



Item 6

October 2013 -  
September 2014

# Annual Report on the Effectiveness of Safeguarding Children in Southend



Southend LSCB

October 2013 - September 2014

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## **SECTION 1 – INTRODUCTION**

### **Background**

This Annual Report is produced in compliance with Working Together to Safeguard Children (HM Govt 2013) which states that the LSCB chair must publish an annual report on the effectiveness of child safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in the local area, and that the report should be submitted to the Chief Executive, Leader of the Council, the local police and crime commissioner and the Chair of the Health and Wellbeing Board (ch3 para16). Chapter 17 of the guidance also states that the report should provide a rigorous and transparent assessment of the performance and effectiveness of local services. It should identify areas of weakness, the causes of those weaknesses and the action being taken to address them as well as other proposals for action. The report should include lessons from reviews undertaken within the reporting period and should also list the contributions made to the LSCB by partner agencies and details of what the LSCB has spent.

### **Foreword from the LSCB Chair**

### **Foreword from the LSCB Youth Lay Member**

## **SECTION 2 - EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Overall, services to safeguard children in Southend are effective. There is a well embedded Early Help offer which has been the subject of a recent Ofsted thematic review, finding that the service was of a good standard with appropriate use of thresholds. The thematic review made some key recommendations, which included the need to be more focused on specific outcomes for children and young people. These actions are underway and continued, targeted improvements to those services are evident, although inevitably a number of key areas for further development remain, as captured below.

Because the Early Help offer is well embedded amongst Southend professionals, at stage 1 and 2, higher level safeguarding services continue to offer a sound and well managed approach towards children and young people with more complex needs and casework requirements. Performance on specific areas such as the timeliness of assessments and the quality of this work continues to be effective. The LSCB has been assured that Looked after Children services are of a good standard and there has been good progress on the priority of developing an effective response to prevent Child Sexual Exploitation in Southend.

The LSCB has a comprehensive Learning and Development Framework and it continues to keep under review the information requirements of the LSCB, which will enable a comprehensive and accurate assessment of how well safeguarding is going in Southend to be achieved. Some areas of further development remain in this respect, but nevertheless the LSCB is well informed and communication between agencies and the capacity for partners within the LSCB to constructively hold each to account is therefore good.

The table below shows progress this year against the LSCB's high level objectives, as outlined in the previous Annual Report:

## Progress on LSCB's Identified Priorities for 2013-2014

	<b>Priority</b>	<b>Outcome/Impact</b>
<b>A</b>	Developing a culture of communication between all stakeholders to safeguard children	The majority of practitioners have received appropriate training in the recognition, communication and response to child abuse and neglect. The LSCB Learning and Improvement Framework has evidenced that information is shared appropriately to safeguard children
<b>B</b>	Reduce the number of children and young people who have experienced bullying including face to face, text or internet	A pilot project is being undertaken with schools to establish baseline data of children's experience of bullying with ongoing data collection evidencing that children's experience is improving as a result of the pilot
<b>C</b>	Reduce the impact of Domestic Abuse on children and young peoples' life chances	The Domestic Abuse Strategy focuses on prevention of domestic abuse as well as reducing risk to victims and interventions with perpetrators. Further work is required by the LSCB and its partner bodies to ensure a reduction in the impact of domestic abuse. The development of a Joint Domestic Abuse Triage Team has improved information sharing to safeguard children from domestic abuse
<b>D</b>	Support families at the earliest opportunity to prevent their needs escalating	Completion of a Common Assessment Framework (CAF) or Early Help Assessment (EHA) enables practitioners to identify the needs of children and families effectively. Feedback from children and families is positive about the early help and intervention they receive, finding it timely and effective. They spoke highly of the

		lead professional role to guide them through a helpful process where reports and reviews are clear and helpful.
<b>E</b>	Reduce the number of children killed, seriously and slightly injured in road traffic collisions	Partners have undertaken significant road safety awareness raising with children and young people. The number of children killed or seriously injured has continued to decline, from 8 in 2012-13 to 6 in 2013-14, however the number of slight injuries for the same period has increased from 50 to 62. The LSCB will review and develop its road safety awareness strategy to seek to reduce the number of slight injuries.
<b>F</b>	Identify and provide early support to children at risk of sexual exploitation, to prevent harm and reduce the impact on their life chances	The LSCB's CSE & Missing Group ensures that children identified as being at risk of sexual exploitation are receiving support that is appropriate to their needs by reviewing the partnership response for all children and young people identified as being at risk of CSE on a monthly basis. A risk assessment tool and awareness training for children's practitioners and the wider workforce ensures children at risk of CSE are identified.

### **Key Successes in 2013-2014**

- Children and their families are positive about the early help and intervention they receive
- 525 children have a Child in Need Plan in place
- All children in need of support at stage 2 & 3 had a CAF or Early Help assessment and a Child in Need Plan was in place





- Child in Need Plans are SMART, with specific, achievable, measurable objectives and appropriate timescales
- Practitioners have a good understanding of thresholds for making safeguarding children referrals
- Children's Services are able to make informed, effective decisions regarding the protection of children
- The number of known Private Fostering arrangements has increased to 10 in October 2014, compared to 7 in October 2013, representing a 43% increase.
- A significant improvement in the quality of Child Protection and Child in Need Plans
- 80% of looked after children feel very safe in their home and feel well looked after
- 92.1% of single social work assessments in September 2014 were completed within 40 days
- Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) Champions report increased confidence in identifying young people at risk of CSE; sharing intelligence; and using referral pathways
- The 2 year average child death rate per 100,000 in Southend has reduced by 26% between 2009/2011 and 2012/14.
- High rate of appropriate training of staff in all partner agencies

### **Key Areas of Challenge and Development to be carried forward into 2014-2015**

- Bi-annual meetings of partnership board chairs, facilitated by the local authority chief executive, to enhance strategic communication and development
- Reduction in numbers of young people admitted to hospital as a result of substance misuse and self harm
- Reduction in numbers of young children admitted to hospital as a result of accidental poisoning
- Implementation of the revised Domestic Abuse Strategy across Southend, Essex and Thurrock and resolution of the operational issues relating to the functioning of the MARAC

- Strengthening of operational links and working practices; training of wider population; and improving data flows and mapping of intelligence around Child Sexual Exploitation
- Improving access to specialist support services for victims of sexual violence and exploitation
- Improving awareness of female genital mutilation, forced marriage, trafficking and modern slavery and support to victims and those at risk
- Increase recruitment and retention of foster carers, as identified by the Corporate Parenting Group
- The development of any proposals to ensure improve information sharing through the development of a Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)
- Ensuring the re-commissioning of forensic and ongoing support services for child victims of sexual abuse provide appropriate, accessible, and joined up pathways for children and young people
- Continue to develop focus across all services on achievement of outcomes for children and young people
- Embed more strongly the children’s voice across all services
- Use of the big lottery funding to improve safeguarding children outcomes for those living in the areas of highest deprivation
- Ensuring safeguarding children practice of all LSCB partners is responsive and accessible to the increasingly diverse population of Southend
- Ensuring the continued improvements in the quality and implementation of Child in Need Plans

Text boxes are used throughout the following sections of this report and are coded as follows:

-  Case Studies/Examples
-  Outcomes or Impact of activity
-  Expected Outcome or Impact of an Activity
-  Feedback from Children and their Families



## **SECTION 3 - CONTEXT**

Southend has a population of 175,284 (ONS mid-year population estimate September 2012) of which 41,583 are aged 0-19, with 11,641 being aged 0-4.

