



Title of Report: **SSCB Annual Report to Sunderland Health and Wellbeing Board**

Author Name and Designation: **Colin Morris, SSCB Independent Chair**

Report Meeting is going to: **Sunderland Health and Wellbeing Board**

Meeting Date:

1. Purpose of the report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to present the Sunderland Safeguarding Children Board (SSCB) Annual Report to members of the Health and Wellbeing Board.

2. Background

- 2.1 SSCB is the key statutory mechanism for agreeing how relevant organisations will co-operate to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people living in Sunderland. The Board has a written Constitution that outlines governance arrangements, role of Board members and structure about which further information can be found at www.sunderlandscb.com.
- 2.2 The SSCB has worked with other local boards and partnerships in 2014/15 to ensure that issues of safeguarding children and child protection are appropriately considered and afforded appropriate priority by the partners and to ensure that work is co-ordinated and efficient.
- 2.3 These partners include the Children's Trust Board, the Health and Wellbeing Board, Safeguarding Adults Board and Safer Sunderland Partnership. The Sunderland Children and Young People's Plan sets out the strategy of the Children's Trust Board, members will be aware that work is currently underway to review and refocus the work of the Children's Trust. The SSCB Performance Report is used to monitor the actions taken to address the priorities and the outcomes for children and young people in Sunderland and hold partners to account for their various contributions to these processes.

- 2.4 Working Together 2015¹ states that the Local Safeguarding Children Board Chair must publish an Annual Report on the effectiveness of child safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in the local area; and that this annual report should be submitted to the Chief Executive, Leader of the Council, the Police and Crime Commissioner and the Chair of the Health and Well-Being Board.

3. Body of Report

- 3.1 Sunderland is a large city in the North-East of England with a population of 276,110 of which 61,540 are children and young people aged 0-19. Children and young people represent approximately 22% of the overall population. 26% of children and young people in Sunderland are defined as living in poverty. The number of children subject to a Child Protection Plan at Quarter 4 2014/15 was equal to 56.2 children per 10,000 in the general population of Sunderland which is similar to the 2012/13 outturn of 56.0 per 10,000. The 2014/15 figure placed Sunderland above the England average of 42.1% and below the North East average of 59.3%.
- 3.2 The Annual Report details that the SSCB has undertaken a number of actions within its Business Plan in 2014/15 including the development of multi-agency audit tools and the recruitment of multi-agency auditors, who have reviewed and updated relevant safeguarding children procedures and developed a Quality Assurance and Performance Framework.
- 3.3 The SSCB has also undertaken significant challenge to partner agencies, in particular Children's Safeguarding. These challenges have included safeguarding issues which have arisen during Serious Case Review (SCR) activity, varying degrees of quality of reports submitted in respect of learning and improvement activity derived from SCRs and concerns around the ability to transfer learning and some concerns around the overall commitment to the work of the SSCB.
- 3.4 The SSCB Learning and Improvement in Practice Sub-committee initiated five Serious Case Reviews during the time period and will report on the learning from these cases in due course. In addition, a number of management reviews and audits have also been undertaken.
- 3.5 The overall budget position for the SSCB for 2014/15 is a balanced budget which includes appropriations from the SSCB Reserves. The impact of efficiency savings in agencies, particularly in the Council and Children's Safeguarding continues to have an impact on the safeguarding infrastructure.
- 3.6 Members will be aware that the Director of People Services commissioned an independent review (Core Assets) of Children's Safeguarding to examine the nature, quality, and robustness of the Council's Safeguarding Services and which subsequently identified areas in need of improvement. A Local Government Association Peer Review also took place in

November 2014 which reasserted the findings of the Core Assets Review and concluded that improvements were not progressing with sufficient pace.

- 3.7 Members will also be aware Ofsted inspected Sunderland's safeguarding arrangements, including the workings of the SSCB in May 2015 and confirmed that the safeguarding system in Sunderland is not sufficiently robust and that urgent improvement activity was required in order to demonstrate impact in 2015/16. In conjunction with the robust commitment, scrutiny and challenge from partners, the SSCB is confident that the necessary improvements will be progressed in order to ensure children and young people in Sunderland are safeguarded.

4. Recommendations

- 4.1 The Health and Wellbeing Board are asked to note the contents of the SSCB Annual Report 2014/15.

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