



# Doncaster Council

## Report

---

Date: 24<sup>th</sup> March 2021

To the Chair and Members of the  
Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Panel

### REPORT TITLE

Annual Report – Doncaster Safeguarding Children Partnership (DSCP)

Relevant Cabinet Member(s)	Wards Affected	Key Decision
Mayor Ros Jones	All	Yes

## 1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report accompanies the 2019/20 Annual Report of the Doncaster Safeguarding Children Partnership and sets out the approach to the report for 2020/2021.
- 1.2 This is the first full year covered by the new legislative requirements outlined in Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018. The new arrangements were initiated from 1 April 2019.

## 2 Future Reporting 2020/21

- 2.1 The next annual report to cover April 2020 – March 2021, will be published in July 2021.
- 2.2 The revised approach to future report and format will be as follows:
- 2.3 Approach:
  - Review of the current strategic safeguarding plan ending in 2021.
  - Link and reference throughout the report the wider strategies, reports and safeguarding information to avoid duplication.
  - Highlight the impact of Covid-19 on the Safeguarding partnership including issues and lessons learned.
  - Strengthen the Voice and involvement of Children and Young People.

## 2.4 Format:

- Report on revised priorities following the new Strategic Safeguarding plan 19/21
- Foreword from the Independent Chair & Safeguarding Manager
- Feedback obtained from individual partners, front line workers, Children and Young People and Families.
- Update on the Structure of the joint safeguarding unit and arrangements across partners.
- Finance for 20-21
- Feedback from Cabinet Member with responsibility for Children's Services.
- Review and extend infographics for population and demographic information to cover all vulnerable and at risk children in Doncaster.
- Scrutiny and assurance of partnership safeguarding arrangements.
- Learning and Improvement to include key strengths, learning points and improvement as well as forward planning.
- Training and Development for both corporate parenting and workforce responsibilities as identified in 2020 Audits and linked to wider improvement works.

## 3 EXEMPT REPORT

3.1 Not applicable.

## 4 RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 Children and Young People's Overview and Scrutiny Committee is asked to review the Annual Report (19/20) in Appendix 1, format and approach for the next Annual Report (20/21)

## 5 WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR THE CITIZENS OF DONCASTER?

5.1 The report demonstrates the effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements for Children in Doncaster and across the local strategic partnership, providing assurance regarding the quality and breadth of provision. Its purpose is to demonstrate the partnership commitment to building a skilled and resilient workforce through effective training and continued professional development. The partnership regularly reviews and refocuses on priority areas in response to intelligence received to ensure that support is delivered where it is most needed, supporting the delivery of improved outcomes for and the safeguarding of the children, young people and families of Doncaster.

