

Report To: Partnerships Scrutiny Committee

Date of Meeting: 7 November 2013

Lead Member / Officer: Head of Children and Family Services/
Lead Member for Social Care and Children's Services

Report Author: Business Manager, Conwy & Denbighshire Local
Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB)

Title: Conwy & Denbighshire Local Safeguarding Children
Board Annual Report and update on the integration of
the North Wales Local Safeguarding Children Boards.

1. What is the report about?

1.1 Conwy & Denbighshire Local Safeguarding Children Board's (LSCB) annual report is attached to this covering report (Appendix 1). The Annual Report is in two sections. Section one provides a brief overview of the functioning of the Conwy and Denbighshire Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB), including its governance and financial arrangements. This section also provides a summary of the LSCB's key priorities for 2012-13, and its achievements against those priorities. Sections 4.2 to 4.5 of this covering report summarise the key points from the Annual Report.

1.2 A further report is provided (Appendix 2) to keep Members informed of the progress made towards the integrations and collaboration of the North Wales Local Safeguarding Children Boards.

2. What is the reason for making this report?

2.1 This report provides the local authority with the information it needs in order to be able to discharge its responsibility for ensuring that the LSCB is properly established and working effectively. 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."

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 focused its attention on achieving against four key priorities during 2012-13, with work continuing on two further priorities identified in the previous year. It achieved what it set out to do on 74% (14) of its tasks, with a further 21% (4) underway. Performance was affected by delay in carrying out the planned consultation exercises, which meant that the results from the exercises could not be translated into action within the planned timescale. No progress was made on 5% (1) task to begin making improvements to Domestic Abuse provision. Work is continuing on all incomplete tasks.
- 4.2 Membership of the LSCB is good, and membership has been stable over the past year. At 68%, attendance by Board members or their deputies was below the 75% target, and below that of last year. This was mainly due to poor engagement of Housing, and long-term sickness of one Board member. Attendance at the sub-groups was below target at 69%, but this showed an improvement compared to previous years. Attendance is monitored and reported on regularly in order to identify and resolve any attendance issues.
- 4.3 The LSCB asked for contributions of £60,000 from partners during 2012-13. After some negotiation, and support from Elected Members, all agencies agreed to pay the amount requested except Wales Probation. Wales Probation limited their contribution to a nationally set percentage of the LSCB's budget, and contributed £273 less than the £1,800 requested from them.
- 4.4 The LSCB conducts an annual self-assessment process. The self-assessment conducted in November 2012 showed continued improvement compared to previous years, and areas of weakness were identified as actions for the 2013-14 business plan.
- 4.5 A significant feature of the first half of 2013-14 has been the continuing development of regional approaches to the work of the LSCB. The Regional Safeguarding Children Board (RSCB) quickly agreed four areas of work that could benefit from a regional approach, and decided that regional subgroups should be established to take this work forward. The regional subgroups are:
- Child Practice Reviews
 - Communications and Consultation
 - Policies and Procedures
 - Training and Workforce Development
- Discussions are continuing on the role and governance of the Regional Board and its relationship to local arrangements.

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

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."

Articles 6.1 and 6.3.4(d) outlines Scrutiny's powers and responsibilities with respect to the LSCB.

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