



## **PROTOCOL OUTLINING PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN**

### **SUFFOLK CHILDREN'S TRUST JOINT COMMISSIONING GROUP, LOCAL SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN BOARD, SUFFOLK SAFEGUARDING ADULTS BOARD, HEALTH & WELLBEING BOARD AND CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD**

#### **1 PURPOSE**

1.1 This Protocol outlines the relationship between the Children's Trust Joint Commissioning Group (CTJCG), the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB), the Suffolk Safeguarding Adults Board (SSAB), the Health & Wellbeing Board (HWB) and the Corporate Parenting Board (CPB). This document aims to make explicit:

- Roles and responsibilities of all of the partners
- Lines of accountability and governance arrangements
- Conflict resolution and challenge

This Protocol aims to improve the co-ordination and development of business planning between relevant partners to ensure there is no duplication of work, and ensure there is appropriate scrutiny of safeguarding arrangements across all the partnerships.

#### **2 POLICY CONTEXT**

2.1 Working Together to Safeguard Children (2010) outlines the requirement for LSCB's and Children's Trusts to establish locally agreed protocols to ensure an effective relationship between the partnerships is in place.

2.2 Suffolk has had in place a protocol between the LSCB and Children's Trust since 2010.

2.3 The role of Children's Trusts has changed and Health & Wellbeing Boards have been a statutory requirement since April 2013. This Protocol therefore seeks to clarify the new strategic partnership landscape for children and young people's services.

2.4 The Care Act 2014 creates the SSAB on a statutory footing with a requirement to co-ordinate multi-agency responses to adult safeguarding concerns.

### **3 FUNCTIONS OF BOARDS AND PARTNERSHIPS**

#### **Children's Trust Joint Commissioning Group**

- 3.1 Develop an annual planning and commissioning cycle which aligns with the planning cycle of agencies and CCGs.
- 3.2 Agree joint strategic commissioning intentions to fulfil the requirements the joint Health & Wellbeing Strategy and the CYPP.
- 3.3 Alongside the Health & Wellbeing Board, oversee the commissioning and delivery of the Suffolk Family Focus programme.
- 3.4 Be accountable for the setting of priorities as informed by the JSNA for children & young people, and produce a CYPP.
- 3.5 Identify opportunities for integrated provision, aligned and/or joint budgets

#### **Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB)**

- 3.6 The LSCB has a range of roles and statutory functions including developing local safeguarding policy and procedures and scrutinising local arrangements.

Section 14 of the Children Act 2004 sets out the objectives of the LSCBs which are:

- 3.7 To co-ordinate what is done by each person or body represented on the Board for the purposes of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in the area; and
- 3.8 To ensure the effectiveness of what is done by each such person or body for those purposes.
- 3.9 Regulation 5 of the LSCB Regulations 2006 sets out the functions of the LSCB in relation to Section 14 of the Children Act 2004 include:
- 3.10 Developing policies and procedures for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, including policies and procedures in relation to:
  - Thresholds for Intervention and referral pathways
  - Training of persons who work with children
  - Recruitment and Supervision of persons who work with Children
  - Investigation of allegations concerning persons who work with Children:
    - Safety of children who are privately fostered
    - Cross-border co-operation
    - Undertaking Serious Case Reviews and Child Death Overview functions
- 3.11 Communicating to persons and bodies in the area of the authority the need to Safeguard and promote the welfare of children and monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of what is done.

### **Corporate Parenting Board**

- 3.12 Ensure that Corporate Parenting responsibilities towards children in care and care leavers are fulfilled across the Children's Trust, acting on the principle of 'if this were my child'.
- 3.13 Act as Suffolk County Council's main point of contact with and champion for the Children in Care Council by meeting regularly with them and involving them in the Board's work. They will listen to their views, ensure a response is given and champion young people's involvement in service development to further improve their outcomes.
- 3.14 Provide a forum through which our looked after children and care leavers can hold the Council to account for its responsibilities as a corporate parent.

### **Health & Wellbeing Board**

- 3.15 Improve health and wellbeing outcomes for Suffolk
- 3.16 Encourage integrated approaches across the public sector
- 3.17 Influence commissioning plans to encourage integrated approaches that are consistent with the Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy
- 3.18 Prepare the Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy
- 3.19 Involve service users and local people in its work including preparing its Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy
- 3.20 To own and drive delivery of the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment
- 3.21 To promote integrated approaches

### **The Suffolk Safeguarding Adults Board (SSAB)**

- 3.22 The SSAB has a range of roles and statutory functions including developing local safeguarding policy and procedures in relation to safeguarding adults at risk of harm and in scrutinising local arrangements.

