

Wiltshire's safeguarding plan

Working together to protect the vulnerable

2019

WILTSHIRE'S SAFEGUARDING PARTNERSHIP



Introduction

The Government published new guidance in 2018 that set out how local areas should work to replace Local Safeguarding Children Boards (LSCB) with new partnership arrangements.

Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 requires that as local safeguarding partners we set out arrangements to work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of local children including identifying and responding to their needs.

A safeguarding partner in relation to our local authority area is defined under the Children Act 2004 (as amended by the Children and Social Work Act, 2017) as:

- (a) Wiltshire Council
- (b) NHS Wiltshire Clinical Commissioning Group
- (c) Wiltshire Police

Our Safeguarding Plan sets out our intention to work together and with wider partners and communities to safeguard the vulnerable in Wiltshire. We are committed to maximising the integration of the children's safeguarding agenda with that of the adult's system and with the work of the Community Safety Partnership. We believe this will better reflect the realities and challenges of the lives of vulnerable people in the county. We are committed to the aspirations and content set out in this plan and will engage widely to ensure its success. We are also committed to the need to respond flexibly and creatively to new challenges as they arise.

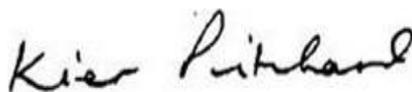
Our new arrangements are designed to offer us the chance to work more effectively and with joint purpose to protect children and young people and support those who most need our help into adulthood.

We agree and state our intention to ensure these plans help us continue to promote and improve the safety, welfare and health of children and families in Wiltshire.

Signed:



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Kier Pritchard
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Working in partnership with
Wiltshire Council
Where everybody matters



NHS
Wiltshire
Clinical Commissioning Group

The Wiltshire context

Wiltshire partners have responded positively and creatively to the opportunities presented by **Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018** and the need to construct a new safeguarding plan for the county.

Partnerships are strong in Wiltshire. They have formed the basis of the 'way we do things around here' for some considerable time. Meeting the needs of the most vulnerable and the most at risk has been at the heart of that work from the very outset. It is a matter of pride that recent external scrutiny has commented so positively on our work together – most notably, the 2016 Joint Targeted Area Inspection and the 2018 Special Educational Needs and Disability inspection.

The key partnerships in the county working to meet the needs of vulnerable children and families are:

- The Family and Children's Transformation (FACT) Programme and associated workstreams
- The Education Transformation Board
- The emerging Adult Transformation programme
- The Community Safety Partnership and associated work streams
- The work of the Safeguarding Adults Board

A key element of our partnership work is increasingly a bias towards innovation and integration. The FACT programme is the key partnership which is radically redesigning services to vulnerable children and their families. Key value propositions for the programme are:

- No bouncing around the system
- Seeing things through
- Warm handovers
- Services are person centred and see the whole person
- Keep it simple

The Wiltshire Education Transformation Board is a school-led partnership focussed on raising attainment for all and especially on closing the gap between the majority of children who do well in Wiltshire's schools and the small but important minority who do not.

Adult services are engaged in a transformation programme to modernise and bring innovation into their service provision through increased integrated working across the health and social care system. This aims to improve outcomes through strength based practice with an emphasis on prevention, early intervention and maximising independence.

The Wiltshire Safeguarding Adults Board is a statutory body which works to provide assurance that organisations in Wiltshire are working together to safeguard vulnerable adults from abuse and neglect in line with the Care Act 2014. Making safeguarding personal is a priority for the board and to assure services are person centred and outcome focused. The board provides assurance that safeguarding practice is continuously improving and commissions Safeguarding Adults Reviews. In 2019-2020, the executive will continue to focus on sharing and implementing learning from Safeguarding Adults Reviews and the Board will assume governance responsibility for the county's Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub for adults (the adult MASH).

The Community Safety Partnership is well established in the county and sets its priorities in line with the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment, focused needs assessments and Wiltshire Police's Control Strategy.

The overall priority of the partnership is to tackle whole system vulnerability, working across the life course in the context of following vision:

“A population, community or individual may be vulnerable or considered ‘at risk’ if they are unable to anticipate, identify, protect and recover from potential or actual harm, at any point across their lifetime, denying them the opportunity to thrive.”

The partnership works to prevent and reduce crime, the impact of crime on victims and wider community, focusing on reoffending, fear of crime, anti-social behaviour, domestic abuse, harm caused by drug and alcohol misuse and the reduction of extremism through local application of the Government's Prevent and Channel programmes.

