

Meeting: Policy Development and Decision Group (Joint Commissioning Team)

Date: 14 December 2017

Wards Affected: All

Report Title: Torbay Safeguarding Children Board (TSCB) Annual Report 2016-17 and Business Plan 2017-18

Is the decision a key decision? No

When does the decision need to be implemented? As soon as possible

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1. Proposal and Introduction

1.1 Torbay Safeguarding Children Board (TSCB) is the key strategic mechanism through which local agencies co-operate to promote and safeguard the welfare of children and young people. The core objectives and key functions of a Safeguarding Board are set out respectively within Section 14(1) of the Children Action 2004 and Local Safeguarding Children Board Regulations 2006. In broad terms these require the TSCB:

- To co-ordinate what is done at a local level by agencies/individuals to safeguard children and young people.
- To ensure the effectiveness of what is done.

1.2 The work of the Safeguarding Board is informed by a range of partner performance data, needs assessments and the learning from any Serious Case Reviews or unexpected child deaths. This in turn supports a cycle of monitoring/review, planning and delivery in order to sustain and develop local arrangements to safeguard children and young people in Torbay.

1.3 The TSCB Annual Report (2016-17) attached at Appendix 1, looks back on the work of the Board over the past year whilst the TSCB Business Plan (2017-18) attached at Appendix 2 sets out the priorities for the current year. In addition to

their consideration by Elected Members at PDDG, both documents will be subject to final approval by the TSCB at its meeting on 14th December, 2017.

2. Reason for Proposal

- 2.1 Torbay Safeguarding Children Board (TSCB) was judged inadequate by Ofsted in January 2016 as part of the single inspection that also judged Children's Services inadequate. In coming to that conclusion, Ofsted raised particular concerns at the weakness in the business planning cycle, the absence of regular reporting against an exhaustive performance framework and the failure to hold partners to account in tackling issues such as neglect and weaknesses in Early Help provision.
- 2.2 A new independent chair, Ian Ansell, was appointed in April, 2016, to lead the Board's response to Ofsted's findings and ensure it delivers its core assurance function. This has involved working with the DfE Commissioner, John Coughlan, appointed in May, 2016, to oversee improvement activity on behalf of the Minister for Children and Families and the Children's Improvement Board convened by the Commissioner to co-ordinate the work to address the deficits identified by Ofsted.
- 2.3 The TSCB Annual Report (2016-17) attached at Appendix 1 provides an overview of progress from 1st April, 2016 to 31st March, 2017 which has been a period of development and consolidation for the Board. Key achievements include:
- Embedding the cycle of business of planning, delivery, monitoring and review.
 - Developing and implementing a comprehensive data set.
 - Overseeing the development and launch of local Neglect and Early Help Strategies.
 - Overseeing a Section 11 audit across local partners, with agency action plans in place to address areas for development.
- 2.4 The Children and Social Work Act 2017, building on the findings of the Wood Review, provided the opportunity for 'designated safeguarding partners' (local authority, clinical commissioning group and police) to develop new local safeguarding arrangements. In light of the Commissioner's recent recommendation that Torbay Children's Services to enter a contractual partnership with Plymouth it is not proposed to commence any significant changes to local safeguarding arrangements at this stage.
- 2.5 The TSCB Business Plan (2017-18) sets out the agenda for the current year underpinned by the two key priorities:
- To promote the welfare of children and young people who are vulnerable to above.
 - Responding to new legislation and joint inspection criteria to ensure the Board fulfils its statutory duties.

- 2.6 The TSCB Business Plan is supported by a detailed action plan setting out how local agencies will work together to deliver the overarching priorities which have been agreed by local partners. A particular emphasis within the action plan is to ensure the Board is receiving regular data and updates on safeguarding performance and the impact on outcomes for children and young people from the recently updated Neglect and Early Help Strategies.

3. Recommendation(s) / Proposed Decision

- 3.1 That the Deputy Mayor be recommended to approve the Torbay Safeguarding Children Board (TSCB) Annual Report 2016-17 (Appendix 1) and Business Plan 2017-18 (Appendix 2).

Appendices

Appendix 1: TSCB Annual Report 2016-17

Appendix 2: TSCB Business Plan 2017-18