



Herefordshire Safeguarding  
Children Partnership

## **Multiagency Safeguarding Arrangements (MASA)**

**Published: Sept 2019**  
**Updated: September 2024**  
**Review Date: September 2025**

## Foreword

West Mercia Police (Chief Constable), Herefordshire and Worcestershire Integrated Care Board (Accountable Officer) and Herefordshire Council (Chief Executive), are the Lead Safeguarding Partners for Herefordshire, as defined by the Children and Social Work Act 2017. We are very pleased to present our revised local multi-agency arrangements to safeguard children. They update the previous arrangements published in November 2023 to deliver the requirements of the Government’s statutory guidance Working Together to Safeguard Children, 2023; and set out our local commitment to the children of Herefordshire.

We wish to acknowledge the dedication and hard work of all those involved in keeping children safe in Herefordshire and who have contributed to these arrangements through a range of engagement activities and consultations. The new arrangements will continue to directly involve everyone who has a responsibility to keep children safe and well in the county.

Herefordshire safeguarding arrangements depend on the full engagement and cooperation across early year’s settings, schools, colleges, health services, GPs, police, voluntary and community groups, private providers and other services such as housing, the fire service, youth justice, probation, and with children and families themselves.

We set out here how we will organise our strategic safeguarding arrangements, and how we, the lead statutory safeguarding partners – the Council, the Integrated Care Board and the Police, will work in partnership with other agencies to identify and respond to the needs of children and young people in Herefordshire.

We remain positive about these revised arrangements and we continue to be ambitious to ensure the best outcome for the children and young people of Herefordshire through our ‘Right Help Right Time’ approach to identifying and responding to need. We also recognise that more needs to be done to improve the quality and effectiveness of services that have been judge to be “inadequate” and we are committed to working together to provide the necessary leadership so we can meet the requirements of the Statutory Direction notice issued by the Department for Education and the Ofsted recommendations. We will hold each other to account, learn from experience when things do not go as well as they should, and we will celebrate best practice together. We see this as a real opportunity to make improvements, to innovate and to tackle those things children and young people need us to tackle and to keep them safe and well.



**Paul Walker**  
Chief Executive  
Herefordshire Council



**Richard Cooper**  
Temporary Chief Constable Police  
West Mercia Police



**Simon Trickett**  
Chief Executive  
NHS Herefordshire and  
Worcestershire Integrated  
Care Board

## Contents

1. Introduction.....	4
2. Vision, Values and Principles .....	5
3. Governance and Scrutiny.....	6
4. Geographical Area and Local Context .....	7
5. Arrangements for the safeguarding partners to work together to identify and respond to the needs of children in the area.....	8
6. Relevant Agencies and Strategic Partnerships .....	9
7. Working in Partnership.....	12
8. Quoracy for the Safeguarding Partners Board and Subgroups .....	15
9. How the arrangements will include the voice of children and families .....	15
10. How all early years settings, schools (including independent schools, academies and free schools) and other educational establishments will be included in the safeguarding arrangements.....	16
11. How any youth custody and residential homes for children will be included in the safeguarding arrangements .....	17
12. 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 .....	18
13. How the Right Help Right Time - Threshold Guidance setting out the local criteria for action, aligns with the HSCP multiagency safeguarding arrangements .....	18
14. Arrangements for commissioning and publishing local child safeguarding practice reviews.....	19
15. The process for undertaking local child safeguarding practice reviews, setting out the arrangements for embedding learning across organisations and agencies .....	20
16. Child Death Reviews .....	21
17. How inter-agency learning and development offer will be commissioned, delivered and monitored for impact and how they will undertake any multiagency and interagency audits .....	22
18. Audits.....	22
19. Yearly Report .....	23
20. Funding and Business Support and Partnership Team.....	23
21. Annual Business Cycle .....	24
22. Multi-Agency Procedures .....	24
23. Communications.....	24
24. Dispute Resolution.....	25
25. Risk Assessment.....	25
26. Amendments to Herefordshire’s Multi-Agency Safeguarding Arrangements .....	25
Appendix 1 - HSCP Structure .....	26

## 1. Introduction

In September 2019, Herefordshire introduced local Multi-Agency Safeguarding Children Arrangements to reflect the fundamental legislative changes to the Children Act 2004, as amended by the Children and Social Work Act 2017. This legislation replaced Local Safeguarding Children Boards with more flexible arrangements which were to be determined locally. The Herefordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (HSCP) arrangements set out our approach to delivering these requirements in line with this legislation and the statutory guidance **Working Together to Safeguard Children: A guide to inter-agency working to help, protect and promote the welfare of children** (WT2023), [Working together to safeguard children 2023: statutory guidance \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#).

- 1.1 The Act requires the three safeguarding partners – Local Authority, Integrated Care Board, and Police – to publish local safeguarding children arrangements and to take equal responsibility for the co-ordination and effectiveness of those arrangements.
- 1.2 These arrangements have been previously reviewed in both 2020 and 2023. We are now pleased to present our most recent version which has been updated in line with ‘Working Together’ (December 2023).
- 1.3 The three Lead Safeguarding Partners are accountable and have joint and equal responsibility for the multiagency safeguarding arrangements. The Lead Safeguarding Partners are:
  - Paul Walker, Chief Executive, Herefordshire Council
  - Richard Cooper, Temporary Chief Constable, Police West Mercia Police
  - Simon Trickett, Chief Executive, NHS Herefordshire and Worcestershire Integrated Care Board
- 1.4 It is recognised that the ICB cover both Herefordshire and Worcestershire and that the ‘footprint’ of West Mercia Police extends beyond Herefordshire. It is for this reason that within the governance arrangements for HSCP the Lead Safeguarding Partners will meet on a shared Herefordshire/Worcestershire footprint, and further detail of this is provided below.
- 1.5 To fulfil the above role the safeguarding partners have set out how they will work together and engage with any **relevant agencies** to safeguard and protect the welfare of children in the area.
- 1.6 The three Safeguarding Partner organisations have a **shared and equal duty** to make arrangements to work together with relevant agencies to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children and young people in Herefordshire.
- 1.7 In Herefordshire, we have a highly engaged group of relevant agencies who care passionately about meeting the needs of our county’s children and young people. We know that safeguarding is everybody’s responsibility and together with the partnership, through our new arrangements we have a genuine ambition to ensure that everyone, including early years settings, schools, colleges, health commissioners and providers, police, voluntary and community organisations, housing providers, youth justice and all those services who have a role in safeguarding children and young people, will know, understand and respond to those responsibilities in a way that has a really positive impact on the children and young people we serve.
- 1.8 Partners in Herefordshire recognise that arrangements must be purpose-driven and therefore agile and adaptive to the local community and the organisational environment, and also to national

priorities and policy developments. Furthermore, our local arrangements need to learn from experience, and develop towards greater effectiveness on the basis of that learning. We expect therefore that our local safeguarding arrangements will evolve over time, whilst remaining compliant with statutory duties; this document will be updated as required in order to reflect developments.

## 2. Vision, Values and Principles

2.1 The values and principle for all children and young people in Herefordshire is to grow up with their needs met well, that they are safe from harm and that our multi agency arrangements designed to support this will be of the highest quality with children at the heart of all we do.

