



**Hounslow Safeguarding Children Partnership Meeting**  
**Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> May 2023**  
**3.00pm – 5.00pm**  
**Virtually, via MS Teams**

<b>Attendees</b>		
<b>Name</b>	<b>Agency</b>	<b>Designation</b>
Steven Forbes	London Borough of Hounslow	Executive Director, Children's & Adults' Services and Chair of the HSCP and HSAB
Jo Leader	HSCP	Service Manager
Martin Forshaw	London Borough of Hounslow	Director, Children's Safeguarding & Specialist Services
Elizna Visser	London Borough of Hounslow	Head of Safeguarding & Quality Assurance
Vicki Taylor	London Borough of Hounslow	Interim Assistant Director Education & Skills
Councillor Lily Bath	Education and Children's Services	Councillor
Sarah Green	Chelsea & Westminster Hospital	Consultant Midwife for Public Health and Safeguarding
Niamh Murrell	Hounslow, Kingston and Richmond	Deputy Head of Service
Parminder Sahota	West London NHS Trust	Director of Safeguarding Children and Adults
Stephanie Hancock	HRCH	Deputy Named Nurse Safeguarding Children HRCH
Andrea Edwards	ICB	Designated Nurse Safeguarding Children
Siobhan Appleton	ICB	Assistant Director for Safeguarding, NW London
Clea Barry	CAFCASS	Service Manager
Natasha Wilson	Feltham YOI	Governor
Rebecca Reeves	Police	Detective Superintendent, Public Protection, West Area BCU
Kamm Grewal	Springwell School	Headteacher (Nominated Primary School Rep)
Michael Michaelides	West Thames College	Executive Director Resources & Student Experience
<b>Apologies</b>		
Kelly O'Neill	London Borough of Hounslow	Director Public Health
Phil Hopkins	London Borough of Hounslow	Head of Adolescent Services
Amanda Lowes	London Borough of Hounslow	Assistant Director: Homelessness, Independence and Preventative Services
Annita Cornish	London Borough of Hounslow	Interim Assistant Director Special Educational Needs and Disability
Claire Smith	London Borough of Hounslow	Assistant Director for Children's Commissioning
Alex Wicking	London Borough of Hounslow	Senior Public Health Officer, Commissioning - Public Health Improvement
Thomas Webster	West London NHS Trust	Named Nurse Safeguarding Children
Aparna Bevan	NHS North West London	Named GP Safeguarding Children, Hounslow NHS North West London, Designated Doctor for Looked After Children, Hounslow NHS North West London

Permjit Chadha	Community Safety	Head of Service
Ian Berryman	Woodbridge Park Education Service	Headteacher (Nominated Special Schools Rep)
Kumal Rajpaul	HRCH	Interim Director of Nursing & Non Medical Professionals
Josephine Daly	Oak Heights School	Independent School Rep
Graeme Baker	West Thames College	Head of Quality & Standards
Victoria Eadie	Tudor Park Education	CEO (Nominated Secondary School Rep)
Katie Stone	Feltham YOI	Head of Safeguards
Taruna Rampersad	ARC	Service Manager
Christopher Davidson	London Fire Brigade	

### 1) Introductions & Apologies

Partnership members introduced themselves to the meeting. All Members welcomed Jo Leader back from Maternity Leave. Apologies were noted.

### 2) Minutes of the last meeting & matters arising

The minutes of the last meeting were discussed. All members agreed there were no changes or amendments to be made.

### 3) Action Log

Hayley Stockwell relayed that there were no open actions on the action log.

## AGENDA (Part A)

### 4) New Pan London Threshold Matrix

Jo Leader gave a verbal report. Key points were:

- The London Partnership Board, who maintain and update the London Child Protection procedures along with their threshold document, have created a new, revised, simplified Threshold Matrix. The MASH review found that a number of London Boroughs had varying localised threshold documents and matrix which creates challenges in cross borough working.
- They have asked that all London Partnerships formally adopt this Threshold Matrix to replace their own localised version and republish it to support Pan London working. Croydon are currently the only Borough not formally adopting it due to the time and effort taken to revise their own document.
- The document is not too dissimilar to the HSCP's current document.

