

**NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL**

**HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD**

**Annual Report of Local Arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people 2020/21**

**1. OBJECT AND KEY POINTS IN THIS REPORT**

- 1.1 Health and Wellbeing Board to note the publication of the Annual Report of Local Arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people 2020/21, and to consider the review in relation to planning, commissioning and budget setting.
- 1.2 The review demonstrates that the Children's Multi Agency Resilience and Safeguarding (MARS) Board:
- effectively meets its statutory obligations
  - benefits from strong and consistent leadership
  - has made good progress against its 'shine a light' areas of focus
  - listens to and takes account of the voices of children, young people and families

**2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

- 2.1 North Lincolnshire is aspirational for children, young people and families in this area and there is a long history of working together to improve outcomes. As early adopters of multi-agency safeguarding arrangements, the North Lincolnshire Children's MARS arrangements, were originally published on 31 October 2018. We have continued to listen, learn, review and adapt and our Local Arrangements have been reviewed on an annual basis thereafter.
- 2.2 As per Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018, there is a statutory requirement to publish an annual report, which sets out what has been done as a result of the Local Arrangements and how effective these arrangements have been in practice. The Annual Report of Local Arrangements to safeguarding and promote the welfare of children and young people 2020/21 has been endorsed by the Children's MARS Board on behalf of the three safeguarding partners from North Lincolnshire Council, North Lincolnshire Clinical Commissioning Group and Humberside Police. The Annual Report is then required to be distributed through relevant governance routes across the three safeguarding partner organisations and relevant partnership arrangements, to be considered in relation to planning, commissioning and budget setting.

- 2.3 We have continued to respond to the needs of individuals and diverse communities, prioritising the most in need, to help and protect children, young people and families, while we support and protect our workforce. Under the auspices of our Local Arrangements and our One Family Approach to create a system that works for all children, young people and families, we have contributed to achieving our ambition for children to be in their families, in their schools and in their communities.
- 2.4 Our strong partnerships, clear processes and robust practice across the early help and safeguarding system have enabled us to continue to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, young people and families, including in changing circumstances through our response to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- 2.5 The Annual Report provides a review of activity and impacts in respect of Children's MARS functions, including funding, performance, voice and stakeholder engagement, training, scrutiny and assurance (including independent scrutiny) and child safeguarding practice reviews.
- 2.6 The Annual Report also clarifies our two 'shine a light' areas of focus and outlines activities and impacts made in order to reduce the harm from risk outside the home and to respond to COVID-19 and emerging harm. The Annual Report also outlines activities and impacts relating to specific 'line of sight' areas for focus in relation to domestic abuse and emotional wellbeing and mental health.
- 2.7 Key highlights in relation to performance and populations which indicate our system is working and making a difference to children, young people and families include:
- The vast majority of performance and activity information relating to the early help and protection system continue to show sustained high performance, compliance with local practice standards and statutory timescales
  - Enquiries, contacts, referrals, repeat referrals and assessments by Children's Services have remained consistent evidencing the continued drive to ensure children and families are supported at the right level and at the earliest opportunity
  - Children in North Lincolnshire who are in need of help and protection make good progress, and are supported to live safely within their family network
  - The children in care population is at its lowest level since before the end of 2015/16, which reinforces our ambition for children to be in their families, in their schools and in their communities
  - We have reduced the number of children in external foster care and residential provision enabling them to remain connected to their local support networks and community
  - The number of children entering the youth justice system as first-time entrants continues to reduce demonstrating the success and effectiveness of the preventative approach

2.8 Key activities, impacts and achievements in 2020/21 include:

- Increased oversight of helping and protecting children in care and care leavers
- Continued to have strong leadership through the Children's MARS Board and a good line of sight to front line multi-agency practice and the quality of services that support children, young people and families
- Ongoing development and implementation of our robust scrutiny and assurance framework, including independent scrutiny, through thematic and agency specific assurance events and multi-agency case audit practice learning line of sight events leading to changes in practice
- Strategic thinking and developmental discussions to progress the development of a joint safeguarding self-assessment across the Children's MARS Board and Safeguarding Adults Board, which meets the requirements of Section 11 of the Children Act 2004
- Ongoing and renewed focus on engaging with and listening to children, young people and families to understand their views and experiences that influence service improvement leading to better outcomes
- Amplified focus on communications through the Children's MARS website and @SafeNorthLincs social media platforms, with a focus on the impacts of COVID-19 i.e. in relation to hidden harm, as a means of sharing information and communication and publishing key documents and resources on our Children's MARS website
- Rich and robust education and learning offer, to include more e-learning and virtual opportunities for learning and to respond to key drivers and thematic areas of focus