### 2.2 [Our Vision](#)

*‘Children are safely cared for by their family because services work well together, and with families’*

2.3 Our values and principles have been developed in collaboration with children, young people and partners, through a variety of engagement activities.

### [The HSCP Values](#)

- Child Focussed
- Collaboration
- Transparency
- Inclusivity

### 2.4 [The HSCP Principles](#)

- Children are at the heart of what we do and we will learn from the actions we take
- We will make a difference to the lives of children and young people
- We will focus on the difference our partnership makes to the lives of children and young people
- We will share information and work together with openness, respect, trust and confidence
- We will challenge each other when this is needed and will welcome challenge in return, knowing that this helps to keep our children and systems safe
- We will recognise the pivotal role that schools, colleges, early years and childcare settings, and other educational providers play in safeguarding children and promoting their welfare, and that their insight and co-operation are vital to the successful delivery of these arrangements
- We will address the well-being needs of children and young people at the earliest opportunity and prevent the need for later child protection intervention whenever possible – providing the ‘Right Help at the Right Time’
- When delivering against our safeguarding arrangements and within all partnership activities we will continually strive to meet the principles for working with parents and carers and the multi-agency expectations for strategic leaders, senior and middle managers and direct practice (pages 14 – 18 Working Together to Safeguard Children – December 2023).

### 2.5 [The HSCP Pledge](#)

- ***Our role*** is to keep children safe and give them a voice
- ***Our commitment*** is to make sure everything we do works for children
- ***We will*** make sure that children are at the heart of what we do

### **3. Governance and Scrutiny**

#### **3.1 Strategic Leadership and Accountability**

We recognise that strong, joined-up leadership and clear accountability is critical to effective multi-agency safeguarding. This begins with our Lead Safeguarding Partners from the Local Authority, NHS Herefordshire and Worcestershire Integrated Care Board and West Mercia Police, who are named above.

Our Lead Safeguarding Partners have responsibility for setting the strategic direction, vision and culture for our partnership. This includes agreeing and reviewing our shared priorities and resources, holding delegates to account for the delivery against their own agencies and the partnerships' commitments, reviewing and signing off key partnership documents, providing shared oversight of learning from independent scrutiny, local and national reviews and ensuring these have a demonstrable impact on practice. Ultimately our Lead Safeguarding Partners are accountable for the effectiveness and outcomes of the multi-agency safeguarding arrangements within Herefordshire. Details of the activity undertaken to fulfil these responsibilities and their impact will be provided within the yearly report.

To support them in their functions, the Lead Safeguarding Partners will meet twice yearly as a combined Herefordshire and Worcestershire forum in recognition of the shared geographic footprint for both ICB and West Mercia Police. The Delegated Safeguarding Partners and Independent Scrutineers will also attend this meeting to ensure strong links within the leadership structure and as an opportunity to escalate risks and issues as required.

#### **3.2 Delivering Multi-Agency Safeguarding Arrangements**

To support the Lead Safeguarding Partners in delivering on these responsibilities, each has named a Delegated Safeguarding Partner (DSP) from their own organisation. The DSPs for Herefordshire are:

Tina Russell - Interim Director of Children's Services, Herefordshire Council

Helen Wain – Superintendent, Herefordshire LPA, West Mercia Police

Kathryn Cobain - Chief Nursing Officer, NHS Herefordshire and Worcestershire Integrated Care Board (ICB)

The DSPs will have oversight of the quality and compliance of the delivery of the agreed shared priorities and have processes in place to provide assurance that multi-agency practice is reviewed and operating well and in line with these arrangements. The DSPs will also ensure that there is close partnership working with education and other relevant agencies to allow better identification and response to harm, there are effective information and data sharing arrangements between agencies, that rapid reviews local child safeguarding practice reviews are completed in a timely manner and to a high standard, that appropriate multi-agency safeguarding training is provided and that feedback from children and families is being sought and responded to so children from different communities and groups can access the help and protection they need.

### 3.3 Independent Scrutiny

As a Partnership we will engage an independent scrutineer to provide an objective assessment of the effectiveness of the multi-agency child safeguarding arrangements within Herefordshire. This is currently Mr Kevin Crompton. Scrutiny will be evidenced based and will consider the impact both the Lead and Delegated Safeguarding Partners (DSP's) are making through their strategic oversight and leadership. It will also take account of the voice of local children and their families. The three safeguarding partners are committed to considering and acting upon the feedback from the independent scrutineer, which will initially be provided to the DSPs through the HSCP Safeguarding Partners Board meeting.

The specific functions of the independent scrutineer will be as set out within the Working Together to Safeguard Children (December 2023) statutory guidance (page 37), and their scrutiny plan and schedule for delivery will be agreed each year by the Lead Safeguarding Partners.

The Independent Scrutineer will be responsible for producing and presenting scrutiny reports in line with the agreed plan.

3.4 The HSCP will also receive assurance of the effectiveness of arrangements through:

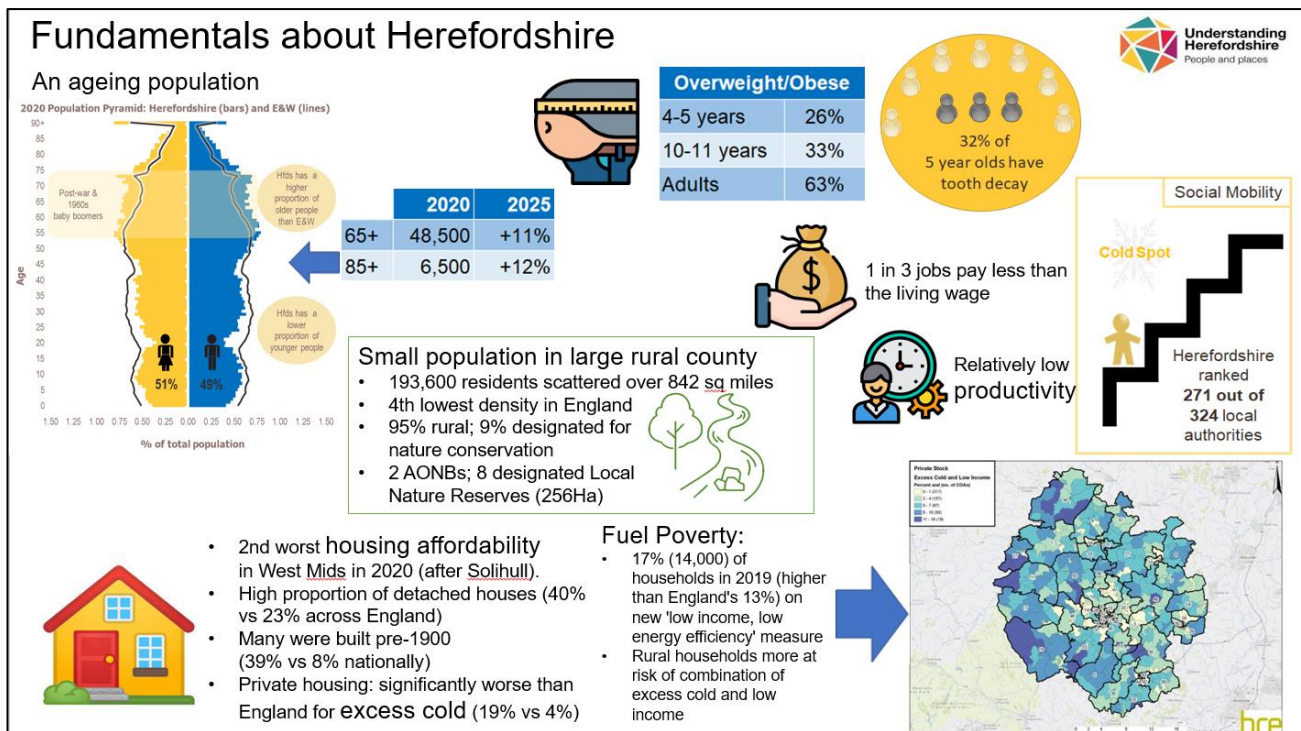
- a. Bi-annual assurance from Relevant Agencies section 11 audits (education only S175 Audit) in accordance with the West Midlands Regional arrangements;
- b. quarterly performance data, single agency audit findings
- c. single agency evidence of impact of improvements made following learning reviews
- d. completed activity from the performance framework
- e. In addition, feedback from children, young people and their families will be central to our work and shaping future priorities
- f. Multi agency and single agency audit outcomes

