



Solihull Local Safeguarding Children Board

Statutory Annual Report 2010-2011

LSCB Chairperson's Introduction

Dear colleagues

Another year, and another report you may be thinking? Well, if you read only two annual reports in 2011 I suggest it is this one and its companion from the Adult Safeguarding Board. As Chair I take very seriously the responsibility I share, with the Lead Member, the Director of Children's Services and the Board as a whole, for making safeguarding "everybody's business" and this report is one of the means by which this duty is discharged and the work of the Local Safeguarding Children Board publicised. So, please read on.

At both national and local levels 2010-11 has been a significant year.

Nationally, I would draw your attention to three areas that already, or will shortly, impact directly on the quality of safeguarding practices:

- Firstly, the Munro Review of child protection in England concluded in May and the Government published its response at the end of July - with the Children's Minister, Tim Loughton, accepting in principle all the recommendations, and signalling his intention to drive reform hard and fast in both the immediate and longer term. There are significant and exciting implications for LSCBs arising from the report - for example the new role we will have for scrutinising the effectiveness of "early help" to families - so our agenda grows all the time;
- Secondly, the Social Work Reform Board (SWRB) has made significant progress in addressing the improvements agreed by the Task Force at the end of 2009. The SWRB's brief encompasses all of the social work workforce, not just children, and is putting centre stage the importance of reflective practice as a primary tool of driving up standards and improving outcomes for families. LSCBs will benefit from this work as it will influence the ways in which we find out about how well the safeguarding system is working locally;

- Thirdly, the sector-led improvement agenda is progressing at speed and LSCBs will need to take account of the fact that Local Authorities, with their partners, will be placing greater emphasis on their own self-assessments to understand strengths and risks, and Boards will want to think about their role in complementing and challenging these new approaches and ensuring that there continues to be credible, independent challenge locally to these assessments and the improvements plans that will follow from them.

Locally, the Board has been developing too. The added capacity brought by the safeguarding officer role created in 2009 has meant that we have a clearer understanding of what our top three priorities are - namely, domestic violence, neglect and child sexual exploitation. Whilst the Board clearly has a role that encompasses a wide range of safeguarding issues common to all areas, it is also charged with identifying concerns that are of particular local significance and providing an evidence base for commissioners to act on.

As well as these three "subject-based" priorities, we have agreed that there needs to be much more of a focus on the cross-cutting issue of developing the quality assurance framework so that it promotes both the capturing and application of the experiences of those using safeguarding services: addressing our priorities, and further development of policies and practices, must become more deeply rooted in customer feedback. To this end, Board has signalled its intent that all partners should give more consideration to how they can learn better from this rich source of evidence to re-shape the child's journey through the system. And this, of course, resonates with the Munro report which strongly advocates that greater value should be placed on the voice of children and young people, parents and carers and front line workers.

2010 -11 has also been a year in which the Board sought to strengthen its relationship with the Children and Young People's Trust Board. This has been challenging as the Trust Board has been undergoing a period of reform itself, due in part to changes in the statutory framework, but the LSCB can feel

confident that it has provided clear advice to commissioners on the local "stay safe" priorities - and not just children's commissioners, but also those within the community safety partnership, the emerging health and wellbeing board and the Solihull Partnership's overarching governing board. I welcome the commitment made in June 2011 by the new chair of the Children and Young Peoples' Trust Board to bring the two Boards even closer together and, in doing so, ensuring a clearer and more precise focus on the stay safe priorities that will strengthen the already good safeguarding arrangements we have across Solihull.

My final point is to note that the LSCB has also been working hard to influence the new health arrangements that are set out in the Health and Social Care Bill going through Parliament. In particular, the Business Manager, Deputy Chair and I have begun advising the Cluster PCT and Strategic Health Authority colleagues on what needs to be done to make clinical commissioning groups "safeguarding proof" so that as they take on Primary Care Trusts commissioning responsibilities, the LSCB can be assured that the necessary partnership arrangements and understanding are in place to maximise positive outcomes for children and young people.

And so all that remains is to say thank you: to the Board; to the Safeguarding Manager and her team: but - most importantly - to all those out there on the front line from all sectors who, on a daily basis, pull out all the stops to ensure that our children and young people are effectively safeguarded.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "SA Mark Rogers". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above a solid horizontal line that extends across the width of the signature.

MARK ROGERS
LSCB CHAIRPERSON

1 Executive summary

- 1.1 Solihull Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) is a multi-agency statutory partnership responsible for co-ordinating how agencies work together to keep children and young people safe and for ensuring the effectiveness of those arrangements.
- 1.2 All children and young people have a right to be safe from harm and this report details the work undertaken by Solihull LSCB, during the period 1st July 2010 – 30th June 2011, to promote the safety of children and young people who live, visit or are educated in Solihull as well as those “looked after” by Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council.
- 1.3 The functions of a LSCB are set out in statutory guidance and in relation to the delivery of its statutory functions, Solihull LSCB has:-
- Updated multi-agency safeguarding procedures and reviewed the threshold for accessing a Children’s Social Work Service.
 - Established a child sexual exploitation steering group to promote a more effective approach to safeguarding children and young people from child sexual exploitation.
 - Launched specific communication campaigns aimed at safeguarding children and young people
 - Enhanced capacity to support safeguarding across 3rd Sector organisations
 - Recruited 2 Lay Members to join the LSCB and continued to work with the Youth Council in order to secure the views of the public and to promote greater public engagement in the work of the LSCB.
 - Established a practitioners forum to secure stronger engagement with those working directly with children, young people and families
 - Undertaken significant activity to evaluate the effectiveness of local safeguarding arrangements including a case review, audits, analysing performance information and monitoring action plans
 - Acted as a ‘Responsible Authority’ under the Licensing Act 2003
 - Received notification of, and, reviewed child deaths

