

**Minutes of the Herefordshire Safeguarding Partner's Board**  
**Friday 31 January 2020 3.30pm – 5.00pm**  
**Hereford Room, Plough Lane, Hereford**

**Present:**

Liz Murphy Sue Thomas	Independent Chair Superintendent, Local Policing Commander for Herefordshire, West Mercia Police
Chris Baird Ellen Footman	Director for Children & Families, Herefordshire Council Head of Safeguarding, Designated Nurse for Safeguarding Children and Adults, NHS Herefordshire Clinical Commissioning Group

**In attendance:**

Ed Hughes (minutes) Philippa Granthier	Business Support Co-ordinator, Safeguarding Business Unit Interim Business Manager, Safeguarding Business Unit
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Item		Action
	<b>Welcome</b>	
	The Chair welcomed all to the January Herefordshire Safeguarding Partner's Board meeting.	
<b>1.</b>	<b>Minutes of the previous meeting, action log and matters arising</b>	
	<p><u>Minutes</u>            The minutes of the previous meeting on 18 December were approved as an accurate record. EF queried the accuracy of the following paragraph on page five:</p> <p><i>Currently all work is going through the Safeguarding Business Unit, and it was assumed by Public Health and CCG that this would continue. PG reported that the expectations on the SBU have not been made clear, despite requesting clarity, and it appears that agreement about continued involvement of the SBU by Public Health staff was assumed, rather than explicitly requested and agreed.</i></p> <p>EF disagreed with this wording, but others felt that it accurately reflected the discussion, and should remain.</p> <p>EF also queried the wording of some of the actions on page six. This led to a discussion about who commissions actions that arise from SCR recommendations.</p> <p>LM suggested that clarity was required here, and an agreed action pathway. Members were asked whether it was appropriate that ownership of recommendations should be passed to the Safeguarding Business Unit, or remain with partners around the table.</p> <p>It was agreed that actions should remain with the action owners around the table (Safeguarding Partners).</p>	

Action log

Members considered the following outstanding actions from the action log:  
(updates in bold)

Action No 19 (23.10.19 ref 7.2)

*Development & Practice Group - Key members of the Development and Practice Group to update the neglect strategy and accompanying action plan virtually, thus avoiding the need for an additional meeting.*

Lindsay MacHardy will be the lead for neglect, and will work on this with key members of the Development and Practice Group. **The meeting is to be organised and invites will be sent to all the D&P group. The group will also look at the MARF application form and guidance, and the threshold/ levels of need document.**

Action No 22 (18.11.19 ref 2.2)

*Business Plan - It was agreed that PG will lead on the production of the new plan.*

**The deadline for this to be revised to March 2020.**

Action No 24 (18.11.19 ref 2.4)

*Engagement - Development & Practice Group to create a framework on 'engagement of children & young people' to include what is already in existence (existing groups and mechanisms) and further recommendations as to what else should be in place that is purposeful.*

Ongoing – The final version needs to go to the next Q&E meeting on 16 March for approval. **AT is leading on this piece of work on behalf of D&P Group. Deadline for Q&E meeting on 16 March 2020 for approval.**

Action No 31 (18.12.19 ref 2.1)

*LADO Referrals – EF to find out whether health staff about which there are concerns are routinely referred to the LADO service.*

**Completed - These are routinely sent to LADO when required and generally Deputy Designated Nurse is notified from a commissioning point of view. LADO information has also previously been sent to GP's for their awareness also and WVT refer when required. Referrals to LADO are included in quarterly reporting to CCG in safeguarding report**

Action No 32 (18.12.19 ref 2.2)

*Early Help Strategic Group to lead on reworking the pathways, arrangements and thresholds, in conjunction with the Development & Practice Group (CB to pass to Chair of Strategic Group).*

**CB Update - The first Early Help strategic group session is arranged for 04.02.20 with a range of senior staff from across agencies and also school and college reps. From there we will establish a work programme which will incorporate the items set out, but needs to work with the wider work on thresholds etc.**

Action No 33 (18.12.19 ref 2.3)

*MASH Governance group to report in to the Quality & Effectiveness Group (CB to pass to Chair of MASH Governance Group).*

**Completed. Noted that the group is called the MASH Partnership Forum**

Action No 34 (18.12.19 ref 2.4)

*MASH Governance group to report in to the Quality & Effectiveness Group - Q&E Group Terms of Reference to be updated accordingly.*

