

Essex Safeguarding Children Board Annual Report 2015–2016

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01 Foreword from the Chair Simon Hart

Once again I am pleased to be able to introduce this Annual Report of the Essex Safeguarding Children Board.

This year it has been very evident that public services are rapidly changing as they work to respond to the many challenges that arise in this severe period of austerity. Aside from the continued financial pressures they endure, many services are developing positive approaches to the way in which they commission, integrate and deliver essential services. It is to their credit therefore that they have continued to maintain an important focus on safeguarding and have combined the need to innovate with recognition that safeguarding also requires some stability and continuity. In this regard I am especially grateful this year for the time and commitment given by the Leadership Group. It has maintained a focus on the potential impact of austerity measures and given leadership to our work aimed at identifying those areas of our large county where greatest risk may be apparent. This has also helped us to ensure that we remain clear about strategic safeguarding need which is more strongly embodied in the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment and the consequent impact on commissioning. This has also helped me, as Independent Chair, to have a clear relationship with other key partnership groups including the Health and Wellbeing Board, which has allowed the escalation of safeguarding concerns when necessary.

Last year I was able to confirm the appointment of our first permanent Board Manager for some time, and she and her team have made a significant impact in improving the operations and impact of the Board. Much of the evidence of this work is contained in later sections of this report and in her introduction. However I would like to highlight the work completed in the Board's further review of Governance which has achieved the strongest ever consensus of Partners and which has been necessary to ensure that the Board remains focused and fit for purpose in light of the many changes taking place locally and nationally. This has also helped ensure that we continue to develop cooperation with our near neighbours in Southend and Thurrock and with the Safeguarding Adult Board.

Some particular achievements over the year include

- Increased focus on Child Sexual Exploitation and Children who go Missing
- Substantial impact of the Section 11 Audit process with unprecedented commitment from Schools in Essex
- Complete review of the Schools engagement with the Board and consequent impact on safeguarding strategy
- Consolidated programme of activity with Young People and the Board's capacity to learn from what they say regarding issues such as CSE, Self-Harm and access to Mental Health Services



I am especially grateful this year for the time and commitment given by the Leadership Group. It has maintained a focus on the potential impact of austerity measures and given leadership to our work aimed at identifying those areas of our large county where greatest risk may be apparent.

- Consolidation of the Practitioner Forum meetings which have substantially increased the Boards understanding of work of frontline practice and also enabled the Board to deliver much sharper challenge to practice standards especially covering information exchange and application of thresholds

Domestic Abuse remains a key area of concern in Essex and this year the Board has further strengthened its links with both Safer Essex and the Strategic Domestic Abuse Board. We have been pleased to receive confirmation of further progress in the work of the Joint Domestic Abuse Triage Team (JDATT) and were pleased to note the improvements in the way in which information is being used to ensure more timely intervention. The Board remains of the view that schools have a willingness to play an increased role and look to JDATT to realise that potential. Domestic abuse inevitably will remain a key area of scrutiny for the Board.

Despite evidence of continued improvement across the partnership, safeguarding assurance in Essex remains challenging and in part lacking consistency. Practitioner Forums indicate a continued need to support front line workers in their understanding and application of information sharing protocol and thresholds. However, management response to this type of concern has been swift and effective. Inspections remain challenging to some Partners. Indeed the 'NHS Success Regime' will enable health colleagues to work closely with a range of partners to address inherent capacity problems where it is clear that local solutions are unlikely to be sufficient and where a more strategic approach is required to make best and most effective use of resources. It is also the case that the Chief Constable initiated a programme of improvements in relation to elements of safeguarding well in advance of challenging inspections carried out by HMIC and which enable progress on improvement to be accelerated.

Finally, I would like to express the Board's continued appreciation for the commitment of Partners and front line practitioners, involved in helping safeguard young people in Essex. Ours is an unrelenting task often carried out in the most difficult of circumstances and the Board deeply appreciates the dedication of all practitioners when supporting young people and their families.



Simon Hart

Independent Chair,
Essex Safeguarding Children Board

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02 Introduction from the ESCB Board Manager

Alison Cutler

This year has been one of change for the ESCB in an environment of continued pressure on resources. The ESCB has therefore reviewed its structures and way of working via a governance review in order to ensure that we continue to operate as efficiently as possible and concentrate our efforts on the things that will make a difference to the lives of children and young people.

The focus of the Board this year has included Child Sexual Exploitation, Gangs and Prevention of Suicide and Self Harm. Children and Young People have helped us to develop strategies and actions to tackle these areas of concern including guidance, toolkits and production of communications materials to raise awareness amongst professionals as well as the wider community.

The Board has also concentrated on measuring the impact of its work and has been keen to ensure that there is involvement from front line practitioners in local areas to test out what is working and where further improvements may be made. This has included lessons learned from Serious Case Reviews, as well as local emerging practice issues such as sharing information across services.

I would also like to thank my support team who have continued to support the Board and its members over the year to ensure that all the administrative arrangements are in place for the ESCB to carry out its statutory duties. We have welcomed new team members, said goodbye to others and received much praise and support from partners and reviewers. All of this is testament to the hard work and commitment shown by all of us involved with the ESCB.

The year has been challenging and exciting and in the ESCB we have had to adapt and change our ways of working. The ESCB continues to evolve in an ever changing environment, and while there is of course always much more to do, Board Partners remain committed to continuing work that makes a difference to children and young people.

We look forward to continuing our work into 2016 and beyond.



Alison Cutler

Board Manager,
Essex Safeguarding Children Board

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03 Executive summary

This report highlights the work of the ESCB and assesses how effective it was in carrying out its statutory function over the period 2015–16.

It discusses the impact of the work of the Board in some key areas, the challenges it has faced over the year and its plans moving forward.

The report includes contributions from partner agencies and has been approved by Board members.

Some key achievements of the ESCB over the year included:

- Governance review of the ESCB after extensive consultation with partners to strengthen the way of working and impact of the ESCB and its sub-committees
- Active involvement of children and young people in the work of the Board, including assisting the board with key projects such as Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE), Gangs and suicide and self-harm. This has led for example to schools campaigns about CSE and the publication of a suicide prevention toolkit.
- Continuing to learn from quadrant based Stay Safe Groups and practitioner forums with the Independent Chair of the Board.
- Children's Partnership Leads playing an active role on the various sub-committees of the ESCB.
- Business Plan (see Appendix D) – all objectives have been achieved or are on track and continuing across into the final year of the Business Plan
- Successful and impactful ESCB annual conference focussing on Neglect to increase greater awareness amongst multi-agency practitioners of the signs, and impact of Neglect.
- Development and publishing of a new Serious Case Review toolkit following the principles set out in Working Together to Safeguard Children. This has led to greater engagement with the process by agencies, and more opportunities for practitioners to be involved in reviews and positively influence practice.
- Successful challenge by the Board which contributed to the review of CAMHS in relation to capacity and access arrangements which has led to the introduction of a new service in 2015.
- Publication of the new Southend Essex and Thurrock Child Protection Procedures in 2015, to enable consistency of practice across all agencies and pan-Essex
- New online Section 11 Audit tool implemented and agreed across Southend, Essex and Thurrock to monitor and challenge safeguarding practice. This has enabled agencies to record and track their progress and more clearly identify any gaps where further work is needed. Challenge from the Board to agencies has included the moderation of all submissions, asking for evidence of impact, supported by a robust monitoring process.
- Working with other Boards, for example the Adult Safeguarding Board to ensure that cross cutting themes such as domestic violence and mental health are dealt with holistically i.e. as a whole family approach to improve focus of all agencies on the child.



- The development of a draft relationship protocol between the ESCB and various other Boards to ensure that safeguarding remains a priority and to avoid duplication of effort and enable effective use of ‘joined up’ resources.
- Being an active partner in the Eastern Region as well as nationally, which has highlighted our progressive work around CSE in particular.
- Publication and implementation of a new ESCB performance management framework and dashboard, using an outcomes based accountability approach that is aligned to the business plan priorities.

3.1 Key priorities and challenges looking ahead

- The ESCB strategic two year business plan 2015-17 will continue to focus on understanding what impact has made to the lives of children, young people and their families as a result of interventions/services by agencies. This includes learning from SCRs and other reviews, and new and emerging priorities (locally / nationally)
- Continue to embed the revised Serious Case Review process to ensure that all SCRs are robust, proportionate and follow the guidance in Working Together 2015. This also includes a framework, accountable to the Board, for conducting other types of reviews that do not meet the SCR threshold but where significant learning has been identified.
- Continue to build upon the performance management framework to ensure that the work of the ESCB is making a difference and to highlight areas of need with a particular focus on those areas of greatest need identified through the specific direction of the Leadership Group
- Assess the implications of the Wood review and how this will affect local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements, Child Death Review process and the commissioning of Serious Case Reviews
- Monitor the ongoing resource and budget pressures on all agencies as well as any restructures that might impact upon safeguarding practice.



4.0 Statutory framework and structure of the ESCB

The Board exists as a statutory body and has a range of roles including developing policies and procedures and scrutinising and challenging local safeguarding practice.

Section 14 of the Children Act 2004 sets out the objectives for the LSCB as:

- To coordinate what is done by each person or body represented on the Board for the purposes of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in the area and;
- To ensure the effectiveness of what is done by each such person or body for these purposes.

04 Statutory framework and structure of the ESCB

4.1 Structure of the ESCB

Working Together 2015 highlights the importance of partner agencies and their role in implementing effective safeguarding practice. While LSCBs do not have the power to direct other organisations they do have a role in making clear where improvement is needed. Each Board partner retains its own existing line of accountability for safeguarding.

In Essex our Board partners include:

- Police
- Health
- Community Rehabilitation Company
- National Probation Service
- Voluntary Sector
- Education
- Social care
- District, City and Borough Councils
- Military Corrective Training Centre
- UK Border Force
- Youth Offending Service
- CAFCASS
- Public Health

We also work with other partners such as Adult Services, Essex Fire and Rescue Service and Army Welfare and the East of England Ambulance Service.

