



Report of the Chief Executive to the meeting of Children's Services Overview & Scrutiny Committee to be held on Wednesday 4 November 2020

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Subject:

Working Together to Safeguard Children – The Bradford Partnership – Annual Report 2019/2020

Summary statement:

Annual Report of The Bradford Partnership covering Partnership activities to safeguard children in Bradford District

Kersten England
Chief Executive

Portfolio:

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Overview & Scrutiny Area:

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1.1 The Bradford Partnership is the body set up by the three safeguarding partners in the district, the Local Authority, West Yorkshire Police and combined Clinical Commissioning Groups to provide scrutiny to safeguarding activities and responses by all relevant agencies in the Bradford District.
- 1.1.2 This is the annual report for the year 2019/2020. This report covers a period when the Bradford Safeguarding Children Board (BSCB) ceased to exist and the new partnership arrangements came into force and reflects this transition. The report outlines the work of the safeguarding partners across the Bradford District to promote the safeguarding and welfare of children and young people. The report provides an overview of the issues facing children and young people across the Bradford District including those with specific vulnerabilities. It then reports on the quality of services that are provided by agencies within Bradford and the results of both local and national inspections of services.
- 1.1.3 It also reports on the work of the Partnership itself and provides an overview report by the Independent Chair and Scrutiny Lead – Jane Booth. In her overview she particularly draws attention to the following:

- The improvement journey that agencies have been working on following a range of inspections which raised significant concerns;
- The impact of instability in the CSC workforce following the inspection in 2018;
- The continuing trend in significant increases in contacts being made with Children's Social Care about vulnerable children together with growing numbers of children needing to be protected by way of a Child Protection Plan or being looked after (formerly referred to as "in care") and that by the year end the need for these services had exceeded both national and statistical neighbour comparisons.
- Multi-agency working practices in respect of service thresholds, consent and information sharing and the need for further development of the Early Help services

- 1.1.4 She identified key challenges as :

- To ensure core services supporting children, young people and their families complete the improvement journey and are able to demonstrate compliance and quality of service;
- To develop multi-agency working and efficiencies to respond to ever increasing work – loads within a context of austerity and where some elements of service appear to be underfunding by National comparison, e.g. school nursing;
- To embed the new approaches to Early Help, reducing the number who need child protection or to be looked after by the Local Authority;

- To effectively progress the improvements being made in the Child and Adolescent Health services despite what appears to be a significant gap in funding against National averages;
- To develop best practice models to respond to some complex areas of safeguarding such as Child Sexual Exploitation, Child Criminal Exploitation and Online abuse.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1.1 In September 2019 following on from the national changes instigated by the Wood Review the Bradford Safeguarding Children Board (BSCB) ceased to exist and was replaced by a new body, Working Together to Safeguard Children – The Bradford Partnership. This new body is a function of the three safeguarding partners in the district and seeks to provide scrutiny and challenge to partners working with children within the Bradford District.. The new arrangements continued the requirement for an annual report to inform the public and other interested parties about the work across the district to safeguard children and the first annual report for the new arrangements is attached.
- 2.1.2 Previous versions of this report under the BSCB arrangements have been submitted to this committee annually.

3. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

Nil.

4. FINANCIAL & RESOURCE APPRAISAL

Nil

5. RISK MANAGEMENT AND GOVERNANCE ISSUES

TBP has established governance and risk assessment processes to enable the scrutiny and assessment of partnership safeguarding activity. TBP has clear policies and strategies which have clear roles and responsibilities for identified activities and action plans to support delivery and actions towards the Partnership Strategic goals. Governance is at the highest level within the partner agencies, Chief Executive within the Local Authority, Divisional Commander within the Police and Chief Officer of the Clinical Commissioning Groups via an established Senior Leadership Group. TBP has formal links with the Bradford Safeguarding Adults Board and Community Safety Partnership as well as with the Children's Service Improvement Board to look at cross cutting safeguarding themes.