**Completed. Terms of reference updated.**

Action No 35 (18.12.19 ref 2.5)

*Review how the Safeguarding Partnership engages with the education sector and voluntary / community sector.*

**Feedback has been received from head teachers re education representation within the wider safeguarding partnership. Their ability to represent the sector is limited because of the diversity of establishments including academies. The education sector is currently represented through the recently established Safeguarding in Education Group, as well as through existing forums. The voluntary and community sector is less well represented at present and does need addressing. The action will be addressed in the review of the new arrangements due in April 2020.**

Action No 36 (18.12.19 ref 2.6)

*CDOP Process - EF/KW/PG to follow up outside the meeting.*

**Meeting held – further discussion needed, to include restructure of the Business Support Unit and contributions from the Safeguarding Partners, as well as consideration of the CCG and Local Authority statutory functions. PG advised the meeting that a paper had been created that set out that CDOP support would continue to be provided by the Business Unit.**

Matters Arising

None

2a.	<b>Performance &amp; Scrutiny - Ofsted Inspection update</b>	
2.1	<p>CB gave a verbal update on the recent Ofsted inspection. A letter was published by Ofsted on 21 January, summarising the findings of a focused visit to Herefordshire children’s services on 18 December 2019.</p> <p>It is not known how many cases the inspectors looked at, but after reading the letter, members felt that the issue of thresholds, and professionals understanding of them, was the key issue identified during the visit, as well as the main issue with implications for the Safeguarding Partnership.</p> <p>The inspectors were positive about how children with disabilities are supported, and about the work that is taking place on the issue of ‘Peer on Peer’ abuse.</p> <p>There are cases in Herefordshire which are at ‘Child Protection Plan’ level that should be at ‘Child in Need’ level, and cases which are at ‘Child in Need’ level that should be receiving support at a lower level.</p> <p>LM gave details of a recent Rapid Review where there was clear evidence of bias against the father.</p> <p>CB noted that this bias against parents/fathers was identified by the recent Essex peer review and is a systematic issue in Herefordshire. This will be addressed by the introduction of ‘Signs of Safety’.</p> <p>LM added that as well as the understanding and application of thresholds, the issues of engagement and empowering families were also important. Herefordshire needs a workforce that supports earlier. Thresholds are often being applied too low.</p> <p><b>Action - It was agreed that these issues would be incorporated within the revised Business Plan. (PG).</b></p> <p>CB suggested that a programme is needed regarding reflecting on, and understanding thresholds over a period of time, over and above the Safeguarding Summit. Concerted campaign is needed. Too many cases are coming through the front door, requiring no further action. Does multi-agency training correctly identify levels of need and thresholds for making referrals?</p> <p>Staff from Herefordshire have recently visited the London Borough of Redbridge to look at their MASH and their screening system, which is effective. They operate a model of a single ‘front door’ and Herefordshire will be developing a similar model in due course.</p> <p><u>Signs of Safety</u></p> <p>Members briefly discussed ‘Signs of Safety’ which is in the process of being implemented in Herefordshire. Training within Herefordshire Council Children &amp; Families directorate has begun and multi-agency training is being developed. It is important that the model is understood and applied across the partnership. EF added that health reports are already ‘Signs of Safety’ friendly.</p> <p>A powerful way of changing practice is to hear what parents say. The voice of the parents are key and suggested the 3 partners begin to explore how the voice of parents can be used to inform practice improvement.</p> <p>LM gave an example of an instance of a case in another area where parents complained that they had had to comply with requests from social care, but</p>	

