

# Progress Update

1st April 2021- 30th September 2021



## **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 The Hull Safeguarding Children Partnership (HSCP) published its first annual report in January 2021 (covering the period 1<sup>st</sup> October 2019 – 30<sup>th</sup> September 2020). This followed the implementation of new arrangements replacing the Local Safeguarding Children Board which took effect from 20<sup>th</sup> September 2019.
- 1.2 The production and publication of an annual report on progress is a requirement of *Working Together 2018* and is expected to provide an account of what has been achieved under local child safeguarding partnership arrangements, including progress in relation to child safeguarding practice reviews and how effective the arrangements have been in practice.
- 1.3 In January 2021, the HSCP Executive Board agreed that an update on progress would be produced and published (covering the period 1<sup>st</sup> October 2020 – 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021). This report was completed, approved by the Executive Board and published on the HSCP website. The Independent Chair confirmed this in a letter to the National Panel, along with the HSCP Executive Board's plan to produce and publish a further progress report covering the period 1<sup>st</sup> April – 30<sup>th</sup> September 2021, prior to producing an annual report for the full financial year 2021/22.
- 1.4 As agreed, this progress report reflects the period from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021 – 30<sup>th</sup> September 2021. The full annual report for the financial year 2021/22 will be completed by 31<sup>st</sup> May 2022. This will also ensure that the HSCP annual report will align with other key reporting cycles.

## **2. Background and Context**

- 2.1 The Children and Social Work Act 2017 abolished Local Child Safeguarding Boards (LSCBs). In their place a duty was placed upon local authorities, the police and clinical commissioning groups to establish multi-agency safeguarding arrangements. The three partners had an equal and shared statutory duty to publish their new, replacement arrangements by 29<sup>th</sup> June 2019 and to implement these by 29<sup>th</sup> September 2019.
- 2.2 Since the new arrangements were implemented in September 2019, these were reviewed and revised through discussions between the three executive leads (local authority, police and clinical commissioning group). Key decisions were made by Executive Board around future arrangements and these have continued to be strengthened during the period of this update (April 2021 – September 2021). The focus continues to be:

- Strengthening arrangements for independent scrutiny and challenge and for ongoing assurance activity;
  - Building the dedicated capacity needed to lead and drive partnership work, and;
  - Re-engaging in a meaningful way at strategic level with the wider group of key 'relevant agencies' who had been marginalised and disenfranchised within the published model and by the process for designing the new arrangements.
- 2.3 The outcomes of this work were described in the last annual report, together with the planned next steps in implementing the decisions taken. The report also reflected that further work was needed in developing the governance structure to support partnership working, the lines of accountability between the sub-groups and the Executive Board and the final make-up of the business support unit supporting, leading and coordinating the work.
- 2.4 The progress update covering the period 1<sup>st</sup> October 2020 – 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021 primarily focused on the progress made in laying those foundations for the future, so that this update and the full annual report for 2021/22 can describe impact and the difference the arrangements are making to improve safety for Hull's children.
- 2.5 Despite that the focus has primarily been upon ensuring that the right building blocks are in place, the focused Ofsted visit in March 2021 found that: *"A significant change in leadership style in children's social care is starting to reap dividends, helping to transform the partnership landscape as evidenced, for example, by Hull's Safeguarding Partnership Arrangements, which have been refreshed and re-energised."*
- 2.6 During the period from 31 March 21, progress has continued to be made in re-engaging with key relevant agencies and strengthening working relationships.

### **3. Independence, Scrutiny and Assurance**

- 3.1 The HSCP Independent Chair continues in her role after commencing post in December 2020. Executive leads agreed that this role was required to provide key leadership and challenge. The Independent Chair has chaired the Executive Board since January 2021 and significant progress continues to be made in enhancing key working relationships with executive leads, the local authority, chief executive and lead members and with the strategic leads of the 'relevant agencies', including the voluntary and community sector.
- 3.2 In order to further enhance relationships, Partner Relevant Agencies Meetings (PRAM) commenced in March 2021. Meetings have been convened on a quarterly basis (May 2021 and September 2021) and provided an opportunity to engage with partners to share updates around activity across the partnership and facilitate open discussion around what is working well and how to further improve engagement and progress. There has been good attendance at PRAM and these will continue to be held quarterly.

