

THIS ITEM IS FOR INFORMATION ONLY

(Please note that "Information Only" reports do not require Integrated Impact Assessments, Legal or Finance Comments as no decision is being taken)

Title of meeting:	Cabinet Member for Children, Families and Education
Date of meeting:	14 December 2023
Subject:	Portsmouth Safeguarding Children Board Annual Report
Report by:	Lucy Rylatt, PSCP Safeguarding Partnerships Manager
Cabinet Member:	Councillor Suzy Horton, Cabinet Member for Children, Families and Education
Wards affected:	All
Key decision	No

1. Requested by:

Councillor Suzy Horton, Cabinet Member for Children, Families and Education.

2. Purpose:

To introduce the Annual Report 2022-23 of the Portsmouth Safeguarding Children Partnership (PSCP) on the effectiveness of multi-agency early help and safeguarding arrangements for children in Portsmouth

3. Information Requested

The Portsmouth Safeguarding Children Partnership (PSCP) is a statutory, multi-organisation partnership coordinated by a business unit, which oversees and leads upon children's safeguarding across Portsmouth. The main objective of the PSCP is to gain assurance that local safeguarding arrangements, comprised of partner organisations, are working effectively, both individually and together, to support and safeguard children who are at risk of abuse and neglect. The PSCP acts as a critical friend and a champion for best practice.

This year, there is evidence of continuing impact of the Covid pandemic upon children and their families in the city. We continue to see high levels of referrals to our Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH), alongside increased pressures in our schools, our health system and across our partnership. In addition, families in Portsmouth are having to deal with a cost of living crisis that has resulted in higher food costs, huge increases in energy costs and wider inflation. In Portsmouth, 23.9% of children under 16 years (8,870 children) were living in relative low income families in 2021/22. This was a 10.6% increase (a further 355 children) compared to 2020/21. Across the partnership our workforce has worked hard to engage with and support these families to prevent the need for them to access statutory services.

In February 2023, the Partnership met to review the impact of the previous Safeguarding Strategy 2020-2023, that had been drawn up as part of the Portsmouth Children's Trust Plan. As a result it was agreed to renew the vision and principles for the Partnership; to amalgamate the priorities within the 2022-25 Business Plan into the [PSCP-Strategy-2023-26-FINAL.pdf](#)

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portsmouthscp.org.uk); and to have one overarching document that set out the multi-agency priorities for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in Portsmouth. The eight priorities agreed are:

- Children and family's needs will be identified at the earliest point, and they will receive effective early support and help
- Families will receive effective and timely support when children are at risk of experiencing neglect
- Families will receive effective and timely support when children are at risk of experiencing sexual abuse
- Young people will be kept as safe as possible from all forms of extra-familial harm, and there will be effective transitional safeguarding arrangements in place to support vulnerable young adults
- Children and young people have access to appropriate support that recognises the impact of trauma resulting from adverse childhood experiences (ACEs)
- There is an effective response to safeguarding children with additional needs and those from diverse communities
- Providing sufficient professional and organisational development to ensure there is effective response to safeguarding children within Portsmouth
- We will ensure there is a good understanding of safeguarding risks for children within education settings and an effective response to these

Signed by:

Scott MacKechnie,

Independent Chair and Scrutineer of Portsmouth Safeguarding Children Partnership

Appendices: Portsmouth Safeguarding Children Board Annual Report 2022-23

Background list of documents: Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972

The following documents disclose facts or matters, which have been relied upon to a material extent by the author in preparing this report:

Title of document	Location
Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018	Gov.uk