

London Borough of Barking and Dagenham

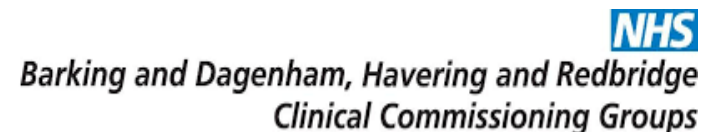


Multi Agency Safeguarding Arrangements (2019/20)

Developing our plan for working together to safeguard children and young people in the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham

May 2019

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Introduction

Nothing is more important than children's welfare, and children who need help and protection deserve high quality and effective support as soon as a need is identified. Professionals working with children and their families in Barking and Dagenham take their responsibility to do so, and to keep children safe, very seriously.

In recent years the Barking and Dagenham Safeguarding Children Board has driven this by providing expertise and leadership across the local area. This has been facilitated by partnership working; scrutiny of practice through a variety of methods including case reviews, sharing knowledge, developing our workforce, and providing a partnership lens on key issues. The latest annual report for the outgoing Board outlines the work undertaken in 2017-18 and its' impact on safeguarding outcomes for our children and young people. The principles that it sets out remain as true now as they were then:

- Being assured that arrangements are in place to identify and safeguard groups of children who are vulnerable
- Partners will own and share accurate information which informs understanding of safeguarding practice and improvement as a result
- We see children and young people as valued partners and consult with them so their views are heard and included in the work of the LSCB
- Arrangements for Early Help are well embedded across agencies in Barking & Dagenham who work with children, young people, and their families
- Partners will challenge practice through focused inquiries or reviews based on performance indicators, practitioner experience and views from children and young people. Collectively we will learn and improve from these reviews.

The new arrangements which each area is required to have in place, provides us with an opportunity to reflect and refresh how we do this within the new legislative framework to ensure we achieve our vision.

This document sets out the outline proposals for the Barking and Dagenham Safeguarding Children Partnership. It outlines how we intend to organise ourselves to work together in the future, and how we will test our system to assure ourselves that it is working.

In essence the remainder of this document outlines *what* the proposed arrangements will be in Barking and Dagenham, and sets out the timeline for developing – and implementing – *how* they will work between July and September of this year.

Also outlined are our intentions for further improving our arrangements post-implementation and how we will work across partnership boundaries, particularly with our neighbours in the London Borough of Havering and the London Borough of Redbridge (with whom we share a Clinical Commissioning Group and Police force area) but also how we intend to ensure that all relevant agencies are fully, and actively, engaged in the business of safeguarding our children and young people.

Following the publication of this plan we will work to implement the key aspects of our new arrangements by the end of September. We recognise, however, that this represents only the first step, and that considerable work will be required not only to take the next steps in implementing these arrangements, but more importantly to deliver the continuous improvement that is required, and that all we do is built upon strong, and lasting foundations.

About Barking and Dagenham

Barking and Dagenham is a rapidly growing, fast changing borough that is increasingly young and facing many significant challenges. The safeguarding challenges are many, and clear. Our most recent Annual Report – and more recent OFSTED Inspection of Children’s Services – sets these challenges out for us very clearly. They also help to clearly define our priorities and provide the context within which we must meet the challenge of delivery upon them.

Population size

A large and growing young population

- Highest proportion of 0–17s in UK
- Highest birth rate in England and Wales
- +6,900 0–17s in next 5 years (+11%)
- +2,100 18–25s in next 5 years (+10%)

Population, 2018–2023			
Age	2018	2023	% change
0–4	20,000	21,600	+8%
5–9	19,700	20,000	+2%
10–14	16,500	19,200	+16%
15–19	13,300	16,600	+25%
20–24	13,800	14,600	+6%
All ages	211,700	232,200	+10%

Deprivation

High levels of deprivation

- 11th highest in England and 4th in London for income deprivation affecting children
- 15% of dependent children live in workless households (10% in London)
- 16% of secondary school pupils claim free school meals, similar to London

Ethnicity & language

A diverse population

- 74% of 0–17s are from ethnic minorities compared with 64% in Barking and Dagenham as a whole
- 56% of primary school pupils do not have English as their first language, higher than London (49%)

Ethnicity, 0–17

Ethnicity	2018	2023
Black	23%	22%
White British	10%	11%
Asian	9%	10%
White Other	2%	2%
Mixed	26%	25%
Other	30%	30%

Did you know LBBB has...

