

Health and Wellbeing Board

14th November 2019

Northumberland Safeguarding Children Board (NSCB) Final Annual Report

Report of Paula Mead NSCB Independent Chair

Purpose of report

To provide an overview of the work carried out under the multi-agency arrangements for safeguarding children April 2018-September 2019 for information to the Health and Well-Being Board

Recommendations

It is recommended that the Board:

1. Notes the content of the Northumberland Safeguarding Children Board (NSCB) Final Annual Report.
2. Notes that the NSCB has now been replaced by the Northumberland Strategic Safeguarding Partnership (NSSP) as set out in the Children and Social Act 2017

Link to Corporate Plan

This report is relevant to the Health and WellBeing Boards priority in the Corporate Plan.

Key issues

- 1 The attached report describes the work during April 2018-September 2019 of the Northumberland Safeguarding Children Board (NSCB), and provides information about operational safeguarding activity during the year. The report describes a range of achievements and progress of the NSCB priorities during the year.
- 2 The report highlights the transition into the Northumberland Strategic Safeguarding Partnership set out in the Children and Social Act 2017 undertaken in June 2019.
- 3 Inspections over thirteen years has identified that partnership working is good in Northumberland and the NSCB is effective and adaptable in keeping pace with a safeguarding agenda. The Board is operating from a strong and well-established base including effective scrutiny, appropriate challenge and focus on relevant issues.

- 4 This identification of effective partnership working in the NSCB over a significant timescale highlights the effective positive working relationships between statutory partners, voluntary sector and lay members and the NSSP has strong foundations to build on.
- 5 National pressures in recruitment to social work roles continue to be addressed in Northumberland; caseloads have reduced over the year from 22.1 in 2017-2018 to 18.9 for this year, this continues to be monitored by the NSSP..
- 6 During this reports timescale the NSCB published one Serious Case Review Natalie, <https://www.northumberland.gov.uk/NorthumberlandCountyCouncil/media/Child-Families/Safeguarding/NSCB-Natalie-Proportionate-Serious-Case-Review-Summary-2018-Final.pdf>
- 7 The NSCB also undertook a series of Multi-agency audits, including, Early Help, Neglect, Child Sexual Abuse, Missing, Exploited, Slavery and Trafficked Risk De-escalation, Voice of the Child, Safeguarding Children with Disabilities, All of the audits have had a robust action plan and have driven forward change across all partner organisations.
- 8 The report sets out the outcomes from June 2019, when Northumberland was subject to a joint Ofsted, the Care Quality Commission, HMI Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services and HMI Probation inspection of the multi-agency response to children experiencing or at risk of Sexual Exploitation and those experiencing or at risk of Criminal Exploitation. <https://files.api.ofsted.gov.uk/v1/file/50097926>

Background

The NSCB had a statutory duty to prepare and publish an Annual Report which analyses and assesses how our partners safeguard vulnerable children and young people. This statutory requirement continues under the new NSSP arrangements Our primary responsibility is to provide a way for the local organisations that have a responsibility in respect of child welfare, to agree how they will work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and to ensure that they do so effectively.

The attached Annual Report describes the strategic activity undertaken by the NSCB, and the most significant specific issues dealt with during April 2018-September 2019.

Implications

Policy	The Annual Report April 2018-September 2019 demonstrates the extent to which the functions of the NSCB, as set out in the national statutory guidance 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' (2018) are being effectively fulfilled.
Finance and value for money	No direct implications
Human Resources	Safeguarding investigations can in some circumstances lead to disciplinary action against staff. Safeguarding training is mandatory for all staff working in Northumberland County Council.

Property	No direct implications
Equalities (Impact Assessment attached) Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N/A <input type="checkbox"/>	This is an information report so does not require an EIA. Referrals statistics suggest that the gender and ethnic balance of safeguarding referrals broadly match those of the care management caseload
Risk Assessment	Management of risks in individual cases is a core element of safeguarding. There are various multi-agency risk assessment groups including Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conferences (MARAC) and the Missing Slavert, Exploited and Trafficked Group (MSET)
Crime & Disorder	Northumbria Police are members of the NSCB/NSSP as are Safer Northumberland Partnership, and there is close joint working to ensure that prompt and appropriate action is taken where it is thought that a crime may have been committed.
Customer Considerations	There is a continuing need to ensure that children and young people are adequately protected from the risk of abuse or exploitation and children and young people in need are offered the services to maintain their health and development
Carbon reduction	No direct implications
Wards	All
Policy	The Annual Report April 2018-September 2019 demonstrates the extent to which the functions of the NSCB, as set out in the national statutory guidance 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' (March 2018) are being effectively fulfilled.

Background papers:

Northumberland Safeguarding Children Board (NSCB) Final Annual Report

Report sign off.

Paula Mead NSCB Independent Chair

Author and contact details

Report Author: Robin Harper-Coulson
Tel: 01670 624037
Email: robin.harper-coulson@northumberland.gov.uk