## 6 BACKGROUND

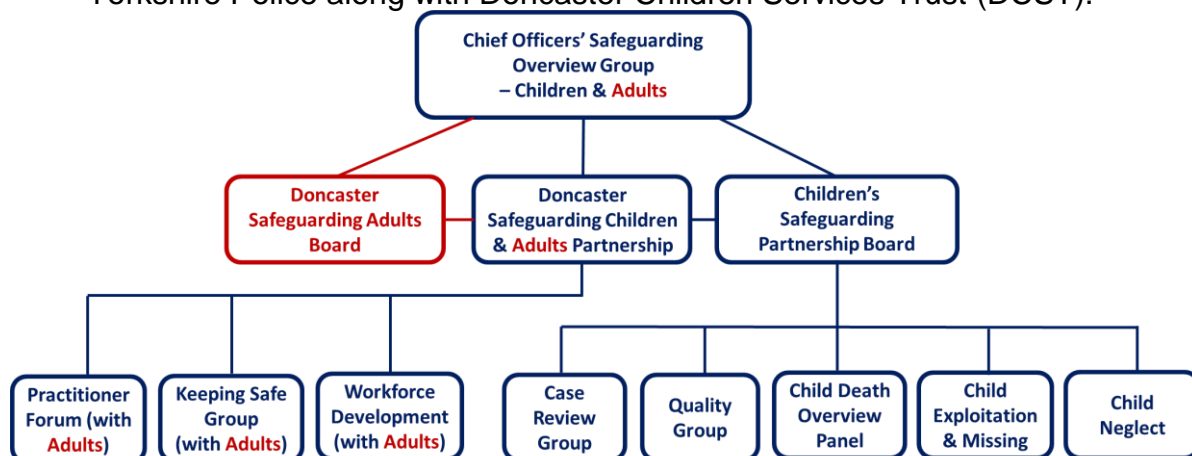
### 6.1. Position Statement

The Joint Doncaster Safeguarding Children's Partnership (DCSP) and Doncaster Safeguarding Adults Board (DSAB) Safeguarding Strategic Plan 2019-21 contains a commitment to an all-age Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub and to Work across Children and Adult partnerships identifying further opportunities to work more closely together.

- 6.2 The Children’s Safeguarding Business Unit transferred from Doncaster Children’s Services Trust to the Council on 1st September 2020. As part of the restructure to an all age joint business unit, a consultation process is underway with staff and Trades Unions.
- 6.3 The proposed structure supports the increased requirement for review work, the rapid review process and the statutory requirements of the Working Together to Safeguarding Children 2018.
- 6.4 An update of the outcome of the restructure and the revised new structure will be detailed in the 20/21 Annual Report
- 6.5 John Woodhouse retired as chair of the DSCP at the end of December 2020, with John Goldup appointed a new chair from January 2021.

## 7 Summary of Key Points – Annual Report 19-20

- 7.1 Legislative changes (2017 Children Act) mean local safeguarding children arrangements are now the responsibility of the three statutory ‘**safeguarding partners**’ –Doncaster Council, the Clinical Commissioning Group, and South Yorkshire Police along with Doncaster Children Services Trust (DCST).



- 7.2 Practitioner Forum - Quarterly
- Keeping Safe Group - Quarterly
- Workforce Development - Quarterly

- 7.3 DSCP:
  - Case Review Group, DCST - Monthly
  - Quality Group - Quarterly
  - CDOP– Arranged when DBTH Child Death Team have cases prepared and ready for review
  - Child Exploitation & Missing 6 weekly
  - Child Neglect DCST 6 weekly

- 7.4 The DSCP Board meets quarterly: a children’s partnership meeting, an adult board meeting and a joint meeting all take place on the same day.

- 7.5 Demand for children’s services in Doncaster is higher than the national average: referral rates to children’s social care are higher. This has been the

case for a number of years and is likely to reflect the impact of historical serious case reviews alongside other demographic factors.

## **8 Partnership Achievements**

- 8.1 One of the most successful aspects of the multi-agency learning centred on the audits that were undertaken around exploitation; mental health; sexual abuse and domestic abuse. The learning from these led to improvements in procedures and practice briefings being produced to cascade the learning across the workforce.
- 8.2 Overall progress has been made in implementing the new arrangements. Feedback has been positive. Members consider the revised joint format to be more effective.
- 8.3 The Early Help Strategy for Children, Young People and their Families 2017 – 20 provides prevention and earlier intervention when a need is identified. During 2019 –2020, there were 7063 referrals made for Early Help support; slightly up from the previous year of 6181 referrals. The focus on practice development improved outcomes for families, evidenced in the overall closure outcome; most notably 'plans completed' 'family disengagement' decreased and 'step up' to social care fell.
- 8.4 The DSCP has continued to develop the Neglect Strategy aiming to ensure the early recognition of neglect and improved responses to it by all agencies.
- 8.5 In response to two Lessons Learned Reviews, a detailed suicide contagion protocol has been developed in conjunction with Public Health.
- 8.6 The Partnership has a strong commitment to multi-agency training and continues to work with our established multi-agency training pool to offer a training programme covering a wide range of safeguarding issues.
- 8.7 In February the Partnership hosted its first joint conference with the DSAB. This followed on from the nine previous conferences and was equally well received. It was described variously as inspiring, informative, excellent and powerful.
- 8.8 Child Death Overview Panel (CDOP)- Significant progress has been made in meeting the requirements of Working Together 2018. The four South Yorkshire areas have collaborated to strengthen the existing shared learning forum, which takes place quarterly.
- 8.9 Quality and Performance - The group has explored the use of data and intelligence to inform the effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements. A revised data set and reporting process has been implemented during 2019 - 20. The group has commissioned four highly successful multi agency audits using the Joint Targeted Area Inspection (JTAI) framework. These have led to action plans to improve practice. The impact of the group is that the Partnership is better able to understand and analyse the functioning of the whole system and implement actions to resolve any issues.
- 8.10 Practitioner Forum: This is chaired by the Independent Scrutineer and has representation from multi-agency practitioners across adults and children's services in Doncaster. Each forum has led to sharing of valuable information on practice issues. These help inform the Board of those priorities to take forward.

