
Meeting	Safeguarding Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Date	10 September 2012
Subject	Barnet Safeguarding Children Board Annual Report 2011/12
Report of	Barnet Safeguarding Children Board
Summary	This report provides an overview of the effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements in Barnet including an assessment of the performance of the Local Authority and partners in delivering outcomes for children. It reviews progress during the last year and identifies challenges and priorities for the year ahead

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Status (public or exempt)	Public
Wards affected	All
Enclosures	Appendix – Annual Report of the Barnet Safeguarding Children Board
Reason for urgency / exemption from call-in	Not applicable

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1. RECOMMENDATION

- 1.1 That the Committee note the work of the Safeguarding Children Board
- 1.2 That the Committee note the progress made and the specific challenges in the forthcoming year, including continued financial support
- 1.3 That the Committee note the priority of monitoring progress in relation to the Ofsted Action Plan
- 1.4 That the Committee endorse the objective that safeguarding across the council and its partners continues to be strengthened through the full engagement of all providers of health services, including through the Health and Well Being Board, and also dialogue with the Clinical Commissioning Group.

2. RELEVANT PREVIOUS DECISIONS

- 2.1 Children's Service Overview and Scrutiny Sub-Committee – 28 April – Decision Item 6

3. CORPORATE PRIORITIES AND POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

- 3.1 Safeguarding is a key priority across the council and partners and is reflected in strategic partnership goals, including the Corporate Plan 2012-13, Health and Well-being Strategy, Sustainable Community Strategy and Commissioning Strategy. The Corporate Plan includes the strategic objectives 'Safeguarding vulnerable children and adults', and 'Working with our partners and residents to keep Barnet safe.'

4. RISK MANAGEMENT ISSUES

- 4.1 A failure to keep children safe represents not only a significant risk to residents but also to the reputation of the Council and partners. The role of the Safeguarding Board is to monitor and challenge the performance of all partner agencies in Barnet to ensure that they are meeting requirements and carrying out their safeguarding responsibilities effectively. A well-functioning Safeguarding Board is essential to reducing the risk of harm to children and young people in Barnet.

5. EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

- 5.1 Ensuring that all children and young people are safeguarded, particularly those that are vulnerable (e.g. with a disability, or children in care), is a key role of the board. Sub-groups of the board work closely with faith, cultural and community groups within Barnet to ensure that safeguarding is embedded and that any children at risk are identified and appropriately supported. The work with Youth Shield has given young people a voice in setting priorities.
- 5.2 The BSCB, in exercising its scrutiny function, has regard for equality considerations in reviewing partnership data.

6. USE OF RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS (Finance, Procurement, Performance & Value for Money, Staffing, IT, Property, Sustainability)

- 6.1 The Annual Report of the Barnet Safeguarding Children Board (BSCB) has been produced as part of the work of the board. The annual gross expenditure of the Barnet Safeguarding Children Board (BSCB) is £162,000, the London Borough of Barnet contribution to this is £98,000, funded by the Children's Service budget. The Board is funded by the London Borough of Barnet and from contributions from partner organisations. Priorities identified for 2013 will be contained within existing approved budgets which partners have agreed to maintain.

7. LEGAL ISSUES

- 7.1 The functions of a Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) are set out in primary legislation (Sections 14 and 14 A of the Children Act 2004) and regulations (Local Safeguarding Children Regulations 2006, SI 2006/90). The core objectives of the LSCB are as follows:

a) to co-ordinate what is done by each person or body represented on the Board for the purposes of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in the area of the authority; and

b) to ensure the effectiveness of what is done by each such person.

- 7.2 These functions are more fully explained in Regulation 5 of the Local Safeguarding Children Regulations which states:

The functions of an LSCB in relation to its objective (as defined in section 14(1) of the Act are as follows:

a) Developing policies and procedures for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in the area of the authority, including policies and procedures in relation to—

I the action to be taken where there are concerns about a child's safety or welfare including thresholds for intervention

II training of persons who work with children or in services affecting the safety and welfare of children

III recruitment and supervision of persons who work with children

IV investigation of allegations concerning persons who work with children

V safety and welfare of children who are privately fostered;

VI co-operation with neighbouring children's services authorities and their Board partners;

(b) communicating to persons and bodies in the area of the authority the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, raising their awareness of how this can best be done, and encouraging them to do so;

- (c) monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of what is done by the authority and their Board partners individually and collectively to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, and advising them on ways to improve;
- (d) participating in the planning of services for children in the area of the authority;
- (e) undertaking reviews of serious cases and advising the authority and their Board partners on lessons to be learned.

7.3 The Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009 introduced a requirement for Local Safeguarding Children Boards (LSCBs) to produce and publish an annual report on the effectiveness of safeguarding in the local area.

8. CONSTITUTIONAL POWERS

8.1 The scope of Scrutiny Committees is contained within Part 2, Article 6 of the constitution.

8.2 The terms of Reference of the Scrutiny Committees are in the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules (Part 4 of the Constitution). The Safeguarding Overview and Scrutiny Committee has within its terms of reference the following responsibilities:

- To scrutinise the Council and its partners in the discharge of statutory duties in relation to safeguarding.
- To scrutinise the provision of education (children and adults), special educational needs provision, and the protection and welfare of children.

9. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

9.1 The Barnet Safeguarding Children Board is tasked with monitoring and challenging the performance of all organisations in Barnet to ensure that children and young people are kept safe. Under the Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009 there is a requirement for the board to produce an annual report outlining the activities it has undertaken over the past year. This is attached as Appendix 1. The Munro review has given further emphasis to the independence of LSCBs in being able to exercise their scrutiny role effectively.

9.2 As outlined in the body of the report, there are a number of key initiatives and opportunities to consolidate partnership working in relation to safeguarding children. This includes the development of Multi-agency Safeguarding Hubs to improve access to information at the first point of contact and risk assessment tools to support timely provision of help. The Committee may therefore wish to consider developing its role in providing overview across the partnership.

9.3 The Barnet Safeguarding Children Board has a key role as a vehicle of learning and improvement and has spearheaded the new approach to learning from review in accordance with the recommendation of the Government. The Committee is asked to endorse this priority.

10. LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

10.1 Working together to safeguard children (March 2010 under revision)
<http://www.workingtogetheronline.co.uk/index.html>

Cleared by Finance (Officer's initials)	MC/JH
Cleared by Legal (Officer's initials)	SH