

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY TO ANNUAL REPORT 2013/14

This overview summarises the key achievements, outputs, outcomes and impact of the work of the Leicestershire and Rutland Children and Adult Safeguarding Boards in 2013/14. It also highlights the further improvements that will be sought in 2014/15.

We recognise that the annual report has to be a detailed and complex record of our work, so this summary is intended to be accessible to a wider audience and enable readers to understand the impact of our work over the last year.

Where appropriate this overview distinguishes between work undertaken by the Children and Adult Safeguarding Boards so that information can be easily extracted for specific purposes such as inspection and peer review processes. The information is presented alongside the key priorities in our business plan 2013-16.

PRIORITY A: IMPROVE THE EFFECTIVENESS AND IMPACT OF THE SAFEGUARDING BOARDS

What has been achieved in 2013/14?

The children's safeguarding board responded to the Department for Education's (DfE) revised Working Together 2013 document. We revised the board's statutory membership, governance and accountability arrangements to ensure compliance and issued the required 'threshold protocol' and a learning and improvement framework. The board considered and approved assessment frameworks for both local authorities.

We introduced a self-assessment tool to evaluate our performance against the new Ofsted review framework for safeguarding children boards. Areas that are not judged to be 'good' or better feature on our Business Plan priorities for 2014/15.

The adult safeguarding board has prepared for the Care Act 2014. This has included undertaking a self-assessment against the Association of Directors of Adult Social Care's (ADASS) 'top-ten tips'.

The board has self-assessed its own effectiveness during this year and in six out of 10 areas members rated the board 'good'. Action is already being taken in the four areas where need for improvement was identified and is incorporated into our Business Plan 2014/15.

Key strengths identified in the audit were:

- Effectiveness of the Independent Chair
- Constitutional compliance with Working Together 2013 and No Secrets
- Self-audit
- Self-development and improvement
- Information and intelligence sharing

- Effective communication – particularly through ‘Safeguarding Matters’

Members of the board included managers with a strategic role in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children within their organisation. These members can:

- speak for their organisation with authority;
- commit their organisation on policy and practice matters;
- hold their own organisation to account and hold others to account.

Better engagement with senior leaders in partner organisations was secured through the safeguarding summit held in December 2013. This will become an annual event. This event raised the profile of both boards within the local professional community.

Attendance levels at meetings have been high and representation from schools and colleges, which was an area of concern in 2012/13, has been addressed. The private sector provider community in adult services has agreed to re-join the board after a period of absence.

Section 11 audits indicate sustained or improved performance against safeguarding standards in all but one agency. Performance was particularly strong in the adult services audit where eight organisations self-assessed themselves to be fully compliant with standards.

There is strong evidence of challenge between board members leading to action to improve service delivery and performance. Examples include:

- challenge from Leicestershire Police regarding increases in the number of children ‘missing’ incidents that resulted in a review of the Missing Protocol across Leicestershire, Rutland and Leicester and some reduction in the number of reported incidents;
- challenge from the Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) in relation to the notification of changes in care arrangements for children looked after with evidence of improvements in information sharing;
- challenge from a range of partners to better co-ordinate policy, practice and procedures across the Leicestershire, Rutland and Leicester City which has been taken forward by the joint Executive Board between the two LSCBs. An example of how this has made a real difference was the agreement to work collaboratively on Single Assessment and Threshold Protocol which came from Working Together 2013. There has similarly been joint work on: policy and procedures; child sexual exploitation, child trafficking and missing; training and workforce development.

The board worked within its budget and linked expenditure more closely to key priorities in the business plan. Action was taken to address the long-standing budget reserve through the allocation of grants to services able to further deliver the boards’ priorities.

Effective arrangements have been put in place to ensure we work with other partnership bodies including: the Health and Wellbeing Boards, local authority scrutiny committees, the Children's Trust in Rutland and the Community Safety Partnerships.