2.9 Examples of key developments also include:

- One Family Approach and One Family Approach Practice Model
- Targeted Family Support
- Relationships with schools and focus on vulnerable children in education
- Partnership Integrated Triage (PIT Stop)
- You Say Who reunification model
- Care Leaver Services and Support
- Holding On model

2.10 There has been significant partnership action pertaining the two 'shine a light' areas of focus which has impacted on children, young people and families. Examples of impacts include:

**Reduce the harm from risk outside the home**

- Professionals retained empathy and persistence in working with the young people to build meaningful and purposeful relationships
- Competent and confident risk management and decision-making which resisted relocating or removing the young person from the family, neighbourhood and community they grew up in
- Approach continued to further strengthen the all-round support and work to remove those who sought to harm and sexually abuse the young person

- The investment in relational working helped to create trust and enable a young person to retain a level of control which helped them to disclose the abuse

### **Respond to COVID-19 and emerging harm (focussing on 0 to 2 years and child sexual abuse)**

- Increased management oversight at the front door and strengthened pre-birth to 2 year old pathway and integrated working across the partnership
- Refined and enhanced joint working between paediatricians, Children's Services and police in relation to the child protection medical process
- Dissemination of a multi-language poster to promote access to help and support across diverse local communities
- Increased awareness and understanding of access to services for adults, e.g. mental health, domestic abuse and substance misuse through hidden harm workshops and dissemination of resources and tools for practitioners to utilise
- Strengthened the engagement and participation of adult based services through the bespoke CHaPP meetings
- 26 parents completed an evaluation/feedback form on completion of the virtual ante-natal programme. All 26 parents reported an increase in their knowledge and confidence regarding parenting as a result of the programme
- A development session will be held to consolidate the current position regarding Child Sexual Abuse in the Family Environment toolkit and agree next steps
- The toolkit provides information for all agencies to identify and respond to children who are at risk of, or subject to, child sexual abuse in the family environment. It also:
  - outlines how agencies can help children if they are beginning to identify concerns and refer to statutory services
  - outlines the support and services that such children and their parents can access support and recovery
  - gives contact details for both local and national support agencies that can be accessed by children and families independently

2.11 In 2021/22, safeguarding partners and relevant agencies will continue to listen, learn, review and adapt in order to ensure the local Children's MARS arrangements best meet the needs of the children, young people and families in North Lincolnshire, so they are resilient and safeguarded. Safeguarding partners will continue to 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, as follows:

- Further develop the multi-agency approach to risk outside the home with a focus on harmful sexual behaviour
- Further develop the multi-agency approach to child sexual abuse in the family environment

As well as our specific 'shine a light' areas of focus, the Children's MARS Board adopts a 'right to roam' approach and as such, will maintain a line of sight across the early help and safeguarding pathway in order to seek assurance, challenge, shape and influence partnership action and system change, some of which are the responsibility of other partnership and planning frameworks. As part of this, to orientate 'line of sight' activity, the Children's MARS Board will take account of performance, practice wisdom and voice and experiences on wider emerging need and harm

### **3. OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION**

3.1 To receive the Annual Report of Local Arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people 2020/21.

### **4. ANALYSIS OF OPTIONS**

4.1 None, for information only.

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

5.1 None, for information only.

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

6.1 None, 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 Children's MARS arrangements. There will be further engagement opportunities as we continue to listen, learn, adapt and review.

### **9. RECOMMENDATIONS**

9.1 Health and Wellbeing Board to receive the Annual Report of Local Arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people 2020/21 and consider this where relevant in relation to planning, commissioning and budgets setting processes.

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**Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:**

[Annual Review of Local Arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people 2020/21](#)