## **9. Areas of development and future challenges**

- 9.1 There is a need to more systematically capture the voice of the child; there is a need to develop this on a multi- agency basis.
- 9.2 Key priorities for 2020-21 will include:

- i) The multi-agency response to the ongoing Covid pandemic and continuing work with the Children’s Recovery and Resilience Board.
- ii) Improved integration with the Safer Stronger Doncaster Partnership at both a strategic and operational level to address issues arising from domestic abuse.
- iii) Seeking assurance from the Health and Wellbeing Board in respect of the impact of mental health issues on young people’s well-being.
- iv) A review is currently underway to further development the recently enhanced website and further embed partnership-working practices.

## 10 OPTIONS CONSIDERED

10.1 There is a statutory duty to produce and publish an annual report; however, options regarding the format of the report are being considered for future

## 11 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDED OPTION

11.1 The report gives the assurance required that Doncaster children are safe, that there is a strong multi agency approach and response and demonstrates impact, whilst involving children and young people and includes their voice.

## 12 IMPACT ON THE COUNCIL’S KEY OUTCOMES

12.1. As above, the annual report provides assurance regarding the robust and effectiveness of Doncaster’s multi agency approach to safeguarding Children and young People.

12.2

	<b>Outcomes</b>	<b>Implications</b>
	<p><b>Doncaster Working:</b> Our vision is for more people to be able to pursue their ambitions through work that gives them and Doncaster a brighter and prosperous future;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Better access to good fulfilling work</li> <li>• Doncaster businesses are supported to flourish</li> <li>• Inward Investment</li> </ul>	<p>The Annual Report demonstrates the consistency of safeguarding policy and practice across Doncaster partners.</p> <p>Workforce development is highlighted throughout the annual report</p>
	<p><b>Doncaster Living:</b> Our vision is for Doncaster’s people to live in a borough that is vibrant and full of opportunity, where people enjoy spending time;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The town centres are the beating heart of Doncaster</li> <li>• More people can live in a good quality, affordable home</li> <li>• Healthy and Vibrant Communities through Physical Activity and Sport</li> </ul>	<p>The annual report demonstrates joined up practice, with adults for an all age approach to safeguarding.</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Everyone takes responsibility for keeping Doncaster Clean</li> <li>• Building on our cultural, artistic and sporting heritage</li> </ul>	
	<p><b>Doncaster Learning:</b> Our vision is for learning that prepares all children, young people and adults for a life that is fulfilling;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Every child has life-changing learning experiences within and beyond school</li> <li>• Many more great teachers work in Doncaster Schools that are good or better</li> <li>• Learning in Doncaster prepares young people for the world of work</li> </ul>	<p>Education provision across Doncaster is a key partner and contributor, ensuring consistent and robust safeguarding policy and practice.</p> <p>Lifelong Learning is a strong theme, developing best practice.</p>
	<p><b>Doncaster Caring:</b> Our vision is for a borough that cares together for its most vulnerable residents;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children have the best start in life</li> <li>• Vulnerable families and individuals have support from someone they trust</li> <li>• Older people can live well and independently in their own homes</li> </ul>	<p>The Annual Report identifies early help, vulnerable young people, looked after children and vulnerable adults and provides a multi-agency focus on keeping these target groups safe.</p>
	<p><b>Connected Council:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A modern, efficient and flexible workforce</li> <li>• Modern, accessible customer interactions</li> <li>• Operating within our resources and delivering value for money</li> <li>• A co-ordinated, whole person, whole life focus on the needs and aspirations of residents</li> <li>• Building community resilience and self-reliance by connecting community assets and strengths</li> <li>• Working with our partners and residents to provide effective leadership and governance</li> </ul>	<p>Working with partners and stakeholders to ensure a safe, skilled, effective and resilient work force.</p>

## 13 RISKS AND ASSUMPTIONS

- 13.1 Overarching legislation (Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018) describes a safeguarding partnership working on a joint funded partnership to safeguard the people of Doncaster.