210,711 residents
7th smallest population in London

- 57,535** under 16s
Highest proportion in London and the UK
- 133,380** 16s to 64s
4th lowest proportion in London
- 19,796** over 65s
8th lowest proportion in London
- 33** average age
Lower than London average (36.2)
- 58.2** male healthy life expectancy
Below London average (63.5)
- 60.7** female healthy life expectancy
Below London average (64.4)
- 46** average attainment
8 score per pupil (GCSE)
Below London average (49.2)
- 12.4%** have no qualifications
2nd highest in London
- 82.6** births per 1,000 women of childbearing age
Highest in London
- 86.3** crimes per 1,000 people
Below London average (94)
- 12.1** domestic abuse offences per 1,000 people
Highest in London
- £302,000** average house price (all types)
Lowest in London
- 6.3%** unemployment
Higher than London average (5.1%)
- 69.5%** employment
Below London average (74.2%)
- 2%** Income Support claimants
Highest in London
- 63.6%** Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) population
Above London average (60.8%)
- 13.4%** obesity amongst children in Reception
Highest in London
- 4.5%** NEET and Not Known
Below London average (4.9%)

Our Vision

This Plan has been produced by the three statutory Safeguarding Partners (SPs) as identified within 'Working Together 2018' and sets out *what* the safeguarding arrangements will be across Barking and Dagenham.

The Safeguarding Partners are:

- The London Boroughs of Barking and Dagenham
- The Metropolitan Police
- The Barking, Havering and Redbridge Clinical Commissioning Group

This plan will articulate the arrangements for safeguarding across the Local Authority area of Barking and Dagenham and our implementation timeline. It will describe the interplay between the three Safeguarding Partners and how shared challenges will be collectively met both within the borough and with our neighbouring Local Authorities.

As Safeguarding Partners, we have set out our vision for this Plan in three areas:

1. Above all else the work encapsulated in this Plan has to reduce the harm and risk faced by children and young people in our communities. In order to do this, we will ensure that their needs and their voices are at the heart of all we do.
2. We know we are reliant on the skills and expertise of our collective workforce so we are making a commitment to invest in our workforce and specifically to build a culture that values reflection, analysis and learning.
3. We will not be driven by organisational needs or limited by agency boundaries: where it is better for children we will work locally, and where it is better to work across the wider footprint then we will do so.

The defining factor will always be: what will be the most effective in keeping children safe.

1. As Safeguarding Partners, we positively and proactively accept our lead responsibility for these arrangements. We will ensure that relevant agencies are asked to contribute proportionately and in a focussed way and we will consciously move away from the need to have every agency around every table, and instead ensure their contribution is made where it is most relevant
2. A core focus of this plan is on our quality assurance and scrutiny functions – we will develop an approach that is characterised by reflective learning and appreciative inquiry
3. We will use this Plan and future iterations of it to reduce duplication and repeated demands on those agencies that work across more than one Local Authority area
4. The learning from our work set out in this plan will, where relevant, be captured in our commissioning strategies, most significantly through the wider ‘Children’s Transformation Programme’.
5. The structure designed to support our arrangements will flex and respond to meet need and circumstances: form will very clearly be driven by function
6. Decision-making will be clear and specific with each component part of the arrangements having clarity about role and purpose
7. Staff in all agencies will continue to follow the Pan-London Child protection Procedures and those procedures will continue to govern the operational delivery of safeguarding services to children and young people across our area.

