

**IMPROVING LIVES SELECT COMMISSION
14th November, 2017**

Present:- Councillor Clark (in the Chair); Councillors Beaumont, Cooksey, Cusworth, Elliot, Fenwick-Green, Ireland, Jarvis, Marles, Marriott and Julie Turner.

Also in attendance: June Lovett, Rotherham Safeguarding Adults Board Member (Assistant Chief Nurse (Vulnerabilities) , The Rotherham NHS Foundation Trust) and Jackie Scantlebury the Safeguarding Adults Board Manager for Item 96. Christine Cassell, Independent Chair of Rotherham Local Safeguarding Board and the Deputy Strategic Director – Safeguarding, Children and Young People’s Services for Item 97.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Brookes, Khan, Senior and Short and Councillor Roche (Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Health) and Sandie Keene (Independent Chair of Rotherham Safeguarding Adult’s Board) for Item 96 and Councillor Watson (Cabinet Member for Children and Young People’s Services) for Item 97. .

92. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

93. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC AND THE PRESS

There were no questions from members of the public or press.

94. COMMUNICATIONS

There were no communications.

95. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 31ST OCTOBER, 2017

The Chair advised that these would be circulated with the next agenda.

96. ROTHERHAM LOCAL SAFEGUARDING ADULTS BOARD - ANNUAL REPORT 2016-2017

The Chair welcomed June Lovett from the Rotherham Safeguarding Adults Board (RSAB) and the Safeguarding Adults Board Manager.

The Care Act 2014 requires each Safeguarding Adults Board (SAB) to publish an annual report as soon as is feasible after the end of each financial year. The report focusses on:

- What the SAB has done during that year to achieve its objective;
- What the SAB has done during that year to implement its strategy;

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- What each member has done during that year to implement the strategy;
- The findings of the reviews arranged by it under section 44 (safeguarding adults reviews) which have concluded in that year (whether or not they began in that year).

The report introduced both the achievements of Rotherham Safeguarding Adults Board (RSAB) for 2016/17 and comments on some of the key points of inter-agency working arrangements and positive partnership.

Key priorities for 2017-18 include:

- All organisations and the wider community work together to prevent abuse, exploitation or neglect wherever possible.
- Where abuse does occur we will safeguard the rights of people, support the individual and reduce the risk of further abuse to them or to other vulnerable adults.
- Where abuse does occur, enable access to appropriate services and have increased access to justice, while focussing on outcomes of people.
- Staff in organisations across the partnership have the knowledge, skills and resources to raise standards to enable them to prevent abuse or to respond to it quickly and appropriately.
- The whole community understands that abuse is not acceptable and that it is 'Everybody's business'.

Discussion ensued on the report with the following issues raised/clarified:-

Is there confidence that the RSAB is holding partner agencies to account? The peer review and audit processes had provided an opportunity to highlight good practice but also identify areas for improvement across different partner agencies. Further examples were asked about how this could be evidenced; the Safeguarding Adults Board Manager gave details of working with the police about referral processes to make 'safeguarding personal'.

Clarification was sought to establish how the customer voice is captured? There have been two Safeguarding Adults Review (SAR) and both are completed and available on the RSAB's website. There have been regional safeguarding events which have focused on learning. The RSAB is working with Healthwatch to support customers to attend the Board should there be issues they wish to raise. The Independent Chair and Safeguarding Adults Board Manager were also willing to attend groups to discuss safeguarding as appropriate. Further work has been undertaken to develop a performance 'dashboard'. The service had also chosen a number of cases at random which had been considered by the RSAB, and had spoken to the customer or families about the processes. It was clear that further improvements should be made to communications to raise awareness of reporting routes.

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A further explanation of the term 'zero tolerance' was requested and how this was applied to safeguarding issues. The term is commonly used and signals the agency's commitment to prevention and taking action should safeguarding issues be raised.

What were outcomes from the two SARs and how has the learning been fed into practice? The action plans arising from the reviews are monitored by the Performance Sub-Group

Clarification was sought on partner engagement and attendance at meetings? It was outlined that some partners have a regional or sub-regional spread and therefore did not have the capacity to attend each local SAB. However, each receive papers and action points and are involved in relevant sub-groups. The Independent Chair has approached voluntary sector partners to explore non-attendance and how this can be improved. Details were also given of information sharing through the voluntary sector newsletter.

What has been the learning from the dementia care initiatives? There are lead nurses for dementia care and learning disabilities; systems are improved to ensure that patients with conditions are flagged to ensure that their needs are met and the ward environment is appropriate. Further details were given on dementia screening and the dementia care pathways.