Wiltshire Community Safety Partnership, 2018

This is a busy and complex set of partnership arrangements placing considerable demands on agencies to populate all the various boards, sub groups and work streams.

Wiltshire safeguarding arrangements

‘Safeguarding’ relates to both the work needed to develop and deliver services designed to keep our population safe by reducing the levels of risks individuals face and it relates to the range of activities that offer to the safeguarding system.

Our Safeguarding Plan sets out the core elements of our approach and how we develop and challenge practice across the partnership with multi-agency partners holding each other to account.

At the heart of our work is one simple proposition:

Children, young people and adults live in families and local communities; these can be sources of support and safety or of danger and risk. Our approach to safeguarding and protecting our community is focused around where people live and with whom – it's an approach which has ‘Think Family, Think Community’ at its heart.

Safeguarding Vulnerable People Partnership

In order to deliver this approach successfully, the plan will necessarily need to cover and address work which sits across children and adult services and community safety.

Our safeguarding plan therefore is designed to work in the spaces 'between' those key partnerships described above and, in so doing, ensure that the safeguarding needs of children, young people and adults are both addressed in context and align one with the other.

At the heart of the Wiltshire Plan is the construction of the **Safeguarding Vulnerable People Partnership (SVPP)**.

It has been named as the SVPP to reflect the broader contextual nature of the approach to safeguarding we intend to adopt, and to recognise the aspirations to broaden its scope in future years.

To reflect the statutory responsibilities in Working Together 2018 to ensure the safeguarding of children in Wiltshire, the safeguarding partners have worked together to address safeguarding in the context of family and community.

SVPP – 2019 and beyond

As the SVPP (Figure 1) develops and as there is evidence that the safeguarding of children is being effectively addressed, so it will explore the potential to create more integration, less duplication and greater streamlining of partnership work within the county. It will seek to expand the experiences and approaches developed in the SVPP, to add value where needed to the quality assurance and scrutiny partnerships in the county from a base of experience and knowing 'what works'

Key elements of the SVPP

- It will develop a geographical and community focus and in so doing ensure that agency responses are varied to meet the needs of different communities and locations across the county.
- It will examine areas which require a response from across the children, adult and community safety areas.
- All safeguarding partners will make a shared and equal contribution to the quality and impact agenda in terms of leadership, culture setting, data production and evaluation of practice.
- Practice will be developed using a clear evidence base of demographic and population projections to plan and respond effectively.
- It will develop a relentless focus on outcomes for children and young people (see the quality and impact section below).
- It will ensure that our collective approach to risk and risk management is aligned and explicit and will ensure that front line practitioners are enabled and supported to carry the risks they are presented with.
- It will ensure that workforce development is focussed on developing staff skilled in 'relationship based' work. Clearly there are specific areas of expertise and knowledge needed within certain specialisms/roles but at the heart of it is a need to be confident that the partnerships have front line staff able to assess and respond to risk; to form professional relationships with service users and to use those relationships to drive change and increase safety and well-being.

- Finally, the SVPP will act to ensure users and the wider community are properly engaged in our work. This is a priority area which we continually strive to improve further; for example developments around the engagement of young people and the voice of users within adult services. We are specifically working to ensure we have the voice of parents and extended family members - many of who might also be adult service users. (Our Early Adopters bid majors on this theme).

The SVPP will discuss its areas of work with the Health and Wellbeing Board, the relevant political select committees, the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner, the CCG's non-executive directors and other key stakeholders. This will ensure that its work adds value to other related developments in the county and that there is a transparency in our work and others are able to challenge the partnership as needed.

The SVPP will be served by three sub groups (Figure 2):

1. **A Quality and Impact Group** which focusses on delivering a quality assurance function, developing and driving an approach to quality and impact that can work in children's, adults and the CSP worlds and, most importantly, can work where they interface.
2. **A Practice Review Group** that oversees the Rapid Review process and Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews and any other multi agency audits into children's services as needed. They will develop approaches based on 'appreciative inquiry' to examine what works and disseminate learning accordingly. They will lead on the development of a core methodology and work alongside the CSP and WSAB to introduce compatible methodologies for Domestic Homicide Reviews and Safeguarding Adults Reviews.
3. **The Voice of the User and of Local People.** There is currently a Young People's Safeguarding Board which informs the work of the WSCB, and a Service Users Group and a Carers Network developed under the WSAB. These voices will be added to feedback emanating from the 18 community area boards across the county and any other public or community engagement activities to give a collective overview of the views of local people inasmuch as they relate to issues of public safety and protection. The SVPP will particularly wish to ensure it is hearing from the 'seldom heard' and hard to reach groups to ensure its work is properly informed by the experiences of service users.

