

**Improving Lives Select Commission**

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**Improving Lives Select Commission: 8 March 2022**

**Report Title**

Rotherham Safeguarding Children Partnership – Annual Report 2020 - 2021

**Is this a Key Decision and has it been included on the Forward Plan? No**

**Strategic Director Approving Submission of the Report:**

Suzanne Joyner, Strategic Director of Children and Young People's Services

**Report Author**

Phil Morris, Partnership Manager, Rotherham Safeguarding Children Partnership

**Ward(s) Affected**

All wards

**Report Summary**

The purpose of this report is to introduce the second Annual Report of the Rotherham Safeguarding Children Partnership (RSCP). It is a statutory requirement under the *Children Act 2004* for the safeguarding partners to produce an annual report setting out about the activity undertaken by safeguarding partners in the previous twelve months and how effective these activities have been in safeguarding and promote the welfare of children in their local areas.

**Recommendations**

That the Improving Lives Select Commission receive and consider the RSCP Annual Report 2020 – 2021.

**List of Appendices Included**

Rotherham Safeguarding Children Partnership Annual Report 2020 - 2021

**Background Papers** None

**Consideration by any other Council Committee, Scrutiny or Advisory Panel**

The report will also be considered by the two other safeguarding partners governance arrangements and submitted to the National Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel.

**Council Approval Required: No**

**Exempt from the Press and Public: No**

## **Rotherham Safeguarding Children Partnership – Annual Report 2020 - 2021**

### **1. Background**

- 1.1 The Rotherham Safeguarding Children Partnership (RSCP) has been operational for 2 years. The RSCP provides the safeguarding arrangements under which the safeguarding partners and relevant agencies work together to coordinate their safeguarding services, identify, and respond to the needs of children in Rotherham, commission and publish local child safeguarding practice reviews and provide scrutiny to ensure the effectiveness of the arrangements.
- 1.2. Statutory guidance, *Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018)*, sets out that the partnership annual report should provide transparency for children, families and practitioners about the activity undertaken by safeguarding partners in the previous twelve months. It must also set out what the partnership have done because of the arrangements, including learning and improvement from local Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews, and how effective these arrangements have been in practice.
- 1.3. As part of the governance arrangements, it is a requirement that the RSCP Annual Report 2020 – 2021 is presented through Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council's own scrutiny arrangements as well as the other safeguarding partners own governance arrangements.

### **2. Key Issues**

- 2.1 The RSCP annual report reflects on the activities undertaken in relation to its core business and priorities identified for the year 2020 - 2021. It considers how well it has worked to the priorities and objectives within its Strategic Business Plan 2020 - 2021 as follows:
  - **Safe at Home**
  - **Safe in the Community**
  - **Safe Safeguarding Systems**
- 2.2. Key areas of progress achieved against each of these objectives and areas of priority are as set out in the attached RSCP Annual Report 2020 - 2021. Section 3.0 provides an analysis by the Independent Chair in their scrutiny role regarding the activities undertaken by the safeguarding partnership and their effectiveness in delivery their safeguarding plan against the multi-agency safeguarding arrangements in place.
- 2.3. As well as identifying what went well, the report sets out that there are areas of activity that could be done differently or better and some of the challenges faced in achieving the priorities over the year. It also acts as an executive summary for the detailed reporting and analysis of the priorities by the safeguarding partners as well as their plans for the coming year. This analysis shows that much progress has been made but areas for development remain.

2.4. As part of continual assurance, the following areas are highlighted in the report:

- Ensuring that vulnerable babies and very young children are kept safe
- Further scrutiny of the Early Help Strategy and Front Door
- New developments, including contextual safeguarding in the identification, assessment and response to criminal exploitation and adolescent neglect.
- Review of the Multi-agency Safeguarding Arrangements and safeguarding business plan
- Ensuring the voices and lived experiences of children and young people, families and workforce are represented across the activities undertaken by the RSCP.