The role of the Safeguarding Children Board is to have an independent coordinating and challenge role around safeguarding practice across its partner agencies. This is carried out by the sub-committees of the ESCB which are:

- Child Death Overview Panel (statutory)
- Serious Case Review (statutory)
- Learning and Development (joint with Adults Board from March 2016)
- Communications (joint with Adults Board)
- Performance Audit and Quality Assurance
- Policies, Procedures & Practice Development
- Child Sexual Exploitation and Missing
- Health Executive Forum
- District, City and Borough Councils Group



This structure was revised in 2015 as part of an overall governance review of the ESCB to ensure improved effectiveness, maximum impact, and value for money. These new arrangements were agreed by the ESCB as a result of extensive consultation, and include:

- Merging of various sub-committees with the Safeguarding Adult Board, e.g. Learning and Development and Communications sub-committees (from 1st March 2016) to maximise resources and ensure that cross cutting themes are actioned across both Boards in their learning programmes.
- The implementation of an ESCB Business Management Group to track progress of the sub-committee work-plans against the Business Plan priorities, oversee the budget and highlight to the ESCB any areas of concern, and thus free up the Board to focus on key strategic business.
- Board meetings are now themed around the Business Plan priorities to enable the Board to have focussed discussion and identify actions.

Structure chart can be found in [Appendix A](#).



05 Local context

The local context for encouraging robust safeguarding arrangements via the ESCB is both challenging and complex.

Essex is a very varied county, comprising both rural and urban areas, and a long coastline. The new towns of Basildon and Harlow contrast with rural villages and coastal towns. Essex has both areas of great affluence and great deprivation, and has pockets of high social and economic need even within otherwise thriving localities. The Leadership Group has made this complex demography a particular feature of its work over the past year.

Children and young people population estimates and projections

There are just below 303,000 under 18 year olds residing in Essex, comprising approximately 86,000 under-fives, 102,500 five to ten year olds, 80,000 eleven to fifteen year olds, and 34,500 sixteen to seventeen year olds^[1]. Between now and 2020 the under 18 year old population is projected to increase by approximately 14,000, (although this is subject to numerous variables such as changes in migration). The 5-10 year old age group in Essex is projected to increase by approximately 6,000 and the 11-15 year old age^[1] group by 8,000. In contrast the 16–17 year old age group is predicted to fall by approximately 1,700^[2].

Levels of poverty and workless households

Across Essex in May 2014 there were approximately 41,000 children and young people under the age of 18 who were living in families dependent on one or more out-of-work Benefits, which equates to 14% of all under 18 year olds. Apart from Kent at 15% this is higher than any of our ten comparable local authorities, highlighting the particular challenges faced by Essex in meeting the needs of children in low income families^[3].

Lone parent households

Lone parent households and particularly those where the parent is not working and income is low, can bring additional challenges and stresses to the bringing up of children. Population estimates suggest nearly 38,000 households in Essex with one or more dependent children are managed by a lone adult. The greatest numbers are in the main urban areas of Basildon, Colchester, Braintree and Chelmsford.

The number of lone parent households with dependent children in Essex is estimated to be nearly 38,000, of which 44% are estimated to be non-working. Basildon, Braintree and Colchester have the highest number across the twelve Districts: there are nearly 3,000 non-working lone parent households with dependent children in Basildon, and just over 2,000 in Braintree and Colchester^[4].



Essex is a very varied county, comprising both rural and urban areas, and a long coastline. The new towns of Basildon and Harlow contrast with rural villages and coastal towns. Essex has both areas of great affluence and great deprivation, and has pockets of high social and economic need even within otherwise thriving localities.

1 (Source: Office of National Statistics, Mid-year 2015 population estimates, published July 2016)

2 (Source: Office of National Statistics 2012 subnational population projection 2014-2039 published 2016)

3 (Source: Department of Work & Pensions, Children in Out of Work Benefit Households, for May 2014 published July 2015)

Social care referrals and child protection plans

Between April 2015 – March 2016, Essex County Council Children’s Social Care (Family Operations) accepted 13,275 referrals for children who required a social care assessment (a reduction of approximately 600 on the previous year, but still an average over 1,000 children each month). As in 2014-15, nearly 30% of these came from Essex Police (of which the majority related to domestic abuse incidents), and nearly 20% from schools. The number of referrals accepted by Children’s Social Care shows seasonal variation across the year, but there has been an overall reduction in the number of referrals accepted by them, when compared with the same Quarters in 2014-15.

Nearly 750 children living in Essex had sufficiently serious concerns for their welfare during the year April 2015 – March 2016 that they were made the subject of a statutory child protection plan, following a multi-agency initial child protection conference. This is an increase of just over 20% on the previous year, due in part to an increase in larger sibling groups coming to the attention of child protection services, but also this may be a reflection of increased awareness and reporting of concerns (such as domestic abuse) by professionals and members of the public.

As at the end of March 2016 there were 562 children subject to a child protection plan within Essex – an increase of approximately 100 children on 31 March 2015 and the highest since 2012. The District of Basildon has by far the highest number of child protection plans in place of all the twelve District, Borough or City Councils of Essex^[5].

Missing children and child sexual exploitation

Missing children and those at risk of, or victims of, sexual exploitation are highly vulnerable, but are not always aware of the risks they are exposing themselves to or that they are victims of exploitation. Over the last year it has been possible for Essex Police and Essex County Council to gather more detailed and accurate information on children and young people who go missing in Essex, and those who are victims of or at risk of child sexual exploitation (CSE) – of which there is often overlap.

At the end of March there were 101 known cases of CSE risk within the County, with which Essex Children’s Social Care were involved with. Nearly half of these young people had been reported missing on one or more occasions, and nearly 20% had links with Gangs and Groups. These vulnerable young people are predominantly girls in the 15-16 age group; however the nature of the exploitation varies, and includes online, gang activity, peer on peer, and the ‘boyfriend’ model.



4 (Source: HMRC child working tax credits finalised awards 2013-14 published April 2015. Household & Dwellings Forecasts 2012-2037, Department for Communities & Local Government 2013, sourced from Essex Insight)

5 (Source: Essex County Council Organisational & Intelligence Children & Families team)

Over the last year (April 2015 – March 2016) there was an average of 33 young people who were in Care who were reported missing each month, and 37 young people who were not, and were reported missing from their homes. A total of 415 individual young people went missing during the last year, and 33 of these went missing 10 times or more^[6].

Domestic abuse affecting children

Domestic abuse affects many children across Essex, and is a key priority area for the ESCB. Over 2015-16 Essex Police notified Essex children's social care of an average of nearly 1,000 children every month who were affected by a domestic abuse incident e.g. being the children of the victim or perpetrator, or within the house when an incident occurred. Over the last year by far the greatest number of such contacts (twice as many as any other District in Essex) related to Basildon families, with 2,270 contacts. These were largely within Fryerns, Lee Chapel North, Pitsea and Vange. An analysis of neighbourhoods in Essex where domestic abuse is a particular problem has highlighted a number of Wards with particularly high incident rates per 10,000 population. These include five Wards in Basildon, six in Colchester, nine in Tendring, and three in Harlow^[7].

The Board has continued to scrutinise the progress made by the Strategic Domestic Abuse Board and will receive a full report on the continued development of the Joint Domestic Abuse Triage Team (JDATT) arrangements early in 2016/17.

Mental health issues / mental illness amongst children and young people

The number of children in Essex experiencing poor emotional wellbeing and mental health problems is an unknown, and can only be estimated.

However, it has been estimated that in the UK 10% of children and young people (aged 5-16 years) have a clinically diagnosable mental health problem, and yet nearly three quarters of these children have not had appropriate interventions at a sufficiently early age^[8]. In the local YEAH!^[9] Report, 15% of participants self-identified as having, or having had, a mental health problem. From these figures it is estimated that there may be between 22,000 to 32,000 children aged 5 to 17 in Essex who are suffering from or self-identify as having a mental health problem. There were 258 under 18 year olds who were admitted to hospitals in Essex for mental health conditions in 2014-15^[10].

This has been a particular concern of the Board and through the Boards challenge to commissioners we expect to see significantly improved and timely access to services that will be more suited to the needs of young people. This remains a close area of scrutiny.



6 (Source: Essex County Council Organisational & Intelligence Children & Families team)

7 (Source: Essex County Council Organisational & Intelligence Children & Families team)

8 (Source: Children's Society, 2008)

9 (Source: Young Essex Attitudes on Health and Social Care 2014 – 2015, Essex HealthWatch)

Young people who are victims of crime

There were just over 6,000 crimes against under 18 year olds committed within Essex (excluding Southend and Thurrock), which were reported to Essex Police between April 2015 – March 2016. 3,500 ‘violence against the person’ offences were reported, of which 1,000 were committed against 0-11 year olds (and one third of these were recorded as being at the hands of their mother, father or stepfather). Reported violent offences against all under 18 year olds have, worryingly, increased by one third since 2014-15.

There has been an increase of 11% in the reporting of sexual offences against children and young people in Essex over the last year, and this has included reporting of historical sexual abuse and non-contact sexual offences where children are the object of sexual images shared via the internet or mobile phone technology.

There were 315 rapes of children or young people under 18 in Essex which were reported to the Police in the year, approximately half of these offences were committed over a year before being reported. In fact nearly 40% of rapes of children or young people reported between April 2015 – March 2016 had been committed three or more years beforehand^[11].

The views of children and young people in Essex on their health and wellbeing

The 2015 large scale survey of a sample of Essex school children^[12] reported that 18% of primary and 25% of secondary pupils say they often feel sad or tearful. 6% of all primary and 8% of all secondary pupils say this has been going on for more than six months. Secondary girls are seven percentage points more likely than boys to say they have felt sad or tearful for the last six months or more, and the proportion of pupils saying this shows a steady increase with age.

Bullying can result in poor physical and mental health, educational attainment and in some cases can pose a suicide risk. In Essex 58.4% of children reported they had been bullied in the past couple of months, and 8.5% had bullied others^[13]. This survey’s definition of bullying included physical and verbal bullying, as well as text messages and online activity.

There is now representation on key ESCB sub-committees by the four Partnership Leads. The impact is that strategic priorities are even better linked to local needs, and as such, local issues are included in work plans of the Board and its sub-committees.

10 (Source: ChiMat Child Health Profile for Essex 2016)

11 (Source: Performance Information Unit, Essex Police, April 2016)

12 (Health and Wellbeing of Pupils in Essex headline report 2015, conducted by the Schools Health Education Unit (SHEU), published August 2015 on Essex Insight)

13 (Source: What About Youth (WAY) lifestyle survey of 15 year olds in England, 2014)

5.1 How are we tackling these local issues in the ESCB?

5.1.1 Local links – Stay Safe Groups and Partnership Leads

A key development in tackling these areas of concern has been the role of the local Stay Safe Groups (SSG) and Partnership Leads across each of the four quadrants. Each SSG is a sub-committee of the local Children's & Young People's Partnership Board, which consists of operational and strategic managers from statutory partner agencies, and focuses on local practice issues with a particular emphasis on local trends and performance. The Stay Safe Groups are also formal Advisory Groups to the ESCB for the purpose of giving the Board a stronger locality focus.

