

Brighton & Hove LSCB: Board Briefing

June 2015

Welcome to Brighton & Hove Local Children Safeguarding Board Briefing. The Board meeting was held on 2 June 2015. We welcomed several new faces committed to effective safeguarding of children, including Tom Bewick, the new lead councillor for children, Brighton & Hove City Council's Interim Head of Housing, Sussex Police's new Detective Chief Inspector for Protecting Vulnerable People, Kent Surrey & Sussex Community Rehabilitation Company's Resettlement Director, the Community Safety Manager for Refugees & Migrants, as well as a new lay member and the Business Manager of Milton Keynes LSCB who was observing.

Participation & Engagement Subcommittee

Buddy Day is a community event aimed at raising awareness and starting conversations about the role every adult plays in preventing child abuse. It is a nationally recognised themed day developed and introduced in New Zealand. The day is about keeping children safe and is a vehicle to start conversations about the wellbeing of children by sending life size cardboard 'children' into the community for a day with business people, politicians and members of the public. The Chair of the Participation and Engagement Subcommittee bought to Board a proposal to develop and introduce a small Buddy Day pilot in Brighton & Hove in the autumn 2015 using eight local schools and several local businesses. The proposal was met



generated a lively discussion. The Board agreed that the project may be more around child safety rather than child abuse and will probably be in the New Year in order to give time to plan and carefully think out. In the meantime a set up meeting with key stakeholders has been arranged.

Early Help Hub (EHH) & MASH (Multi-agency Safeguarding Hub MASH) Initial Review

The Executive Director of Children's Services gave the Board an update on the first three months of the Early Help Hub and Multi-agency Safeguarding Hub, both of which were launched in September 2014. The MASH provides a single point of contact for safeguarding concerns in the city. The EHH provides a route for enquiries and referrals where there are concerns about a child or young person that doesn't meet the social work threshold.

The initial review was to take an early test regarding impact and effectiveness of both the MASH and the EHH with a close view on how the two systems are operating together to ensure referrals are made correctly and looking at how cases are passed between the two hubs.

Example of findings: EHH

The EHH has successfully introduced a new first point of contact for all enquiries and referrals regarding children at tiers 1-3 and for cases forwarded by the MASH and stepped down from Social Work.

The Weekly Allocation meeting is well-attended by a range of agencies and professionals and provides an effective and efficient forum for discussion and decision making.

The number of EH Family Assessments and Plans registered with the EHH remains lower than anticipated and has been raised with the EH partnership board and further work will be undertaken in respect of current paperwork and the commissioning of a new electronic system.

Example of findings: MASH

MASH has been successful in creating a specific point of contact for concerns about a child to be relayed. It promotes a safe forum for concerns to be discussed and decisions made for further action in consultation with partners.

Referrals to Children's Social Work remain high. Re-referrals to the MASH appear higher than average. Work is underway to check re-referrals are being captured correctly and to explore reasons.

A proportion of the re-referrals reflect professionals feeling confident to re-refer should concerns persist.

Cases RAG rated Red receive a quicker response.

Example of joint findings

Multi-agency partnerships are showing signs of improved decision making and service delivery. Timely follow up to referrers and families from MASH and Early Help reduces the likelihood of re-referral through provision/co-ordination of services.

Jointly owned data and workload systems are key to effective communication, information sharing and review of decision making and outcomes. Multiple recording systems and lack of clear recording increases risk and can delay decision making. Children and their families would benefit from a more streamlined pathway that ensures connectivity between all teams involved and clear recording that is available to all relevant professionals involved with a family.

Operation Encompass

An approach first launched in Plymouth in 2011 to make sure that information about children caught up in a domestic abuse incident is shared with schools as soon as possible, is to be trialled in schools in the autumn term in Brighton & Hove. Safeguarding children exposed to domestic violence and abuse (DV&A) is one of the priorities for the LSCB. This is due to the risks posed to children living with DV&A and its prevalence in the City. Detective Superintendent Paul Furnell updated the Board on progress. Known as Operation Encompass, its purpose is to enable schools to have the information about a domestic abuse incident, where a child was present, quickly so they can give relevant and tailored support to children to help them to feel safe. Children are often the hidden victims when it comes to domestic abuse in the home, the launch of Operation Encompass is a key milestone in supporting and protecting children who have witnessed or been in the home when an incident has occurred. We know from statistics presented to Board that for children subject to a Child Protection Plan (CPP) the most frequent contributory factor is Domestic Violence & Abuse. Behind every statistic there is an individual story; and without access to timely information staff in schools can misinterpret behaviours and miss opportunities to play a key role in providing support.

