

NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL
YOUNG PEOPLES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

6 September 2019

North Yorkshire Safeguarding Board: Introduction to Discussion

1.0 Purpose of the report

- 1.1 To introduce the presentation by Professor Maggie Atkinson, current Chair of the North Yorkshire Safeguarding Children Board (NYSCB).

2.0 Background: Role of Scrutiny

- 2.1 The welfare of all children and young people in the local community must be a top priority for any local authority. Safeguarding ensures that children are kept as safe as possible by identifying their needs, views and any risks they face. Services, information and support can then be provided as required.
- 2.2 All councillors share a responsibility for Safeguarding, and scrutiny members in particular must ensure that arrangements for safeguarding of communities are effective.
- 2.3 Overview and scrutiny committees have become increasingly aware of the need to consider the effectiveness of local safeguarding arrangements. This was highlighted by Professor Jay's 2014 Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Exploitation in Rotherham and the response by the Communities and Local Government Select Committee. These reports describe the essential role of overview and scrutiny in the safeguarding process. It uses the tragic example of the sexual exploitation of girls and boys in Rotherham to demonstrate the serious consequences of any failures of independent internal scrutiny and challenge.
- 2.4 Safeguarding permeates many aspects of local services and duties, so it so important that scrutiny members - indeed all councillors for that matter - are always vigilant of the impact on children's safeguarding of decision-making across diverse policy areas.

3.0 Scrutiny Committee and the Chair of the Local Safeguarding Board

- 3.1 In recent years this committee has carried out this responsibility in part by inviting the Chair of the Local Safeguarding Board to come talk about "how do we keep children and young people in North Yorkshire safe". Discussion has focused upon:
- An understanding of how local safeguarding arrangements are managed and structured;
 - How do local arrangements work effectively to protect children and young people; and
 - How well local agencies are working together to identify and meet the needs of the most vulnerable children and young people.

3.2 Challenges raised by members with the Board chair (Professor Nick Frost) on previous occasions have included:

- Strengths and weaknesses of the Board and Children Safeguarding practices in North Yorkshire - How effective has the LSCB been in monitoring and challenging the effectiveness of local safeguarding arrangements?
- What evidence is there that this challenge has led to changes in these arrangements and local working practices and relationships?
- Are appropriate measures being taken by the Board to ensure high standards of child protection across all agencies
- How are children placed at the centre of local safeguarding arrangements and frontline practice?
- Has the Board assessed its priorities effectively and has it an action plan which helps it achieve them in a timely manner.
- Sharing and monitoring of information - How effective are local protocols for sharing appropriate information between practitioners and organisations.
- Commitment of partners, and leadership from organisations - Is there a strong commitment from parties within the Board to the Safeguarding Agenda?
- Standards practice and professionalism of staff working in this difficult and complex area -? - Is there a culture of continuous learning around safeguarding?
- What lessons and learning have been identified by Serious Case Reviews and other forms of monitoring? How have they been implemented?
- Child Sexual Exploitation.
- How we are meeting changing regulations for multi-agency safeguarding. Looking ahead - priorities and future plans.
- How do groups of children have a voice in the review and development of local safeguarding arrangements? What impact does this have?
- An account of the high profile cases currently under consideration by the board – their implications.

3.3 Whilst the Board's Annual Report is unlikely to be ready for your meeting, the timing of Professor Atkinson's attendance is helpful bearing in mind agreed governance and structural changes - mainly the merging of the Children Safeguarding Strategy Groups, Local Safeguarding Adults Groups and the non-operational element of the Local Delivery Team meetings to Local Safeguarding Partnerships.

3.4 The background to this and general information about Board activity can be found at <http://www.safeguardingchildren.co.uk/>.

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