The quarterly meetings between the ESCB Independent Chair; the Chairs of the Stay Safe Groups and also the local Partnership Leads is a successful working arrangement and continues to prove beneficial, for example:

- Strengthening the link between strategic priorities and local needs to enable improved information sharing and dissemination of key practice messages.
- Promotion of training opportunities and reinforcement of the Effective Support document which provides guidance for all practitioners in working together with children and families to provide early help and targeted and specialist support

Impact

The work of the Stay Safe Groups aligns with the priorities within the ESCB Business Plan and brings much valued local feedback and perspectives from frontline staff. This model ensures that the identified needs of vulnerable children, young people and their families within each quadrant are addressed. In particular the SSG supports the delivery and/or embedding of:

- Communication and workforce strands to ensure that thresholds are consistently implemented across the partnership, promoting the use of the Effective Support framework
- Serious Case Review Workshops - ensuring key messages, campaigns and lessons learnt are communicated to a broad practitioner audience, are understood and acted upon
- Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) Champion Network meetings
- Missing and Child Exploitation Groups (MACE)

Through coordinating/facilitating Practitioner Forums, the identification and dissemination of best practice, new policies and procedures is undertaken. The forums include:



- Practitioner Action Review Groups (PARG)
- Parenting Networks, Think Family Groups
- Joint Health & Family Operations workshops
- Targeted workshops focussed on Domestic Abuse, Children Affected by Parental Imprisonment, Missing Children
- School Safeguarding Cluster meetings

In addition, links have been built with Community Safety Partnerships across the 12 City, District and Borough Councils and other relevant forums to ensure consistent messages are conveyed and both opportunities to work jointly are identified and duplication is reduced.

All of this activity is vital in ensuring that the Board remains closely in touch with practice and delivery at a local level. As Partners are increasingly challenged through elements of austerity it will remain vital that these arrangements are given priority and continue to develop and mature.

5.1.2 Voice of practitioners

The Independent Chair held his annual series of locality based practitioner forum meetings intended to help ensure that practitioners are familiar with, and confident in the work of ESCB. They also give practitioners the opportunity to raise any local issues / concerns as well as what is working well.

These again have proved invaluable in assessing the impact of the work of the ESCB upon local practice and enabling the Chair to reflect information back to the Board based on practitioner's comments, which can be incorporated in the work plans of the Board.

These forums are now consolidated and give practitioners the opportunity to speak openly about the things that work well and those that cause them concern. These forums provide important feedback to the Board and Managers and are also leading into some significant areas of challenge.

During 2015-16 there have been two practitioner forums in each of the four quadrants with a total of 100 practitioners attending the forums from Essex County Council, Health, Education, Police, Probation Services, Housing providers, VCS, District/Borough/City Councils, Children's Centres, Early Years and childcare settings.

The Independent Chair held his annual series of locality based practitioner forum meetings intended to help ensure that practitioners are familiar with, and confident in the work of ESCB. They also give practitioners the opportunity to raise any local issues/ concerns as well as what is working well.

The table below outlines some of the key issues raised, action taken and the outcome:

Issues and requests raised at Practitioner forums 2015-16	Action Required	Outcome
Education and health representatives in West were looking to gain a better understanding of thresholds for accessing children's social care	Multi-agency workshops on thresholds and inter-agency working provided All schools in the West area were given a named social care link person from Children's Services	Feedback at subsequent forums indicate that this has helped to improve working relationships
Concerns about the time it was taking for young people to be assessed by the Child & Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) and out-of-hours access	ESCB Chair wrote to the relevant commissioners and partner concerns fed into a service review of CAMHS.	New Emotional Well-being and Mental Health Services commissioned, and launched 1 November 2015 run by NELFT. The services have the long term aim of responding earlier to children's needs to help prevent, reduce or delay the need for more specialist interventions Continues to be closely monitored by the ESCB
Lack of clarity about the process for challenging practice decisions across agencies and the escalation process	The SET Child Protection Procedures was updated in 2015 with a chapter on Professional Conflict Resolution. This was given a higher profile via training, the ESCB website and bulletins.	This will form an integral part of the ESCB learning and development programme for 2016 – 17 and will continue to be monitored via the forums
ESCB website difficult to navigate and not user friendly	Following consultation, the new ESCB website was launched November 2015 with improved accessibility, content and practice tools	Practitioners shared positive feedback about new ESCB website, e.g. user friendly, easy to navigate, helpful information and bulletins

A focus of the forums in the Autumn was CSE, the newly appointed ESCB CSE Project lead attended and posed some key questions in order to gain practitioner feedback and levels of confidence in the following areas:

1. Recognising and identifying CSE?
2. Protecting, and disrupting when CSE is identified?
3. Supporting victims and their families
4. Working together and response from partners in planning.

Issues and requests raised at Practitioner forums 2015-16	Action required	Outcomes
Challenges in relation to those young people who continue to be vulnerable post 18, Specifically those with learning needs, young people want services to continue post 18 when tackling CSE	Consideration to be given to how adult services work with adults who are being sexually exploited and the transition between children and adults services (across the whole spectrum of services) for those who are known to be have been, or being, exploited	Through the current ESCB review of CSE arrangements, look at how adult services are integrated to support young people transcending into adulthood
All forums raised that they want to better understand what CSE looks like in their local area	A problem profile needs to be developed and shared with the relevant people using multi-agency data	ESCB are reviewing the current Essex arrangements in tackling CSE so that information is shared easily and consistently to build the local pictures. This will enable resources to be used more effectively locally to tackle issues and fully utilise district, borough and city councils partners and community safety partners
All forums felt that parents needed to be more aware and better supported in order for them to support their young people	Further work to be undertaken talking with parents about the support they need	Review of the ESCB website information for parents to ensure there is a robust offer for parents with easy access to support Consideration to be given to having an awareness campaign aimed at parents/carers, young people and local businesses to tie in with national CSE awareness day in March 2016
Lack of awareness amongst practitioners of the content of the full CSE risk assessment toolkit	ESCB to raise the profile of the full CSE risk assessment toolkit	Highlighted in the CSE Champions bulletin in January 2016
Sharing of good practice	Where there are example of good practice and innovative work, ESCB are keen to hear about them	Practitioners to feed to their Stay Safe representative examples of good practice locally so that they can be collated and fed back to ESCB

5.1.3 Involvement of Children and Young People

The ESCB recognises the importance of speaking with and listening to the experiences and views of children, young people and their families. Essex County Council has a well established and effective Involvement and Engagement Team working with children in care, and the ESCB is utilising the skills and experience of the team in involving children and young people in the work of the Board.

Working with the Involvement and Engagement Team, the Board identified their top three key areas that worried them the most, and therefore asked for the views and experiences of young people to help shape the work of the Board going forward. For 2015–16 these three areas were:

- Self-harm – over 200 young people shared their perceptions and experiences of self-harm. This was shared (via a report) with the ESCB Performance, Audit and QA Sub-committee, and will be the focus of the next Board Development Day in October 2016. It will also further inform the revision of an ESCB suicide prevention toolkit being used in schools across Essex since 2015
- Gangs – nearly 400 young people shared their perceptions and experiences of gang related activity in Essex. This was presented to the Board and is helping to inform wider work being done across the District, City and Borough Councils and being monitored by the ESCB Performance, Audit and QA Sub-committee
- CSE – a significant amount of work has been undertaken to gain the understanding of children and young people through surveys to Year six and Year eight pupils within schools across Essex and feeding into the future design and delivery of services.

At the ESCB annual conference in November 2015, based on the theme of Neglect, a group of young people successfully ran their own workshop and as in previous years, this was extremely well received by practitioners, and had a significant impact.

This process of active engagement with young people will continue as the Board has identified its top three worries for 2016 and 2017, which are CSE (a continuation), Radicalisation and Young People Leaving Care.

Working with the Involvement and Engagement Team, the Board identified their top three key areas that worried them the most, and therefore asked for the views and experiences of young people to help shape the work of the Board going forward.



5.1.4 Challenge to Partners

The ESCB continues also to challenge partners where appropriate in order to ensure that safeguarding arrangements are satisfactory. These have also been added to the ESCB Risk register so that progress can be monitored. Challenges over the past year include:

Essex Police – expectation that the police provide evidence of an improvement plan and quarterly progress reports to the Board following poor outcomes of their recent HMIC inspections. Partners not only challenged the police on the findings, but also stressed their support in assisting the police in areas where multi-agency expertise would be useful.

Health – monitoring and challenging progress of the Success Regime to ensure that steps are being taken to address safeguarding concerns in a timely way. Following a challenge by the Independent Chair, safeguarding issues from the minutes of Quality Surveillance groups are now being shared with him for consideration and action.

Provision of Mental Health Services to Young People – this was identified by the Board as a risk due to ongoing concerns from practitioners and the local Stay Safe groups about the time it was taking for young people to be assessed by the Child & Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) and out-of-hours access. Subsequently the Emotional Well-being and Mental Health Services was commissioned (to replace CAMHS) and launched 1 November 2015, run by North East London NHS Foundation Trust (NELFT).

Cookham Wood Young Offenders Institute – concerns were raised about the welfare of young people held in Cookham Wood, and as a consequence the Independent Chair, Lead Member and Head of Youth Offending undertook a joint visit to the institution. The ESCB representatives were assured that matters had and were being addressed and agreement was reached about the ongoing dialogue with the Governor to ensure that the welfare of young people from Essex would remain paramount.

The ESCB continues also to challenge partners where appropriate in order to ensure that safeguarding arrangements are satisfactory. These have also been added to the ESCB Risk register so that progress can be monitored..

06 Summary of the work of the ESCB Sub-committees

6.1 Business Plan

The work of the ESCB is set out in its two year Business Plan 2015-17– (see Appendix D), and driven by its sub-committees. The Business Plan is formed of local and national issues, as well as emerging concerns arising from case audits including Serious Case Reviews. A number of objectives for 2015-16 have been achieved and some areas of continuing work and focus for the ESCB will be carried over to the 2016–17 business plan.

Continuous improvement and impact is a key focus for all ESCB sub-committees work plans, and overseen by the Board.

6.2 Sub-committee work

6.2.1 Business Management Group

The key role of this new Business Management Group (which commenced in March 2016) is to provide scrutiny and oversight to the achievement of the ESCB Business Plan, ensure that all administrative functions to support the ESCB are effective and highlight any risks to progress against the Business Plan to the ESCB.