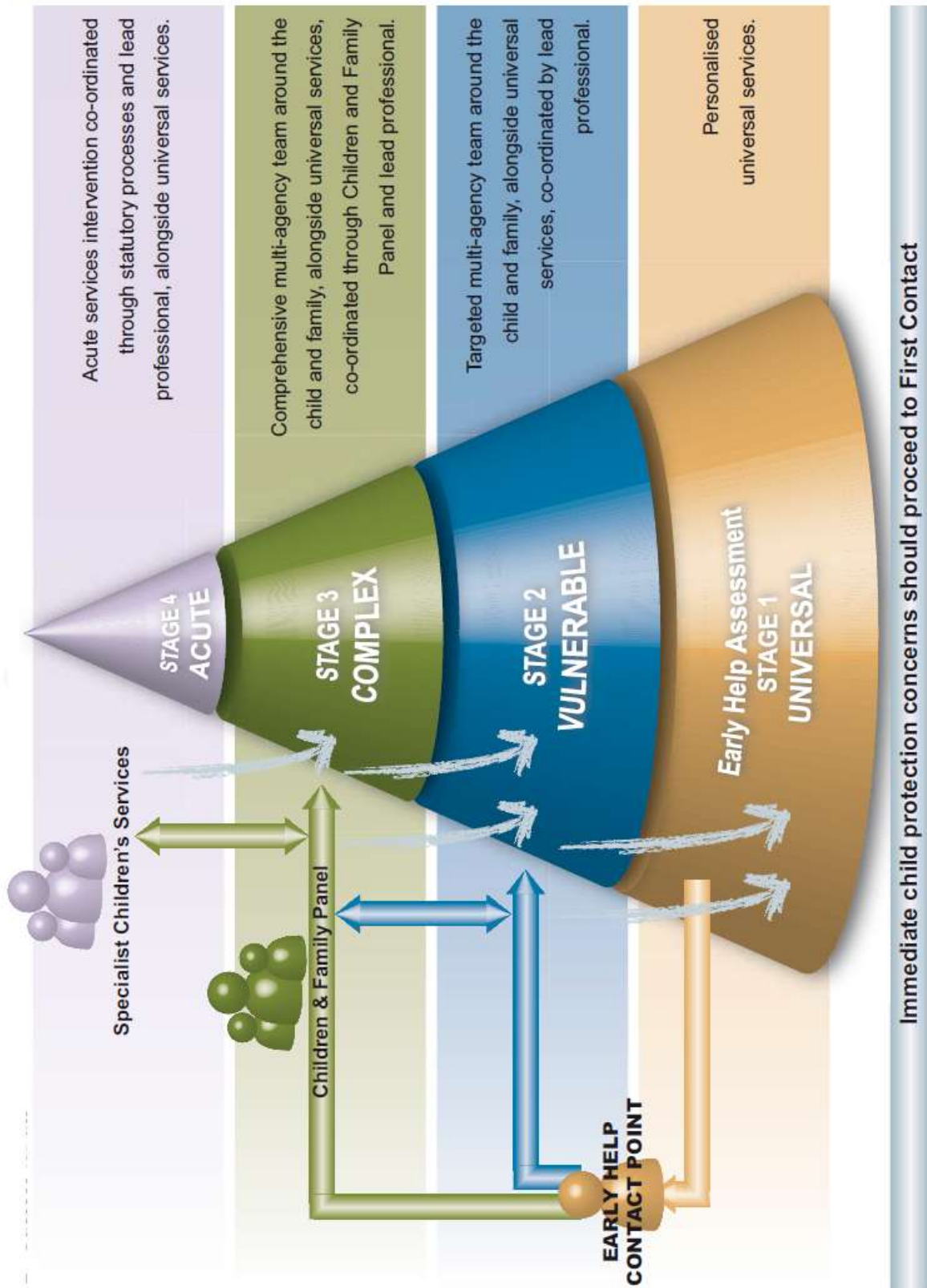
Southend has some areas of high deprivation. 50,000 residents in Southend live within the 30% most deprived areas in the country (ONS data). 4,300 children receive free school meals (January 2012 school census)

Southend's integrated staged approach to intervention ensures a partnership approach to identifying and meeting children's needs as soon as possible. The LSCB sets and regularly reviews the thresholds for the staged integrated approach to intervention in the lives of children and their families. Thresholds are generally well understood by practitioners and an LSCB audit of their application supports this view.

Southend has developed and implemented an Early Help Assessment, replacing the Common Assessment Framework (CAF), and uses a well embedded Team Around the Child/Family approach to improve outcomes for children and young people and provide them and their families with early support to prevent escalation of risk to children.

Application of thresholds where there is a risk of significant harm to children is appropriate and the partnership approach to child protection is sound.

## Staged Model of Intervention



## The LSCB's Learning and Improvement Framework

Working Together to Safeguard Children (HM Government 2013) required all LSCBs to establish and maintain a Learning and Improvement Framework which “enables organizations to be clear about their responsibilities; to learn from experience; and improve services as a result”. The focus in Working Together is on the use of reviews and audits to inform the learning and improvement framework. Southend LSCB has identified additional areas for obtaining learning to improve practice, to develop an integrated framework which builds on its culture of learning and improvement. The following elements will form the basis of the LSCB's Learning and Improvement Framework:

<b>Element</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Expected Outcome/Impact</b>
Serious Case Reviews	Identification and implementation of learning	Learning from SCRs and improvement actions are informed by the views of families and practitioners.  A measurable impact on the level of confidence and satisfaction expressed by families and practitioners on the current arrangements and processes in terms of improving children's welfare and safety
Child Death Reviews	Identification and implementation of learning	Actions taken in response to findings from CDRs reduce the number of child deaths with modifiable factors
Alternative Case Reviews	Identification and implementation of learning	Learning from reviews and improvement actions are informed by the views of families and practitioners.  A measurable impact on the level of confidence and satisfaction expressed by families and practitioners on the current arrangements and processes in terms of improving children's

		welfare and safety
Single & Multi Agency Audits and Audits of Board Effectiveness	Reporting of single agency audits	LSCB partner agencies evidence effectiveness of safeguarding practice and identify areas for improvement
	Programme of LSCB audits	LSCB evidences the effectiveness of safeguarding services throughout the journey of the child
	Audit of Board effectiveness conducted by identified LSCB team.	LSCB evidences its effectiveness in monitoring and coordinating the safeguarding of children and promoting their welfare
Qualitative Information from Children, Young People and their Families (including compliments and complaints)	Analysis of information obtained to quality assure the effectiveness of safeguarding across the tiers of intervention	The development and improvement of safeguarding services is informed by the views and experience of children, young people and families
Qualitative Information from Practitioners	Analysis of information to identify risks to safeguarding practice and learning	Risks to the effectiveness of safeguarding children services are identified early and addressed in a timely way. Practitioners report in follow up evaluations that they are aware of key development areas and good practice, with a positive impact on their safeguarding children practice and increase in confidence
Single Agency Performance	Analysis of quantitative and	Evidence of improvement in identified key areas of safeguarding practice.

Information	qualitative data from partner organizations	
Section 11 Audits	Reporting of qualitative and quantitative data by LSCB partner agencies	Partner agency self assessments of safeguarding efficacy are robust
Annual Reports from Strategic Partners (e.g. Corporate Parenting, school governing bodies and MAPPA) and LSCB Members	Needs analysis and monitoring of safeguarding effectiveness	The LSCB evidences the effectiveness of safeguarding practice throughout the journey of the child
Strategic & Themed Work (e.g. domestic abuse, child sexual exploitation)	Mapping of issues and development of overarching strategies	The LSCB and its strategic partners identify any risk and/or need and implement improvements to address these

Additionally at each meeting the LSCB Executive Group identifies any operational or strategic changes within each partner agency which may impact on the effectiveness of services to safeguard children. A partnership approach is taken to mitigate these identified risks

## SECTION 4 – THE JOURNEY OF THE CHILD

### Prevention and Early Help – Stage 1

Prevention and Early Help is undertaken at stage 1 of the integrated staged approach to intervention in Southend. There is a strong and developing prevention and early help offer in Southend which reduces the escalation of risk to children and young people. Support to children and families at stage 1 is provided by personalised universal services

#### **Example 1**

Health Visitors provide and discuss a leaflet on 'Safe Sleeping' with all parents of newborn babies in Southend to reduce sudden infant deaths due to co-sleeping and other preventable factors

### Key Achievements

In July 2014 the Local Authority, Pre-school Learning Alliance, and its partners were awarded £40m from the Big Lottery Fund's 'Fulfilling Lives: A Better Start' initiative. The award supports partners to work with the local community in six key wards over the next ten years (Kursaal, Milton, Westborough, Victoria, Shoeburyness and West Shoebury) to shape and redesign services during pregnancy and early childhood and help parents to give their children a better start in life. The plan which underpins this; 'Our Children, Our Community, Our Future', has been developed with local parents, the community and professionals, to put prevention at the heart of the way services are delivered. The LSCB anticipates that this investment in prevention will have a significant positive impact on the safeguarding of children in Southend.