- 3.3 There continues to be an independent scrutineer appointed to Hull Safeguarding Children Partnership. As agreed by Executive Board in February 2021, the independent scrutineer has led on a programme of thematic learning, focusing on the effectiveness of local practice and responses in safeguarding children from domestic abuse. The key themes considered were the impact of domestic abuse on children and young people and the effectiveness of current services and partnership arrangements in Hull in improving outcomes for children and young people where domestic abuse is a factor. Partner agencies across Hull contributed to this work. The report was endorsed at Executive Board in September 21 and has been used to inform the HSCP Business Plan 2021/ 2022 (finalised outside of the scope of this update).
- 3.4 To further strengthen partnership working in relation to domestic abuse, the HSCP manager now attends the Domestic Abuse Strategic Board. The above programme of thematic learning has contributed towards the current draft Domestic Abuse Strategy for Hull which has been co-ordinated through the Hull Community Safety Partnership. Joint working has been strengthened between HSCP and Hull DAP including a task and finish group to agree practitioner training and support for parents and young people where child to parent abuse is apparent. This will be funded through a recent successful bid for financial support through the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Humberside.
- 3.5 There has also been a commitment to strengthen the joint working between Hull Safeguarding Children Partnership, Adults Safeguarding Board, Hull Community Safety Partnerships and the Health and Wellbeing Board. Shared strategic priorities have been agreed. Monthly meetings are held between the four respective managers to discuss priorities and plans to meet these. Positive working relationships have developed with joint working taking place to meet shared goals. This includes the current development of a joint website.
- 3.6 In order to further strengthen working arrangements, the Hull Collaborative Partnership Meeting has now been formed including strategic leads from each partnership. The Hull Collaborative Partnership Meeting has been initiated and developed through the Hull Safeguarding Children Partnership who will continue to co-ordinate and drive this forward as the combined value of all partnerships working together is very evident.
- 3.7 The Hull Collaborative Partnership Meeting is convened on a quarterly basis with the aim of delivering change through collective effort to integrate the work of the Hull Safeguarding Children Partnership, Safer Hull Community Safety Partnership, the Hull Safeguarding Adults board and the Health and Wellbeing board. Terms of reference for this group were agreed in August 21. Emerging themes from each partnership are identified to provide an integrated city-wide response.
- 3.8 Through the Hull Collaborative Partnership Meeting, priority areas have been identified for further strategic oversight and planning. These are exploitation, analytics, domestic abuse, combined learning and trauma informed city. Five

subgroups have been established to focus on these key areas, chaired by strategic leads from Executive Board.

#### **4. Strengthening Capacity to support partnership work**

- 4.1 As part of the review of the published arrangements, it was agreed that a new post of HSCP Manager was needed to provide leadership and ensure coordination of partnership improvement activity. An appointment was made to this position in December 2020 with the post holder commencing this role on 12<sup>th</sup> April 2021.
- 4.2 Progress has also been made in recruiting to the agreed business support roles. A full-time business support coordinator commenced their post on 1st July 2021 and an appointment was also made to the role of service support officer. The post of service support officer commenced in September 2021. This has enabled, through one central point, important support and assistance with the co-ordination of various sub-groups, meetings and provided support to the executive board.