6.2.2 Strategic Child Death Overview Panel

Across Southend, Essex and Thurrock (SET), 93 notifications of deaths of children living in these areas were received during the year 1 April 2014 to 31 March 2015. 72 of these notifications were in relation to Essex resident children and 28 of these deaths were classed as unexpected, i.e. the death was not anticipated as a significant possibility for example, 24 hours before the death; or where there was an unexpected collapse or incident leading to or precipitating the events that led to the death.

The Strategic Child Death Overview Panel (SCDOP) meets quarterly and is supported by five Local Child Death Review Panels that also meets quarterly and are located across the acute trust areas, West, Mid, South East, South West and North East Essex. Attendance by all agencies at Local Child Death Review Panel meetings has been good and additional specialists are also invited to attend as required for specific cases. For example the East of England Ambulance Service safeguarding lead and Head of Midwifery of the local maternity unit.

Actions arising from completed child death reviews this year have included:

- Discussion with HM Coroner around how Post Mortem results are shared and discussed with families



- Development and launch of a furniture safety campaign, including producing guidance in the home for families
- Learning from a local hospital Serious Incident Report regarding diagnosis of a rare condition shared across SET area hospitals and nationally
- A Working Group has been formed to consider in depth, all cases of children who have taken their own lives in SET areas over the last three years, to see if there are any further lessons that can be learned to prevent any future deaths

Updates from SCDOP and local panel work and national child death review information is included regularly in the ESCB Bulletin and on the ESCB website. Child safety campaigns initiated by SCDOP have been publicised on local radio and newspapers and good use is made of social media to circulate the information as widely as possible. During school holidays information from all the SET SCDOP child safety campaigns has been on display and available for families at Chelmsford library foyer.

6.2.3 Serious Case Review (SCR)

The SCR sub-committee provides oversight to the commissioning and on-going management of all Serious Case Reviews and other types of multi-agency reviews commissioned by the ESCB. It makes recommendations to the ESCB Chair on whether referred cases meet the criteria for a Serious Case Review or other type of review.

The ESCB published two serious case reviews in 2015 (Child J and G), involving infants age 3 months and under at the time of the incidents, where neglect was a common factor, and both suffered serious head injuries.

A number of recommendations were made focusing on information sharing, pre-birth assessments, hospital discharge processes, dealing with more complex parenting circumstances and risk management.

A Partnership Learning Review was also carried out. This is a new type of review for Essex intended for cases that do not meet the criteria for a Serious Case Review but where there is significant multi-agency learning to be gained. The review was completed within seven months and the methodology received very positive feedback from the practitioners and managers involved.

Learning from these case reviews continues to be incorporated into multi-agency briefings and disseminated across agencies.

The SCR sub-committee has also provided some support for two out of area Serious Case Reviews.

A further area of work this year has been the development of the Serious Case Review Toolkit (published November 2015), which sets out the arrangements by which the ESCB will conduct its case reviews.

Child safety campaigns initiated by SCDOP have been publicised on local radio and newspapers and good use is made of social media to circulate the information as widely as possible.

A further area of work this year has been the development of the Serious Case Review Toolkit (published November 2015), which sets out the arrangements by which the ESCB will conduct its case reviews.

It highlights its statutory duties, overall process for running a serious case review and how the ESCB will commission such work.

The impact of the toolkit has enabled greater engagement with frontline practitioners and managers involved with the families. The multi-agency practitioner feedback and learning events (held as part of this new process) have been particularly valuable learning opportunities to share views, ideas, as well as identify key lessons.

Learning from these reviews is shared widely through feedback events, multi-agency briefings, bulletins and are incorporated into the wider multi-agency learning and development programme.

Due to the complex arrangements across the Health sector and re-structures within other partner organisations, clarification around pathways continue to be strengthened to enable SCR and other review processes to run as smoothly as possible, and reflected in the SCR Toolkit.

The focus will be on evaluating and monitoring the impact of learning and development and linking this with the training audit, Section 11 Audit and the new ESCB Performance Framework to ensure that outcomes of learning can be monitored as part of the ESCB learning and improvement framework.

6.2.4 Learning and Development

As part of the ESCB governance review over the last year it was agreed that this sub-committee would focus purely on learning and development. The review also considered where there could be greater synergy between the working of the Adult and Children Boards. As a result, it was identified that we could build on some of the joint training programmes already on offer and as from March 2016 the Learning & Development sub-committee became a joint group under both the Children and Adults Safeguarding Boards.

A new sub-committee chair and vice chair was appointed and an initial joint workshop was held in March 2016 to scope the work, which identified a number of key areas to be progressed in the coming year. The focus will be on evaluating and monitoring the impact of learning and development and linking this with the training audit, Section 11 Audit and the new ESCB Performance Framework to ensure that outcomes of learning can be monitored as part of the ESCB learning and improvement framework.

The main achievements of the ESCB Learning and Development sub-committee in 2015-16 are as follows

Learning and Development programme

A total of 1,725 people attended ESCB learning and development opportunities this year, which is an increase of 494 additional places compared to 2014-15.

Both the Children and Adult Safeguarding Boards have continued to offer joint learning and development opportunities during 2015-16 in the following areas:

- Domestic Abuse Basic Awareness
- Female Genital Mutilation awareness
- Honour based abuse awareness
- DASH risk checklist (Domestic Abuse, Stalking, Harassment and Honour Based Abuse)
- MARAC (Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference)

Measuring the impact of the learning and development opportunities

The ESCB uses a nationally recognised model of evaluating its learning and development opportunities, based on the NSPCC Professional Inter-agency training evaluation. The purpose of developing this model with partners facilitating learning opportunities in Essex is to embed it as part of the learning framework across all organisations so that it encourages discussion within personal development sessions and is adopted as a model of good practice.

The impact of learning is also measured in other ways:

- Attendees at the practitioner forums and CSE Champions networking forums feedback within the session and exchange information on what is working well and less well. Any issues that are raised in these forums are logged and feedback is provided to practitioners either directly or through various mechanisms such as the CSE Champions bulletin
- The impact of the learning from serious case review events is undertaken in a variety of ways. For example the local Stay Safe Groups regularly discuss the learning and are now looking at finding ways of capturing the impact on practice, asking members of these groups to provide evidence as to how they have shared the learning within their organisation, what changes have been made to practice and how they monitor the effectiveness of those changes
- The pre-birth assessment workshops are part of a wider piece of work around pre-birth as this has been a key theme in recent local serious case reviews, and the impact of these events will be considered in the wider evaluation of practice in relation to pre-birth cases. Such evaluation will be through multi-agency case audits, single agency audits and feedback from practitioners.

Impact of ESCB Training

Across all the courses delivered, the confidence of participants both pre and post attending the training is measured against the learning outcomes (1= no confidence and 5= very confident). Those completing the courses reported an increase in their confidence to practice by 1.5 points.



The Learning and Development webpage (on the ESCB website) remains the second highest viewed, with Safeguarding Children Level 1 and 2 training being the most popular.

The ESCB has also produced separate training bulletins (disseminated to all partners) and due to their popularity all our bulletins now have a learning and development feature which has led to an increase in the take up and awareness of training opportunities. For example, when a training specific bulletin was sent out in December 2015, we saw higher than average clicks on the website. This strand of work will be further developed in the coming year to ensure that the profile and the breadth of learning and development opportunities continue to be promoted.

Monitoring of the provision of safeguarding training and development across agencies

In addition to the Section 11 Audit, the ESCB carried out a more detailed audit to gain an overview of the scope and reach of safeguarding training and development across its partners. The completion of the audit was voluntary however the ESCB received a response rate of 85% and from this was able to assure itself that all agencies who responded and who operated front line services:

- Had appraisal systems in place that included a learning and development review for staff members to ensure that effectiveness of training for that staff member is monitored
- Had a learning and development strategy
- Kept records of safeguarding learning and development for their staff
- Had methods of evaluation in place though effectiveness of this varied
- Either had safeguarding training in place as part of staff induction or had this planned
- Had a compliance rate of over 70% on numbers of staff trained at the appropriate level in safeguarding
- Methods of evaluation of learning included:
 - o Measuring number and quality of referrals
 - o Feedback from inspections
 - o Internal and multi-agency audits
 - o Cases discussed in supervision to give an opportunity to reflect and check management oversight of safeguarding issues



The ESCB has also produced separate training bulletins (disseminated to all partners) and due to their popularity all our bulletins now have a learning and development feature which has led to an increase in the take up and awareness of training opportunities.

On the question of evidencing impact of the learning, agencies were of the view that impact was embedded in wider practice within their organisations and that measurement of impact was thus part of a wider organisational reporting framework of practice.

Examples of impact included:

Improvement in the understanding of processes and practice amongst practitioners leading to:

- improved quality of referrals, and
- more effective case discussions which generated areas for improvement and learning

It was felt by all agencies that more assistance in monitoring outcomes would be useful. As a result, this will form a key part of the work of the joint ESCB/ ESAB Learning and Development group in 2016 -17 and a task and finish group has been set up for this purpose. This group will develop guidance for agencies to help support their evaluation processes based on best practice.

Putting the lessons from Serious Case Reviews into practice

As part of a joint piece of work between the ESCB Learning and Development sub-committee and West Essex Stay Safe Group a working group is looking at developing a multi-agency table top discussion event with front line practitioners focussing on three key learning themes from a number of Essex Serious Case Reviews (facilitated by local practitioners who have been part of the working group). If successful this will be rolled out across the county in 2016.

This event will be held alongside other briefings focussing on individual Serious Case Reviews.



6.2.5 SET Procedures Working Group

The multi-agency Southend, Essex and Thurrock group published the new Child Protection Procedures in March 2015, which align with the Pan-London procedures. This was a significant and complex piece of work and is testament to the effectiveness of that group.

Further minor updates were published in August 2015 and will continue as and when required (at least annually), incorporating learning from local, regional and national serious case reviews.

6.2.6 ESCB Policies and Procedures group

The group has developed and published a number of Essex policies/guidance documents this year including:

- Safer Recruitment top tips
- Pre-birth assessment multi-agency guidance
- Supervision of parents of children in hospital where there are safeguarding concerns
- Practice guidance and care pathway for children and young people who are admitted to psychiatric in-patient units in Essex
- E-safety policy
- Hoarding guidance (a joint effort across both Adult and Childrens Boards)

6.2.7 Performance Audit and Quality Assurance

The group has focussed on four key areas in 2015-16:

- Developed a new ESCB Performance Management Framework (published April 2016)
- Developed a new multi-agency performance dashboard that aligns with the Business Plan priorities
- Ensured multi-agency case audits are central to our learning (including the feedback of service users)
- Robust moderation of Section 11 Audit action plans
- Ensured the views of young people inform the work of the Board

There has been extensive consultation to agree a definitive set of performance measures that aligns with the Business Plan priorities as well as continuing to report on key child protection measures of relevance to the Board.

