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**Meeting:** Children’s Services Overview and Scrutiny  
**Date:** 11 November 2014  
**Subject:** Central Bedfordshire Safeguarding Children Board Annual Report 2013 – 2014  
**Report of:** Cllr Mark Versallion, Executive Member for Children’s Services  
**Summary:** Local Safeguarding Children Boards (LSBs) are required to produce and publish an annual report on the effectiveness of child protection in their local area. The Annual Report of the Central Bedfordshire Safeguarding Children Board sets out the extent to which the functions of the LSCB as set out in statutory guidance are being effectively discharged.

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**Advising Officer:** Sue Harrison, Director of Children’s Services  
**Contact Officer:** Karen Oellermann, Assistant Director, Commissioning and Partnerships  
**Public/Exempt:** Public  
**Wards Affected:** All  
**Function of:** Central Bedfordshire Council and LSCB statutory partners

## **CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS**

### **Council Priorities:**

1. This report supports the Central Bedfordshire Councils priority to: “Promote health and wellbeing and protecting the vulnerable” and reports on the Local Safeguarding Children Board’s business priorities for 2013 – 2014.

### **Financial:**

2. Key statutory agencies are required by statutory guidance set out in ‘Working Together 2013’ to contribute towards the costs of an effective working Local Safeguarding Children Board. These costs are set out in Section 6 of the Annual Report which describes Governance and Accountability.

### **Legal:**

3. Working Together 2013 states that the Chair of the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) must publish an annual report on the effectiveness of child safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in the local area. This is a statutory requirement under section 14A of the Children Act 2004.
4. This statutory guidance covers:
  - a) the legislative requirements and expectations on individual services to safeguard and promote the welfare of children; and
  - b) a clear framework for Local Safeguarding Children Boards (LSCBs) to monitor the effectiveness of local services.

**Risk Management:**

5. The Central Bedfordshire Safeguarding Children Board manages and mitigates risk by regularly reviewing and monitoring a risk log. Reputational and child protection and safeguarding risks would arise if Central Bedfordshire Council, in conjunction with partner agencies, did not ensure that robust arrangements are in place to safeguard and promote the welfare of children at risk of harm and that the effectiveness of multi agency arrangements was not appropriately monitored, reviewed and responded to by the Central Bedfordshire Safeguarding Children Board.

**Staffing (including Trades Unions):**

6. Not Applicable.

**Equalities/Human Rights:**

7. 'Working Together 2013' stipulates a child centred approach and refers to the following obligations on partners when working together to safeguard children:
  - the Equality Act 2010 puts a responsibility on public authorities to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination and promote equality of opportunity. This applies to the process of identification of need and risk faced by the individual child and the process of assessment. No child or group of children must be treated any less favourably than others in being able to access effective services which meet their particular needs; and
  - the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). This is an international agreement that protects the rights of children and provides a child-centred framework for the development of services to children. The UK Government ratified the UNCRC in 1991 and, by doing so, recognises children's rights to expression and receiving information.

**Public Health**

8. The work of the Central Bedfordshire Safeguarding Board and its focus on aligns with and supports the following Health and Wellbeing priorities:
  - Giving every child the best start in life
    - Babies have the best start in life
    - Parents or carers are equipped to nurture their child and the impacts of toxic trio are minimised
    - All children arrive at school in a great position to learn
  - Ensuring good mental health and wellbeing at every age
    - Children, young people and adults are emotionally resilient
    - Children young people and adults with mental health illness recover quickly
    - People with poor mental health live as healthily and for as long as those with good mental health

**Community Safety:**

9. Domestic abuse is a community safety priority and the impact of domestic abuse on children was one of the priorities for the Board during 2013-2014. Significant attention was given to this issue during the year with a particular focus on the impact on children who live with it. The Annual report sets out the challenges that the Board highlighted in relation to the sustainable funding for the Independent Domestic Violence Advisor Service.

**Sustainability:**

10. There are no new sustainability implications arising from the Report

**Procurement:**

11. Not applicable.

**RECOMMENDATION:****The Committee is asked to:-**

- note and comment on the achievements and challenges described within the Central Bedfordshire Safeguarding Children Annual Report 2013 - 14

**Background**

12. Working Together 2013 states that the Chair of the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) must publish an annual report on the effectiveness of child safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in the local area (this is a statutory requirement under section 14A of the Children Act 2004). The annual report should be published in relation to the preceding financial year and should fit with local agencies' planning, commissioning and budget cycles.
13. 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. This report is also submitted to the Children's Trust and Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee for information.
14. 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.
15. The report should also list the contributions made to the LSCB by partner agencies and details of what the LSCB has spent, including on Child Death Reviews, Serious Case Reviews and other specific expenditure such as learning events or training. All LSCB member organisations have an obligation to provide LSCBs with reliable resources (including finance) that enable the LSCB to be strong and effective. Members should share the financial responsibility for the LSCB in such a way that a disproportionate burden does not fall on a small number of partner agencies.

16. This report therefore provides Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny members with a view of the LSCBs achievements and challenges during 2013-2014. This report shows how LSCB partners have worked together and individually to keep children safe, deliver our agreed Board priorities and meet our statutory objectives to:
- coordinate 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; and
  - ensure the effectiveness of what is done by each such person or body for those purposes.
17. The foreword from the Independent Chair provides a summary of the key achievements and challenges.

**Appendices:**

Appendix A – Central Bedfordshire Local Safeguarding Children Board Annual Report 2013 -2014.