

Annual Report of Bath and North East Somerset Local Safeguarding Children Board 2011/2012

Introduction

This Annual Report of Bath and North East Somerset's Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) represents the second Annual Report written in accordance with the national guidelines for such reports. It builds upon the previous Annual Reports and Business Plans published by the Area Child Protection Committee and then the Local Safeguarding Children Board since 2000, the 3 Year Strategic Plan published by the Board for 2008 – 2011, and the Annual Report for 2010 – 2011. It has been compiled by the constituent members of the Local Safeguarding Children Board and informed by stakeholders who were widely consulted. It represents a critical appraisal of the safeguarding arrangements and activities during 2011/2012; the key priorities for 2012/2013; and the Work Programme for delivering those priorities.

Draft versions of this Annual Report will be presented to the Council's Early Years, Children and Youth Policy, Development and Scrutiny Panel and the Children's Trust Board. The previous Annual Report informed the priorities and key actions within the Children and Young People's Plan 2011 – 2014, and this Annual Report will inform the review of that Plan which will be published on 1st April 2012.

This Annual Report will be published on 1st April 2012 and is a public document. Progress with achieving its key priorities, and implementing its Work Programme, will be reviewed by the Business meetings of the Local Safeguarding Children Board: reported to the Children's Trust Board, the Partnership Board for Health and Wellbeing and the Early Years, Children and Youth Policy, Development and Scrutiny Panel: and critically appraised within the Annual Report for 2012/2013.

1. Summary

1.1 Key priorities for the year

The key priorities for 2011/12 were determined by the Board's consideration of the developing national safeguarding agenda: its evaluations of the effectiveness of local safeguarding arrangements: progress with its 3 Year Strategic Plan 2008 – 2011: progress with its Annual Report and Work Programme 2010/2011: its analysis of the local needs assessment: feedback from the annual stakeholders event: and its review of the national and local safeguarding context within its annual development day in January 2011. Having done so, the Board concluded that whilst maintaining its overall commitment to the 5 aims of the Staying Safe outcome, it should in the coming year give priority to its core business of protecting children and young people from violence, maltreatment, neglect and sexual exploitation.

In doing so, the Board will also continue to take actions and coordinate activities and resources so that:-

- Children are protected from accidental injury and death – with the intended outcome that fewer children are involved in road traffic accidents and other accidents at home, play and employment.
- Children and young people feel safe from bullying and discrimination – with the intended outcome that children and young people report that they feel safer and incidents of bullying and discrimination are reduced.
- Children and young people feel safer from crime and antisocial behaviour in and out of school – with the intended outcome that fewer children and young people will be victims of crime and antisocial behaviour; there will be safer places to play and hang out; fewer children and young people commit crimes against children.
- Children and young people have security, stability and are cared for – with the intended outcome that the local agencies work together to promote policies and strategies to promote security and stability.
- There is an effective LSCB – with the intended outcome that the LSCB works effectively and efficiently as a Board, in its sub groups and lead groups and effectively influences other strategic partnerships to deliver the Staying Safe agenda.
- Staff and volunteers are provided with appropriate training and support – with the intended outcome of ensuring that all staff serving children in public, private, voluntary, faith and community sectors are sufficiently trained in safeguarding awareness to play their part in protecting children from the risk of significant harm.

The Board therefore compiled a Work Programme for 2011/2012 detailing the actions it would take primary responsibility for: the actions that it would ensure are taken by others: and the actions that the Board would seek assurance are being progressed by other partnerships and agencies.

The evaluation of the work undertaken during 2010/11 and the evidence arising from the needs analysis also highlighted the need for actions to:-

- Further improve the quality, and achieve consistency, in interventions, assessment, planning and interagency working to safeguard children and young people.
- Progress workforce development and training to ensure that staff have the requisite skills and experience to intervene effectively to safeguard children and promote their safe and appropriate care.
- Focus on the recruitment, retention and continuous development of front line staff and first line managers in Children's Social Care, Health and Police.
- Engage the wider community in safeguarding children.
- Increase the reporting and assessment of children in private fostering arrangements.

- Utilize the combined resources of the LSCB member agencies to underpin preventative strategies and services in challenging budgetary conditions.
- Maintain the active engagement of schools and GPs in safeguarding children – including Academies and the GP consortia.
- Raise the profile of the LSCB and its safeguarding agenda through effective communication and media strategies.
- Ensure that the potential impact on safeguarding and outcomes for children arising from service changes due to challenging budgetary conditions are overviewed by the LSCB, and that agencies share information and cooperate to minimise the short and long term impact of changes in safeguarding children.
- Further improve practice and service delivery at the interface between Children's Social Care and Adult Mental Health Services to ensure that effective support services are being provided to parents and to children in need – and ensuring that there is a clear and sharp focus on safeguarding children at all times.
- Continue the promotion and local implementation of the Think Family strategy.
- Achieve the co-ordinated and targeted provision of parenting support programmes.
- Maintain capacity across partner agencies for preventative and early intervention services in amidst of severe budgetary pressures.
- Ensure that messages from the Child Death Review process informs local practice and service development.
- Learn the lessons arising from the process of the Munro Review of Child Protection and be ready to implement its recommendations.
- Improve referrals, cross working and coordination of strategies between the Local Safeguarding Children Board and the Local Safeguarding Adults Board.

These were incorporated into the Work Programme for 2011/12.

1.2 Key areas of progress/achievements

To be added to during course of 2011/12 as Business Plan work programme is reviewed – All to add

To include:-

- Implementation of Family Intervention Project and confirmation of Strengthening Families, Strengthening Communities Programme.
- Stability of placements for children and young people in care has remained strong.
- Effective Child Death Review arrangements are in operation – for Rapid Response and Child Death Overview Panel. Evaluation of arrangements completed and reported to the LSCB.
- LSCB has continued to influence other strategic partnerships (e.g. Responsible Authorities Group) to deliver the safeguarding agenda.