Our focus has been (and continues to be) to further understand the impact of the work of the ESCB and its partner agencies and the difference we all make to the real lives of children, young people and their families in Essex.

There has been extensive consultation to agree a definitive set of performance measures that aligns with the Business Plan priorities as well as continuing to report on key child protection measures of relevance to the Board. This includes intelligence from performance indicators, case audit activity, surveys and feedback from children and young people.

Our focus has been (and continues to be) to further understand the impact of the work of the ESCB and its partner agencies and the difference we all make to the real lives of children, young people and their families in Essex. The Board recognises service users are often the experts in identifying their own needs, and seeks to ensure that our management information enables triangulation of more traditional data with views of children, young people and their families.

Section 11 Audit

Another key area of work for the sub-committee has been the S11 Audit (agreed across Southend, Essex and Thurrock LSCBs), which requires partner organisations to self-assess against safeguarding standards, and to develop action plans to update on progress, deal with deficits. This is monitored by the ESCB Performance Audit and Quality Assurance sub-committee.

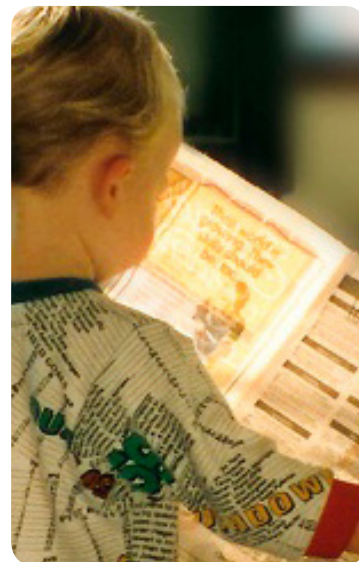
This audit was carried out online to enable agencies to easily access their submissions and update their action plans, as well as enable monitoring and tracking of responses by the ESCB. Agency submissions of their action plans were also subject to rigorous moderation (during February 2015), which has enabled the Board to challenge agencies where evidence was lacking and offer support as needed.

An example of challenge was in relation to contracted and commissioned services and their “Whistle-Blowing” procedures, which were in place, but were not always readily accessible to their staff or members of the public. In response to this finding, the ESCB developed (in collaboration with the LADOs) new ‘Whistle-Blowing’ publicity materials for partners which are available on the ESCB website.

Essex schools and colleges also completed a bespoke safeguarding online audit to enable them to continue to review their practice. This identified a need for further training around Child Sexual Exploitation, and has been addressed by the ESCB through provision of additional CSE training and workshops which are now being accessed by schools.

Multi-Agency Case Audits (MACAs)

MACA meetings are forums where practitioners and managers across the partner agencies come together to share thoughts and observations about their agencies contributions to work with families, and also the effectiveness of their work and the effectiveness and overall impact of interagency working. This is done so that practitioners can think and learn together and decide what has gone well and what has not gone too well, and whether



Agency submissions of their action plans were also subject to rigorous moderation (during February 2015), which has enabled the Board to challenge agencies where evidence was lacking and offer support as needed

there should be any immediate plan of action to improve the services delivered to families. Nominations are open for any professional to make where there is an opportunity for shared discussion and shared learning.

MACA meetings can be generic or themed days and are widely valued with increasing attendance from across the partnership. Examples of themed MACA days undertaken over the last year include: Children with Disabilities, Neglect, Child Sexual Exploitation and Alcohol and Drug Misuse.

Learning from MACA's is collated and shared with the Board via the Performance, Audit, and Quality Assurance Sub-committee so they can hear and respond to what frontline practitioners and their managers working with children, young people and their families are saying about the quality and impact of the services provided.

MACA Learning Bulletins are now published twice a year and provide a summary of key learning experiences shared by practitioners at MACA meetings - highlighting strengths and areas for development. These are circulated widely across partner agencies and are shared with practitioners as a reflection opportunity and to contribute to improving practice, and are very popular with frontline staff.

There has also been a greater focus this year by the Performance, Audit, and Quality Assurance Sub-committee on having oversight of Partners' internal case audit schedules around safeguarding themes, looking back over the previous year and what they have learnt. As well as looking at their planned case audit schedules going forward in order to identify common themes, and join up work where appropriate.

6.2.8 Communications

The Communications sub-committee has a remit to communicate, disseminate and monitor safeguarding messages across partner organisations and the wider community, lead on promotional work and campaigns, and raise the profile of the Board. In addition, the group is becoming more proactive in engaging with service users and members of the public.

The joint adult and children's communications sub-committee has seen the addition of a Lead for Partnership Delivery from the adult sector, as well as Health and Police representatives; these changes have led to a more robust group and effective partner representation. In addition, arrangements with National Probation Service and Essex Community Rehabilitation Company have been implemented to ensure their representation when required. The group, as well as the wider network of communications contacts, allows for broad and more efficient dissemination of key messages from the Board.

This sub-committee has been very successful over the past year of which examples are as follows:

The joint adult and children's communications sub-committee has seen the addition of a Lead for Partnership Delivery from the adult sector, as well as Health and Police representatives; these changes have led to a more robust group and effective partner representation.

ESCB website

Our new website was officially launched in November 2015 to coincide with the ESCB annual conference. The website has become a central reference area for safeguarding, and seen an increase in activity especially following the annual conference as well as during key campaign periods. For example, there were more than 20,000 views to the website during the summer months when the ESCB was promoting Water Safety. This is in comparison to an average monthly figure of 17,560. The reporting concerns page was in the top three most viewed pages between November 2015 and March 2016 due to a re-designed home page. We encourage ongoing feedback and engagement via the Partnership Delivery Leads and Stay Safe networks is planned.

The website has become a central reference area for safeguarding, and seen an increase in activity especially following the annual conference as well as during key campaign periods.

Bulletins

Bi-monthly e-bulletins are issued with a distribution of more than 3000 recipients (also published on website and Twitter), and are proving to be popular. We have seen click rate increase from 7% to 18% meaning more people are clicking through from the e-bulletin stories to read additional information.

The Policies bulletin in January 2016 saw a 38% click through rate demonstrating people's interest in new policies and procedures updates. For example, the E-Safety policy was promoted on the website and bulletin and was the third highest clicked link in June bulletin, with more than 100 people opening and reading the story. There were 269 views on the website story. The dedicated policies bulletin was the most popular bulletin in 2015-16 with a 38% click through rate demonstrating people's interest in new policies and policy updates.

The Communications Sub-Committee fully supported the CSE 'I Didn't Know' campaign and through effective partnership helped with the campaign design and campaign roll out. The week of activity saw a huge 11,425% increase in web hits to the Police CSE pages. There were over 150,000 views of the films with extensive engagement on social media and a reach of almost 1.5 million

Child Sexual Exploitation campaign

The Communications Sub-Committee fully supported the CSE 'I Didn't Know' campaign and through effective partnership helped with the campaign design and campaign roll out. The week of activity saw a huge 11,425% increase in web hits to the Police CSE pages. There were over 150,000 views of the films with extensive engagement on social media and a reach of almost 1.5 million. Both web hits to the main ESCB reporting concerns page and calls in to the Family Operations Hub concerns line increased in the month of March, likely due to the launch of the campaign. The work of children and young people was central to the success of this campaign, which is further outlined in 6.2.9

ESCB annual conference Child Neglect-The Invisible Abuse

We held our annual conference on 11 November 2015; which focussed on the theme of neglect and covered a range of areas within this through a number of different workshops. A total of 235 people attended the conference which was well received.

The aims of the conference were to increase practitioner knowledge on the subject of neglect, to help practitioners think how they might be able to work differently with families to support them to make the sustained changes needed to improve outcomes for children. Workshop themes were drawn from areas of practice arising from serious case reviews, local and national issues and comments from practitioners across all agencies. In this way, the conference programme was tailored to meet the needs of agencies working with families in Essex.

The impact of the conference was evident in a number of areas:

- During the month of the conference there were 2414 impressions on Twitter (amount of people that would have seen our tweets). This was a 309% increase on previous month. Profile visits increased by 228% to 375.
- The new neglect webpage was developed after the conference and received 750 hits over the five month period following the event
- Participants said they found the workshops gave them a better understanding of each area of work which they could then include in their own practice
- Practitioners also commented on the powerful impact on them of the presentation from the key note speaker who described her experiences of neglect on her own life. Her presentation was described as ‘inspiring and courageous’ by delegates.

Delegates were asked to rate their overall experience of the ESCB conference with 1= poor and 5= excellent. The average score was 4.3 with practitioners highlighting the value of the learning from the workshops they attended. The workshop delivered and supported by young people was a particular success with delegates commenting:

‘This was an excellent workshop as it was about people who had been in care who shared their own views.’

“This workshop was mainly led by young people who had experienced the care system themselves. This was a really helpful workshop - I was very impressed with the way that the workshop had been developed and delivered. The YP involved were both sensitive and reflective in the way they delivered the session and this enabled the participants to gain a greater insight into their experience.”

Campaigns

A successful implementation of the **Wise up to Water Safety Campaign** saw coverage in various local media outlets as well as the Child Accident Prevention Trust (CAPT) June 2015 bulletin and website. Social media reach on Facebook of 12,670 during four week period May-June due to a small amount of paid advertising, which was very successful.

The new neglect webpage was developed after the conference and received 750 hits over the five month period following the event

‘This was an excellent workshop as it was about people who had been in care who shared their own views.’

‘This was a really helpful workshop - I was very impressed with the way that the workshop had been developed and delivered. The YP involved were both sensitive and reflective in the way they delivered the session and this enabled the participants to gain a greater insight into their experience.’

6.2.9 Essex Child Sexual Exploitation Group

Following on from a SET CSE Strategic Round Table in April to review the terms of reference and future actions of the group, it was concluded that the SET CSE Strategic Group would continue, Chaired by DCC Matthew Horne (Essex Police) and would be attended by Directors from the 3 LAs, Chairs from the three LSCB CSE Sub-committees, and OPCC. The group will address issues which are raised across the SET region. Future SET CSE meetings will be responsible for overseeing the review of the SET CSE Risk Assessment Toolkit which requires updating since its implementation in 2013.

In 2015 it was recognised that the Southend Essex and Thurrock CSE Strategic Group was not in a position to provide a mechanism for robust oversight and drive for progressing Essex activities in relation to CSE, largely due to Thurrock and Southend having agreed their own separate strategic groups and action plans reporting to their LSCBs. It was therefore agreed and supported by the SET CSE Strategic Group and ESCB Board Members for an ESCB CSE & Missing Sub-committee to be established and for the SET CSE Strategic Group to undertake a review in early 2016 of its terms of reference and aims.