In November 2013 Ofsted undertook a themed inspection of the partnership approach to early help and intervention. Inspectors found that partnership working in Southend is strong, both at a strategic level and operationally. The needs of children and families are identified and responded to in a flexible and timely way with

professionals demonstrating their confidence in safeguarding and working within thresholds.

Early Help is part of the overall partnership strategy for improving educational outcomes for children and young people, removing barriers to learning, and improving life chances. The Southend Special Educational Needs Strategy includes Early Help and is an integral part of assessing children's needs, whether they are educational, social, and emotional or health related.

Locality Teams hold budgets to allow the purchase of bespoke early intervention resources to meet the needs of individual children and their families.

The Integrated Locality Toolkit has been revised to reflect the 'Early Help' offer and includes the new early help assessment; single social work assessment, and education health care plan. The toolkit also includes the work of the Streets Ahead project and how this compliments the Early Help offer. Southend Information Point (SHIP) provides information for accessing Early Help through local services including Southend's Local Offer for children and families; community activities and events; and local childcare providers

In response to an increase in domestic and sexual violence offences between young people in Southend a pilot programme was undertaken by partner agencies with secondary aged pupils raising awareness of domestic and sexual violence and promoting healthy relationships.

#### **Outcome/Impact**

Evaluations from young people following the pilot have been positive and the programme is being rolled out with schools across Southend. The LSCB will monitor reported offences between young people to measure the impact of the programme.

The LSCB has prioritised a reduction in the number of children who are killed or seriously in road traffic collisions for the last 3 years. Death and serious injury to children caused by road traffic collisions presents the biggest risk to the safety of children.

### **Outcome/Impact**

The number of children killed or seriously injured has continued to decline, from 8 in 2012-13 to 6 in 2013-14, however the number of slight injuries for the same period has increased from 50 to 62.

All secondary schools and statutory agencies, as well as a number of private and community organisations, have trained Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) Champions to promote the implementation of an assessment toolkit to assist the early identification and support of children and young people at risk of CSE. Children and young people identified as being at risk of CSE are supported within the integrated staged approach to prevent escalation of risk. A CSE Champions Forum has been established to provide ongoing support and professional development for Champions.

### **Outcome/Impact**

CSE Champions report increased confidence in identifying young people at risk of CSE; sharing intelligence; and using referral pathways

An awareness raising campaign was undertaken with schools to help identify and support children at risk of forced marriage or female genital mutilation (FGM), in partnership with Karma Nirvana. The LSCB will monitor the impact of the campaign and any increase in contacts from Southend residents to Karma Nirvana.

### **What Children and Their Families Tell Us**

Children and their families are positive about the early help and intervention they receive, finding it timely and effective. They spoke highly of the lead professional role to guide them through a helpful process where reports and reviews are clear and helpful.



## Areas for Development

The monitoring of outcomes from early help requires further development to evidence positive impacts on the lives of children and their families, as well as identifying areas for further service development.

At a time of budget constraints across all partner agencies the LSCB and its strategic partners will need to evidence and promote the value and cost effectiveness of maintaining and building on the early help offer in Southend.

The LSCB will prioritise awareness of FGM, Forced Marriage, Trafficking and Modern Slavery to improve identification and support for victims and those at risk

The LSCB will continue to prioritise road safety awareness to reduce death and injury to children

There has been a significant increase in the number of children and young people admitted to hospital as a result of unintentional or deliberate injuries, from 49 in 2012/13 to 78 in 2013/14. In 37 cases primary or secondary diagnosis was poisoning as a result of substance misuse or overdose/self harm by young people over the age of 12 years. In 7 cases primary or secondary diagnosis was accidental poisoning of young children.

The LSCB and its partners will continue to work together to reduce substance misuse and self harm in young people.

**Expected Outcome** – Reduction in numbers of young people admitted to hospital as a result of substance misuse and self harm

The LSCB and its partners will also undertake awareness raising campaigns to prevent accidental poisoning in young children.

**Expected Outcome** – Reduction in numbers of young children admitted to hospital as a result of accidental poisoning

## **Early Intervention and Children in Need – Stage 2 & 3**

Early Intervention takes place at stages 2 and 3 of the integrated staged approach, where children and their families require additional, coordinated support to that provided by universal services alone. A single point of contact for early intervention has been established in each of the three localities across the Borough. This contact point is serviced by early intervention screening officers, supported by a multi-agency team which also includes a CAMHS specialist as part of the early help assessment.

At Stage 2, a Team Around the Child, coordinated by a lead professional and working with universal services, provides targeted support to vulnerable children and their families. At Stage 3 support to children and their families with complex needs is coordinated by Child and Family Panels with a comprehensive Team Around the Child and a lead professional.

### **Example 2**

A 7yr old child is identified by their school as having some behavioural problems. The school completes an Early Help Assessment. The school's special educational needs coordinator (SENCO) is the lead professional and coordinates support for the child and family, including a behaviour management programme and support for the class teacher; an assessment by an educational psychologist; a learning mentor; and a parenting programme for the parents.

### Key Achievements

The Ofsted thematic inspection of Early Help and Early Intervention in November 2013 found that strategic and operational partnership working was strong and that professionals were confident in working with children and their families in a flexible and timely way within thresholds. The inspection also identified that early intervention screening officers are very well regarded, as is the Children and Families Early Intervention Team (CFEIT) and their ability to work with families in their own home and with those that are hard to engage; and that there is good liaison between the locality teams and social care.

This assessment is supported by the LSCB's Learning and Improvement Framework activity, including multi agency audits and scrutiny of performance information.

**Outcome/Impact**

An LSCB audit report in May 2014 identified that in all cases audited a CAF assessment had been undertaken and a Child in Need Plan was in place, a significant improvement on findings from the previous year's audit.

**Outcome/Impact**

An LSCB audit report in May 2014 identified that Child in Need Plans were found to be SMART, with specific, achievable, measurable objectives and appropriate timescales. The majority of assessments also clearly distinguished between the needs of the child and those of the adults in a family (an area previously identified as a weakness in local and national serious case reviews); and assessed the impact of significant males in the family (previously identified as a weakness in local and national serious case reviews).

Children and young people identified as at low or medium risk of child sexual exploitation are supported by the locality teams to prevent risk from escalating. All Children and Young People who go missing from home or care are now offered a return home interview by an independent worker. Emerging trends from the outcomes of these interviews are addressed by the CSE and Missing Group. The Local Authority has employed a coordinator to ensure children and young people who go missing receive a coordinated partnership response and that any risk of sexual exploitation is identified and addressed. Work is currently being undertaken with schools to support them in the development of the PHSE curriculum, to include awareness of CSE.

**What Children and Their Families Tell Us**

Children and their families report that they find the early intervention process very positive. They receive a timely and effective response, and found the process helpful, with clear and useful reports and reviews. They valued highly the work of the lead professional in coordinating the early intervention process for them and their families.

## Areas for Development

Work is in progress to improve the engagement in the early intervention processes by early years services, services for 16 – 18 year olds, and Essex Police.

The quality of Common Assessment Frameworks (CAFs), now replaced by the Early Help Assessment, is inconsistent, and the voice of the child is not always heard clearly through them. An action plan is being implemented by the LSCB to ensure the voice of the child is evident in Early Help Assessments, and that they are consistently of a good quality.

Consultation with the children and young person about their Child in Need Plans and the difference that the interventions have made is mixed and is an area for further practice development

Further development of the Child in Need plan format is required to support practitioners to evidence good practice in areas including identification of what needs to change, a contingency plan, and frequency of visits to the child

The monitoring of outcomes from early intervention requires further development to evidence positive impacts on the lives of children and their families, as well as identifying areas for further service development. This is identified as a priority in the LSCB Business Plan.

