
Dudley Shadow Health & Well-Being Board - 1st October 2012

Report of the Director of Children's Services

The Annual Report of Dudley Safeguarding Children Board 2011-2012

Purpose of Report

1. To present to the Health and Well-Being Board the Annual Report of the Dudley Safeguarding Children Board (DSCB) for 2011-12.

Background

2. Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children requires effective co-ordination in every local area. For this reason, the Children Act 2004 requires each Local Authority to establish a Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB).
3. The Local Safeguarding Children Board is the key statutory mechanism for agreeing how the relevant organisations in each local area will co-operate to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in that locality and for ensuring the effectiveness of what they do.
4. The core objectives of the Local Safeguarding Children Board are set out in S 14(1) of the Children Act 2004 as follows:
 - To co-ordinate what is done by each person or body represented on the Board for the purposes of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in the area of the authority
 - To ensure the effectiveness of what is done by each such person or body for that purpose
 - Protecting children from maltreatment
 - Preventing impairment of children's health or development
 - Ensuring that children are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
 - Understanding that role so as to enable those children to have optimum life chances and enter adulthood successfully
5. The scope of Local Safeguarding Children Board's role includes safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in three broad areas of activity
 - Activity that affects all children and aims to identify and prevent maltreatment, or impairment of health or development and ensure children are growing up in circumstances consistent with safe and effective care
 - Proactive work that aims to target particular vulnerable groups
 - Responsive work to protect children who are suffering or at risk of suffering harm

6. The functions of the Local Safeguarding Children Board are laid out in statutory guidance – *‘Working Together to Safeguard Children’* (2010). This guidance is currently being revised by the Department for Education, following consultation which ended on 4th September 2012. The key functions are:
 - Thresholds, policies and procedures
 - Communicating and raising awareness
 - Monitoring and evaluation
 - Participating in planning and commissioning
 - Conducting child deaths and serious case reviews
7. Dudley Safeguarding Children Board (DSCB) is currently chaired by the Chief Executive of Dudley MBC, although arrangements are now under way to appoint an Independent Chair in accordance with the Government and Ofsted’s position.
8. In accordance with statutory guidance Dudley Safeguarding Children Board is required to produce an annual report, which includes:
 - Providing a comprehensive analysis of the effectiveness of local safeguarding arrangements in the local area, such as in respect of policies and procedures for the safer recruitment of frontline staff, assessment of single and inter-agency training on safeguarding, lessons learnt about the future prevention of child deaths, progress on priority issues and with regards to implementing actions from individual Serious Case Reviews and their impact
 - Recognise achievements and present a realistic assessment of the key challenges that remain
 - Challenge the work of the ‘Children’s Trust Board’ and its key partners to ensure that necessary overarching structures, processes and culture are put in place to ensure that children are safeguarded.
9. The Dudley Safeguarding Children Board Annual Report (enclosed) provides an outline of the key achievements and developments during 2011-12 and progress in respect of its three key priorities.
10. During 2011-12, the Local Authority and its key partners safeguarding arrangements were externally inspected by Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission. Action plans are in place in respect of all the recommendations and progress has been made in their implementation. The Board conducted a self-assessment during 2011-12 and identified a number of improvements, which are incorporated into its Business Plan & Work Programme for 2012-13.

Finance

11. Dudley Safeguarding Children Board has an annual budget of around £214,500, receiving core funding from the Local Authority (57%), Primary Care Trust (27%) and West Midlands Police (4%). The remainder of income is received from contributions from other partner agencies and through training.
12. The Local Authority funds the Head of Safeguarding & Review post and a number of administrative posts within the Safeguarding & Review Unit which contribute directly to supporting the business of the Board.

Law

13. The key legislation underpinning the work of the Local Safeguarding Children Board is the Children Act 2004, supported by statutory *Working Together to Safeguard Children* guidance.

Equality Impact

14. The work of the Dudley Safeguarding Children Board supports parents, families, communities and partner agencies in providing safe homes and environments, security and stability for all children and young people in the Borough. The Dudley Safeguarding Children Board responds to the needs of vulnerable groups to minimise the incidence of child abuse and neglect to ensure that all children can maximise the opportunity to achieve positive outcomes.

Recommendation

- 27.0 The Health & Well-Being Board is asked to consider and comment on the Annual Report.



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List of Background Papers

Dudley Safeguarding Children Board Annual Report 2011-12 (Full Report)
Dudley Safeguarding Children Board Annual Report 2011-12 (Executive Summary)