically assessing the need of a patient and their lived experience, identifying concerns to ensure early help is identified, enabling staff to pathway patients to their GP via Trust systems and understanding the Toxic Trio (Mental Health, Drug and Alcohol problems and Domestic Abuse).

Monitoring of the safeguarding referral line has remained consistent over the last year; this work ensures the quality of data leaving the Trust and the pathway choices are evaluated no more than 3 days after the referral is made. This is to ensure patient concerns are received and managed by the correct agency.

Further training has been undertaken to support all Trust staff in using the Consent and Capacity Policy and paperwork complete of the Capacity to Consent Form. The Trust issued further guidance regarding restraint and how to use restraint, how to document the use of such procedures and what the Trust expects of Trust staff. Further work will continue over the next year as this topic is integral to PU for 2014/15.



South Essex College of Further & Higher Education

Within Thurrock, multi-agency working has been overall very good. Any issues we have had regarding a Looked after Child, we have communicated directly with their allocated Social Worker and issues have been raised and addressed. This has allowed a consistent approach to the students support. There have been occasions whereby we have looked into arranging counselling for a student known to the Local Authority and it has been made apparent that the student already receives counselling support outside of college. In this respect, it would be useful to know exactly what other external support the student is receiving arranged by the Local Authority so we can direct specific queries to that agency as well as informing Social Care.

4. What are your safeguarding priorities for this year 2014/15?

Children's Social Care

- Implementation of MASH from July 2014.
- Additional changes to the model for Early Offer of Help to ensure that children with additional needs are supported at an earlier stage via CAF
- Plans are in place to reintroduce peer auditing across Children's Social Care to drive up quality and evidence improvement.
- Introduction of strengthening families' model for CP conferences.
- More rigour to address drift on CP plans / roll this out quarterly tracking meeting and involve partners agencies.

Essex Police

Essex Police continue to work to increase all staff awareness of child safeguarding while considering learning from other law enforcement agencies and partners. This will ensure that our response to risk and safeguarding issues will be strengthened through early identification, intervention and partnership working in contribution to early help obligations and prevention opportunities.

SEPT

To continue to provide substantial assurance that there is effective safeguarding children process in place using audits including Section 11.

To ensure partnership working is effective for example

- The Integrated Family Working project will continue



- Thurrock LSCB minutes are standard agenda items on the Trust Safeguarding meeting
- Staff will be fully skilled in using the MASH system in Thurrock
- Ensure safeguarding learning via SCR etc. is tabled at the Trust Lessons Learnt Group

NELFT

Ensure the voice of the child is considered and responded to across all service areas

Ensure our services are aware of the indicators for CSE, FGM and harmful practices, and referral pathways.

Support the implementation of the MASH and ensure staff have the skills to assess and identify children and YP who would benefit from early intervention and early offer of help.

Develop safeguarding children outcome measures

Increase the number of and improve the quality of referrals to Children's Social Care

Increase the number of NELFT referrals to MARAC

Probation

Having introduced in the course of last year a new and updated Practice Instruction to staff in relation to safeguarding children, Essex CRC will also need further to the changes stemming from Transforming Rehabilitation and its embedding in practice in Thurrock, to assure ourselves that our focus on safeguarding remains as strong as ever.

As part of our commitment to the Whole Essex Community Budget Reducing and further to the publication of the last iteration of Working Together, Essex CRC have committed ourselves to developing the offer of 'Early Help' in relation to the children and families of offenders. We are looking to roll that 'offer' out in concert with our partners in the coming year.

East of England Ambulance Service

The Trust will be focused on the following priorities of the next year. These have been highlighted from Government initiatives and new legislation, SCR outcomes and ongoing monitoring of Trust systems to ensure the Trust keeps up to date on all changes as the NHS and Safeguarding restructures take place nationally.