The Chair questioned whether replacing the Partnership's own threshold document with the new matrix will have an impact operationally.

Martin Forshaw suggested keeping the 2 documents but modifying the Partnership's threshold document to incorporate the new London wide guidance and updating the links, as there are certain key principles in the Partnership's threshold document that are important to retain, such as the emphasis on Early Help.

Sarah Green stated that at a quick glance the document looked really good and it would make things much easier if everybody across London, or even Nationally, could follow the same process.

Jo Leader informed the group that it is now part of the London Child Protection procedures and their threshold guidance, and not an addendum or standalone document.

The Chair reiterated that the ask is to replace any existing threshold document and agreed with Martin Forshaw that there are some local aspects that need to be retained. He suggested that if the threshold matrix is adopted then localised guidance can be created to pick up on those things that this Partnership considers useful, such as early help and early intervention. He suggested a small group of people meet to create the Hounslow Guidance.

Jo Leader responded that once the supplementary guidance was agreed, a comms will need to be circulated advising everybody to change their references to direct to the Pan London Threshold Matrix with the supplementary guidance.

Kamm Grewal enquired about the timeline of the rollout of the new threshold matrix.

Jo Leader advised that the Pan London matrix was already live, and boroughs are signing up to it, but it is a decision for the Board to make as to whether it is formally adopted.

The Chair acknowledged that for schools it is nearing the end of the academic year so it would not be reasonable to ask them to make amendments, but all other Partner agencies could adopt the threshold matrix within a relatively short time frame and a later date could be assigned for it go live in schools, although an immediate decision cannot be made as more time needs to be given in order to create the Hounslow localised guidance.

Jo Leader suggested that local supporting guidance be done within around 6 weeks which would also give time for discussion by Partners in the SE Subgroup, after which comms can be sent and it can be uploaded onto the website. It will be made clear that it will apply to schools from September.

Reeves Rebecca added that there will be a formal adoption date for the new Pan London Threshold Matrix across the 12 BCUs.

The Chair noted that in essence everybody is agreed that in approximately 6 weeks' time, following discussion and review at the SE Subgroup and the creation of localised guidance, it can be adopted with it to be applied to schools from September.

Jo Leader agreed the timelines and that she would confirm the position with the London Partnership in order for them to keep track.

Vicki Taylor added that they could put it into the Headteachers bulletin at beginning of the academic year.

***Action: Jo Leader to discuss in the next SE Subgroup meeting and look to create localised guidance within 6 weeks with a view to sign up to the Pan London Threshold Matrix, with the exception of school who will go live in September.***

***Action: Jo Leader to contact the London Partnership to inform them of this Partnership's position.***

## **5) Family Hub Update**

Martin Forshaw gave a brief update on Family Hubs:

- Links to the Government's guidance and background reading on Family Hubs will be circulated to Members.
- Family Hubs are physical spaces and also virtual hubs and are part of the Government's latest drive to strengthen Early Help across the country and formalise it so people will be familiar with troubled families and the principle of an Early Help system.
- Physical Family Hubs will offer prescribed services located in a single location, with a broader range of services available virtually.
- Virtual access to Family Hubs will be via designated services, but there is direct access at certain prescribed places.

- Hounslow is one of 75 Boroughs pioneering Early Help Hubs, with a Project Board leading on it chaired by Steven Forbes.
- Prescribed milestones indicate that the physical Family Hub access points need to be in place and operational by the end of June 2023 and they are looking at using libraries for this purpose.
- There will initially be 3 hubs; East, West and Central. West is further ahead due to the involvement of the Reach Academy. Feltham Library has been identified as the access point for first Family Hub.
- Care is being taken to dovetail the Family Hubs with the Community Hubs to ensure there is no duplication.
- Part of the wider developments of the Children's Front Door is to try to move away from the current system of being inundated with information from Partner agencies. Family Hubs will fit into that new wider liaison initiative giving the opportunity to discuss families of most concern prior to sending a referral to the Front Door as part of the step up to a more statutory intervention.