## **Child Protection and Acute Services – Stage 4**

Child protection concerns requiring a statutory response are dealt with at stage 4 of the staged model of intervention by the Local Authority's Children's Services First Contact, Care Management, Fostering, Adoption and Leaving Care Teams in partnership with Essex Police and other agencies

### **Example 3**

An unborn child is referred to Children's Services by a local hospital midwife because of concerns regarding the mother's illicit drug use during pregnancy. A child protection plan is put in place focused on supporting the mother to cease her drug use. The mother fails to stop using drugs and the baby is born with significant health problems due to acquired drug dependency from its mother. The baby is placed with foster parents as there are no other family able to look after it. Further work is undertaken with the mother to support her to manage her drug use and care for her baby, but this is unsuccessful in achieving sufficient changes to ensure the safeguarding of the baby if it were returned to the mother. The Child and Family Court decided that the baby should be removed permanently from the care of its mother and it is placed for adoption. The baby's current foster parents apply to, and are successful in, adopting the baby.

### Key Achievements

High levels of staff and volunteer safeguarding children training are reported for the majority of partner agencies (data for September 2014 except where stated):

Southend Hospital – 90% (March 2014); Essex Community Rehabilitation Company – 97.6%; SEPT – 99%; ECFRS – 90% (March 14); Schools – 98.2% (March 14); Commissioned Dental Practitioners – 50.5% (March 14); GPs– 100% at level 3; Essex Police – 73.5% levels 1&2 (March 14); South Essex Homes – 79% ; SBC Children's Services 95% (March 14); SBC IYSS 99.5% (March 14); Early Years 90.7% (Sept 14)

A good conversion rate from referral to Single Social Work Assessment of 93.1% indicates that staff and volunteers have a good understanding of the thresholds for making safeguarding children referrals and that they are identifying children at risk of significant harm.

### **Outcome/Impact**

Practitioners have a good understanding of thresholds for making safeguarding children referrals

There has been a significant increase in safeguarding children referrals from 457.2 per 10,000 population in 2012/13 (520.7 national average for same period) to 529.5 in March 2014, reflecting a national picture of increasing referrals, although performance in relation to national averages (573) remains good. 8.6% of referrals are made by family or members of the public (Oct 2013 – March 2014) reflecting

awareness raising activity by the LSCB and other organisations and local confidence in safeguarding services

Within Southend, CAF's, and more recently Early Help Assessments, are used to support referrals to Children's Social Care where there are child protection concerns. The quality of CAFs remains variable, but is improving.

**Outcome/Impact**

Children's Services are able to make informed, effective decisions regarding the protection of children.

The development of a Joint Domestic Abuse Triage Team (JDATT), based within Children's Services and resourced by personnel from Essex Police, Probation and Health Services has improved the sharing of information to safeguard children from domestic abuse. All domestic abuse incidents reported to the police where there are children in the household are shared with Children's Services and triaged by the team to identify children at risk.

**Outcome/Impact**

Practitioners report improvements in information sharing and response to domestic abuse incidents involving children as a result of the JDATT.

An independent review of the effectiveness of the JDATT is being undertaken with consideration of how the potential development of a Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) could complement and operate effectively within the existing staged approach to intervention.

Children and young people who are assessed as being at high risk of sexual exploitation are identified and supported at this stage of intervention. The LSCB has developed a CSE and Missing Children Sub Group, which identifies children and young people at high risk of CSE or who may go missing on a frequent basis to ensure that they are being effectively supported within the staged approach to intervention. The LSCB has provided online training for 450 practitioners working

with children and young people, and has provided training for over 90 CSE champions and GP leads, identified by all statutory partners, secondary schools, children's homes, private foster carers and private and community organisations. A CSE Champions Forum has been established to support this group in their work. Awareness raising work is being undertaken in schools and with the community in addition to targeted professionals and organizations such as licensing officers, the hotel trade etc. who play a key role in helping to identify and disrupt CSE activity.

Children in Private Fostering arrangements are also supported at stage 4. Private Fostering arrangements refer to children and young people who are living with people other than close family. Practitioners and the community have a legal responsibility to let the local authority know of any private fostering arrangements they are aware of. Historically the number of children known to the local authority in private fostering arrangements has been between 4 and 5. Placements are assessed to ensure they are suitable and appropriate action taken where this is not the case.

#### **Outcome/Impact**

Identification of a dedicated worker for private fostering within Children's Services and awareness raising by the LSCB and its partners have increased the number of known Private Fostering arrangements to 10.

Following a child protection referral a single social work assessment is undertaken to identify the level of risk to the child. 92.1% of Single Social Work Assessments were completed within 40 working days compared to 73.4% nationally and 64% for statistic neighbours

Where this level of risk meets the threshold for statutory intervention a child protection conference is held. The quality of information sharing and child protection planning as been audited by the LSCB, and is generally good. LSCB audits also identify that the quality of assessments has improved, and partner agency reports for case conferences are not always shared with the child and family in advance of the conference. All partner agencies have been required to develop action plans to ensure these issues are addressed.

Southend has recently introduced a 'Strengthening Families' framework for child protection conferences, designed to help families participate more easily; to help all participants assess risk better; and for all to be more engaged in the development of a Child Protection Plan or Child in Need Plan. Initial feedback to the LSCB regarding the 'Strengthening Families' framework has been positive.

**Outcome/Impact**

The LSCB will undertake a formal review over the coming months to evidence whether practitioners, and particularly children and their families, experience improved outcomes as a result of the Strengthening Families framework

The quality of the activity and outcomes of Core Groups and Child in Need meetings has been audited by the LSCB, with improvements evidenced from previous audits and their resulting action plans. The identification of additional personnel to provide administrative support for core groups by Children's Services has contributed to these improvements.

**Outcome/Impact**

In 85% cases the child (where appropriate) and family members attended the Core Group/ Child in Need meetings and where the child did not attend, and they were of an age to do so, they were consulted and their views sought before the meeting; there was evidence that the Core Group/Child in Need meetings had developed and implemented the outline plans; and there was evidence that meetings reevaluated risk or needs.

**Outcome/Impact**

There is a significant improvement in the quality of child protection and child in need plans.

Early in 2014 the LSCB Learning and Improvement Framework identified a significant increase in the number of children with a child protection plan. 75 children were subject to a child protection plan in 31<sup>st</sup> March 2013. On 31<sup>st</sup> March 2014 the number of children subject to child protection plan had increased to 163 children, and appears to have stabilized with 161 children on a child protection plan in September 2014 (42.8 per 10,000 compared to 42.1 nationally and 52.8 for Statistical



Neighbours). When explored further the increase was identified as being due to a number of practice related factors:

- Practice changes in relation to pre-proceedings in public law means that children were held on child protection plans rather than as children in need before becoming Looked After
- A number of cases were identified where a short period of intensive child in need work would have negated the need to move to a child protection plan
- Some impact of reviewing cases where some poor performance had been identified up to August 2013.
- An increase in referrals in relation to CSE

The LSCB is assured that the increase in the number of children with a child protection plan is appropriate

The LSCB will continue to monitor the number of children with child protection plans to ensure thresholds are being applied appropriately

#### **What Children and Their Families Tell Us**

A survey of children and young people over the age of 8 years, who have a social worker, indicates that over 55% rated their Social Worker as having excellent listening skills and patience and excellent trust in their social worker. Over 55% also said that their Independent Reviewing Officer has excellent patience, timekeeping and listening skills

#### Areas for Development

Continued improvements in the quality of assessments will improve the effectiveness of information sharing to safeguard children.

Improve recording of outcomes and impacts for children and their families as a result of child protection planning.

An LSCB audit of domestic abuse referrals and of domestic abuse notifications received from Essex Police identified a number of procedural issues, which when

addressed will further improve the response to safeguard children experiencing domestic abuse

A revised Domestic Abuse Strategy across Southend, Essex and Thurrock will be monitored by the LSCB to ensure that the impact of domestic abuse on children's safety and life chances is reduced

The LSCB will monitor the learning and implementation of recommendations from a review of Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) processes across Southend Essex and Thurrock for high risk domestic abuse cases. In 2013/14 a backlog of cases to be considered at MARAC was identified. Interim measures were put in place to address the backlog and the LSCB will monitor the impact of these and the effectiveness of an identified revised process going forward.