SVPP membership

The core membership of the SVPP is:

- I. Independent chair
- II. DCS or nominated deputy
- III. Chief constable or nominated deputy
- IV. CCG chief executive or nominated deputy
(all deputies will be part of the senior management team in their organisations)
- V. Chair of the WSAB
- VI. Chair of the CSP
- VII. Director of public health (currently is CSP chair also)
- VIII. DASS/adult transformation lead

The SVPP will meet every 8-12 weeks but will set out arrangements to ensure child safeguarding practice reviews (see below) and any new and emerging safeguarding risk is managed and responded to promptly, convening extraordinary meetings as needed.

Figure 1:



Figure 2:



Geographical area

The boundaries for the SVPP will be those of Wiltshire Council. However, every effort will be made to explore integration with those neighbouring authorities. This will provide greater efficiencies, notably for the police and CCG who span more than one local authority area. In particular, approaches to the exploitation of young people, responding to missing children, the Section 11 expectations (see scrutiny section below), sharing of quality and impact approaches and any other areas where partners or relevant agencies are experiencing a duplication of demand.

Relevant agencies including schools, colleges and other educational providers

The SVPP is necessarily a small and senior body. It needs to be so to retain its focus on its core agenda of scrutinising service provision within the county.

However, the safeguarding of children and young people, and services to them and their families are offered by a much wider range of organisations in the county, and their contribution and voice in these arrangements are critical.

In addition to the key partnerships listed above, there are a number of other professional forums in the county that will relate to and work with the SVPP and its constituent parts.

These include:

- The Corporate Parenting Board
- The Children and Young People Safeguarding Panel
- The Children Safeguarding Forum (for designated health professionals)
- NHS England Safeguarding Meetings
- Wiltshire Association of Secondary and Special School Headteachers
- Schools (WASSH)
- The Primary Heads Forum (PHF) Wiltshire Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs) for Schools and Early Years networks
- The Multi-Agency Practitioner Forums established by the WSCB

All of the relevant organisations in the county are present and active in at least one of the five key partnerships and their sub-groups, or in these groups listed above. They are therefore collectively all part of this plan through those memberships and contributions.

The termly meetings of DSLs for schools and early year's settings are valued and well attended. This will be maintained and developed within our new arrangements. They offer essential communication and information flows and allow DSLs to network and problem solve together. We will be building an offer of group supervision in 2019.

The two health based meetings set out above will have a direct route into the SVPP through the CCG. They represent a key stakeholder group in the safeguarding system and their experiences and contributions are central to the delivery of a safe and effective service.

The practitioner groups referenced above will be maintained – listening to their voice and engaging with their experiences in our system is crucial to ensure that our work is properly rooted in the day to day safeguarding of vulnerable children.

The integration of and alignment with, these bodies will be through either joint membership, the work of the independent chair, or the work of the business support unit.

Quality, impact and independent scrutiny

Just as we have worked hard to craft our partnerships into those already active in the county, so we are crafting our approach to quality assurance and impact to add value to existing arrangements.

Operational managers, up to and including the chief officers are both managing and challenging their own services all of the time. They are aware of any deficits in standards and practices and they are continually seeking to improve. The partners all have their own internal checks and balances and take remedial action as required.

In health, there is a robust system of contract management and supervision of designate leads that drives the work of the providers, all of whom have to meet a considerable set of safeguarding objectives within their contracts.

Safeguarding partners must answer to those who hold the democratic and non-executive mandate whether through elected members, the Office of the Police and Crime Commission or non-executive members of the CCG. In addition, SPs and relevant agencies are subject to external inspection from Ofsted, CQC and HMICFRS, and jointly through the JTAI arrangements.

Our plans for independent scrutiny will be carefully crafted to add value to an already crowded and complex landscape of challenge and scrutiny in providing services to vulnerable people.