- Clear accountability for safeguarding children established, and strengthened, with Children's Trust Board: Partnership Board for Health and Wellbeing: Lead Member Children's Service; and Early Years, Children and Youth Policy, Development and Scrutiny Panel.

TO FOLLOW – All to add

1.3 Remaining challenges and issues for the Children's Trust Board

- Resourcing the LSCB (particularly in terms of staff time) to carry out its functions.
- Funding the LSCB activities (particularly training) in difficult budgetary conditions.
- Ensuring the active participation and contributions of all member agencies.
- Ensuring effective working arrangements across Children's Social Care and Adult Mental Health Services to coordinate support to parents and protection to children.
- Maintaining capacity for preventative and early intervention services – and promoting the anticipated duty to cooperate to provide early help and services.
- Ensuring that a clear focus is maintained upon the safeguarding of children during periods of significant organisational change within and across partner agencies – and that such change does not result in a fragmentation of services.
- Whilst ensuring that there is a clear focus upon the core activity of child protection, supporting the Board with its wider commitment to the Staying Safe aims.
- Maintaining and strengthening effective information sharing and joint working between agencies in a time of radical change for all agencies.
- Ensuring that all agencies commissioning services establish robust arrangements to ensure that providers are meeting their safeguarding duties.
- Considering how best to use changes to the shape, role and functions of key safeguarding agencies to develop effective local arrangements and practice to achieve even better outcomes for vulnerable children and young people.
- Developing strategic and operational arrangements to safeguard children, young people and vulnerable adults.
- Ensuring that the upcoming election of a Police and Crime Commissioner for Avon and Somerset does not diminish the local focus upon safeguarding and community safety.

MORE TO FOLLOW – All to add

2. Governance and Accountability arrangements

The Local Safeguarding Children Board is accountable to the Director of Children's Service and the Lead Member for Children's Services who have a particular focus on how the Local Authority is fulfilling its responsibilities to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people. The Chair of the Local Safeguarding Children Board prepares reports on the effectiveness of the arrangements for the LSCB in Bath and North East Somerset to the Lead Member, the Early Years, Children and Youth Policy, Development and Scrutiny Panel, and the Health and Wellbeing Partnership Board. Further, the LSCB's own activities are part of the Children and Young People's Plan and this enables its work to be scrutinised by the Local Authority, by other local partners and other key stakeholders.

The LSCB has a clear and distinct identity within Bath and North East Somerset Children's Trust Board. The Chair of the LSCB is a member of the Children's Trust Board, and holds that Board to account for ensuring that safeguarding is central to all its activities. The dual accountability for safeguarding is detailed in the Children's Trust Board Terms of Reference. In September 2010 the LSCB and Children's Trust Board strengthened these arrangements by signing up to a joint agreement for working together.

The LSCB has previously completed an evaluation of its governance arrangements against the standards detailed in the Department for Children School and Families (DCSF) Challenge and Improvement Tool, and has undertaken a further review in 2011. This work will inform updates to the Terms of Reference and governance arrangements to ensure that these are robust and effective.

The inspection framework has also played an important role in reinforcing the ongoing monitoring of the work of the LSCB. At present these are based upon 3 yearly inspections of Safeguarding Services and annual unannounced inspections of Contact, Referral and Assessment Services. Following the recommendations of the Munro Review of Child Protection the Government is considering changes to these arrangements. Ofsted has consulted about a proposed inspection framework and new arrangements will be introduced in 2012.

Whilst the LSCB plays the key role in co-ordinating and ensuring the effectiveness of local individuals and organisations work to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, it is not accountable for their operational work. Each Board partner retains their own existing lines of accountability for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children by their services. The LSCB does not have a power to direct other organisations but will advise the Local Authority and Board partners on ways to improve. When there are concerns about the work of partners and these cannot be addressed locally, the Chair of the LSCB will report these to the most senior individual in the partner organisation, to the relevant Inspectorate, and, if necessary, to the relevant Government department.

Local Safeguarding Children Board Meetings

The Local Safeguarding Children Board meets in March, June, September and December. The Board is currently chaired by an interim Independent Chair pending the appointment of a permanent postholder. The Board has held a Stakeholders Forum and a Development Day during 2011/12 to review the Work Programme and effectiveness of the LSCB and contribute to this Annual Report

During 2011/12, the LSCB has undertaken a review of all its arrangements for the Board and its sub groups – to ensure that these not only operate effectively but also achieve the active participation of all members – and, in conjunction with the Local Safeguarding Adults Board has reviewed overall safeguarding arrangements with a view to establishing strategic, operational and sub group arrangements which will provide greater coherency and use of expertise and resources. The LSCB has at present two sub groups with a focus upon staff training (Training Management Committee) and upon quality assurance, policy and procedures (Safeguarding Children Sub Committee). The Training Management Committee meets bi-monthly and is chaired by the NHS Bath and North East Somerset representative. The Safeguarding Children Sub Committee meets monthly and has been chaired by the Children's Services Integrated Safeguarding Officer, and latterly by Barnardo's. Both Chairs sit on the LSCB.

Lead Groups have been established for each of the aims of the staying safe outcome and they report to the LSCB as follows:

- The Safeguarding Children Sub Committee
- Avonsafe
- The Anti-bullying Group
- The Youth Offending Team Management Board
- The Children in Care Quality Assurance and Strategy Group

Membership of the LSCB

The core members of the LSCB are those who are designated as statutory members under S.13(3) of the Children Act 2004. Further, a national voluntary organisation with experience in this work (Barnardos) is represented, and a designated doctor and designated nurse provide appropriate expertise and advice to the Board. Representatives from Primary Schools, Secondary, Special Schools and Colleges, Adult and Children's Health Services providers, Adult Safeguarding Services, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) and the GP consortia are also core members. Actions have been taken to engage Academies. Plans are in place to determine how the Lead Member for Children will join the Board as a participating observer and 2 Lay Members will be recruited to support stronger public engagement and contribute to improved understanding of the LSCB's work.