Principles

When developing this plan, Safeguarding Partners agreed the principles against which our new arrangements would be developed.

These are the seven principles underpinning the design of our new Multi-Agency Safeguarding Arrangements.

Overview of the Barking and Dagenham Safeguarding Partnership Arrangements

The Safeguarding Partnership Board

To simplify and focus delivery and assurance a new Safeguarding Partnership Board will replace the existing Safeguarding Children's Board (LSCB). This will be a leaner, Board that will build on the work of the LSCB and remain true to the agreed principles and priorities that the partnership has already agreed.

This group will lead the borough-wide response to safeguarding challenges in Barking and Dagenham. It will comprise the three statutory partners alongside our local Safeguarding Champion, the Lead Member for Children's Services and Lead Member for Education. As required key leaders from the relevant agencies or other experts will contribute to the new Partnership Board.

Essentially these meetings will a) set the strategic direction; b) oversee the progress of the local response to strategic priorities and c) receive independent scrutiny and challenge (both against the strategic direction and progress, but also much more widely upon the experiences of our children, young people and their families of our local safeguarding systems).

The Safeguarding Partnership will convene thematic, time-limited delivery groups and delegate authority to these groups to get on with business. On a rolling-basis the Chairs of the Delivery Groups will be invited to provide progress updates on delivering the Safeguarding Partnership priorities.

The Safeguarding Partnership Board will also receive routine 'business updates' covering Child Deaths; Rapid Reviews and Local Safeguarding Practice Reviews; Performance, Quality and Practice Development and learning from National Reviews relevant to the Local Area.

The Safeguarding Partners will – through the Safeguarding Partnership Board – deliver the priorities as agreed by the partnership as set out in the last Annual Report of the LSCB. These were:

1. Tackling knife crime and gang culture
2. Protecting vulnerable children and young people from all forms of exploitation
3. Reducing the impact of domestic abuse on our children and young people
4. Strengthening work at the pre-birth stage and minimising the impact of chaos and neglect on our youngest children
5. Establishing consistent and agreed thresholds across the partnership that are congruent with new approaches.

To deliver against our priorities there are five core delivery areas through which the SPB will drive change and improvements. These are:

1. The Improvement Plan developed in response to the Ofsted ILACS inspection (March 2019);
2. Through our work as a development site for contextual safeguarding;
3. As one of the five selected sites by the Early Years Transformation Academy to deliver an early years transformation academy (which will be used to target issues related to neglect).
4. The Commission work led by the Council's Chief Executive on domestic abuse;
5. Through the formation of a multi-agency Safeguarding Quality Assurance Group.

Overview of the Barking and Dagenham Safeguarding Partnership Arrangements (cont.)

Thematic Delivery Groups

Thematic delivery groups will be mandated by the Safeguarding Partnership Board to lead on delivery. These will encompass and build on existing work groups as required. The focus of these groups will be firmly aligned to the priorities set by the Safeguarding Partnership and will be responsible for ensuring that a multi-agency plan is developed to meet these challenges, and that there is effective delivery of these plans. Where appropriate and feasible these sub-groups, or short-term task and finish groups, will be joint with other partnerships and Boards.

These Delivery Groups will be the engine room driving improvements in safeguarding across the partnership. They will be one of the primary mechanisms for engaging relevant agencies and will be at the forefront of affecting change.

It is anticipated that they will be chaired by suitably senior managers from across the partnership and be accountable for delivery through the Safeguarding Partnership Board.

Operational Delivery Groups

Where the Thematic Delivery Groups will deliver the strategic priorities of the Safeguarding Partnership, the Operational Delivery Groups will be responsible for ensuring the business of the Safeguarding Partnership is discharged. Unlike the Thematic Delivery Groups these will be permanently constituted groups. These groups will be responsible for:

- Performance and Quality Assurance
- Practice Learning and Development (including Workforce Development)

- Child Death Reviews (joint with LB Havering and LB Redbridge)
- Coordinating Local Practice Reviews

These groups will work closely with the business support function to ensure the business of the Safeguarding Children Partnership is efficient and effective, deadlines are met, and include guiding the work of the support functions in place. Activities will also include oversight of a forward plan, the annual report leading the business plan, managing communications, as well as providing challenge for improvement activities and non-compliance by agencies, escalating any concerns to the Partnership.

