

## **Children and Young People Scrutiny Review Board 16 December 2019**

Present: Councillor Lind (Chair)  
Councillors Hezelgrave, Hussain and McCristal  
Co-optees – Stephen Grundy, Chris Hulse

In Attendance: Suanne Lim– Service Director for Early Help and Children's  
Social Care  
Jasmine Nembhard-Francis, Head of Service - Quality Assurance  
Fiona Colton, Head of Service, Early Help, Locality 2  
Pauline Anderson, Acting Director Learning and Skills

### **26/19 Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Nicky Fenton, Co-optee, Abdul Siddiqi, Youth Mayor, Gargandeep Kaur, Deputy Youth Mayor and Andy Smith, Strategic Director Peoples Services

### **27/19 Late items introduced by the Chair**

There were none.

### **28/19 Declarations of Interest**

There were none.

### **29/19 Minutes of the meeting held on 21 October 2019**

The minutes of the meeting held on 21 October 2019 were agreed as a correct record.

**22/19 Updated Report on the Integrated Disabled Children's Service** - Officers confirmed that, as per the recommendations, an update on the IDCS Service would be provided to the Board in this municipal year .

### **30/19 Monitoring Safeguarding Practice**

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director of Peoples Services which gave an overview of workforce development, performance and safeguarding pressures. The report was presented by the Director of Early Help and Children's Social Care.

The Board noted that after the Joint Targeted Agency Inspection (JTAI) in March 2019 the main workforce development continued to be the strategic review of the "Front Door" multi agency safeguarding hub arrangements. The implementation of the Derby Derbyshire Children Safeguarding Partnership on 29 September 2019, which replaced the Derby Safeguarding Children Board, was also noted. It was

recognised that the main safeguarding pressure continued to be the increased demand for services across all areas and sufficiency of placements, which mirrors the national situation.

The officer highlighted the progress against the JTAI, which included a new online referral form launched in May 2019 to address the variability in the quality of referrals from partners. A review of the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) had been implemented; now Early Help and Health Professionals are being co-located to address wider inclusion of "front door" services so that children receive the right service in a timely fashion. The Board noted that the average caseload in the MASH had reduced to 15 in October 2019 from 24 in March 2019. The timeliness of single assessment has been consistently above 90% since May 2019.

The Officer updated the board on the new Safeguarding Partnership. Working Together 2018 replaces the need to have Local Safeguarding Boards, and for Safeguarding Partners, comprising of local authorities, clinical commissioning groups and chief officers of police, to agree arrangements locally to safeguard and protect children.

The new arrangements bring together the lead members and chief officers from Derby and Derbyshire statutory agencies to oversee and scrutinise the work of a joint executive safeguarding board. The Board is independently chaired and arrangements for the new joint Partnership went live on 29.09.19.

The new local arrangements would support and enable organisations across Derby and Derbyshire to work together. The combined partnership arrangement has been serviced by a single business unit hosted by Derby City since 29.09.19. The initial review of effectiveness will be reported to Children's Scrutiny in February 2020.

The Board were informed that there was a comprehensive programme of quality assurance for monitoring safeguarding practice in place. The key areas of improvement evidenced in November, following work from the August visit, were:

- Increased numbers of written referrals from partners
- Workload stabilised for social workers in MASH
- Management arrangements in MASH more resilient

The Board were also informed that two focus groups had been held. The first one was with social workers to assure that social workers received sufficient quality of supervision and support and that they had manageable workloads. The positive impact of both the co-location of the new services and of all MASH teams being located in the Council House was highlighted. The second focus group showed the positive impact of the LEAN review which resulted in a more efficient and effective processing of domestic abuse referrals. A child protection strategy meeting had also been observed. The quality of charring and of health and education contribution was thought to be excellent in terms of understanding holistic risk and facilitating decisions.

An audit of referrals was undertaken and showed that information received from partners was of a satisfactory quality, and that thresholds were being applied correctly. The new performance dashboard enables a breakdown of the contacts measure so that thresholds can be checked. All relevant cases are signposted and there are an increased number of online referrals by partners.

