

Divisions Affected - All

Cabinet – 15th October 2024

Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children Board (OSCB) Annual Report Report by Director of Children's Services

RECOMMENDATION

1. **Cabinet is RECOMMENDED to** note the annual report of the Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children Board senior safeguarding partners and to consider the key messages.

Executive Summary

2. This paper highlights findings from the Board's annual report on the effectiveness of local arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in Oxfordshire.

Background

3. Local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements are the collective responsibility of chief officers in the county council, the Integrated Care Board and Thames Valley Police.
4. These three senior safeguarding partners agree ways to co-ordinate their safeguarding services for children; act as a strategic leadership group in supporting and engaging others; and implement local and national learning including from serious child safeguarding incidents. They work with relevant partners through the Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children Board, under the leadership of an Independent Chair. The arrangement is referred to as the "Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children Board (OSCB)".
5. The report can be accessed in full on the [OSCB website](#).

Key Issues

6. The OSCB Annual Report sets out the safeguarding challenges in Oxfordshire. The report shows the need to improve practice with respect to the themes of: (1) Neglect (2) Child exploitation and (3) Keeping children safe in education.
7. There are key messages for system leaders to bring a collective focus to:

Tackling Neglect of children in the family home by supporting those families who are not yet meeting all the needs of their children.

Minimising risks to children outside the home to ensure we have a system wide approach to keeping children safe from exploitation

Ensure that we keep children safe in schools and settings by making sure local arrangements are properly understood and better used to keep children in full time education

8. In the last year there were no Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews commissioned and one Rapid Review was completed. A thematic review on intrafamilial sexual abuse was published. Practical learning from these reviews informed the OSCB training programme for local workers and volunteers. It also informed learning summaries, workshops and an OSCB Safeguarding conference.
9. The repeat safeguarding themes identified in reviews last year are still current and continue to be a priority for the partnership this year. These are:
 - The impact of trauma and cumulative harm
 - Family engagement and consistent support
 - Information sharing across the partnership
 - Children with complex mental health/ emotional needs
 - Parental mental health and parenting capacity
 - Children not in school

Corporate Policies and Priorities

10. The report outlines the Safeguarding Children Board's priorities, the learning from Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews, the outcomes of quality assurance work and the summarised findings with respect to the unexpected child deaths in Oxfordshire. The report supports the vision, values, objectives and strategic priorities in the County Council's Corporate Plan (see [Corporate Plan](#)).

Financial Implications

The Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children Board is funded by the local safeguarding partnership including the County Council, District Councils, the Integrated Care Boards, Thames Valley Police and the National Probation Service. The budget contributions and expenditure are outlined in full detail in appendix B of the report

Comments checked by:

Legal Implications

11. Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023) is a Department for Education (DfE) statutory guidance which requires safeguarding partners to publish an annual report. The intention is to 'bring transparency for children, families and all practitioners about the activity undertaken' by the safeguarding partners.
12. As the requirement to produce a report is based on statutory guidance, this is not a legal requirement and there are no legal implications within the report.

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Annexes:

Annex 1: OSCB Annual Report

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