

**Report to:** Partnerships Scrutiny Committee

**Date of Meeting:** 5 June 2014

**Lead Member/Officer:** Head of Children and Family Services  
Lead Member for Social Care – Adult and Children’s Services

**Report Author:** Project Manager, Safeguarding

**Title:** Update from Conwy & Denbighshire Local Safeguarding Children Board.

---

**1. What is the report about?**

- 1.1 Conwy & Denbighshire Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) develops and monitors a business plan each year. The 2013-14 plan is attached to this covering report.
- 1.2 At its meeting of 7<sup>th</sup> November 2013, the Committee asked that the LSCB analyse data and trends identified in 2013/14 to identify which approaches worked well and which were not as successful

**2. What is the reason for making this report?**

- 2.1 At its meeting of 7<sup>th</sup> November 2013, this committee asked that a further report was brought to monitor the LSCB’s achievement and performance in delivering its key priorities for 2013/14 and provide information on its key priorities for 2014/15. This is that report.

**3. What are the Recommendations?**

- 3.1 That the Committee scrutinises the report and makes recommendations on any issues that arise.

**4. Report details**

**4.1 The LSCB’s Business Plan (business plan attached as Appendix 1)**

- 4.1.1 Priorities 1 to 4 of the LSCB’s business plan are being taken forward regionally. The board received regular updates from regional lead officers over the year.
- 4.1.2 Progress was below target against Priority 2 ‘Experiences and outcomes are improved for children who have lived, or who are living with domestic abuse by developing a local action plan for domestic abuse’. The LSCB has examined various mechanisms to achieve this objective, but does not yet have confidence that the issue is being addressed as robustly as it would like. This is recognised as a regional issue and also an issue that spans various planning processes – Safeguarding and Community Safety.

- 4.1.3 This LSCB maintained responsibility for priorities 5 and 6, and again, the Board monitored progress against its objectives at each Board meeting.
- 4.1.4 Priority 5: to develop a 'Joint Protocol in relation to safeguarding children and young people affected by adults viewing indecent images of children'. Good progress was made by Conwy Children's Social Services and Wales Probation in developing this protocol. The completed protocol was taken to the regional Policies and Procedures Group, where it was recognised as a priority for adoption across the region during 2014/15.
- 4.1.5 Priority 6: 'To address issues raised via the self-assessment (SAIT) process, in particular where performance falls below' band 2'. Progress was below target on several objectives within this priority:
- 6a 'Risks to children from unsafe staff are minimised because the LSCB adopts and promotes best practice in safe employment'. Progress was behind schedule on this objective because the safe employment task group was not able to meet. This was due to the work commitments of the task group members. The Board recognises that it needs to continue pressing forward on this issue, although this may be appropriately managed at a regional level
- 6c 'That SMG consider how best to demonstrate improvements to the outcomes for children receiving child protection services' is marked as 'RED'. Whilst SMG have considered the report, the target was that by March 2014, improvements to the outcomes for children receiving child protection services can be demonstrated, and this was not the case at the end of the year.
- 6d 'To contribute to the development of a NW Regional Safeguarding Children Board'. The LSCB has been a strong supporter of the Regional Board, which is chaired by Conwy's Director of Social Services. However, the target for the LSCB was to consider the evaluation report from the University of Sheffield, and this did not take place within the target timetable. The report has since been shared and the findings used to inform the revised proposals, which are included in the report on this agenda.

## **4.2 Key Priorities 2014/15**

- 4.2.1 Conwy and Denbighshire LSCB considered establishing priorities at its away day in January 2014, but it was recognised that the issue of whether they were to be established locally or regionally needed to be resolved before it was purposeful to set an agenda for the coming year.
- 4.2.2 The interface between regional and local safeguarding arrangements is the subject of a report to Cabinet on the 24<sup>th</sup> June 2014. It proposes that the Regional level becomes the Statutory Safeguarding Children Board and the local areas, in our case Conwy and Denbighshire become a Safeguarding Delivery Group
- 4.2.3 Once agreed the strategic vision which is starting to develop at a regional level will lead to local activities for the Conwy and Denbighshire area. This is a time of considerable change but the operational management of the Safeguarding agenda continues to be a priority and the current transition will not be allowed to be negatively affected during this period of change

### **4.3 Effective Delivery**

4.3.1 The LSCB has a range of ways to establish how effective it is in delivery of the safeguarding agenda ranging from case audits to focused thematic reviews of practice, gaining feedback from service users, sharing intelligence about needs and circumstances across partner agencies including individual agency audit of performance. The information from these activities informs the LSCB development agenda at a local and regional agenda. Overall there is confidence that the system works well in its approaches to protection however there continues to be commitment to continuous development and improvement.

### **5. How does the decision contribute to the Corporate Priorities?**

Safeguarding Children is a high priority for everyone. An effective Local Safeguarding Children Board contributes to this aim by ensuring agencies work together to keep children safe from abuse and neglect. This area of work contributes to Denbighshire's Big Plan outcome 7: keeping people safe.

### **6. What will it cost and how will it affect other services?**

The Local Safeguarding Children Board is a statutory partnership, and is funded by contributions from its statutory partners.

### **7. What are the main conclusions of the Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) undertaken on the decision? The completed EqIA template should be attached as an appendix to the report.**

Any changes to services arising as a result of LSCB activity or decisions are implemented by constituent agencies, where the equality impact assessment will be made.

### **8. What consultations have been carried out with Scrutiny and others?**

This report is a mechanism for consultation with scrutiny.

### **9. Chief Finance Officer Statement**

The Local Safeguarding Children Board is a statutory partnership, and is funded by contributions from its statutory partners. The cost implications of actions emerging from the Business Plan will have to be considered separately.

### **10. What risks are there and is there anything we can do to reduce them?**

The biggest risk for the LSCB and the local Authority is the danger of a serious incident which finds that the LSCB or one or more of its partner agencies have failed in their duty to safeguard children. Whilst in social care there is no such thing as zero risk, the work of the LSCB is directed at ensuring that partner agencies take all reasonable steps to safeguard children.

## **11. Power to make the Decision**

Section 4.24 of the Welsh Assembly Government's guidance 'Safeguarding Children: Working Together Under the Children Act 2004' states:

"Each local authority should take lead responsibility for the establishment and effective working of Local Safeguarding Children Boards, although main constituent agencies are responsible for contributing fully and effectively to the work of the LSCB."

Scrutiny's duties and powers with respect to monitoring the work of the LSCB are outlined in Articles 6.1 and 6.3.4(d) of the Council's Constitution.

### **Contact Officer:**

Project Manager Safeguarding

Tel: 07768 043315