The boards have delivered domestic homicide reviews on behalf of the Community Safety Partnerships. Two reviews were delivered in 2013/14. The learning from these reviews is being disseminated through the Serious Case Review Sub-Group with any relevant improvements being included in the framework we are using to manage quality and performance.

We have worked across the area and region so that we are more efficient and consistent – particularly for agencies who operate across local boundaries. Key achievements in 2013/14 included:

- co-ordinated local authority single assessment arrangements
- LSCB Threshold Protocols
- LSCB Learning and Improvement Frameworks
- Integrated work on policies and procedures across both children and adult services
- Integrated arrangements for workforce development and training
- Signs of Safety
- The Domestic Abuse, Stalking and Honour Based Violence (DASH) tool
- Mental Capacity Act and Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards implementation
- Joint Executive Groups for both children and adult safeguarding to improve co-ordination across the sub-region and the East Midlands

The boards have increased their focus on learning and improvement. We have not only focused on the outcomes of reviews within Leicestershire and Rutland but also in testing local performance against recommendations from serious case reviews and inquiries in other areas and nationally.

Examples include consideration of serious case reviews for Daniel Pelka, Hamzah Khan, and reports from the Office of the Children's Commissioner on child sexual exploitation and trafficking, the Winterbourne View Report and the Francis Report. There has been robust and rigorous scrutiny of the responses to these reviews as well as the impact on quality and performance management.

There has been a real focus on ensuring learning is disseminated to front-line staff through events such as the Serious Case Review Learning Event in February 2014.

The board has remained aware of inspections and reviews carried out in member agencies. We have monitored action plans from local authority Ofsted inspections, peer challenge arrangements across the East Midlands, Care Quality Commission inspections of both organisations and providers, and Ofsted inspections of other organisations such as CAF/CASS.

What will improve in 2014/15?

Our business plan for 2014/15 sets out a number of priorities. We are seeking:

To ensure that all agencies fulfil their responsibilities as set out in Working Together 2013. We also plan to increase compliance in the Section 11 Audit which tests agency compliance with key safeguarding requirements.

To ensure that the agencies are appropriately represented on the board, executive and sub-groups and attendance and participation levels are high so that we can achieve our objectives.

To ensure that the board knows the safeguarding strengths and weaknesses of agencies, both individually and collectively, through challenge, scrutiny and performance management

To drive partnerships and agencies to own, prioritise, resource, improve and positively impact on safeguarding and receives management information to scrutinise and challenge performance

To be assured that the 'voice' of children, young people and adults is heard and acted on

To ensure partner agency contributions secure 'value for money'

To be ready for inspection across the partnerships

PRIORITY B: SECURING CONFIDENCE IN THE OPERATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS OF AGENCIES (INDIVIDUALLY AND COLLECTIVELY) THROUGH ROBUST QUALITY ASSURANCE AND PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT OF SAFEGUARDING

What has been achieved since 2013/14?

A new Quality Assurance and Performance Management (QAPM) framework has been introduced. This is made up of four areas: quantitative data, qualitative information, service user perspectives and staff perspectives.

The framework now draws on performance information from all agencies. It also focuses on better engagement with children, young people and adults as well as front line staff in planning, delivering, monitoring and evaluating service delivery and performance.

This new framework has enabled the Safeguarding Effectiveness Sub-Group (SEG) to exert greater rigour in scrutinising performance and alerting both the executive and boards to areas that require action and intervention to improve performance. This has enabled the boards to focus on strategy and performance rather than process and procedure.

The sub-group has developed a more robust and extensive programme of audits to test front line practice and to identify areas for learning and improvement.

The Child's Journey in Leicestershire

We have seen increases in the number of children receiving early help through the First Response arrangement. The Supporting Leicestershire Families initiative has also helped to improve the lives of the most vulnerable families.