Across the partnership there is a need to strengthen operational links and working practices as well as improving data flows around CSE. There is a need to improve recognition by practitioners, especially by means of a more enquiring approach, and to improve their confidence in investigating and responding to CSE. Every partner to the LSCB needs to have its own plan in this respect

The LSCB and its partners need to ensure that appropriate and sufficient specialist support services are provided for victims of sexual exploitation and sexual violence

The Southend LSCB has, during the course of this year, identified a number of areas of joint working with Essex Police in particular, with the objective of improving the local capacity for effective action against CSE.

Detailed discussions have taken place to address these areas and to develop a common understanding about the priorities for action in the coming year.

The following priority actions have been identified, and will be included in the LSCB Business Plan for 2014-15:

- Essex Police CSE Triage Team –
  - This team currently triages information about suspected CSE from the 3 SET Local Authorities in Essex County. Essex Police are currently taking steps to deal with backlogs which may have occurred and the team has been strengthened to ensure work is kept on track. Southend

LSCB has been assured by Essex Police that information now submitted by Southend referrers will be triaged and responded to in a timely fashion.

- The work of the team needs to be formalized into a process document with operational sign up from the three Local Authorities involved, including Southend. This will then be signed off by the respective LSCB's.
  - In the longer term it may be more effective to move this triage function to a local level by incorporating it into a Southend MASH, should Southend proceed to develop one from its current JDAAT arrangement, which has recently been reviewed and the report is awaited by the LSCB.
- 
- Front Line Police Response to CSE in Southend –
    - To improve the ability of front line call handlers and police officers in the borough to both identify CSE and respond appropriately, the following actions are proposed:
      - The LSCB will support the Police in the purchase of a cost effective e-learning package for front line police staff including PCSO's.
      - Essex Police will introduce a protocol for call handlers supporting their effective response to potential CSE.
      - The LSCB will support an event designed for briefing Sergeants and Child Abuse Investigation Team staff in handling CSE work; in support of front line officers; and in managing the interface with Children's Social Care.
      - The LSCB will work with the Police to develop an effective data set which will enable the LSCB to assess progress and outcomes in addressing CSE within the Police as well as other agencies.
- 
- 5 Year Review of Cases –
    - The three SET Local Authorities and Essex Police have agreed to undertake a review of all cases over the last 5 years with the view of

identifying potential cases of missed opportunities to address CSE. This will be coordinated by the SET working group which supports all three LSCB's, and although each Local Authority may adopt slightly different approaches, it is hoped to achieve some degree of consistency of recognition and response to CSE in future cases, and also to ensure that any young person potentially having been, or still being at risk, will be identified and supported as appropriate. Lessons learned will be disseminated by the LSCB and their impact evaluated.

- Co-ordination of Future Linked CSE Cases –
  - Following a review of the a CSE case which involved multiple Southend victims, there will be improvements to the way in which the Essex Police interface with the Local Authority Children's Services for CSE. This will involve the work of the Police Serious Crime Directorate activity being coordinated through the Public Protection Directorate in terms of this interface. From the Southend Local Authority perspective the Complex Cases Protocol will be deployed to ensure intelligence and activity is well managed jointly. These arrangements will be kept under review by the LSCB, and developed and improved as appropriate.
  
- Improvements to the Court Process in Respect of CSE Cases –
  - Southend LSCB is very concerned that in a recent CSE case with multiple victims the scheduled trial of accused perpetrators was deferred due to the unavailability of a suitable Judge. This has put the victims, acting as witnesses in the case, through further unacceptable stress and trauma.
  - We wish to draw this to the attention of the Police Crime Commissioner for Essex and ask that he use his powers to raise this matter with Her Majesty's Courts and Tribunal Service (HMCTS) and to ensure that more consideration is given to the victim's perspective within the Court system.

- Police Data Set for CSE –
  - The LSCB will develop its data set for measuring our impact in the area of CSE. This will include discussion with Essex Police about the development of suitable data, both qualitative and quantitative, which will evidence improvements in detection and response to CSE in Southend.

## **Safeguarding of Looked After Children and Young People Leaving Care**

### Key Achievements

Adoption performance has seen a significant improvement. Timescales have reduced for children where adoption is the plan

Timescales for the assessment of adoptive families has reduced following the introduction of the new Prospective Adopters Report, from over 8 months to an average of only 4-6 months.

The Looked After Children (LAC) Permanency Panel has identified continued improvements in LAC planning. Nearly 100% of children now have a permanency plan within 4 months of becoming looked after

Stability of placement remains high and is within the government's best performance banding

Numbers of Looked After Children who go missing (often a sign of possible CSE) are low. Numbers from children missing from care has consistently reduced over the past year with clear monitoring of all young people, which is shared on a quarterly basis with the local authority portfolio holder

### **What Looked After Children and Young People Tell Us**

80% of looked after children feel very safe in their home and feel well looked after

Significantly more looked after children report that their social worker always talks to them in private – 58% in 2014 compared to 22% in 2013

79% said they had a care plan or pathway plan, compared to 67% nationally, however, only 73% said their plan was being kept to (compared to 94% in 2013)

59% said they moved placement with a week or less notice compared to 63% nationally in 2013

### Areas for Development

Increase recruitment and retention of foster carers to ensure that children and young people who become looked after can be placed with appropriate foster carers within the local area.

Sufficiency of suitable placements available and where external provision required, ensure quality and safeguarding within these provisions.

Increase quality of assessments as monitored by audit activity

Monitor improvements in the work with Looked After Children who go missing from care and who are identified as being at risk of Child Sexual Exploitation

## **SECTION 5 - LSCB CHALLENGE TO PARTNER AGENCIES AND STRATEGIC BODIES**

LSCBs have a statutory duty to ensure the effectiveness of what is done by each of its partner bodies to safeguard children. In undertaking this duty LSCBs are required to:

- communicate to persons and bodies the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, raising their awareness of how this can best be done and encouraging them to do so;
- monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of what is done by the authority and their Board partners individually and collectively to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and advising them on ways to improve
- participate in the planning of services for children in the area

As part of this function the LSCB constructively challenges its partner bodies to ensure that services to safeguard children are effective. The following are the areas and outcomes, where relevant, of the LSCB's challenge during the reporting year.

### **Sexual Abuse Resource Centre (SARC) and Service Pathways (SASP)**

The LSCB has been concerned about the provision of forensic medical services at the Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC), situated in Brentwood, and the sexual assault service pathways (SASP) for ongoing medical and emotional support to child sex abuse victims. A new SASP Board has recently been established that is focussed on strategic commissioning rather than operational issues and is separate from contract monitoring.

#### **Outcome/Impact**

The LSCB is assured that in the short term there are interim arrangements in place to secure a suitable forensic service at the SARC and that young people referred for this service will receive a suitable response whilst the longer term service is commissioned

The SASP Board has also assured the LSCB that in the coming year it will take all reasonable steps to assure improvement in:

- the quality of services to victims whilst ensuring integrated care pathways to other health and healthcare services, safeguarding, social care and criminal justice services;
- access to long-term support from third sector specialist sexual assault services (provide advocacy, counselling and support), NHS psychological therapies and appropriate mental health services;
- victim's experience and satisfaction with access, healthcare, ancillary forensic medical examination and follow-up after-care;
- the supply of competent forensic examiners in sexual assault services, including paediatric forensic medical examiners;
- clinical governance and peer review in sexual assault services;
- safeguarding sexually-assaulted children, young people and vulnerable adults;
- facilitating decisions to prosecute in cases of rape and sexual assault through improved forensic medical provision for both children and adults

### **Domestic Abuse and Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conferences (MARAC)**

Increasing rates of reported domestic abuse, including incidents involving children; findings of Domestic Homicide Reviews; and concerns regarding significant delays between referral of high risk cases and their consideration at MARAC prompted the LSCB to challenge partner agencies and the Community Safety Partnership regarding the effectiveness of the Domestic Abuse Strategy in Southend and across Essex.

