Welcome to the East Sussex Safeguarding Children Partnership (ESSCP) Board Briefing. The briefing is intended to provide you with the key headlines from each Board meeting so that you can quickly catch up with decisions and learning and disseminate them to your staff. Minutes of the meeting will continue to be circulated to Board members.

This briefing includes news from the **21 July 2022** in person Board meeting (our first since the start of the pandemic!). If you have any comments on the briefing, or questions about the contents, please contact us on ESSCP.Contact@eastsussex.gov.uk.

**Family CC Local Safeguarding Practice Review**

Board members discussed the learning from the Family CC Local Safeguarding Practice Review: this was the case involving the neglect of a large group of siblings. When Police visited the home in June 2021 the property was found to be uninhabitable and the children in unkept state. The family had been known to professionals for several years. Four of the children had additional needs and many of them were being educated at home.

Board members noted key learning, including:

* Working with highly resistant parents – understanding and responding to history, reflective supervision, and focus on the lived experience of the child.
* How to safeguard children who are electively home educated in the context of neglectful parenting.
* Relevance of the neglect/abuse of animals when assessing risks to children.
* Relevance of family history when screening for service delivery.
* The role of voluntary sector agencies in providing support to vulnerable families.
* Assessment of fathers and other significant males.

The Board discussed the learning and accepted the recommendations in the report, noting that the partnership would need to think carefully about the right actions to take forward to ensure practice improvement. The report will be published following legal proceedings, and a learning briefing will be shared shortly.

**Child Protection Annual Report 2021/22**

Sue McGlynn, ESCC Safeguarding Operations Manager, presented the annual report from the Child Protection Conferencing Unit. Sue noted that conferences continue to be delivered in a ‘hybrid’ way, with parts of the conference held virtually. Sue highlighted key performance information from the unit, including the rise in the proportion of children subject to CPC experiencing a ‘trigger trio’ of parental risk factors (mental health issues, domestic violence, substance/alcohol misuse) from 32% in 2019/20 to 40% in 2021/22.

The board discussed the barriers to children participating in their reviews, noting the disappointing reduction over the past few years. Sue informed the board of the introduction of an app called ‘Mind of my own’ which is hoped to improved participation. The board also discussed the promotion of the advocacy service and use of other trusted staff to support children in their reviews.

**ESSCP 2021/22 Annual Report**

Members of the Board received the 2021/22 ESSCP Annual report, noting the increased focus of the report on the impact of partnership working on practice and outcomes for children. Members gathered in four break-out groups to discuss how the partnership can strengthen: the use of the ESSCP Performance Dashboard; the use and dissemination of learning from safeguarding practice reviews; learning across the Pan Sussex area; and evidencing the impact of partnership working. The outcome of the discussions will be taken forward by the ESSCP subgroups and the rolling programme of scrutiny.

**Other Business**

The Board discussed the continuing challenges the **Health Visiting** service faces due to capacity issues. The Board noted health visiting service will be targeted at those families who don’t have anyone else going in, and the positive feedback from the latest round of recruitment, but that this will be a long-term situation. Action is being taken at the most senior level and staff will be supported with safeguarding work.

Board members were informed that the **2022 Section** **11 audit** and guidance will be circulated to agencies in early September. Members noted the 2022 tool is more proportionate for agencies to complete, which will mean that more emphasis be placed on the scrutiny of those returned audits.

The Chair thanked Jon Hull and Andrea Holtham for their contributions to the Partnership, who are leaving Sussex for new roles.