- There were 15,228 contacts. There were 5895 referrals – which is low compared to statistical neighbours
- The percentage of referrals proceeding to initial assessment has decreased from 84.5% to 80% in the previous year
- Initial and core assessments are being completed more quickly and systems have been improved.
- The number of children on child protection plans has increased from 393 to 446 but remains low in comparison to statistical neighbours. The highest number of plans relate to emotional/physical abuse
- The rate of completion of child protection plan reviews has fallen to 55%
- The number of children in care has increased from 446 to 490 but remains low in comparison to statistical neighbours
- 9% of children in care experienced three or more placements in the year which is in line with statistical neighbours

The Child's Journey in Rutland

The number of Common Assessment Framework (CAF) assessments completed has increased by 45% from 62 in 2012/13 to 90 in 2013/14.

The number of contacts to children's social care has increased, reflecting the national trend. However, the number of referrals to children's social care has decreased by 36%, evidence that the use of early help has been very effective in slowing down the referral rate and that thresholds are being applied more rigorously by the duty team.

The percentage of referrals progressing to initial assessment has increased from 71.4% to 85.3%, indicating good use thresholds, resulting in appropriate referrals.

93% of initial assessments were carried out within 10 days and 93% of core assessments were carried out within 35 days.

There has been an increase in the number of children with child protection plans – 34 as compared to 23 in the previous year. The largest category of abuse is neglect.

All child protection plans have been reviewed within timescale. No child protection plans lasted longer than two years.

The number of children in care has increased by 29 to 34. No child experienced more than 3 placements in the year.

100% of children in care had their reviews on time – this matches performance in the previous year.

The views of the independent Reviewing Officer (IRO) services

The annual report provides a perspective on the quality of services to children in need of protection and care from the IRO services. They report a number of improvements, including:

- The success of the Grow Safety (previously Signs of Safety) model in Leicestershire has improved the focus and effectiveness of reviews particularly in terms of enabling the voice of the child and family to be better heard and to secure a better focus from professionals on outcomes and risk;
- In Rutland, multi-agency training has taken place within early help and child protection services. The Signs of Safety model will be implemented by 31st March 2015
- Improvements in advocacy services for children;
- Reductions in the number of complaints
- The introduction of a listening and support service for children that go missing.

The reports do however identify areas for improvement relating to the timeliness of distribution of papers for reviews, the levels of attendance and quality of reporting of some partner agencies, the need for better responses to children's needs from some services such as CAMHS. All the issues raised by IROs have been incorporated into our Business Plan for 2014/15

Private Fostering

Concerns remain about the low number of private fostering arrangements known to the two local authorities. A major awareness raising campaign is underway in 2014/15 to address this.

Serious Case Reviews and Child Deaths

No Serious Case Reviews (SCRs) were undertaken during 2013/14.

The LSCB did engage in Serious Case Reviews in three other areas – Lancashire, Lincolnshire and Birmingham – which featured children that had been resident in Leicestershire.

The Safeguarding Effectiveness Group has done targeted work to improve practice in response to past reviews, from those undertaken in other areas and from audits used to test the impact of previous learning.

A range of learning events and conferences has been delivered to disseminate learning and to support action to improve practice.

The Child Death Overview Panel has completed reviews on 47 child deaths – which are similar to levels in statistical neighbour authorities. The highest number of notifications still remains those under 1 year of age.

The Safeguarding Effectiveness Group has increased the level of reporting and number of individual agency and multi-agency case audits. This has included audits to test the impact of SCR recommendations and an audit of Strategy Meetings which had been identified as a concern in the previous year.

Action has been taken where audits have identified the need for improvement.

Assurance that Adults are Safe

In Leicestershire

There has been a 28% increase in the number of referrals

64% of referrals related to residential or nursing care homes. This compares to 63% in the previous year which shows that the ratio between residential and community settings has remained much the same.

The rate of completing referrals was 95% last year and is now?

53% of referrals were substantiated or partially substantiated.

Neglect remains the most significant. There has been an increase in the proportion of referrals relating to neglect and a decline in those relating to physical abuse.