- Trust training – review of training standards to ensure trust compliance to Intercollegiate Guidance
- Trust training – ensure that there is a consistent approach to safeguarding training throughout the trust during this year of heavy recruitment



- Adult safeguarding – evaluate compliance to statutory obligations when issued in October 2014
- Trust Locality leads – ensure that lead managers are identified in each area and have clear responsibility regarding safeguarding expectations
- Mental capacity – review capacity documentation
- Mental Capacity – support the PU programme to ensure this topic is identified to all staff undertaking PU and the train the trainers are supported in delivering the discussion regarding legislation on legal requirements

South Essex College of Further & Higher Education

Looked After Children

- Each Safeguarding advisor will be allocated a ‘case load’ of LACs to work with and will be a direct point of contact for the allocated Social Worker and LAC.

Staff Training

- The College are looking to increase staff confidence in dealing with a range of safeguarding issues as well as the pastoral care after any disclosure. Training across college will be taking place in the first term of 2014/15.

Training & Upskilling of Safeguarding Team

- This will always be a priority due to the changing landscape of safeguarding. Staff must be equipped with the appropriate skills and knowledge so we can effectively support all cases.

Policies and Procedures

- A new Safeguarding Policy has been developed and this will be promoted to staff and students over 2014/15. The next phase will be to bring all College policies in line with the Safeguarding Policy and ensure there is a joined up approach for example to behaviour and bullying & harassment.

Self-esteem

- This is an area of interest for our team this year that needs development across all colleges. Increasing self-esteem for students will help to develop students capacity to problem solve situations, develop their independence and empower them to make better decisions. We will be doing this through self-esteem workshops and through peer-support within the Student Union.

Young Carers

- Continued development is needed in this area. We are speaking with the Young Carers Group in Thurrock and will be arranging a time to meet up and discuss how the college can help support Young Carers and work collaboratively.



Substance Misuse Awareness

- The Safeguarding Team piloted a Substance Misuse event in Southend using the Local Authority agencies within the town. This provided largely successful with a template that we hope to replicate in Thurrock. We will develop relationships with the local YPDATs in Thurrock as well as Police and rehabilitation services, ready to roll out a similar provision next academic year at the Grays Campus.

Thurrock CCG

Priorities identified for the year 2014-15 will be monitored through the CCG and Providers CQRG Meetings and will be based on the standards outlined in “Safeguarding Vulnerable People in the Reformed NHS Accountability and Assurance Framework” (March 2013) namely: -

1. Maintain CCG membership of the Thurrock Local Safeguarding Children Board (TLSCB) and fully engage with the Local Authority to fulfil safeguarding responsibilities including reviewing and reporting on the progress and quality outcomes.
2. Maintain robust processes to learn lessons from cases where children die or are seriously harmed and abuse or neglect is suspected. This will include contributing fully to Serious Case Reviews (SCRs) and other Alternative Reviews which are commissioned by TLSCB.
3. Ensure representation and effective contribution to the newly established Joint Children’s England to influence the commissioning of high quality integrated pathways of care for all children and young people from maternity and right through to adult services.
4. Gain assurance from commissioned services that they have effective safeguarding arrangements in place and that the views of children and young people and frontline staff inform service development.
5. Demonstrate that designated clinical experts are embedded in the decision making of the organisation, with the authority to work within local health economies to influence local thinking and practice.
6. Work with primary care commissioners and local CCG clinical leaders to develop effective arrangements for the employment and development of named GPs (and other primary care expertise) within the local area.
7. Work with the Local Area Team of the NHS England to contribute to the continued development of Safeguarding Clinical Forums
8. Ensure CCG staff induction programmes incorporate safeguarding requirements and that



CCG staff attendance is evidenced and reported to the Safeguarding committee.

9. Continue to support and improve the quality of primary medical care by continuing to offer PLT events and GP safeguarding lead training to all CCG's across the County

The Childs voice

Following the success of the LSCB Conference in December 2012 on child sexual exploitation, greater engagement with young people and their involvement in the Board was an area acknowledged for further development and still continues into 2014. The Board recognised that work to involve young people was not as advanced as it could be and actions were put in place to rectify this. Such actions included a conference for professionals on the voice of the child in November 2013, which provided the opportunity for young people to openly express their experiences to those that provide the services to children. Key note speakers and workshops with young people reinforced the message. Through the close working with the CYPP we now have a youth forum set up at a local school whose focus is on E- Safety which has helped shape our understanding and obtain a young perspective on the needs and use of young people and the internet .

