

## Health and Wellbeing Board

9<sup>th</sup> March 2021

<b>Title:</b>	<b>Safeguarding Children Partnership - Annual report 2019 - 2020</b>
<b>Report of the Safeguarding Children Partnership.</b>	
<b>Open Report</b>	<b>For Information</b>
<b>Wards Affected:</b> N/A	<b>Key Decision:</b> No
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<b>Accountable Officer:</b> Elaine Allegretti, Director of People and Resilience	
<b>Summary:</b>  The Barking and Dagenham Safeguarding Children Partnership (BDSCP) Annual report provides an opportunity to highlight the progress that the Safeguarding Children Partnership, consisting of the Local Authority, NHS BHR Clinical Commissioning Group and the Police, has made in achieving the safeguarding priorities in 2019/20.  The report outlines key demographic and performance data, findings from multi-agency audits, progress updates from each of the Working Group Chairs and feedback from some of our key partner agencies. The report also outlines the Partnership's priorities for 2020/21 and the new Barking and Dagenham Safeguarding Children Partnership structure and its interface with the tri-borough safeguarding partnership that includes Barking & Dagenham, Havering and Redbridge.	
<b>Recommendation(s)</b>  The Health and Wellbeing Board is asked to note and approve the content of the report.	
<b>Reason(s)</b>  Working Together 2018 guidance, stipulates that Safeguarding Partners must publish an Annual Report, within a twelve-month period. The report it is to be sent to the National Safeguarding Practice Review Panel, within 7 days of publication. The Board is asked note the content and approve the report.	

### 1. Introduction and Background

- 1.1 The Barking and Dagenham Safeguarding Children Partnership (BDSCP) Annual report is an opportunity to highlight the progress that the Safeguarding Partnership, consisting of the Local Authority, NHS BHR Clinical Commissioning Group and the Police, has made in achieving its safeguarding priorities in 2019/20.
- 1.2 The report outlines key demographic and performance data, findings from multi-agency audits, progress updates from each of the Working Group Chairs and

feedback from some of our partner agencies. The report also outlines the Partnership's safeguarding priorities for 2020/21.

## **2. Key aspects of the report**

- 2.1 In accordance with the guidance outlined in 'Working Together 2018', much work has been done, and is still to be done, to transition from a Local Safeguarding Children Board into a Local Safeguarding Children's Partnership. The BDSCP has focused on getting the leadership right and embedding a stronger foundation for collaborative working. Whilst this took time, a solid basis to build on has been established.
- 2.2 The Barking, Havering and Redbridge Safeguarding Partnership was established in 2019/20 enabling an integrated approach to addressing the shared safeguarding needs, bringing together the infrastructure required, across the three boroughs, to tackle the joint priorities, such as young people's involvement with and at risk of gang culture, knife crime and child exploitation.
- 2.3 The Annual report provides a progress update on the work carried out in context of addressing the 2019/20 safeguarding priorities outlined below:
  - Tackling knife crime and gang culture.
  - Protection of vulnerable children and young people from all forms of exploitation.
  - Reducing the impact of domestic abuse.
  - Strengthening work at pre-birth stage to minimise neglect.
  - Establishing consistent and agreed thresholds across the partnership.
- 2.4 The BDSCP has delivered many of its priorities for 2019/20, despite facing some significant changes. In common with the rest of the country, all partner agencies services were re-directed to respond and manage the impact of the Coronavirus pandemic. The overall impact and response to the pandemic will be outlined in our 2020/21 annual report.
- 2.5 To tackle knife crime, gang culture and exploitation, a multi-agency Contextual Safeguarding and Exploitation Strategic group was established. The group worked in partnership with the University of Bedfordshire to coordinate and support a multi-agency approach to Contextual Safeguarding in the borough. The Exploitation strategy was signed off in April 2019, providing partner agencies with a clear mandate within which to operate. Five Contextual Safeguarding Champions from across the multi-agency partnership have been trained and will enable further training to be cascaded across the partnership.
- 2.6 To improve the connectivity between schools and the wider partnership and enable concerns to be referred early on and for pupils and parents to access support, the Youth at Risk Matrix (YARM) was implemented. YARM workers offer both 1-1 and group work in primary schools, including teacher training, with the aim to prevent children becoming victims of criminal exploitation.
- 2.7 To reduce incidents of serious youth crime, knife carrying and exclusions, a Step Up and Stay Safe programme was implemented which included commissioning a range of interventions across universal, targeted and specialist services, including working with schools.