There are still an increasing number of referrals arising from unacceptably poor standards of care.

In Rutland

There were 91 referrals leading to investigation which is higher than last year.

68% of these referrals related to residential or nursing care home settings with only 32% from the community which is a significant shift in ration from last year.

Of the completed referrals 47% were substantiated or partially substantiated.

Areas of Safeguarding Risk in Leicestershire and Rutland

The boards have sought assurance that action is being taken to address those areas of safeguarding risk that were identified as priorities in our business planning process for 2013/14. The annual report outlines progress that has been made in relation to:

- Child sexual exploitation and trafficking
- Children missing
- Domestic abuse
- Suicide and self-harm
- PREVENT
- Learning disabled adults including those in residential settings
- The implementation of the Mental Care Act (MCA) and Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards
- Older people – particularly those living in residential care and nursing homes

Positive progress has been made in all these areas. We have put in place more robust and rigorous arrangements to identify, assess and respond to risk.

However, these do remain high priority risks. Clearly, the positive action taken has sometimes had the effect of increasing the number of cases reported – which is what was expected. We must ensure that our focus is balanced between prevention and response to identified risk if we are to see reductions in safeguarding risk in these areas.

Workforce development

Significant progress has been made to deliver a comprehensive programme of training and development in safeguarding for children and young people.

The range of training and number of attendees has increased. A total of 1174 people were trained and post-training evaluations have been very positive.

An important development this year has been the Competency Framework for children and adult safeguarding training. This provides a more robust and rigorous tool to evaluate the impact of training on service delivery and on outcomes for children, young people and adults. It monitors competences across the workforce – and allows better targeting of training. The new framework was launched in April 2014.

Workforce Capacity

The boards have begun to monitor workforce capacity to better identify safeguarding risk in our organisations and systems.

Agencies proposing service reductions are asked to present safeguarding risks to the board. We have asked for assurance that funding and staffing levels are managed to mitigate any risk.

Caseloads amongst social workers have remained steady in most areas but increasing numbers of contacts and referrals will need to be carefully monitored to ensure that staffing capacity is sufficient to respond to need.

Within this annual report, we have included headlines from the annual report of the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) responsible for overseeing allegations made against staff.

The number of cases has not changed significantly from last year but, in Leicestershire, the proportion relating to sexual abuse has risen. This may be a result of heightened public awareness and confidence in reporting as a result of high profile media coverage of cases such as the Saville case.

Improvement sought in 2013/14 and built into the business plan

Priority 2a: To be assured that children and young people are safe

To be assured:

- of the quality and impact/effectiveness of services across the 'child's journey'
- that thresholds for safeguarding children are clear, understood and consistently applied
- that the impact of universal and early help intervention reduces the numbers of children requiring protection and care
- that the quality and impact of single and multi-agency children protection practice is effective
- that children at high risk/vulnerable are being identified (e.g. child sexual exploitation, children missing from home and care, bullying) and risks managed to secure a positive outcome

Priority 2b - To be assured that adults in need of safeguarding are safe

To be assured:

- of the quality and impact/effectiveness of services to adults in need of safeguarding
- that thresholds for safeguarding adults are clear, understood and consistently applied.
- that the impact of universal and early help intervention reduces the numbers of adults requiring protection and care.
- that the quality and impact of single and multi-agency adult protection practice is effective.
- that adults at high risk/vulnerable are being identified (e.g. mental health, domestic violence) and risks managed to secure a positive outcome

Priority 2C – To be assured that services for children, services for adults and services for families are effectively coordinated to ensure children and adults are safe

To be assured:

- that young people who are receiving services from children's services successfully transition to adult services where necessary
- that adults who are assessed as posing risk to children, young people and adults in need of safeguarding (such as MAPPA – Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements- and MARAC– Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference) are effectively managed and that risk to others is mitigated
- that services that work with “whole” families are effectively coordinated – e.g. Supporting Leicestershire Families and Changing Lives Rutland and secure added value in ensuring and co-ordinating effective safeguarding.