Wiltshire's approach to scrutiny and challenge is driven by six key principles:

- I. An appreciation that managers and services are in a continual cycle of improvement and challenge within their own organisations.
- II. A readiness from the safeguarding partners to be transparent and honest with each other about concerns within their own organisations and a willingness to challenge and be challenged. This approach mirrors that set out in our [Case Resolution Protocol](#) and the expectations placed on front-line staff to challenge each other in the best interests of children.
- III. A greater focus on how we, as partners, are working together to improve **outcomes** for children and adults. Issues of compliance are important but they are secondary in importance to outcomes and will principally remain the responsibility of managers and leaders within their own organisations.
- IV. A commitment to engaging front line practitioners more actively in their own scrutiny and seeking to close the gap between scrutiny, challenge and practice improvement.
- V. The intelligent and analytical use of data especially across the life-course will form the bed rock of our continuous quality and impact work. Databases alone are not sufficient – data analysis more familiar to Health and the Police will be developed to help the SVPP shape and focus its activities.
- VI. A commitment to an agility and speed of response and with a focus on action not monitoring.

Independent scrutiny will be sourced in order to meet specific purposes and themes. – It will not rely on one individual and scrutiny methods will be sourced to meet need. They will include:

- The SVPP will have an Independent Chair SVPP for at least for the first 12 months of its existence. The responsibilities of this post holder are to:
 - Chair the SVPP

- Act as the link with the three sub groups
- Work between SVPP meetings to continue the SVPP's agenda and where necessary take issues to the other key partnerships and relevant groups referenced in this plan
- To personally explore and pursue areas of vulnerability for children and young people and adults in the context of their family and place across the county that might not be getting sufficient attention
- To lead on decision making in relation to rapid reviews and local safeguarding practice reviews
- To act as the link with other partnerships and national bodies as needed
- Through the Early Adopters money, work to a clear evidence base, with an established performance management process. To develop a system of engaging local people, service users and communities in the evaluation and scrutiny of service delivery.
- Developing partnering arrangements with neighbouring safeguarding partners to provide peer reviews.
- To buy in recommended expert scrutiny from national bodies and/or acknowledged experts as needed.
- To recruit dedicated off-line scrutineers to explore practice across the partnership.

In addition, our plan will formalise an approach to the assessment of the duties of relevant agencies set out in Section 11 Children Act 2004 that is more streamlined and focussed. The SPs will no longer be subject to a S.11 audit (it is for SPs, with any independent scrutiny as needed, to hold each other to account for their contributions). Health providers should be enabled to rely on their reporting against their contracts as appropriate. Cross-boundary agencies will only be asked to do a single return and any 'audit' commissioned by the SPs will major on those areas of activity where relevant agencies impact upon safeguarding outcomes for children. The established model of 'Walkabouts' will be developed to meet the need to ensure that S.11 duties are being properly and fully enacted by our relevant agencies.

A Families and Children Systems Assurance Board has been established to oversee quality assurance, improvement and impact and will report into the SVPP. All key findings from the work described above will be tabled at the SVPP and that group will ensure action and dissemination as required. Some of this will involve the need to challenge the other existing partnerships in the county to ensure they address the issues raised. Key findings will be placed on the SVPP website to ensure maximum practitioner access. (The SVPP site will be developed from the existing WSCB one and until complete, the WSCB site will act as the main outlet. It is a well-known and well-used resource across the County)

Child safeguarding practice reviews

The SVPP will assume responsibility for the sign-off of terms of reference for any review, the commissioning of any independent reviewer, and decisions about publishing any completed reviews. It will also cover agreement on the ownership and location of any related action plans and who will lead in any discussions with the national panel.

There will be times when work has not gone well, where the system has not worked well and where risks to children have not been reduced and safeguarding not enhanced. We have developed a [Case Resolution Protocol](#) which sets out the expectations on staff both raising and receiving disagreements about cases. At the heart of the protocol lie the following commitments:

“Effective safeguarding of children is absolutely predicated on practitioners and front-line staff wanting the very best for children and being ready to stand up in their best interests, even if this brings them into disagreement with other practitioners, with other organisations, or with their own managers and employing bodies. Escalating concerns about a child is not simply allowed for or tolerated in the Wiltshire system, it is **expected**. Safeguarding children is not a science; there are no absolutes and no automatic right answers. Discussions and debates about the best way forward for children are part and parcel of safeguarding work.”

The Practice Review Group (PRG) will be the first recipient of any notifications of incidents that might require further case review. These notifications **must** be made when it is known or suspected that a child has been abused or neglected and

- A child dies, or is seriously harmed in the local authority’s area, or
- While normally resident in the local authority area, the child dies or is seriously harmed outside of England

Working Together 2018, Chapter 4

The PRG will seek agreement from the Independent Chair of the SVPP that a case meets these criteria and ensure that the appropriate notification is forwarded to both Ofsted and the National Child Safeguarding Review Panel within five days of the incident.

