

SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN AN UPDATE

To: **Cabinet**

Date: **7 July 2009**

From: **Executive Director Children and Young People Services**

Electoral division(s): **All**

Forward Plan ref: **2009/041**

Key decision: **No (from the recommendations set out below)**

Purpose: **Purpose of the report:**

- **To update Cabinet on the outcome of the Review of Safeguarding in Cambridgeshire**
- **To inform Cabinet of plans for the investment in social care.**

Recommendation: **Cabinet is asked to:**

- i) **note the progress made in Cambridgeshire following the review of safeguarding arrangements.**
- ii) **Note the outcomes of investment in Children's Social Care and the recruitment of additional social workers.**

<i>Officer contact:</i>		<i>Member contact</i>	
Name:	Nicola Clemo	Name:	Councillor Martin Curtis
Post:	Service Director Social Care	Portfolio:	Children
Email:	Nicola.Clemo@cambridgeshire.gov.uk	Email:	Martin.Curtis@cambridgeshire.gov.uk
Tel:	01223 717856	Tel:	01223 699173

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 In April 2009, Children and Young People Services (CYPS) reorganised and established a new countywide directorate for Children's Social Care, under a single Service Director. The new Directorate brought together all aspects of social care for children and young people including: -

- Area Assessment and Care Management Teams, Family Support, Looked After Children's Teams, Disabled Children's Teams
- Specialist Commissioning Teams-Contract and Procurement
- Fostering and adoption, 16 plus Team, Community Support Services and residential care.
- Safeguarding and Standards Unit-Independent Reviewing Officers, Specialist services-Family Group Meeting, Participation for Looked After Children

Social care (Staying Safe) has been graded as a 2 "adequate" since the Joint Area Review (JAR Inspection) in October 2007. All other aspects of Children and Young Peoples Service are graded as a 3 "good".

- 1.2 Whilst performance across the whole of Children's Services has improved during this time, performance in social care has not been consistent. In particular, there have been significant challenges in recruiting and retaining social work staff often contributing to variable performance in a number of key areas.
- 1.3 More recently the tragic death of Baby Peter and the subsequent JAR in Haringey required all local authorities to scrutinise their safeguarding arrangements and to ensure that there are clear lines of accountability. As a result, there has been a focus on child protection and safeguarding arrangements within local authorities, particularly the lead role of social work. The subsequent report by Lord Laming was published in March 2009 and the Governments response, which accepted all 58 recommendations in full, was published on 13th May 2009.

2. Safeguarding Arrangements in Cambridgeshire

- 2.1 Cambridgeshire's Local Safeguarding Children's Board (LSCB) has in the last 6 months been subject to a major review led by the interim Independent Chair Jane Held. As a result the LSCB's Business Unit is developing a clear Strategic Plan on the priorities for the Board. There is improved engagement by all Chief Officers who make up the LSCB Executive and a commitment to improved safeguarding throughout Cambridgeshire.
- 2.2 Felicity Schofield was appointed as substantive LSCB Chair on 8th June 2009. Felicity is currently an Inspector for the Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (OFSTED) on secondment from her substantive post as Assistant Director social care in Leicestershire. She hopes to join Cambridgeshire by September 1st 2009.
- 2.3 As part of the CYPS restructure, the role of Head of Safeguarding and Standards was broadened to provide a safeguarding lead for all of CYPS and not just social care. This role includes ensuring that all CYPS services comply with the annual audit of safeguarding under Section 11 of the 2004 Children Act. The post also has line management responsibility for the LSCB Business Manager and supports the work of the unit.

- 2.4 In addition, the Head of Safeguarding and Standards has responsibility for the Safeguarding and Standards Unit, a team of Independent Reviewing Officers and policy advisers. The team is separate from front line service delivery and management and has an audit function to undertake regular monitoring, review and quality audits to ensure the system meets national and local quality standards.
- 2.5 The LSCB oversees the management of the Serious Case Review (SCR) process. A SCR is undertaken when a child dies or is significantly harmed and abused or neglect is suspected. Currently Cambridgeshire has 4 SCRs underway. These relate to the death of a 7 week old baby in January 2006, the murder of two teenage girls in June 2007 and the suicide of a 17 year old earlier this year. The first two cases are subject to criminal proceedings and are due to be published in the autumn, with the latter due in July. A further SCR has been commissioned in respect of the tragic unexplained death of a 6 week old baby on the 17.06.09 who was subject to a Child Protection Plan.

