



Report for Select Committee

Date:	07 January 2021
Title:	Buckinghamshire Safeguarding Children Partnership Annual Report 2019/20
Relevant councillor(s):	All
Author and/or contact officer:	Sir Francis Habgood, independent Chair for Buckinghamshire Safeguarding Partnership
Ward(s) affected:	All
Recommendations:	For Select Committee to note the progress made by the Buckinghamshire Safeguarding Children Partnership during the last year.

1. Content of report

- 1.1 In 2018, a review was commenced to consider new local safeguarding arrangements in line with the revised Working Together 2018 statutory guidance. The arrangements have been developed by the statutory safeguarding partners following initial work by the Buckinghamshire Safeguarding Children Board (BSCB) and from ongoing collaboration with relevant agencies and partners. This review has resulted in the implementation of the Buckinghamshire Multi-Agency Safeguarding Arrangements, which were agreed and signed off by the Statutory Partners in June 2019, changing the Safeguarding Children Board into the Safeguarding Children Partnership (BSCP).
- 1.2 The BSCP is a statutory, multi-organisation partnership coordinated by the local authority, which oversees and leads children safeguarding across the Buckinghamshire Council area. The main objective of the BSCP is to gain assurance that safeguarding arrangements locally, and its partner organisations work effectively, individually and together, to support and safeguard children in its area who are at risk of abuse and neglect.
- 1.3 The BSCP has worked over the last year with our partners across the multi-agency arena to drive activity to ensure that we have met or worked towards the key priorities. As a result of the business functions of the Safeguarding Children

Partnership and Safeguarding Adults Board becoming a single business unit, we will be seeking to undertake some joint strategic work over the next two years. The focus of this work will be to streamline and align the new three year business plans for both the Partnership and Board to demonstrate closer working together and a whole-family approach to our work. We are seeking to provide a joint learning and development plan to again provide closer training and learning opportunities across all our multi agencies, voluntary and charity sectors. Through the work in our subgroups we are seeking to produce quality assurance frameworks that will support the subgroup activities and challenge those working in the safeguarding arena to ensure that our policies and procedures are imbedded in the work we carry out and that we can demonstrate the impact of learning that has taken place.

- 1.4 The Partnership has an Independent Chair who provides leadership, vision and support and who is responsible for ensuring that all organisations contribute effectively to the work of the BSCP. The Chair provides accountability for the work undertaken by the BSCP by way of reports to relevant strategic committees and boards.
- 1.5 2019-2020 saw the Safeguarding Children Board change into the Safeguarding Children Partnership halfway through the year. One of the leading strategic aims was to complete this transformation with a new executive body and a new overarching chair and management structure to support the business unit functions of both the Safeguarding Adults Board and Safeguarding Children Partnership. The transformation also included a revision of Partnership participation at the executive level. Alongside this work, the strategic priorities for the BSCP during this period have been:
 - Domestic Abuse
 - Child Exploitation
 - Neglect
 - Commitment to a high level Improvement Plan
- 1.6 The Board is currently supported by five subgroups that carry out the day to day work in order to help deliver the Board's objectives and Strategic Plan. The new partnership arrangements advocate for a new Learning and Education subgroup to support the ongoing multi-agency work with children and young people. This subgroup will work closely with them in their educational years, seeking to deliver positive outcomes that have a lasting effect on their lives. The work of each subgroup is covered in detail during the Annual Report itself.

- 1.7 This year was a significant one for the safeguarding children's world as the Children's Board was reformed into the Children's Partnership following guidelines laid out in Working Together 2018. A number of objectives set out in the previous Annual Report have been achieved this year. Of note, in August 2019 the business functions of the Safeguarding Adults Board merged with the Safeguarding Children Partnership to form one business unit. The business unit now has one Safeguarding Partnership Manager to oversee the daily operation of the Safeguarding Children Partnership and one Joint Independent Chair. This has streamlined the business processes but not impacted on the valuable work the Safeguarding Children Partnership carry out to ensure the safety and wellbeing of our children and young people in Buckinghamshire. A review was undertaken with regards to the membership of both the Partnership and subgroups which led to a more focused membership, ensuring that work of the subgroups was sufficiently supported from our multi-agencies and third sector volunteer and charity sectors.
- 1.8 The joint protocol that exists between the Safeguarding Adults Board, Safeguarding Children Partnership, the Health and Wellbeing Board, and the Safer Stronger Bucks Board has been under review leading to a new but slimmed down joint protocol that will be published in 2020. This document will set out defined structures for joint working between these four groups, leading to more cohesive strategies to support our local communities.
- 1.9 The Partnership, through the Serious Case Review subgroup, commissioned a thematic review into serious youth violence in Buckinghamshire after the report of a serious incident in the County. The commissioning decision sought to take the opportunity to review serious youth violence in a national context to provide the best possible learning outcomes and ensure that learning was fully understood, and had an impact on the lives of children and young people. This approach involved a practitioners' learning event in November 2019; the full report will be published in 2020. Some feedback from this event included that the conference was 'invaluable' and 'it will change the way I work with children subject to serious youth violence moving forwards'.
- 1.10 The death of a child is always tragic and leaves families with a sense of shock, devastation and loss. However, it is important that we review child deaths to see whether we can learn any lessons to improve the health, safety and wellbeing of other children, or to improve the support for bereaved families. The Child Death Overview Panel (CDOP) fulfils this function.
- 1.11 In the period 2019-2020, the Panel reviewed 22 child deaths. None of these were referred to the Children Safeguarding subgroup for consideration of a serious case review. 12 deaths have now been closed and 10 remain open. Of those remaining open there are ongoing processes that are being concluded to allow closure to take place.

1.12 A very brief overview of child death is included within the Annual report and the CDOP will provide their own annual report later in the year.

