

CABINET REPORT TEMPLATE AND GUIDANCE

REPORT TO:	CABINET 16 November 2022
SUBJECT:	Croydon Safeguarding Children Partnership Annual Report 2021/22
LEAD OFFICER:	Debbie Jones, interim Corporate Director, Children, Young People and Education Fiona Martin, Detective Superintendent. Metropolitan Police Elaine Clancy, Chief Nurse Croydon Heath Services & Croydon CCG Kerry Crichlow, Director Quality, Commissioning and Performance Improvement
CABINET MEMBER:	Cllr Maria Gatland, Cabinet Member for Children and Young People
WARDS:	All
FINANCIAL IMPACT	
There are no direct financial implications arising from this report. This is a retrospective report. The Croydon Safeguarding Children Partnership (CSCP) operates within a budget to which partner agencies contribute	
FORWARD PLAN KEY DECISION REFERENCE NO.: <i>This is not a key decision</i>	
The Executive Mayor in Cabinet is recommended to	
1. RECOMMENDATIONS	
1.1	note the Croydon Safeguarding Children Partnership (CSCP) Annual Report for 2021-22.
1.2	note that the report provides robust evidence of the impact of the CSCP's activity to improve outcomes for children and families.

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 2.1 Section 16G of The Children Act 2004 requires safeguarding partners to publish their arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. It also requires the safeguarding partners to prepare and publish, at least once in every 12-month period, a report on the work that they have done as a result of their arrangements, and how effective the arrangements have been in practice.
- 2.2 The CSCP Annual Report aims to:
- a) summarise both single agency activity and partnership activity to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in Croydon

- b) summarise the quality of safeguarding arrangements
 - c) evidence the effectiveness of the partnership to:
 - share learning from Safeguarding Practice Reviews
 - impact on outcomes for children
 - know what it has not achieved, and how it will address it
- 2.3 The annual report covers the financial year April 2021 - March 2022. It is a public facing document which will be published on the CSCP website.

3. CONTENT

- 3.1 The CSCP arrangements are set out on page 5 of the Annual Report. Key workstreams are overseen by the CSCP Executive and the Independent Scrutineer Eleanor Brazil, on a monthly basis.
- 3.2 The Safeguarding Practice Review Group conducted 7 Rapid Reviews (incidents where a child has been seriously injured or has died and abuse or neglect is suspected). Three of the Rapid Review are progressing as a Thematic Child Safeguarding Practice Review examining the circumstances for 7 of the young people associated with unrelated serious youth violence incidents. The CSCP published a nationally recognised review into the differences/similarities of the lives of [60 vulnerable adolescents](#) in February 2019. This new review of 7 young people may attract similar interest.
- 3.3 The CSCP completed 5 Safeguarding Practice Reviews. Page 8 of the Annual Report provides more details. Although the CSCP is limited in what they can publish due to matters awaiting conclusion at either Coroner or Criminal Court, the learning from these cases as well as national cases of interest has been shared widely in briefings, on-line and in-person events. The case studies have provided meaningful substance for practitioners to anchor their learning in, however perennial themes persist such as:
- poor information sharing across agencies
 - lack of professional curiosity by practitioners
 - the importance of identifying and engaging with fathers/male carers
- 3.4 Other themes include:
- extra-familial harm
 - the quality of safeguarding supervision for professionals
- 3.5 The CSCP Learning & Improvement Group align the findings from both Rapid Reviews and Safeguarding Practice Reviews with the learning events commissioned for the following year.
- 3.6 The CSCP reviews a very small number of cases, given the number of children in the borough or indeed the number already subject to Early Help or Child Protection. Most children are safe and well. One child death or serious injury is always one too many, however it should be viewed in the context that whilst

similar themes persist, these are not catastrophic failings in themselves, but areas where practice could have been more robust. Efforts to permanently change practice are impacted by frequent changes in the workforce and systems and processes which do not necessarily support professionals to do their best work efficiently, especially in a climate of increased pressure on resources. None of these challenges were the cause of the deaths or injuries to these children, which sits firmly with the people who perpetrated the harm. Narrowing the gap where safeguarding risks persist for children is a constant priority.