Walk Online Road Show

The Board undertook what is probably its biggest challenge in recent years to raise awareness and gain greater insight into child sexual exploitation through the voice of the child. Partners from across different agencies supported an ambitious project which took place over six days during March 2014 targeting 5,000+ years 5, 6 & 7 pupils from across the whole Borough.

This event was organised based on feedback received from schools, Serious Case Reviews and identified local needs to meet concerns around pupils awareness to sexual exploitation and in particular e-safety and its many facets e.g., cyber bullying, sexting and grooming. The programme was led by Essex Police Online Investigation Team and cases and examples used in this event were based on real life examples and the content was hard hitting, but age appropriate, reflecting the nature of the investigations Essex Police are coming across within these year groups.

The Board took this rare opportunity of having such a large group of young people together to conduct an anonymous survey using electronic keypads, asking eight questions about their use of the internet. The questions were aimed to complement the NSPCC survey conducted this year on CSE so comparisons could be made from a local to national perspective. The results of the survey have highlighted some interesting facts. The full report on the events is available on request from the LSCB.



LSCB Business Unit

The Business Unit of the Board has continued to grow following the appointment of a dedicated Business Manager and restructured support team to oversee the work of the Board. This has helped to streamline processes and look at new ways of working. The need to appoint further support resources will be assessed over the coming year as part of the independent review findings. Further development of the new LSCB website as well as taking on a more proactive safeguarding awareness role with professionals and the community are two areas of work currently being progressed. Further streamlining of process including cloud based technology will be developed during 2014.

Relationship with the Health and Well-Being Board

The LSCB continues developing its relationship with the Health and Well-Being Board reporting activity and supporting partnership working. There is still significant transformation taking place across the Health community, including commissioned services, early offer of help provision and Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) and these changes continue to be assessed to enable agencies to acclimatise to new ways of working.

Full Board

The Full Board met on four occasions with good attendance from all statutory and member organisations. Some of the areas reviewed, discussed and challenged included

- Who's Looking After the Children – our response and position to the report was agreed. Police provided information and data on its procedures. A further report requested and response received following HMI inspection of Essex police custody facilities for young people
- 157/175 Audits on education establishments
- Budgets
- Annual Independent Review Officer Report was discussed. A number of challenges made to the Local Authority around case loads and content of the report.
- Childrens Commissioner Report – “If only someone had listened” Action plan to be developed through the CSE sub group
- Child Death Review – Some of the content was challenged and tasked to the Management Executive to action. Awareness campaign agreed on safe sleeping and the risks of water (pools & ponds)
- Joint protocol with Heath & Well-Being Board signed by Chair
- The activates and reports of the sub groups were provide to the Board
- Reflective learning by Board members



The Independent Chair has led the Board through a series of Thematic Section 11 processes. These have included to date:

- Selection & Recruitment
- Voice of the child
- Governance

Board members were required to account for their agencies processes and outcomes within the themed areas and were challenged by members who found the process both insightful and a refreshing approach.

The Local Authority Lead Member with responsibility for children and young people sits on the Board as a participating observer, allowing them to participate in discussion but does not have a voting right. This enables another context of the communities' voice to be heard within the LSCB communications framework.

As part of our Learning Improvement Framework we ask members of the Board to complete feedback and reflection after meetings under eight subject headings to ensure that we have made best use of the time and productively of members

Management Executive

The Management Executive met on eight occasions during this reporting period.

The Boards sub groups report direct to the Management Executive who are the custodians of the LSCB Business Plan and ensure that allocated objectives are actioned by the groups.

The focus and purpose of this group is to ensure that the LSCB are able to be satisfied that children are being appropriately safeguarded across Thurrock.

The Executive reviewed

- Health Action Plan
- Update and progress of the VAWG strategy
- Update and progress on Local Authority Self-Assessment
- Childrens workforce strategy
- Report on impact of welfare reform
- Report from Basildon Hospital on safeguarding
- Report from Essex Police on safeguarding
- Report from Probation



- Report on children who are home educated
- Update and progress on response to CSE & Childrens Commissioner paper
- Review of the threshold document
- Monitored progress of the early help changes
- Annual reports
 - ❖ Private Fostering annual report
 - ❖ IRO report
 - ❖ E-Safety report
 - ❖ EDT report
 - ❖ Missing children report
 - ❖ UAS

Sub Groups

The Boards sub groups are the key mechanism for challenging practice and any gaps or areas for development in service provision, ensuring that the Board is contributing to make a difference to safeguarding practice across Thurrock. The groups are well supported by partner agencies and all elements have shown considerable progress against objectives set by them as part of the Business Plan. They are all functioning well and their work areas and terms of reference continue to be reviewed to ensure they remain fit for purpose.