A SCR has been recently concluded and was reported to Cabinet in March 2009. This SCR (Child A) was judged as adequate under the new OFSTED assessment arrangements in May 2009.

- 2.6 Cambridgeshire has undertaken a review of safeguarding in response to the Haringey JAR and the requirement of the Secretary of State to review Safeguarding practice. These actions have used a range of support from both internal and external resources and include:
- A sample of child protection plans involving children under the age of 4 were reviewed by an Independent Reviewing Officer
 - An audit has been conducted by the County Council's Internal Audit team to assess referral and Assessment processes across the County
 - A benchmarking exercise involved the benchmarking of our own safeguarding arrangements against the findings of the Haringey JAR
 - A peer inspection programme has been undertaken to enable Team Managers to be part of a programme of self assessment reviews.
 - An audit of 15 cases per area team has been undertaken by Area Managers
 - A stock take against the recommendations in the Victoria Climbié report has been concluded
 - A Team Manager based in the Contact Centre has been appointed to scrutinise and screen referrals.
 - We have undertaken a workload monitoring exercise to establish current activity needs in Service Areas
 - Area workshops have been held for newly qualified social workers (NQSW) to hear about their early experiences of working for Cambridgeshire
 - An Independent Consultant has been commissioned to undertake an evaluation of our plans for workforce reform and to assist with the qualitative assessment of our front line services.

2.7 **Government Response to the Laming Review**

In reality as described in this report, many of the Laming Review recommendations are going to take some time to be realised. However, much of the work currently underway in Cambridgeshire is in the direction of travel of the reports recommendations. For example, we are planning to have an Independent Chair of

the Serious Case Review Panel as well as an Independent Chair of the LSCB. Many of the workforce reforms are also identified as a priority for Cambridgeshire and we have already seen significant improvements in our recruitment of social workers. Appendix 1 gives the detail of the recommendations and initial responses of Children's services.

3 Current Performance and Demand Pressures on Local Authority Services

3.1 The following tables give an overview of some of the challenges that are currently faced.

3.1.1 **Referrals per 10,000 population under 18**

	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09
Cambridgeshire	562	519	317
Statistical Neighbours	358	303	
England	496	490	

Since the introduction of a Team Manager in the Contact Centre, referrals for Social Care are now in line with our statistical neighbour authorities. This is as a direct result of the robust screening at referrals at the Contact Centre.

3.1.2 **% Referrals that are repeat referrals within 12 months of a previous referral Referrals per 10,000 population under 18**

	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09
Cambridgeshire	34.4%	32.0%	26.3%
Statistical Neighbours	23.2%	22.9%	
England	22.7%	24.3%	

The rate of re-referrals has also fallen although it is still above statistical neighbours and the England rate.

3.1.3 **NI 68 % Referrals that led to Initial Assessments**

	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09
Cambridgeshire	37.1%	42.7%	53.6%
Statistical Neighbours	59.0%	67.6%	
England	56.0%	59.4%	

Performance on this indicator has continued to improve over recent years, with a significant improvement last year. However, performance remains below that of statistical neighbours although we are now approaching last year's national rate.

3.1.4 **Performance against assessment timescales**

National Indicator (NI) 59 % Initial Assessments completed within 7 days

	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09
Cambridgeshire	69.0%	67.2%	61.9%
Statistical Neighbours	62.8%	64.3%	
England	68.4%	70.7%	

Performance in NI59 % Initial Assessments completed within 7 days has fallen since last year.

3.1.5 **Children subject to a Child Protection (CP) Plan.**

At the end of 2008/09 there were 361 children in Cambridgeshire subject to a child protection plan, an increase of 3 since last year. Rates per 10,000 population are significantly higher than our statistical neighbours

% children subject to a CP Plan who are not allocated to a qualified social worker

	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09
Cambridgeshire	4.4%	2.8%	0.0%
Statistical Neighbours	0.4%	1.1%	
England	0.3%	0.4%	

All children subject to a child protection plan are now allocated to a qualified social worker.

3.1.6 Looked After Children (LAC) allocated to a Qualified Social Worker

	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09
Cambridgeshire	60.0%	62.7%	69.8% (provisional)
Statistical Neighbours	94.7%	96.2%	
England	95.5%	97.0%	

Qualified workers have improved for LAC though it's still below that of other authorities.