#### **5. HSCP Governance Arrangements and priorities**

- 5.1 As discussed within the last progress report, it was acknowledged as part of the review of arrangements that further work was needed to strengthen the governance arrangements (including the partnership sub-groups) and the clear lines of reporting and accountability to the Executive Board. This work was completed and endorsed by the board in February 2021.
- 5.2 The Hull Safeguarding Children Partnership key priorities for 2021/ 2022 were agreed at an `Extraordinary HSCP Executive Meeting` held in June 21. It was agreed that the priority areas for focus would be neglect, domestic abuse, contextual safeguarding, learning and improvement and COVID recovery. A one-page plan was developed to highlight priorities, and this was cascaded across the partnership. [Plan on a page-link](#)
- 5.3 Subsequently the full HSCP Business Plan for 2021/ 2022 has now been endorsed at Executive Board. [Business Plan- link](#)
- 5.4 The circumstances surrounding COVID-19 have presented challenges and the need to flexibly respond to a changing landscape of risk on a daily basis. The pandemic has also provided a valuable opportunity to highlight positive ways in which services have responded to the needs of children and young people, working innovatively in partnership to overcome these. The Executive Board continues to meet on a monthly basis. Key priorities and emerging risks are subject to continual review.
- 5.5 Risks highlighted and prioritised during the scope of this progress report have included consideration of multi-agency demand during COVID 19 and during the transitioning out of the pandemic. Examples of these have been a focus

around responses and demand made for services through EHASH, responding to children and young people who are subjected to or at risk of neglect, work to consider how agencies are collaborating to effectively to respond to the wellbeing of children, young people and their families who are affected by domestic abuse and integrated partnership working and communication around contextual safeguarding. Further details in relation to responses to identified risks are contained within this report.

- 5.6 There are currently six strategic subgroups under the arrangements. These consist of the EHASH subgroup, Contextual Safeguarding subgroup, Safeguarding in Education subgroup, Learning from Individual Cases subgroup, Quality Assurance and Performance subgroup and the Learning and Improvement subgroup. The subgroups have good attendance and commitment from agencies across the partnership, including the voluntary and community sectors, education, police, children's social care, NHS Hull CCG, City Health Care Partnership, Primary Care, Hull University Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust and Humber Teaching NHS Foundation Trust.
- 5.7 The chairs of the subgroups continue to report into the executive board on a quarterly basis to ensure clear governance. Progress reports are submitted to strengthen accountability, enable the executive leads to influence the work of the subgroups and to support in understanding and addressing any barriers to progress.
- 5.8 Quarterly meetings are now in place for the subgroup chairs, deputy chairs and the HSCP Manager to meet on a quarterly basis to ensure consistency and the opportunity to explore any issues. This is currently chaired by the HSCP Independent Chair.
- 5.9 Operational groups have also been developed to support front-line developments and implementation of actions. The Operational Management Group reports to the EHASH subgroup, the Performance and Quality Assurance Audit group reports into the Performance and Quality Assurance subgroup and an operational Contextual Safeguarding subgroup supports operational activity agreed via the Contextual Safeguarding subgroup.
- 5.10 In relation to Contextual Safeguarding, two workshops took place in April 2021 with a wide range of partners and stakeholders to consider new arrangements and to provide professionals with the opportunity to collaborate and identify systemic gaps. An expression of interest to work with the Tackling Child Exploitation programme was also successful and input commenced in June 2021. This has been co-ordinated through the Contextual Safeguarding subgroup with attendance at all TCE meetings by a representative from health, police, HSCP manager and the chair (local authority) and deputy chair (probation). The TCE programme has provided a useful library of resources for professionals to utilise and joint working has taken place with a neighbouring authority (East Riding) to consider through mapping activity how current arrangements can be strengthened.

5.11 Links have been strengthened between HSCP partnership and police in relation to pathways to safeguard children identified through Organised Crime Groups and to ensure that there is appropriate representation at the OCG bronze and silver meetings. This has included presentations being provided to the strategic Contextual Safeguarding subgroup by Humberside Police to raise awareness around organised crime, including data to enhance understanding around risks.