Scrutiny and challenge

For this reporting year the groups of the LSCB comprise of:-

- Child Death Review Sub Group
- Serious Case Review and Audit Group
- Performance Management Sub Group
- Interagency Training Sub Group

Each sub group has its own terms of reference and business priorities set within the 2013-14 plan and reports into the LSCB Management Executive. The groups are accountable through an action matrix but have also been given the flexibility to adapt these priorities to meet emerging priorities, for



instance, new legislation/guidance or serious case reviews that affect safeguarding in Thurrock. Where appropriate they can implement task & finish groups to compliment the work undertaken.

Child Death Review

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 Thurrock LSCB and Children's Partnership 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 implemented a safer sleeping awareness programme in November 2013 and water safety information in readiness for an awareness campaign over the coming spring and summer months.

Geographically based are Local Child Death Review Panels which for Thurrock are placed within the South West Essex group. This group assesses the response at a more local level and detailed level. This group is tasked to review all child deaths in the SW Essex area to identify any modifiable factors and make recommendations to the Strategic group and appropriate agency to address any issues.

Serious Case Review and Audit Group

As part of streamlining LSCB business, the process for conducting serious case reviews and audits changed in the previous year 2012-13 resulting in the Serious Case Review Group and Audit Group being amalgamated to one group. This followed a long period where no serious case reviews had been presented for consideration to the Board and partner representatives time was not being well utilised. In hindsight and as fate often plays its part, this year saw both the need to consider and implement a serious case review and also a separate managed review. This identified a number of



weaknesses in the structure and has resulted in the groups re-forming back to two groups, with greater focus and direction.

Lessons from Serious and Managed Case Reviews

Thurrock commissioned one serious case review for this reporting period the case of “Julia”. The SCR findings and publication will fall into the next reporting period. Other national serious case reviews whose findings had an impact on safeguarding in Thurrock were reviewed during the year and disseminated to the respective agencies for the learning outcomes to be embedded into practice.

A further case was presented to the Panel for consideration of a SCR which did not meet the threshold criteria – this was in relation to fabricated illness.

Having reviewed the case the panel felt that although it did not meet the threshold for a SCR, there was learning to be obtained from agencies. The Board commissioned a light touch managed review which was undertaken by the NSPCC. The Board during this process identified the importance of transparency of its work and agreed that all reviews undertaken (subject to any reporting restrictions) will be published.

The future work programme of the group in its new format will be determined by the action plans arising from serious case reviews which will form part of the standing agenda and any local cases submitted for consideration of a SCR.

The group’s priority will be 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 process undertaken considering the feedback from staff involved in managed reviews to continue to improve the process of supporting staff involved in the DCR process.

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 seven occasions.



The activity and case categories selected for audit and review are selected at random and an audit tool 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 e.g. S47 Child Protection. 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.

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 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. All members of 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.



Audits undertaken 2013/2014

Criteria - Section 47 cases audited that have been closed as no further action.

Learning outcomes:

Concern identified over one case reviewed where case closed whilst police investigation still taking place. Further review of similar cases then tasked and identified that this was not normal practice and details fed back to team concerned.

Criteria - Child Protection case where parents have learning difficulty.

Learning outcomes

Audit identified a shortfall in service provision of support to the parents as agreed by Adult Social Care. Action taken by adult representative to implement support.

Criteria – Appropriate use of CAF process

Learning outcomes

- The Adult and Child Protocol is to be refreshed.
- An action plan has been put in place to review Core Assessments and ensure that the Voice of the Child is captured.