### **3. Options considered and recommended proposal**

3.1 n/a

### **4. Consultation**

4.1 All members of the RSCP Executive Group have contributed and been consulted on the content of the report.

### **5. Timetable and Accountability for Implementing this Decision**

5.1 n/a

### **6. Financial and Procurement Implications**

6.1 n/a

### **7. Legal Advice and Implications**

7.1. The requirement for the safeguarding partners to produce and publish an annual report on the effectiveness of safeguarding children in the local area is mandated in the *Children Act 2004, section 16G (7)* as amended by the *Children and Social Work Act 2017* which sets out that:

At least once in every 12-month period, the safeguarding partners must prepare and publish a report on —

- (a) what the safeguarding partners and relevant agencies for the local authority area have done because of the arrangements, and
- (b) how effective the arrangements have been in practice.

7.2. Statutory guidance within Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018) also sets out that:

*To bring transparency for children, families and all practitioners about the activity undertaken, the safeguarding partners must publish a report at least once in every 12-month period. The report must set out what they have done because of the arrangements, including on child safeguarding practice reviews, and how effective these arrangements have been in practice.*

In addition, the report should also include:

- Evidence of the impact of the work of the safeguarding partners and relevant agencies, including training, on outcomes for children and families from early help to looked-after children and care leavers
- An analysis of any areas where there has been little or no evidence of progress on agreed priorities
- A record of decisions and actions taken by the partners in the report's period (or planned to be taken) to implement the recommendations of any local and national child safeguarding practice reviews, including any resulting improvements
- Ways in which the partners have sought and utilised feedback from children and families to inform their work and influence service provision

7.3. Safeguarding partners should make sure the report is widely available, and the published safeguarding arrangements should set out where the reports will be published.

7.4. A copy of all published reports should be sent to the *Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel* and the *What Works Centre for Children's Social Care* within seven days of being published.

7.5. Where there is a secure establishment in a local area, safeguarding partners should include a review of the use of restraint within that establishment in their report, and the findings of the review should be reported to the Youth Justice Board

7.6. The three safeguarding partners should report any updates to the published arrangements in their yearly report and the proposed timescale for implementation.

## **8. Human Resources Implications**

8.1 None

## **9. Implications for Children and Young People and Vulnerable Adults**

9.1 Publication of this report is one of ways of holding RMBC and other safeguarding partners as well as relevant agencies to account in relation to their safeguarding children arrangements and seeking assurance regarding the effectiveness of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

## **10. Equalities and Human Rights Implications**

10.1 Equality & diversity issues are reflected in the report

## **11. Implications for Partners and Other Directorates**

11.1 Publication of this report is one of the ways of holding RMBC, other safeguarding partner agencies to account over their safeguarding arrangements for children.

## **12. Risks and Mitigation**

12.1. There is clear evidence in the RSCP Annual Report 2020 – 2021 that progress made to ensure the effectiveness of multi-agency arrangements to safeguard children has been far reaching despite the challenges experienced over the year, particularly during the Covid-19 pandemic. The RSCP has met its full range of its statutory responsibilities including those for assurance of safeguarding effectiveness across its three priorities.

12.2. While there is further work to be done in delivering on the RSCP strategic priorities and objectives, there is a strong commitment from the partnership, led by the Executive Group, and relevant agencies to ensure children and young people are at the forefront of their activities. In addition, the review of the safeguarding arrangements will ensure that the structures and governance in place will continue to provide the necessary focus in achieving the priorities and principles within its safeguarding business plan.

## **13. Accountable Officer(s)**

Approvals Obtained from:

- Jenny Myers – Independent Chair, Rotherham Safeguarding Children Partnership
- Suzanne Joyner - Strategic Director of Children and Young People's Services, Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council
- Sue Cassin - Chief Nurse, NHS Rotherham Clinical Commissioning Group
- Steve Chapman – Temp Chief Superintendent, Rotherham District Commander, South Yorkshire Police

*Report Author: Phil Morris, Business Manager, Rotherham Safeguarding Children Partnership*

This report is published on the RSCP 's website or can be found at:

[http://www.rscp.org.uk/downloads/download/3/annual\\_reports\\_and\\_business\\_plans](http://www.rscp.org.uk/downloads/download/3/annual_reports_and_business_plans)