

Serious Incidents & Reviews Subgroup

Revised Terms of Reference and Membership

(Updated 29 November 2022)

1. Purpose

The purpose of the Serious Incidents & Reviews Subgroup is to:

- Respond to notifications of serious safeguarding incidents and convene Rapid Reviews, and to advise the Executive if a Safeguarding Practice Review should be commissioned.
- Commission Safeguarding Practice Reviews and provide regular updates to the Executive.
- Quality assure the review process to ensure that agencies across the partnership demonstrate due diligence in their internal management reviews and provide timely and comprehensive information to the partnership.
- Ensure that all reviews are Chaired effectively and are competently conducted by credible review authors.
- Formally receive Reviews from review panels and formulate and agree an action plan to deliver the review's learning and recommendations; and
- Identify and report on emerging themes, cross-cutting issues, and inequalities.

2. Accountabilities and Governance

Partners are accountable for their own performance and members of the subgroup are responsible for reporting progress, key issues and actions through their own governance structures.

As identified in *Working Together 2018*, strong leadership is critical for the new arrangements to be effective in bringing together the various organisations and agencies. It is therefore necessary for all partner representatives to play an active role. The representatives, or those they delegate authority to, should be able to:

- speak with authority for the safeguarding partner they represent
- take decisions, as appropriate, on behalf of and in consultation with their organisation or agency and commit them on policy, resourcing and practice matters
- hold their own organisation or agency to account on how effectively they participate and implement the local arrangements.

The chair/s of the Subgroup will report to each Executive meeting.

3. Support and Finance

The work of the Subgroup will be supported by the LSCP Business Manager and Business Unit. Activities of the Subgroup will be resourced from the agreed annual LSCP budget.

4. Membership of the Subgroup will include representatives from:

- Health: Designated Doctor; Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust; King's College Hospital NHS Foundation Trust; South London and Maudsley NHS Trust; Primary Care
- Police: Public Protection
- Lambeth Council: Children's Social Care; Education; Community Safety; Housing, VAWG
- Probation Services

- School representative
- Community/Voluntary Sector Representative

The following will also attend Subgroup meetings:

- The Independent Scrutineer
- Relevant officers, including the LSCP Manager

The Subgroup will ordinarily meet every 6 weeks. Additional meetings will be held as required to respond to serious safeguarding practice notifications.

5. The role of the Chair/s of the Subgroup

The Chair/s of the subgroup will be appointed by the LSCP Executive. The Chair/s will be responsible for chairing the meetings of the subgroup, including approving the agenda and meeting minutes. The Chair/s will work with the LSCP Business Manager to sustain the engagement and momentum of the Subgroup, monitoring progress and actions in between meetings.

6. The role of the Subgroup in Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews

Working Together 2018 states that the responsibility for 'how the system learns lessons from serious child safeguarding incidents lies at a national level with the Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel and locally with the three safeguarding partners.'

Agencies will follow the LSCP's Operational Notification Protocol to notify partner representatives of all serious child safeguarding and public protection incidents. The Serious Incidents & Reviews Subgroup Chairs will consider if the incident meets the criteria to be referred to the National Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel. Where it does, they will instruct the LSCP Business Manager to convene a Rapid Review promptly and ask agencies to provide a summary of their involvement, so that facts about the case can be established.

The Serious Incidents & Reviews Subgroup Chairs will determine the chair of and panel for the Rapid Review. The Rapid Review panel will discuss whether immediate action is needed to ensure the safety of children, consider the potential for identifying improvements and complete a report. Once signed off by the Rapid Review Panel, the report will be signed off by the Executive Chairs before being submitted to the National Panel. The Rapid Review report will make a recommendation as to whether a safeguarding practice review should be undertaken (in line with the criteria set out on page 85 of Working Together 2018).

The decision to undertake a safeguarding practice review rests with the Chairs of the Executive, in consultation with the safeguarding partners. If a decision is made to undertake a Child Safeguarding Practice Review, the LSCP Manager, in collaboration with the Independent Scrutineer and the Chairs of the Subgroup, will recommend an independent reviewer to undertake the review, based on their expertise, knowledge, practice experience (as set out in Working Together 2018).

The independent reviewer will provide updates to the Subgroup Chairs at regular intervals. A draft report of the Child Safeguarding Practice Review will be submitted to the Subgroup Chairs and Independent Scrutineer within four months of the review having been initiated. A final report will be completed within five months. The report will be written in a way to avoid harming the welfare of children or families involved in the case.

7. Escalation

Working Together 2018 states that safeguarding partners are expected to work together to resolve disputes locally. In the event of any disagreement, the Executive will be notified and the Designated Officers from the three statutory partners will meet to agree a resolution.

8. Independent scrutiny

As established in Working Together 2018, the role of independent scrutiny is to provide assurance in judging the effectiveness of multi-agency arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children in a local area, including arrangements to identify and review serious child safeguarding cases. As such, the Independent Scrutineer may attend Subgroup meetings and work with relevant partners and/or the Chair/s of the Subgroup as necessary.

9. Annual Reporting

As set out in Working Together 2018, the LSCP will publish a report at least once in every 12-month period. The report will set out LSCP actions, including on child safeguarding practice reviews, and how effective partnership arrangements have been in practice. The Subgroup, through the Chair/s will provide information to feed into this report as requested.