Criteria - Examination of the early help provision

Learning outcomes:

- Identified that some health colleagues were not clear on the pathways
- EH services and pathways forwarded to health colleagues
- EH needs to be acknowledged as a multi-agency programme of services

Performance Management Sub Group

The Performance Management Sub Group met on two occasions. The group supports the LSCB in the monitoring, promotion and planning of high quality practice in line with the interagency performance management framework. This group will be changing to a Performance Panel approach during 2014.

The group developed a framework called the “Thurrock Wheel” which has received regional recognition as good practice in monitoring the effectiveness of what is done by the Board Partners, individually and collectively, to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. Although this process has been very effective, it is recognised that further development of performance indicators is required and these are in the course of being agreed.



Continuous performance management is at the core of Thurrock LSCB ethos, ensuring the effectiveness and impact of interagency safeguarding activity makes a difference. Areas of concern, practice, performance issues or areas requiring development are identified and evidenced through the performance management framework. The chair of the sub group reports directly to the LSCB Executive in respect of the progress and impact of safeguarding in Thurrock.

The group examined performance in the following areas during 2013-2104

Child Death Review process

- Examined the CDR Annual Report and feedback provided to the CDR Coordinator
- Identified data that would support better understanding of neo natal deaths where maternal age is under 20
- Missing children - The group reviewed the Children's Partnership multi-agency Missing Children Panel performance, which tracks individual cases but has also contribute to identifying patterns of absconding and behaviour to minimise the impact of child sexual exploitation. In one case presented, the Missing Children Panel were able to find a reported missing person though its intervention who would otherwise not have been located through other enquiries and illustrated the value of this group. During 2014 having recognised the significant links to CSE the group will join with the CSE group infrastructure.

Training Sub Group

The Training Sub Group met on eight occasions and has a key role in ensuring that each agency delivers effective child protection training of professionals and volunteers who work with children, young people and their families or services that affect the safety and welfare of children. It is the responsibility of the LSCB to ensure that multi-agency training on safeguarding and promoting welfare that meets local needs is provided. The purpose of the training is to develop and promote shared understanding amongst safeguarding partners around the tasks, processes, principles, roles and responsibilities for safeguarding children promoting their welfare to result in better outcomes for children and young people in Thurrock.



The group successful sought to identify an individual who has an overarching involvement with schools and education and can provide a valuable insight to training and development needs for education.

Training Provision

A review of training provision was conducted and presented at the February 2014 meeting. This was a detailed review of both the provision and attendance of agencies to the different programmes offered by the Board to enable to the group to assess future needs. The data in this year's report will cover this review period which was from January 2013 to January 2014. An extract of the report has been included in this annual report.

Training Programmes

Throughout the last year we have ran three courses; Inter-Agency Child Protection Training, Online Exploitation of Children and Young People, and the Six Steps of Child Sexual Abuse Behaviour Module. A total of twelve courses overall.

Inter-Agency Child Protection Training:

This training was delivered on five occasions. There was a high response to this training with a total of 123 staff attending from the 125 positions given across the five sessions.

Online Exploitation of Children and Young People:

This training was delivered on four occasions. There was a medium response to this training with a total of 136 staff attending from the 180 positions given across the four sessions.

The Six Steps of Child Sexual Abuse Behaviour Module:

This training was delivered on three occasions. There was a high response to this training with a total of 135 staff attending from the 150 positions given across the three sessions.

TRAINING ATTENDANCE

Training Event	Number of Courses	Places Available	Total Attended	Total Attended from each Sector
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				Health	Education	Private Voluntary	CAFCASS	Local Authority	Police	Probation	Private	Fire	Misc
Inter-Agency Child Protection Training	5	125	123	35	36	23	2	15	11	1	0	0	0
Online Exploitation of Children and Young People	4	180	136	37	19	34	4	35	0	1	6	0	0
The Six Steps of Child Sexual Abuse Behaviour Module	3	150	135	34	14	20	4	36	7	5	10	2	3

The total amount of attendees for the period January 2013 to January 2014 is 394.



Of this 394 the percentage of attendance across the recorded sectors is as follow:

Sector	Percentage of Total attendance recorded in sectors
Health	26.90%
Local Authority	21.83%
Private Voluntary Institutes	19.54%
Education	17.51%
Police	4.57%
Private	4.06%
CAFCASS	2.54%
Probation	1.78%
Misc.	0.76%
Fire	0.51%

Findings

The review identified the current commitment from each agency and identified the number of eligible staff against attendance. This process was welcomed by the group and has enabled each agency to review their commitment to multi agency safeguarding training. The representatives have been tasked to take the report back to their agency and discuss the findings.