Sarah Green enquired where the Family Information Service will fit within the new Family Hubs.

Martin Forshaw confirmed that it was yet to be decided if the Family Information Service will form part of the physical or virtual Partner Membership of the hubs, but they are part of it.

The Chair expressed that Family Hubs are an attempt to make Statutory Services, particularly across the 0-5 age bracket, and Early Intervention work more effective. A Programme Board has been set up to deliver Family Hubs and each of the 3 hubs will have its' own Governance Board, which colleagues across all Partnership agencies will be asked to be part of, along with Parent Panels. He highlighted that, although the DFE wants to change the nature of how things are done, there is no additional funding which is a challenge. The overall aim is to deal with situations early so they do not escalate. He added that the Safeguarding Partnership needs assurance that any system redesign will not put the current systems in place at risk and will need to be regularly reviewed by Partners. He suggested that himself and Martin Forshaw liaise with Akosua Bame-Ashiagbor to discuss what formal development updates should be brought to this group.

***Action: Links to the Government's guidance and background reading on Family Hubs to be circulated to Members.***

***Action: Steven Forbes and Martin Forshaw to discuss with Akosua Bame-Ashiagbor (Programme Manager, ACE - Programmes and Change) what formal development updates should be brought to the Board.***

## **6) Safeguarding Strategy**

- **Stable Homes Built on Love**
- **Working Together update and impact on LSCPs**

Jo Leader gave verbal report. Key points were:

- The Government's 'Stable Homes Built on Love' strategy has been developed following the review into Children's Social Care Reform, along with findings from some high profile National safeguarding Reviews and the second Alan Wood review.
- A further reform of Safeguarding Partnerships is planned soon to strengthen multi-agency working practice and strengthening the Child Protection system.
- The Wood Review recognised that the move from Safeguarding Boards to Partnerships has resulted in everybody making up their own arrangements locally and things being taken out of a formal regulation and evaluation system other than the Joint Targeted Area Inspections which has led to, locally, accountability not being as clear within the Safeguarding systems that it should.
- The Government developed a cross-party multi-agency group that consulted on the Stable Homes strategy.
- Hounslow responded locally and ultimately agreed with a lot of the principles.
- Working Together will now be rewritten and will mainly focus on strengthening and the requirements of a Local Safeguarding Children Partnership and although specific detail is unknown is expected to be lots of

focus on partnership arrangements and the development of some multi-agency safeguarding practice guidance that local areas will need to implement, manage and seek assurance on.

- It is likely that Working Together will become more prescriptive on membership and expectations of leadership and the statutory safeguarding partners which includes decision making and accountability.
- The Multi-Agency Safeguarding Arrangements published in 2018 will need to be rewritten to meet the new standard.
- The aim is for the rewrite to be rolled out this year, which may be unachievable, but a timeframe will be issued for when the new arrangements are expected to be in place and functioning.
- There will be a requirement for an Executive Board and Hounslow already has a lot of the expected structures in place.
- There will be an expectation for the Partnership to publish quarterly assurance statements on safeguarding practice in addition to an annual report.
- The Association of Safeguarding Partnership (TASP) are working with Ofsted on the inspection regime for Safeguarding Partnerships which is expected to go live in around 18 months' time.
- Independent scrutiny is crucial to the arrangements and will need to be implemented and the advert for the recruitment of an Independent Scrutineer is currently being worked on.

Sarah Green asked if Health consulted on this document.

Andrea Edwards confirmed that a colleague sent a response which she could share a copy of.

Jo Leader told Members that the parliamentary letter suggested that the partnership board would become an operational group of partner members at Senior organisational level, who would respond and report to the Executive Board of Statutory Safeguarding Partners and the DCS has been identified as the most appropriate role to Chair the group as the holder of statutory child protection processes. Membership and at what level will be very prescriptive and they will want decisions to be made quickly by people who can commit their organisation to change and provide resources where needed.