Resources and Infrastructure

The statutory partners have an equal and joint responsibility to ensure that there is sufficient and effective resourcing to support the arrangements. We must have sufficient resources in place to deliver the following:

- Maintain and update policy and procedures;
- Maintain communications and knowledge sharing including briefings and web presence, including communicating learning and key messages to all agencies.
- Maintain partnership plans such as a forward plan, business plan and support subgroup work plans.
- Preparing agendas, administer and minute meetings of all groups that sit within the arrangements.
- Support a range of multi-agency practice reviews including coordination management of action plans.
- Coordinate and administer multi-agency audits.
- Collate performance information reports and draft annual reports.

Overview of the Barking and Dagenham Safeguarding Partnership Arrangements (cont.)

- Lead a Safeguarding Training Needs Analysis and manage multi-agency learning and development and delivery our multi-agency training programme and learning events.
- Maintain links and joint working with other partnerships and Boards.

As part of the next phase of designing our safeguarding arrangements, ensuring the resources and infrastructure are in place will be a key priority. The current support arrangement will remain in place until such a time as new arrangements are agreed under the funding arrangement that the current Safeguarding Board have agreed for the year 2019/20.

Rapid Reviews

What we will achieve: compliance with the national requirement to complete rapid reviews within 15 working days; reviews that offer the necessary narrative and analysis that enables local partners and the National Safeguarding panel to make informed choices about the way(s) forward and the quick and effective dissemination of learning back into the system.

Given these are by definition, case specific, they will be carried out within the area of residence for the child/family involved. We will use our local arrangements to conduct these reviews. However, we will develop a common template for all agencies who might be asked to contribute to such a review. The SPs will sign off any completed review and in particular ensure that any recommendations are properly owned by the local system.

All Rapid Reviews, regardless of their proposed outcomes, will be tabled both within

the local arrangements and with the tri-borough SP meeting – it is important that all are sighted on specific incidents of concern and abuse that trigger the rapid review threshold. SPs will want to identify any emerging themes which might lend themselves to a thematic Local Child Safeguarding Practice Review.

Local Safeguarding Practice Reviews

What we will achieve: the completion of LCSP reviews that are short, focussed and reflective, enabling effective dissemination of learning across the system and that meet the standards set out in Working Together 2018 and are responsive to any future guidance from the National Panel

Again, these are child specific and will need to be commissioned and delivered within the relevant authority boundary. Completed reviews will be tabled both locally and across the wider area. In particular, the SPs will want to maintain an oversight on emerging themes and risks and the production of a review in one area may result in a stocktake and diagnostic in the others. Working Together requires reviewers to be independent of the case under review but not necessarily completely independent of the local safeguarding system. We will therefore develop a pool of reviewers across the wider area able to conduct these reviews as required.

Agency Challenge

What we will achieve: an assurance that all agencies are making their appropriate contribution to the safeguarding of vulnerable children and young people and are contributing as required to the local safeguarding system

Overview of the Barking and Dagenham Safeguarding Partnership Arrangements (cont.)

Working Together 2018 is clear in setting out the crucial contribution to 'relevant agencies' especially but not solely schools, colleges, other education providers and early years settings. The duties placed on those agencies under the 2004 Children Act still stand of course and it is important that there is an assurance about the effectiveness of their contributions.

Safeguarding Partners will no longer be subject to a S.11 audit. Health providers should be enabled to rely on their reporting against their contracts as appropriate and cross-boundary agencies will only be asked to do a single return. We will develop a model of (section 11) assurance based on firstly, an agency specific clarity about exactly where their duties to safeguard children and young people lie, secondly an identification of what 'good' looks like in those areas and thirdly an assessment of their contribution arrived at through 'Agency Walkabouts' The contribution of schools and other education providers will be arrived at via their completion of the S175/157 audits.