- Appointed a permanent Training and Development Officer and continued to deliver multi-agency training to the workforce on a variety of safeguarding issues and disseminate learning from audits and review activity.
- 1.4 The above achievements represent significant progress against the priority areas identified for the LSCB in the previous LSCB annual report.
- 1.5 Due to a review of the structure and function of the Children and Young People Trust Board (CYPTB), progress against priority areas identified for the CYPTB has not been undertaken at a partnership level; instead individual agencies/partners have taken action. Some priority areas, namely domestic abuse and childhood accident/injury prevention, remain priority areas that need to be progressed.
- 1.6 The significant activity carried out by the LSCB to evaluate the effectiveness of local safeguarding arrangements has provided a rich source of information to enable the LSCB to identify 3 priority areas of safeguarding for 2011-12:-
- Child Sexual Exploitation
 - Domestic Abuse
 - Neglect
- 1.7 The Munro Report into child protection calls for a greater emphasis on understanding the experiences of children, young people and their families of receiving help, as well as measuring the impact of service provision on improving outcomes for children and young people. The LSCB will need to revise its performance management framework in order to gather this information and a greater emphasis will be needed on such activity by partner agencies, and in particular, the Local Authority.

- 1.8 Changes to the commissioning of health services need to be carried out in a way that promotes the safety of children and young people and work will need to be progressed to ensure this happens; including at the needs assessment stage.
- 1.9 Understanding the development needs of the workforce, supporting them to exercise professional judgement and develop and maintain positive working relationships with children, young people and their families, as well as understanding the impact of training on front line practice, will become more significant given the greater emphasis on promoting professional judgement set out in the Munro Report and the forthcoming changes to statutory guidance that will form part of the government's response to the Munro Report.
- 1.10 Work to continue to support all those in contact with children and young people to recognise and act on safeguarding concerns will also need to be maintained; with a specific focus on sport and leisure providers, early years sector and the health community.
- 1.11 Finally, to promote clarity of role and responsibility, as well as the effectiveness of the LSCB, the Board will need to review its governance arrangements and, in particular, working relationship with the CYPTB.
- 1.12 Fifteen recommendations have been made by the LSCB to progress priority areas of business and can be found below.

Recommendations

- (i) The LSCB Chairperson should ensure that the LSCB Annual Report 2010-11 is presented to Chief Executive Officer, Solihull MBC and the Leader of the Council

- (ii) The Leader of the Council should ensure a programmed debate of the LSCB Annual Report 2010-11 at Full Council.
- (iii) The LSCB Chairperson and Children and Young People's Trust Board (CYPTB) Chairperson should ensure a protocol is devised, between the two Boards, that sets out working arrangements and promotes clarity of role; the protocol should be included in both Board's governance frameworks.
- (iv) The Chairperson of the Solihull Partnership Governing Board should ensure a review of LSCB governance arrangements to ensure that the LSCB is adequately held to account for its functioning as a partnership body; this should include a review of LSCB Chairperson arrangements.
- (v) The Director of Public Health should ensure that the LSCB is a formal consultee to the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment.
- (vi) The Director of Public Health should ensure that the LSCB Annual Report 2010-11 is presented to the Shadow Health and Well-Being Board and that the development of local health commissioning arrangements actively addresses the safeguarding of children and young people.
- (vii) The LSCB Executive agency representative of all statutory members of the LSCB should ensure a review of own agency performance management arrangements to ensure data is gathered to measure improved outcomes for children and young people.
- (viii) The Director of Children's Services should ensure the development of a quality assurance framework that includes:-

- The quality assurance activity that will be undertaken in respect of children's plans; including Child Protection Plans and core group functioning.
 - The experiences children, young people and parents/carers have of the helping system; including child protection system
 - The views of front-line staff about how the helping system, including child protection, supports better outcomes for children and young people
- (ix) The Chairperson of the CYPTB should ensure the development of a borough-wide e-safety strategy and the collation of data in respect of childhood accidents/injury and as appropriate, action should be taken to reduce childhood accidents/injury.
- (x) The LSCB Chairperson should ensure a programme of work is in place to promote increased awareness of child safeguarding in the sports and leisure sector in Solihull, including awareness training.
- (xi) The LSCB Executive representative of all statutory members of the LSCB should review internal arrangements to:-
- Identify safeguarding training needs
 - Deliver safeguarding training
 - Manage any unmet training needs
 - Produce an annual report, on safeguarding training, as set out in the LSCB training strategy.

Specific emphasis should be given by the LSCB Executive representative of Birmingham and Solihull Cluster PCT to level 1 and 2 training (inter-collegiate guidance) across the health community and by

the LSCB Executive representative of Solihull MBC to the Early Years Sector, and in particular the childminding workforce.

- (xii) The LSCB Chairperson should ensure a review of the LSCB Performance Management Framework to ensure a greater focus on measuring the experiences of and improved outcomes for children and young people and their families at *all levels of need*; including the impact of training on front line practice.
- (xiii) The LSCB Chairperson should ensure that the LSCB has a Child Sexual Exploitation strategy in place to safeguard children and young people from sexual exploitation.
- (xiv) The LSCB Chairperson should ensure that a work programme is in place to improve identification of and response to children and young people living with neglect.
- (xv) The Chairperson of the Solihull Partnership should hold to account the Chairperson of the Safer Solihull Board to ensure consistent practice to identity, and service provision to support, children and young people affected by domestic abuse.