

## **SLOUGH BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**REPORT TO:** Slough Wellbeing Board                      **DATE:** 11 November 2015

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**WARD(S):** All

### **PART I** **FOR COMMENT & CONSIDERATION**

#### **SLOUGH LOCAL SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN'S BOARD (SLSCB)** **DRAFT ANNUAL REPORT 2014-2015**

#### **1. Purpose of Report**

To update Slough Wellbeing Board (SWB) on the progress being made by and through the Slough Local Safeguarding Children Board (SLSCB) to ensure that partners improve safeguarding children practice in Slough.

#### **2. Recommendation(s)/Proposed Action**

To note and comment on the content of the Draft LSCB's Annual Report 2014/15.

#### **3. The Slough Joint Wellbeing Strategy, the JSNA and the Five Year Plan**

#### **3a. Slough Joint Wellbeing Strategy (JSWS) Priorities**

- The current 2015/16 SLSCB Plan focuses on four themes:
  1. **Theme 1: Evaluating the Impact of Early Help particularly for children:**
    - Involved in substance abuse or with mental health issues,
    - in families who have recently moved to Slough or
    - living in families where domestic abuse is a factor
  2. **Theme 2: Issues of Particular Public Concern – Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)**
  3. **Theme 3: Developing the Capacity of Partners and the Board**, particularly regarding auditing of services and performance management, identifying risks, sharing information and hearing the voice of the child and professionals
  4. **Theme 4: Learning and Improvement from case reviews.**

Whilst these priorities indirectly impact across several priorities of the SJWS, they particularly challenge and contribute to the 'Health' and 'Safer Communities' priorities.

### **3b. Five Year Plan Outcomes**

The SLSCB's work contributes to the delivery of the following Five Year Plan outcomes:

- Slough will be one of the safest places in the Thames Valley
- Children and young people in Slough will be healthy, resilient and have positive life chances

## **4. Other Implications**

### **(a) Financial**

Whilst there are no financial implications for the Wellbeing Board as a whole, the activities of the Safeguarding Board need increasing financial and resource commitment from individual partners.

### **(b) Risk Management**

The annual report attached at Appendix A sets out the objectives of the SLSCB which are set in order to meet specific threats/risks that have been identified, and the actions being taken to address these.

### **(c) Human Rights Act and Other Legal Implications**

There are no Human Rights Act implications associated with the proposed action although the work of the Board contributes to a number of Human Rights, including the right to family life.

### **(d) Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA)**

There is no requirement for an EIA attached to the proposed action.

## **5. Supporting Information**

5.1 Slough's Local Safeguarding Children Board (SLSCB) is a statutory body established under the Children Act 2004. It is independently chaired (as required by statutory guidelines) and consists of senior representatives of all the principle stakeholders working together to safeguard children and young people in the Borough.

5.2 Its statutory objectives are to:

- Co-ordinate local work to safeguard and promote the welfare of children; and
- to ensure the effectiveness of that work

5.3 Safeguarding is defined as any activity which prevents a child's health, welfare or development being impaired, and includes activity to protect them from abuse, (although that is only part of the SLSCB's responsibilities).

- 5.4 The Government's "Working Together to Safeguard Children" guidance (published in 2015) requires Local Safeguarding Children's Boards to publish an annual report evaluating the effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements for children and young people in their local area. This cover report therefore introduces the attached draft SLSCB Annual Report for 2014/15. The report is due to be formally agreed by partners at the LSCB's Executive meeting on 12<sup>th</sup> November. It will then be published.
- 5.5 The final report will (as required) be presented to the Council's Chief Executive, the Leader of the Council, the Police & Crime Commissioner, the Children and Young People's Partnership Board (CYPPB) and the SWB's Chair. It will also be published on the LSCB's website.
- 5.6 The attached draft report evaluates the effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements for children and young people in Slough during 2014/15, sets out the priorities that were agreed for delivery in 2105/16 and explains how the Board's work was further developed and expanded throughout 2015/16 to meet new and emerging challenges. It is drawn from a wide range of sources from across the children's partnership and reflects the continuation of an 'improvement journey' that has involved a high degree of multi-agency cooperation and collaboration.
- 5.7 The attached draft report also includes a comprehensive review of the SLSCB's performance, quality assurance and audit findings which clearly outlines the breadth and depth of work being undertaken to safeguard and promote the wellbeing of children and young people in Slough. The draft report illustrates the positive nature of the SLSCB improvement journey, for example it highlights the commitment and progress partners have made in joint working on child sexual exploitation (CSE).
- 5.8 The introduction to the report particularly highlights key issues which the Board agrees need to be addressed by partners if the Board and Children's Services are to reach sustained reliable performance and be able to guarantee effective safeguarding of all children:
- Partners need a much stronger commitment to quality assurance and show a greater willingness to resource the processes within their agencies which make performance management and auditing a benefit for everyone.
  - Overall, the Board is not sufficiently resourced bearing in mind the improvement journey which is needed to convince the public and stakeholders that children are well protected in Slough. Partners need to address this issue and agencies, such as the police need to give a stronger undertaking to resource both the Board and the staffing needs of functions, such as multi-agency auditing in the long term.
  - The new Children's Trust should give an impetus to improvement across Slough but it could also lead to confusion for partners about roles and responsibilities, duplication of effort and increased bureaucracy. The approach to this new commissioner-provider approach therefore needs determination to ensure that it does not make safeguarding more complex in a way which distracts professionals from their key role.

- The culture of agencies working within the Board needs to be one of ‘can-do’ and a willingness to challenge and be challenged at all times. Making commitments in meetings and then failing to deliver on them undermines confidence between partners and breeds a culture of failure rather than success. Accepting others failures without challenge enables poor commitment or performance to continue.

5.9 Local authorities are the lead partners on Safeguarding Children Boards. As members know, the Department for Education has intervened in Slough to remove the provision of Children’s Services from the Council, relocating it into the Slough Children’s Trust. This is a very significant transition which has slowed progress for the S LSCB partnership. However, the Board anticipates much speedier progress on the safeguarding agenda now that the Trust is in place and able to provide partners with greater clarity about future working arrangements.

5.10 The final draft of the report will be presented to the SLSCB Executive Board on 12 November 2015 for their approval/endorsement.

## 6. **Conclusion**

6.1 The SLSCB’s Annual Report shows that overall the Partners and the Board is becoming more effective but it also shows clearly how much more there is yet to do.

## 7. **Appendices Attached**

‘A’ - Slough Local Safeguarding Children’s Board (SLSCB) Annual Report 2014-15

## 8. **Background Papers**

None