- 3.2 Members will note that performance trends in Cambridgeshire are variable and that there is a need to improve timeliness of initial assessments and numbers of core assessments in particular. The impact of the new Information Technology (IT) system, Integrated Children system (ICS) has been significant on front line staff. Concerns around the national ICS system and its implementation by software suppliers have been expressed at a national and local level and we are working closely with our providers to resolve the issues.
- 3.3 A project funded by the Regional Improvement and Efficiency Programme (REIP) has recently identified improvements in performance as being a main priority for the 11 Local Authorities in the region. All the eleven Directors of Children's Services (DCS's) across the region have collaborated on a successful bid for funding of £750,000 over two years to pump prime work to focus on improving performance and on workforce reform across the region. The Service Director of Social Care is a member of the Project Steering Group.
- 3.4 Workforce Reform**
- 3.4.1 In the past 18 months there has been success in recruiting to 55 social workers, 20 senior social workers and 20 Team Managers posts. Whilst many of the senior social workers and Team Managers are current staff that have been promoted, most of the 55 social workers are newly qualified, with many coming from areas outside of Cambridgeshire. A significant number are also staff that were originally employed as Child and Family Workers and have returned to Cambridgeshire following their training.
- 3.4.2 Recruitment and retention of social workers has been a major issue for the delivery of social care in Cambridgeshire for a number of years. This mirrors a similar picture both regionally and nationally and a Recruitment and Retention strategy Group has led the way in designing and developing a number of mechanisms to improve recruitment and retention across the County.

- 3.4.3 This work has been subjected to external scrutiny and has been monitored by Children and Young Peoples Management Team and Scrutiny Committee and there has been significant success in attracting newly qualified workers (NQSW) in particular.
- 3.4.4 However, the challenge of retaining the more experienced staff is significant and requires a more creative package of support, a "total reward model" which considers what else experienced practitioners' need to keep in the most demanding of roles, particularly in the field of child protection.
- 3.4.5 The outcome of work with an Independent Consultant and one of the lead Project Managers for "Reclaiming Social work" in Hackney reinforces the message that whilst pay is an issue there were other considerations of equal importance. This included:-
- High quality regular supervision
 - Protected caseloads
 - Shared cases with experienced staff
 - Opportunities for reflective practice
 - Clear personal development plans
 - Lease car schemes/car loans
 - Continual learning environment opportunities to work in different environments

A Work Force Development Group has responsibility for progressing all of these plans to ensure we have social work teams that are fit for purpose and who provide high quality service. It is widely recognised that children are better protected when there is a well trained and supported social work service in place.

- 3.4.6 In response to this challenge, plans are underway to:
- Provide a Team Managers' development programme
 - Review and revise procedures such as the social care Children in Need procedures
 - Identify and commission training arising from Serious Case Review Action Plans e.g. in adult mental health
 - Develop relationships with external providers such as universities to access 'clinical supervision'
 - Implement a workforce development strategy
 - Pilot new ways of using business support in developing the model of a 'team around the child'
 - Undertake peer inspection by and with high performing authorities

4 Demand and Resources

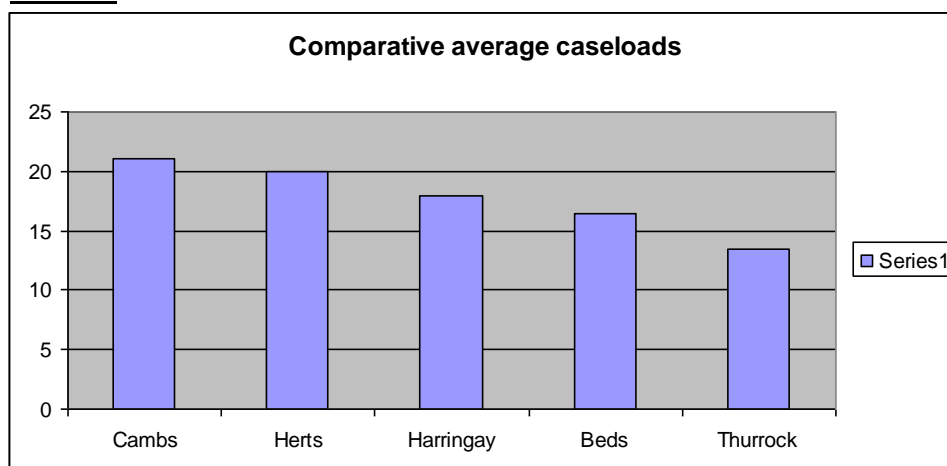
- 4.1 The caseload weighting exercise in Cambridgeshire identified a shortfall in the number of social workers required to manage the workload.
- 4.2 Average number of open cases held by assessment and care management practitioners in place and working at the time of the audit as set out overleaf.