#### **Outcome/Impact**

A comprehensive review of the Southend, Essex and Thurrock (SET) Domestic Abuse Strategy has been undertaken and actions identified to improve the multi agency response to domestic abuse. The implementation of these actions is monitored by the SET Domestic Abuse Strategic Board



The LSCB will continue to monitor the implementation of the revised strategy and its effectiveness in preventing and supporting those affected by domestic abuse

### **Implementation of ACPO Guidelines for Missing People**

The Association of Chief Police officers (ACPO) published new guidance in April 2013 regarding missing children including new definitions of missing and absent. The new guidance has resource implications for Essex Police, and has not yet been implemented. The LSCB has requested a timescale for implementation of the guidance in order that it can effectively coordinate the response of all partners to missing children

### **Increased Number of Children with a Child Protection Plan**

Early in 2014 the LSCB Learning and Improvement Framework identified a significant increase in the number of children with a child protection plan. 75 children were subject to a child protection plan in 31<sup>st</sup> March 2013. On 31<sup>st</sup> March 2014 the number of children subject to child protection plan had increased to 163 children, although this reflects a regional pattern. When explored further the increase was identified as being due to a number of practice related factors:

- Practice changes in relation to pre-proceedings in public law means that children were held on child protection plans rather than as children in need before becoming Looked After
- A number of cases were identified where a short period of intensive child in need work would have negated the need to move to a child protection plan
- Some impact of reviewing cases where some poor performance had been identified up to August 2013.
- An increase in referrals in relation to CSE

#### **Outcome/Impact**

An action plan to address the areas identified has been put in place and the LSCB will continue to monitor the number of children with child protection plans to ensure thresholds are being applied appropriately

## **Timeliness of completion of assessments**

Since 15<sup>th</sup> April 2013 Social Work teams have been completing the Single Social Work Assessment. Local timescales for completion of assessments is 40 working days with a performance target of 90%. This compares favourably with the rest of the East of England region where timescales are 45 working days in Essex, Hertfordshire and Suffolk.

SBC Children's Services reported to the LSCB that between April and July 2013, unauthorised changes in practice, including recording practices, were implemented in the First Contact Service, which had a negative impact on the timescales for assessment. Robust action was taken and the backlog has been cleared.

### **Outcome/Impact**

92.1% of single social work assessments in September 2014 were completed within 40 days compared to 73.4% nationally

### **Outcome/Impact**

Due to the improved practice within Children's Services caseloads stand at 15.1 children per social worker which is the lowest since 2007. This should help to maintain the rapid improvement in performance on assessment timescales.

## **Variable quality of Child in Need Plans and their implementation**

The LSCB's Learning and Improvement Framework identified that Child in Need Plans were variable in quality and implementation. To support improved practice SBC Children's Services identified additional personnel resources to coordinate improvements. The quality of Child in Need Plans and their implementation will be monitored by the LSCB over the coming year to ensure sustained improvement.

## **Reduction in School Nursing Provision**

Ahead of a planned move of commissioning arrangements for school nursing from the NHS to local authority Public Health numbers of school nurses had reduced as a number of posts had become vacant. The LSCB received assurance that safeguarding children activity was prioritised by the school nursing service above other activities. The LSCB will continue to monitor school nursing provision during the transitional arrangements

## **Joint Safeguarding Children Standards across Southend, Essex, and Thurrock**

Joint safeguarding children standards across Southend, Essex and Thurrock (SET) had previously been agreed as a vehicle to assessing partner agency compliance with section 11 requirements of the Children's Act 2004. In 2012-13 Essex LSCB developed its own integrated safeguarding adults and children standards, without consultation with Southend and Thurrock LSCBs. In order that some statutory partner agencies were not required to work to different standards Southend adopted the integrated standards on the condition that these were reviewed on a SET basis the following year. This review has now taken place.

### **Outcome/Impact**

Revised, distinct safeguarding children standards have been agreed across the Southend, Essex and Thurrock LSCBs

## **'Achieving Best Evidence' Suites**

In July 2013 Essex Police reported to the LSCB that there was at that time a lack of digital recording equipment for Achieving Best Evidence (ABE) suites, making it difficult to capture and record witness statements, etc and this was a significant concern, as a key facility needed to support vulnerable victims/witnesses. Due to the lack of operational suites, vulnerable children had to travel significant distances to give statements.

The LSCB requested a timescale for upgrading of ABE suites from Essex Police and monitored progress against these.

**Outcome/Impact**

Essex Police has confirmed that all Achieving Best Evidence suites have been refurbished and are now operational.

## **SECTION 6 - PARTNER AGENCY ANNUAL STATEMENTS**

### **Southend Borough Council Adult Social Care**

Southend Borough Council's Adult Social Care takes its responsibilities for safeguarding children within the context of the work we do with families as paramount. Adult Social Care is represented both on the LSCB Board and the LSCB Executive, representing the needs of adult family members and carers. For example, in the last year, we have worked collaboratively with Children's Services to deliver on the review of the Family Focus Protocol, which ensures that professionals across the partnership economy work proactively and collaboratively to ensure that interventions within the home take into account the needs of all members of the family.

Adult Social Care is also represented in the work to prevent and support victims of child exploitation and sit on the Southend Child Sexual Exploitation Workgroup.

Over the last 18 months, Adult Services social workers have undertaken e-learning training related to the needs of children, primarily child abuse awareness and child sexual exploitation. Practitioners have also attended specially commissioned safeguarding children training at Level 2 and 3, which was delivered by the LSCB. Specialist training will continue on a rolling basis as part of the Council's training and development plan.

Southend Borough Council's People Department- Adults will continue to work proactively to ensure that practitioners are trained to have an awareness of the safety of children. We will continue to make referrals when appropriate and engage in plans to support children and their families.

### **Southend Borough Council Integrated Youth Support Service (IYSS)**

#### Achievement/progress in safeguarding over the last year:

All IYSS staff have participated in the Missing and CSE on-line training, which has raised general awareness and understanding of the issues. The training has helped staff recognise the signs of exploitation and potential exploitation. Through improved

assessment, staff are more effective at ensuring appropriate interventions and risk management plans are in place, reducing vulnerability and securing improved safeguarding.

As part of the missing and CSE agenda SBC has employed a Missing and CSE co-ordinator. The co-ordinator is co-located within IYSS and they have proved to be very successful at collating information and intelligence relating to concerns regarding CSE for both victims and perpetrators.

The Missing coordinator/Streets Ahead now undertake missing interviews for all young people, following a reported episode of absence. Information is collated centrally and concerns regarding vulnerability and safeguarding are addressed by ensuring appropriate referral and interventions.

#### Areas for development over the next 12-months:

- Staff will receive updated training on the completion of vulnerability plans in accordance with HMIP and YJB case management guidance.
- Internal Performance Monitoring Report will include missing and CSE following the implementation of a flagging system on YOIS.
- Prevention team to be routinely included in CSE and Missing intelligence so this can feed into street based deployments.

#### **Southend Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG)**

Southend Clinical Commission Group (CCG) continues to have a commitment to the safeguarding children agenda and to work with local NHS providers to ensure safeguarding children arrangements are in place in line with the requirements of Section 11 of the Children Act 2004. The CCG is integrated and works in collaboration with all partner agencies.

Following the introduction of CCGs on 1st April 2013 it became evident that a review of the Safeguarding Children Clinical Network (SCCN) in Essex was required to ensure it remained fit for purpose, provided commissioners value for money and continued to operate within the appropriate legislative frameworks. The review has

been completed and a revised Collaborative Agreement and structure has been put in place to reflect the changing health economy and support the collaborative work of designated professionals across Essex.

The CCG has worked with Primary Care services in Southend to respond effectively to the needs of Looked After Children and to children and families where there are safeguarding concerns. All General Practitioners have now completed safeguarding children training in accordance with the requirements Children and Young People: roles and competences for health care staff, intercollegiate document (2014). This work has been supplemented by the GP Safeguarding Children Forum which has met on a quarterly basis and has been supported by all LSCB partner agencies, in particular Southend Borough Council. The CCG alongside NHS England has introduced a modified section 11 audit for primary care to which south east Essex had the highest response rate in the county. The safeguarding arrangements of GP practices have been significantly improved as a consequence of the actions arising from the audit.

Southend CCG has led in the development and implementation of a south Essex wide policy and procedure to improve the co-ordination of the response of health services to fabricated and induced illness.