If you would like to know more about this approach please contact Richard.Bates@sussex.pnn.police.uk

Monitoring & Evaluation Annual Report

The main focus of this subcommittee's work in 2014/15 has been continuing to oversee a programme of multi-agency audits, revising the child level data provided to the LSCB, consolidating the LSCB's Quality Assurance Framework (QAF), sharing findings from audits with frontline staff and tracking action plans.

Over the year membership expanded to include an LSCB lay member, the Violence Against Women & Girls Programme Board Commissioner, the Service Manager for the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub and the Early Help Hub Coordinator.

In 2014/15 four multi agency audits were presented to the subcommittee. The first covered child sexual abuse cases and strategy meetings. The second multi agency audit addressed domestic violence and abuse. The third multi agency audit was unusual in that it was a thematic review of young parents and domestic violence. The fourth multi agency audit was of child sexual exploitation. You can read more about the audit activity on the Quality Assurance's pages on our website

www.brightonandhovelscb.org.uk/quality-assurance

Modern Slavery: National and Local Developments

Community Safety Manager – Refugees and Migrants, attended Board to talk about the national and local developments with regards to Modern Slavery. She advised that the landmark Modern Slavery Bill has now received Royal Assent and become the Modern Slavery Act 2015. This is the first legislation in Europe to specifically target this crime. The Act re-defines modern slavery and strengthens the sentencing regime (those who commit these appalling crimes can receive up to a life sentence). The Modern Slavery Strategy puts victims at the heart of the response to modern slavery. This new Act significantly enhances support and protection for victims. For example, it introduces a statutory defence for slavery or trafficking victims to help ensure they are treated by the authorities as victims not criminals.

It is important to note that the government's modern slavery strategy incorporates the Child Sexual Exploitation agenda, seeing this as part of the broader modern slavery work-plan for the government. The intention with the new act and strategy is to give this type of crime a higher profile in how law enforcement agencies and community safety partners combat it.

LSCBs, should ensure that there is widespread awareness of the signs and indicators of modern slavery and robust mechanisms for protecting children. We agreed that it is important that we keep the modern slavery agenda closely linked to the CSE work in the city and the formation of the new CSE & Vulnerable Children Strategy Group should provide an opportunity to ensure that this is the case, but that the governance arrangements will need to be routinely scrutinised. You can read the Modern Slavery Act 2015 [here](#)

Paediatric Sexual Abuse Referral Centre (SARC) Implementation update

Children and young people who have been sexually assaulted or abused need medical care and support. The Health and Justice Commissioner, from NHS England, South (South East) and the Designated Doctor for the Brighton & Hove Clinical Commissioning Group updated the Board on the new Paediatric SARC launched on 1 April 2015. From this date, the Brighton and Hove team has provided a Forensic Paediatric Child Sexual Abuse service for children up until their 14th birthday every day (including weekends and Bank Holidays) between 9am and 5pm. At present, any case outside of the forensic window of 72 hours continues to be worked with by the local paediatric team as has previously been the case. Service Level Agreements are presently being put in place with local Paediatric teams. We heard that from the 1st of July 2015 it is anticipated that all concerns regarding child sexual abuse, both forensic and historic, will go centrally to the Brighton Hub. Children will then be seen in the most appropriate setting, either locally by their local Paediatrician or at the Brighton CSA Hub. We heard that issues regarding facilities and the sustainability of the staffing rota are being addressed by the SARC Board, as well as looking closely at strategy meetings and taking opportunities to improve the pathway. It was good to hear that children are involved in naming the new centre.

Accessing Historical Information

Several reviews into safeguarding practice commissioned by the LSCB asked the Board to consider if there is a perception or a real problem for staff within Brighton & Hove to access all information about a child and their family. If there is over-reliance on electronic records information shared between agencies may be based on incomplete records which could then lead to faulty formulations of risk. The LSCB is concerned as this could expose some children to avoidable significant harm.

We asked each statutory board member agency for a formal update on how historical information is stored and retrieved to inform risk assessments and what quality assurance mechanisms are in place.. It's clear that accessing historical information, where it is not all kept electronically, is a problem for many of our agencies and its evident that there is no simple quick fix. Statutory agencies have been encouraged to promulgate through their agencies the importance of accessing all information (whether this is paper records or information stored on an alternative dataset) when making assessments. They have been asked to ensure the effectiveness of access to historical information mechanisms are built into internal risk assessment audits or put on risk registers.

