

Central Bedfordshire Council

EXECUTIVE

2 April 2019

Central Bedfordshire Multi-Agency Safeguarding Arrangements

Report of: Alan Caton, Independent chair of the LSCB
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This report relates to a decision that is Key

Purpose of this report

The following report provides details of the proposed Central Bedfordshire Multi-Agency Safeguarding Arrangements that have been drafted by Strategic Officers within Central Bedfordshire Council Children's Services, Bedfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group and Bedfordshire Police. The local safeguarding arrangements were reviewed following the publication of Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 and it is proposed that the attached arrangements replace the current Local Safeguarding Children Board arrangements from the 1 September 2019.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Executive is asked to:

- 1. approve the proposed Central Bedfordshire Multi-Agency Safeguarding Arrangements.**

Overview and Scrutiny Comments/Recommendations

1. The report was considered by Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the 12 March 2019 and the Committee:
 - NOTED the report and welcomed the work which had been undertaken to introduce the new arrangements, also highlighting the need for the new board to examine more closely the links between the increase in school exclusions and safeguarding risks to children, and to ensure that partners were willing to readily divulge information with each other in the best interests of the child.

Background:

2. Alan Wood's review of the role and functions of local safeguarding children boards, The Wood Review of Local Safeguarding Children Boards, was published in March 2016. The review found widespread agreement that the current system of local multi-agency child safeguarding needed to change and proposed a new model to ensure collective accountability across local authorities, the police service and the NHS.
3. The new Children's and Social Work Act 2017 removed the requirement for Local Authorities to establish LSCBs and instead to place a duty on three safeguarding partners – the local authority, police and health - to work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in their area.
4. Safeguarding Partnerships: The safeguarding partners are required to make arrangements to work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in their area. They will have the power to identify and place a duty on other relevant agencies to co-operate with their arrangements. It will be for local areas to decide how this should work in practice and what geographical area their arrangements will cover.
5. Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 was published in July 2018 and outlines the requirements of local Multi-Agency Safeguarding Arrangements and the details that need to be published.

Local Arrangements:

6. Locally the Pan Bedfordshire Strategic Leaders of Children's Services Board was set up to review the current structures and arrangements in place across Bedfordshire and develop and agree arrangements going forward.
7. The Board consists of Strategic Leads from the following agencies:
 - Central Bedfordshire Council – Children's Services
 - Bedford Borough Council – Children's Services
 - Luton Borough Council – Children's Services
 - Bedfordshire Police
 - Bedfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group
 - Luton Clinical Commissioning Group
 - The 3 Local Safeguarding Children Board Independent Chairs
 - The 3 Local Safeguarding Board Business Managers
8. The Board agreed some initial key principles in relation to taking this work forward:
 - Safeguard the rights of all children consistently across the county but not losing the focus on the needs of Central Bedfordshire children and young people.
 - That all partners keep the child in focus when making decisions about their lives and work in partnership with them and their families.

- All partners to champion a continuous cycle of learning, to further develop service provision and delivery to support the child and their family.
 - Duty to co-operate on all partners, particularly schools.
 - Independent challenge, authority and resource to fulfil both statutory functions & ensure learning.
 - That any change is not led by austerity or efficiencies but by measurable improvements in the safeguarding system that benefit children and families.
9. The Board also established that it wanted to retain three Strategic Safeguarding Children boards across Bedfordshire that are independently chaired along with three individual Case Review Groups which are also independently chaired. The Case Review Groups will be responsible for taking forward the new Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews and linking in with the new National Safeguarding Practice Review Panel.
10. Underneath the strategic boards as much work as possible will be completed using a pan Bedfordshire approach where appropriate.
11. Therefore, the Central Bedfordshire Multi-Agency Safeguarding Arrangements will consist of the following:
- An independently chaired Strategic Safeguarding Children Board
 - An independently chaired Case Review Group
 - A Pan Bedfordshire Co-ordinating Group (Executive/Core Group overseeing work of sub-groups)
 - A set of Core Groups which are the standing sub-groups of the Safeguarding Board arrangements, these groups are:
 - A Pan Bedfordshire Policies and Procedure Group
 - A Pan Bedfordshire Voice of the Child
 - A Pan Bedfordshire Performance Group (which links with a local Central Bedfordshire Performance Group)
 - A Pan Bedfordshire Learning and Improvement and Training Group
 - A set of sub-groups which relate to the priority areas of the Strategic Boards – these may change over time if the priorities change, these groups are:
 - A Pan Bedfordshire Neglect Group
 - A Pan Bedfordshire Technology Group
 - A Pan Bedfordshire Strategic CSE and Missing Group
 - A Pan Bedfordshire CSE and Missing Operational
 - A Pan Bedfordshire Young People’s Mental Health Group

