



Derby City Council

**CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLES BOARD**  
**19 March 2013**

Report of the Strategic Director of Children and  
Young People

# ITEM 11

## **Implementation of the Recommendations of the Munro Review of Child Protection**

### **SUMMARY**

- 1.1 In June 2010 the Secretary of State for Education asked Eileen Munro to conduct an independent review of Child Protection in England. The final report was published in May 2011 and made 15 recommendations, which are attached as Appendix 2.
- 1.2 This report outlines national and Derby City progress on the implementation of the recommendations of the Munro Review of Child Protection and identifies the next steps for the Council.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

- 2.1 To note the current position with regard to those recommendations from the Munro Review of Child Protection, which are nationally led.
- 2.2 To note progress on the implementation of the recommendations in Derby City.
- 2.3 To note the planned further developments and those that will be required on introduction of revised national frameworks.

### **REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION**

- 3.1 To make sure that the Local Authority and its partners are compliant with the Recommendations of the Munro Review of Child Protection 2011.
- 3.2 Implementation will improve arrangements to safeguard Derby children and young people.

### **SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

- 4.1 When the Secretary of State for Education commissioned the Munro Review, a central question was 'What helps professionals make the best judgments they can to protect a vulnerable child?'. The final report set out proposals for reform which, taken together, were intended to create the conditions that enable professionals to make the best judgments about the help to give to children, young people and families. This involves moving from a system that has become over-bureaucratized and focused on compliance, to one that values and develops professional expertise and is focused on the safety and welfare of children and young people
- 4.2 The review found that four factors come together to create a defensive child protection system that puts so much emphasis on procedures and recording, that insufficient attention is given to developing and supporting the expertise to work effectively with children, young people and families. The four factors were identified as:
- the importance of the safety and welfare of children and young people and the understandable strong reaction when a child is killed or seriously harmed;
  - a commonly held belief that the complexity and associated uncertainty of child protection work can be eradicated;
  - a readiness, in high profile public inquiries into the death of a child, to focus on professional error, without looking deeply enough into its causes; and
  - the undue importance given to performance indicators and targets, which provide only part of the picture of practice, and which have skewed attention to process over the quality and effectiveness of help given.
- 4.3 A number of the recommendations are reliant on national consultation and changes to existing frameworks. The progress against these is outlined below:
- **Working Together** is in the process of revision. The draft version of the revised framework was consulted on in 2012 and it is believed that substantial concerns were raised about some aspects of the draft proposals. Final publication was anticipated in December 2012. However, the latest indication is that it will be March/April 2013. It is widely anticipated that the revised framework will allow substantial local flexibility in relation to assessment frameworks, ICT systems and some local processes. However, it is likely that the extent to which full local determination can be exercised will be impacted on by the continuing requirements to submit a range of performance data sets to the Department for Education (DfE) this will be commented on further below.
  - **Inspection Frameworks** of Child Protection services and services to Looked After Children are being revised by Ofsted. The methodology will be based on 'the journey of the child' and will focus on the child, and family's, experience of receiving help and the effectiveness and impact of that help. The new framework has been piloted by a number of Local Authorities and this is informing the final version, which is expected to be implemented in May / June 2013.

- **Performance Indicators** remain a challenge. Although clear intent has been signalled that there would be a reduction in national Performance Indicators, this has not been felt as a reality. The national Children in Need census return continues to be a requirement. However, not all information collected is designated as a performance indicator, it includes such information as assessment timescales and a range of other activity measures. Recent events in relation to adoption scorecards have shown that the burden of data provision remains high to Local Authority Children's Services. This fact impacts on our ability to be fully flexible in our development of new systems, processes and procedures and, specifically, restricts our ability to remove data collection mechanisms from our ICT system, impacting on the continued administrative burden for front line practitioners.
- **Serious Case reviews** are no longer evaluated by Ofsted. There has been a new requirement implemented for publication of the full overview report in all but exceptional circumstances, where this would be prevented by data protection legislation. The methodology for conducting serious case reviews is presently unchanged. Systems methodology has been trialled by a number of Local Safeguarding Children Boards with the permission of DfE. It is understood that the issue of Serious Case Reviews is that which is causing most debate in finalising the revised Working Together. Pending the publication of revision, Derby continues to adhere to the existing arrangements.
- **Early Help** – The Munro Review recommended that the Government placed a duty on Local Authorities and statutory partners to secure sufficient provision of early help services to children, young people and families. The Government have not made this a duty. However, inspection arrangements will examine the effectiveness of early help services in protecting children.