Governance arrangements for monitoring safeguarding practice are extensive. A monthly Assurance Safeguarding Meeting, attended by the Chief Executive of the Council and the Independent Chair of the Children's Safeguarding Partnership, takes place. This enables oversight and challenge of safeguarding matters at the highest level. Underneath this there is a monthly CYP Practice and Development Board where the Strategic Director of Peoples Service holds the Director of Early Help and Children's Social Care and Heads of Service to account.

The Board noted that in respect of Safeguarding pressures, Children's Early Help and Social Care Services have experienced an increase in demand of approximately 20%. This means that Derby City's practitioners, social workers and team managers have responsibility for more children.

Recruiting and retaining social workers was still a priority for Derby in order to maintain a stable workforce. Derby has put in place several schemes:

- Assisted First Year Programme - 135 social workers have joined the Council, 114 have completed the programme, of these 73 still work for Derby and 21 are still on the programme.
- Step up to Social Work – 20 candidates of whom 14 are working in Derby
- Grow your Own – 5 candidates who will qualify in June 2020
- New Social Work Apprenticeships - there are 4 people currently on role

A councillor queried whether there had been a significant increase in social workers employed and also why, if demand for services was increasing, caseloads were decreasing. The officer confirmed that the actual establishment figure for social workers has not increased. There are 142 social worker posts on the establishment. However, three years ago there had been between 30 to 35 Agency Social Workers in post, now there are under 10. This decrease had been achieved through a system of support and training. There was an open advert in place with permission to over recruit when appropriate. The officer confirmed that caseloads had decreased in MASH to 15 but in the Locality Services they remain in the 20's. Cases are being dealt with differently at the "Front Door" which has a positive impact on caseloads.

Councillors then asked why demand for services had increased and whether there was a pattern in demand. The officer explained that a mixture of austerity, poverty, and the fact that other services had fallen away, had given rise to this national situation. With regard to patterns in demand in the Safeguarding area, there are high levels of child neglect and emotional abuse, there are more families in crisis, more intervention was provided to families of five or more children, and there are a higher number of children of 13 years upwards needing support.

Councillors discussed whether there had been a rise in Serious Case Reviews (SCRs) during the last five years. Officers confirmed that there had been three or four but not all had been published due to confidentiality concerns. Staff could learn from these reviews and two briefing sessions had been arranged in January 2020. It was important that the Board also learnt from SCRs. The Board noted that that from 29.09.19 SCRs had been renamed and were now known as Child Practitioner Learning Reviews and that the new Statutory Partnership were now responsible for decision making.

**The Board resolved to note the actions being taken to make improvements and challenge process.**

## 31/19 Derby Safeguarding Children Board Children at Risk of Exploitation (CRE) Annual Report

The Board considered a report and presentation of the Strategic Director of Peoples Services which gave an update on the work that has been developed across the multi-agency partnership of previous years. The presentation was given by the Head of Service - Quality Assurance.

The Board were informed that the history of Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) has been well embedded in Derby since 1998 when the first CSE strategy was developed. A voluntary group "Safe and Sound" was created to provide support for children and families. During 2006-2010 there was a high number of high profile Police Operations following serious CSE offences against young women (Operations Kern and Retriever). In 2015-2016 there was development of a CSE Risk Tool for agencies and school strategy/police tasking began. In 2016 work was developed and strengthened with taxi licensing to ensure that all Derby Taxi drivers completed mandatory training. In 2017 a Vulnerable Young People Sub Group was created to give a multi-agency approach to CSE and other vulnerabilities. The Board noted that Derby City publishes an Annual CSE report; which provides a comprehensive account of the work and activity undertaken during the year to prevent, protect and support children and families in the City. It was not a requirement to produce an annual report but it helps to identify priorities for the next year.

The Board noted more recent developments include the creation of a joint Children at Risk of Exploitation (CRE) Strategy with Derbyshire County Council. Children are now at more than just sexual risk, for example:

- Child criminal exploitation
- Organised crime and gangs
- Female Genital Mutilation
- Forced Marriage and Honour Base Violence
- Modern slavery and Human Trafficking
- Extremism and radicalisation
- Cyber and off-line and on-line abuse
- Gang related activity

A CRE Risk Assessment Tool has been developed and Derby has evolved a multi agency approach to CRE training across the partnership, including frontline training for Social Workers. Training for 204 multi-agency staff has also taken place.