## **6. Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews, Serious Case Reviews and other learning**

6.1 There have been no new notifications made to the panel in relation to the death or serious injury of any child where abuse or neglect is known or suspected. There are two reviews which are currently ongoing through Hull Children Safeguarding Partnership. These are complex in nature and it is anticipated that these will be published in 2022.

6.2 Learning from one of these reviews has already been disseminated across the partnership. A multi-agency webinar was held in June 2021 to cascade learning and attended by professionals across the partnership. Subsequently a further webinar has been recorded which can be accessed by partner agencies. The neglect strategy and tool kit for Hull are also being updated and a task and finish group has been established in relation to this. The updated tools will be shared and cascaded in December 2021. Briefing and webinars will also take place to support this work.

6.3 As part of work to improve the way in which learning is disseminated, and impact measured, the partnership safeguarding training and development officers continue to be much more directly involved in the work of the learning from individual cases group. Trainers attend subgroups and regular meetings are held between HSCP Manager and the Training and Development Manager to discuss key priorities. This enables flexibility in designing learning programmes to reach a bigger volume of practitioners and managers in the future.

6.4 The Terms of Reference for the Learning from Individual Cases subgroup have recently been updated, including a clear referral pathway for agencies who identify a child where a review would be helpful. This includes the process in relation to 'Line of Sight Meetings' which have recently been introduced for local learning reviews. Presentations are delivered based on agency chronologies and identified learning by single agencies, followed by reflective discussion with key practitioners. Panel meetings are then held to agree specific actions which are cascaded and then reviewed to consider impact and implementation. Actions identified from learning reviews are tracked through the Learning from Individual Cases subgroup.

6.5 A recent local learning review has taken place following a family court judgement highlighting the need for practice improvement. In response to this

review, joint auditing work has taken place by Police and HSCP manager to considering themes around S47 enquiries – including strategy discussions and ABE interviews. This activity has included a neighbouring authority due to similar themes having been raised. The outcome of this review has included actions for revised learning to be disseminated across the partnership. The need for ABE training for Social Workers was also identified as a priority area. To meet this identified need, joint meetings have been held involving the four neighbouring authorities and Humberside Police to consider how this could most effectively be delivered. It has been agreed a bespoke training package will commence in January 2022 for Social Workers.

- 6.6 In response to Ofsted's review of sexual abuse in schools and colleges (June 2021) a number of actions have been taken in relation to key findings. The Education Safeguarding Manager has led briefings being delivered at Local Authority and Multi Agency Trust meetings and Primary, Secondary and Special School meetings. Liaison has also taken place with Multi Academy Trust Strategic Safeguarding Leads, individual headteachers and Designated Safeguarding Leads to gather front line information in relation to actions undertaken. Working groups have been established to consider actions being carried out. A working party has been initiated with representation from Humberside Police, Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner, Hull Safeguarding Children Partnership Manager, LADO, Headstart and the Safeguarding Education Manager. Early intervention and education in schools is a priority. Collaboration has taken place to look at the launch of the Ineqe Group Safer Schools App (accessible to parents, pupils and teaching staff). This provides a wealth of safeguarding resources to help educate and protect children and young people.
- 6.7 The HSCP have also actively engaged with the work led through Humberside Police in relation to Violence against Women and Girls. HSCP have signed a statement of intent to work alongside agencies to tackle this. Early intervention and education will be key to this work.
- 6.8 In August 2021 an appointment was made to an integrated practice officer role through Safeguarding Education. The practice officer post commenced in September 2021 and will support education settings with addressing domestic abuse and providing education and support around this.

## **7. Multi-Agency Safeguarding Improvement Activity**

- 7.1 The Quality Assurance and Performance subgroup forms part of the published model of the Hull Safeguarding Children Partnership. The purpose of this group is to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of services that are provided by the safeguarding partnership, and wider partners, to gain assurance of their ability to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. Areas of excellent quality are considered and where there is a need for improvement. Reports are provided to Executive Board in relation to the activity of this group on a quarterly basis.

