

Title of meeting:	Lead Member Briefing
Decision maker	Cabinet Member for Children and Families
Subject:	New Strategic Safeguarding Children Partnership Arrangements
Date of meeting:	21 June 2019
Report from:	Alison Jeffery Director of Children, Families and Education
Wards affected:	All Wards
Key decision (over £250k):	No
Full Council decision:	No

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the new strategic safeguarding children partnership arrangements for Portsmouth

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 **It is recommended that the Cabinet Member approves the new strategic safeguarding children partnership arrangements on behalf of the City Council ready for publishing (Appendix A). The arrangements have been approved already by the Portsmouth Clinical Commissioning Group and by Hampshire Police.**

3. Background and Context

- 3.1 In July 2018, the Government published the revised Working Together statutory guidance for safeguarding children.
- 3.2 This outlined the requirement for new local strategic safeguarding partnership arrangements to replace Local Safeguarding Children's Boards as well as changes to how Serious Case Reviews are carried out and arrangements for Child Death Overview Panels.
- 3.3 Working Together 2018 Chapter 3 outlines the new safeguarding arrangements. The key points are:

- a. Emphasis on safeguarding being everyone's business and the expectation to join up the system
 - b. The amendments to the Children's Act 2004 to establish three 'safeguarding partners'; the local authority, CCG and chief of police for the area. They have 'equal and joint responsibility for local safeguarding arrangements'.
 - c. An expectation that the three statutory safeguarding partners work with 'relevant agencies' named in local arrangements, who then have a duty to cooperate with those arrangements
 - d. The purpose of the arrangements is to protect children, promote their welfare, and challenge and hold local agencies to account, ensure early identification of problems, promote learning, and facilitate and drive action beyond the usual institutional boundaries
 - e. The geographical area for partnership arrangements should be based on the footprints of a local authorities but more than one council can be under one partnership
 - f. Safeguarding partners must set out who the local relevant agencies are - the 2018 Regulation set out who those should include - see the lengthy list in Appendix 1
 - g. Safeguarding partners must set out expectations of 'relevant agencies', any contribution they make to the strategic safeguarding arrangements, how they will work with relevant agencies, how they will ensure they have robust policies and procedures and how information will be shared
 - h. There is a specific section on schools and other education providers (though it says little more than what applies to any other 'relevant agency')
 - i. Relevant agencies have a duty to comply with requests for information regarding learning from practice
 - j. There is an expectation of independent scrutiny. The guidance does not specify how this might work but states that scrutiny should be objective, constructive and promote reflection to drive improvement. There should be independent scrutiny of a published annual report
 - k. Funding - the safeguarding partners and relevant agencies should make payments towards expenditure incurred for the purpose of the arrangements. It should be 'equitable, proportionate and transparent'
 - l. A report must be published at least every 12 months including information on training, child outcomes, learning, progress on priorities, progress on recommendation from practice reviews and how feedback from children has influenced local provision
- 3.4 Chapter 4 sets out the purpose of children reviews, the duties on local authorities to inform the national Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel where there has been a serious incident and some criteria to determine if a review is local or national.
- 3.5 Chapter 5 sets out arrangements for child death reviews with the development of 'Child Death Review Partners' who should model their work on CDOPs. The

geographical footprint should be such that the arrangements cover around 60 child deaths a year.

4. The Response in Portsmouth

- 4.1 A number of conversations and workshops have been had with the three statutory safeguarding partners (PCC, CCG and Police) together with existing PCSB members to develop our local arrangements for further improvement to child safeguarding. Our approach has been to keep the best practice that we have (the PCBS having previously been rated 'Good' by Ofsted) whilst taking the new arrangements as an opportunity to improve what we do. Moreover, we have retained an inclusive set of arrangements with a wide range of 'relevant partners'
- 4.2 There are three major changes that are worth highlighting:
- a) The creation of a more formal 'Executive' as Hampshire, IoW, Portsmouth and Southampton level
 - b) Shifting from an Independent Chair model to an independent chair and 'scrutineer' model and sharing that post with Southampton
 - c) Adopting a model of "deep dive" topic based scrutiny, building on our already effective practice of multi-agency auditing and data analysis.
- 4.3 The revised arrangements have to be published by 29 June. We have secured both CCG and Hampshire Police agreement to these arrangements.

5. Legal implications

- 5.1 The arrangements take account of relevant provisions of the 2017 Children and Social Work Act and statutory guidance published in 2018. If Portsmouth agencies, including the city council, were to decide they wished to withdraw from the wider Hampshire, Isle of Wight, Portsmouth and Southampton (HIPS) arrangements, a year's notice would need to be given. There is no financial exchange between the authorities to support the HIPS arrangements, which are expected to be supported in kind through the time of different officers across the area.

6. Finance comments

- 6.1 The arrangements are designed to cost no more than current safeguarding partnership arrangements.

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Signed by:
Alison Jeffery
Director of Children, Families and Education

Attachment: Portsmouth Safeguarding Children Arrangements