Priority 3a: To be assured of the quality of care for any child not living with a parent or someone with parental responsibility

To be assured:

- that partner agencies are fulfilling their responsibilities as corporate parents
- children/young people who are privately fostered are identified and supported
- that awareness is raised of the notification requirements for private fostering, and the effectiveness of this is monitored
- that children and young people placed in Leicestershire and Rutland from other areas are safe
- and
- To establish and maintain robust interface with other Looked After Children bodies (charity, respective roles and responsibilities)

Priority 3b: To be assured of the quality of care for any adult supported by registered providers

To be assured:

- that adults living with or receiving services from registered providers are safe
- that providers are effective in carrying out their safeguarding responsibilities and that as a result service users are safe.
- that safeguarding roles and responsibilities and outcomes are explicit in commissioning, contracting, monitoring and review of services

Priority 4: To be assured that our Learning and Improvement Framework is raising service quality and outcomes for children, young people and adults

- Apply the Learning & Development Framework and ensure its effectiveness

- Ensure learning from national and regional SCRs and other learning processes is incorporated into the practice of partner agencies and the partnership
- Ensure the effectiveness of CDOP for Leicestershire and Rutland and that lessons from child deaths are understood and consistently acted upon
- Implement the performance management framework and ensure its effectiveness
- To ensure that policies and procedures are 'fit for purpose'

Priority 5: To be assured that the workforce is fit for purpose

- To be assured that the workforce is competent as measured by the Competency Frameworks through quality assurance
- To monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of training and development in terms of the impact on the quality of safeguarding practice and outcomes for service users
- To be assured that the workforce is safely recruited
- To be assured that allegations made against people who work with children and adults are dealt with effectively
- To hear the voice of practitioners

Improving the Effectiveness of Communication and Engagement

What has been achieved in 2013/14?

A communications strategy and a participation and engagement strategy were agreed by the board.

'Safeguarding Matters', a bi-monthly publication to staff across the partnerships in both counties, was launched in February 2013 and has been positively received by staff.

A new website was launched in January 2014 and initial monitoring of 'hits' suggests increasing and wide access to the site – in April over 9,500 hits were recorded a 37% increase on the previous month.

There has been engagement with the Youth Councils and with Young Inspectors in Leicestershire and Rutland to enable the voice of children and young people to be heard in identifying priorities for action in future business plans.

A major schools survey was also carried out through which we engaged Schools Councils in identifying safeguarding priorities for the new business plan – 110 schools participated including 10 from Rutland

A range of publications and leaflets has been issued to better disseminate key information and service availability including a leaflet on private fostering.

There was a major media and communications exercise to raise awareness of Child Sexual Exploitation and Trafficking targeting a range of audiences including schools, taxi companies, sport, leisure and hotel industries and the wider community. There is evidence that these campaigns have led to greater levels of reporting.

Improvement sought in 2013/14 and built into the business plan

Engagement with children and young people needs to be extended to cover both broad audiences and very targeted groups – such as looked after children, disabled children, those subject to child protection plans, black and minority ethnic groups. We also need to improve how we engage with children and young people at the point of service delivery.

Engagement with front-line staff requires significant development.

The website will be revised to reflect new national frameworks such as Working Together 2013 as well as including bespoke areas for professionals, the wider community and children and young people themselves.

Safeguarding Adults Board

Ensuring the effectiveness of services and keeping adults safe.

Work undertaken by the board.

The board has received regular reports from agencies on actions taken in response to both the Winterbourne View and Mid-Staffordshire Hospital/Francis reports.

The board has been provided with assurances that local providers have produced action plans to address any local concerns and it continues to receive updates on their implementation.

The board has extended the scope of its work include prevention and early intervention both through scrutiny of Safer Communities initiatives and the Supporting Leicestershire Families programme.