#### 4.4 Implementation Progress within Derby City Council

**Early Help** – Derby has a robust 'early help offer' and this has been the focus of developments and restructuring over the last two years. The Keeping Families Together Strategy outlines how this will be further developed and strengthened. Ofsted found that *"agencies in Derby have a good shared understanding of thresholds and they are consistently applied. The early help offer is good, easily accessible and provides effective early identification of children and young people of all ages who may need additional or targeted support. Partner agencies work well together and Common Assessments Frameworks (CAF) of satisfactory quality are increasingly being used to inform plans for Team Around the Child services. CAF Advisors provide valuable advice to support the growth in this work. Partner agencies have a shared understanding of early help and the need to prevent escalation to statutory services where appropriate."*

**IT system procurement** – Derby City Council is currently procuring a new Children's IT system. The present system is not well regarded by practitioners or managers and replacing it was one of the recommendations of the Ofsted Inspection of Child Protection in Derby. An Invitation to Tender document has now been produced and a clear project timeline is in place. The invitation to tender will be issued in March 2013.

**Performance** – Derby City Council and Derby Safeguarding Children’s Board (DSCB) have continued to work on local systems to analyse and judge local quality and performance. This attention to continuous local improvement was evident in the ‘good’ outcome received during the recent Ofsted inspection. The Business Plans are currently being refreshed and will focus on a small number of key priorities that will make the biggest difference to children and families. A quality framework is in the process of development that will be applied across the Early Intervention and Integrated Safeguarding Services of the Council. This is supported by a Quality Audit System. The Inspection of Child Protection in December 2012 concluded *“Performance management has a high profile, is well established and is evident in all levels of planning. Good quality and accessible management information is key to the effective use of approaches such as ‘turning the curve’, which has delivered desired improvements. This approach has led to a broad range of colleagues, such as Legal Officers, being engaged in all aspects of performance management. Reporting arrangements are robust and performance surgeries overseen by the Children and*

*Young People’s Scrutiny Board enhance the good arrangements for performance reviews held by the Improvement Board. Individual staff members have regularly monitored and reviewed Performance Plans, directly related to Business Plan priorities. Standards of quality assurance are improving and regular thematic case file audits are routinely undertaken.”*

**Designated Lead roles** – Derby has a dedicated Director of Children’s Services and a Lead Member for Children’s Services. These arrangements are well established and effective.

**Social Work Reform** – the Munro Review states *“Social work can and should be a highly skilled job, where Social Workers are capable of using relationship and therapeutic skills to help families overcome their problems”*.

A number of authorities have responded to this recommendation by whole scale restructuring of services – for example, the Hackney Pod Model – others have introduced elements of evidence based models. There are risks involved with a radical restructuring, including increased anxiety for staff, reduction of productivity and distraction from core business. It is also the case that while structures can create an environment where improved practice is more likely to flourish, simply restructuring and doing nothing else will result in the same practice.

Derby has a ‘good’ service providing social work intervention and early help. The investigation of models for remodelling social work team structures will take into account the strong position from which we are starting and changes will be proportionate to this position and are outlined below in 4.7.

#### 4.6 **Implementation Progress Derby Safeguarding Children Board**

DSCB has published an annual report for a number of years and arrangements have been made to ensure this is shared with the individuals, organisations and bodies as identified in the Munro review.

DSCB has specifically identified early intervention as a priority in its Business Plan.