The ESCB CSE & Missing sub-committee held its first meeting on 25 January 2016, Chaired by Tanya Gillett (Head of Youth Offending Service), with good attendance across partners. The sub-committee has agreed and finalised its terms of reference, and agreed bi-monthly meetings initially throughout 2016 to ensure that actions and review of progress is managed in a timely way. As part of a wider SET arrangement the sub-committee adopted the SET CSE Strategy and has undertaken a CSE self-assessment checklist to aid its priorities and action plan. The self-assessment checklist and action plan is agreed by all Sub-committee members with six priorities agreed:

- Identifying and understanding the prevalence of CSE and threats to children who are missing
- Ensuring the views of parents/carers and CYP are taken into account in design and delivery of services
- Ensuring suitable training is available across the partnership and that those requiring it can access it
- Undertake a comprehensive review of our approach to Missing across home, care and education
- Promoting a SET CSE awareness campaign to the general public, parents, carers and children and young people
- Ensuring ourselves of our approach towards perpetrators, that they are held to account and review our response to children who perpetrate against other children.



Swift progress has already been made. A SET CSE Campaign “I Didn’t Know” has, and continues to be delivered. With good partnership delivery within District Councils, Schools, health services, youth organisations, libraries, and the licensing department utilising the taxi stickers and booklets, and some districts ensuring that CSE is now mandatory training for hackney carriage and private hire licenses. There has been an 11,425% increase in web hits to the Police CSE pages. The ESCB webpages doubled their monthly views in March. There were over 150,000 views of the films with great engagement on social media and a reach of almost 1.5 million. The victim film alone had 14,281 views, of those 77% were women and 23% men, and on Facebook we could see 5,716 views were by 13-17 year olds, with 45% reach to this age group. The campaign film ‘I Didn’t Know’ was released in cinemas across SET during the May half term week on all screenings of films rated PG or above. The campaign has been shortlisted for the PRCA (Public Relations Consultants Association) awards for best public sector campaign in the South East and Anglia.

The ESCB has gained National Working Group Gold Membership which is now free for all Essex partners from 2016 to support the workforce in understanding CSE.

To support our understanding of the views of children and young people and their parents/carers, the School Project has utilised the ‘I Didn’t Know’ Campaign to deliver surveys across Year 6 and Year 8 pupils from participating schools in Essex. This will inform our understanding of what young people know and understand about staying safe on-line and risks from others in the community. A report to analyse the returns from these surveys is due in July and will be shared with ESCB Members and CSE & Missing Sub-committee. It will also inform future work of the schools project, which will devise lesson plans for KS2 and KS3 and individual school pledges based on what young people tell us.

The establishment of multi-agency arrangements around CSE through Missing and Child Exploitation (MACE) meetings since March 2016 has provided a data set on CSE and Missing supported by Essex Police, Family Operations, ESCB, and the Children’s Society. This data set is outlining prevalence of CSE activity and missing threats, supporting our knowledge and scrutiny of planning for those children whom are most vulnerable within our communities and helping us identify patterns and hotspots. This understanding has supported the creation of a number of multi-agency activities set for delivery in July, which will use the ‘I Didn’t Know’ Campaign to launch a targeted ‘Safer Seafront Campaign’ within the Tendring District. This will target seafront businesses and activities with young people in that area, supported by targeted social media and web campaigning to children, young people, parents and carers.

The ESCB has gained National Working Group Gold Membership which is now free for all Essex partners from 2016 to support the workforce in understanding CSE. Through this membership, staff can access an online basic awareness course, a wide variety of resources on CSE and missing to utilise in their teams or directly with families, and research and other training events. NWG also provide consultation surgeries, so that professionals or agencies can discuss issues directly with the new CSE Response Unit.

6.2.10 District, Borough and City Councils Safeguarding Group (CDB group)

This Group continues to be the main means through which the Board has a formal connection with the 12 District/Borough and City Councils in Essex. It has a crucially important role in ensuring that the Board has a clear sight of emergent risk in each of the localities and has continued to mature under the direction and leadership of the Chief Executive from Maldon District Council.

Achievements since April 2015 have included:

Housing and Temporary Accommodation: The Group has worked hard to track the impact of pressure mounting on temporary accommodation, largely as a result of families moving out of London and other local authority areas close to Essex. The unregulated and piecemeal nature of this movement over a period of time has been recognised to represent significant risk to families and also place untenable strain on local services. Subsequently, the concern was escalated through the Essex Chief Executives and Leaders Networks and raised formally with London Councils, and appropriate local authorities and Government.

Extensive work has been undertaken by Essex Housing Officers group, supported by representatives from the District/Borough and City leads group, which has resulted in improved communication from some of the London Boroughs and a commitment to work in partnership.

In addition the District/Borough and City (DBC) leads group undertook to:

- 1) Create a list of all temporary accommodation that is used across Essex by Essex organisations. For example, housing/police/probation/social care (adults and children)
- 2) Create a list of all temporary accommodation that is used across Essex by London organisations. For example housing/police/probation/social care (adults and children)
- 3) Create a leaflet for temporary accommodation managers on their roles and responsibilities
- 4) Launch the leaflet at an event aimed at temporary accommodation managers
- 5) Essex local authorities to distribute the leaflet to all temporary accommodation managers in their area
- 6) Develop a protocol for Essex and London organisations for when people are placed in temporary accommodation to ensure this is safe

Work on these actions has commenced and will be a focus of the DBC Action Plan in 2016-17 and led by the Essex Housing Officers Group.



Work with Young People affected by Sexual Violence and Exploitation

Over the review year, Braintree and Epping Forest District Council had been successful in securing funding to provide an Independent Sexual Violence Advisor (ISVA) that has worked across the two districts, undertaking targeted work on prevent and education in schools.

Child Sexual Exploitation

Following a presentation by the ESCB Child Exploitation Project Manager and Essex Police lead, the District/Borough and City leads group made a commitment to implement CSE training within their organisations for relevant staff. In some areas, this was undertaken on an in house basis, and in the West, a CSE conference was organised by Epping Forest Council, which was open to colleagues across Harlow and Uttlesford. The event included presentations from, ESCB Child Sexual Exploitation lead, Safe and Sound; the Child Sexual Exploitation Triage Team (CSETT) and South Essex Rape and Incest Crisis Centre. The event was a great success and attracted in excess of 100 attendees from organisations across the West area of Essex.

Linked to this, other District/Borough and City Councils arranged a number of events for licensed premises and taxi drivers to raise awareness of CSE. All areas were in the process of providing information leaflets to all Licensed Taxi Drivers, as part of their induction and training.

Section 11 and Adult Audit Action Plan Updates

During the review year, all District/Borough and City Local Authorities undertook a review of actions identified through the Child and Adult Audits and submitted their updates to both the Children and Adult Safeguarding Boards. Good practice was also shared amongst the authorities and support exchanged in relation to required Policies and Procedures.

All of the work of the District/Borough and City Safeguarding Group feeds in to the ESCB Action Plan and representatives from the group attend a range of countywide sub-committee meetings, such as Safer Essex and Southend, Essex and Thurrock Child Sexual Exploitation Group.

One of the key challenges for the District/Borough and City Safeguarding Group is maintaining capacity in respect of safeguarding in general. Most of the representatives on the group are Community Safety Officers and due to the recent policing reforms, they are finding that the scope and volume of their work is expanding all of the time.

In 2016-17, the group intends to identify areas of safeguarding where it can make a more thorough impact, rather than spreading resources thinly across the expanse of issues.

6.2.11 Health Executive Forum (HEF)

At a strategic level the co-ordination of the safeguarding responsibilities for the large number of health organisations in Essex is achieved through the Health Executive Forum (HEF). Over the course of the year the HEF has taken

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taken considerable responsibility to harmonise safeguarding priorities and expanded in 2015 to support the safeguarding adults at risk agenda as well.

The HEF meets six times per year and brings together all the health agency executive safeguarding children/adult leads from across Essex, which since early 2016, has included representatives from NHS Southend and NHS Thurrock Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCG).

The HEF provides a forum for the consideration of proposals and agreement of commitments, to take forward initiatives to support the safeguarding agenda in Essex. The group is led by the Accountable Officer of Castle Point & Rochford CCG and is the key health leadership forum for safeguarding in Essex. Selected HEF members represent the health economy on the ESCB and the ESAB.

During 2015–16 the HEF has:

- Maintained a strong focus on safeguarding in the face of ongoing financial and capacity issues by aligning its business plan with ESCB/ESAB business plans
- Developed performance monitoring so that meaningful reports are produced from the data dashboard. Agreed minimum key performance indicators and data sets for safeguarding in all health contracts have standardised expectations across the health economy
- Integrated safeguarding into commissioning decisions through the establishment and implementation from the CAMHS services to the Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health Services for Children and Young People
- Supported the re-procurement of the Sexual Assault Referral Centre with particular regard to improving paediatrician cover at weekends
- Prioritised the most vulnerable children by supporting pilots to improve case-finding and early intervention for children experiencing domestic abuse. Information sharing with health practitioners in the Joint Domestic Abuse Triage Team was delayed whilst an information sharing agreement was put in place
- Challenged ESCB partners in matters that impact on the health and welfare of children, for example, the introduction of a new system for sharing information regarding domestic abuse notifications
- Following a robust challenge from the Board to NHS (England) regarding regulation and inspection across the whole Essex Health Community the HEF has become the means through which the Board now has greater access to the considerations of the Quality Surveillance Group and therefore a better focus on performance and risk
- Acknowledged that existing IT systems that support information sharing can hinder the sharing of information between professionals and supported the redesign and centralisation of the Clinical Record Systems
- Participated in the further development of the Serious Case Review (SCR) process and ensure that learning from SCRs were shared and taken forward across the health economy
- Supported the implementation across health partners of the SET strategic plan for tackling child sexual exploitation
- Monitored and reviewed the implementation of the Essex-wide child Death Review Rapid Response Team
- The inclusion of the Chief Nurses for Thurrock and Southend CCGs has strengthened the ability to influence providers that cross boundaries

The HEF has made progress against the Business Plan and the main achievements are:

- Information sharing between health organisations and the health component of the Joint Domestic Abuse Triage Team/Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (JDATT/MARAC) was delayed whilst an information sharing agreement was put in place across the whole Essex Health Community. The HEF has become the means through which the Board now has greater access to the considerations of the Quality Surveillance Group and therefore a better focus on performance and risk. It has been operational since February 2016 and supports risk assessment and safety planning for families where there is high-risk domestic abuse.
- Continue to prioritise the most vulnerable children by supporting pilots to improve case-finding and early intervention for children experiencing domestic abuse.
- Raising awareness within health organisations of the changes in legislation and data reporting requirements for Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), which will support the protection of girls at risk and improve service provision.
- Continued support of the implementation by health partners of the SET strategic plan for tackling child sexual exploitation, by increasing the use of the CSE Toolkit for risk assessment and participation in Multi-Agency Child Exploitation (MACE) meetings.
- Monitoring of the implementation of the Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health Services for Children and Young People to ensure effective arrangements for the delivery of the service and support the agenda to reduce self-harm and prevent suicide.
- Work with health organisations to embed the learning from SCRs into practice with particular reference to pre-birth assessment and the indicators of neglect.
- Contribute to the review of the ESCB Governance framework.