## 4. Geographical Area and Local Context

- 4.1 Herefordshire is a predominantly rural county, with the 4th lowest population density in England (0.87 persons per hectare). The vast majority (95 per cent) of the county's land area is classified as rural according to Defra's 2011 rural/urban definition.
- 4.2 It is situated in the south-west of the West Midlands region bordering Wales. The city of Hereford, in the middle of the county, is the centre for most facilities; other principal locations are the five market towns of Leominster, Ross-on-Wye, Ledbury, Bromyard and Kington.



Figure 1



### 5. Arrangements for the safeguarding partners to work together to identify and respond to the needs of children in the area

- 5.1 The Delegated Safeguarding Partners and the Education Lead meet six-weekly as the Safeguarding Partners Board to provide overall strategic leadership and direction to the arrangements. This in no way however diminishes the importance of the responsibilities and contributions of all the other relevant agencies in Herefordshire who play such a vital role in safeguarding children and young people. We are responsible collectively as a partnership for strategic co-ordination and delivery of safeguarding services for children and young people across Herefordshire.
- 5.2 In line with Working Together 2023 the Safeguarding Partners Board is being chaired by Tina Russell during 2024-2025, Tina being the Delegated Safeguarding Partner for Herefordshire Council.
- 5.3 Following the review of the arrangements in September 2019, it was recognised that there was a need to strengthen and revise governance arrangements, and the structure and number of sub-groups across the HSCP.



- 5.4 Sub-groups are chaired by safeguarding partner representatives. Other groups may be chaired by appropriate senior officers from relevant agencies.
- 5.5 Further members of the Safeguarding Children Partnership may be co-opted, invited to attend HSCP meetings to present items in relation to specific issues or where there is agreed joint strategic priorities, co-production and work to address cross cutting themes from other partnerships.
- 5.6 Relevant agencies continue to support and be engaged with the Partnership, through the delivery of priority work streams through the subgroups, as well as task and finish groups or other specific projects, such as developing learning webinars or presenting/facilitating at the Practitioner Forum.
- 5.7 The Safeguarding Partners hold twice yearly summits, the purpose of which are to update the executive leads of relevant agencies of the work of the Partnership and its effectiveness, as well as to highlight any gaps and where further support and engagement is required.
- 5.8 The Safeguarding Partnership will develop and retain close structural relationships with the Health and Well-being Board, Safeguarding Adults Board and Community Safety Partnership, as illustrated in the governance structure appendix 1.

## **6. Relevant Agencies and Strategic Partnerships**

- 6.1 The strength of local partnership working relies on the safeguarding partners working collaboratively with relevant agencies. The role of relevant agencies is not underestimated and is required to help safeguard and promote the welfare of children. The partnership will engage with relevant agencies to enable joint identification and response to need and to agree priorities to improve outcomes for children.

### ***Relevant Agencies***

- 6.2 Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023 defines relevant agencies as those organisations and agencies whose involvement the safeguarding partners consider may be required to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

- 6.3 These partners will include, but is not limited to:

#### Health Providers

- General Practitioners and primary care professionals
- Wye Valley NHS Trust
- UK Health Security Agency and the Office for Health Improvement and Disparities (OHID),
- West Midlands Ambulance NHS Trust
- NHS England
- Herefordshire and Worcestershire Health and Care NHS Trust (HWHCT)
- Substance Misuse Services,
- Sexual health services

#### Education

- All Early Years and Children Centre providers

- All Primary Schools, Secondary Schools, Special Schools
- Further Education & Colleges including post 16 settings and training providers
- Pupil referral units

#### Other agencies

- Herefordshire Voluntary Support Organisation Services (HVOSS)
- Faith organisations
- Domestic Abuse Services
- Herefordshire and Worcestershire Youth Offending Service
- Herefordshire and Worcestershire Fire and Rescue Service
- Housing Providers
- British Transport Police
- National Probation Service
- CAFCASS
- Local Providers of Children’s Residential Units
- Border Force and Immigration Services

#### ***Close links with other Strategic Partnerships and Groups***

- 6.4 There are clear benefits to children, young people, families and vulnerable adults from the coordination of cross partnership business. The HSCP does not operate in isolation, and there are a range of other multi agency partnerships which contribute significantly to the children and adults safeguarding agenda and priorities, for example through the commissioning of services. These include:
- 6.5 [Corporate Parenting Panel](#) - The Council has Corporate Parenting responsibility for Children Looked After (CLA) and Care Leavers up to the age of 25. The council endeavours to treat CLA and Care Leavers as “their own” children. Further information on the Corporate Parenting Panel can be found here: [Corporate parenting – Herefordshire Council](#)
- 6.6 [Herefordshire Children & Young People’s Partnership \(CYPP\)](#) – This partnership is responsible for the development and implementation of Herefordshire’s Children & Young People’s Plan. This plan aims to make sure that children and young people in the county are given the best possible start in start in life so that they grow up healthy, happy and safe within supportive family environments. Further information about the Children and Young People’s Partnership can be found here: [Children and Young People’s Partnership – Herefordshire Council](#).
- 6.7 [Children Improvement Board](#) – Children’s Services was inspected by Ofsted in July 2022 under the Inspecting Local Authority Children’s Services (ILACS) framework. The inspection report was published on 21 September 2022 and is available **here**. The Secretary of State issued a **Statutory Direction** to Herefordshire Council on 21 September 2022, and appointed a Commissioner for Children’s Services. The overall judgement was that Herefordshire Children’s Service is ‘inadequate’. Three Ofsted monitoring visits have taken place to date. The monitoring visits found insufficient consistency and pace of progress in the areas of focus.

