

Overview & Scrutiny

Children & Young People Scrutiny Commission

Date of Meeting: 9 September 2019

Title of Report: The City & Hackney Safeguarding Partnership

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1. **Introduction & Background**

1.1 This report provides a summary of the safeguarding arrangements covering the City of London and Hackney. The full arrangements can be found [HERE](#).

1.2 In 2015, the government commissioned Sir Alan Wood to review the role and functions of Local Safeguarding Children Boards (LSCBs). The Wood Report¹ was published in March 2016, with the government formally responding² in May 2016. The Wood Report recommendations were subsequently embedded in statute in April 2017 with the granting of Royal Assent to the Children and Social Work Act 2017. As a consequence, four important areas of change have followed.

- Firstly, LSCBs, set up by local authorities, are being replaced. Three safeguarding partners (*local authorities, clinical commissioning groups and chief officers of police in a local area*) must now make **new safeguarding arrangements** to work together with relevant agencies (as they consider appropriate) to safeguard and protect the welfare of children in the area.
- Secondly, the current system of Serious Case Reviews is being replaced. Safeguarding partners must now make arrangements to identify and review **serious child safeguarding cases** which, in their view, raise issues of importance in relation to their area.
- Thirdly, a **National Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel** has been created and is responsible for identifying and overseeing the review of serious child safeguarding cases which, in its view, raise issues that are complex or of national importance.
- Fourthly, two partners (*local authorities and clinical commissioning groups*) have been specified as 'child death review partners' and must set up new **child death review arrangements**. These new arrangements should facilitate a wider geographic footprint and respond to the statutory guidance defining how deaths will be reviewed and how the bereaved will be supported.

¹ [The Wood Report March 2016](#)

² [The Government response to the Wood Review May 2016](#)

2. Timescales

- 2.1 Statutory guidance³ covering the transition from LSCBs to the new safeguarding and child death review arrangements was issued in July 2018. Safeguarding partners were required to publish their arrangements by 29 June 2019 following a 'compliance check' by the DfE. The local safeguarding arrangements covering the City of London and Hackney were published on 26 June 2019. All new local arrangements must be implemented by 29 September 2019.
- 2.2 Child death review partners are working to the same timescale set for safeguarding arrangements. Safeguarding and child death review partners have been meeting regularly to develop the new arrangements and plan for their implementation.

3. The Purpose of the New Safeguarding Arrangements

- 3.1 The purpose of the new arrangements is set out in Chapter 3 of Working Together 2018 (para 3). Safeguarding arrangements aim to support and enable local organisations and agencies to work together in a system where:
- children are safeguarded and their welfare promoted
 - partner organisations and agencies collaborate, share and co-own the vision for how to achieve improved outcomes for vulnerable children
 - organisations and agencies challenge appropriately and hold one another to account effectively
 - there is early identification and analysis of new safeguarding issues and emerging threats
 - learning is promoted and embedded in a way that local services for children and families can become more reflective and implement changes to practice
 - information is shared effectively to facilitate more accurate and timely decision making for children and families.
- 3.2 Statutory guidance (WT 2018 Chapter 3, para 9) also sets out that the safeguarding partners with other local organisations and agencies should develop processes that:
- facilitate and drive action beyond usual institutional and agency constraints and boundaries
 - ensure the effective protection of children is founded on practitioners developing lasting and trusting relationships with children and their families

³ [Working Together – Transitional Guidance July 2018](#)

3.3 To achieve the best possible outcomes, statutory guidance is also clear that children and families should receive targeted services that meet their needs in a co-ordinated way. The responsibility for this join-up locally rests with the *three safeguarding partners who have a shared and equal duty to make arrangements to work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children in a local area.*

4. Local Flexibility

4.1 Whilst legislation and statutory guidance has set out clear requirements, there has been a degree of freedom for safeguarding partners to determine how they organise themselves to meet those requirements and improve outcomes for children locally. For local safeguarding partners, this is undoubtedly an important starting point given the CHSCB was the first LSCB to be judged as Outstanding by Ofsted in 2016. Indeed, whilst acknowledging both the statutory requirements and opportunities for improvement, there is a need to ensure that we don't dismantle what has been evidenced as working well.

4.2 Whilst a simple point, the naming convention for the new safeguarding arrangements has been agreed as **The City & Hackney Safeguarding Children Partnership**. Most areas have named their arrangements along similar lines.

5. Statutory Guidance

5.1 Working Together 2018 includes statutory guidance on the following areas that must be included in the written arrangements.

Safeguarding Partners

5.2 The safeguarding partners are defined in statute and agree on ways to co-ordinate their safeguarding services; act as a strategic leadership group in supporting and engaging others; and implement local and national learning including from serious child safeguarding incidents. Safeguarding partners include the following.

