

Local Members Interest
N/A

Safeguarding Overview & Scrutiny Committee - Tuesday 30 November 2021

Staffordshire Safeguarding Children Board (SSCB) Annual Report 2020/21

Recommendation

I recommend that:

- a. Members are asked to receive the report to understand the role and function of Staffordshire Safeguarding Children Board (hereafter referred to as the SSCB). Members are asked to consider or comment on the progress that the Board has made since the last annual report was presented to the committee in December 2019. This SSCB Annual Report sets out the progress made by the partnership during 1st April 2020 and 31st March 2021.

Report of Cllr Mark Sutton Cabinet Member for Children and Young People

Summary

What is the Overview and Scrutiny Committee being asked to do and why?

1. The SSCB should report annually on the progress made by the Board to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to enable robust Member scrutiny of its statutory functions. SSCB Annual Reports provide a transparent, public account of the work of the partnership during 2020-2021.

Report

2. The SSCB works together in partnership to safeguard and promote the welfare of children across three broad areas of activity all of which consider the need to promote equality of opportunity and to meet the diverse needs of all children living in our communities. Specifically:
 - a. Engage partner agencies to set the strategic direction for safeguarding all children;
 - b. Identify and prevent harm and impairment of health or development and help ensure that all children are provided with safe and effective care as they are growing up;

- c. Lead and coordinate on proactive work to target vulnerable groups;
 - d. Lead and coordinate on responsive work to protect children suffering, or at risk of suffering, significant harm; and
 - e. Lead and coordinate the development and delivery of multi-agency safeguarding training.
3. The objectives of the Board are pursued through core statutory functions which are set out within the Children Act 2004 and the statutory guidance Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018. These core functions are achieved through the work of the Board's revised subgroup structure. Each subgroup is responsible for measuring its performance against an annual work plan, which is derived from the SSCB Business Plan. Members of the Board and Scrutiny and Assurance group monitor the effectiveness of the work completed.
 4. Membership of the SSCB is set out in section 13(3) of the Children Act 2004 and has been updated in Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018. Organisations that include local authority, police and health are required to cooperate with the local authority in the establishment and operation of the Board and have shared responsibility for the effective discharge of its functions. The Staffordshire County Council Cabinet Member for Children and Young People also attends the Board as a participating observer.
 5. Under the new arrangements for safeguarding partners, the Board took the decision to arrange alternative independent scrutiny of the effectiveness of the arrangements in keeping children safe. This led to an external peer review in 2020 and resulted in modifications to the arrangements that concluded with Stoke-on-Trent local authority setting up their own independent arrangements in the City.
 6. The governance arrangements of the SSCB have been the subject of significant review since 2019 and are in line with the statutory guidance Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018. The Board is confident that it is fully compliant with the statutory function requirements for local safeguarding children partnerships.
 7. Since the last report to the Committee the SSCB has made considerable progress on a wide range of objectives through effective local partnership working, despite the challenges presented by the current Covid-19 pandemic and the recovery phase, economic climate, and agency restructures. This includes engaging in activity which is targeted at groups of children and young people who have been identified as being vulnerable due to criminal exploitation, and neglect. The information provided in the annual report highlights some of the most noticeable

achievements in respect of the priority areas and work undertaken with partner agencies.

Link to Strategic Plan

8. The work of the SSCB contributes to and supports the values and principles detailed in the Staffordshire County Council's Strategic plan.

Link to Other Overview and Scrutiny Activity

9. The work of the SSCB links to Committee's overview of the local authority's Children's Social Care arrangements

Community Impact

Refer to CIA guidance on the [Learning Hub](#)

List of Background Documents/Appendices:

Appendix 1 - Staffordshire Safeguarding Children Board Annual Report 2020/21

Contact Details

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