Table 1

	No of open cases	FTE	Ave caseload by worker
Huntingdonshire	908	41.3	22
South Cambridgeshire and Cambridge City	804		4717
East Cambridgeshire and Fenland		684	3122
County Total	2396	119.3	21

Compared to other local authorities in the region, Cambridgeshire's caseloads were judged to be higher and that additional staff needed to be employed.

Table 2



- 4.3 In response to Baby Peter and the early work looking at caseloads, Cabinet agreed to a funding uplift of £485k for social care in March 2009. It was decided to use this funding to recruit more social workers direct in order to reduce caseloads, which was seen as having an influence on recruitment and retention. The funding has been used to recruit to 15 additional social worker posts across Cambridgeshire. The majority of these posts are now filled.

This needs to be seen as a first stage development as further Government guidance following the adoption of all the recommendations from the Laming Review is awaited. Several of these recommendations have the potential for requiring additional resources. The DCSF has announced an additional resource of £58m for child protection services across the country but details and expectations of this funding have not been announced.

5. SIGNIFICANT IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 **Resources And Performance** (*this heading includes Finance, Property and Facilities Management, Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Human Resources, Performance, Risk and Best Practice and where significant, they are set out below*)

The following bullet points set out details of significant implications identified by officers:

- Section 3, paragraph 3.1 to 3.3 details performance implications.
- Section 4 paragraph 4.1 to 4.3 details resource implications.

5.2 Statutory Requirements and Partnership Working

- paragraph 2.7 and the Appendix 1 details implications for partner organisations.

5.3 Climate Change (Includes any climate change, greenhouse gas emissions and environment implications and where significant, they are set out below)

There are no significant implications under this heading.

5.4 Access and Inclusion (*includes inclusion, crime and disorder, the voluntary Sector, equality and diversity and transport implication and where significant, they are set out below*)

- Section 3.4 will impact on delivery to all children including disabled children

5.5 Engagement and Consultation (*includes community engagement and public consultation and where significant, they are set out below*)

There are no significant implications under this heading.

6.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Cabinet is asked to note the progress made in Cambridgeshire following the review of Safeguarding arrangements.

5.2 Cabinet is asked to note the outcomes of the investment in Childrens Social Care and the recruitment of additional social workers.

Source Documents	Location
The Protection of Children in England: A Progress Report Lord Laming	www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/?asset=News&id=142893
The protection of children in England: action plan - The Government's response to Lord Laming	http://publications.everychildmatters.gov.uk/
Workforce Development Strategy	Childrens Services Castle Court

Key recommendations from the Laming Report and in the Government's Action Plan

<http://www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/?asset=News&id=142893>

Implications for Local Authorities		
<i>National Leadership and Accountability</i>		
no.	Action	Commentary
2	A new Chief Adviser on the Safety of Children	Appointed – Sir Roger Singleton
2	A cross Government National Safeguarding Delivery Unit	Operational from July 2009 with a detailed work programme from September 2009-05-19 - this will have a range of implications but there is as yet no clarity about exactly what or how
7	All DCSs who do not have a background in safeguarding must appoint a senior manager in their team that has Revised guidance published by June 2009 – and revised Working Together by December 2009	Compliant
9	Changes to the nature of the strategic needs analysis – to be developed in the revised Working Together and through the National Safeguarding and Standards Unit Revised guidance published by June	This will significantly influence the work of the LA and the basis upon which the Big Plan is developed and delivered

	2009 – and revised Working Together by December 2009	
10	<p>A revised inspection regime for schools, giving greater prominence to how schools are fulfilling their responsibilities for child protection</p> <p>Already devised – to be applied from September 2009</p>	<p>This has direct implications for Children's Services and the LSCB in both school improvement and in training provision</p> <p>However, Cambridgeshire is already in a good place to deliver with its specialist education Child Protection service</p>
11, 13, 14, 16, 19, 20, 21, 23, 25, 29, 30	<p>Revision of Working Together to achieve:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear expectations at the point of contact when concerns are raised • The way all referrals lead to initial assessments • The way assessments gather information • Changes to the way children in need access early intervention from specialist services • The way core groups, reviews and casework decisions are arrived at • Guidance on high quality social work supervision • Referrals from police, probation, adult mental health and adult substance abuse services refer • Assessments of risk • Consistent application of current information sharing guidance • Co-location of named health and police professionals in children's social services • Initial training and CPD for all staff who work with children • Sufficient multi-agency training to ensure all staff use a shared language and have a shared understanding of what is meant by referral, assessments, information sharing etc <p>Revised guidance by published by June 2009 – and revised Working Together by December 2009</p>	<p>The timescales are very ambitious</p> <p>Care needs to be taken locally that this is used as an opportunity for transformational change, not just for endless re-writes and dissemination events – procedural changes alone will not achieve the desired impact</p> <p>However, it should be noted that each of these issues will have significant implications not just on how we work, but how much we do, at what cost and at what point in a child's life, by whom with what standards and qualifications</p> <p>All of which could have very significant resource and workforce implications</p>