*Phase 2 Improvement Plan has been developed to bring focus, pace and measures to the improvement journey. The plan introduces a Quality Assurance framework of measures to enable us to monitor progress. Key Performance Indicators', Service User feedback and Audit, defines measures.*

*The Children's Improvement Board, has reviewed its Terms of Reference and membership and is independently chaired by the Department of Education Commissioner.*

- 6.8 [Health and Wellbeing Board](#) - The Health and Wellbeing Board (HWBB) is made up of members that represent the organisations responsible for improving health and wellbeing in Herefordshire. The health and wellbeing strategy sets out how the council and its local partners plan to address the health and wellbeing needs of its population and as such, is a key document that is jointly owned and one that promotes collective action to meet those needs. Further information on the Herefordshire Health and Wellbeing Board can be found here: [Committee details - Health and Wellbeing Board - Herefordshire Council](#)
- 6.9 [SEND Strategic Board](#) - The SEND Strategic Assurance Board meets regularly to provide strategic and senior leadership and partnership oversight of what is working well and what needs improvement across the local area system in Herefordshire for children and young people with special education needs and disabilities (SEND) and their families. It uses its influence and decision-making authority and accountabilities to drive forward improvements across the sector, consolidating what is working well and improving what is not. The SEND Strategic Assurance Board is chaired by Managing Director of the ICB with the Director of Community Wellbeing (HC) as Vice-Chair. Its membership includes senior leaders from health and Herefordshire local authority, schools, colleges and early years professionals, and parent carer representatives.
- 6.10 [Herefordshire Community Safety Partnership \(CSP\)](#) – The overall aim of this partnership is to help improve the safety and well-being of residents and visitors to the county. The Partnership work includes working to bring offenders to account and cut levels of reoffending, addressing the harm caused by domestic violence and abuse, minimising the impact of alcohol and drugs on our communities and promoting community togetherness and cut antisocial behaviour. Further information on the Herefordshire Community Safety Partnership can be found here: [Community Safety Partnership - Herefordshire Safeguarding Boards and Partnerships](#).
- 6.11 [Herefordshire Safeguarding Adults Board \(HSAB\)](#) - This board brings together representatives from various agencies and organisations in Herefordshire to work in partnership to protect adults in Herefordshire. By sharing best practice and expertise the board works to ensure that adults have access to the right support and services they need. The HSAB shares the Joint Case Review subgroup with both the Herefordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership and Community Safety Partnership. Further Information on the Herefordshire Safeguarding Adults Board can be found here: [Safeguarding Adults Board - Herefordshire Safeguarding Boards and Partnerships](#)
- 6.12 [Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference \(MARAC\)](#) – is a meeting that is held to discuss the most high risk cases of domestic abuse and sexual violence, to share information and to safety plan to safeguard a survivors of abuse. MARAC works closely with the partnership, the intelligence and information from this group informs the response to domestic violence strategically and operationally.

- 6.13 *Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA)* - is the process through which the police, probation and prison services work together with other agencies to assess and manage violent and sexual offenders in order to protect the public from harm.
- 6.14 Herefordshire recognises the strong links between issues for children and adults and has the intention through a number of the above named strategic partnerships to work in a more integrated 'whole family' all-age approach. The safeguarding partnership recognises the key themes that cross cut the different partnerships, boards and strategic groups and that all seek to ensure there is coordinated approach particularly in relation to transitional safeguarding, domestic abuse and modern Slavery.
- 6.15 It is noted that WT2023 is not prescriptive about specific meetings and attendees. Herefordshire has developed a structure of meetings and forums that engage all relevant agencies at all levels and in the most appropriate manner.
- 6.16 In order to allow the Partnership Board to have a core working membership, and at the same time to engage with a much wider pool of relevant agencies including those in the voluntary and community sector, the children's Safeguarding Partners, HSAB and HCSP have developed the Safeguarding Children Practitioner Forum, that take place twice a year. This has a mixed agenda of tri-partnership/boards business, presentations, workshops, consultations, etc.

## **7. Working in Partnership**

### **Structure**

The revised partnership arrangement will be discharged through the HSCP, and the structure is set out in appendix 1.

### ***The Herefordshire Safeguarding Partners Board***

- 7.1 The Herefordshire Safeguarding Partners Board (SPB) provides the local governance for the partnership that will primarily focus on safeguarding systems, performance and resourcing. This group is accountable to the Lead Safeguarding Partners. Membership, meeting frequency and chairing arrangements are covered within section 5 above. It will:
- a. Have strategic ownership of the safeguarding arrangements in Herefordshire, with stronger joint responsibility for the whole system
  - b. Drive the work of the partnership, delivering on priorities and ensuring learning from practice and development opportunities have an impact.
  - c. Be responsible for financial, strategic and reputational risk
  - d. Be responsible for ensuring cross-partnership collaboration and agency participation, convening and supporting participation in the HSCP subgroups
  - e. Have responsibility for ensuring that independent scrutiny of the partnership's effectiveness is regular and has impact and
  - f. Review progress of priorities work.

- 7.2 Part of this group's agenda will include assurance and challenge sessions where senior officers from partner agencies are invited to provide evidence regarding the effectiveness of their safeguarding arrangements for children and young people within their agency.
- 7.3 The partners will report to their own internal management, quality and assurance processes to satisfy themselves of their own safeguarding responsibilities, evidence of which will be shared with the HSCP Quality and Effectiveness Group.
- 7.4 In supporting its working principles, Public Health exists both as a function to assist HSCP and as a commissioning partner with relevant agencies to improve health and wellbeing outcomes for children. A public health approach will promote and encourage the partnership and its relevant agencies to maintain those working principles by remaining outcome focused, maximising prevention, promoting greater integration of services and utilising epidemiological and other forms of intelligence research or evidence to promote planning and decision-making.

### ***Core Sub-Groups, Priority Theme Groups and Task and Delivery Groups***

- 7.5 To complement the high-level strategic nature of the Partnership, HSCP has a two-layered approach to the discharge of its functions with an operational and tactical focus, both of which hold responsibilities and activities from different perspectives and at each level of the partnership's governance. Of importance to the HSCP multiagency arrangements is the arrangements for a partnership summit and frontline practitioner's forum.
- 7.6 The **HSCP Summit** is held twice a year and is an opportunity for the Safeguarding Partners to meet and review the successes and any areas for development resulting from the work of the partnership.
- 7.7 The Summit is open to senior leads of all relevant agencies. The aims of the summit are:
- To provide all strategic leaders and senior managers with opportunity for input, engagement and ownership in the work of the Herefordshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (HSCP)
  - To update on the implementation of the HSCP Strategic Plan
  - To reflect and input on how to improve effectiveness within the children's systems and partnership working with children, young people and families
  - Provide feedback by relevant agencies on their contribution to the safeguarding partnership
- 7.8 **Practitioner Forum** – A joint multi-agency practitioner forum events takes place twice a year, which provide practitioners with a summary of updates arising from work undertaken across Herefordshire relating to the HSCP and HSAB. The forum provides the opportunity to share good practice and update practitioners on developments relating to safeguarding practice. This forum is to engage and hear the views of practitioners and is valued and well attended by practitioners from a range of backgrounds and administrative support from the Partnership Team is provided. All professionals working with adults or children are welcome to attend. These groups are identified in the governance illustration below in appendix 2.

