

CABINET

18 June 2019

Title: Multi-Agency Safeguarding Partnership Arrangements	
Report of the Cabinet Member for Social Care and Health Integration	
Open Report	For Decision
Wards Affected: All	Key Decision: Yes
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Accountable Director: Chris Bush; Commissioning Director, Children's Care & Support	
Accountable Strategic Director: Elaine Allegretti; Director of People and Resilience	
Summary <p>The publication of the Children and Social Work Act 2017, The Child Safeguarding Practice Review and Relevant Agency (England) Regulations 2018 and Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 guidance legislate for the formal ending of Local Safeguarding Children's Boards. They also set a series of new expectations, which include that all local areas should publish new multi-agency safeguarding children arrangements led by three statutory agencies (known as 'Safeguarding Partners'). These are the Local Authority, Clinical Commissioning Groups and Police.</p> <p>These arrangements are required to be shared with the Department for Education and published by 30 June 2019, and in place by 30 September 2019.</p> <p>This document sets out the outline proposals for the Barking and Dagenham Safeguarding Partnership to be published alongside our plans for implementing these arrangements by 30 September 2019. It also sets out our intentions for further developing our partnership arrangements post-implementation.</p>	
Recommendation(s) <p>The Cabinet is recommended to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">(i) Agree the principles and approach to the new Multi-Agency Safeguarding Partnership Arrangements as set out in the report;(ii) Note the plans for implementing the arrangements during the period July - September 2019; and(iii) Delegate authority to the Director of People and Resilience, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Social Care and Health Integration, to finalise and publish the plan for the new arrangements by 29 June 2019.	

Reasons

It is recommended that Cabinet agree this proposal for the following reasons:

- It is compliant with the legislative requirements of the Children and Social Work Act 2017 and the statutory guidance 'Working Together to Safeguard Children – July 2018';
- It both retains and better focusses the engagement of partners within the arrangements;
- It builds on the strengths of the current Local Safeguarding Children Board arrangements (for example the multi-agency audit process) and the priorities as already agreed by the partnership;
- The approach is all about delivering improvements in line with the partners' safeguarding priorities;

1. Introduction and Background

- 1.1 The publication of the Children and Social Work Act 2017, The Child Safeguarding Practice Review and Relevant Agency (England) Regulations 2018 and Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 guidance legislate for the formal ending of Local Safeguarding Children Boards (LSCBs) as recommended in the Wood Review, accepted by Government in 2016. changes, which include all local areas to publish new multi-agency safeguarding children arrangements led by the three statutory agencies. These statutory agencies (the Safeguarding Partners) are the Local Authority, Clinical Commissioning Groups and Police. The relevant legislation provides several clarifications within which any new arrangements must be framed.
- 1.2 Geography: Local arrangements can cover two or more local authorities. Each local authority must continue to fulfil its statutory and legislative duties to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. The same applies for Clinical Commissioning Groups and Chief Officers of Police (in respect of their safeguarding partner duties only).
- 1.3 Relevant Agencies: are those organisations whose involvement the safeguarding partners consider is required to safeguard and promote the welfare of local children. Strong, effective multi-agency arrangements are ones that are responsive to local circumstances and engage the right people. For local arrangements to be effective, they should engage organisations and agencies that can work in a collaborative way to provide targeted support to children and families as appropriate. This approach requires flexibility to enable joint identification of, and response to, existing and emerging needs, and to agree priorities to improve outcomes for children.
- 1.4 Whilst Working Together 2018 does not provide explicit guidance – rather leaving local areas to agree the arrangements they feel work best for their residents – it is made clear that:
 - i. A Local Authority area should not be covered by more than one group of Safeguarding Partners;
 - ii. That the representatives of Safeguarding Partners must all play an active role;
 - iii. that the representatives must be able to:
 - speak with authority for the Safeguarding Partner they represent

- take decisions on behalf of their organisation or agency and commit on policy, resourcing and practice matters
- hold their own organisation or agency to account on how effectively they participate and implement the local arrangements

1.5 These arrangements are required to be shared with the Department for Education and published by 30 June 2019, and in place by 30 September 2019.

1.6 This document sets out the outline proposals for the Barking and Dagenham Safeguarding Children Partnership alongside our plans for implementing these arrangements by 30 September 2019. It also sets out our intentions for further developing our partnership arrangements post-implementation.