Associate members have been established and ensure robust links with key stakeholders. The LSCB will also secure the involvement in its work of Faith groups, Independent Schools, Further Education Colleges, Children's

Centres, GP's, Independent Health Care Organisations, Sirona Care and Health, IVASP, the Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements, Housing, Culture and Leisure Services, Housing Providers, Drug Action Team, and representatives of children, young people and parents via existing networks and forums, including the Annual Stakeholders Forum.

All core members are nominated in writing by the Chief Officer of their organisation or the Chair of their partnership/representative body. The Chief Officer/Chair will be asked to ensure that their nominated member has the requisite skills, expertise and capacity to carry out their roles and responsibilities as core members of the Board.

All core members and associate members of the LSCB have been provided with a written statement of their roles and responsibilities and their organisation has confirmed that they are able to:

- Speak for their organisation with authority
- Commit their organisation on policy and practice matters
- Hold their organisation to account (in matters of safeguarding children).

For 2011/12 the attendance records of core member agencies at the business meetings, stakeholders' forum and development day were as follows:-

LSCB Personnel

Core Members 2011/2012

(Any other updates)

Independent Chair	Jim Gould
Ashley Ayre	Director of Children's Service
Ian Tucker	Strategic Health Authority
Tracey Iles	Royal National Hospital for Rheumatic Diseases NHS Trust
Jenny Theed	Divisional Director: Children, Learning Disabilities, Professional Leadership and Quality
Jim Grant/Beverley Boyd	Assistant Divisional Manager for Specialty Division
Liz Price	Commissioning Strategy Manager, Children Services
Anne King	Assistant Chief Officer, Avon and Somerset Probation Service
Mark Dean	Assistant Director for Public Protection and Safeguarding, Avon Wiltshire Mental Health Partnership NHS Trust
Dave Gill	Chief Inspector, Avon and Somerset Police, B&NES District
Maurice Lindsay	Divisional Director for Children's Service
Nicola Bennett	Integrated Safeguarding Officer
Sally Churchyard	Service Manager, Youth Offending Team
Simon Lenton	Designated Doctor, NHS B&NES
Duncan Stanway	Assistant Director, Barnardos
TBC	Designated and Named Nurse, NHS B&NES
Sue East	Head Teacher: representative for B&NES Head Teachers
Tony Parker	Divisional Director, Children Services
Kevin Gibbs	Service Manager, CAF/CASS
Yvonne Taylor	CAMHS
Ruth Grabham/Rachael Eade	GP Consortia
Jo Gray	Divisional Director, People and Communities Department

Associate Members

Geoff Spicer	Great Western Ambulance Service Representing Community Safety and Drugs Partnership
Graham Sabourn	Housing & Supported Living Services Avon Wiltshire Partnership NHS Trust, Adult Mental Health Services
Denis McCann	Fire & Rescue Service
Mike MacCallam	Adult Social Care Services
Shirley Ward	Adult Disability Services and Safeguarding Adults Coordinator

Lead Member Children Services

Cllr Nathan Hartley Cabinet Member Early Years, Children and Youth

Safeguarding Children Sub Committee Personnel

Members 2011/12 **(will need updating)**

Nicola Bennett	Integrated Safeguarding Officer, Bath & North East Somerset (Chair)
Duncan Stanway	Barnardo's (Chair from November 2011)
Mary Kearney	Change for Children and Independent Quality Assurance
-Knowles	Manager, Bath & North East Somerset
Jill Chart	Named Nurse for Safeguarding, Bath & North East Somerset Primary Care Trust
Fiona Finlay	Consultant Community Paediatrician, Bath and North East Somerset Primary Care Trust
Trina Shane	Assessment & Family Service Manager, Bath & North East Somerset
Hugh Jupp	Public Protection Safeguarding Manager, Avon and Wiltshire Mental Health NHS Care Trust
Mike Williams	Detective Inspector, Bath & North East Somerset District
Nigel Harrison	Inclusion Manager – Special Educational Needs Support Services
Margaret Hudd	SCSC Admin
Karen Boucher	Consultant in Adolescent Psychiatry, Young People's Service Avon and W Wilts Mental Health NHS Care Trust
Michael Sidey	Independent Chair, Child Protection Conferences

Training Management Committee Personnel

Members 2011/2012 **(will need updating)**

Nicola Bennett	Integrated Safeguarding Officer, Bath & North East Somerset Children's Service (Chair)
Trina Shane	Assessment and Family Service Manager, Children's Service
Dan Forster	Bath and North East Somerset District Police
Mike Dance	Bath and North East Somerset District Police
Beverley Boyd	Royal United Hospital
Jill Chart	Named Nurse Safeguarding, Bath and North East Somerset, PCT
Jenny Dixon	Early Years Service
Chris Wilford	Youth Offending Team
Fiona Finlay	Consultant Community Paediatrician, Bath and North East Somerset Primary Care Trust
Hugh Jupp	Public Protection Safeguarding Manager, Avon and Wiltshire Mental Health NHS Care Trust
Paula Bromley	Principal Youth Officer, Bath and North East Somerset Council

Risk principles for child protection work

The LSCB considered the risk principles for child protection work detailed in the Munro Review Final Report: A Child Centred System **(To be discussed at LSCB meeting 6.12.11)** and recommended that each constituent member considers their adoption. The risk principles are as follows:-

Principle 1:

The willingness to make decisions in conditions of uncertainty (i.e. risk taking) is a core professional requirement for all those working in child protection.

Principle 2:

Maintaining or achieving the safety, security and wellbeing of individuals and communities is a primary consideration in risk decision making.

Principle 3:

Risk taking involves judgement and balance, with decision makers required to consider the value and likelihood of the possible benefits of a particular decision against the seriousness and likelihood of the possible harms.

