



Children, Education, Libraries and Safeguarding Committee 21st September 2016

Title	Barnet Safeguarding Children Board (BSCB) Annual Report
Report of	Chris Miller, Independent Chair
Wards	All
Urgent	No
Key	No
Status	Public
Enclosures	Appendix A – Barnet Safeguarding Children Board Annual Report 2015/16 Appendix B – Barnet Safeguarding Children Board Business Plan 2016-18, Executive Summary
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Summary

The Independent Chair of the Barnet Safeguarding Children Board (BSCB) must publish an Annual Report on the effectiveness of child safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in Barnet. National guidance states that the annual report should be published in relation to the preceding financial year and should fit with local agencies' planning, commissioning and budget cycles. The report should be submitted to the Chief Executive, Leader of the Council, the local police and crime commissioner and the Chair of the Health and Wellbeing Board.

The report provides a rigorous and transparent assessment of the performance and effectiveness of local services. It identifies areas of weakness, the causes of those weaknesses and the action being taken to address them as well as other proposals for action (Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015).

Recommendations

- 1. That the Committee notes the Annual Report of the Barnet Safeguarding Children Board, attached at Appendix A.**
- 2. That the Committee notes the summary Safeguarding Children's Board Business Plan for 2016-18, attached at Appendix B, and supports the approach intended to ensure a continued, robust multi-agency approach to safeguarding children in Barnet, with involvement from the Council, Barnet Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG), NHS Trusts, the Police and the Voluntary Sector.**

1. WHY THIS REPORT IS NEEDED

- 1.1 The annual report of the BSCB and bringing it to this Committee fulfils the statutory requirement under the Children Act 2004 to:
 - Report on safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children;
 - Provide a rigorous and transparent assessment of the performance and effectiveness of local services;
 - Identify areas of weakness, causes of those weaknesses and action plans for improvement.
- 1.2 Safeguarding activity is a core element of the Council's responsibilities. Section 19 of the Children Act 2004 states that the Lead Member of Children's Services (LMCS) has political responsibility for the leadership, strategy and effectiveness of Local Authority children's services. The LMCS is responsible for ensuring that the needs of all children and young people, including the most disadvantaged and vulnerable, and their families and carers, are addressed. Safeguarding plays a key role here. This Committee is responsible for ensuring that safeguarding responsibilities are properly taken into account by the Council.
- 1.3 There are three statutory roles: the LMCS, the Director for Children's Services (DCS) and the Chair of the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB). The Chair of the LSCB is an independent appointment charged with holding all agencies to account. The LMCS has political responsibility for the leadership, strategy and effectiveness of Local Authority children's services. The Director for Children's Services (DCS) post has the professional responsibility for children's services. Together they are responsible for ensuring that the needs of all children and young people, including the most disadvantaged and vulnerable, and their families and carers, are addressed, and ensuring that there are clear and effective arrangements to protect children and young people from harm.
- 1.4 The Barnet Safeguarding Children Board (BSCB) Annual Report must also be submitted to the Chief Executive, Leader of the Council, the local police and crime commissioner and the Chairman of the Health and Wellbeing Board.

- 1.5 The Business Plan for 2016-18 sets out the strategic priorities the next two years and provides a series of outcomes to which we will provide evidence of progress and impact. These priorities are driven and informed by:
- A review of the BSCB Business Plan for 2014-2016 and a consultation with members of the BSCB about progress with existing priorities and developing areas of concern
 - Learning from local and national case reviews and audits of practice
 - Learning from children and young people
- 1.6 The Business Plan will be monitored by the BSCB Business Management Group which will ensure the plan remains current and relevant, delivering local and national priorities and responding to emerging local needs. A review of progress made on delivering actions will be produced at the end of the year (March 2017).

2. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 The report provides the Committee with the opportunity to consider the safeguarding of children in Barnet and the work of the Board.

3. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND NOT RECOMMENDED

- 3.1 Not applicable.

4. POST DECISION IMPLEMENTATION

- 4.1 The Annual Report provides details of the Board's priorities and challenges which will be progressed through the business arrangements during 2016/17.
- 4.2 The Barnet Safeguarding Children Board Business Plan is a public document which can be accessed through the BSCB website.

5. IMPLICATIONS OF DECISION

5.1 Corporate Priorities and Performance

- 5.2 The Council, working with local, regional and national partners, will strive to ensure that Barnet is a place of opportunity, that people are helped to help themselves and where services are delivered effectively. The table below demonstrates how activity taking place within safeguarding contributes to these corporate priorities.