### ***The Delivery Subgroups***

- 7.9 The Safeguarding Partners Board has delegated certain functions to a set of standing 'Delivery Sub-Groups.' A review of the Board structure saw a new arrangement designed for the subgroups, primarily to reduce duplication, improve integration and engagement by agencies. The new subgroups forming the partnership will strongly focus on improving practice and ensuring emphasis on learning, enabling a feedback loop across partner agencies and the front line.
- 7.10 The HSCP Partnership Team will support and co-ordinate the work of the subgroups, providing a mechanism for the members to meet regularly outside of normal scheduled meetings, and monitor plans. This will ensure that there is co-ordination and information sharing between subgroups. Subgroups will report to the HSCP Board. These subgroups will be assisted by smaller task and finish groups to develop and deliver specific outcomes. The new subgroup arrangements are now in place, and the role and purpose of each is set out below.

### **Quality & Effectiveness Sub Group**

- 7.11 **Role:** This group is central to changing and improving quality and effectiveness of multi-agency frontline practice. It will scrutinise the work and performance of the safeguarding partner agencies and other relevant agencies in delivering their statutory safeguarding responsibilities and in addressing any local safeguarding priorities identified. It will define operational impact of priorities work and new risks as well as identify the key area of learning for dissemination. There is a need to ask key questions around how we know we are making a difference and to challenge agencies to gather feedback and evidence. The group will use audit, performance data and intelligence to assess the effectiveness of the help being provided to children and families, including early help.

### **Development and Practice Group**

- 7.12 The Development and Practice Group is responsible for the development of policy and procedures for safeguarding children, and overseeing the delivery and effectiveness of multiagency training, learning and its impact on practice and outcomes for children and young people. This subgroup will produce an annual work plan, outlining practice, learning and workforce activities scheduled for the next 12 months
- 7.13 It will focus on implementing the Learning and Development Strategy 2022-24 and training framework around effective working together, dissemination of learning from practice and innovative opportunities including practice-learning events. Evaluation of the training delivered will test out how the Early Help and Statutory systems are responding to needs across the continuum and the impact on lives of children and young people in Herefordshire.

### **Joint Case Review Subgroup**

- 7.14 The Safeguarding Children Partnership, Community Safety Partnership and Safeguarding Adults Board have a **Joint Case Review Group** and therefore is able to identify linkages, crosscutting themes and areas of business. The JCR group undertake work around Rapid Reviews, local Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews (CSPRs), Domestic Homicide Reviews (DHRs), and Safeguarding Adults Reviews (SARs).

### **Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) Group**

7.15 The MASH Group provides a forum for development and oversight of the MASH to ensure the continuous improvement of partnership arrangements, that they are effective, well understood and are accessible across the County. The MASH group reports back on the effectiveness of operational activity and adherence to the Quality and Effectiveness Group.

### **Education Subgroup**

7.16 This group will seek to ensure that all children and young people, aged between 0 and 19 within any educational provision, including universal childcare, remain safe. The group will enable engagement with providers' designated safeguarding leads and promote effective practice and intelligence reporting on emerging themes and trends within all education provisions. It will work collaboratively with single agency partners to ensure effective multi-agency working takes place. The group will be chaired by an educational professional and vice-chair is be the Safeguarding Children in Education Officer, who will fulfil the role of the Chair in the Chair's absence. Membership includes representatives of: HCC, Education Officers, including Early Years and Post 16; Early Years education sector; School/Academy Safeguarding Leads; Primary Headteachers Forum; Association of Secondary Heads (HASH); Independent Schools; Special Schools; Alternative Training Providers; Virtual School; Early Help Team; Children's Social Care; Business Manager for Children Safeguarding Partnership; and Social Inclusion representatives..

### **Child Exploitation and Missing Subgroup**

7.17 The Child Exploitation and Missing subgroup provides strategic oversight, scrutiny and challenge of the multi-agency approach and response to extra familial risk. It supports the understanding of how agencies are working together to identify, respond, prevent and protect against extra familial risk, and provides the forum in which partners can agree, monitor and review the effectiveness of the HSCP extra familial risk strategies, framework, policies and interventions. The subgroup also ensures that national requirements and developments are incorporated effectively in to the HSCP response to extra familial risk.

## **8. Quoracy for the Safeguarding Partners Board and Subgroups**

For any multiagency meeting to be quorate there must be 100% attendance of three safeguarding partners at the time of the meeting. Relevant agencies must send representation and non-attendees (without valid reason) will be reported to their agency's line manager. The three Statutory Safeguarding Partner representatives must be part of any key actions and decision-making.

## **9. How the arrangements will include the voice of children and families**

- 9.1 Herefordshire will continue to strengthen its mechanisms to gather the views of children and families, building on existing methods such as surveys, Independent Scrutineer hiring panel, Friends and Family Test, and HWICB Public Engagement Team.
- 9.2 Children and Young People's views, and the views of their parents and carers, are also sought during the Child Safeguarding Practice Review process (CSPR) (formerly Serious Case Reviews) and will be included through the partnerships audit process.

- 9.3 The voice and experience of children and families will be central to how safeguarding arrangements work effectively. Good practice, guidance and tools will be promoted through the Voice of the Child Toolkit. We will ensure that in all our scrutiny work (deep dives, case reviews and data analysis) we elicit, and take central account of, the views and experiences of children, young people and families. We will continue to evaluate the effectiveness of the journey of children through the service system and ensure that we understand what that system looks and feels like from a child's perspective.
- 9.4 Children's voices will be captured and reflected in the training we provide, in the way that we set priorities ('doing with' not 'doing to') and in our annual report.

## **10. How all early years settings, schools (including independent schools, academies and free schools) and other educational establishments will be included in the safeguarding arrangements**

- 10.1 'Working Together' (December 2023) emphasises the pivotal role that schools, colleges, early years and childcare settings, and other educational providers play in safeguarding children and promoting their welfare. Within Herefordshire the safeguarding partners recognise that their insight and co-operation are vital to the successful delivery of these arrangements. To support this the Director for Education, Skills and Learning is now a permanent member of the Herefordshire Safeguarding Partnership Board.
- 10.2 It is recognised the educational landscape in Herefordshire is complex and diverse and a range of revised mechanisms are required to ensure that the statutory partners can be assured of the effectiveness of these arrangements.
- 10.3 All schools are named as relevant partners, however the representatives from individual settings (schools) cannot speak for the rest of the sector. The participation and active engagement of schools, colleges and other educational settings is critical to ensuring effective safeguarding practice in Herefordshire.
- 10.4 The partnership will work together with schools and colleges to improve compliance with safeguarding responsibilities in line with self-assessment through Section 175 audits. Many of Herefordshire schools have generally achieved positive ratings for safeguarding and pupil welfare in Ofsted inspections.
- 10.5 The HSCP will work closely with the Director for Education, Skills and Learning, Principals, Head Teachers and the Lead Officer of Education Safeguarding to ensure there is consistent representation from primary, secondary, special schools, colleges and independent sectors in the strategic developments undertaken by the HSCP.
- 10.6 We will build on established mechanisms to strengthen relationships ensuring the engagement of schools and key education stakeholders within the new MASA partnership. This includes:
- Herefordshire Council has secured the appointment of an **Education Safeguarding Lead** and this post holder will act as the education representative and conduit between the council and providers. The Lead Officer has the responsibility of attending a range of meetings across the sector to promote two-way communication process - to bring information into the meeting, and feedback information to the HSCP from the education sector.



