

The LSCB has been very active in recent months. At its annual business planning day, the Board reviewed its priorities for the forthcoming year, having evaluated the impact of its work in the preceding twelve months. More detail of the Board's evaluation of its impact and effectiveness will be given in the annual report, due to be published shortly. For the forthcoming year, the focus will be very much on missing children, child sexual exploitation and gang-affected neighbourhoods, these being issues both of national and local concern.

The bi-monthly seminars arranged by the LSCB, where we have reviewed the lessons to be learned from serious case reviews and evaluated Luton services against these benchmarks, have been well attended and proved highly informative. The feedback from frontline practitioners and managers has been instructive and will assist Board members in knowing where to focus to drive forward service improvement. The focus groups that Lloyd Denny (LSCB Vice-Chair) and I hold have also been helpful in learning about your lived experience of work, and of multi-agency arrangements, so please do continue to give feedback since this does strengthen the LSCB's interrogation of performance.

Work on one serious case review is nearing completion although publication will have to wait until all criminal as well as civil proceedings have been concluded. I have just agreed with an SCR panel recommendation to commission a further serious case review. Whilst it is important to learn lessons from such cases, it is also necessary to stress that frontline services are safeguarding and promoting the welfare of Luton's children every day. To support that work, the Board has launched its safeguarding in schools initiative, maintains its work with third sector organisations and faith groups, and has been updating policies and procedures to reflect the latest statutory guidance, *Working Together 2013*, and learning from serious case reviews.

Considerable work has been done by colleagues across agencies to prepare the Flying Start application, the outcome of which will be announced in June. Whatever the outcome, this work has given prominence to levels of disadvantage in parts of Luton and underscored the importance of prevention and early intervention. The LSCB will work closely with the Children's Trust Board and the Health and Wellbeing Board to embed the hopefulness in this work for Luton's children and young people.

Working to safeguard children and young people remains challenging, not least because of the financial cutbacks that are affecting all frontline services. If you have ideas for service improvement, do not hesitate to contact the LSCB. Similarly, if you have concerns about how services are working together in specific situations, do escalate these. Meantime, once again, I thank you for your commitment and resilience.

Professor Michael Preston-Shoot  
Independent Chair  
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