Highlights

- New content and model of delivery for Inter-agency Child Protection training has been developed and implemented with positive feedback from participants regarding their learning from the programme
- Since introducing the new programme for Inter-agency Child Protection training demand has increased
- Adult Social Care representation on training group has strengthened the groups capacity to encourage joint working across children's and adults services
- Online Exploitation training has been well received with each training identifying that there is still a significant lack of awareness across the workforce as to the real challenges in this area of work
- Investment in the skills of the training group and an increase in trained facilitators reduce the need to commission external providers and strengthen the effectiveness of local delivery with a local perspective, allowing budgets to be used more effectively.
- Administrative support has allowed for training places in the second half of the year to be more evenly allocated across the partner agencies, ensuring that training truly is "inter-agency"



Challenges

- Long-term evaluation on impact of training continues to remain a challenge due to the vast nature of the workforce of which only a small percentage receive inter-agency training. There are a significant number of other variables which all impact on improvements in practice making it difficult to pinpoint the exact impact of training. We have developed our post course feedback process and split one course to enable learning practice to form the second part of the programme.

FINANCE AND RESOURCES

The LSCB is funded through partner agency contributions and any income generation provision. These monies are used to pay for management of 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 2013/14 is shown below.

Income 2013/2014		Expenditure		Budget	Actual Spend	Comment
Health	15,000.00	LSCB Independent Chair (inc VAT)	AA301-2104-CS410	20,000.00	16,275.00	
Police	15,000.00	LSCB Manager Cost - inclusive	AA301-0001-00000	27,909.00	27,909.00	
CAFCASS	550.00	LSCB Business Team - inclusive	AA301-2104-CS403	9,773.40	20,089.76	Additional staff from Aug 2013
Probation	9,500.00	The Walk On Line Roadshow	AA301-1750-00000	10,000.00	10,000.00	Final bills to be calculated
LA Business Team	65,591.40	LSCB Training Programme	AA301-2104-CS400	20,000.00	21,293.92	
		Child Death Review Administrator	AA301-2104-CS424	6,000.00	6,000.00	
		Annual Conference	AA301-0380-00000	13,500.00	9,263.27	Final bills awaited
		Serious Case/Mgt Reviews	AA301-2104-CS402	28,000.00	9,107.50	Final bill awaited for SCR
		Promotional/Publications/Marketing		5,000.00	1,067.85	
		Seminars and Courses	AA301-0360-00000	5,000.00	350.00	
		Equipment Purchase	AA301-1400-00000	4,000.00	1,375.23	
		Contingency	AA301-0000-00000	1,000.00	0.00	
		Stationery	AA301-1681-00000	1,000.00	620.76	
Total Income	105,641.40	Total Expenditure		151,182.40	123,352.29	
C/F 2011-12	68,641.00					
C/F from 2012-13	37,826.00		Savings made		27,830.11	
Munro Funding	11,000.00					
Total C/F from previous year	117,467.00					
Total Budget	223,108.40					
						Fixed costs - staffing of LSCB Business Team
						Disposable Income
						Fixed costs from disposable income
Carry Forward to 2014-15	99,756.11					

The Board have managed to maintain a standstill budget for a fourth year in a row, but is reaching the point where it is proposed to apply a slight annual increase for 2014/15 to offset additional costs being necessary both as demand increase for outcome based learning as well as changes in infrastructure affecting meeting costs.