The PRG will then lead and complete the ‘rapid review’ within a further 15 days as currently required. This will generate a report that will set out initial findings and proposed ways forward. This report will identify:

- (a) Whether the case appears to raise particularly complex issues or ones of potential national significance and interest – in these circumstances the Independent Chair and QA lead will act as the main link with the National Panel.
- (b) Whether the rapid review has generated enough learning to identify improvements needed in the local safeguarding system such that further review is not deemed necessary - this recommendation will be shared with the SPs and tabled with the SVPP.
- (c) Set out the terms of a local child safeguarding practice review, including proposed methodology and indicative terms of reference for such a review – the PRG will identify and work with the identified reviewer to ensure its completion within six months.

All notifications and rapid review reports, regardless of their conclusions or next steps, will be copied to SVPP members to ensure the leaders of the system are routinely sighted on individual cases. This is both an important principle but also a recognition of their responsibility to lead any necessary system changes.

The above covers the formal response to those sections of [Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018](#) which cover child practice safeguarding reviews.

However, in Wiltshire we are committed to a broader range of case evaluations through Safeguarding Adults Reviews (SARs) and Domestic Homicide Review (DHR) processes and have developed a protocol for shared learning. In particular we will be developing a model to explore examples of good and effective practice and disseminating any relevant learning.

Finally, our early adopter bid is part-founded on the commitment to build a process of evaluation that is both informed and led by the direct experiences of parents and in particular those parents whose children have been in need, on child protection plans, or have entered

the care system. We believe their voice has been unheard when evaluating what works and what makes the most difference in safeguarding their children.

Workforce development

Wiltshire's Local Safeguarding Children Board currently provides Multi-Agency Training across the partnership. Whilst we are rethinking our wider approach we want to keep the elements of existing arrangement that are working. Last year the existing board improved the knowledge and understanding of over 1,200 members of the workforce who attended one of over 70 training sessions. The current training offer has been revised and from early 2019 we will be offering a new programme which reflects the revised [Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018](#).

The core programme will retain a strong focus on the inter-agency aspects of safeguarding, and courses will allow practitioners to stay up to date in their understanding of local and national safeguarding developments. In addition, and in response to input from health agencies and the police, there is a wider range of more specialist courses available. These themed courses focus on various aspects of child protection. This includes consideration of the possible risks to children in particular circumstances, such as when parents have mental health or substance misuse problems, children who are vulnerable to criminal or sexual exploitation, or where there is domestic abuse within a family. The 2019 programme will also provide more accessible training by utilising 'bite size' short courses and workshops, e-learning modules, webinars and podcasts. Practice forums and practitioner learning events will remain integral to the programme structure.

We will explore opportunities for greater partnership training across the children and adult's agendas.

User involvement

Wiltshire has developed a Youth Safeguarding Board and they provide a valuable input to the work of the WSCB. There are of course other forums where the voices of young people can be heard – the Children in Care Council, School Councils, Care Leaver's Forum, and Wiltshire Assembly of Youth. In addition, there are 18 community area boards based on ward boundaries within the council and they bring together local people and local bodies to enable their voices to be part of the democratic process in the county.

The WSAB has both a Carers Reference Group supported by Carer Support Wiltshire and a Service Users Reference Group supported by the Centre for Independent Living. Both groups are focused on recruiting more young adults in their membership.

Finally, there is a broad and active voluntary and community sector providing a range of services across the county that is brought together under the Voluntary and Community Sector Forum.

It is the responsibility of the 'Voice of the User and of Local People' to bring this network together in relation to the broad safeguarding and protection responsibilities of the SVPP.

Thresholds

The **Threshold Document** outlines Wiltshire's criteria for action when a family requires support. It describes the different levels of statutory intervention available.

This document is under review and will be being substantially amended in line with the changes being progressed under the FACT programme. In particular, the aspirations of that programme to embed a clear understanding of child and family levels of need across the children and adult's multi-agency workforce; promoting resilience, prevention and early intervention.

It is anticipated that the new document will be launched early in 2019.

Funding and support

An integrated Business Support Unit will support the work of the SVPP, CSP, FCSA, and WSAB.

The previously agreed budgets for the current business support arrangements will continue for 2019/20 budgets and expenditure will be reviewed to ensure capacity is well focused and in line with partners overall budget planning.

Reporting on the plan – annual review

The SVPP will commission an annual external review of the impact of the arrangements described in this Plan. The review will identify where there has been progress in the safeguarding of children in the County and contribute to the setting of objectives and areas of focus for the year ahead.



Working in partnership with