Principle 4:

Harm cannot be totally prevented. Risk decisions should, therefore, be judged by the quality of the decision making, not the outcome.

Principle 5:

Taking risk decisions, and reviewing others' risk decision making, is difficult so account should be taken of whether they involve dilemmas, emergencies, or are part of a sequence of decisions or might appropriately be taken by other agencies. If the decision is shared, then the risk is shared too, and the risk of error reduced.

Principle 6:

The standard expected and required of those working in child protection is that their risk decisions should be consistent with those that would have been made in the same circumstances by professionals of similar specialism or experience.

Principle 7:

Whether to record a decision is a risk decision in itself which should, to a large extent, be left to professional judgement. The decision whether or not to make a record, however, and the extent of that record, should be made after considering the likelihood of harm occurring and its seriousness.

Principle 8:

To reduce risk aversion and improved decision making, child protection needs a culture that learns from successes as well as failures. Good risk taking should be identified, celebrated and shared in a regular review of significant events.

Principle 9:

Since good risk taking depends on good quality information, those working in child protection should work with partner agencies and others to share relevant information about people who pose a risk of harm to others or people who are vulnerable to the risk of being harmed.

Principle 10:

Those working in child protection who make decisions consistent with these principles should receive the encouragement, approval and support of their organisation.

Principles for supervision arrangements in all agencies

The Local Safeguarding Children Board's core principle for safeguarding Children Services in Bath and North East Somerset is that they are based on the use of professional judgement within the framework of agreed guidance and procedures.

This is underpinned by the quality of consultation and supervision to staff working in safeguarding children Services. Each member agency has detailed and shared their supervision practice and policy arrangements. From this, the previous Area Child Protection Committee compiled a statement of core principles for supervision arrangements in safeguarding children work which each agency signed up to and determined how to implement within their agency. This statement was adopted by the Local Safeguarding Children Board and each member agency.

The core principles are:-

- Supervision is a meeting that provides staff with the opportunity to reflect upon their work and decision making.
- Each agency will have a written policy for supervision of staff working in safeguarding children that is known to, and used by, all staff.
- All staff should have access to appropriate advice and support to deal with any immediate safeguarding children issues.
- All staff will receive regular supervision from their manager to develop their skills and ensure high standards of service delivery.
- A formal record of supervision sessions should be made for each party.
- Supervision will include a focus on the inter-agency aspects of safeguarding children work.
- Supervision will be used to identify development and training needs.
- Agencies will (annually) review the implementation and effectiveness of their supervision arrangements and practice.

The implementation of supervision arrangements was audited and reviewed in 2009 – and a further audit completed in 2011.

Budget 2011/12(to be updated)

1. Local Safeguarding Children Board – Main Programme

Sources of Funds

Budget 2011-12

(£)

Children's Social Care Services

Police

Bath & NES PCT

Probation

Learning and Inclusion

CAFCASS

Other Income

Expenditure

Admin Staff Salaries

Car Allowances/ Mileage &

Subsistence Allowances

Equipment Purchase

Printing/ Design

Postages

Other Expenses

IT Desktop & Laptop SLA Charges &

Purchase

MPS - Printing & Copying - Black &

White

2. **Local Safeguarding Children Board – Training Co-ordination**(to be updated)

Sources of Funds

Budget 2011-12
(£)

Children's Social Care Services
Police
Bath & NES PCT
Learning and Inclusion
Youth & Community
Other Income
Carry forward from prior year

Expenditure (estimates)

Admin Staff Salaries
Training Co-ordinator Salaries
Training (including room hire)
Professional Subscriptions
Staff Car Parking
Car Allowances/ Mileage
Printing/ Design
Hospitality
Other Expenses
IT Desktop & Laptop SLA Charges
MPS - Printing & Copying - Black & White

3. Monitoring and Evaluation/Quality Assurance activity

3.1 Within the local arrangements for the National Performance Indicators across the Every Child Matters outcomes, the LSCB has lead responsibility for the following Staying Safe Performance Indicators. Within these, priority is given to the audit and reporting of:-

- Referrals to Children's Social Care going onto an initial assessment.
- Initial assessments for Children's Social Care carried out within 10 working days of referral (previously 7 working days).
- Core assessments for Children's Social Care that were carried out within 35 working days of their commencement.
- Child Protection Plans lasting 2 years or more.
- Children becoming subject of a Child Protection Plan for a second or subsequent time.
- Child Protection cases which were reviewed within required timescales.
- Looked After Children cases which were reviewed within required timescales.
- Stability of Care Placements for Looked After Children: number of moves (percentage of children looked after with 3 or more placement during the year).

Performance in respect of these indicators was examined by the Board at each of its Business meetings and actions determined as required. Performance in respect of these indicators was also reported to the Council's Children and Young People's Overview and Scrutiny Panel and the Council/PCT Health and Wellbeing Partnership Board.

3.1.1 Annual Performance reports were also presented to the LSCB in respect of:-

- People killed or seriously injured in road traffic accidents (includes young people aged 16 – 18).
- Children killed or seriously injured in road traffic accidents (0 – 15 year olds).
- Timeliness of placements of children for adoption (following an agency decision that the child should be placed for adoption).
- Stability of care placements of Looked After Children: length of placement.
- Children who have experienced bullying.
- Hospital admissions caused by unintentional and deliberate injuries to children and young people.
- Children who have run away from home/care overnight.

During the course of 2011/12 the LSCB started to consider a wider range of indicators of the effectiveness of local safeguarding arrangements including number of CAF assessments completed: referrals to Children's Social Care: number of children with child in need plans: number of children with protection plans: number of children in care: domestic violence incidents: violent crimes committed against children and young people: emergency admissions to hospitals following accidents: families living in temporary accommodation: staff vacancy rates and turnover rates: staff access to training: Ofsted inspection information – and will continue work to refine these reports and how they can be used to achieve better outcomes for children and young people.