The challenges and issues being raised over the coming 12 months are:

- On going financial and capacity issues across the health economy will challenge both commissioning and provider health organisations. This may impact on the ability of health organisations to support pilots to improve case-finding and early intervention for children experiencing domestic abuse and continue with the health component of the JDATT/MARAC.
- Health partners will need to work closely with Essex County Council with recommissioning the 0-19 service to minimise any adverse impact of organisational change and ensure that safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children remains high on the agenda.
- The HEF remains the only means through which health agencies in Essex have a formal connection to both ESCB & ESAB. Accordingly, it will need to continue to grow and mature and recognise any changes in Governance which may arise through the 'Success Regime' and any further work with Essex County Council and other Partners related to integration.

7.0 Other activities and functions of the ESCB outside its sub-committees

7.1 Allegations Management via Local Authority Designated Officers

Essex has four Local Authority Designated Officers (LADO) involved in the management and oversight of individual cases where allegations are made against people who work with children in any setting across Essex (paid and unpaid).

The team is based within the Essex County Council, Quality Assurance & Safeguarding Service and are all qualified social workers with significant practice experience in child protection. Each is aligned to one of the quadrant areas (Mid, North, South and West).

In addition to their core responsibilities they also:

- Undertake risk assessments (as part of the councils pre-employment checks) where a DBS trace has been found
- Complete Vetting and Barring checks when the national Disclosure and Barring Service request information on anyone that has been referred to them for consideration for barring from working with vulnerable groups
- Work with the district council licensing authorities to ensure that all new licences consider the protection of children from harm
- Attend various multi-agency forums, e.g. Stay Safe Groups, the School Safeguard Network Groups
- Deliver training to partner agencies.

Key information, trends and analysis of LADO activity 2015–16

The team received 1,300 referrals, which is a continued increase on the previous year's referrals and an overall 60% increase over the last two years. This year's total included 457 allegations, the second highest total on record and the first time that there has been a rise in allegations referred to the service in consecutive years.

Whilst difficult to precisely identify reasons for the increasing referrals, there has been extensive work done by the team to record all consultations (not just those that meet the allegations threshold), and a drive to ensure consistency in practice especially around thresholds. This is in addition to the LADOs maintaining their rigorous programme across Essex of awareness raising workshops about the allegations management process.

Therefore the increase in referrals reflects a system improving in its ability to identify and refer issues of concern involving professionals, rather than the increase reflecting more instances of abuse and inappropriate behaviour.

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Categories of abuse

There are four main types of abuse that may apply in an allegation, of which we received the following referrals:

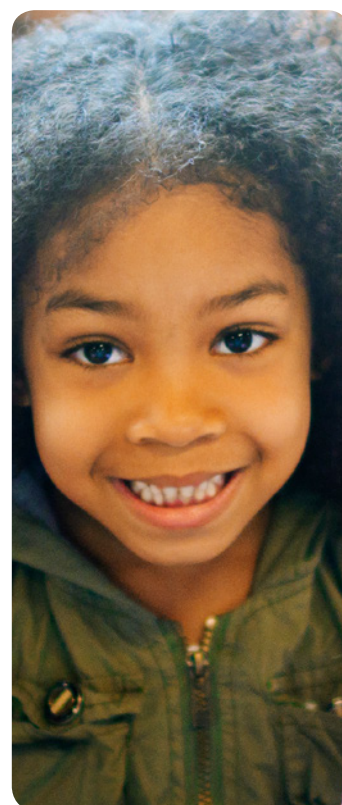
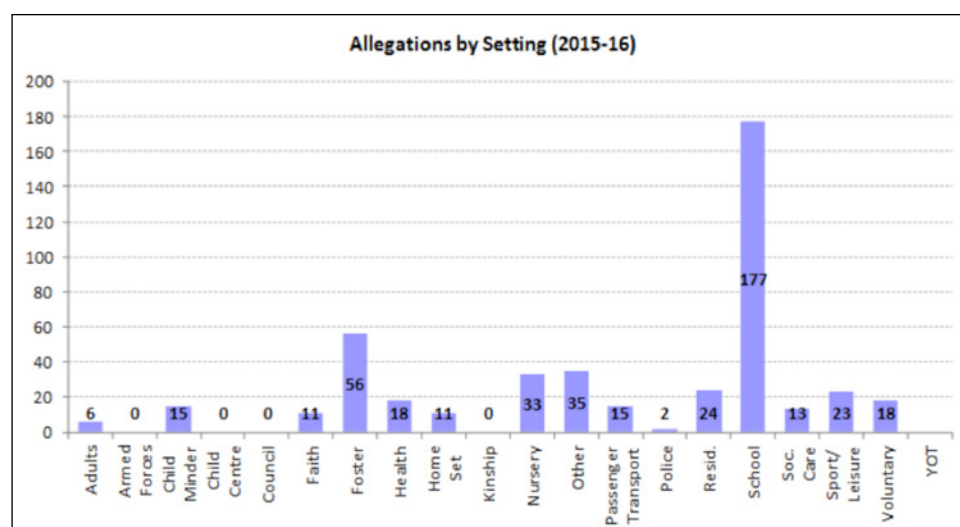
Category	Number of allegations
Physical abuse	185 (occurring in 40% of all allegations)
Sexual abuse	172 (38% of all allegations)
Emotional abuse	22 (5% of all allegations)
Neglect	22 (5% of all allegations)

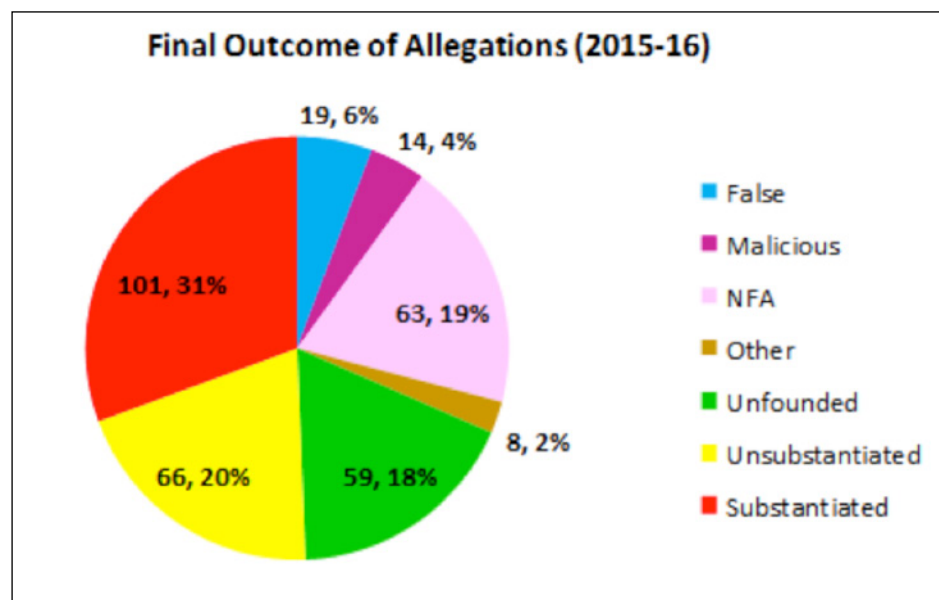
Referring agencies

Schools made the most referrals to the service in 2015-16 (27%) with the next most common being Essex Police (21%) and Social Care (20%). This is the most referrals ever received from the Police and reflects an ongoing improvement in the level of awareness across Essex Police regarding their responsibilities in this area and the close working that continues between them and the LADOs.

Settings where the allegations took place

Allegations against those in the children's workforce take place in a number of different establishments, and not always in the one which actually makes the referral to the LADO service. The most common referrals related to incidents in school settings (39%) followed by fostering placements (12%).





- Malicious – clear evidence that the allegation was entirely false and made in order to cause deception
- False – sufficient evidence to disprove the allegation
- Unfounded – no evidence to support the allegation
- Unsubstantiated – insufficient evidence to prove or disprove the allegation
- Substantiated – sufficient evidence to prove the allegation

There are also a number of cases where an outcome of No Further Action is recorded, the most common reasons are where the referral does not relate to a person in the children's workforce, or does not come under the jurisdiction of Essex and is passed on to the appropriate local authority to deal with.

7.2 Licensing

Since April 2014, the Essex County Council LADOs have been working with the district council licensing authorities to ensure that all new licences intending to sell alcohol consider the protection of children from harm.

Over the period 2015–16, the LADOs considered 176 new licensing applications in order to assess the risks to children and young people.

In 2016 the Essex LADO also joined the SET Taxi Licensing Forum with a view to strengthening links with transport agencies across Essex and join up key areas of work, raise awareness and especially help to identify potential / actual exploitation of young people.



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Where there is evidence of a risk to children and young people, the LADOs along with other local Responsible Authorities, will make representations to the Licensing Committee, and licences can be revoked and premises closed as a result.

Although the Licensing Act 2003 does not cover licences for vehicles for public hire (taxis), partner agencies share information and discuss issues where there is a taxi company or driver whose conduct is a cause for concern, and instigates appropriate courses of action. Where there are sufficient safeguarding concerns the matter is referred to the LADO, the police, and the licence for a driver or vehicle can be suspended or revoked by the relevant district council.

In 2015 the new LADO information and data retention leaflets were published. Followed by a new whistleblowing poster in January 2016 to encourage anyone (public and professionals) to contact the Essex LADO if they have concerns about any individual working with children and young people. This was on the back of the S11 audits highlighting that, whilst all agencies that took part had a whistleblowing policy of some kind, not all were readily [accessible to the public and/or staff](#).

In addition a new audit tool developed by the Essex LADOs is being piloted across the eastern region with a view to being rolled out nationally.