Further questions were asked of the case-study in the respect of financial abuse and if any work was undertaken with the perpetrator to ensure that other people are not at risk of financial exploitation. It was acknowledged that this was an area of work requiring further exploration. It was suggested that the Commission factors this into its work programme to establish how the respective safeguarding boards work with the Safer Rotherham Partnership to prevent repeat victimisation by perpetrators.

Following last year's consideration of the RSAB annual report, concerns were raised about the quality and timeliness of performance information presented to the Board. The Board Member assured the Committee that the issues raised were being addressed and each partner agency was fulfilling their obligations in this area.

Further details were asked about impact of the training package delivered by the Independent Domestic Abuse Advocates? No details were available but the Chair committed to pursue this as part of the Commission's work programme.

How is information and support shared with communities who did not have English as a first language? In the first instance, awareness raising through posters and leaflets had been produced in English, however it was recognised that this would be an area of development.

Clarification was sought on the Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DOLS) and the effects of the change in legislation. There has been a quality assurance review which identified areas of improvements and changes in processes. However there are challenges because of the rise in number of applications and the capacity of staff to undertake the assessment. There is a specific sub-group to oversee how agencies respond to DOLS.

In respect of the domestic abuse case study, clarification was sought to establish if the level of support was typical in cases which did not involve children? The Safeguarding Adults Board Manager was unable to comment on whether this was a 'typical' case as each case would be unique.

How does the delays in re-assessment in care packages may have impacted on adult safeguarding? One of the learning reviews would examine backlogs in assessment and where improvements can be made to processes.

Clarification was sought on whether there was any collation and analysis of data in respect of repeat Section 42 referrals. This is on the Performance and Quality work plan and resources have been allocated to examine data in greater depth.

How is increased mortality for people with learning disabilities monitored locally? Working closely with the CCG and NHS England, deaths of learning disabled people are reported and processes are embedding.

The Chair thanked Ms Lovett and Safeguarding Board Manager for their attendance and contribution to the meeting.

Resolved:

- 1) That the Improving Lives Select Commission receive the RSAB Annual Report 2016-17;
- 2) That in the presentation of the RSAB Annual Report 2017-18:
 - details are provided to evidence how the customer voice is heard;
 - data is provided in respect of repeat Section 42 referrals and how this is being addressed;
- 3) That a meeting of the Improving Lives Select Commission is scheduled as part of its 2018-19 work programme to establish how the respective safeguarding boards work with the Safer Rotherham Partnership to prevent repeat victimisation by perpetrators.

97. ROTHERHAM LOCAL SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN BOARD - ANNUAL REPORT 2016-17

The Chair welcomed Christine Cassell, the Independent Chair of Rotherham Local Safeguarding Children Board, to present the Board's annual report for the year 2016-17.

The context for this report is one of increasing demand for family support and child protection services both locally and nationally whilst all public sector budgets are reducing. The role of local safeguarding children boards in this context is particularly important in requiring assurance that local services are appropriately targeted and resourced to ensure that children are protected.

The Independent Chair outlined that drawing on single and multi-agency audits and reviews and from inspection monitoring, that the safeguarding system in Rotherham, with the local authority as the lead agency, is becoming more compliant with statutory requirements and is beginning to improve in the quality of the assessment, decision making and planning for children at risk. Rotherham Safeguarding Children Board will continue to monitor the improvements in the quality of safeguarding practice and will focus in particular on the quality and compliance of multi-agency meetings which are held when a child is considered to be at risk of harm.

During the course of the year the Children and Social Work Act gained Royal Assent which has considerable implications for the role of the Board. The Act abolishes the requirement for a Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) but does not abolish the requirement for partners to work together. Responsibility for co-ordinating safeguarding activity is now jointly shared between the local authority, the Chief Police Officer and the local Clinical Commissioning Group.

The report detailed the Board's activity in relation to the priority areas outlining areas of improvement and concern. This activity focussed on monitoring and improving responses to child sexual exploitation, neglect, early help and the safeguarding of children who are looked after by the local authority. The LSCB has sought evidence that agencies are individually and collectively listening to children and young people and taking account of their views both in plans for individual children and in wider strategic planning of services.

Discussion ensued on the report with the following issues raised/clarified:-

Clarification was sought on a series of issues raised in the 2016-17 Voice of the Child Lifestyle Survey in relation to bullying, alcohol use and sexual activity. The Independent Chair had met with the Youth Cabinet who had identified that bullying remained a concern. The expectation was that schools would take the lead in this work. There were ongoing discussions with the Youth Cabinet to ensure that the work of the Board reflected the voice of young people. Alcohol use had not been identified as a priority

issue by the LSCB but the Deputy Strategic Director gave assurance about action taken by school nurses and Public Health to raise awareness. It was outlined that the survey was self-reported, therefore services were triangulating evidence from case-files and partners (e.g. referrals to Accident and Emergency Departments or reports of anti-social behaviour relating to alcohol misuse) to establish if this required further action. Similarly, in respect of unprotected sexual activity, further investigation of data had identified that there had not been a rise in teenage pregnancies although there were concerns about a rise in numbers of care leavers who were becoming parents. Action was being taken with this cohort to understand the reasons behind this and how it can be addressed.