Areas for development 2014-2015 include:

- 1) Ensuring that we listen to what children and young people say about things that affect them. Safeguarding services within the health domain continue to seek their views when developing, progressing and evaluating services aimed towards this population
- 2) Review designated doctors and nursing workforce to ensure that capacity reflects the recommendations of the Intercollegiate Document March 2014
- 3) Agreeing a standard set of key performance indicators across Essex for providers of NHS services in respect of Safeguarding and Looked after Children

## **Essex County Fire and Rescue Service (ECFRS)**

Essex County Fire & Rescue Service completed a joint Self Audit Tool to check the strength of their arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults. The Self Audit Tool assesses the extent to which Essex County Fire & Rescue Service safeguard and promote the welfare of children under Section 11 of the Children Act 2004 (and referred to in Chapter 2 of “Working Together to Safeguard Children” 2013).

Essex County Fire & Rescue Service evidenced that they fully met or partly met 33 of the 36 areas with only 3 areas Not Met. 2 of the areas identified for progress within the organisation included the need to review the policies and procedures in line with the Safeguarding Boards standards. This action was completed and amendments made with effective communication for all staff. Safeguarding Training included the signs and symptoms of Child Sexual Exploitation where role apparent. Systems were introduced ensuring that all front line staff were made aware of the learning outcomes from referrals and that information was evidenced.

Essex County Fire & Rescue Service remains committed to maintaining its high standards in all aspects of Safeguarding.

## **National Probation Service (NPS)**

From the 1st June 2014, the National Probation Service (NPS) became a newly formed organisation.

- The focus of the NPS for the coming year is to complete the Section 11 audit and to continue to promote the training and quality assurance processes for safeguarding children.
- The NPS will ensure it works with its partners to identify children at risk of harm and will review and update child protection policies, protocols and procedures to reflect national and local recommendations.
- Senior Managers will ensure that local area staff who work with offenders:



- are familiar with guidance on the recognition of children in need, particularly those who have been abused or neglected;
- know what to do if they have concerns about the welfare of children,
- and recognise the role they can play in working with offenders that can improve their skills as parents and carers as well as reduce the likelihood of re-offending.

### **Southend Borough Council Early Years Team**

All early years settings now have policies for E Safety containing procedures for mobile phone and camera use as well as the use of social network sites. This policy is attached to their child protection policy.

Settings including pre-schools, nurseries, children's centres and childminders have zero tolerance to the use of mobile phones for parents and visitors and designated places and times of use for staff.

These procedures that are now embedded into everyday practice have raised further awareness with practitioners of how to safeguard children.

E Safety is now included in the early years safeguarding training delivered by the early years tutor covering e.g. staff concerns, the impact of Facebook, CEOP.

The result of progress made with E Safety is that two practitioners, from a pre-school and children's centre, now represent the early years on the LSCB E Safety Sub Group together with the early years team Senior Development Officer.

Children's centres play a big part in safeguarding children by the preventative work that they do with children and families as well as early interventions.

They provide a variety of services including parenting programmes, the majority of which are evidenced based, and the Freedom Programme for women experiencing domestic violence and abuse as well as being able to signpost families to other

centres and organisations to receive help, as well as providing more targeted support for some families. Three children's centres work in partnership as a collaborative group in the more disadvantaged areas of Southend offering a more targeted package of services to support families and safeguard children. Children's centres as well as settings are increasing their use of the Early Help Assessment form/CAF's in order to get the support that children and families need. 190 EHA/CAFs were received for 0-5 year olds from children's centres and settings, from July 2013 – June 2014 compared to 148 for the previous 12 months.

Children's centres and settings are working more closely with families in order to safeguard children.

Currently 83% of PVI settings are either Good or Outstanding following an Ofsted inspection.

All Children's Centres that have been inspected are either Good or Outstanding.

The early years team is always highly motivated to reach higher standards of safeguarding children in Southend and continue to strive forward by updating their own knowledge of safeguarding children.

During a recent training course delivered by an outside consultant, expert in her field of safeguarding children and who regularly works with us, the early years team were congratulated on their already high standards and knowledge of safeguarding children in Southend.

#### Areas for development:

One of the early years key roles is to support providers to deliver high levels of safeguarding.

We continually look for areas of development for our providers through impact of training and our own needs analysis.

The early years team would now like to take safeguarding children further by raising provider's awareness of adult mental health and domestic violence and abuse and the impact this has on young children; to look at the bigger picture and be more aware of what's happening in the background within the family unit.

We already have 70 practitioners trained at safeguarding level 4 so further training will be targeted at this level.

This will link through the Big Lottery - A Better Start, Fulfilling Lives - and safeguarding will be at the heart of all delivery.

### **Southend Association of Voluntary Services**

SAVS is a membership organisation and since April 2010 prospective members are asked if they have the correct safeguarding policies in place. They are then signposted to the LSCB and Safe Network websites or to SAVS for further information and support if required.

SAVS Funding Development Officer gives advice to organisations to enable the organisation to apply for funding. This support can be for organisations setting up, for those wishing to expand and those reviewing good practice. This service includes giving advice on writing Child Protection Policies for which the SAVS Officer has received training. Training programmes are run by SAVS through SACC and the LSCB; this training is open to volunteers and paid staff working for VCS groups.

In addition a Children & Young People's Thematic Group is held quarterly to bring together organisations working in this field. The Group encourages partnership development to enable collaborative working and share good practice amongst peers. A speaker is invited to each of the four Thematic Group meetings to share information about relevant topics of interest.

The Volunteer Centre brokers and markets volunteering, promotes good practice, develops volunteering opportunities and strategic development of volunteering. On registration an organisation is given good practice advice and when a volunteer is referred assurances are required that the organisation will comply with current good practice.

SAVS also has a database of VCS organisations in Southend and can put partners in touch using a number of routes. We have a Newsletter which is sent out at least 4 times a year, regular emails to members and mail can be targeted to a particular area such as organisations working with children or young people. Special events could also be arranged in partnership to get a particular message across.

The Turning Tides project runs youth activities through the Triple T initiative. These are held through two youth clubs for children aged 8 upwards in two of the most deprived areas of Southend. Volunteers are recruited and trained to run the clubs alongside the two paid members of staff. The project was funded by Children in Need until March 2014 who have stringent Child Protection guidelines that must be followed. We continue to work to these guidelines.

## SECTION 7 - LEARNING FROM REVIEWS

### Learning from Serious Case Reviews

The LSCB chair commissioned one serious case review (SCR) in the period. Completion of this review is expected in November 2014, at which point the LSCB will disseminate learning from the case to practitioners. There have been no other SCRs in the period.

The LSCB has completed the implementation of the learning from the 'Baby Kathy' SCR. The recommendations were as follows:

Recommendation
The LSCB should recommend to The Success For All Children Group that further multi agency training is commissioned to embed locality working and the use of CAF/TAC
The LSCB should ensure that there are robust and regularly reviewed interagency referral processes in place, with clear guidance about safeguarding thresholds, roles and responsibilities.
The LSCB should ensure that all commissioners of services are aware of their responsibilities in respect of safeguarding
The LSCB should ensure that all schools and early years settings within the Borough are made aware of the learning from this review, particularly with regard to the keeping and sharing of information about pupils.
The LSCB should require each agency to inform the Board of any restructure, with a robust analysis of risk in terms of the impact and implications for service delivery and safeguarding issues during implementation.
The LSCB should commission a themed report with appropriate action plan on the topic of agencies' engagement with significant men in families they are working with.
The LSCB should ensure that it receives regular monitoring reports from NHS Direct

### **Outcome/Impact**

The LSCB's Learning and Improvement Framework has evidenced the achievement of all outcomes against all the recommendations from this case.

### National SCRs

The LSCB has also identified the following learning from national SCRs to take forward in the coming year:

- Particular issues of hidden adversity for children aged 5-10
- The risks of harm to children associated with parental suicide or parental self-harming behaviour
- The potential adverse effects on children linked with parental separation.
- Neglect is a background factor in the majority of serious case reviews (60%), and for children of all ages not just the younger children. Although neglect is uncommon as a primary cause of death in children, it is a notable feature in the majority of deaths related to but not directly caused by maltreatment, including sudden unexpected death in infancy (SUDI) and suicide, and in over a quarter of homicides and fatal physical assaults. Neglect was the primary reason for undertaking a serious case review in 11% of the non-fatal cases, but also featured in 58% of other non fatal cases, including physical abuse and sexual abuse.