Management Information Report (Part A) Headlines

Number and rate of children subject of Child Protection Plans (CPP) – The number of children subject to Child Protection Plans has remained steady during Quarter 4 ranging from 309 to 307 between 31st December 2014 and 31st March 2015. The Board agreed there needs to remain in place a focus to ensure Child Protection Plans aren't stepped down too early. Discussions to this effect have taken place with the Child Protection Chairs.

Looked after children (LAC) - There has been a slight increase in the numbers of children looked after at 31st March 2015, with 481 children being looked after, up from 478 the previous month. The figures show an increase from 462 in March 2014. Audit activity has not revealed any set of circumstances which did not warrant a child or young person becoming looked after. There have been some changes in the profile of looked after children compared to the previous 12 months, there has been an increase in the numbers of children aged 1 to 4 but a more significant increase in the numbers aged 5 to 9. The numbers of children ceasing to become looked after show a significant increase in the number adopted with a reduction in the numbers who have returned to live with parents or relatives. In terms of the legal status of looked after children there is a slight increase in the numbers who are looked after by parental agreement Section 20, and a slight increase in the numbers subject to Interim Care Orders.

Hospital admissions & A&E attendance as a result of self-harm

The Director of Public Health led an agenda item on the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment - Children and young people's mental health and wellbeing. He advised that the Brighton & Hove Clinical Commissioning Group and City Council Public Health team are leading on a needs assessment for children and young people's mental health and wellbeing which will produce its draft report by the end of September 2015. Board were told this needs assessment will bring together the data we have, the voice of professionals, young people and their parents/carers with evidence of effectiveness to look at services in relation to need. It was confirmed that self-harm is included within this needs assessment.

Board had requested Public Health lead on a piece of work to understand the story behind the Child Health Profiles data which had come to the Monitoring & Evaluation Subcommittee's attention in April 2014. Provisional data for the 2015 profiles (due out in June 2015) suggest again that we remain significantly higher than England for 2013/14 admissions. Since 2014 the Public Health team, on the request of the Board, have been providing monthly updates on **self-harm attendances** at A&E for Brighton & Hove residents aged 10-17 years. There were, on average over the last year, eight attendances at A&E of 10-17 years olds for self-harm per month: a total of 97 for the year (2014/15). Whilst there has not been a significant increase, there is a slight upward trend in the attendance rate since 2008/09, although this could be due in part to better recording. There is no relationship with deprivation (this was tested for 2012/13 data as this is the last year with postcode available to do this analysis). In 2014/15 there were no attendances recorded as deliberate self-harm for 10 or 11 year olds and four attendances for 12 year olds. The majority of attendances (70%) are in those aged 15-17 years. Board has requested further analysis on this data and the Director of Public Health and the Executive Director of Children's Service have committed to taking this forward at the LSCB Independent Chairman's request.

Review and service re-design of mental health and wellbeing services for children: Strategic Priority 2015/16 for CCG & LA

The Head of Commissioning for Mental Health & Children's Services, and the GP and Clinical Lead for Mental Health from Brighton & Hove CCG, with the Director of Public Health gave the Board a brief presentation on the review and service re-design of mental health services for children. They talked about recognising a 'shift of balance' in children and young people's mental health and wellbeing services from reactive, towards prevention, promoting mental health and wellbeing, and early intervention, where children and young people can thrive. Board are advised that the outcome of the strategic review and service re-design will result in a business case outlining options for a new model of care for children and young people's mental health and wellbeing needs in Brighton & Hove.

Reflections of the LSCB from a Lay Member

The full board meeting of the LSCB was indeed full. A combination of many stakeholders, very detailed discussions and a long and broad agenda was impressive, slightly overwhelming and perhaps too ambitious. As a newcomer it was hard work keeping up with it all.

The meeting had to be cut short. I am told this was the first time the meeting finished without having discussed all agenda items. None the less it was reassuring to see that everyone's input was carefully considered and discussed



Following feedback to the Participation & Engagement Subcommittee the Board have agreed that the minutes of the quarterly meetings will be published on the LSCB Website, www.brightonandhovelscb.org.uk. This is to reflect #yourLSCB's commitment to a culture of openness, and as a reminder that **Safeguarding is Everybody's Responsibility**.

If you would have any questions or comments on this briefing please contact the Board's office at LSCB@Brighton-Hove.gov.uk