


Cabinet	 TOWER HAMLETS
30 October 2019	
Report of: Debbie Jones, Corporate Director Children and Culture	Classification: Unrestricted
Tower Hamlets Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) Annual Report 2018-19	

Lead Member	Councillor Danny Hassell, Cabinet Member for Children, School and Young People
Originating Officer(s)	Monawara Bakht, Safeguarding Children Strategy and Governance Manager
Wards affected	All wards
Key Decision?	No
Forward Plan Notice Published	24 September 2019
Reason for Key Decision	N/A
Strategic Plan Priority / Outcome	<p>Priority 1 People are aspirational, independent and have equal access to opportunities</p> <p>Outcome: Children and young people are protected so they get the best start in life and can realise their potential.</p>

Executive Summary

The Tower Hamlets LSCB Annual Report 2018-19 provides an overview of the work undertaken throughout 2018-19 by the Board and its partner members. It includes information about the Board's current governance arrangements, transition to the new safeguarding partnership arrangements, key safeguarding information, progress over the last year following the April 2017 Ofsted's Inspection of Children's Social Care and examples of partnership work and achievements.

The Children and Social Work Act 2017 amended the Children Act 2004 to dissolve the LSCB by 29th September 2019, and transition in to the new local safeguarding children partnership arrangement. This will be the final report of the LSCB.

Recommendations:

The Mayor in Cabinet is recommended to:

1. Note content of the LSCB Annual Report 2018-19
2. Note the specific equalities considerations as set out in paragraph 4.1

1. REASONS FOR THE DECISIONS

- 1.1 The Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) is required to publish an annual report on the effectiveness of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in its locality. The LSCB annual report, which fulfils this responsibility, is appended to this paper.
- 1.2 The content of the Annual Report has been developed and agreed by the Tower Hamlets Local Safeguarding Children Board partners.

2. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 2.1 There are no alternative options. It is a statutory requirement for the LSCB to report to the leader of the council (Mayor) along with the Chief Executive, the Borough Commander, the Crime and Policing Commissioner and Chair of the Health and Wellbeing Board on an annual basis. Although the content and format of the Annual Report can be revised in line with feedback.

3. DETAILS OF THE REPORT

- 3.1 Working Together to Safeguard Children Guidance 2018 requires LSCBs to ensure that local children are safe, and that agencies work together to promote children's welfare:
- 3.2 *"The chair of the LSBC must publish an annual report on the effectiveness of child safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in the local area. The annual report should be published in relation to the preceding financial year.*

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 who should note its findings and inform the Independent LSCB Chair of actions they intend to take in relation to the findings and priorities"

- 3.3 Since 2017, there has been a significant focus on post-inspection improvement work by children's social care with the support of partner agencies. Ofsted re-inspected children's social care in June 2019 and judged

them to be 'good' in all areas, noting that all cases examined found no child had been left at risk.

- 3.5 The content of this report is structured as follows:
- 3.6 Executive Summary on page 4 consolidates the borough's child protection and safeguarding profile and performance information. Partners are encouraged to display the infographics in staff and public areas.
- 3.7 Section 1 describes the current legislative and local governance framework of Tower Hamlets LSCB, the membership and costs of running the board. A description is included of the new safeguarding partnership system.
- 3.8 Section 2 provides the borough's demographic and safeguarding information in order to contextualise the experience of local people.
- 3.9 Section 3 sets out the partnership work undertaken in the past year referencing published serious case reviews. Children's social care report on the progress they made against the 2017 inspection findings.
- 3.10 The LSCB will be replaced by the Tower Hamlets Safeguarding Children Partnership (THSCP) in September 2019. The new partnership will develop its priorities for 2019-20.
- 3.11 The agreed safeguarding arrangement was published on the Council Website in June 2019.

4. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 Each year, the LSCB Priorities are designed to ensure that all children have access to early help support and statutory intervention when needed to keep them safe from harm, at home and in the community, and to tackle the challenges they face individually or as a family unit to help them grow in to healthy adults. The new safeguarding partnership will continue to ensure all children are protected from risk and harm.

5. OTHER STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 This section of the report is used to highlight further specific statutory implications that are either not covered in the main body of the report or are required to be highlighted to ensure decision makers give them proper consideration. Examples of other implications may be:
- Best Value Implications,
 - Consultations,
 - Environmental (including air quality),
 - Risk Management,
 - Crime Reduction,
 - Safeguarding.

5.2 **Safeguarding**

5.3 Safeguarding has an important interface with crime and disorder. Effective safeguarding means that children and young people are safe from harm caused by crime, for example abuse, violence, radicalisation and exploitation. The report sets out the partnership links with that of the Community Safety Partnership through the vulnerable young people and exploitation work strand.

5.4 **Risk Management**

5.5 The LSCB maintained a risk and issues register, which was regularly monitored by the LSCB chair. Risk areas causing serious interagency or systems difficulties were escalated to the council's chief executive officer or equivalent senior office of the relevant agency.

5.6 There are a number of risks associated with the development of the THSCP, therefore, a full risk register is being assembled and mitigating actions will be monitored and challenged by the independent scrutineer.

6. **COMMENTS OF THE CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER**

6.1 In 2018-19 the service overspent by circa £40k, which is largely attributable to the number of serious cases and other independent reviews conducted. With completion of the Ofsted inspection this trend is not projected to continue in 2019-20.

6.2 In June 2019, Tower Hamlets Safeguarding Children Board (THSCB) replaced the LSCB. The development of the THSCB is led by key partners including schools, colleges and the voluntary sector. Joint resourcing responsibilities of the THSCB falls on Tower Hamlets Council (LBTH) which provided over 75 per cent of the funding contribution in 2018-19, Tower Hamlets Clinical Commissioning Group (THCCG) about 20 percent, the MET Police and other partners.

6.3 Funding discussion for THSCB should happen prior to June 2020. Currently, LBTH is the largest financial contributor responsible about for circa 75 per cent of THSCP annual budgetary contribution in 2018-19.

7. **COMMENTS OF LEGAL SERVICES**

7.1 The Council has established the LSCB in accordance with its current obligation under section 13 of the Children Act 2004. Section 14A of the Children Act 2004 requires the LSCB Chair to publish an annual report on the effectiveness of child safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in the local area. 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, Mayor, the local Police and Crime Commissioner and the Chair of the Health and Wellbeing Board.

- 7.2 The annual report should provide a rigorous and transparent assessment of the performance and effectiveness of local services. It should identify areas of weakness, the causes of those weaknesses and the action being taken to address them as well as other proposals for action. The report should include lessons from reviews undertaken within the reporting period. The appended report complies with these requirements.
- 7.3 There is no statutory equivalent requirement to publish an annual report within the amendments to the Children Act 2004 introduced by Children and Social Work Act 2017, which is now in force. However, Tower Hamlets Safeguarding Children Partnership has published its local arrangements, which set out that the THSCP will prepare an annual report which will evaluate the effectiveness of its own work, as well as that of the local multi-agency partnership to demonstrate accountability to its member agencies and to the local community for its work.

Linked Reports, Appendices and Background Documents

Linked Report

- None

Appendices

- Tower Hamlets Safeguarding Children Board Annual Report 2018-19

Background Documents – Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements)(Access to Information)(England) Regulations 2012

- None

Officer contact details for documents:

- N/A