7.3 Private Fostering

The Board recognises that Essex County Council is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children including privately fostered children. It recognises and acknowledges the particular vulnerability of many privately fostered children, and the difficulties that may be inherent in their home and fostering situation or circumstances. The private fostering service will ensure that private fostering arrangements are safe and suitable for children, and children in such arrangements are protected from abuse, neglect or exploitation.

Essex encounters the same difficulties as many other authorities with regard to private fostering, in terms of likely under reporting, but is committed to pursuing a vigorous policy of awareness raising, reporting, assessment and monitoring, regulation and support. The proactive service has resulted in the number of private fostering arrangements made known to and supported by the service increase in recent years.

Overwhelmingly, the private fostering arrangements notified or referred to the service have been in relation to young people who have been estranged from their parents and consequently are living away from home. We have developed good links with the local language schools and there have been notifications from these schools within the last year. Links have been strengthened with the Ethnic Minority and Traveller Achievement Service and they have been involved in some of our awareness raising activities



and training. There has been an increase in the notifications received from social workers who are already involved in working with families and children before they move into private fostering arrangements. There has also been increased awareness raising with local faith groups.

There is a dedicated team within the Fostering Service in Essex responsible for Private Fostering. A Senior Practitioner and two Social Workers are responsible on a day-to-day basis for publicity of the service; for managing the system of notification; for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of the privately fostered child; assessment of the suitability of private foster carers and their accommodation and household; and for providing advice and assistance to private foster carers. The Senior Practitioner and Social Workers report to the Private Fostering Team Manager.

One of the Team Managers in the Recruitment and Assessment team also assists with the awareness raising for private fostering having special responsibility and knowledge for this area of work. They noted that in Essex they had 48 Private Fostering Notifications from 1st April 2015 to 31st March 2016. Sources of notifications are other professionals i.e. Child Care Social Workers, Education Welfare Officers, Independent hosting agencies, private foster carers and more recently, an increase in notifications from schools and on some occasions, parents.



For the last year we continue to have around 22 active Private Fostering Arrangements with children and young people ranging between 2 and 16 years, open to the team at any one time. The majority of our Private Fostering Arrangements are young people aged 14 to 16.

The Board have also been interested to understand the arrangements that are in place to meet the needs of a number of exchange students who stay with host families for 28 days and longer over the course of the year.

The Board have been reassured that the Private Fostering team are actively providing awareness raising to many other professionals. This involves tailor made presentations using case scenarios to childcare teams within Essex Family Solutions, Brentwood Catholic Society, sessions at Safeguarding Network Groups for head teachers and designated officers from schools across Essex. The team also had a meeting with Designated Professionals (Safeguarding Children Clinical Network) LAC Nurses and provided two multi-agency awareness raising sessions for all professionals, which were very well attended, with around 30 people each session. The team have developed links with Children Affected by Parental Imprisonment (CAPI) in order to better support children and their private carers and families who are affected by imprisonment.

Since September 2014, our Parent/Carer leaflets are available in four different languages – German, Mandarin, Polish and Dutch. The team use language line interpreter service to enable working relationships with parents living outside England, ensuring they are well informed and involved in their children's care.

There has continued to be a number of complex cases involving children and young people in situations which are at times not suitable. The private fostering social workers support the private fostering family and birth families in various ways, for example, mediation, providing transport and advising families about family contacts. The workers ensure that during all discussions, the child/young person's voice is heard and respected.

There is one Outreach Worker in the Fostering Recruitment and Assessment team, who does some specific direct work with children in Private Fostering arrangements. Young people and families find this very helpful in preventing potential breakdown.

Moving forward, we consider we should have more notifications of private fostering arrangements and plan to continue to raise awareness with the public and professionals to increase the number of arrangements we are aware of. This will include increased workshops planned with partner agencies to raise awareness and some advertising across Essex to raise awareness with the general public.

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08 Measuring impact of the work of the ESCB under a learning and improvement framework

This report has sought to outline the work of the ESCB and the difference it has been making to safeguarding across Essex. It has provided examples of action taken and can evidence some of the difference made. Additional overarching activities supporting the achievement of the Boards objectives in 2015 are listed below.

Business Plan

This year, the decision was made to have a two year business plan given the breadth of the improvement priorities and the need for steady progress, whilst also recognising the complexity of some of these areas. The overarching priorities ensured that all sub-committees had work plans that covered different aspects of each priority. It was also intended that these work plans be reviewed six-monthly to ensure work was on track and also amend or add in any additional areas that emerged during the year. The focus of this Business Plan has also been very much on measuring impact and therefore one of the areas of work of the Performance sub-committee has been to develop a matrix of multi-agency data that aligns to the improvement priorities in the Business Plan. Moving forward, this will enable us to better measure outcomes of activities.

Summary of progress

Each sub-committee has made progress against each area of the plan as outlined above in the summary of work from each committee. The Business Plan therefore is on track to be achieved in 2017.

Governance review

The governance review has enabled the Board to carry out its work more effectively through a refocus of Board meetings towards key themes in the Business Plan and a streamlining and strengthening of roles and responsibilities of the sub-committees. This will continue into 2016–17.

Development and implementation of a Serious Case Review and Partnership Learning Review toolkit in consultation with partners

The development and implementation of the toolkit benefited greatly from partner input and provides a clear and robust process for carrying out Serious Case Reviews and other types of reviews in Essex. This has led to improved cooperation with agencies (especially engagement with frontline staff), effective dissemination of learning and robust action planning and monitoring. We have also received much praise from the independent lead Reviewers about the efficiency, clarity and transparency of the new process which allows for frontline staff to be involved in the review early on encouraging openness. The action planning process following the reviews, has also ensured that actions identified for each agency are implemented and tracked closely, and appropriately challenged if progress is slow.

We have also received much praise from the independent lead Reviewers about the efficiency, clarity and transparency of the new process which allows for frontline staff to be involved in the review early on encouraging openness.

New ESCB website

Our new website has become a central reference area for safeguarding children and young people. It has seen an increase in activity especially following events such as the ESCB annual conference. There were more than 20,000 views to the website during the summer months when the ESCB was promoting Water Safety. This is in comparison to an average monthly figure of 17,560. The reporting concerns page has been in the top three most viewed pages, due to a re-designed home page. The website is supported also by regular bulletins, to highlight issues such as CSE, providing practitioners with information to assist them in their role. This is seen as a useful tool, with the ESCB now having more than 3000 people signed up to receive this information.

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Risk register and challenge log

This ESCB now has a risk register, which lists and monitors significant factors that could affect the Board in achieving its objectives, as outlined in the ESCB Business Plan 2015-17 and associated Sub-Committee action plans, and enables:

- The identification of risks associated with the achievements of the Board's objectives
- The allocation of responsibility for the management of the risk
- The reporting of risks and their management to the Board
- The Risk Register is a standing agenda item at every Board meeting

Some examples of risk and challenge over the past 12 months were highlighted in section 5.1.4 of this report

There is also a challenge log in place containing all challenges made by the ESCB, which the Board actively monitors and updates at each quarterly meeting.

There were more than 20,000 views to the website during the summer months when the ESCB was promoting Water Safety.

Links with other Partners

The ESCB Business Managers, in the spirit of constructive challenge, has also taken on new initiatives, including offering training and support to the Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee, to enable members to effectively challenge health commissioners and providers, and ensure that any concerns expressed by the ESCB are picked up as part of this process. The ESCB worked in partnership, to ensure that safeguarding children issues are included in the work of the Health and Well Being Board and the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA). The ESCB also commissioned a piece of work to look at indicators of need across the County, which is being progressed and already provide extremely useful information.

Lay Members

Over 2015/16 we recruited three new Lay Members to join the ESCB who come from a variety of backgrounds and whose skills and experience will help further enhance and also challenge the work of the Board. A part of their remit is to be the ESCB link to the local community, so that we can continue to develop new contacts, build effective relationships and positively impact on children, young people and their families in our area. Each Lay Member will also sit on a specific sub-committee to help drive forward the work of the Board.

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09 Challenges for the ESCB 2016–17

The ESCB has implemented a number of changes in 2015–16 to enable it to carry out its work more effectively, including improved monitoring around outcomes and impact.

However, there continues to be challenges ahead, especially in regards to meeting the demands of an increasingly changing landscape, for example safeguarding young people in the face of emerging risks such as radicalisation.

Resources

Austerity measures across the partnership inevitably impacts upon ESCB resources and as such we continue to try to find new and smarter ways of working with a focus on less bureaucracy and more on delivery. The ESCB governance review goes part way to supporting this but the Board and its partners need to continue their efforts to ensure effective safeguarding arrangements are in place.

Performance will continue to be challenged, risks monitored and impact measured. The voice of children and young people will continue to be a critical part of this work.

ESCB Review

As with all Local Safeguarding Children Boards around the country the ESCB will need to adapt to any new requirements arising from the Wood Review – this will potentially have far reaching consequences for multi-agency practice locally.



10 Conclusion

This report has aimed to show what work the ESCB has undertaken over 2015–16 to support the safeguarding of children and young people in Essex, how this is monitored and what evidence there has been to demonstrate its effectiveness.

In summary, the ESCB has been proactive this year in aiming to improve its reach to local areas and disseminate messages around safeguarding as widely as possible via its communication activities. It now has a firm foundation with new, clear processes in place, to enable it to carry out its statutory duties more effectively. For example, the work around Serious Case Reviews has already led to improvements in practice as well as been positively received by agencies. The ESCB Risk Register and Challenge Log will continue to support the ESCB in ensuring that its work takes into account emerging risks and areas of concern, so that these can be monitored and addressed.

The ESCB continued to promote Early Help via a number of means including Practitioner Forums, training and communications activities while the annual conference on the theme of Neglect was particularly well received by staff from all agencies. This work will be progressed further in 2016-17.

The Board has been able to move forward with different ways of working to ensure that the sub-committees are tackling the improvement priorities in the Business Plan. This new way of working is evidenced by the governance review and maximising use of resources, by creating joint sub-committees with the Adult Board and working with other Boards and strategic groups to ensure that safeguarding remains an important focus, without duplicating efforts.

All of the above is also underpinned by an improved focus on impact, with clear indicators in place to measure the difference the ESCB is making towards safeguarding as set out in the learning and improvement framework.

Some clear examples of challenge have emerged during the year and activities that have led to improvements in safeguarding practice. These efforts will continue moving forward and have already shown clear progression from the work started in the previous year.



Appendices: (please click on the links below to access)

Appendix A – [ESCB Structure Chart](#)

Appendix B – [Business Plan Progress 2015-17](#)

Appendix C – [Learning & Improvement Framework](#)

Appendix D – [Attendance at Board](#)

Appendix E – [Financial Report](#)



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