2. Development

2.1 The Barking and Dagenham Safeguarding Children Board has already established many of the underpinning principles, priorities and ways of working that support the changes that are required from September 2019. Already established to support this are:

- a) Agreed strategic priorities that are directly relevant to Barking and Dagenham and fulfil the requirements of the 3 Strategic Partners. These were agreed at the LSCB in November 2018 and published in the Annual Report endorsed by the Board in January 2019.
- b) Established functioning work groups which provide a basis of ensuring that work is being progressed and afford the current Board challenge and assurance.
- c) Established an agreed process for consistent decision making in relation to current requirements for SCRs which provide a firm basis for what will be required considering the changes brought about by Working Together.
- d) The 5 fundamental touchstones set out in the Annual Report and below¹, and below, against which organisational changes post Working Together should be measured.
- e) Published a vibrant Annual Report in January 2019, setting the scene and key principles for Working Together over the next 3 years.

2.2 The Barking and Dagenham Safeguarding Children Board engaged the support of an external consultant to coordinate support the development of the Safeguarding Partnership Arrangements. This consultant has previously been the Chair of Safeguarding Boards that were early adopters in implementing these arrangements and is also a member of the new National Child Safeguarding Panel. It has been beneficial helpful to have having external experience and

¹ i) Understand the risks faced by children and young people in Barking and Dagenham
 ii) Work together well in every locality on all things that may cause children and young people harm. That must include adult behaviour that may cause harm to children.
 iii) Support all staff, volunteers and community leaders in all settings to know what safeguarding means and what is required of them.
 iv) Understand safety through the experiences of children and young people.
 v) Work with Adult Safeguarding especially as young people grow up to become adults

knowledge in this process. to support discussion at many levels within Barking and Dagenham.

- 2.3 At a local level the external consultant led a session as part of the January LSCB Board and the note of those discussions was signed off by the Board in February.
- 2.4 When developing the proposed Safeguarding Partnership Arrangements careful consideration was given to how the shared priorities across the Barking and Dagenham, Havering and Redbridge footprint could be met in a more integrated way, whilst maintaining the integrity of local arrangements in each Local Authority area. While Each of the individual geographic areas (based on local authority boundaries) are committed to much closer collaboration, co-operation and shared activity though each of the geographic areas are clear that there is a firm agreement that must be integrity of local arrangements based on each local authority footprint. There is no conflict in these proposals between this level of engagement and opportunities for joint working across the wider footprint and local needs. For this reason, the proposed arrangements have been set out at two levels.
- 2.5 At one level the proposed arrangements describe how the three statutory partners across Barking and Dagenham, Havering and Redbridge (BHR) will better work together across the footprint to meet shared safeguarding challenges. This naturally includes how we shape and seek to align our strategic and commissioning responses, but also takes account of how we make more efficient use of time and resources through, for example, multi-agency auditing, implementation of learning and development and shared operational arrangements such as those for reviewing multi-agency child exploitation (MACE). Some of the significant safeguarding challenges in Barking and Dagenham are faced by both LB Havering and LB Redbridge, alongside health agencies and the Police who cover all three areas. These include young people who are both involved with and at risk from gang culture, knife crime and child exploitation. An integrated response to these difficult issues will allow for a more effective and targeted use of resources. Victims and perpetrators of adolescent crime pay little regard to borough boundaries.
- 2.6 The second, and more detailed, proposal outlines the local arrangements that ensure the continued focus on the needs of children and young people in Barking and Dagenham. These build on the agreed principles of the safeguarding partners and are linked to the shared priorities set out in the most recent Annual Report of the Barking and Dagenham Safeguarding Children Board. Crucially, these new arrangements enhance, rather than replace, the positive work that is already underway, whilst not simply renaming the existing structures.
- 2.7 The key proposals set out in this report specifically outline the local (Barking and Dagenham) arrangements in the context set out above. The working Together changes provide a positive platform for building on the elements set out here and give real impetus to working effectively and efficiently in new ways.

3. Safeguarding Partnership Arrangements: Barking and Dagenham

Strategic Leadership and Assurance

- 3.1 To simplify and focus delivery and assurance a new Safeguarding Partnership Board will replace the existing Safeguarding Children's Board (LSCB). This will build on the work of the LSCB and remain rooted in the agreed principles and priorities that the partnership has already agreed.
- 3.2 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.
- 3.3 Essentially these meetings will:
 - a) Set the strategic direction;
 - b) Oversee the progress of the local response to strategic priorities;
 - c) Receive independent scrutiny and challenge (both against the strategic direction and progress); and
 - d) Fundamentally this revised Board will be driven by the experiences of our children, young people and their families who must be the focus of our local safeguarding systems.
- 3.4 To achieve this, the Safeguarding Partnership will convene thematic, time-limited delivery groups and delegate authority to these groups to get on with business.