- 3.7 A number of statistics relevant to the work are shown on pages 6-7 of the annual report. The CSCP uses data to understand the safeguarding landscape for children in Croydon and to provide scrutiny or challenge of partner agencies. Clarity has been provided by informed commentary and robust examination by all partner agencies. For example, Education has been able to show its grasp and impact to keep children in school (Croydon's current exclusions are very low) and the number and quality of referrals is something being progressed alongside the MASH Operational Group.
- 3.8 The CSCP aligns its work with other multi-agency workstreams, ensuring CSCP membership includes relevant representation from other workstreams and that CSCP members are included in other workstreams to enable cross cutting themes to be referenced in all areas. For example, there are CSCP members in the Community Safety Partnership (CSP), The SEND Board, The Domestic Abuse & Sexual Violence Board (DASV) and The Early Help Partnership Board.
- 3.9 Collaboration with the SCP has enabled greater sharing of pertinent data and engagement with the Community Safety Strategy. This approach has been developed for 2022-23 with similar engagement with Public Health workstreams such as the Preventing Suicide & Self Harm Strategy and influencing Joint Needs Assessments (LGBGTQ+ and another JSNA for Vulnerable Adolescents) by sharing the learning from our work and where possible, building in opportunities to raise the community awareness of safeguarding themes to help equip the community to help itself.

4 OUTCOMES

- 4.1 Outcomes are referenced in almost every area of the report. Some key outcomes are:
- Quality Briefings & Learning Events based on SPRs and National Learning which are well received by the wider partnership who value the content, opportunity to reflect and supportive learning environment in which they are delivered
 - Influenced & co-produced the new Suicide & Self-harm Strategy, Early Help Directory & Early Help Strategy
 - The culture of partnership working around Mental Health has improved, increasing confidence.
 - Raised awareness of the need for an 11-25 vulnerability panel which is now in place.

- Pressed the continuing need for an Early Intervention Approach which is influencing the new Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) developments.
- Using quality presentations from across the partnership/services enabled partners to review their strategic responses to vulnerable young people e.g., the Youth Offending Service Disproportionality Dashboard.
- Sought evidence of voice of the child influencing service design e.g., chill zone in the Paediatric Hub.
- Support for Schools following the “Everyone’s Invited” Campaign.
- Police/Croydon College co-delivered student awareness sessions which improved student understanding of healthy relationships & consent.
- Data examination around ethnicity and disproportionality improved data capture and service design.
- We have secured new training based on learning themes:
 - Expanding Cultural Competencies for Safeguarding Professionals working with LGBTQ+ Young People
 - Challenging Disproportionality – Assessing the Extra-Familial Risk for Black Male Children & their Families
 - Trauma Informed Approach - e-learning module and additional face to face/MS Teams courses
- The value of the opportunity for ad-hoc conversations with CSCP Members who are seen as “experts in safeguarding” and their ability to influence workstreams outside of the CSCP core business cannot be under-estimated.

5 FORWARD PLANNING

- 5.1 2021 was the worst year on record for deaths of teenagers in London due to serious youth violence. 30 teenagers lost their lives, five were killed in Croydon as a result of separate incidents; the highest number in any London borough. Other young people were associated with the incidents. As detailed in para 3.2, the CSCP has commenced a Thematic Local Child Safeguarding Practice Review (LCSPR) which focuses on 7 of the young people associated with the incidents. It will examine the quality and outcomes of the services offered to support these young people and test the theory, whether young people exposed to extra-familial harm are as much at risk of being a victim of serious youth violence as they are of being an alleged perpetrator of the same.
- 5.2 The Thematic LCSPR is expected to be concluded by the end of December 2022, however criminal court processes will restrict publication in full. This report will help the broader partnership understand the barriers to young people engaging in multi-agency activities intended to support and safeguard them as well as hear directly from young people and their parents who have received such services. There has been excellent engagement with the professionals directly involved with these families and early findings show some strong and often innovative multi-agency work with families to reduce risk.
- 5.3 The CSCP has commissioned its own independent review of the effectiveness of the partnership. The findings, along with the appointment of a new

Independent Scrutineer from November 2022 will shape the development of a robust CSCP business plan for 2023.