Regional work was undertaken to show how Derby City compares to neighbouring local authorities. The Board noted that there had been concerns about the low number of referrals received; after research it was established that children were being safeguarded but under different plans so were not included in the CRE data collected. There was now more increased awareness of CRE, more young people are being referred to the strategy including increased numbers of boys and young men; this year 16 to 17 have been identified and referred. The priorities for action for 2019/20 were outlined by the officer and included greater participation of

children and young people at meetings, the benefits of young people voicing their thoughts having already shown how they could be better protected. The Board recognised the planned expansion on the "See Something say Something Campaign" to Pubs and Hotels.

Councillors felt that the work undertaken so far was very comprehensive in terms of risk and they felt that every angle had been looked at. However they asked whether any work had been undertaken on home educated children who might not see professionals regularly. The officer confirmed that a report about home educated children was received at each meeting of the Vulnerable Young Peoples Group. A register of home educated children was kept and social workers work closely alongside their health colleagues; if there are any concerns they will be escalated.

Councillors asked if there was a particular pattern or trend of risks to children that they need to be aware of. The officer confirmed that there are more children referred at risk of criminal exploitation, such as stealing, holding and sharing drugs with others, violence and coercion and this was an area that needed to be looked at.

Councillors also queried whether work with children in Special Schools was undertaken, for example children with SEND involved in "County Lines". The officer confirmed that children referred from Special Schools will have Education Health Care Plans (EHCP) and work with them was undertaken in a different way. It was noted that there was an Education Hub which all schools in Derby and Derbyshire have access to and there are Safeguarding Leads in all schools.

#### **The Board resolved**

- 1. to note the Children at Risk of Exploitation report and the work of the Derby Safeguarding Children Board**
- 2. to commend the fantastic work undertaken in terms of early help and intervention for children and young people in this area**
- 3. to thank all the Teams and Partner Agencies involved for their work**

## **32/19 Early Help Service**

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director of Peoples Services which updated the Board on the impact of Early Help Services from April 2018 to March 2019 and gave an overview of Early Help direction of travel. A presentation was given by the Head of Early Help, Locality 2.

The Board were informed that the Early Help Service was integral to the Peoples Directorate work to support vulnerable children and give their families access to the right support at the right time and in a structured way. The Service has the responsibility for delivering:

- Early Help Casework Offer to Schools
- New Arrivals Team – set up 12 – 18 months ago delivering services across the city to families new to the UK, supporting them with an emphasis on helping them to understand their rights and responsibilities in the UK. The

Team has been recommended for 6 National Awards.

- Children's Centres
- Young Carers - statutory
- Safe Families for Children
- Children Missing, Missing Education, Education Welfare and NEET – statutory

The officer outlined the key findings which show that there has been a rise in the number of cases from 650 to 798 in March 2019. There has also been a rise in Early Health Assessments to 700; this was a result of the impact of services that have ceased. There has been a rise in the number of cases stepped up to Social Care to 273 (23% of Early Help Cases) caused by the impact of poverty and children being criminally exploited, as well as a growing confidence of Early Help workers in referring cases. The number of cases returned to Early Help has been reduced to 13. The number of cases screened for CSE has reduced to 303 since last year, because staff completing risk assessments classed cases as CRE rather than CSE; work was on going with staff to use more accurate terminology.

The Board noted that the delivery of the service was on a solution-focused, whole family basis and uses Progression of Change tools to demonstrate the distance travelled for families and the impact of services. There are a reduced number of Progression Tools completed (470) but there was an increase in those with the improved Direction of travel (97%). There was a reduced number of "How was it for you" (HWIFY) completed (490) because there are more larger families with five children and over and only one form would be completed for the whole family; a family with one child would also only have one form completed. The service has over 60,000 direct contacts which include family homes, children's centres and schools. Every school has a link worker and manager and the service works with them to identify needs in schools like social media, knife crime.

The officer outlined the Action Plan in place:

- The New Arrivals Team was now well established working with 40 plus cases
- NEET Strategy refreshed and on target
- Increased registrations in Children's Centres
- Good evidenced-based practice in place – Case Study on page 3 of the report. The initiative focuses on the parents way of managing a child's misbehaviour and was funded through Futures in Mind (FIM). Over 20 staff across Early Help and Social Care have been trained to work in a different way with families.