**Action: Andrea Edwards to share the Health response with Sarah Green.**

## **7) Section 11 Audit**

Jo Leader gave a brief verbal report. Key points were:

- A Section 11 has not been done in Hounslow for quite some time and will need to be done and will help to write the Partnership's assurance statement on the basic safeguarding practices and processes.
- The online tool is available for all Partners to use (except Education as the Education audit covers this requirement) and will be rolled out imminently with a projected 8-week turnaround.
- Any Section 11 done centrally in an agency should be sent to Jo Leader as soon as it is available. If a central Section 11 is not being undertaken the tool will need to be completed and agencies should inform Jo Leader of their nominated auditor in order for a link to be sent to them. Once completed Jo Leader will analyse results over the summer in order to bring the findings for discussion at the Challenge Day/Assurance Effectiveness Event planned for October 2023.

The Chair stated that confirmation of any agency's central Section 11 undertaken within the last 12 months needs to be submitted no later than 30 May 2023 and that anybody that needs to use the tool does so within 6 weeks of 1 June 2023.

**Action: All Partners to send Jo Leader any Section 11 done centrally within agencies in the last 12 months by 30 May 2023 and if one has not been completed then it is to be done by 13 July 2023 (6 weeks from 1 June).**

**Action: All Partners to inform Jo Leader of the main organiser of their audit.**

## **8) Quality Assurance Program 2023/24**

Jo Leader relayed that the Quality Assurance Programme for 2023/24 will consist of the Section 11 audit, the annual Education audit and the multi-agency re-audit of Neglect, for which a decision needs to be made about the Partnership's current position.

The Chair echoed the need for the Partnership to reach a final decision on Neglect as a priority.

Martin Forshaw noted that although Neglect was highlighted as a priority it was never agreed what the resolution would be, so some clarity is needed.

The Chair observed that if the Partnership could assure themselves that the response to Neglect is managed effectively it may be sufficient, but Neglect cannot continue to be a priority year upon year.

Sarah Green enquired if any audit had shown improvement in any specific area.

Martin Forshaw replied that a targeted audit of Neglect cases in the normal audit cycle indicated good practice, but neglect cannot be "cured", it can only be managed and the embedding of the Quality of Care Tool has helped to manage that better.

Jo Leader reported that the auditor is delivering the Neglect training at the moment and feels that Hounslow is in step with a lot of other areas nationally and over the timeframe of the audits she has completed for Hounslow she has seen the progress that has been made. The Partnership would like to see consistent multi-agency use of the Quality of Care Tool as a lot of work has gone into training the multi-agency use of it. If it can be seen in this year's audit that there is consistent use of the tool and that joint effort can be seen in practice around a neglectful family then the Partnership may be in the position to step down Neglect as a priority.

The Chair questioned if the Partnership can be assured that the procedures and response is effective enough to safeguard children from decline and if that would be sufficient in terms of it being a priority as a Safeguarding Board, as Neglect cannot continue to be a working priority year upon year. He agreed that if this audit showed progression then a line could be drawn on Neglect and the Partnership could focus on other priorities. He suggested revisiting it in the autumn in order to make a final decision about whether assurance can be given that systems can protect children.

Jo Leader stated that the auditor can be asked to look at it in order to feed back to the Board in late autumn/winter in order to have the discussion ready for the next year.

## **9) AOB**

Sarah Green informed the group about an Embrace Report looking into maternal deaths which notes that the highest number of maternal deaths in the last few years has been due to suicide, of which the highest number of those cases are as a result of children being removed from the parent. She highlighted the need for this to be looked at and considered from a 'Think Family' approach about what input and care are put in place for those parents, as the number is rising.

The Chair agreed that when the group next meets in the autumn this can be considered, along with other issues such as online harm and exploitation, as something to focus on moving forward.