



Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council

2016/17 Annual Report

Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council (NBBC) continues to work towards meeting its requirements under legislation and being an effective partner of the Warwickshire Safeguarding Children Board (WSCB) and other statutory and third sector organisations.

CSE issues are covered in a specific section as requested by the WSCB.

What has NBBC done in 2016/17 which promoted safeguarding and how has this improved outcomes for children and young people as a result.

MASH related queries: The Council has been involved in 45 cases with the Warwickshire MASH. 19 of these have been referrals from NBBC, the other 26 have been requests for information from the MASH. The Council has aspired to respond to requests in line with the MASH RAG ratings (when a RAG rating has been given by the MASH).

Creation of NBBC Single Point of Contact: Following a request from the MASH for a single point of contact (SPOC) the Council has nominated the Equality and Safeguarding Officer to be the first point of call for requests for information. Other officers have also been nominated and given a secure email address to ensure that there is adequate cover for periods of annual leave and sickness etc.

Internal reporting arrangements for the NBBC SPOC: To support the SPOC, the Council has set up an internal network of officers (Support SPOC's) within a number of Service Units; these officers have direct access to the information required which enables the SPOC to respond to MASH enquiries more promptly.

Involvement in meetings related to children's welfare: When there are concerns about a child's welfare and the family are Council tenants the housing officer is actively involved in the case and they attend any meetings that are arranged by Children's Services.

Involvement with work of WSCB: The Council is involved with the work of the WSCB, contributing to the board via attendance at the main board meetings and other sub committees.

Delivery of Safeguarding Children Training: Training has been delivered to Elected Members and employees. Of those that require the training, 70% have attended a course in the last 3 years.

Housing of 16/17 year old children: To assist the Council in finding appropriate accommodation for children aged between 16 and 17, it continues to work closely with the MASH and Children's Services.

What are NBBC's safeguarding priorities for the financial year 2017/18?

Signing of MASH SPOC Protocol and Information Sharing Agreement: This document has been agreed in principle between the MASH and NBBC and will be formally signed and sealed during 2017/18.

Respond to requests for information from the MASH: The Council will continue to respond to requests for information from the MASH and aspire to meet the RAG rating for each request. To assist this process the Council will appoint deputies for the support SPOCs to ensure that there is always someone available with access to the information required.

Implement Safeguarding Policy & Guidance: Once all agreements between the MASH & NBBC have been finalised, the Safeguarding Policy & Guidance can be updated and approved by the relevant Portfolio Holder.

Review list of employees who are required to undertake safeguarding training: The Council is due to review the list of employees who (as part of their role) come into contact with children.

Aspire to have trained 100% of all employees who require core Safeguarding Children Training: Once the list of employees is reviewed, the aim is that 100% of those listed will have received training within the last 3 years.

Scrutiny Report on Safeguarding Activity: activity report will be taken to the Council's Economic & Corporate Overview Scrutiny Panel on the safeguarding work carried out by the Council and the WSCB.

Safeguarding Performance Indicators: The Council will now be reporting safeguarding performance indicators within its performance management system

Revision of Warwickshire Protocol for Assessing and Managing the Housing Needs of Homeless Young People: The Council will be looking to work with the other District & Boroughs in Warwickshire to update the protocol in light of the introduction of the MASH.

What challenges do NBBC face to achieve these priorities?

Resources: NBBC continues to work to achieve its safeguarding objectives and, in particular, respond to requests from the MASH. However, due to decreased resources across the Council, it is becoming increasingly more difficult to respond to requests for information in the timescales given or attend MASH/Children Services/Early Help meetings.

Support for housing of 16/17 year old children: NBBC has faced challenges when trying to obtain support for the housing of 16 to 17 year old children. NBBC is addressing this by continuing to communicate with the MASH, Children's Services and other agencies in order to provide the appropriate support.

Making appropriate referrals: The majority of the cases NBBC has been involved in have been accepted and actioned but, some referrals have resulted in no further action. The Council will endeavour to improve the standard of referrals in the future to improve the number that are accepted.

CSE Activity

The Council will continue to promote and support the work of the WSCB and other agencies in detecting and preventing CSE.

Training: In the last 3 years, 48 NBBC employees and 12 Elected Members have attended a face to face CSE training course delivered by Barnardos.

CSE is now included in the Council's main core child protection training which is delivered to all Council employees who come into contact with children as part of their employment and Elected Members.

Scrutiny of CSE Activity by Officers & Elected Members: An internal assessment has been completed of the Council's procedures against the failings in Rotherham as highlighted in the Casey report. An action plan was also developed to address any areas for improvement that were identified during the assessment process.

The findings of this assessment were reported to the Council's Licensing Committee, Standards Committee and Economic & Corporate Overview Scrutiny Panel in July 2016. A follow up report was also taken to the Economic & Corporate Overview Scrutiny Panel in March 2017.

These reports focused on the following areas:

Section 1: Is the Council taking steps to address past weaknesses and does it have the capability to do so?

Section 2: Is the Council taking steps to address weaknesses in children's social care and its work on CSE, and does it have the capacity to continue to do so?

Section 3: Did Rotherham take and continue to take sufficient steps to ensure only 'fit and proper persons' are permitted to hold a taxi licence?

Section 4: Taxis and Child Sexual Exploitation

Section 5: Does the Council undertake sufficient liaisons with other agencies?

Section 6: Does the Council take appropriate action against staff guilty of gross misconduct?

Section 7: Does the Council cover up information and silence whistle-blowers?

CSE Licensing Activity: As a result of working with other local authorities, the Police and the WSCB, the Council's Licensing function has made a number of improvements to its services which strengthens its ability to assist with preventing and detecting CSE related activities.

One of the main improvements the Council has implemented is a new Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicle Policy which introduces compulsory training for all hackney carriage and private hire drivers on CSE awareness. A number of sessions have already been delivered by Barnardos and the Police have delivered training to hotel and B&B owners. These groups of workers were identified in the Casey report as being key in detecting CSE.

Nuneaton Town Hall is one of the host venues for the training in Warwickshire.

Reporting on statistics: As a result of the scrutiny of its CSE activity and to raise awareness of CSE, the Council has agreed to report CSE and child abuse statistics on its performance management system. This system is accessible to all members of the public through the Council's website.