



WOLVERHAMPTON SAFEGUARDING TOGETHER

Review published into case of baby who suffered serious injuries

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Wolverhampton Safeguarding Together has today (Tuesday 21 June, 2022) published the findings of a Child Safeguarding Practice Review into the case of an baby who suffered significant head injuries.

A Child Safeguarding Practice Review is undertaken when a child has been seriously harmed and there is cause for concern as to the way organisations worked together.

The baby, referred to as 'Child R' in the review, was just eight days old when they presented at Accident and Emergency with serious injuries. It is not known how the baby's injuries were caused, or who the perpetrator was.

Wolverhampton Safeguarding Together commissioned the review to look at the involvement of agencies with Child R and their family.

There had been ongoing concerns about parental neglect of Child R's older siblings, who were subject to child protection plans. Both parents had learning needs and some mental health issues and there was known to be conflict in their relationship.

The review identifies specific learning for individual agencies involved, and action plans are in place to address these.

In addition, a total of six recommendations have been made for the wider partnership, which Wolverhampton Safeguarding Together is implementing.

Sally Roberts, the Independent Chair of Wolverhampton Safeguarding Together Board, said: "This was a very sad incident in which a young baby suffered serious head injuries – though thankfully they are now doing well.

"We commissioned the Child Safeguarding Practice Review to identify any learning from this case, and its recommendations will be helpful, both for the agencies involved and for the wider system.

"The review particularly found that, when long-term neglect is an issue due to the vulnerabilities and needs of the parents, support needs to remain in place – and that professionals must regularly consider whether the needs of the children can be met, even if a high level of support is already being provided.

"We know that, nationally, neglect is the most common reason for a child to be made the subject of a Child Protection Plan and that, here in Wolverhampton, around 70% of children who are on a Child Protection Plan are on it primarily because of neglect.

"The review found that there has been a positive focus on child neglect by agencies in Wolverhampton in recent years and this continues. Professionals already have access to a range of resources to help them identify and plan where child neglect is an issue, the WeCan toolkit is being launched today alongside the release of the review in addition to a review of the city's Neglect Strategy.

"The review underlines how important it is that professionals understand the impact that neglect can have, both in the short and long-term, and also consider the possibility that other forms of abuse, such as domestic abuse, often co-exist alongside neglect.

"We fully endorse the learning which has been identified in this review and we are working closely with partner agencies to ensure that the actions that have been recommended, both for individual organisations and the system as a whole, are implemented."

ENDS

Note to editors:

1/ Wolverhampton Safeguarding Together Board provides strategic leadership for safeguarding work to ensure there is a consistently high standard of professional response to situations where there is actual or suspected harm. For more information, please visit www.wolverhamptionsafeguarding.org.uk.