- The **Early Years** leaders and managers meetings will have a standing agenda item to similarly enable the Lead Officer to bring information to the early years sector and feedback information to the HSCP.
- **Primary, Secondary, Special Schools and Colleges** – Principal and Head Teacher meetings will also have a standing agenda item to receive and share information with the Lead Officer, the Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSL) meetings would also be subject to this arrangement
- In addition to the above the Lead Officer will hold a monthly drop in sessions for all sectors and settings to ensure that any emergent issues and matters not covered in the information and communication exchange from and to HSCP is picked up and responded to.

10.7 The HSCP will establish a system for ensuring that the Partnership receives regular reports from Education services so that it has a wide range overview of the functions and priorities as well as a comprehensive dataset of safeguarding performance within educational settings.

10.8 The HSCP will continue to ensure key messages are disseminated to all schools through training, management information sheets and termly newsletter, and encourage attendance from School staff at multi-agency events wherever possible.

10.9 The HSCP will ensure there is a two way communication system to the network of designated safeguarding leads in Herefordshire.

10.10 The HSCP will continue to seek assurance on schools' safeguarding practice through the local authority Section 175 self-assessment process, and through data drawn from inspection and monitoring visits.

### **Early Years**

10.11 Similarly to schools early years sector receive spotlight information and emails from the Early Years Foundation Sector (EYFS) lead. They are invited to attend leaders and managers network meetings and there is training provided by the EYFS team and the Education Safeguarding lead. Equally training can be purchased from private providers.

10.12 The local authority Early Years' Service actively promotes the Early Years sector's compliance with the Early Years foundation stage statutory framework (EYFS) which includes policies and procedures in line with local arrangements, and also with Ofsted's inspection framework.

10.13 Early Years providers are also targeted for attendance at the Herefordshire summits, Children & Adults Safeguarding Partnership events.

## **11. How any youth custody and residential homes for children will be included in the safeguarding arrangements**

11.1 There are no prisons or youth offending institutes within Herefordshire, it is however important to recognise the duty and ensure the duty is applied in respect of Herefordshire children who may be placed in custody in other local authority areas. The West Mercia Youth Offending Service are therefore one of the relevant agencies for the HSCP and actively participate in the work of the HSCP subgroups.

- 11.2 For each children’s residential home in Herefordshire, it is the Registered Person’s duty to prepare and implement a safeguarding policy. Where children’s homes are owned and run by Herefordshire Council, it is expected that the local authority is able to provide assurance on this to the HSCP. Where children’s homes are from an independent provider (named above as a relevant agency) we will continue to develop robust arrangements and seek assurance through commissioning, procurement and contract management processes. These arrangements and appropriate assurance will apply equally to supported living accommodation within Herefordshire, which also need to be registered.
- 11.3 Herefordshire Council commissioning and procurement services department hold an up to date list of children’s residential services that operate in within Herefordshire and they are deemed as relevant agencies to the local safeguarding arrangements.

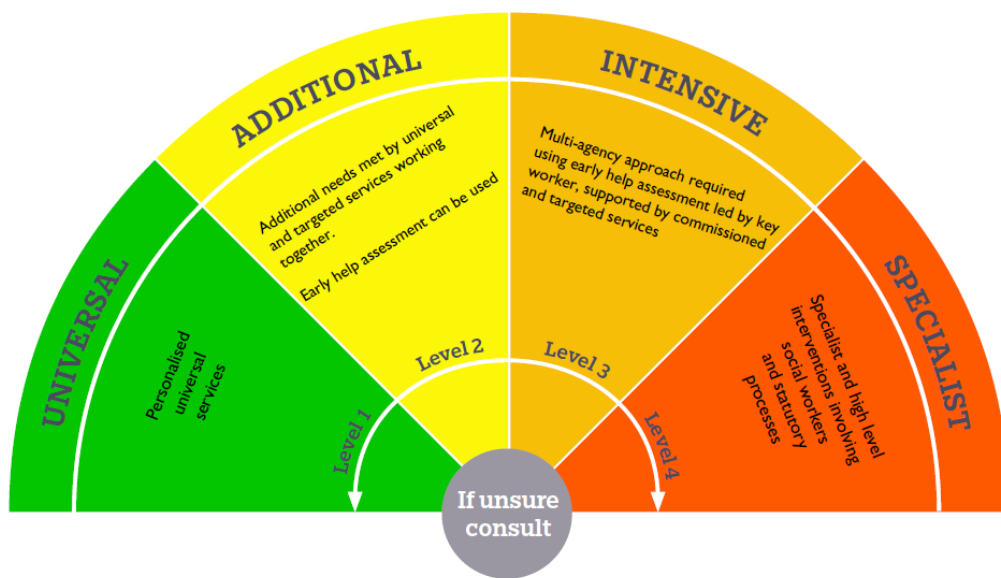
## **12. How the safeguarding partners will use data and intelligence to assess the effectiveness of the help being provided to children and families, including early help**

- 12.1 The HSCP Quality and Effectiveness group will receive information from a number of work streams. This includes:
- Performance data and intelligence
  - Single and Multiagency Audits and case file audits
  - Independent Scrutiny
  - Voice of practitioners
  - Voice of children and their families
- 12.2 The HSCP will use this data and intelligence for a number of purposes:
- To identify strengths and areas for development in the system
  - To help set priorities for the system to respond to
  - To identify the need for changes to policy, service design and practice within the remit of the three key statutory partners which will then be discussed and implemented
  - To identify areas where more fundamental service re-design is required or where a wider range of partners needs to be engaged – this will then inform the agendas for the CYPP, HSAB, the Herefordshire CSP and Health and Wellbeing Board (HWBB).
- 12.3 Annual Reports to the Safeguarding Partnership from the Independent Reviewing Officers and the Child Protection Review Service will also include the views gathered from children on Child Protection Plans and Children Looked After, and their families.

## **13. How the Right Help Right Time - Threshold Guidance setting out the local criteria for action, aligns with the HSCP multiagency safeguarding arrangements**

- 13.1 The Herefordshire arrangements will operate in line with the requirements set out in the Working Together 2023 statutory guidance and will cover the geographical boundary of Herefordshire. This is contiguous with council, HWICB and local policing area and provides a clear and strong focus on Herefordshire improvement with well-established wider networks of relevant agencies, including early year’s settings, schools and colleges.

- 13.2 The MASA does not change how partner agencies respond to identified needs and risk to children, young people and their families. All those that work with children and their families or carers are required to work to the multi-agency thresholds and levels of need document to ensure that children and families get the right support at the right time.
- 13.3 The safeguarding partners, other organisations and agencies included in these arrangements will fulfil their statutory duties to safeguard and promote the welfare of children from Herefordshire who live or are placed outside the local authority area.
- 13.4 The partnership will oversee the safeguarding aspects across Herefordshire’s continuum of need, which is illustrated below. The partnership will also support community and professional workshops during 2024/25 to ensure our multi-agency thresholds and levels of need are developed in consultation with both families and practitioners.