Section 14 of the Care Act 2014 sets out the objectives of the SSAB, which are:

- 3.23 To co-ordinate and ensure effective and proportionate multi-agency responses to concerns around adult safeguarding or the protection of adults at risk of harm.
- 3.24 To ensure the effectiveness of what is done by each such person or body for those purposes.

- 3.25 To hold partners to account for their activity in relation to the safeguarding of vulnerable adults.
- 3.26 To use data, information and intelligence to effectively identify risk and act on it.
- 3.27 To undertake Serious Case Reviews as either required on a mandatory basis or recommended via discretionary guidance.
- 3.28 The above includes a requirement to work effectively with partners across borders.

#### **4 RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN SUFFOLK CHILDREN'S TRUST JOINT COMMISSIONING GROUP, LOCAL SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN BOARD, SUFFOLK SAFEGUARDING ADULTS BOARD, HEALTH & WELLBEING BOARD AND THE CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD**

- 4.1 The function of these partnerships includes responsibility and accountability for keeping children and young people safe and to protect adults at risk of harm. Each partnership has distinct roles.
- 4.2 The HWB is responsible for the improvement of outcomes across all aspects of health and wellbeing in Suffolk. Children and young people's safeguarding and the safeguarding of adults at risk of harm are key elements of this. The LSCB plays a specific role in ensuring the HWB promotes and safeguards the welfare of children and young people, the SSAB undertakes the same role with regards to adults.
- 4.3 The CTJCG is responsible for the improvement of outcomes across all aspects of children and young people's lives. Children and young people's safeguarding is a key element. The LSCB plays a specific role in ensuring the CTJCG promotes and safeguards the welfare of children and young people.
- 4.4 The CPB is responsible for overseeing the corporate parenting/looked after children strategy for improving the outcomes for all looked after children and care leavers. Safeguarding is a key element. The CPB will provide an annual report to Cabinet which will ensure oversight of the progress being made for LAC and care leavers, will recognise the continuing challenges and will seek support for the priority actions for the following year, to address those challenges. (Consultation with the Monitoring Officer will clarify how the report should be presented in relation to the Children's Social Care report).
- 4.5 The LSCB plays a specific role in ensuring the CPB promotes and safeguards the welfare of all looked after children.

- 4.6 In order to provide effective scrutiny, The LSCB and SSAB should be independent entities. Neither should not be subordinate to, nor subsumed within, other local structures. The LSCB and SSAB will act as a mutually supportive partnerships working with other relevant partners in ensuring procedures are in place to minimise risk and maximise the safety of children and young people and adults in Suffolk. It is the responsibility of the Chief Executive to appoint or remove the LSCB chair with the agreement of the panel including LSCB partners and lay members, with the Director of Adult and Community Services holding a similar responsibility with regards to the chair of the SSAB, once more with the agreement of the panel including SSAB partners and lay members. The Chief Executive, drawing on other LSCB partners, and where appropriate, the Lead Member will hold the Chair to account for effective working of the LSCB. The Director of Adult and Community Services will perform this role for the SSAB.
- 4.7 The Chairs of the LSCB and SSAB must publish annual reports on the effectiveness of child and adult safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and safety of adults in the local area. Each annual report should be submitted to the Chief Executive, Leader of the Council, the local Police and Crime Commissioner and the Chair of the Health & Wellbeing Board. The report should provide a rigorous and transparent assessment of the performance and effectiveness of local services.
- 4.8 The LSCB will receive annual reports and any exception reports as necessary from the Corporate Parenting Board to maintain oversight and accountability regarding the safeguarding of children in care.
- 4.9 The LSCB will be consulted on any Children and Young Persons Plan (CYPP) that is produced and will satisfy itself that children and young people are adequately safeguarded.

## **5 KEY PRINCIPLES**

- 5.1 Committed to working together.
- 5.2 Respect each partnership's roles and responsibilities and work within the agreed protocol.
- 5.3 Adopt a culture of mutual challenge and mature professional accountability.
- 5.4 Maintain an effective interface with regular communication.