A range of initiatives has been undertaken to learn from investigations – such as serious case reviews and serious incident learning processes.

These include: the Safeguarding Matters publication; a range of other communication channels; training and workforce development and direct work within service teams.

In August 2012, a conference was held on the Mental Capacity Act (MCA) and Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS). This was attended by 120 professionals from across the partnership. An action plan to improve practice and procedures was produced and is being monitored by the Safeguarding Effectiveness Group.

The board has continued to provide a comprehensive programme of training and workforce development to support staff in delivering effective safeguarding and securing better safeguarding outcomes for service users.

The Safeguarding Adults Training Network has met on a bi-annual basis to ensure that learning and improvement is effectively disseminated. On average, there have been between 35 and 40 professionals attending each meeting.

The Training Effectiveness Group has developed the 'Competency Framework' that underpins the training and development offer and formulated a competency log to better evaluate the impact of training on practice.

The Procedures and Practice Sub-Group revised or developed new procedures primarily in response to learning from reviews. These included:

- Pan-East Midlands Social Care Institute for Excellence (SCIE) procedures
- Information sharing agreement
- Thresholds Document
- A range of risk assessment and risk management tools.

Improvement sought in 2014/15

Safeguarding referral rates continue to rise. Whilst this may in some part be the result of improved awareness resulting from both training and communication activity the reasons for these increases will be more fully analysed to identify required improvement particularly in prevention and early intervention.

More work needs to be undertaken to understand patterns of repeat referrals from residential providers and to evaluate the effectiveness of intervention designed to improve care standards.

Work will be done to improve the clarity and understanding of thresholds.

Work will be undertaken to better understand First Contact in Leicestershire and its impact on preventing adults coming in to the formal adult protection system as part of our aim to reduce safeguarding referrals and to prevent adults requiring specialist services.

Regular reporting of performance on Mental Capacity Act and Deprivation of Liberties Safeguards legislation will be included in the Quality Assurance and Performance Management framework for the SAB.

The evaluation of training needs better to identify impact on both the quality of service delivery and outcomes for vulnerable adults and further development in training evaluation is planned to support this.

Quality Assurance and Performance Management

What has been achieved since 2013/14

The Quality Assurance and Performance Management Framework was revised to extend the range of impact evidence collected and to include information from all partners. The new framework comprises four key quadrants: quantitative data; qualitative data; the views of service users and; the views of front line staff. .

A Safeguarding Adults Compliance Audit was introduced to test compliance in all agencies against key standards. This has provided a baseline from which we can now judge improvement. Levels of compliance were high but agencies that self-assessed themselves as partially or non-compliant with standards have now set in place actions to address this.

Improvement sought in 2014/15 and built into the business plan

Work will be undertaken to further embed the new Quality Assurance and Performance Management Framework for 2013/14 that it:

- extends the quantitative scorecard to include a wider range of safeguarding performance data from partner agencies;
- extends the range of qualitative evidence particularly the number of multi-agency audits undertaken
- includes evidence drawn from engagement with adult service users and from front-line staff.

Communication and Engagement

What has been achieved since 2011/12?

A communications strategy and a participation and engagement strategy were agreed by the board.

A new brand identity/logo for the SAB was adopted and launched.

'Safeguarding Matters', a bi-monthly publication to staff across partners in both counties was launched in February 2013 and has been positively received by staff.

Improvement sought in 2014/15 and built into the business plan

The business plan for 2014/15 continues to prioritise improvements in our work to engage with and secure the participation of children, young people and adults. This will include a programme to refresh key leaflets.

A key priority next year is to ensure that safeguarding is everyone's business and that the 'voice' of children, young people and adults is heard and acted on

Our focus next year will be to work with existing engagement and participation groups so that safeguarding can feature on their agendas and facilitate more voices being heard. This will include working with Healthwatch to enable them to include safeguarding in their interfaces with patients both children and adults.