#### **14 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS [Officer Initials NC Date 15/3/21]**

- 14.1 Section 16E of the Children Act 2004 places a duty on the local authority, the Clinical Commissioning Group and the Police (“the Safeguarding Partners”) to set up a Safeguarding Partnership and to exercise their functions and work together for the purposes of safeguarding and the promoting the wellbeing in their area.
- 14.2 Section 16G of the Children 2004 and Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 require the Safeguarding Partners to prepare and publish a report at least once in every 12 month period to set out what Safeguarding partners have done as a result of the safeguarding arrangements in place and how effective the arrangements have been.

#### **15 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS [Officer Initials: AB Date: 15/03/21]**

- 15.1 There are no specific financial implications arising from this report. The Children’s Safeguarding Board budget for 2020/21 is £248,230. Following the transfer of the service to the Council on the 1st September 2020, budget of £103,130 remained with Doncaster Children’s Services Trust to cover the spend incurred up to the point of transfer, and the remaining 2020/21 budget of £145,100 transferred to the Council. The budget of £103,130 that remained with Doncaster Children’s Services Trust in 2020/21 will transfer to the Council on 1st April 2021.

#### **16 HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS [Officer Initials CR Date 15/03.2021]**

- 16.1 There are no immediate HR implications arising from the approval of this report, however, any future changes that impact on the workforce will require HR engagement and would involve separate approval as appropriate.

#### **17 TECHNOLOGY IMPLICATIONS [Officer Initials PW Date 15/03/21]**

- 17.1 The report refers to a review and further development of the recently enhanced website (<https://dscp.org.uk/>). The DCST contract with Proportion Marketing for this website ends 30/6/21 and a report relating to a 12-month extension and consideration of future options is going to the Technology Governance Board (TGB) in April 21.

#### **18 HEALTH IMPLICATIONS [Officer Initials CW.Date 15/3/21]**

- 18.1 The impacts of the COVID pandemic on the health and wellbeing of children and young people may not be fully realised for years to come, but early indications are that poor mental and emotional health has also most certainly increased during the pandemic. Children have been forced to be at home in potentially volatile situations without usual support systems. The pandemic has created additional stresses on families, which may lead to them requiring additional support. Previous, existing and emerging safeguarding issues are of particular concern for our most vulnerable children.
- 18.2 The COVID 19 pandemic has placed an enormous strain on our health services. Despite this, the report describes the effective partnership working with health services throughout. Moving into the recovery phase, it is important to be clear about expectations and ask on our health services and ensure they

have the resource and capacity to fully support safeguarding functions, and not be being diverted away from important preventative elements of the service offer.

## **19 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS [Officer Initials...KLN... Date...12/3/21]**

19.1 The Annual Report 19/20 covers the breadth of the most vulnerable groups in the Borough through its changing focus on priorities and through its fully inclusive multi agency approach, including elements of co-production and feedback from children, young people and families.

## **20 CONSULTATION**

20.1 The Annual Report is developed and written in consultation with key partners and stakeholders

## **21 BACKGROUND PAPERS**

21.1 DSCP Annual Report (See Appendix 1)

## **22 GLOSSARY OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS**

22.1	CDOP	Child Death Overview Panel
	DCST	Doncaster Children's Services Trust
	DSAB	Doncaster Safeguarding Adults Board
	DSCP	Doncaster Safeguarding Children Partnership

## **23 REPORT AUTHOR & CONTRIBUTORS**

- Kerry North – Interim Commissioning Manager - 01302 862133
- [Kerry.north@doncaster.gov.uk](mailto:Kerry.north@doncaster.gov.uk)
- Angela Harrington - Interim Head of commissioning and Business Transformation
- Ben Brown - Partnership Development Manager – Safeguarding Business Unit

**Riana Nelson**

**Director, Education, Skills, Culture and Heritage**