Corporate priority	
<p>Transforming Services</p> <p>As we focus on how to transform services, we will take the opportunity to make them as efficient as possible to drive out savings.</p>	Effectively safeguarding children and young people and intervening at as early a stage as possible helps to reduce the need for higher tier, more expensive services.
<p>Managing demand for services</p> <p>Step up change in the council's approach to early intervention and prevention, working across the public sector and with residents to prevent problems rather than just treating the symptoms.</p>	This report details preventative action taking place across Family Service, which helps to ensure that children are safeguarded from harm.
<p>More resilient communities</p> <p>Invest in the infrastructure of the Borough to ensure Barnet continues to be a great place to live and work</p>	Safeguarding plays a key role in ensuring that children and young people in Barnet are able to enjoy a safe childhood and reach their potential

5.4 Resources (Finance & Value for Money, Procurement, Staffing, IT, Property, Sustainability)

5.5 The Annual Report (2015/16) and the Business Plan (2016 – 18) of the Barnet Safeguarding Children Board (BSCB) have been produced as part of the work of the Board. The resources available to the Board are detailed within the report, and these resources are utilised to co-ordinate and manage all work undertaken by the BSCB. The current annual budget of the BSCB is £156,000, which includes the contributions made by partner agencies, of which the Local Authority contribution is £98,000. The budget covers staffing requirements including the Independent Chair of BSCB. The regulations state that the resourcing of the Board should not fall disproportionately on any one member over another, including London Borough of Barnet, whose contribution accounts for 63%. The Metropolitan Police funds LSCBs at a significantly lower level than any other urban Metropolitan Police Force and this impacts all LSCBs including Barnet. All LSCB chairs in London are concerned by this and have sought a better settlement from the Mayor's Office. The Chair of the Board has addressed BSCB partners with a request for a funding increase.

5.6 Social Value

Not applicable.

5.7 Legal and Constitutional References

- 5.8 The Commissioning Director, as the statutory Director of Children's Services, is a member of Board. The Lead Member for Children's Services also attends the Board as a participating observer, in accordance with the statutory guidance for this role. This is in order to ensure that the BSCB can properly hold the Council to account and that the Lead Member can hold the Independent Chair to account for the effective working of the Board.
- 5.9 Section 13 Children Act 2004 contains the statutory requirement for each Local Authority to establish a Local Safeguarding Children Board, including prescribed statutory partner agencies. Section 14A requires that the Independent Chair of the LSCB prepares and publishes a report about the effectiveness of child safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in the local area.
- 5.10 The Working Together 2015 guidance provides further detail on the recommended content of this report. The report attached to this report was approved by the BSCB on 2 September 2016.
- 5.11 As detailed in Annex A of the Responsibility for Functions, in the Council's Constitution, the Committee has responsibility for ensuring that the Council's safeguarding responsibilities are taken into account.

5.12 Risk Management

- 5.13 Not receiving this report would present a risk to the Committee in that they would not be providing a mechanism for the Independent Chair to present the annual report to the Council. Without sight of the report, the Committee could not be satisfied that the Council is properly prioritising and effectively safeguarding children within the Borough, whilst at the same time promoting the welfare of children.
- 5.14 Research shows that the more effective LSCBs are those that concentrate on a few clearly articulated priorities¹, through a business planning processes.

5.15 Equalities and Diversity

- 5.16 Equalities and Diversity considerations are a key element of safeguarding work.
- 5.17 Barnet's diverse population of children and young people is taken into account in the design and delivery of services to safeguard children. There are more children from all Black and Minority Ethnic groups in the 0– 9 age group, than there are White children in Barnet. Children and young people in the 10 – 19 age groups are predominantly White. The highest proportion of people from BAME groups is found in the 0-4 age group (55.4%). In terms of religious diversity, Jewish and Muslim population make up over a quarter of the total population of Barnet. The Board considers the diverse needs of the Borough's population in carrying out its work. There is faith school representation on the

¹ *Local Safeguarding Children Boards, a review of progress*, DCSF, 200

Board in addition to representation of a national faith-based charity which works to support vulnerable children and their families.

5.18 Consultation and Engagement

5.19 This paper provides an opportunity for the Committee to be engaged in the direction of the Barnet Children Safeguarding Board. The Board's Business Plan is informed by the views of lay members and the views of children and young people through the work of Youth Shield.

5.20 Insight

5.21 Data has been used to inform the understanding in the Annual Report presented in Section 2 'Local Demographic Context', and Section 3 'Safeguarding Context' uses insight from the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment and Barnet Council's Corporate Plan

5.22 Data has been used to inform the strategic priorities set out in the Business Plan 2016-18, using the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment and partner data.

6. BACKGROUND PAPERS

6.1 'Statutory guidance on the roles and responsibilities of the Director of Children's Service and the Lead Member for Children's Services' Department of Education April 2013:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/directors-of-childrens-services-roles-and-responsibilities>

6.2 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' March 2015:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/419595/Working_Together_to_Safeguard_Children.pdf

6.3 'Safeguarding Children – A practical guide for overview and scrutiny councillors' LGA:

<http://www.cfps.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/Safeguarding-Children-1.pdf>