

SLOUGH BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Slough Wellbeing Board

DATE: 29 March 2017

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PART I **COMMENT & CONSIDERATION**

PROTECTING VULNERABLE CHILDREN

1. Purpose of Report

1.1 This report provides an overview of the work amongst partners which contribute to the safeguarding of children and young people; and emergent work on establishing Early Help Collaboratives. Work undertaken by partners is crucially important in safeguarding the most vulnerable children and what matters most is that this work translates into the achievement of outcomes. The report therefore also includes a presentation by young people: Living in Slough – a young person's perspective.

2. Recommendation(s)/Proposed Action

2.1 The Slough Wellbeing Board is recommended to note and comment as appropriate on:

- (a) The work amongst partners in Slough to safeguard children and young people;
- (b) A presentation by young people "Living in Slough – a young person's perspective".

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

"Protecting Vulnerable Children" is one of four key priorities in the Slough Joint Wellbeing Strategy (SJWS). In turn the SJWS is based on an analysis of needs contained in the Joint Strategic Needs Analysis (JSNA), specifically children in need and children / young people subject to a Child Protection Plan. The Council's Five Year Plan priorities *"Putting People First"* and specifically seeks an Outcome that *"Our children and young people will have the best start in life and opportunities to give them positive lives"*. Slough Children's Service Trust's social work model is reflected in its vision statement *"Safe, Secure and Successful"*.

4. Other Implications

4.1 Financial – None directly related to this paper.

4.2 Risk Management – None directly related to this paper.

4.3 Human Rights Act / Other Legal Implications – None directly related to this paper.

4.4 Equalities Impact Assessment – None directly related to this paper.

4.5 Workforce – None directly related to this paper.

5. Supporting Information

5.1 The Slough Local Safeguarding Children's Board (SLCSB) plays a key role in coordinating the work of statutory partners in helping, protecting and caring for children in Slough. For example, its remit includes: monitoring the effectiveness of local arrangements; that multi-agency training in the protection and care of children is effective; that policies and procedures in respect of thresholds for intervention are understood and operate. The LSCB also has a challenge role in terms of practice between and amongst partners, including casework auditing, and that serious case reviews, management reviews and reviews of child deaths are used by SBC / SCST and other partners as opportunities for learning and feedback that drive improvement. The relationship between the LSCB and other Boards including the Wellbeing Board has been set out and agreed by all partners in the protocol Sloughs Safeguarding People Protocol (see Appendix).

5.2 The SLSCB Business Plan is currently being refreshed for 2017/18 Partners have agreed to focus on the following 6 key priorities:

- Theme 1 – Revise and implement multi-agency threshold guidance (***key impact is less variation in quality of safeguarding amongst partners***)
- Theme 2 – Establish a programme of effective monitoring and quality assurance of multi-agency safeguarding practice (***key impact are performance framework helps promote quality of practice, and voice of the child is given due prominence***)
- Theme 3 – Take action to strengthen the LSCB's oversight and scrutiny of the effectiveness of the local multi-agency response to children at risk of exploitation including Child Sexual Exploitation and Missing (***key impacts are children at risk of CSE, Missing and FGM are better identified and protected***)
- Theme 4 – Develop and implement a funding agreement to ensure the LSCB has sufficient resources to undertake its core business (***key impact is delivery of the LSCB business / work plan is assured***)
- Theme 5 – Undertake a training needs analysis and regularly evaluate the quality and impact of training including e-learning (***key impact is targeted training leads to improvement in learning and practice***)
- Theme 6 – Engage the wider community in the work of the LSCB by ensuring that the Board has lay member representation and through engagement with local faith groups (***key impact is that an inclusive approach heightens and improves public understanding of SLSCB's child protection work and enforces the message that "safeguarding is everyone's business"***)

5.3 In addition to the core work of the LSCB there is significant work being undertaken in other forums. A good example is that of work overseen by the Joint Improvement Board (JIB), and emergent work on Early Help, as discussed below.

5.4 The JIB has responsibility for the oversight and management of the Ofsted Delivery Pan. This is a joint Board between the Council and the Trust with DfE and partner agencies as key members on the Board. Its principal task is to ensure that Slough is

on track to deliver all the improvements required post the Ofsted inspection in 2015. Whilst the lead agency for safeguarding children rests with the Trust this cannot be achieved without the support and action of partner agencies and therefore the Board also has a responsibility to identify blocks and barriers to success across the whole system. The LSCB Chair sits on this Board to ensure that there is no duplication of effort and to ensure that the work of the two Boards is integrated.

5.5 Universal services play a fundamental role in protecting children and are key to ensuring children are safe. The revised LSCB threshold has improved the understanding across all agencies and contacts and referrals for social care intervention are much more appropriate and timely. The increase in capacity within the Trust in the Early Help Teams has also resulted in an improved response from the Trust. This will be further supported by the success of Sloughs bid for Innovation grant monies to develop early help hubs.

5.6 However there is still a considerable way to go to influence strategic priorities particularly within the health systems and the Well Being Board may be able to assist improvements in this area.

Early Help

5.7 The concept of 'Early Help' is about providing support when needs are first identified, and when the right intervention or assistance can prevent matters escalating. Effective early help can prevent families from experiencing crises, can prevent problems deepening or becoming entrenched and can help build resilience. Developing an Early Help Strategy (EHS) is a requirement of the Ofsted Delivery Plan (Ofsted Recommendation 9 – Early Help Strategy to be developed with key partners, including the Slough Children's Services Trust).

5.8 Work is therefore underway to develop an EHS which will underpin work in SCST as well as in a wider Slough context. This context includes launching of Local Area Collaboratives, which are about building closer local working between our schools, nursery providers, children centres, health services, family support services, and other key partners so we can deliver more effective interventions to support families, raise our children's outcomes, and reduce levels of inequality. Each Collaborative is therefore locally driven, focused on local need, and chaired by a local Service Manager or Head.

5.9 The success of the EHS and Collaboratives will be measured by criteria that are still being developed. Draft proposals include:

- The number of referrals to high cost and specialist services reduces
- More children, families and adults can have their needs met within universal services
- Family focused services, working with children, young people and their families and involving them in service planning to meet their needs
- Good coordination of family focused work across a wide range of agencies
- Family resilience is increased and the capacity to help families find their own solutions is enhanced
- Children, young people and families are satisfied with and positively endorse the help and support they receive

- Risk is managed by all agencies who clearly understand their role in the delivery of Early Help Services

“Living in Slough – a young person’s perspective”

5.10 (Oral presentation by Slough young people to Slough Wellbeing Board.)

6. Comments of Other Committees

Not Applicable.

7. Appendix

Protocol – Slough Wellbeing Board and LSCB / SAVB.

8. Background Papers

None.