



Children & Education Overview & Scrutiny Sub-Committee.

15th January 2024

Title	Barnet Safeguarding Children Partnership Annual Report 2022/23
Report of	Barnet Safeguarding Children Partnership
Wards	All
Status	Public
Urgent	No
Key	No
Enclosures	Appendix A – Barnet Safeguarding Children Partnership 2022/23 Annual Report
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Summary

In September 2019 the Barnet Safeguarding Children Partnership (BSCP) was established, replacing Barnet Safeguarding Children Board with new multi-agency safeguarding arrangements in line with the government guidance *'Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018.'*

The BSCP is a statutory partnership between the Local Authority, North Central London Integrated Care Board (NCL ICB) and Police partners to safeguard children and young people in Barnet and to promote their welfare. It also works with health providers, education and the voluntary, community and faith sector.

The BSCP is required to publish an annual report about how the multi-agency safeguarding arrangements have been delivered. This report is attached at **Appendix A**.

Officers Recommendations

That the Committee scrutinises the Annual Report and provides any comments.

1. WHY THIS REPORT IS NEEDED

- 1.1 In line with government guidance *Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018*, local Safeguarding Children Partnerships must publish an annual report on the effectiveness of their work to promote safeguarding and the welfare of children and young people.
- 1.2 The Committee is asked to scrutinise the Barnet Safeguarding Children Partnership (BSCP) annual report and provide feedback. The annual report is a statutory requirement of the partnership. Officers from the partnership will be present to answer questions.

2. STRATEGIC CONTEXT

BSCP annual report

- 2.1 The annual report sets out what BSCP has achieved over the period September 2022-September 2023 and how the Partnership has worked to deliver the locally agreed six strategic priorities:
 - Strengthening leadership and partnership
 - Tailoring our work to local specific issues
 - Driving continuous improvement to safeguarding practice
 - Responding to serious safeguarding cases effectively
 - Creating a strong feedback loop with children, families & practitioners
 - Measuring & evidencing the impact of our work
- 2.2 It sets out the impact that the Partnership has made in continually improving the multi-agency safeguarding arrangements within the borough and identifies areas of safeguarding practice that all Partners are focussed on tackling. It also provides an overview of progress made against the Partnership's shared safeguarding themes of: Safer Sleeping, tackling Female Genital Mutilation, promoting Family Networks and working together to address cross-Partnership challenges in the recruitment and retention of staff. The annual report includes contributions from all Partners.
- 2.3 Our independent scrutineers visit BSCP once per year to scrutinise and gauge the effectiveness of our multi agency safeguarding arrangements and publish a report outlining their findings for the Partnership to consider. Previous reports can be found [here](#) . Our scrutineers have previously noted that our annual reports reflected guidance published by the institute [What Works for Childrens Social Care](#) which outlines what areas an effective annual report should cover. The Partnership will welcome independent scrutineers once more from week commencing 22nd January 2024

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 The annual report needs to be developed and published in line with statutory requirements for local Safeguarding Children Partnerships. The scrutiny sub committee need to scrutinise the report as part of their yearly cycle of deep dives.

4. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND NOT RECOMMENDED

- 4.1 N/A

5. POST DECISION IMPLEMENTATION

- 5.1 As a multi-agency report by the three statutory partners, the annual report will be submitted to the national Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel ('The Panel') and What Works for Children's Social Care (also known as the Early Intervention Foundation). This is in line with [guidance](#) published by the Panel.
- 5.2 The annual report will be published online [here](#) in due course.

6. IMPLICATIONS OF DECISION

6.1 The Corporate Plan

- 6.1.1 Our Plan for Barnet 2023-26 is centred around being a council that cares for people, our places, and the planet. Being a Family Friendly borough is a key driver of our corporate planning with the vision of "*Creating a Family Friendly Barnet, enabling opportunities for our children and young people to achieve their best*". Family Friendly Barnet consists of:

- Family and Belonging - families and children can be together and be part of a community that encourages resilience.
- Safe and Secure – children and young people are safe protected from harm.
- Education and learning – Children and young people can learn about the world around them.
- Life Chances – children and young people are able to succeed.
- Health and wellbeing – children are supported to achieve a healthy start in life, enjoy a healthy lifestyle and to build resilience.

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

- 6.2.1 Partners including the London Borough of Barnet, Police and Health (NCL ICB) contribute to the annual budget for Barnet Safeguarding Children Partnership and the contributions are set out in the published arrangements (see [online](#))
- 6.2.2 Financial commitments set out in the annual report and proposed by the independent scrutineers will be accounted for within current budgets.
- 6.2.3 The Council continue to support the partnership financially at a greater level than our statutory partners with police funding remaining too low. This has been raised with the Police and MOPAC and is an ongoing matter pan-London.

6.3 Social Value

- 6.3.1 The Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012 requires people who commission public services to think about how they can also secure wider social, economic and environmental benefits.
- 6.3.2 Protecting children from abuse and neglect has clear social value and is at the core of BSCP's purpose and activities. Working in partnership with other local agencies improves responses to safeguarding concerns and delivers better outcomes for children and young people in Barnet.

6.4 Legal and Constitutional References

- 6.4.1 Barnet Safeguarding Children Partnership exists in line with the Children Act 2004, as amended by the Children and Social Work Act 2017, which sets a duty for the local authority, clinical commissioning group and police to make local arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children in their area.
- 6.4.2 The annual report and arrangements for independent scrutiny are in line with Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018, the statutory guidance which sets out the requirements for local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements.
- 6.4.3 Under the Barnet Constitution Part 2 C, the Children & Education Overview and Scrutiny Sub-Committee shall perform the overview and scrutiny role and function in relation to:
- All matters as that relate to Children’s Social Care
 - All matters which relate to services pertaining to the education and well-being of children and young people including youth services
 - Receive and comment upon any external inspections and reviews

6.5 Risk Management

- 6.5.1 BSCP works within a risk management approach aligned to the Council’s Risk Management Framework.

6.6 Equalities and Diversity

- 6.6.1 The 2010 Equality Act outlines the provisions of the Public Sector Equalities Duty which requires Public Bodies to have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and
- other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010
- advance equality of opportunity between people from different groups
- foster good relations between people from different groups.

The broad purpose of this duty is to integrate considerations of equality into day to day business and to keep them under review in decision making, the design of policies and the delivery of services.

- 6.6.2 BSCP works to keep equality at the core of its business and continually considers how Barnet’s diverse populations may face different safeguarding challenges and require different forms of support.

6.7 Corporate Parenting

- 6.7.1 In line with the Children and Social Work Act 2017, the council has a duty to consider Corporate Parenting Principles in decision-making across the council. The outcomes and priorities in the refreshed Corporate Plan, Barnet 2024, reflect the council’s commitment to the Corporate Parenting duty to ensure the most vulnerable are protected and the needs of children are considered in everything that the council does.

6.7.2 BSCP monitors and receives assurance on Barnet's corporate parenting role and reviews reports and performance data on various safeguarding themes which relate to looked-after children.

6.8 Consultation and Engagement

6.8.1 BSCP works with a wide range of local partners to set priorities and deliver activities, including health, police, education and voluntary sector partners. The Partnership has consulted with young people and residents to inform its work over the past year and further consultation and engagement will be driven by the My Say Matters participation strategy.

7 INSIGHT

7.1 BSCP has a multi-agency performance dashboard which helps set priorities and spot emerging trends, and its thematic deep dives draw on research and local and national data.