6. LEGAL APPRAISAL

The Children and Social Work Act 2017 and revised statutory guidance ‘Working

'Together To Safeguard Children' (July 2018) abolished local safeguarding boards and placed responsibility for safeguarding children and promoting their welfare with the three designated safeguarding partners, as set out in the body of this report. The partners are required to publish a report at least every 12 months. The report must set out: -

- What they have done as a result of the arrangements, including on child safeguarding practice reviews and how effective these arrangements have been in practice.
- Evidence of the impact of the work of the partners and relevant agencies, including training, on outcomes for children and families from early help to looked-after children and care leavers
- An analysis of any areas where there has been little or no evidence of progress on agreed priorities
- A record of decisions and actions taken by partners to implement recommendations of any local and national safeguarding practice review, including any resulting improvements and
- Ways in which the partners have sought and used feedback from children and families to inform their work and influence service provision.

7. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

7.1 EQUALITY & DIVERSITY

Equality assessments – All work of the Partnership are cognisant of equality and diversity issues and the impacts on all parts of the community treated fairly.

Equality objectives – The work of the Partnership contributes to creating a district where everyone feels safe, able to achieve to their fullest extent without fear of abuse or exploitation and where their views are listened to and taken seriously.

7.2 SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

Central to ensuring the long-term social, economic and environmental well-being of Bradford District are arrangements for protecting and supporting the most vulnerable in our communities. Over the long term this means every effort is made to reshape behaviours, policy and practices to enhance the lives of children and the most vulnerable. This report reflects the vital work undertaken together to safeguard children through The Bradford Partnership and out into the actions and interventions required by all citizens and organisations. A long term goal is that through early intervention, prevention, public awareness and effective protection measures there is a fundamental reduction in harm and ongoing efforts to minimise the adverse impacts on children, families and our community now and for their future lives. Our aspirations beyond safeguarding, aligned to the Children, Young People and Families Plan, are for a district that cares, is inclusive, healthy and puts child safety and the rights of the child at the heart of all that we do.

7.3 GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS IMPACTS

N/A

7.4 COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

This report highlights the range of continuing community safety risks relating to young people in the Bradford District. The District Community Safety Plan highlights criminal exploitation of children as a key concern and community safety partners work alongside safeguarding professionals in a range of strategic and operational partnerships to help safeguard and support young people away from exploitation. This includes the Missing and Child Exploitation Meeting (MACE) and the Serious and Organised Crime Partnership Silver Group. Alongside this the Safer Communities Board directs the funding into Bradford from the West Yorkshire Violence Reduction Unit. The focus of this work has a strong public health emphasis supporting young people away from damaging life choices often connected to the drugs trade.

7.5 HUMAN RIGHTS ACT

Child abuse and neglect is a violation of the rights of the child/adult under the Human Rights Act. The arrangements made by the Council and its partners are intended to prevent the rights of the child/adult being violated in this way.

7.6 TRADE UNION

No Trade Union implications

7.7 WARD IMPLICATIONS

District report covering all Wards.

7.8 AREA COMMITTEE ACTION PLAN IMPLICATIONS (for reports to Area Committees only)

N/A

7.9 IMPLICATIONS FOR CORPORATE PARENTING

National and local evidence shows that children who are looked after are more likely to become victims of Exploitation and abuse than other groups. This means that in relation to safeguarding and corporate parenting responsibilities, partners have a responsibility to understand the safeguarding risks facing children, and especially in relation to Exploitation, neglect and abuse.

7.10 ISSUES ARISING FROM PRIVACY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

There is no sensitive data included in this report that requires a Privacy Impact Assessment

8. NOT FOR PUBLICATION DOCUMENTS

None

9. OPTIONS

N/A – this report is submitted for information purposes.

10. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee is invited to note the contents of this report.

11. APPENDICES

Working Together to Safeguard Children – The Bradford Partnership – Annual Report 2019/2020

12. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

- Background documents are documents relating to the subject matter of the report which disclose any facts or matters on which the report or an important part of the report is based, and have been relied on to a material extent in preparing the report. Published works are not included.
- All documents referred to in the report must be listed, including exempt documents.
- All documents used in the compilation of the report but not specifically referred to, must be listed.