- 2.8 All Partners worked tirelessly over 2019/20 to adopt a whole system approach to tackling domestic violence in Barking and Dagenham. A new Domestic and Sexual Violence service was commissioned and went live in October 2019. In May 2019, the Local Authority implemented DV FLAG East, which is a collaboration between the Council's Legal team and Barking & Dagenham Citizen's Advice to improve access to legal advice for families experiencing domestic abuse. Partner agencies adopted the 'The Safe & Together'™ Model: an internationally recognised suite of tools and interventions designed to help child welfare professionals become domestic violence informed which has been rolled out across the partnership. In February 2020, the Barking and Dagenham Domestic Abuse Commission was launched. A key priority in 2020/21 is to take forward the recommendations of the Commission to bring about effective change.
- 2.9 A multi-agency 'task-and-finish' group was established to define and document the response to tackling neglect in the borough. A multi-agency Neglect strategy was produced, and implementation of the action plan commenced. This involved the establishment of a multi-agency pre-birth service, consisting of social workers, health visitors and midwifery, so to identify and respond to the risks of vulnerable new-born babies much earlier and assess parenting capabilities more robustly to inform future care planning. As a result of this service, new-born babies are prevented from being exposed to neglect and our aim is to break the intergenerational cycle of neglect.
- 2.10 The Graded 2 Care Profile Assessment Toolkit for Neglect was commissioned through NSPCC, with nominated multi-agency professionals trained in its use with the view to rolling out this training across the partnership in 2020/21.
- 2.11 Significant improvement is required across the Early Help landscape, of which all partner agencies are committed to take forward as a priority in 2020/21. In 2019/20, partners were engaged in developing a new multi-agency thresholds framework, starting from the basis of establishing a common understanding of terminology across the partnership. This work is to continue into 2020/21 and is a key priority for the Neglect and Early Help Delivery Group.
- 2.12 The report reflects that two multi-agency audits were undertaken over 2019/20, outlining positive findings and areas requiring improvement, as well as what was done to address them. The two audits were:
- Help and Protection (covering Section 47's, Child Protection Plans, Child in Need and Early Help)
  - Child Sexual Abuse in family environment
- There remains much learning to be taken forward into 2020/21.
- 2.13 Chair summary reports have been received from CDOP, Early Help, Performance and Quality, the Contextual Safeguarding & Exploitation Strategic Group, MASE and the Practice Development Training working groups. All the chair's summary reports reflect the progress made in addressing the 2019/20 priorities and what the priorities are for 2020/21. As to Child Deaths, between April 2019 and March 2020 the CDOP was notified of 27 deaths of children who were resident in Barking and Dagenham. CDOP identified and reviewed one (1) case during 2019/20 where the panel identified modifiable factors and the learning from this case has been take forward.

- 2.14 There was only one serious case review in 2019/20 – Child F, a 9-month-old baby who died because of a head injury whose mother was a Care Leaver. The report outlines what was learnt and what has been done to implement improvements to services, it includes establishing the multi-agency pre-birth assessment team within Children’s Social Care.
- 2.15 Working through the challenges of 2019/20 has galvanised partnership working across our Statutory Safeguarding leaders and solidified their ambition for taking forward a bold and innovative vision for 2020/21. This includes de-professionalising the role of the Independent Scrutineer and making this role more representative of local communities in carrying out its scrutiny functions. Recruitment to this post is due to commence in March 2021.
- 2.16 The key focus of the Safeguarding Partnership is to get the basics right which will underpin all work that is carried out in delivering the 2020/21 safeguarding priorities. These priorities are as follows:
- Strengthen multi-agency working to protect and safeguard vulnerable children and young people from all forms of exploitation.
  - Strengthen multi-agency working in the early identification and support for children at risk of suffering from harm resulting from neglect and domestic violence.
  - Safeguard children with additional needs and promote their welfare.
  - Protect vulnerable children and young people from sexual abuse.
  - Embed our Safeguarding structure and Independent Scrutiny arrangements with a strong focus on evidencing the impact on improving the lives for children, young people and families.
  - Respond to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- 2.17 Our cross-cutting priorities are to understand the lived experience of the child; improve their lived experience and outcomes because of our involvement and evidence the impact we have made.

### **3 Consultation**

- 3.1 Safeguarding partners have been involved in the development of the Annual report and have fed into the development of our 2020/21 Safeguarding priorities.
- 3.2 Children and young people have actively been involved in informing the recruitment of our Independent Scrutineer and in informing the priorities of this role and will be involved in the recruit of this post.
- 3.3 The Annual report has been through the following governance structures.

Safeguarding Executive Group	17 <sup>th</sup> December 2021
People and Resilience Management Group (PRMG)	4 <sup>th</sup> February 2021
Portfolio for Social Care and Health Integration	16 <sup>th</sup> February 2021

**4.4 Financial Implications**

None.

**4.5 Legal Implications**

None.