Workforce Development

What we will achieve: we will build on the best of our current workforce development programmes to ensure a consistency of approach and a focus on the skills and expertise needed to keep children safe.

We will identify a training programme across the wider BHR area that is designed to focus on those issues that most benefit from multi agency training and that make the biggest impact on children and young people's safeguarding. We will find a balance between setting out a programme in advance that staff can sign up to and ensure

there is enough flexibility to respond as needed to developments such as work on adolescent safety.

Relevant Agencies

We must ensure that all partners are active participants in safeguarding work in ways that are proportionate and appropriate to their core responsibilities. Agencies will be expected to contribute significantly where it is clearly their role to do so, but not where their contribution would be marginal.

The local arrangements set out above seek to engage many of our relevant agencies – but again with a specific focus on ensuring they are enabled to make the 'right' contribution in the 'right' setting.

Our schools are of course crucial partners in all our work with children and young people and in maximising their safeguarding. As with all other agencies, we are wanting to ensure that their contribution is purposeful and proportionate. We see their presence being especially important in the various local arrangements this Plan describes, in the cross -borough developments also set out here – our work to better protect adolescents and address gangs and knife crime is dependent on the contribution of our secondary schools – and in exploring individual cases whether formally through the rapid review and any subsequent process or through locally defined case audit activity.

Independent scrutiny arrangements

We are committed to the value independent scrutiny can bring to all of our safeguarding work. Holding a mirror up to that work is crucial if there is to be confidence our practices are as safe and effective as possible. We are committed to seeking challenge that is informed, expert (including expert by experience) and focussed on our overall commitment towards continual improvement.

We will look to appoint a ‘Safeguarding Champion’ to be a cornerstone of our approach to independent scrutiny. The Safeguarding Champion would be supported by Safeguarding Partners to cast the approach to independent scrutiny in their own image, and it is envisaged that they would marshal the voices of not just our children and young people, but their wider families, local providers and the Third Sector. Essentially all those that must be able to have a say in how well our safeguarding systems are working.