- Other meetings – there are currently two other meetings which take place in addition to the above:
 - FGM, Honour Based Abuse and Forced Marriage)
 - Safer Borders Meeting – this meeting is an update meeting with Border Force from Luton Airport
- Central Bedfordshire currently has a Children’s Leadership Board which includes membership from Central Bedfordshire Council Children’s Services, Bedfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group, Bedfordshire Police and LSCB Independent Chair, it is therefore suggested that this group oversees the Central Bedfordshire Safeguarding Arrangements and the Central Bedfordshire Safeguarding Children Board Strategic Group reports up to this Board. Where possible individual membership from the safeguarding partners who sit on the Children’s Leadership Board and the Central Bedfordshire Safeguarding Children’s Strategic Board should be different to offer an extra level of appropriate challenge.

12. The Multi-Agency Safeguarding Arrangements are attached to this report along with its appendices:

- Appendix A – Terms of Reference for the Central Bedfordshire Safeguarding Children Board (Multi-Agency Safeguarding Arrangements)
- Appendix B – Flowchart Process for Safeguarding Practice Reviews
- Appendix C – Multi-Agency Safeguarding Training Arrangements

13. It is suggested that the three Safeguarding Arrangements within Bedfordshire (Central Bedfordshire, Bedford and Luton) should go live and be implemented on the same day, 1 September 2019.

Council Priorities

14. Implementing the new Multi-Agency Safeguarding Arrangements supports the following Council priority:

- Protecting the vulnerable; improving wellbeing.

Corporate Implications

Legal Implications

15. The Children and Social Work Act 2017 and ‘Working Together to Safeguard Children’ Guidance published by central government in July 2018 places a responsibility on the Police, local Clinical Commissioning Group and local Authorities in an area to establish and put in place local multi-agency arrangements for safeguarding children. These arrangements must be published by 29 June 2019 and implemented no later than the 29 September 2019.

Financial and Risk Implications

16. The Multi-agency Safeguarding Arrangements are funded by the multi-agency safeguarding partners on an annual basis, these arrangements remain the same as for the previous LSCB funding arrangements. The funding amounts are detailed with the attached report.

Equalities Implications

17. 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. The safeguarding arrangements are keen to ensure that no child or group of children are treated any less favourably than others in being able to access effective services which meet their particular need, as a consequence all reports received by the Strategic Safeguarding Children Board request agencies to identify any equalities implications. No significant issues were raised during this reporting period.
18. The Multi-Agency Safeguarding Arrangements will be responsible for scrutinising equalities information within its day to day work on a regular basis and some examples include CSE, Missing Children, Looked After Children, Neglect, Forced Marriage, Honour Based Abuse, FGM and youth offending data.

Conclusion and next Steps

19. Executive are asked to agree the proposed Multi-Agency Safeguarding Arrangements. The arrangements will then need to be published on the 29 June and implemented by the 29 September 2019.
20. It is suggested that the three Safeguarding Arrangements within Bedfordshire (Central Bedfordshire, Bedford and Luton) should go live and be implemented on the same day, 1 September 2019

Appendices

Appendix A - The Multi-Agency Safeguarding Arrangements

- Appendix A1 – Terms of Reference for the Central Bedfordshire Safeguarding Children Board (Multi-Agency Safeguarding Arrangements)
- Appendix B1 – Flowchart Process for Safeguarding Practice Reviews
- Appendix C1 – Multi-Agency Safeguarding Training Arrangements

Background Papers

None

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