13.5 This continuum of need forms part of Herefordshire’s threshold guidance, called ‘Herefordshire Right Help Time Levels of Need - A guide to support professional judgement’ published in November 2020 and is based on providing the right intervention to meet the assessed needs of the child or young person at the point at which they need it. Throughout the electronic version of this document partners will find links to Herefordshire’s policy for each potential indicator, to support decision making for children & families, as well as supporting guidance from alternative sources. The new partnership arrangements are designed to ensure that the responses across this continuum of need are met in an appropriate and timely manner. The approach also promotes early help for families before they reach crisis point and ensures families are supported to help themselves. The Lead Safeguarding Partners have overall responsibility for the threshold guidance document, and will endorse any changes to it.

**14. Arrangements for commissioning and publishing local child safeguarding practice reviews**

- 14.1 The Herefordshire Joint Case Review Group delivers the local responsibilities for Child Safeguarding Practice Review as set out in ‘Working Together’ 2023. The group’s Terms of Reference have been updated and a process map and procedures setting out the new processes have been produced.

- 14.2 The Joint Case Review Group will be responsible for:
- Initiating the rapid review (in accordance with the statutory guidance set out in Working Together 2023) in respect of the incident when informed of a notifiable incident. The rapid review will be collated by the Partnership Team Manager and finalised by the Case Review Group and form the basis of advice to the delegated safeguarding partners about their recommendation to the Child Safeguarding Practice Review National Panel. The decisions of the delegated safeguarding partners resulting from rapid reviews will be subject of scrutiny from the Independent Scrutineer.
  - Publication of the reviews. This will include publication on the HSCP website in accordance with guidance set out in Chapter 4 Working Together 2023.
  - Agreeing and reviewing progress of action plans arising from reviews and for publication and dissemination of practice briefings.
- 14.3 The Joint Case Review Group is chaired by the Head of Safeguarding & Designated Nurse for Safeguarding Adults and Children, HWICB and has delegated responsibility as a senior officer, by the Safeguarding Children's Partnerships ICB Accountable Officer and Chief Nursing Officer. The JCR group Chair provides a quarterly report to the Safeguarding Partners Board or by exception.

### **15. The process for undertaking local child safeguarding practice reviews, setting out the arrangements for embedding learning across organisations and agencies**

- 15.1 HSCP continues to develop a robust approach to learning from cases and undertaking reviews of practice. It will continue to use a variety of methodologies to review cases and identify learning.
- 15.2 The HSCP Joint Case Review (JCR) group aims to develop and implement a Thematic Learning Framework, which sets a context for practice reviews and provides a consistent approach to addressing learning and seeking best practice.
- 15.3 The members of the JCR group will ensure that learning is disseminated, promoted and embedded within their organisations. They will support the Partnership Team in the development of workshops/webinars and other learning events.
- 15.4 The Partnership Team receives all notifications of serious incidents and is responsible for coordinating arrangements for rapid reviews, communication with the National Panel and for the procurement of lead reviewer services for local practice reviews on behalf of the JCR group.
- 15.5 The JCR group will be expected to draw on single agency investigations wherever possible and partners will make the learning from these available where appropriate/proportionate through the Rapid Review and Practice Review processes.
- 15.6 The JCR group will be responsible for delivering local arrangements for the identification of serious child safeguarding cases which raise issues of importance and for commissioning and overseeing the review arrangements for those cases, including the commissioning of lead reviewers, and for the quality control of reports on behalf of the Safeguarding Partners.

- 15.7 The JCR group will consider notifications of serious incidents from all partners. It will conduct Rapid Reviews in line with the Practice Guidance issued by the National Panel. The Rapid Review panel will make a recommendation on whether the case meets the criteria for a Child Safeguarding Practice Review. A final decision on the commission or not of all case reviews will be made by representatives of the three Safeguarding Partners. The Independent Scrutineer will review the outcomes of rapid reviews and the associated decisions, and make recommendations to the Delegated Safeguarding Partners where they believe it appropriate to do so.
- 15.8 From experience, Herefordshire learns best when it hears directly from the frontline practice and children. Relevant professionals will continue to be involved in safeguarding practice reviews and their feedback on the process will be monitored and evaluated. The agencies will support any staff involved from a strength based approach to ensure that the emphasis remains on learning rather than blaming, but also addressing any poor practice outside of the process. Children and families will always be considered to contribute and participate in the process.
- 15.9 On completion of a review, the report will be signed off by the Delegated Safeguarding Partners prior to publication. The Safeguarding Partners will arrange for leads of agencies and relevant stakeholders who are not core members of the HSCP to be invited to attend any meeting to hear the findings of the report and contribute final views.
- 15.10 The learning from these reviews will also be considered by the safeguarding partners who will seek to agree on how to engage with the wider partnership on systemic issues and areas for development in response to the findings and recommendations. The dissemination and embedment of learning will be the responsibility of the three statutory partners with the support of the HSCP Partnership Team.
- 15.11 The Independent Author and JCR Chair will work with the Partnership Team Manager and work force development leads to ensure that Herefordshire leaders have the opportunity to reflect on safeguarding practice from the perspective of both their service users and within their workforce.
- 15.12 Where cases do not meet the criteria for a child safeguarding practice review, a range of learning options will be developed to ensure that relevant professionals have an opportunity to reflect on the safeguarding system and their own practice

## **16. Child Death Reviews**

- 16.1 In 2019 the responsibility for ensuring that reviews are carried out when a child dies moved to the ICB and the Local Authority. In Herefordshire, the geographical and population 'footprint' of the new Child Death Review (CDR) Partners has been locally agreed. 17.2 The CDR Partners for Herefordshire and Worcestershire have formed a joint Child Death Overview Panel which will review all child deaths in those areas. A child death pathway including a series of multiagency activities, meetings, and appropriate agency representation is now in place.
- 16.2 Joint national reporting has been agreed. In addition, there will be regional themed reviews based on emerging findings from the Herefordshire and Worcestershire Child Death Overview Panel, in conjunction with CDR Partners from Shropshire, Telford and Wrekin, as well as the wider West

midlands region. This arrangement provides a better opportunity to learn from the aggregated findings from child deaths.

- 16.3 Safeguarding Partners will receive an annual report of the findings from child deaths which will be considered for workforce development and learning and review of policy procedures and services, and we will continue to foster a close working relationship with the Child Death Overview Panel.

## **17. How inter-agency learning and development offer will be commissioned, delivered and monitored for impact and how they will undertake any multiagency and interagency audits**

- 17.1 The HSCP will oversee the delivery of multi-agency training including directing the work of a partnership officer working alongside a pool of multi-agency trainers.
- 17.2 All partner agencies have a responsibility to provide a suite of training from their own organisations which will complement the multi-agency safeguarding arrangements and enable practitioners to learn how to effectively safeguard children.
- 17.3 Multi-agency training will be based on a Learning and Development Strategy developed through a training needs analysis with partners, overseen on behalf of the Partnership Board by the Development and Practice Group. The training needs analysis will take into account training that is already provided by partners and specific interagency targets , emerging issues or persons who do not otherwise have access to safeguarding learning.
- 17.4 The multiagency agency safeguarding training is free for attendees from relevant agencies. The training programme is funded through the contribution of safeguarding partners to the Safeguarding Children's Partnership business functions, as well as contribution 'in kind' through a training pool of staff from partners and agencies.
- 17.5 Evaluations of training delivery and of post-training impact on practice is collated and reported on in the yearly report, and subsequently feeds into the development of the next multiagency Learning and Development Strategy.
- 17.6 The partnership will develop a robust system to ensure the impact of training on practice and children's outcomes is further understood and informs future developments.
- 17.7 Training take-up by partners is monitored and will be reported upon in quarterly and yearly reports.