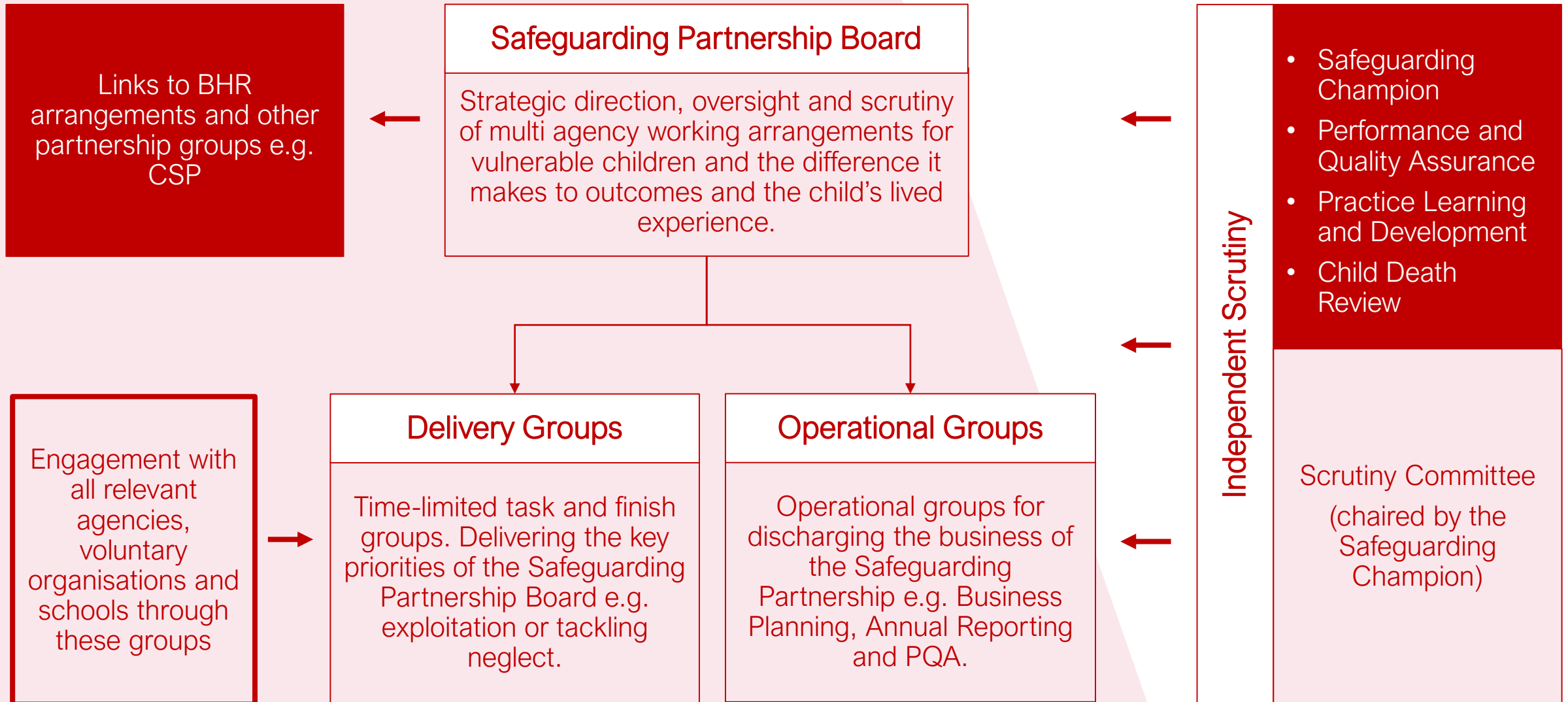
In addition to this we will also draw on the existing scrutiny and quality assurance arrangements in each agency – not just the Safeguarding Partner agencies – to build as complete a picture as we can. The existing Performance and Quality Assurance Arrangements will be revised, but it is anticipated that the existing approach – of bringing together multi-agency performance and audit data, focused on outcomes and used to inform learning – will remain as the principle of this approach (though of course the opportunity to make any necessary improvements will be taken). Similarly, the role of Practice, Learning and Development (as it currently is) would also remain an important element of any scrutiny arrangements. Finally, a stronger voice for the Principal Social Worker will also be embedded in our new arrangements.

All the “relevant agencies” working in the Borough are vital to the success of our approach to Working Together. As well as engagement in the work and development activity, we will ensure at least 2 annual “Listen, Learn, Challenge” sessions to give

focus and impetus to the work and an opportunity for the partnership to showcase their work and learning. There will also be new staff fora developed that tie together strategic priorities, practice challenges and learning from reviews using seminar, show and tell and reflective sessions. We will also commission an independent review of our safeguarding arrangements after 12 months to test how effectively our plans are working.

Independent Scrutiny Arrangements	The bulk of the ‘independent’ scrutiny will be provided by the Safeguarding Champion. However, there are other components of scrutiny and challenge that will also test the efficacy of our safeguarding systems, tell us what is and is not working and help identify areas of learning and require improvement
	The Safeguarding Champion – providing the voice of the community.
	Performance, intelligence and quality assurance (incl. MA auditing)
	Practice Development and Training (incl. Local Practice Learning Reviews)
	Child Death Review (incl. Rapid Reviews and learning from child deaths)
	The Principal Social Worker

The organisation of the Safeguarding Partnership



The Barking and Dagenham, Havering and Redbridge Partnership

As part of the development, Safeguarding Partners have considered the opportunities for working together, whilst maintaining the integrity of local arrangements. The BHR Safeguarding Partners Group will:

- Develop cross borough responses where it makes sense to do so
- Ensure local arrangements are focussed on local issues and that local learning is made available across the BHR area
- Identify themes and activities that require independent scrutiny and commission scrutiny providers to provide challenge and guidance
- Resolve any inter-agency conflict as might arise
- Maintain an overview of the new arrangements as they develop

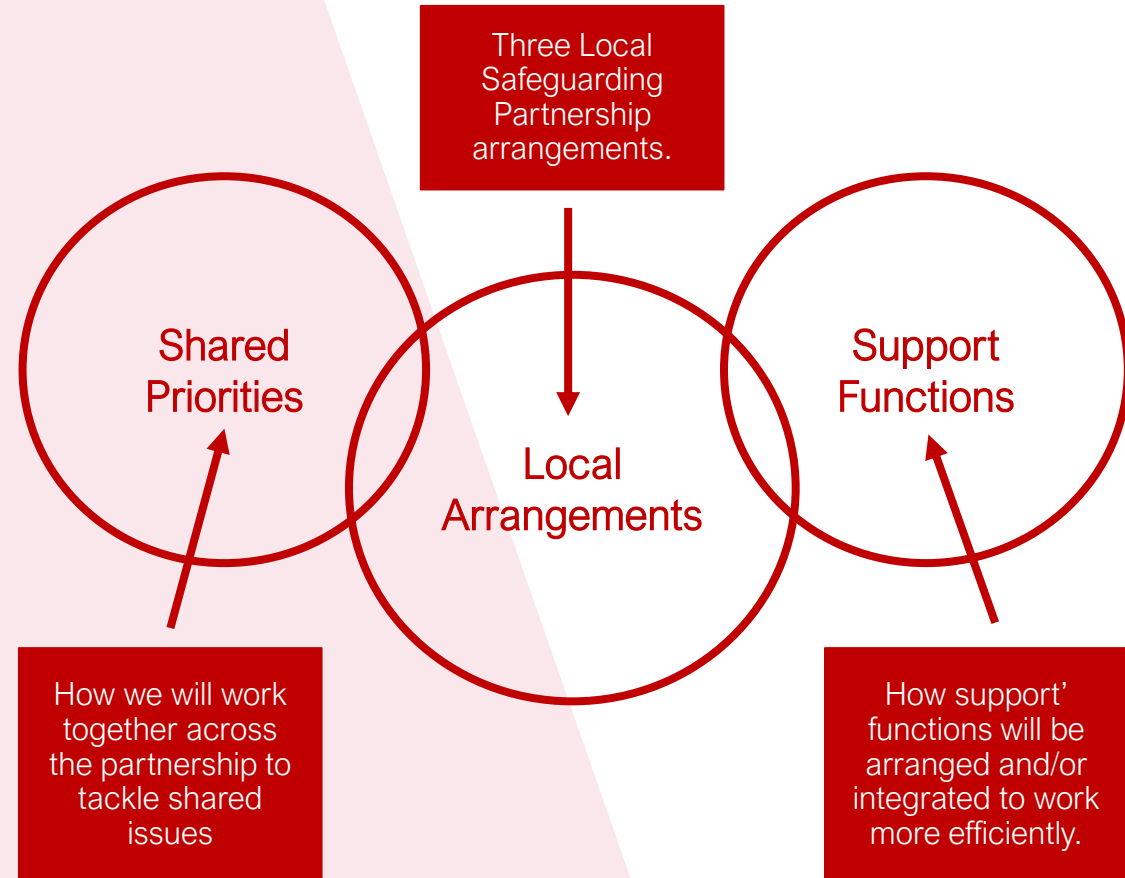
When developing our arrangements careful consideration was given to how the shared priorities across the Barking, Havering and Redbridge footprint could be met in a more integrated way, whilst maintaining the integrity of local arrangements in each Local Authority area.