3.1.2 Within 2011/12, the LSCB gave priority to auditing:-

- The reasons for a significant increase in the number of children with protection plans during the second half of 2010/11.
- The outcomes of the unannounced inspection of Children's Social Care Contact, Referral and Assessment Services and the actions taken to respond to its recommendations.
- The quality of reports presented by all agencies to child protection conferences.
- Safer recruitment practice across all agencies.
- The implementation of duties in respect of private fostering arrangements.
- The provision of appropriate accommodation, support, health care and education/training to young people leaving custody.
- The implementation by agencies of the LSCB core principles for supervision arrangements of staff engaged in child protection work.
- Individual agency implementation of the safer recruitment policy.

3.2 All individual agencies have the responsibility for the quality assurance of child protection activity as it relates to case recording; sharing and communicating information; confirming any referrals in writing; confirming actions taken as a result of such referrals; attendance at and contributions to core group meetings, initial and review child protection case conferences; written reports submitted to child protection case conferences. The LSCB expects that all individual agencies will have systems in place to ensure this quality assurance.

3.2.1 The LSCB's Safeguarding Children Sub Committee has responsibility for auditing all strategy discussions, core group meetings, initial and review child protection case conferences against agreed standards and using an evaluation tool. The Safeguarding Children Sub Committee is a multi-agency forum. Actions arising from these reviews are referred back to the appropriate officer/agency and responses tracked by the Sub Committee.

3.2.2 The SCSC provides six monthly reports to the LSCB summarising its quality assurance activity, actions taken and outcomes achieved. The

LSCB members use these reports to highlight, challenge and improve practice within their respective agencies.

More to follow

3.3 LSCB comments on the joint strategic needs assessment – to follow

3.4 Areas of strength and areas requiring improvement

- 3.4.1 Areas of strength include the range of early intervention and preventative services provided across the Authority area; evidence of good inter-agency working; evidence of good supervision arrangements and inter-agency training; strategy discussions held in appropriate circumstances; good agency attendance and contributions to initial child protection case conferences and the compilation of individual child protection plans; core group meetings held within required timescales; all child protection plans are reviewed within required timescales; good participation of parents at case conferences; good arrangements in place to facilitate children and young people's participation in case conferences. Examples of excellent written reports to case conferences.
- 3.4.2 Areas requiring improvement include achieving consistency in quality of social work reports to case conferences; increasing the number of written reports submitted by all agencies and achieving consistency in the quality of those reports; sharing reports with parents prior to the case conference; ensuring that all reports and case conference discussions have a clear focus upon the analysis of risk indicators in respect of each individual child; the timeliness of the completion of initial and core assessments in Children's Social Care; the provision of continuing services to avoid the need for a repeat Child Protection Plan.
- 3.4.3 Actions to address the areas requiring improvement will be based upon highlighting and sharing best practice; revision of existing report formats and processes to facilitate appropriate completion; written guidance to staff; direct support, supervision and training; continuing quality assurance and corrective actions; use of LSCB stakeholder events, communications and development days to reinforce standards.
- 3.4.4 The LSCB has discussed the Munro Review of Child Protection Final Report: A Child Centred System and the Government's Response to its findings and recommendations. The Board completed an initial position statement in respect of each of the 15 Munro recommendations and proposed actions for how these can be taken forward locally in line with the actions to be determined by the Department for Education. The Board has also received and considered reports in respect of the Lean Review of the Council's

Children's Social Care Services which will be used to inform the re-design of that Service. The LSCB held an additional meeting in December 2011 to consider how the Munro Review Recommendations and the proposals for the re-design of Children's Social Care Services will be used to improve safeguarding outcomes for children and young people in Bath and North East Somerset – and how this will be evidenced.

3.5 Evidence of activity impacting upon outcomes – to follow

3.6 Needs Analysis

This section updates the Needs Analysis based upon the Bath and North East Somerset Children and Young People's Needs Assessment published in April 2010, with information relating to 2010-11 and provides the following details in respect of staying safe and safeguarding (Note: this Needs Analysis details the positions at 31.3.2011 and has been updated whenever possible for this Annual Report):-

- 3.6.1 The use of the Common Assessment Framework (CAF) continues to lead to the earlier identification of needs and the provision of services. The CAFs have identified a wide range of issues, in particular parental health and wellbeing: domestic violence: parental drugs and alcohol misuse: the need for practical family support. There continues however to be a clear need to increase the number of CAFs completed, especially for the 11-18 age range.
- 3.6.2 In 2010/11 1406 referrals were made to Children's Social Care. This represents an increase of 20% since 2008/09. The rate of referrals is in line with that for similar authorities, which is much lower than the England average. In 2010/11 there were re-referrals within 12 months of a previous referral. This represents around % of referrals where needs may not have been satisfactory met following the previous referral, or where needs have changed. This issue has been highlighted within the Lean Review of Children's Social Care Service and actions to reduce the rate of re-referrals are central to the re-design of the Service. (Add comment about referral rate in relation to similar authorities and England as a whole)
- 3.6.3 In 2010/11 there were 1039 initial assessments completed and 270 core assessments completed. This represents a significant increase since 2008/09 (particularly in respect of initial assessments), and means that the rate of initial assessments is now in line with that for similar authorities which remains lower than the England average. The rate of core assessments is below the last known figures for similar authorities and the England average. The proportion of initial assessments leading to core assessments is higher than for similar authorities (check with Joe Duncan).

