



## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

**ANNUAL REPORT 2010 - 11**

## 1. Introduction

This is the Executive Summary of the 5th Annual Report for the Bexley Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB). The LSCB is required to produce an Annual Report and Plan of its work. The LSCB in Bexley has a 3 year Business Plan and this is a progress report on its second year.

The full Annual Report can be found on:

[www.bexleylscb.org.uk/news\\_andpublications.html](http://www.bexleylscb.org.uk/news_andpublications.html)

[www.bexley.gov.uk](http://www.bexley.gov.uk)

Partner agencies' websites and the Bexley Schools Portal

## 2. Background

The Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) is a statutory body and is responsible for agreeing how the relevant organisations in each local area will co-operate to safeguard and promote the welfare of local children and for ensuring the effectiveness of agencies' safeguarding practice. Bexley LSCB has, since its establishment in April 2006, complied with the requirements of Section 13 - 14 of the Children Act 2004 and the statutory guidance set down in Working Together to Safeguard Children 2010.

'Working Together' 2010 states that the LSCB should have a clear work programme, including measurable objectives and a budget. The LSCB is required to publish an annual report on the effectiveness of safeguarding in the local area and if required provide a robust challenge to the Children's Trust in respect of any concerns.

The Annual Report provides an analysis of the work undertaken over the past year by the LSCB and its partner agencies. It summarises relevant management information on multi-agency child protection and safeguarding activity in Bexley for the previous year and assesses the progress made against the objectives of the previous year.

The LSCB Business Plan 2009-12 supports the work of the LSCB by setting its strategic priorities over a three year period. The plan includes objectives that are measurable. The plan additionally takes account of national and local developments that the LSCB needs to consider over the coming year. Senior managers and governance bodies for each of the main constituent agencies endorse the LSCB Business Plan. This Annual Report reviews the progress of this Plan after its second year and updates the plan as the work has progressed.

## 3. Summary of the Annual Report

The report covers the key priorities set down in the 3 year Business Plan 2009-12 and the work undertaken for the year 2010-11. The report addresses the progress of the work and updates priorities based on current information.

The report is split into 7 Sections:

a) Governance and accountability

- The LSCB appointed an Independent Chairman in August 2010 as required under Working Together 2010
- Monitoring of attendance and ensuring effective engagement of its members has continued
- Governance Handbook has been updated in line with Working Together 2010
- The LSCB is required to appoint 2 Lay Members by April 2011 and the recruitment process is underway
- Relationship between the LSCB and the Children's Trust has been strengthened particularly in relation to multi-agency service improvement and

the LSCB will continue to work with the wider partnership through the changes in legislation and the establishment of the shadow Health & Wellbeing Board.

- Pooled Budget, the LSCB operates a legally constituted pooled budget. The budget has been set as a nil growth budget for the coming year.

b) Quality & effectiveness of the safeguarding arrangements

- This work is managed through the Quality and Effectiveness Group
- Monitoring of Child Protection Performance Management and Data is undertaken and the report provides analysis of this data
- Under Section 11 Children Act 2004 the LSCB has a responsibility to ensure key organisations safeguard children and promote their welfare in the discharge of their role – work has continued on the strengthening of arrangements following the audit in 2009 that was followed up in 2010. This audit is undertaken biennially and will be repeated in the autumn of 2011
- Multi-agency Practice Audits in respect of children under 2 years presenting at A&E with an injury has been completed and an audit of neglect cases in primary age children is currently underway. The learning from these audits is shared across agencies and used to develop training
- Local Government Improvement & Development Peer Review of Safeguarding Arrangements and the Unannounced Inspection by Ofsted of Contact, Referral & Assessment Services have taken place in 2010 – it was found that overall performance is strong and children are safeguarded
- Monitoring of single agency quality and effectiveness work including health, schools and children social care is undertaken
- Areas of strengths include focus on improving outcomes for children through improved practice and well trained workforce, ensuring policies and procedures are in place. Areas of development include how well the Common Assessment Framework is embedded and used effectively in early identification of safeguarding need and the response to domestic abuse.

c) Learning from Serious Case Reviews (SCR)

- The LSCB has a Standing Serious Case Review Panel that has monitored the Action Plans from SCRs, internal reviews and learning from national SCRs
- The Executive Summaries of the two Serious Case Reviews completed in 2009 have been published following the completion of the criminal proceedings. The resultant action plans have been completed
- A further Serious Case Review was initiated in February 2011, this will be completed by August 2011.

d) Child Death Overview Process

- The LSCB has a statutory responsibility to ensure all child deaths are reviewed through the Child Death Overview Panel (CDOP) and this has been completed
- Briefings for practitioners have been produced on any findings from CDOP cases, this includes window safety and advice about garden ponds.

e) Standing Work of the LSCB in relation to its statutory functions

- Thresholds, policies and procedures. This work has included the publication of a number of inter-agency protocols and review of existing protocols that are all available on the LSCB website
- Ongoing monitoring of the management of allegations against those working with children and training on this and safer recruitment shows that the number of allegations made remains fairly constant. Training is provided on these areas
- Safeguarding in Education – 99% schools have received safeguarding training in the last 3 years as is required by Ofsted. 80% of schools inspected since

June 2009 when the safeguarding requirement was strengthened have been evaluated as outstanding or good for safeguarding, none have been found to be inadequate

- Private fostering is where children are cared for by someone other than their parent or close relative. Notifications of such children remain low as they do nationally but work is ongoing to raise the profile of this vulnerable group of children
- Youth Justice – the relationship between the LSCB and Youth Justice has been strengthened. The Youth Offending Team has been evaluated by the Youth Justice Board to be performing well against national indicators
- Adult Services/Mental Health Services/Drug and Alcohol Services – the work between adult mental health services and children social care have been strengthened and guidance for social workers and practitioners produced. Further work with drug and alcohol services is ongoing with representation on the LSCB now in place
- Training - the LSCB provides multi-agency safeguarding training to the children's workforce across all agencies in the borough. The number of delegates accessing this training has been maintained and the range of training has been expanded to meet practice needs.

f) Progress on specific priority areas in the business plan is analysed for the following categories:

- Work on the priorities included in the Business Plan has continued and developed.
- Focus has been on the needs of children with particular vulnerability through their own problems or that of their parents
- Development and improvement of services for children with additional needs who require targeted safeguarding services including children who go missing, E-safety those who use alcohol excessively, children with disabilities and those from a BME background.

g) Issues and challenges ahead for the LSCB and the Children's Trust

- The Annual Report does have to consider the challenges that are ahead as well as consider any issues identified from reviewing its work. The changes in the public sector in particular health and education as well as the financial constraints facing all organisations will have an impact on the work of the LSCB and this will require particular focus in the coming year.
- The priorities identified include:
  - Further work on the governance of the LSCB
  - Work to develop an outcomes based approach with effective performance management
  - Priority areas of need including:
    - Domestic Violence
    - Alcohol misuse by young people
    - Early intervention including the CAF and Police Merlins
    - Engagement with Adult Drug and Alcohol Service
    - Information sharing
- The close working relationship between the LSCB and the Children's Trust has allowed for a good level of communication and challenge throughout the year. The issues that continue to require the attention of both Boards are:
  - Impact of public services changes, legislation changes and financial constraints on children's services including safeguarding
  - Embedding early intervention the use of the common assessment and team around the child approaches and the mapping of services.