Delivering Good Outcomes

- 3.5 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.
- 3.6 The Thematic Delivery Groups will deliver the strategic priorities of the Safeguarding Partnership while the Operational Delivery Groups will be responsible for ensuring the business of the Safeguarding Partnership is discharged. The Thematic Delivery Groups these will be permanently constituted groups. These groups will be responsible for:
 - Performance and Quality Assurance (currently PQA);
 - Practice Learning and Development, including Workforce Development (currently PDT);
 - Child Death Reviews (joint with LB Havering and LB Redbridge);
 - Coordinating Local Practice Reviews.

Effective Support, Delivery and Planning

- 3.7 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.

Independent Challenge, Assurance and Engagement

- 3.8 A key component of the new arrangements is to ensure that an appropriate level of independent scrutiny is brought to bear.
- 3.9 To do this we intend 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. This will build upon and better harness existing good practice of child voice, including our local children in care and school councils.
- 3.10 We intend to be bold and innovative in how the Safeguarding Champion role will function. They will not be operating in isolation but will need to work closely with existing services, processes and systems, though maintain independent scrutiny based on a high level of skill, experience and understanding. The Safeguarding Partnership Board 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 possible. 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.
- 3.11 All the “relevant agencies” working in the Borough are integral to the success of our approach to Working Together. As well as engagement in the thematic and delivery groups, 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.

Publication of Proposed Arrangements

- 3.12 The document attached at Appendix A is the full version of the plan for Multi-Agency Safeguarding Arrangements in Barking and Dagenham that will be published. It sets

out in greater detail the proposals outlined above, as well as outlining the next steps toward implementation.

Enhanced and improved working in partnership across Barking and Dagenham, Havering and Redbridge

- 3.13 When developing our arrangements careful consideration was given to how the shared priorities across the Barking and Dagenham, Havering and Redbridge (BHR) footprint could be met in a more integrated way, whilst maintaining the integrity of local arrangements in each Local Authority area.
- 3.14 Our proposals describe how the three statutory partners across BHR will better work together to meet shared safeguarding challenges. To do this we will establish a BHR Safeguarding Partners Group. 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 and will also pave the way for streamlining similar activities. The group will not govern the local operations but will seek to ensure opportunities for mutually advantageous alignment are taken, and more proactively where we can more efficiently work together.
- 3.15 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.

4. Next Steps: Delivery and Implementation

- 4.1 These plans represent the conclusion of the first design-phase setting out, as they do, what the new safeguarding arrangements will look like, though but this is only the beginning of the process.
- 4.2 Between July and August of 2019 we will work to develop the detailed plans of how our new arrangements will work. This will be a phased plan. There are the arrangements that we must have in place by 29 September 2019 and these will be the priority. One outcome of this will be a detailed transition plan of how we will move from the current set of arrangements to the new, and the organisation and structure changes required.
- 4.3 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.
- 4.4 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. These developments will continue at pace through to April 2020 with a programme of objective fulfilment and review.

- 4.5 The next phase will be to consolidate the changes and consider the wider context of safeguarding so that this reflects the key principles set out in the Annual Report.
- 4.6 The (welcome) implication of the new regulations are to remove the detailed and prescriptive regulations that governed the construction and areas of activities of LSCBs. As our new arrangements develop, so we will, with our partners, review the efficacy of our chosen approaches and be ready to amend them as required to ensure that there are constructed to deliver the best possible outcomes for children and young people in Barking and Dagenham.
- 4.7 This is not change for change sake but nor is it no change. The Working Together requirements give us a significant opportunity to take what works and make it work better and to develop an outcome driven, person focused approach to safeguarding.

5 Consultation

- 5.1 These proposals have been developed in consultation with key stakeholders and the work was supported by an independent consultant on behalf of the Local Safeguarding Children Board.
- 5.2 A substantive discussion item was held with all partners through the Local Safeguarding Children Board in February 2019. The final draft of the proposals was presented to the same group in May 2019. It should be noted that the currently appointed LSCB Independent Chair has supported these discussions and helped to give shape to the new proposals.
- 5.3 Work to develop the proposals for greater alignment across the three Local Authority areas of Barking and Dagenham, Havering and Redbridge was led by the same consultant and included consultation with the three Directors of Children's Services and our partners in the BHR Clinical Commissioning Group and the Police.
- 5.4 In addition, these arrangements are being considered by both the Metropolitan Police and the Barking and Dagenham, Havering and Redbridge Clinical Commissioning Group through their respective internal governance arrangements.

6 Financial Implications

Implications completed by: Murad Khan (Group Accountant)

- 6.1 This report seeks to outline the key objectives, outcomes and the relevant milestones in implementing the new Safeguarding partnership arrangements in LBBD. Change in legislation has meant that the existing tri-borough safeguarding board needs to change to a partnership arrangement within each locality.
- 6.2 There will be a phased approach to implementation and as such this report does not go into the detail of the transition and funding arrangements, but rather acknowledges that these will need to be planned out in readiness for the report due on the 29th of September.