- 3.6.4 The Children's Social Care Service worked with 2127 children in need throughout 2010/11 and were providing services to 951 at 31.3.2011. The rate of children in need per 10,000 population is in line with that of similar authorities but lower than the England average.
- 3.6.5 102 children had child protection plans at 31.3.2011, with 98 children becoming the subject of a child protection plan within the year. This total was almost 50% higher than the corresponding total for 2009/10. This represented the largest total since the late 1990's. As noted in the previous report, the Authority did not experience the levels of increased numbers reported by many Local Authorities following Baby Peter. The increase during 2010/11 was similar to that reported by neighbouring Authorities. The Children's Social Care Service and LSCB sub-committee undertook an examination of the reasons for this increase and found that there was a significant increase in the number of new child protection plans made (due to a combination of new, complex cases and an increase in the number of cases where long standing concerns about neglect and/or emotions welfare had reached the threshold of child protection interventions) and a decrease in the number of child protection plans terminated (due to a combination of lack of sustained progress in reducing risks in some cases: cautious assessments of the risk of significant harm in others: and an apparent lack of confidence in the provision of alternative children in need services). An assessment of the practice issues and case conference processes that may have contributed to this increase was also undertaken. Actions have been taken to address the combination of factors that contributed to the increase and overall numbers have gradually decreased – to 88 at 30.9.2011 and (detail figure at 31.12.2011 and 31.3.2012). The rate of child protection plans remains below that of similar authorities and the England average (update with Joe Duncan).
- 3.6.6 On 31.3.2011 there were 102 children with protection plans: of these 48 were female and 54 were male: add percentage which were from black and other minority ethnic communities. Within these age groups, the numbers were as follows:-
- Under 1 year – 17
 - 1 – 4 years – 34
 - 5 – 9 years – 24
 - 10 – 15 years – 24
 - 16 + years – 3
- 3.6.7 Paragraph here to compare local and national figures for main categories for child protection plans in 2010/11 – ML with Joe Duncan.
- 3.6.8 In 2010/11 there was a high percentage (but representing low absolute numbers) of children becoming subject to a child protection plan for a 2nd time. This was significantly above similar and England average figures. The above notes audit of child protection plans did not identify circumstances in which plans were being terminated precipitately, but

did raise questions about the provision of children in need services subsequent to protection plans. Work has been progressed to ensure the provision of these step down services and the work of the Lean Review of Children's Social Care Service has tested out the provision of rapid responses and early offers of help when difficulties or concerns may be re-emerging. During 2010/11 there was a gradual reduction in the percentage of child protection plans that have lasted for 2 years or more (again absolute numbers are low) which has continued into 2011/12. These are now at the rate for similar authorities (check with Joe Duncan).

3.6.9 Paragraph needed here regarding number of hospital admissions caused by unintentional and deliberate injuries to children and young people.

3.6.10 Paragraph required here with reference to children's experiences with bullying at school and elsewhere.

3.6.11 Paragraph required here re number of referrals to Children's Social Care with presenting issue notification of domestic violence.

3.6.12 The area has low numbers of children in care for the size of the population, however numbers have continued to increase steadily and are now 30% higher than 31.3.2009. This has resulted from an increase in the number of care proceedings and an overall increase in the number of admissions to care whilst the numbers leaving care have reduced. Neighbouring authorities have reported a similar increase in overall numbers. The rate of children in care is slightly about that for similar authorities and significantly lower than the average for England as a whole. In a recent snapshot, 61% of children in care were male and 39% female. The main reasons for being in care were abuse and neglect (35%) and family dysfunction (34%). 15% (check with Joe Duncan) were from black and other minority ethnic communities.

3.6.13 The stability of placements for children in care is strong. The proportion who had 3 or more placements in 2010/11 was 5.6% - significantly better than similar authorities and the England average. The proportion lasting 2 years or more is 79.5% - again significantly better than similar authorities and the England average. Approximately 90% of children in care are in foster care placements.

Appendix 2 details tables and charts in respect of the following, showing performance for 2011/12

- Referrals of children to Children's Social Care Service.
- Rate of referrals per 10,000 children aged under 18.
- Initial assessments completed.
- Rates of initial assessments per 10,000 children aged under 18.
- Timeliness of completion of initial assessments.
- Core assessments of children completed.

- Rates of core assessments per 10,000 children aged under 18.
- Timeliness of core assessments.
- Children who became subject of a Child Protection Plan within the year.
- Rate of children becoming subject of a Child Protection Plan per 10,000 population aged under 18.
- Numbers of children who are subject of a Child Protection Plan at year end.
- Rate of children who are subject of a Child Protection Plan per 10,000 population aged under 18 at end of period.
- Main category of abuse recorded as reason for Child Protection Plan.
- Age and gender of children who were subject to a Child Protection Plan at 31.3.10.
- Child Protection Plans lasting 2 years or more.
- Children becoming subject to a Child Protection Plan for a second or subsequent time.
- Numbers of children in care.
- Children in care rates per 10,000 aged under 18.
- Reasons for being in care.
- Gender of children in care.
- Ethnicity of children in care.
- Age of children in care.

3.7 Review of sources of referrals and quality of action taken – to follow

3.8 Review of locally agreed thresholds for referrals of children in need

During 2010/11 an updated threshold matrix was produced, consulted upon and shared with professionals across all agencies, incorporated into the LSCB training programme and used to help families and professionals to better understand the thresholds for referrals to Children's Social Care. The unannounced Ofsted inspections of the Council's Social Care Contact, Referral and Assessment Service in May 2010 and January 2011 highlighted that the thresholds were appropriately set and implemented. The process for referrals to Children's Social Care and how these are responded to was analysed within the Lean Review of Children's Social Care Services and has been used to inform a re-design of Contact, Referral and Assessment Services and how these work with pre Social Care Services. This has enabled Services to develop a sharper focus upon the early identification of need, the early and effective provision of help and the delivery of pre and post Social Care Services. As a result, there are early indications of fewer repeat referrals for Social Care Services and positive feedback from children, young people and families.