The Chair reminded the Committee that the most recent Voice of the Child would be considered in the new year.

Clarification was sought about action taken by South Yorkshire Police (SYP) to address the issues raised in the PEEL review about the low-numbers of staff who had not received specialist child abuse investigator training. The Independent Chair outlined that SYP had been recently inspected and expected an update on the issues once the results are published.

A question was raised in respect of the low proportion of early help assessments undertaken within timescales. The Deputy Strategic Director explained that the target had been set locally and was not a statutory target. Whilst there had been a slight improvement, this target was proving difficult to meet consistently and work was underway to establish the reasons behind this. Although timeliness of assessment is a concern, the Deputy Strategic Director stressed the importance of the quality of the assessment and building relationships with clients which may not always be possible within the timescales. The LSCB has monitored quality and how the voice of the child is reflected in this work.

An update was requested in respect of the Section 47 investigations and the concerns raised in the Ofsted Monitoring Visit of February 2017. The Independent Chair outlined that the LSCB continues to monitor this critical area. The Deputy Strategic Director detailed actions taken to improve practice including the adoption of signs of safety methodology. A recent audit had established that 97% of Section 47 investigations had identified that children were at risk of or experiencing harm confirming that the investigations were appropriate. The Independent Chair also outlined the role of partner agencies in reaching good decisions based on the presenting issues.

The views of the Independent Chair were sought on the rising number of Looked After Children and the Authority's sufficiency strategy. The Independent Chair was satisfied that the right decisions were being taken in respect of children being in care. The Deputy Strategic Director outlined that the majority of children were in care because the Courts had directed

that this was appropriate and therefore thresholds were being met. Increasing numbers of children were being placed in extended families and work is underway to return more children home safely, with parental support in place. Other initiatives such as Edge of Care and Family Group Conferencing were having an impact on reducing numbers of children taken into care and this would be monitored further. The national shortage of quality placements was also reflected in Rotherham, however, examples were given of steps taken to minimise disruption in placements and assurance given in respect of the increasing numbers of permanent arrangements in place.

Clarification was sought on actions taken by SYP in relation to inspection feedback which highlighted that its response to victims of domestic abuse was inconsistent. The Independent Chair outlined that the LSCB had looked at multi-agency responses to domestic abuse where there was a child affected. It had conducted an audit over the summer which had highlighted good practice and areas of improvement. The LSCB was also undertaking a longitudinal study of responses. The Independent Chair expected the findings of the recent inspection of SYP and any actions arising to be fed into the Board in due course.

Questions were asked about what further actions had been put in place to address the additional vulnerabilities of disabled children. A further report would be submitted to the Performance and Quality Assurance sub-group. The Deputy Strategic Director outlined that there was a specialist team in place to work with disabled children to ensure that any additional needs would be addressed.

Further details were sought in respect of the work undertaken by the CSE and Missing Group to disseminate information to different communities about the risks of CSE and if this work was having an impact. Positive examples were given about engagement and different approaches which were being adapted to the needs of individual communities. The Chair requested that a further update be brought back to this committee in six months' time.

Views were sought on the potential impact of the unsuccessful bid for funding on post-abuse support for survivors of CSE. The Independent Chair drew the distinction between support for victims and survivors who are children which are the responsibility of LSCB and the focus of the bid to support adult survivors who are not. The wider response is of concern and from the LSCB's perspective, whilst it does not directly relate to its work, the failure to secure this funding will have a negative impact.

The Deputy Strategic Director was asked to clarify adoption figures and if the lower numbers were due to lack of prospective adopters. The variance was due to case law interpretation however, the importance of finding adoptive families for older children and sibling groups was reiterated.

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The Independent Chair was asked for her observations on areas of improvements and any areas that caused her concern. The major improvement has been the move from compliance to improving practice. There is positive partner commitment to safeguarding and a shift in staff confidence and enthusiasm. The Independent Chair gave assurance, as demonstrated through the report, that the LSCB will continue to challenge at a strategic level about the level of resourcing, support to staff and if services are being commissioned appropriately in addition to challenging services through case audits.

The Chair thanked the Independent Chair for her attendance and comprehensive report.

Resolved:

- 1) That the Improving Lives Select Commission receive the LSCB Annual Report 2016-17;
- 2) That a further update be provided on the impact of the work of the CSE and Missing Sub-Group in six months' time.

98. DATE AND TIME OF THE NEXT MEETING

Resolved:-

That a further meeting be held on 12th December, 2017 at 2.00 p.m.