Troubled Families Programme

Thurrock Council and its partners are participating in the Troubled Families Programme. This is a national programme developed to address issues of crime and anti-social behaviour, children not engaged in education and worklessness. The initiative for Thurrock targets 360 families over three years to help them to turn their lives around and in particular the lives and prospects of their children. Families will be offered intensive interventions to address the difficulties that they have. The LSCB is interested and involved in this work at a strategic level as the success of the programme will have positive benefit around the safety and wellbeing of children in Thurrock. The work links with the early help provision of service, providing a mid and long term saving both financial and the point intervention takes place. The programme is just reaching end of year one and of its target of 120 families 100 payment by results submissions will have taken place. The next phase over the coming year targets 180 families. In addition to specific family intervention, through the payment by results approach, the programme has been able to offer financial support to support Children's Social Workers. Social Workers can apply for small amounts of money for basic items or commissioned services to resolve easy to fix low level family issues which would have otherwise escalated. The Board receive progress reports throughout the year from the Programme Lead on outcomes achieved. The impact on those families supported as well as the financial benefit to children's safeguarding has been significant, with many excellent examples where families in crisis have been turned around. The Board fully support the continued work of this very worthwhile programme.

Sexual Exploitation

The majority of children in the UK grow up safe from harm however there are a small number of children who are being sexually exploited and it is thought that this is an area which is under-reported. Research has shown that this abuse can be perpetrated by individuals from all sections of society and can be targeted at boys and girls from all sections of society. There are certain factors in a child's life that can make them more vulnerable to being sexually exploited, for example the links between children who go missing and those who are sexually exploited are well documented.

Thurrock LSCB has made substantial progress in working to improve outcomes for children who go missing from home or care or who are at risk of sexual exploitation. We are part of the Essex Strategic CSE group which examines and delivers activity across Essex to support victims and bring offenders to justice. Through the Children's Partnership Missing Children Panel the Board has oversight of the picture of children who go missing in Thurrock. They also review individual cases and have highlighted some children who are at risk of CSE and take positive action to meet their safeguarding needs and provide a report to the LSCB for scrutiny.

The Government has also made sexual exploitation a priority and has produced a



‘Tackling Child Sexual Exploitation Action Plan’ and also a cross-Government strategy on missing children and adults. The LSCB has been reviewing the Children’s Commissioners Report and has been working on its own action plan to quality assuring its systems and processes against the reports recommendations and making sure that those who come into contact with children and young people are aware of possible signs of sexual exploitation and how to respond. Further work in this area is seen as a priority for the LSCB in the coming year.

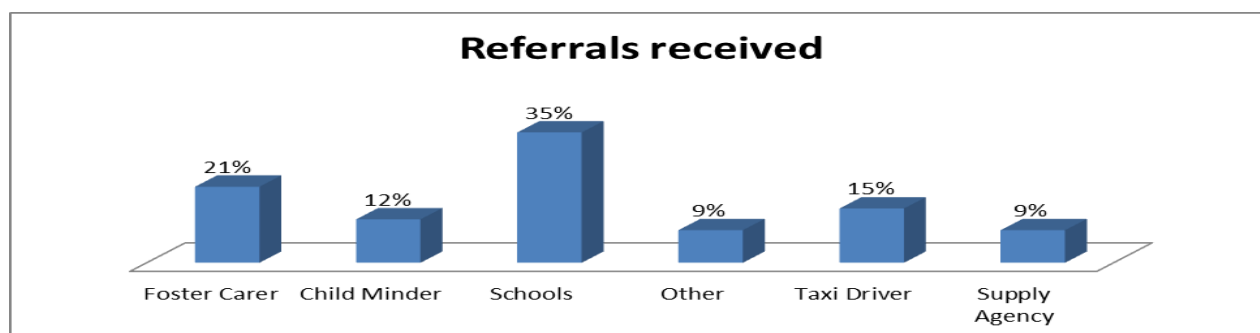
Lay members

Thurrock LSCB have been very fortunate in having a lay member who is well known within the community which has proved invaluable in assisting with community awareness and supporting events. Unfortunately during this year due to other community commitments our lay member resigned which has left a gap of providing the ‘community voice’ to the Board. We have since been actively engaged in a recruitment campaign and we did have another member for a short period but it is disappointing that we have been unable to find a community member to pick up this important role. We continue to actively seek lay members to be a part of the Board.

Allegations Management

The Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) has close links with the LSCB who 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. During this reporting period there are have been 34 referrals to the LADO, this is consistent with the previous years reporting.



The outcomes from allegation investigations in Thurrock show that the proportion resulting in no further action is 47% this may be due to the fact that schools are reporting all allegations that are made. The LSCB will continue to monitor this.