- 6.3 As it stands this report is mainly for information, setting out the background and legislation that is driving this change and seeking approval for the outlined approach and methodology for implementation, as such there are no direct financial implications arising from this report.
- 6.4 It must be noted that there are likely to be financial implications in the future which will become clear when the detailed plans on how the new arrangements will operate are produced. These are likely to be changes to current staff structures or existing infrastructure that may be required to operate the new Safeguarding arrangements, also agreement needs to be sought between the 3 partners on the funding arrangements of the new model.
- 6.5 Finance will expect to have oversight of these reports when produced so that the financial implications can be vetted.

7 Legal Implications

Implications completed by: Lindsey Marks, Deputy Head of Legal Community

- 7.1 The Children and Social Work Act 2017 significantly amended the Children Act 2004; one of the main pieces of legislation on safeguarding children. The changes to legislation have resulted in the replacement of LSCBs with local safeguarding partners. The new statutory framework requires the three safeguarding partners (local authorities, Police and CCGs) to join forces with relevant agencies, as they consider appropriate, to co-ordinate their safeguarding services; act as a strategic leadership group; and implement local and national learning, including from serious safeguarding. Relevant agencies include schools, youth offending teams, prison governors, immigration officials and many more (Schedule to the Child Safeguarding Practice Review and Relevant Agency (England) Regulations 2018/789).
- 7.2 All three safeguarding partners have equal and joint responsibility for local safeguarding arrangements rather than operating through an independent chair of an LSCB. If a single point of leadership is required, then all three safeguarding partners should decide on who would take the lead on issues that arise. Scrutiny of the effectiveness of the safeguarding arrangements is to be undertaken however, by an independent person. A governing document could capture how the partners will work together and how the scrutiny would be affected.
- 7.3 In July 2018 an updated version of Working Together to Safeguard Children was published and required local authorities to begin their transition from LSCBs to local safeguarding partners. The statutory guidance provides that local safeguarding partners should agree the level of funding secured from each partner to support the new safeguarding arrangements. The level of funding secured from each partner should be “equitable and proportionate”, with contributions from each relevant agency. Funding is required to be transparent to children and families in the local authority area and to include the cost of local child safeguarding practice reviews.
- 7.4 At least every 12 months the local safeguarding partners and relevant agencies must publish a report on what they have done as a result of the arrangements, and

how effective the At least every 12 months the local safeguarding partners and relevant agencies must publish a report on what they have done as a result of the arrangements, and how effective the arrangements have been in practice.

- 7.5 The requirement for local authorities to begin their transition from LSCBs to safeguarding partners began in June 2018. The arrangements must be published by 29 June 2019 and implemented by 29 September 2019. Once such arrangements have been entered into, the LSCBs will have a 'grace' period of up to 12 months to complete and publish outstanding serious case reviews and four months to complete outstanding child death reviews (Working Together: Transitional Guidance). LSCBs are required to continue to carry out all their statutory functions until safeguarding partner arrangements are operative within a local area.

8. Other Implications

- 8.1 **Risk Management** - Safeguarding children is everyone's responsibility, and effective multi-agency safeguarding arrangements rely upon the active involvement of all agencies in those arrangements. The implications of these arrangements not being implemented or failing to work effectively are that the efficiency and effectiveness of children's safeguarding will be undermined.

This risk is being mitigated in several ways. Firstly, the planning and consultation that has preceded these arrangements has sought to ensure continued strong multiagency working practices. Secondly, those working practices of the BDSCB which are recognised as very strong practice have been retained within these new arrangements. Finally, all key positions within the new arrangements are filled by senior safeguarding partner representatives with extensive experience in multi-agency safeguarding practice.

- 8.2 **Staffing Issues** – There are no immediate staffing implications from this proposal. However, there may be changes in roles as progress towards a joint BHR infrastructure develops.
- 8.3 **Safeguarding** – In addition to the above, the adoption of these arrangements will ensure effective oversight of the multi-agency arrangements for the safeguarding of children and young people and the promotion of their welfare. This in turn will ensure that agencies are working together to ensure an efficient and effective response to children and young people at risk of or subject to harm.

Public Background Papers Used in the Preparation of this Report

- Working together to safeguard children (2018): Statutory guidance on inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children--2>)

List of Appendices

- **Appendix A:** Barking and Dagenham Multi-Agency Safeguarding Arrangements; *Developing our plan for working together to safeguard children and young people in the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham*