

NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL

HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD

Annual Report of Local Arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people 2023/24

1. OBJECT AND KEY POINTS IN THIS REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to update the Health and Wellbeing Board of the outcome of the Annual Report of Local Arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people 2023/24.
- 1.2 The Annual Report of Local Arrangements to Safeguard and Promote the Welfare of Children and Young People 2023/24 sets out the activity, effectiveness and impact of children's safeguarding arrangements in North Lincolnshire.

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1 In North Lincolnshire, our ambition is for children to thrive in their families, achieve in their schools and flourish in their communities and through our One Family Approach, we aim to create an integrated offer that works for all children, young people and families. Set in the context of our One Family Approach and the underpinning practice model, our Children's Multi-Agency Safeguarding and Resilience (MARS) Local Arrangements place children, young people, families and communities at the heart of our early help and safeguarding system. There is strong evidence of how the One Family Approach is embedded across our local arrangements and across the partnership, we remain committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and families via the fewest best interventions, leading to whole family turnaround.
- 2.2 Safeguarding partners are proud to acknowledge and celebrate the positive outcomes achieved and the strength of partnership working. As a result of collaborative working and high support, high challenge at all levels across the early help and safeguarding pathway, we have continued to make progress in developing our local offer for vulnerable children, young people, families and communities. This has placed North Lincolnshire in a strong position to respond and we have continued to listen, learn, review and adapt to maintain and build on our creative, innovative and flexible practices. This has resulted in positive experiences and outcomes and contributes to achieving our ambition for children to thrive in their families, achieve in their schools and flourish in their communities.
- 2.3 In 2023/24, we have continued to:
 - ✓ fulfil all functions across our Local Arrangements
 - ✓ respond to the needs of individuals and diverse communities, prioritising the most in need, to help and protect children, young people and families
 - ✓ support and develop our workforce
 - ✓ build on our outstanding partnerships and practice to ensure that everyone can recognise and fulfil their responsibilities

- 2.4 Our Family Help Offer closely aligns with the ambitions and values of our One Family Approach and our Local Arrangements, has a focus on the importance of bringing services together around families to deliver whole family working and it emphasises the importance of early help in increasing the likelihood of good outcomes for children and families.
- 2.5 Looking forward, we continue to be in a strong position to respond positively to new policy directions and guidance, including the implementation of Working Together 2023. As we further develop our integrated children and families offer, we remain committed to a culture of listening, learning, reviewing and adapting, which is reinforced through our republished arrangements, our learning and improvement culture that is welcoming of improvements and innovations, and the multi-agency practice developments and transformation that continue to evolve.
- 2.6 In the Independent Scrutiny Officer's review of local arrangements, it was noted that the Children's MARS Board had respect for each other and had developed professional respectful relationships over time. This enables the discussions to be purposeful and focussed enabling the Board to develop bespoke action points for future planning and supporting Children, Young People and their Families and Carers.
- 2.7 Areas of progress/achievement in 2023/24 include:
- Strengthening the focus on prevention and early intervention in the Early Help Strategic Leads Group (EHSLG). Leads responsible for associated workstreams including the development of Family Hubs and the shaping of the youth offer are now represented to strengthen the local offer of help and support
 - Responding to risk, for example a bespoke Risk Outside the Home Strategic Group was held to discuss several young people subject to a police operation. The meeting focussed on seeking assurance that all efforts were being made to engage with the young people and to maximise the partnership approach to disruption
 - Ensuring a partnership response to the new supported accommodation quality standards and regulations
 - Achieving positive outcomes of an Inspection of Local Authority Children's Services (ILACS) Focused Visit in respect of Care Leavers aged 18 to 25 and in particular the quality and suitability of accommodation, support into adulthood and care leavers with specific needs
 - Strengthening the interface and built upon existing mechanisms to communicate and build relationships with the VCSE sector
 - Delivering an effective training offer, and high-quality resources via the CMARS website
 - Showing commitment to communicating across the safeguarding partner organisations and other agencies, including high quality newsletters and social media
 - Collaborating with other local and regional Boards and partnerships to reduce duplication and to identify where additional resource and specialist skills can be shared across the wider partnership landscape. Some examples of this include:
 - Continued close working with the Safeguarding Adults Board to review our bi-annual Joint Safeguarding Self-Assessment
 - Shared scrutiny and assurance events have taken place with the Safeguarding Adults Board and Domestic Abuse Partnership Board in relation to domestic abuse and the impact on children and with the Youth Justice Partnership Board in relation to child exploitation and transitions to adulthood
 - We have continued to commission joint training regionally with other Local Safeguarding Children's Partnerships across the Yorkshire and Humber

region and have worked closely with the Humber-wide Domestic Abuse Partnership Boards to raise awareness of their training offer across the partnership

- 2.7 Overall, the Local Arrangements continue to have a positive impact on outcomes for children and families. Efficient board arrangements with shared chairpersonship, core membership and active, engaged discussions and decision making continues. The annual report covers the Local Arrangements and provides assurance that they are working well.
- 2.9 The lead Independent Scrutineer in the annual report said *‘The Children’s MARS Board sets the tone and culture across the partnership. Respectful challenge is accepted as normal and constructive and is intended to make a positive difference in the lives of children and families. The difference between the levels, from the Children’s MARS Board to the multi-agency front line is understood, and creative approaches are used to communicate across agencies and levels. The move to locate teams within communities offers an increased opportunity to understand the lived experience of children and families and to make a positive impact on their safety and wellbeing’.*

3 OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

- 3.1 Safeguarding partners will continue to listen, learn, review and adapt in order deliver the core functions, ensure that effective safeguarding arrangements are in place and continue to seek assurance that further work is progressing in relation to the ‘shine a light’ areas of focus identified in the Annual Report.

4. ANALYSIS OF OPTIONS

- 4.1 The Health and Wellbeing Board is asked to note the key headlines relating to Annual Report of Local Arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people 2023/24

5. FINANCIAL AND OTHER RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (e.g. LEGAL, HR, PROPERTY, IT, COMMUNICATIONS etc.)

- 5.1 There are no specific resource implications associated with this report.

6. OTHER RELEVANT IMPLICATIONS (e.g. CRIME AND DISORDER, EQUALITIES, COUNCIL PLAN, ENVIRONMENTAL, RISK etc.)

- 6.1 None, specific – this report is for information only.

7. OUTCOMES OF INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT (IF APPLICABLE)

- 7.1 Not applicable.

8. OUTCOMES OF CONSULTATION AND CONFLICTS OF INTERESTS DECLARED

- 8.1 There has been a range of consultation with safeguarding partners, relevant agencies and children, young people and families as part of the development and implementation of the Local Arrangements.

9. **RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 9.1 That the Health and Wellbeing Board notes the outcome of the Annual Report of Local Arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people 2023/24.

DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

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Background Papers: Annual Report of the local children's (CMARS) safeguarding arrangements 2023-2024