The Board will make recommendations to the Inter-Agency Training Group to provide further awareness training and the roles of agencies in disclosing to the LADO.

Good examples of safeguarding practice

The LSCB are pleased to acknowledge some of the excellent work undertaken in safeguarding children and young people by the Children's Partnership, Community Safety Partnership and local community and voluntary organisations that contribute to making Thurrock a safe place and supporting Thurrock overarching vision

Highlights

- Positive alcohol strategy and proactive operations to combat and reduce underage drinking
- Violence against Women Strategy and implementation plan
- Honour based abuse - The LSCB has been a sponsor of the showing over 5 sessions of a documentary "BANAZ" to 236 professionals from multi agencies in support of understanding the impact and response to HBA. The film chronicles the life and death of a young British Kurdish woman killed in 2006 in South London on the orders of her family in a so-called honour killing.

SAFEGUARDING PERFORMANCE OVERVIEW

THRESHOLDS

Thurrock continues to apply its thresholds rigorously. With a steady increase in Child Protection Plans Children's Social Care commissioned an independent audit of CP plans during 2013 to ensure that thresholds to intervention were being appropriately applied. The outcome of the sample audited confirmed that risk assessments were being appropriately applied.



Referrals

Referrals have seen an increase on the previous year with a 2% increase in repeat referrals (19%). Despite this trend, Thurrock over the last three years still remains consistently below the national and statistical neighbours' benchmark average. This suggests Thurrock is accurate in determining what kinds of cases need to come into the service and understanding of this threshold is very well understood by partners. The implication of the Early Offer will help to strengthen the interface between Children's Social Care and partner agencies in terms of cases that do not meet the threshold for Social Care involvement. Nevertheless the referral rate into the service remains an area for vigilant attention.

Rate of Referrals per 10,000	2008/9	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14
National rate	497	548	555	534	521	Not available
Stat Neighbours	525	560	550	555	608	Not available
Thurrock	1046	671	416	361	449	497

Initial & Core Assessments

During this reporting period the process of Initial and Core Assessments changed with the introduction of the Single Assessment. This area of performance is at an early stage and will be monitored over the coming months and will be reported on further in the 2014/15 report.

Child Protection Plans

The rate of children subject to Child Protection Plans is high; Comparable data with national and statistical neighbour were not available at time of this report. The actual number of children subject of a plan in Thurrock is 288 which are anticipated to be significantly higher. Child Protection thresholds are consistent in Thurrock; the percentage of children becoming subject to a Child Protection Plan measured against the number of Section 47 investigations undertaken has remained consistent at about 50% for a five year period. This is largely in line with national and statistical neighbours' figures for the same period.



The Board are concerned on the number of Child Protection cases which fall under the category of neglect and that recording of cases of CSE are correctly reflected and recorded. This will be a focus for the Board during the coming year.

Children in Care

The rate of Children in Care continues to rise Thurrock - 68 per 10,000; national - 60; statistical neighbour - 67 (the actual number of children in care March 2014 is 291). We have seen a steady increase over the year and a particular rise in young people 18+ moving from 0 to 7. It needs to be acknowledged that as part of this increase the method of data recording changed during the year and now young people who are placed on remand are also classified as LAC and although not tested, likely to be in the higher age bracket. The outcomes for children in care, as measured by the performance indicators, are on the whole good, and in some areas very good.



Challenges and next steps from the Independent Chair

This reporting period has seen further progress to continue to improve the Boards challenge to maintaining and improving safeguarding practice across the Borough. There are some gaps and areas for improvement that have been identified through the activities of the Board, the independent review and the need for continuous improvement.

The Board continues to develop an ethos of ongoing challenge and improvement not only of its partner agencies but also of itself. With this in mind, the LSCB will continue to challenge the way we do business – complacency in this important area of work of safeguarding children and young people is clearly not an option. We would like to thank all those members who have committed to the sub groups and activities of the LSCB during this period. Can I thank the Business Support Team for their dedication and commitment to making a difference to the Board's business processes. We will continue to seek out what we can do better to support the community we serve and ensure that the message that 'safeguarding is everyone's business' continues to be promoted.



Dave Peplow

Independent Chair

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