- 7.2 The above subgroup meets on a bi-monthly basis. The Terms of Reference have recently been amended to reflect the need for both an oversight and assurance function alongside a more operational function of undertaking partnership audit activity. Work is also being progressed as to how data is presented for analysis.
- 7.3 How to ensure the views and feedback of children and families are heard is a standing agenda item and links have been made with the Children's Voice and Influence Group to identify further opportunities as to how feedback can be collated and analysed.
- 7.4 An auditing activity programme through HSCP has been completed for the next year with themes aligning with the agreed partnership priorities. Emerging issues, learning and feedback is fed into the Quality Assurance and Performance subgroup. Audit activity from across the partnership is also discussed within this subgroup, including auditing activity currently taking place within EHASH (Early Help and Safeguarding Hub – Children's Services).
- 7.5 As detailed in the last progress report, the partnership undertook a section 11 audit (self-assessment) process. There was a very good response to this across the partnership with a 97% return from partners and organisations. This information was analysed and priority themes for further focused improvement work were identified. An analysis was presented to Executive Board in April 2021 and progress in relation to the priorities has been overseen by the Quality Assurance and Performance subgroup. Work which has taken place as a result of the section 11 audit activity has included widespread training in relation to PREVENT (led by Hull Safeguarding Community Partnership), cascading of information linked to private fostering, improved processes around how to learn from individual cases and significant activity in relation to child exploitation (please see 5.6).
- 7.6 In addition to the work on practice reviews (described above) and the section 11 audit work, the current local authority context (of intervention) has meant that there has been a significant amount of continuous improvement activity, much of which has, and will continue to, engage key safeguarding partners.
- 7.7 The HSCP strategic leads are members of the Improvement Board which is currently overseeing the implementation of the local authority's improvement plan.
- 7.8 'Signs of Safety' is being implemented by the Local Authority as the practice model for working with children, young people and families across Hull. The model is intended to be used across the whole partnership. Training and briefings have taken place between July – October 2021 with 634 practitioners and managers from the wider partnership having attended briefings and over 70 attending the two-day training (majority school nurses and health visitors). The HSCP manager has attended a six-day training course in relation to Signs

of Safety and attends training targeted at practice leads. Signs of Safety information for partners has been cascaded in a recent HSCP newsletter along with details as to how to access the knowledge bank.

- 7.9 Bi-monthly newsletters are now produced and cascaded by HSCP to voluntary and statutory agencies to strengthen communication and to ensure that regular updates are provided in relation to work which is taking place across the partnership. This has been well received and includes contributions made by a range of partners. The newsletter provides updates around the HSCP priorities, local training and key findings from local, regional and national research; recent examples have included summaries and learning links in respect of 'The Myth of Invisible Men' and the recent 'Thematic Report on Suicide in Children and Young People'.

## **8. Conclusions and Next Steps**

- 8.1 Significant progress has been made in re-establishing and re-invigorating the partnership and strengthening collaboration across the partnership. Foundations are in place for a more effective partnership which will continue to be built on.
- 8.2 As indicated above, there is strategic oversight of activity which taken place within HSCP by executive leads who form the Executive Board.
- 8.3 The 2021/2022 HSCP Business Plan has been agreed by the Executive Board. This sets out the HSCP priorities for the next twelve months and details the key activity to make progress, including the success measures. The five priorities are neglect, domestic abuse, contextual safeguarding, learning & improvement & COVID-19 recovery. [Business Plan- link](#)
- 8.4 Activity in relation to outstanding practice reviews to be finalised by 31<sup>st</sup> January 2022.
- 8.5 HSCP website to be updated and improved by 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022.
- 8.6 Scrutiny and assurance framework to be updated to reflect current arrangements by 28<sup>th</sup> February 2022, for approval at the Executive Board meeting in March 2022.