4. Serious Case Reviews

- 4.1** No Serious Case Reviews were undertaken in 2010/11 nor were there any outstanding actions from Serious Case Reviews commissioned in previous years.
- 4.2** The LSCB has taken steps to consider lessons learned from Serious Case Reviews undertaken in other Local Authorities. Local practice has been evaluated in respect of findings and recommendations arising from those Reviews – and actions taken to inform and improve local practice and services. The LSCB has also considered the lessons arising from the Biennial review of Serious Case Reviews and how these can be used locally. The LSCB's Annual Stakeholders' Event in November 2010 focussed upon lessons learnt from Serious Case Reviews and best practice and included a presentation from Plymouth SCB following their Serious Case Review in respect of the Little Ted's Nursery. These lessons were incorporated into mock unannounced inspections of local Children's Centre Services undertaken in 2011.
- 4.3** The LSCB has undertaken local management reviews of cases which did not meet the criteria for a Serious Case Review but raised issues in relation to local practice and identified learning points for local services. Actions arising from these were implemented across the appropriate agencies and reported to the LSCB.

5. Child Death Overview Panel

- 5.1** The LSCB has collaborated with the Bristol, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire Safeguarding Children Board's to establish the West of England Child Death Overview Panel. The LSCB has thus far provided the Chair, Community Paediatrician representatives to the Panel, and currently provides the Children's Social Care representative. The Divisional Director Children's Services and Integrated Safeguarding Officer have also been members of the CDOP Operations Group.
- 5.2** Arrangements are in place for lessons learned from any individual child death review to be immediately relayed to the LSCB and relevant agencies, and actions taken. Regular reports on the work of the CDOP have been provided to LSCB Business meetings – as a standing agenda item. The CDOP Annual Report for 2010/11 was presented to the LSCB in December 2011. The report details recommendations to improve policy, professional practice and inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. Actions to respond to these recommendations are taken forward by the CDOP Operations Group on behalf of the LSCB.
- 5.3** The LSCB (in conjunction with its partner LSCB's) has undertaken an evaluation of the effectiveness of the Child Death Review arrangements using the Government Office self assessment tool. This

evaluation has been presented to the Child Death Overview Panel and the respective LSCB's.

- 5.4 An evaluation of the effectiveness of the Rapid Response Service arrangements has been undertaken. Further, a refresher/training has been provided for staff involved in the Rapid Response Service.
- 5.5 The arrangements for the Child Death Review process were updated in accordance with the requirements of Working Together to Safeguard Children 2010 – and will be reviewed in light of any revision to this.

6. Progress on priority policy areas

6.1 Engagement of wider community in safeguarding

- 6.1.1 The LSCB's annual stakeholder events, and the consultations undertaken in respect of the Children and Young People's Plan, achieve good engagement of staff across the statutory, voluntary and community sector working in Bath and North East Somerset – and through this achieves links with the wider community to promote the safeguarding agenda. The opportunities for joint work with the LSAB should promote a wider understanding and promotion of the safeguarding agenda. The wider engagement of the community – and in particular the active participation of young people, parents and carers (notwithstanding their involvement in previous stakeholder events) – remains rather underdeveloped and requires further attention.
- 6.1.2 The LSCB has an extensive communication strategy in place via its webpages, newsletters, briefings and distribution of its Annual Report and Work Programme – but the effectiveness of this needs to be evaluated. Proposals are in place for joint communications group with the LSAB.
- 6.1.3 The LSCB still has a rather underdeveloped media strategy which has fundamentally been reactive rather than proactive. Work has been progressed during 2011/12 to develop this.

6.2 Safer Workforce

- 6.2.1 The LSCB has adopted the Safer Recruitment policy as included in the South West Child Protection Procedures.
- 6.2.2 The LSCB has audited and evaluated individual agency arrangements for Safer Recruitment using the GOSW self-evaluation tool and during 2011/2012 all agencies have reported back to the LSCB on their safer recruitment practice.
- 6.2.3 All LSCB agencies have made preparations for the introduction of the Independent Safeguarding Authority and the Vetting and Barring

Scheme, and will take these forward in line with new guidance from the Government.

Nikki Bennett to update

6.3 Missing Children

6.3.1 The LSCB has adopted a local protocol for children missing from care and home, in line with the South West Child Protection Procedures. The protocol is available locally via the LSCB website.

6.3.2 The LSCB receives and reviews regular reports from the Young Runaways Monitoring Group Chaired by the Children's Social Care Service Manager. The Group meets quarterly and brings together Children's Social Care Managers, Police and other stakeholders to ensure that children who go missing are effectively safeguarded. The Group shares information about all reported incidents of children going missing from home or care in the Bath and North East Somerset Area and ensures that the protocol is followed in all cases. Actions are taken as required and any lessons learnt from specific incidents are used to inform practice.

Charlie Moat to update

6.4 Sexual exploitation

6.4.1 The LSCB has adopted the protocol on sexual exploitation as included in the South West Child Protection Procedures.

Nikki Bennett – any updates

6.5 Child trafficking

6.5.1 The LSCB has adopted the protocol on child trafficking as included in the South West Child Protection Procedures.

Nikki Bennett – any updates

6.6 Forced marriage

6.6.1 The LSCB has adopted the protocol on forced marriage as included in the South West Child Protection Procedures.

Nikki Bennett – any updates

6.7 E-safety

6.7.1 In 2010/11 the E-Safety working group updated its terms of reference, action plan and established priorities for the year. During 2011/12 it has remained focused on working with schools to assist them in helping children stay safe online and is developing ways of reaching parents via a variety of media and by continuing its provision of parental sessions.

- 6.7.2 An E-Safety course for all professionals is available as part of the LSCB Training Programme, along with a course on internet child abuse and tailored training for teachers and youth workers. E-Safety is also embedded in the work of the Anti-Bullying Strategy Group.