## **6 RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE PARTNERSHIPS**

- 6.1 The LSCB Independent Chair (or their Delegated Officer) will meet annually with the CTJCG Chair and the Chair of the CPB and HWB. This will also enable more understanding of each other's structures, reporting mechanisms and shared priorities.



The Lead Member for Children, Young People & Education will be a member of HWB and a 'participant observer' of the LSCB as well as sitting on the Corporate Parenting Board. The Lead Member can:

- Seek the views of the LSCB on a particular topic
- Bring to the attention of the LSCB an exception report raising safeguarding concerns
- Present an annual report

The LSCB will be formally consulted during the development of the CYPP. This will include scrutinising all elements of the Plan and ensuring the LSCB's reflection of safeguarding is incorporated into the CYPP.

6.2 The LSCB will form a view on the quality of local safeguarding through:

- Formulating an annual report identifying strengths and weaknesses in respect to safeguarding practice across Suffolk partner agencies.
- Monitoring and reporting against the LSCB learning and improvement framework.
- Initiating Serious Case Reviews and Partnership Reviews ensuring lessons are communicated to the respective partnerships.

6.3 The SSAB will form a view on the quality of local safeguarding through:

- Formulating an annual report identifying strengths and weaknesses in respect to safeguarding practice across Suffolk partner agencies.
- Monitoring and reporting against the SSAB training and development strategy.
- Initiating Serious Case Reviews and partnership reviews ensuring lessons are communicated to the respective partnerships.

## **7 CHILDREN'S TRUST JOINT COMMISSIONING GROUP**

7.1 Examine the LSCB Annual Report, identify issues for their attention and agree necessary action. This will be formally reflected within the CYPP and joint commissioning intentions.

7.2 The CTJCG Board, drawing on the expertise of the LSCB, will ensure that the CYPP reflects the identified strengths and weaknesses of safeguarding practice in the local area.

7.3 The CTJCG will ensure that its commissioning intentions with partners adequately safeguard children and young people.

## **8. HEALTH & WELLBEING BOARD**

8.1 Receive the LSCB Annual Report with its recommendations, identify issues for their attention and agree necessary action. This will be formally reflected

within the Health & Wellbeing Strategy and joint commissioning intentions.

- 8.2 Receive the SSAB Annual Report with its recommendations, identify issues for their attention and agree necessary action. This will be formally reflected within the Health & Wellbeing Strategy and joint commissioning intentions.

## **9. CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD**

- 9.1 Examine the LSCB Annual Report, identify issues for their attention and agree necessary action.
- 9.2 Receive an annual Report on the progress made by the Corporate Parenting Board to maintain oversight and accountability regarding children in care.
- 9.3 The CPB will provide an annual report to cabinet, ensuring oversight of the progress made for LAC and care leavers.

## **10 MUTUAL CHALLENGE**

- 10.1 Any of the Chairs can make a formal written request for information or consideration of any area of concern.
- 10.2 Any of the Chairs can make a request for an item to be placed on either partnership meeting agenda to address any areas of concern.
- 10.3 Any of the Chairs can request a meeting with the respective partnership Chair (and any other relevant agencies) to consider and agree a way forward regarding issues that have not been resolved by the routes identified in 8.1 and 8.2.
- 10.4 Where an area of concern cannot be resolved within the above framework, a Resolution Meeting will be held between the Board Chairs and Directors of both Children's and Adult's Services. If this does not reach a satisfactory resolution, a further meeting must be initiated with the Council's Chief Executive, as a minimum.

## **11 ROLE OF THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL AND THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

- 11.1 The Leader of the Council and the Chief Executive have a responsibility to ensure that the Authority is well led, managed, accountable and effective.
- 11.2 The Leader of the Council and Council Chief Executive should satisfy themselves that appropriate arrangements around safeguarding children and young people are in place.
- 11.3 The Leader of the Council and Council Chief Executive will consider the LSCB and SSAB Annual Reports regarding the effectiveness of arrangements for safeguarding children and adults in Suffolk, including the effectiveness of governance and partnership arrangements in this regard.

- 11.4 Their assessment, based on information contained within the LSCB and SSAB Annual Reports, will be included within the Health & Wellbeing Board's Annual Report and will reflect its response to the LSCB and SSAB Annual Reports.
- 11.5 The leader of the Council will consider the effectiveness of progress for care leavers and Looked after Children through the CPB Annual Report to Cabinet.