## **18. Audits**

- 18.1 The Quality and Effectiveness subgroup should receive a performance scorecard based principally on the key multi-agency operational safeguarding indicators, based on multi-agency safeguarding arrangements as set out in WT2023. Themes for further enquiry are identified through the analysis of performance data and intelligence, along with issues raised by the Partnership Board or other sub-groups. From these themes and based on learning from serious incidents, an annual programme of multi-agency case audits is developed.
- 18.2 The voice of children and families should be captured wherever possible within multi-agency auditing processes.

18.3 The outcome of audits are reported to the Quality and Effectiveness group and will be delegated to a task and finish or priority group to ensure the recommendations from the audits are actioned in real time to optimise the learning and embedment into practice.

## **19. Yearly Report**

19.1 Each year an HSCP yearly report will be published. It will include:

- a. evidence of the impact of the work of the safeguarding partners and relevant agencies, including training, on outcomes for children and families from early help to looked-after children and care leavers
- b. an analysis of any areas where there has been little or no evidence of progress on agreed priorities
- c. a record of decisions and actions taken by the partners in the report's period (or planned to be taken) to implement the recommendations of any local and national child safeguarding practice reviews, including any resulting improvements
- d. ways in which the partners have sought and utilised feedback from children and families to inform their work and influence service provision
- e. Safeguarding partners will be expected to include a review of the use of restraint where applicable within their establishment in their annual report returns.

19.2 The yearly report will be presented to the Safeguarding Partners own agency governance and accountability bodies namely the Herefordshire's Children and Families Scrutiny Committee, the Police and Crime Commissioner and the Herefordshire and Worcestershire Integrated Care Board. Final approval of the yearly report will be the responsibility of the Lead Safeguarding Partners.

19.3 The HSCP yearly report will be made publicly available on each of the Safeguarding Partners organisation websites.

## **20. Funding and Business Support and Partnership Team**

20.1 The HSCP Partnership Team and multi-agency safeguarding arrangements are principally funded by the three safeguarding partner agencies. Individual agency contributions will be agreed annually by the Lead Safeguarding Partners.

20.2 The HSCP budget may be revised throughout the year at the discretion of the partnership according to the needs of the HSCP to fulfil its functions. Agency contributions and a summary of the HSCP budget will be included within the yearly report.

20.3 Financial Accountability - The role of the Accountable Body is to ensure that financial probity is established and maintained. Herefordshire Children Services will be accountable for all funding received from statutory partners. This includes receipt of the funding, and for setting up and monitoring the financial monitoring systems. The Accountable Body is not by itself responsible for managing the financial operations of the Partnership or for taking decisions regarding allocation of funding. This means that if there is concern about whether funding is being used properly and for the purpose for which it was given, the Accountable Body will have the final decision on a course of action. However, questions about value for money and allocation of resources will be made by the Delegated Safeguarding Partners within the Partnership meetings.

20.4 Herefordshire Children Services as the Accountable Body will put in place effective arrangements for safeguarding public money, including establishing a clear line of responsibility and accountability and for the production of a finance report at bi-monthly meeting. Lines of accountability are as follows:

Director of Children Services	Accountable Body
Partnership Team Manager	Day to Day Management of Budget

20.5 The HSCP is supported by the **HSCP Partnership Team**, which is hosted by Herefordshire Council and provides support to both the HSCP and HSAB. It is important that the HSCP Partnership Team services the three statutory partners equally and is seen to be independent, although for the purposes of pay, pensions, staffing policies and procedures etc the local authority systems will be used.

20.6 The HSCP Partnership Team will continue to support with:

- Administration of all HSCP and sub structure meetings
- Co-ordinating rapid reviews and local child safeguarding practice reviews.
- Communication, including website maintenance and supporting any campaigns or awareness raising activity
- Training and workforce development
- Multi-agency policy review and updates
- Multi-agency performance data and quality assurance activity; including Service Level Agreements (SLA) with the local authority for performance analyst capacity

20.7 The HSCP Partnership Team Manager will also be responsible for producing the drafts of any rapid review reports, the Business Plan and reporting to the Safeguarding Partners Board on progress against milestones, as well as writing the yearly report on behalf of the three Safeguarding Partners.

## 21. Annual Business Cycle

An annual business plan will be produced which will incorporate both the activity required of the partnership by the Improvement Plan, and areas for development identified within the yearly report. Delivery of the business plan will be overseen by the Delegated Safeguarding Partners.

## 22. Multi-Agency Procedures

The HSCP will continue to contribute to the development and use the [Regional Child Protection Procedures for West Midlands](#) which are regularly updated and widely disseminated to partner agencies and form the basis for the multi-agency training programme.

## 23. Communications

The Safeguarding Partnership will use a range of methods to communicate with partners such as the HSCP [website](#) resources, co-produced Safeguarding Events with HWBB, HSAB and Herefordshire CSP, summits, an annual safeguarding week, including the use of social media and email communications. A dedicated communications lead will be identified by each safeguarding partner to support the work of the partnership as required.



## **24. Dispute Resolution**

- 24.1 Herefordshire safeguarding partners and relevant agencies will proactively work together to resolve any disputes locally through timely dialogue, discussion and and/or meeting within a timescale as specified within the Resolving Disagreement and Escalation Protocol. ([Multi-Agency Professional Differences Policy - Herefordshire Safeguarding Boards and Partnerships](#)).
- 24.2 It is the responsibility of each agency representative to adopt the highest standard of professional conduct, and to attempt to resolve any issue close to the organisational level where it arose, through means of a dialogue with the person or agency that brought up the matter.
- 24.3 The activities of the safeguarding partners and the effectiveness with which they work together is also subject of review through a variety of regulatory and inspection activity from Ofsted, Care Quality Commission, His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services and His Majesty's Inspectorate of Probation.

## **25. Risk Assessment**

- 25.1 There is a risk that the quality of scrutiny and quality assurance could be compromised if arrangements are changed. All partners have agreed that clear principles must be adhered to when considering any future changes. Any changes need to enhance and further strengthen partnership working and safeguarding practice and the priority will be on safety and protection at all times.
- 25.2 A second risk is the financial implication of supporting the multi-agency safeguarding arrangements, as this is key to the effectiveness. This will be mitigated by the three statutory partners addressing all financial matters so it is clear what the expectations would be on all partners who have safeguarding responsibility.

## **26. Amendments to Herefordshire's Multi-Agency Safeguarding Arrangements**

This document will be reviewed on an annual basis to ensure that it reflects national and local developments and that it remains relevant.

Any changes to the HCSP multi-agency safeguarding arrangements shall be ratified by the Lead Safeguarding Partners. Any member may request a review of the arrangements by writing their request to the Safeguarding Partners Board (SPB) Chair.

The (SPB) Chair on receipt of the request will notify members of the partnership and ensure the matter is placed as an item on the partnership's agenda for full consideration.

The three statutory safeguarding partners will report any updates to the published arrangements in their yearly report and the proposed timescale for implementation.

## Appendix 1 - HSCP Structure