Nikki Bennett/John Barnes to update

6.8 Bullying

- 6.8.1 The Anti-Bullying Strategy Group has updated its terms of reference and broadened its membership to include key professionals in the statutory and voluntary sectors who can target specific support to services for children, young people, parents and carers. All members have clear roles and responsibilities in monitoring and reviewing the Anti-Bullying Strategy with reporting lines to the Divisional Director (Learning and Inclusion Services) in the Council's Children's Service.
- 6.8.2 A partnership matrix of statutory, voluntary and community sector services is being collated to cross reference how their provision and resources can support the implementation of the Anti-Bullying Strategy. The partnership profiles and information gathered to date have proved useful, and will be disseminated.
- 6.8.3 A school anti-bullying audit tool has been developed (based on the criteria established on the Safe to Learn resources) and all secondary schools, one special school and 13 primary schools have to date undertaken audits of their anti-bullying policies and strategies. Individual reports have been sent to each schools and a summary overview report with recommendations presented to the multi-agency Anti-Bullying Strategy Group. This report has formed the work plan for the academic year 2010/11 and the delivery of bespoke support for individual or clusters of schools, and wider generic training modules for schools staff, pupils, parents and carers. Training and support is also being developed for school staff, parents and peer mentors about cyber-bullying, restorative justice and strategies for young people with learning disabilities.
- 6.8.4 The Anti-Bullying Strategy Group has benefited from significant contributions from the E-Safety Officer, the PSHE and Drug Education Consultant, and Parent Partnership Advisors.

Tony Parker/Sadie McNab to update

6.9 Accident prevention

- 6.9.1 The Avonsafe Strategy has been implemented with a view to reducing the number of children and young people suffering accidental injuries. Within this recognition has been given to the fact that whilst the overall number of accidental deaths and injuries has been falling across the UK, there are persistent and widening inequalities between different social-economic groups. The Strategy has therefore targeted help and support to those identified as most valuable.

6.9.2 Using evidence gathered across the 4 neighbouring unitary authorities, the Avonsafe Strategy has therefore focused on actions to improve child safety this year as follows:-

- Burns and scalds prevention
- Home fire safety
- Child home safety
- Falls prevention
- Child passenger safety
- Child pedestrian safety
- Child cyclist safety

as well as progressing actions to prevent child poisoning – including sampling products for poisons and choking hazards.

6.9.3 The Strategy has also promoted injury prevention strategies in education settings – designed to improve children and young people’s knowledge of and ability to take managed risks.

6.9.4 Additional work planned for 2011/12 includes Child Home Safety training sessions for childminders: Avon Fire and Rescue Service Sparks programme for Schools: Falls Prevention and Education and Support.

Nikki Bennett/Liz Price/Simon Lenton to update

6.10 Domestic Violence (Anne King and Trina Shane to update)

6.10.1 The Partnership against Domestic Violence and Abuse (PADVA) has been replaced by IVASP and given a stronger steer from the Responsible Authorities Group – with the Probation Service representative now operating as the Chair. This has resulted in greater cohesion between agencies. The local response to incidents of domestic violence are being jointly screened by the Police Domestic Abuse Investigation Team (DAIT) and the Children’s Social Care Senior Practitioner. Children’s Social Care has also invested dedicated social worker assistant time to improve response timescales and support. The New Way Service has continued to develop and has received additional investment in order to reinforce its work with fathers.

6.10.2 The Chair of IVASP sits on the LSCB and provides annual reports to the Board. The LSCB Training Programme includes specific domestic violence training courses.

6.11 Private fostering Trina Shane to update

6.11.1 The LSCB has taken actions to promote and increase individual agency and public awareness of private fostering arrangements and

the Children's Social Care Services duties in respect of these. This has been undertaken through LSCB briefings, information leaflets, a web page, press coverage, letters to all agencies and establishments who may place children, staff training and the nomination of an identified lead officer for private fostering. These efforts have not yet resulted in a significant increase in the number of private fostering arrangements reported, assessed and supported. As a result, it is likely (in line with the national picture) that only 50% of private fostering arrangements are known to the Local Authority. The LSCB will support continuing campaigns to highlight the position of these potentially vulnerable children and young people.

6.11.2 The LSCB received an Annual Report detailing how the Council carries out its duties in respect of private fostering arrangements. The Report is also presented to the Lead Member of Children's Service.

6.11.3 The most recent Ofsted inspection of the Council's arrangements for carrying out its private fostering duties (2009) judged the arrangements as satisfactory. Work will be undertaken to improve this position.

7. Priorities for the following year (More work – input from all)

To include:-

- Further improving the quality, and achieving consistency, in interventions, assessment, planning and interagency working to safeguard children and young people.
- Workforce development and training to ensure that staff have the requisite skills and experience to intervene effectively to safeguard children and promote their safe and appropriate care.
- The recruitment, retention and continuous development of front line staff and first line managers in Children's Social Care, Health and Police.
- Actions to engage the wider community in safeguarding children.
- Increasing the reporting and assessment of children in private fostering arrangements.
- Implementing recommendations and actions arising from the Munro Review of Child Protection.
- Ensuring the local provision of early help and preventative services.
- The re-design of Children's Social Care Services.
- Ensuring that there is a clear focus upon safeguarding children during times of significant organisational change for many constituent members of the LSCB.
- Further improve practice and service delivery at the interface between Children's Social Care and Adult Mental Health Services to ensure that effective support services are being provided to parents and children in need – and ensuring that there is a clear and sharp focus upon safeguarding children at all times.

8. Work programme for 2012/13 (details of work programme to be confirmed on 8.2.2012)

The following work programme has been compiled by the LSCB to deliver its key priorities. It has been informed by the national and local safeguarding agendas and by contributions from the Annual Stakeholders' Event and the LSCB's own Development Day. It is designed to achieve the following actions:-

- That children are protected from violence, maltreatment, neglect and sexual exploitation.
- That children are protected from accidental injury and death.
- That children feel safe from crime and anti-social behaviour in and out of school.
- That children have security, stability and are cared for.
- That Bath and North East Somerset has an effective Local Safeguarding Children Board.
- That we have a confident, skilled and supported workforce.

**Maurice Lindsay
Divisional Director
Children's Service**