- For Hackney: Hackney Council, the City & Hackney Clinical Commissioning Group and the Metropolitan Police Service
- For the City of London: The City of London Corporation, the City & Hackney Clinical Commissioning Group and the City of London Police

Leadership

- 5.3 The lead representatives for safeguarding partners are:
- the local authority chief executive,
 - the accountable officer of a clinical commissioning group, and
 - the chief officer of police.
- 5.4 Similar to the current LSCB arrangements, the lead representatives can delegate their functions, although they remain accountable for any actions or decisions taken on behalf of their agency. If delegated, it is the responsibility of the lead representative to identify and nominate a senior officer in their agency to have responsibility and authority for ensuring full participation with these arrangements.
- 5.5 Working Together 2018 sets out the need for the new arrangements to link to other strategic partnership work happening locally to support children and families. This includes other public boards including Health and wellbeing boards, Adult Safeguarding Boards, Channel Panels, Improvement Boards, Community Safety Partnerships, the Local Family Justice Board and MAPPAs.

Geographic Area

- 5.6 The CHSCB currently covers the City of London and the London Borough of Hackney. This arrangement will continue.

Relevant Agencies

- 5.7 Safeguarding partners are obliged to set out within their arrangements which organisations and agencies are required to work as part of those arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of local children. These organisations and agencies are referred to as relevant agencies and have a statutory duty to act in accordance with the arrangements.
- 5.8 A schedule of relevant agencies can be found under [part 4 of the Child Safeguarding Practice Review and Relevant Agency \(England\) Regulations 2018](#). It should be noted that the safeguarding partners may include any local or national organisation or agency in their arrangements regardless of whether they are named within the regulations.

- 5.9 The new guidance does not include a requirement to have either Lead members or Lay members but safeguarding partners have committed to their ongoing inclusion in the arrangements.

Schools, Colleges and other Education Providers

- 5.10 Local safeguarding partners have named schools, colleges and other educational providers as relevant agencies, with existing forums / support being judged sufficient to establish the active engagement of individual institutions.

Information Requests

- 5.11 Safeguarding partners may require any person or organisation or agency to provide them, any relevant agency for the area, a reviewer or another person or organisation or agency, with specified information. This is clearly set out in the written arrangements.

Independent Scrutiny

- 5.12 This is a key aspect of the new arrangements that safeguarding partners have considered. Safeguarding partners need to ensure that the scrutiny is objective, acts as a constructive critical friend and promotes reflection to drive continuous improvement.
- 5.13 In addition to the work of the various inspectorates, independent scrutiny is currently discharged through the role of the independent chair and the CHSCB's Learning & Improvement Framework (*i.e. such as through the existing SCR / review process, multi-agency case audits, Section 11 audits, peer reviews etc*).
- 5.14 The independence provided by the CHSCB has worked well to date, with relevant recognition of these driving a strong culture of constructive challenge, debate and improvement. They have also ensured the necessary rigour to provide challenge to the named safeguarding partners. Safeguarding partners have agreed an independent person (The Independent Child Safeguarding Commissioner) is retained in the new arrangements to provide the necessary independent scrutiny and independent leadership for the local safeguarding agenda.

Funding

- 5.15 The funding for the new arrangements for 2019/20 will be maintained at the same level as that previously provided to the CHSCB in 2018/19. A review of the funding will be undertaken during 2019 to enable the safeguarding partners to consider the future

resourcing requirements, agree the level of funding provided by each safeguarding partner and any contributions from relevant agencies

Publication of Arrangements

5.16 Published arrangements reference each of the following points.

- how the arrangements will include the voice of children and families
- arrangements for the safeguarding partners to work together to identify and respond to the needs of children in the area
- arrangements for commissioning and publishing local child safeguarding practice reviews and for embedding learning across organisations and agencies,
- how any youth custody and residential homes for children will be included in the safeguarding arrangements.
- how the safeguarding partners will use data and intelligence to assess the effectiveness of the help being provided to children and families, including early help
- how inter-agency training will be commissioned, delivered and monitored for impact and how they will undertake any multiagency and interagency audits
- how the threshold document setting out the local criteria for action aligns with the arrangements

Dispute Resolution

5.17 Safeguarding partners and relevant agencies must act in accordance with the arrangements for their area and will be expected to work together to resolve any disputes locally. Locally, an existing escalation protocol sets out how operational disputes are resolved, and this has been used as the basis for this requirement.

Reporting

5.18 Safeguarding partners will be responsible for producing an annual report. The report must set out what they have done as a result of the arrangements, including on child safeguarding practice reviews, and how effective these arrangements have been in practice.

6. Partnership Structure

6.1 Safeguarding partners have agreed the following structural arrangements through which they can deliver on the statutory requirements set out within Working Together 2018.