These arrangements describe how the three statutory partners across Barking and Dagenham, Havering and Redbridge will better work together across the footprint to meet shared safeguarding challenges. This naturally includes how we shape our strategic and commissioning responses, but also considers other significant positive arguments already put forward for more efficient use of time and resources such as Performance, Multi-Agency Auditing, Learning and Development, MACE arrangements and Workforce Development.

We intend to establish a BHR Safeguarding Partners Group who come together at set points, but not in a formally constituted way. In accordance with the five themes set out previously, this group will grapple primarily with how the three areas may come together to meet common challenges. Will also play a role in paving the way for streamlining similar activities e.g. Quality Assurance and Training. The group will not formally govern the local operations, but will seek to ensure opportunities for mutually advantageous alignment, and more prosaically where we can more efficiently work together.

BHR Safeguarding Partners Group

3x Directors of Children's Services
East BCU Commander
Clinical Commissioning Group Chief Nurse



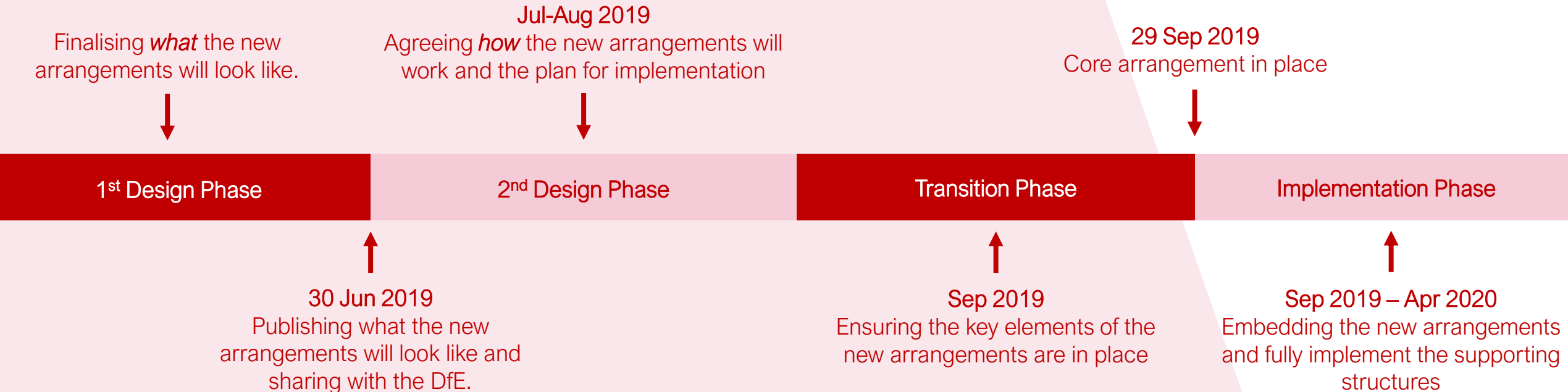
Next steps and timeline for implementation

These plans represent the conclusion of the first design-phase setting out, as they do, *what* the new safeguarding arrangements will look like. This is only the beginning of the process.

Between July and August of 2019 we will work to develop the detailed plans of how our new arrangements will work. This will be phased plan. To begin there are the arrangements that we must have in place by 29 September 2019, and beginning to put those in place will be a priority. This will include a detailed transition plan of how we will move from the current set of arrangements to the new, and how we will make the organisational and structural changes required.

Once we are satisfied that we have a plan in place to deliver what we must by 29 September, and the nature of the transitional arrangements are confirmed – including agreeing the nature of the resources and infrastructure that will underpin much of what we propose to do - planning will begin for the next phase.

This phase – referred to as the Implementation Phase below – will set out how we will mobilise and embed the new arrangements post-September 2019. This will include elements such as establishing the Delivery and Operational Groups as well as implementing the support arrangements and bringing our plans for independent scrutiny to life.



End

Authors:

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(on behalf of the Barking and Dagenham Safeguarding Children's Board)

May 2019