In 2019/20 a consultation was planned to update the structure of Early Help, to ensure savings could be made. The Service will be moving to a strength based model across services with continued development of systemic interventions. There will be an Early Help Advisors presence at the Front Door.

Councillors asked if there had been many people prosecuted over the last 12 months as a result of interventions. Officers confirmed that they would let the Board have this information. Councillors queried what the current time frame was from the beginning of the assessment; it was confirmed by officers that 3 weeks was the current timescale for completion of assessments. Team capacity and sickness levels were discussed.

**The Board resolved:**

- 1. to acknowledge progress made and actions to be completed for future direction of travel.**
- 2. to note the important work Early Help does with families so that parents are can become skilled at managing their children's behaviour with confidence**

**33/19 Written Statement of Action: Inspection of Services for Children and Young People with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities**

The Board considered a report of the Strategic Director of Peoples Services which gave an update on the Inspection of Derby's Services for Children and Young People with SEND in June 2019. The report was presented by the Acting Director of Learning and Skills who has taken over leadership of SEND area since 14.10.19. The Board noted that the Inspection was of the Local Area Services as a whole, not just Derby City Council's services.

The WSoA was submitted to Ofsted in line with the deadline of 26.11.19; it has been published and can be accessed on Derby's Local Offer website. HMI will now assess whether the statement is fit for purpose. Councillors were concerned that parents, partner organisations and agencies were aware of the publication of the WSoA. The Officer welcomed any suggestions from the Board for improved communications around the publication of the WSoA.

The Board were informed that the WSoA was developed in response to five priority areas.

- The failure of the local area to take the joint commissioning actions required to implement the reforms across education, health and social care
- The lack of an overarching coproduced strategy for improving provision for and outcomes of children and young people with SEND
- The number of significant weaknesses in the EHC processes, timeliness, quality and outcomes of plans
- The long-standing systemic issues with waiting times to access a large number of key services; and
- Poor parental engagement with plans for local area SEND provision and high levels of parental dissatisfaction

It was co produced with partners from across the Local Area including:

- Parent Carers Together
- Derbyshire Clinical Commissioning Group
- all Health Provider Trusts
- Derby Schools Forum
- Derby City Council Children and Adult Social Care Services
- Children's Commissioning Teams and the School Improvement Team

The Council has hosted engagement and feedback events to ensure the WSoA addresses the key areas of weakness, can be delivered, and drives a culture of inclusion and co-production in the local area as a whole.

Councillors were concerned that the local area partner organisations were now working better together. The officer confirmed they were but there was still more work to do. Councillors asked if the local parent groups had been engaged. The officer confirmed that they had been and that, moving forward, there was a need to rebuild the trust that has been lost with these groups.

The Board noted that a LEAN review had been undertaken on Education Health Care Plans (EHCPs) to see how the system could be improved to become more effective; and that it was also planned to look at the Annual Review Process, possibly moving to an electronic system. Better ways of liaising with the Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) and Social Care were also being examined. It was planned to have an internal audit looking at Tribunals, as there was a need to establish what can be offered to better assist the child rather than an EHCP. It was felt that funding could be invested more effectively at an earlier point in a child's development.

Councillors also queried if there was still an opportunity to amend or make changes to the WSoA. The officer confirmed that the WSoA was still a draft version. Councillors were concerned that the WSoA contained actions about review but few actions about making change now. The officer confirmed that work was currently ongoing with the SEND Team analysing their strengths/abilities and skills. A new SEN Manager had been appointed; parents had been involved in this process. An IT analysis has begun to establish at what point parents are accessing SEND services. Parent Partnership Groups had been re-established and an electronic version of EHCP Plans was in place.

**The Board resolved:**

- 1. To note that Derby's WSoA was developed with Local Area partners and was submitted to Ofsted by the deadline of 26 November 2019.**
- 2. To note the overall inspection findings, including strengths and areas for improvement.**

## **34/19 Work Programme and Topic Review 2019/20**

The Board considered a report which allowed the Board to study its Terms of Reference and Remit for the forthcoming Municipal Year. The report set out key work areas, issues and potential topic review subjects within the service areas, for discussion or inclusion in the work programme.

The Board agreed the work programme set out in appendix 1 to the report.

**The Board resolved to approve the work programme set out in appendix 1 of the report, with the addition of an IDCS Update Report to come to a future meeting within this municipal year.**