5.4 The Independent Review author reports:

- The CSCP supports the delivery of safe multi-disciplinary practice in the Borough. Benefiting significantly from highly experienced and competent leaders, the partnership demonstrates a capability to identify and focus on those issues relevant to the needs of local children and young people.
- Safeguarding Practice Reviews are currently the best evidence of the voice of the child. Those children's experiences come through in the reports, a testament to the quality of the Independent Authors as well as to the honest, open and committed engagement of the professionals and practitioners involved in the reviews.
- The annual report includes quotes and information from children surveyed by other linked areas such as EMPIRE and the Safer Croydon Partnership however this is an area that needs development. Over 2022-23 the Partnership will focus on activities to ensure children and young people's voices shape services delivered by the partnership agencies.
- The skill and commitment of the CSCP Executive, Independent Scrutineer and other longstanding senior partnership members, combined with the with the passion and tenacity of the business support team ensures the demanding nature of the CSCP business functions efficiently. However, should there be significant changes to those personnel this may impact on the CSCP's effectiveness.

5.5 Plans are being developed to strengthen the infrastructure that supports the working and influence of the CSCP, including:

- a refresh of the Terms of Reference
- the development of a Partnership Quality Assurance Framework
- a more robust approach to business planning

5.6 Aligned with the appointment of a new Independent Scrutineer these developments aim to position the CSCP to further improve its effectiveness in assuring that children and young people across the borough are safeguarded.

6 CONSULTATION

6.1 The three statutory partners (Local Authority, Health and Police) along with other CSCP member organisations including the voluntary sector have contributed to the annual report. The Independent Scrutineer has also provided her own reflections.

7 PRE-DECISION SCRUTINY

- 7.1 The report was presented to Children & Young Peoples Scrutiny Sub Committee on the 27th of September and feedback from the committee's review is included in this report.

8 FINANCIAL AND RISK ASSESSMENT CONSIDERATIONS

- 8.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report. This is a retrospective report. The Croydon Safeguarding Children Partnership (CSCP) operates within a budget to which partner agencies contribute (budget details on page 6)

Approved by:

9 LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 9.1 Section 16E of the Children Act 2004 requires the safeguarding partners for a local authority area in England to work together to exercise their functions in relation to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in their area. The safeguarding partners include the local authority.
- 9.2 Section 16G of the Children Act 2004 requires the safeguarding partners to prepare and publish a report at least every 12 months on what the safeguarding partners and relevant agencies have done because of the children's safeguarding arrangements, and how effective the arrangements have been in practice.
- 9.3 There is also statutory guidance on the working of local safeguarding arrangements in Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018).
- 9.4 The matters set out in this report comply with the above legislation and guidance.

Approved by: Doutimi Aseh, Head of Social Care and Education Law on behalf of Stephen Lawrence-Orumwense, Director of Legal Services & Monitoring Officer

10 HUMAN RESOURCES IMPACT

- 10.1 There are no direct Human Resources implications arising from this report for Croydon Council employees.

11 EQUALITIES IMPACT

11.1 The Council has a statutory duty, when exercising its functions, to comply with the provisions set out in the Sec 149 Equality Act 2010. The Council must, in the performance of its functions, therefore, have due regard to:

(a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act.

(b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

(c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

11.2 The role of the CSCP is to safeguard all children and promote their welfare. The CSCP has played a leading role in challenging inequalities and in safeguarding those children who have/are at risk related to their ethnicity and gender. For example, the work to provide training to challenge disproportionality when assessing Black boys at risk from extra-familial harm and the intention to provide LGBTQ+ training for professionals working with young people who are self-harming or at risk of suicide.

Approved by Denise McCausland, Equalities Programme Manager

12 ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE CHANGE IMPACT

12.1 None

13 CRIME AND DISORDER REDUCTION IMPACT

13.1 None

14 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS/PROPOSED DECISION

14.1 That the Council notes the work and effectiveness of the CSCP in its activity to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in Croydon and to note the report provides robust evidence of the impact of the CSCPs activity to improve outcomes for children & families.

15 OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

15.1 None

16 DATA PROTECTION IMPLICATIONS

16.1 WILL THE SUBJECT OF THE REPORT INVOLVE THE PROCESSING OF 'PERSONAL DATA'?

NO

16.2 HAS A DATA PROTECTION IMPACT ASSESSMENT (DPIA) BEEN COMPLETED?

NOT APPLICABLE

The Director of Early Help and Children's Social Care comments: *"There is no individual or confidential information contained within the report. Information has been provided in summary form from each of the relevant agencies.*

There is in place across all London Boroughs a robust Multi-Agency Data Sharing Agreement with all partners."

CONTACT OFFICER: Donna Kingsley - CSCP Manager

APPENDICES TO THIS REPORT –CSCP Annual Report 2021/22