<p>2.2</p> <p>2.3</p>	<p>when social workers do not do what they are supposed to, nothing happens to them.</p> <p><b>Action - It was agreed that Signs of Safety should be a standing item on the agenda for future Development &amp; Practice Group meetings. (PG).</b></p> <p><b>Action - It was agreed that Signs of Safety should be incorporated within the revised Business Plan. (PG).</b></p>	
<p>2b.</p>	<p><b>Performance &amp; Scrutiny – Peer on Peer abuse</b></p>	
	<p>It was agreed that this item would be deferred until after the Spotlight review which is taking place in March.</p>	
<p>2c.</p>	<p><b>Risk Register</b></p>	
	<p>It was agreed that this item would be deferred as work is in progress. A task and finish group met recently to discuss multi-agency data and update the risk register. Those in attendance identified understanding and application thresholds as the biggest risk for the partnership.</p>	
<p>3.</p>	<p><b>Approval</b></p>	
	<p><u>Partnership Summit Agenda</u></p> <p>PG introduced the previously circulated draft working agenda for the partnership summit which is being held on 26 February. External presenter and national expert Joanna Nicolas will be the keynote speaker. She has been briefed and is putting together a work plan for the event, focusing on thresholds, making a good referral / consent and escalation policy Also will be an exercise on what staff want from the partnership and how that can feed into new priorities / business plan</p> <p>There will be an introduction to the event to introduce the safeguarding partners and the new safeguarding arrangements, the initial views from the new Independent Scrutineer, before JN begins her segment.</p> <p>Members discussed attendees and PG confirmed it is practitioners and managers/previous LSCB members so a broad spectrum of professionals, who will have different requirements.</p> <p>Also discussed was the importance of setting the tone, and listening and engaging with professionals.</p> <p><b>Next steps</b> – Joanna Nicolas will be finalising details with PG and LB at the Safeguarding Business Unit. The meeting requested clear aims and objectives for the event, the needs of a mixed audience to be met through the event along with a focus on behaviours.</p> <p>Once this has been completed, the final summit details will be circulated electronically to the safeguarding partners. EF pointed out that she will be away so it was suggested to send to Heather Manning.</p>	

4.	<b>Capacity &amp; Resources</b>	
4.1	<p>Business Unit proposal and budget 2020-21</p> <p>EF confirmed that the proposed financial contribution from the CCG of £91k from April 2020 has been approved.</p> <p><b>Action - PG to send ST an email with the proposed financial contribution from the police of £62k, so that she can pursue approval.</b></p> <p>PG gave an update on the applications and recruitment process for the Partnership Manager, closing date is today.</p> <p>Proposals for the Business Unit have been shared with all key stakeholders and have been generally agreed. PG has now met with HR and is clear on the process that must now be followed.</p>	
5.	<b>Learning</b>	
	<p><u>Partnership development</u></p> <p>Six Steps for Independent Scrutiny – Safeguarding children partnership arrangements</p> <p>It was agreed that because of time constraints, this item would be deferred until the next meeting on 25 February.</p>	
5.	<b>Messages to / from partnership groups</b>	
5.1	<p><b>Development &amp; Practice</b></p> <p>The update report from the Development &amp; Practice group was presented with the following key points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A new Chair of the D&amp;P Group is required as the new Principal Social Worker is unable to commit to the time requirements of the Chair's role. It was noted there is not a Vice Chair.</li> <li>• Final draft Escalation / Resolution of Professional Disagreements policy to be agreed / commented on by Friday 31 January 2020</li> <li>• Meeting to be arranged for Neglect steering group – it was noted that no members of the group volunteered to attend a meeting to progress neglect strategy</li> </ul> <p>Members discussed the report and agreed that the group requires strong leadership and clear priorities to be able to function effectively. Members of the group need to work to deliver the collective accountability for safeguarding activity of all agencies/sectors.</p> <p><b>ACTION – ToR for the group to be sent to SPB with a view to them proposing a Chair and Vice Chair.</b></p> <p>SPB were clear the group needed to focus on 3 priorities of Neglect, Signs of Safety and Thresholds</p>	

	<p><b>MASH Partnership Forum</b></p> <p>The first report from the MASH Partnership Forum was presented which covered the following sections:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Purpose, Role, Function and Responsibilities of the Forum</li> <li>• What is working well, New or ongoing risks,</li> <li>• Suggestions of any issues for inclusion in Partnership Summit.</li> </ul> <p>The report was noted and the issue of consent was added to the summit planning section in item 3 above.</p> <p>CB confirmed that MASH will be moving from their current offices to Plough Lane this year. The move is currently scheduled for September.</p> <p>As noted earlier, staff from Herefordshire have recently visited the London Borough of Redbridge to look at their MASH and screening system. A similar new system is to be introduced here. LM clarified and the planned MASH move is being overseen in Herefordshire by the MASH Partnership Forum.</p>	
6.	<p><b>Any Other Business</b></p>	
	<p>Learning &amp; Improvement (QA) Framework (information item)</p> <p>Members considered the revised Learning &amp; Improvement (QA) Framework document which had been approved by the Quality &amp; Effectiveness Group at their last meeting. The SPB approved the Framework and for the Q&amp;E group to ensure this was now implemented.</p>	

Date of next meeting – 25 February 2020.