

Committee	Date:
Community & Children's Services Committee	15 January 2015
Subject: The Safeguarding Children Annual Report 2014/15 City and Hackney Safeguarding Children Board	Public
Report of: Director of Community & Children's Services	For Information

Summary

This report gives an overview of the City of London safeguarding children arrangements for 2014/15 as reflected in the City and Hackney Safeguarding Children Board (CHSCB) annual report 2014/15. The annual report provides detailed information of the work undertaken by partners and the CHSCB to ensure robust safeguarding arrangements are in place, as required by Working Together to Safeguard Children statutory guidance, (March 2015). The annual report is attached to this report as an appendix.

Recommendation(s)

Members are asked to: Note the report.

Main Report

Background

1. The City and Hackney Safeguarding Children Board (CHSCB) is governed by the statutory guidance in "Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015 and the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) Regulations 2006. The two key requirements for LSCBs as outlined in the Children Act 2004, are to co-ordinate the safeguarding work of agencies and to ensure that this work is effective.
2. There is also an expectation that LSCBs will be influential in strategic arrangements to improve performance in the care and protection of children. This has been taking place through the continued engagement with the City and Hackney Safeguarding Adults Board (CHSAB) and the respective Health and Wellbeing Boards and Community Safety Partnerships across both the City of London and Hackney.
3. In 2014/15 there was a concerted effort to raise the visibility of the City of London's profile within the joint board. This was achieved through having a clearer focus on City's safeguarding requirements through the formation of a City Executive Group. The Independent Chair of the CHSCB chaired this meeting and the focus of this group is to progress the CHSCB business plan in relation to the City context.

Current Position

4. The CHSCB Annual report for 2014/15 clearly defines the City context, data, progress and future development, which ensures that the City's profile is definable within the report. The following performance information in regard to the Children and Families Team for 2014/15 was included in the report;
 - There were 81 contacts recorded, this is a 63% increase on 2013/14.
 - There were 20 referrals accepted for a statutory assessment, this averages out as being similar to the previous three years.
 - There have been no re-referrals in the last two years.
 - Analysis of performance identified that referrals accepted for a statutory assessment remained low.
5. The report identifies the role of the CHSCB in offering support and challenge in the launch of the City of London's Thresholds of Needs document, by supporting its launch and by offering challenge to partner agencies around the low referrals rate. Police were also asked to refer all contacts through to the Children and Families Team, this included non- City residents. This assisted in the profiling of Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) in the City of London.
6. Although there are no known children who have been victims of CSE in the City, the Children and Families Team have completed a review of all open cases and identified less than 5 with associated vulnerabilities because they had gone missing in 2014/15. These cases were discussed in the City Multi-Agency Sexual Exploitation group (MASE). The City of London and partner agencies are also prompting awareness around CSE with hotels and businesses in the City through Operation Makesafe.
7. In April 2014, it became mandatory for healthcare professionals to record Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) in the patients' health care records. Changes to the Serious Crime Act mean that all health care professionals, teachers and social workers are required to report known cases of FGM. Part of the role of the CHSCB is to influence and monitor the effectiveness of the partnership response to FGM. Training has taken place through lunch time seminars in the City provided by CHSCB.
8. The report identifies how the CHSCB will be monitoring the City's response in implementing the Prevent strategy and how the City responds to radicalisation by holding agencies and the Safer City Partnership to account for its continued response in terms of awareness raising, recognition and response.
9. The annual report identifies the work that is going on in relation to domestic violence and abuse in the City of London. The Safer City Partnership initiated a comprehensive review of domestic violence and abuse in 2014 and this will be subject to further monitoring by the CHSCB in terms of influence on arrangements to safeguard children and young people.

10. The report identified that the City of London have their own action plan for children missing from home, care and education and this is monitored through effective multi agency arrangements in place that provide a coordinated response when children go missing. In 2014/15 no children were reported as missing from home. There are unique challenges for the City as the majority of its children are educated outside the local authority or in the private sector which can make it difficult to track those children missing from education. Significant work has been undertaken to tackle this issue which will be reported in the 2015/16 Annual Report.
11. The report also contains information on the progress of the Local Authorities Designated Officer (LADO) for the City of London and the concerns around the low number of referrals in 2014/15 including how this is monitored and challenged by the CHSCB. Private Fostering was also covered within the report, with a brief résumé of what action had been taken in 2014/15 to raise the profile of Private Fostering. It was acknowledged that even with this awareness raising there have been no private fostering arrangements identified for the past three years, this is being addressed as a priority for the CHSCB for 2015/16.

Conclusion

12. The annual report identifies the progress that the City of London has made during 2014/15 in regard to its safeguarding duties and responsibilities. The CHSCB has offered independent challenges to the City of London and partners through the City Safeguarding Executive group. The report has a clear City focus, which defines the City context and needs, outlining how the City is meeting these needs, as well as the priorities going forward into 2015/16 ;
 - Early Help; the CHSCB will continue to evaluate the effectiveness of early help services through the use of its Learning and Improvement Framework.
 - To develop arrangements for children who are subject to domestic abuse.
 - The CHSCB will agree and sign off the Neglect strategy and associated action plans.
 - CHSCB will monitor the progress of the actions on the Neglect strategy plan.
 - Further assurance work will be undertaken to test learning.
 - The CHSCB will continue to oversee actions required to support the strategy on children missing.
 - CHSCB will gain a better understanding as to the reason why children go missing through the return interviews carried out by Action for Children.
 - There will be further scrutiny on those children who go missing in education.
 - To analyse the outcome from the Harmful Practices audit and implement any associated actions.

- Implement and monitor Prevent strategy.

Appendices

- Appendix 1 – City and Hackney Safeguarding Children’s Board Annual Report 2014/15

Pat Dixon

Safeguarding and Quality Assurance Service Manager

T: 020 7332 1215

E: pat.dixon@cityoflondon.gov.uk