### **Outcome/Impact**

The LSCB will be undertaking specific thematic work in the coming year regarding neglect.

- An understanding of normal development in childhood is an essential component of child protection practice. Overall, there is a dearth of child development teaching on professional courses for those who will be working with children.

Where children have communication impairments the onus is on the professional not the child to find ways of communicating.

**Outcome/Impact**

The LSCB will work with local further and higher education providers to ensure that they address child development through curriculum development in professional training courses.

**Learning from Child Death Reviews**

In 2007 the LSCBs of Southend, Essex and Thurrock (SET) established a shared Strategic Child Death Overview Panel (SCDOP) with five Local Child Death Review Panels (LCDRPs). Child Death Reviews undertaken by the Panels aim to help reduce avoidable deaths in children by identifying modifiable factors; whether deaths were preventable; and what lessons can be learned from deaths. Recommendations are then made about actions which could be taken to prevent such deaths in the future.

**Outcome/Impact**

The 2 year average child death rate per 100,000 in Southend has reduced by 26% between 2009/2011 and 2012/14. In the period April 2013 to March 2014 there were 9 deaths of children in Southend.

44% of childhood deaths in SET in the year 1 April 2013 – 31 March 2014 were neonatal deaths, i.e. within the first 0 – 28 days of life. 65% of all deaths occurred within the first year of life. This is reflected in the ages of children who died in Southend for the same period, with 5 deaths occurring in children under the age of one. The number of notifications of neonatal deaths in the year April 2013 – March 2014 in the Southend area equates to 0.4 deaths per 1000 live births. This is lower than the national rate for England and Wales of 2.9 deaths. 66% of neonatal deaths in the year 2013-2014 occurred in children born before 38 weeks gestation. 33%

occurred in children born before 28 weeks. The opening of a state-of-the-art centre for unborn babies at Southend Hospital should help to further reduce the number of neonatal deaths.

Modifiable factors were identified in 35% of the completed reviews in the year April 2013 – March 2014 in SET area. In Southend 3 deaths were identified as having modifiable factors, 2 involving children with chronic medical conditions and one neonatal death. In all cases action has been taken to implement the learning from the death.

Recommendations from child death reviews implemented in Southend have achieved the following outcomes:

#### **Outcomes/Impact**

- Midwives emphasize the importance of Vitamin D and good nutrition during pregnancy.
- Vitamin D is distributed to pregnant women in Southend via children's centres and other venues
- Work is undertaken with schools to improve safety of journeys to and from schools and raise general awareness of road safety and child car seat fitting.
- Health Visitors discuss safer sleeping advice with new parents on their first visit
- Safer sleeping article included in Outlook magazine, delivered to all households in Southend

#### **Learning from Other Reviews**

In the period October 2013 to September 2014 the LSCB has implemented the learning from an alternative review into the death of a baby. Learning from the case included:

- The LSCB will remind practitioners that professionals meetings are promoted, in clearly defined circumstances, especially in complex cases, in addition to the child protection process



- The LSCB will receive assurance that conference chairs lead and facilitate a shared understanding amongst partners of the impact of de-escalation from Child Protection to Child In Need.
- The LSCB should ensure that core groups and Child In Need meetings are appropriately structured and monitored against the SET Procedures.
- The LSCB should recommend Housing Services to:
  - undertake an audit against the existing protocol for information sharing between the service, the ALMO and Children's Services
  - evidence that a similar protocol is in place with all housing associations operating in Southend
  - evidence that its officers have a sufficient level of safeguarding training
- On completion of the revision of the core group work with case conferences the LSCB should consider using this review as a case study to facilitate a workshop day for practitioners to think through the issues systemically in multi-agency groups
- The LSCB should seek assurance from NHS England (Essex Area Team) that GPs are held accountable for their safeguarding responsibilities
- The LSCB should recommend that the Children's Partnership develops a local multi-agency protocol for the implementation of the Early Years Foundation Stage and the 0-5 Healthy Child Programme.
- The LSCB, Success for All Children Group, and all partner agencies will know how to proactively encourage the growth of a culture of professional support and challenge
- The LSCB will develop and implement guidance regarding the challenge and support of case conference and core group minutes by practitioners

All recommendations are expected to be completed by March 2015, with progress monitored by the LSCB. Learning from the case will be integrated within the LSCB's Learning and Improvement Framework in order that practice changes and their impact can be monitored and evidenced in the coming year.

## SECTION 8 - FINANCIAL REPORT APRIL 2013 – MARCH 2014

The LSCB uses the funding formula below to ensure it has adequate resources to undertake its business effectively

Agency	% Contribution	Actual Contributions in 2013/14
Southend Borough Council	49.5%	£38847.60
Essex Police	16.5%	£12949.20
CCG/Local Commissioning Board	26.0%	£20404.80
Probation	7.2%	£5650.56
CAFCASS (+ reserves)	0.7%	£550.00
	0.1%	/£77.84
<b>Total</b>	100%	£78480

The Board received additional income from a grant of £10,000 from the Schools Forum; training charges (£14931), reserves (£38,000) and interest.

Funding of the Southend LSCB is relatively low level, compared to other Boards nationally, however, the considerable contribution of partners to both the Board and sub groups is a major resource which is difficult to quantify, but is critical to the effective functioning of the LSCB

For the year 2013-14 expenditure was as follows:

Description	Expenditure
<b>Total Employees</b>	<b>70,015</b>
<b>Total Supplies And Services</b> (includes chair remuneration)	<b>23,564</b>
<b>Total Internal Recharge to Service</b>	<b>2,860</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>96,439</b>

Free training provided for charities and voluntary and community organisations was £8,950

For the financial year 2014/15 the LSCB carried forward £77,434.96 in reserves.

## SECTION 9 – BOARD MEMBERSHIP AND ATTENDANCE

Representative	November 2013	March 2014	May 2014	July 2014
Independent Chair	√	√	√	√
Vice Chair - Corporate Director for People	√	√	Apologies	√
Essex Community Rehabilitation Company (from June 2014)	Apologies Substitute attended	√	√	√
South Essex College	√	√	√	Apologies Substitute attended
Essex Police – Southend District	√	√	Apologies	√
Youth Lay Member	√	Apologies	√	√
Independent Schools Rep	√	√	Apologies	Apologies
Department for People, Chair LSCB Executive	√	√	√	√
Southend CCG	√	Apologies	√	√
Essex Police – Child Abuse Investigation Team (until September 2014)	Apologies Substitute attended	√	√	√
Community Lay Member	Apologies	Apologies	Position Vacant	Position Vacant
Public Health	√	-	Apologies	Apologies

<b>Representative</b>	<b>November 2013</b>	<b>March 2014</b>	<b>May 2014</b>	<b>July 2014</b>
Department for People – Children’s Services	√	√	√	√
Special Schools Heads Rep	√	Apologies	√	Apologies
CAFCASS	Apologies	Apologies	√	Apologies
Primary Heads Rep	√	√	√	√
National Probation Service , South & South Eastern Division (from June 2014)				√
Southend Hospital	Apologies	√	√	√
Secondary Schools Rep	√	√	Apologies	√
Voluntary Sector - SAVS	√	√	√	√
NHS England LAT	√	√	√	√
Designated Doctor	√	√	√	√
LSCB Legal Advisor	Apologies	√	√	√
SEPT	Apologies Substitute attended	Apologies Substitute attended	Apologies Substitute attended	Apologies Substitute attended
Councillor Courtenay, lead Member (until May 2014)	Apologies	Apologies Substitute attended	Apologies	
Councillor Anne Jones, lead Member (from June 2014)				√

<b>Representative</b>	<b>November 2013</b>	<b>March 2014</b>	<b>May 2014</b>	<b>July 2014</b>
East of England Ambulance Service	-	-	-	-
Essex Fire & Rescue Service	-	-	-	