12	<p>New guidance for A and E Departments</p> <p>A set of recommendations by December 2009 that take into account the costs and affordability of implementation</p>	<p>Implications for local health economy particularly around resources</p>
15, 24,26, 27,28, 31	<p>Social work reform to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guidelines on supervision time for social workers • National strategy to ensure supply (recruitment and retention) • Clear progression routes and career framework for social work (NQSW, Advanced Practitioner, practice focussed and also managerial progression routes) • Caseload management • Social work remodelling • Reforms to social work education • Practice based masters qualification • Conversion standards for overseas social workers • Revised code of practice <p>Via the work of the Social Work Taskforce and a comprehensive Social Work reform programme to be in place by September 2009</p>	<p>To be welcomed –and large parts already underway through a very large scale programme through CWDC but also will need to be resourced and will take some time</p> <p>However, the impact of an equivalent programme on teaching and in schools would indicate that it could be the single most influential change in safeguarding children better</p> <p>Will need to be taken into account in the Children's Trust's workforce strategy, which is already well underway in Cambridgeshire (including piloting NQSW's)</p>
16, 17	<p>Review and reform of ICS</p> <p>Immediate changes to be announced May 2009 – Other reforms to be set out in the report of the Social Work Taskforce October 2009</p>	<p>To be welcomed but needs careful implementation</p> <p>Will require very careful monitoring and heavy emphasis on compliance in transition</p>
22, 50	<p>Reform of LSCBs through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Statutory representation from schools and adult substance abuse services • Senior officer membership • Appointment of two lay members • Implementation of changes arising from research by Loughborough University into the effectiveness of LSCBs • Separate chairing arrangements with different Chairs of the Children's Trust and the LSCB • An annual report by the LSCB to the Children's Trust on the effectiveness 	<p>Local reform is already underway as part of the Cambridgeshire LSCB Strategic Plan – with revised structural and governance arrangement being reported to the Children's Trust within the next 6 months</p>

	of local safeguarding activity	
32, 33,	<p>Action to prioritise:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved health visitor workforce capacity, by October 2009 • Extension of the healthy child programme (HCP) to cover 5-19 year olds by December 2009 • Commissioning a 0-5 HCP by March 2010 • Clarification of their role • Expansion of Family Nurse Partnerships 	Again welcome but will require new resources and a comprehensive workforce development strategy
34	Action to clarify the role and responsibilities of GP's and to promote compliance with their statutory duty and to revise guidance to them by December 2009 that takes into account the costs and affordability of implementation	
35	Action to improve training for health professionals to be agreed by December 2009	
36	<p>Work with ACPO. Association of Police Authorities and the National Police Improvement Agency to develop a clear unified strategic framework for delivering 'protective services' with child protection being the first protective service to be implemented</p> <p>Update comprehensive training for police officers</p> <p>By December 2009</p>	Again, this will have clear resource implications and may require changes amongst partners as well as within Cambridgeshire Police
37, 38	Work by the Care Quality Commission (CQC), Ofsted, and HMIC to ensure inspection regimes prioritise and rigorously inspect safeguarding arrangement	This will require collective and co-operative work to prepare and respond to inspections from single agency inspectorate
39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44	<p>Revision of the whole SCR system through a new chapter 8 of Working Together to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explicit purpose • Systems to learn lessons • Framework for conducting SCR's 	<p>This will create some significant new ways of working which will require capacity, assurance and effective commissioning and quality assurance systems</p> <p>There may be an advantage in looking at sharing the work and</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluation of the depth of learning achieved • The nature and type of executive summaries • Independent chairs of SCR Panels and overview authors and sufficient supply of them • Training for SCR Panel members <p>by July 2009</p>	developments required as a result of this with Peterborough
54, 55	Local partners must ensure through the strategic needs assessment that partners collectively resource safeguarding adequately based on the analysis, - which will be robustly challenged annually by Govt Office's	