## 4.7 Next steps

**Assessment Frameworks** – Discussion has commenced between regional safeguarding leads on the response to revised Working Together. Broad agreement has been reached that the Local Authorities across the region will attempt to develop a shared ‘single assessment process’, covering early intervention and social work assessment processes, should the revised Working Together give this local flexibility as anticipated. The aim is to minimise confusion for those agencies working across Local Authority boundaries, to share the development workload and incorporate best practice, and to ensure continuity of assessment for those children and families who are mobile and move between Local Authority areas.

**Inspection Readiness** – The recent inspection in Derby of Child Protection utilised much of the methodology that will be integral to the revised inspection frameworks we have learned from this experience. Attention has also been given to the pilot inspections that have been undertaken around the country. Working groups have been established within the Council to assist our preparedness. An Action Plan is in place and this will be expanded and developed once the new framework is published. We will also be working with our partners in preparation, as the new framework will be multi-agency.

**Social Work Reform** – A programme of work is being taken forward to implement:

1. Reflective practice – putting in place Supervision and support systems that enable practitioners to reflect on their practice and use their professional skills and judgement.
2. Developing skills for engaging families to change – Research In Practice will be engaged to explore through staff, manager focus groups and workshops the evidence base for models of family change. The findings will assist in the determination of the models for intervention to be adopted in Derby, with an associated plan for implementation and development.
3. Careers structures – Derby currently has a limited professional social work career structure, with the exception of the role of the Principal Social Worker. Similarly, the progression routes for non-social work practitioners are not clearly mapped. This impacts on the balance of experience within teams, the ability to retain experienced professionals and results in Team Managers frequently ‘acting down’ into practitioner roles to support less experienced staff and to cover for shortfalls. A Working Group will be created to focus on the development of a career structure that reflects experience, expertise and additional work responsibilities, with clear criteria for progression. This will be done in consultation with the Adults, Health and Housing Directorate and Human Resources.

4. Reduction of administrative burden – the administrative burden on frontline staff has grown significantly. This is a result of a number of factors, including the reduction in ‘back-office’ roles, greater regulation and inspection, an increase in statutory prescription, changing expectations of the public in terms of transparency and disclosure of information and, for Derby staff, a cumbersome recording system. Clear models for administrative support will be developed to ensure that maximum time is spent by practitioners in their delivery role.
5. Behavioural Leadership – Derby City Council has endorsed and developed a framework for behavioural leadership this will be fully implemented and embedded and is a key component of implementing this strategy and bringing about culture change across the service. The objective is that the staff group in Derby Children’s Services will be confident, intuitive and creative, with a reinvigorated sense of being part of an integrated professional group. Methods for evaluation of this will be devised.

## OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

### 5.1 Take no further action and retain existing arrangements

This report has been approved by the following officers:

<b>Legal officer</b>	N/A
<b>Financial officer</b>	N/A
<b>Human Resources officer</b>	N/A
<b>Estates/Property officer</b>	N/A
<b>Service Director(s)</b>	Jane Parfremment – 01332 642668 / <a href="mailto:jane.parfremment@derby.gov.uk">jane.parfremment@derby.gov.uk</a>
<b>Other(s)</b>	N/A

  

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<b>Background papers:</b>	Appendix 1 – Implications
<b>List of appendices:</b>	Appendix 2 – Summary of recommendations

<b>IMPLICATIONS</b>
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**Financial and Value for Money**

- 1.1 The required finances have been allocated to the key projects relating to ICT and Social Work Reform.

**Legal**

- 2.1 All changes will be in line with Statutory Guidance.

**Personnel**

- 3.1 Social Work Reform actions will be taken forward in consultation with Human Resources, and where necessary and appropriate, the Unions.

**Equalities Impact**

- 4.1 A robust early help offer ensures that services reach the most vulnerable children and their families in a timely way.

**Health and Safety**

- 5.1 Not applicable.

**Environmental Sustainability**

- 6.1 Not applicable.

**Property and Asset Management**

- 7.1 Not applicable.

**Risk Management**

- 8.1 There is a clear financial and reputational risk to the authority regarding safeguarding children.

**Corporate objectives and priorities for change**

- 9.1 Safeguarding of children is a corporate priority.

