

TRAFFORD COUNCIL

Report to: Children and Young Peoples Scrutiny
Date: January 2025
Report of: Jude Brown – Director of Safeguarding and Practice Improvement, Children’s Services

Report Title

Multi-Agency Safeguarding Arrangements

Purpose

To provide an update to Children and Young Peoples Scrutiny of the changes to the statutory safeguarding arrangements for children

Recommendation(s)

Members of Scrutiny are asked to:

- Note the contents of this report.
- Provide Challenge and support to the Partnership.
- Agree to receive further updates on progress against the implementation of the changes to the statutory safeguarding arrangements.

Contact person for access to background papers and further information:

Name: Jude Brown

Extension: 2365

Background Papers: [Working together to safeguard children - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)

Corporate Priorities	The Best Start for our Children & Young People
Relationship to GM Policy or Strategy Framework	N/A
Finance	N/A
Legal	N/A
Equality/Diversity	N/A
Sustainability	N/A
Carbon Reduction	N/A
Staffing/E-Government/Asset Management	N/A
Risk Management	N/A
Health and Safety	N/A

1. Introduction

Over the last decade there have been a number of developments within statutory guidance on the requirements for how local authority areas organise the safeguarding arrangements for children.

Recommendations made in the Wood Report 2016, which reviewed the role and functions of local safeguarding children boards, led to the new multi-agency safeguarding children arrangements set out in the Government's statutory guidance 'Working Together to Safeguard Children - A guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children' (July 2018).

In December 2023 the Government published updated Working Together statutory guidance

[Working together to safeguard children - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/guidance/working-together-to-safeguard-children)

This clearly sets out expectations for multi – agency working in the children's space which requires a very different cultural approach from partners to deliver against the government's response to the independent Review of Children's Social Care and clearly outlines expectations of the three statutory partners at different levels across organisations.

Stable Homes Built on Love 2023 is the response to the Independent Review of Children's Social Care and sets the future direction of travel for Partnership working. It placed an emphasis on providing more and better support to families as soon as difficulties emerge, to stop problems escalating and enable more families to stay together. It outlined how child protection response should be strengthened by getting agencies working together in a fully integrated way and makes it clear that responding to early help/family help is also a shared responsibility.

The work of multiagency safeguarding arrangements was further strengthened by 'Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023 - A guide to multi-agency working to help, protect and promote the welfare of children,' which is the framework for all Partnerships across England to ensure a consistent and coordinated response to the needs of children, young people and families.

This document sets out how the three lead safeguarding partners work together in Trafford to co-ordinate local safeguarding services and to ensure that they are effective.

Effective Local Safeguarding Children Arrangements will ensure that children are a focus and their voices are heard, as outlined in Working Together 2023 (Paragraph 40):

- Outcomes for children will improve continuously
- Children are safeguarded and their welfare promoted

- Relevant partner agencies collaborate, share information and work to the agreed vision and values established for Trafford
- Organisations and agencies challenge appropriately and hold one another to account effectively
- There is early identification and analysis of new safeguarding issues and emerging threats
- Learning is promoted and embedded in a way that enables local services for children and families to reflect and implement changes to practice
- Information is shared effectively to facilitate more accurate and timely decision making for children and families

These arrangements link to strategic work led by several partnerships in Trafford. These partnerships include:

- Ambitions for Children's Board
- Health and Wellbeing Board
- Domestic Abuse Partnership Board
- Trafford Community Safety Partnership
- Trafford Strategic Safeguarding Adult Board

These multi-agency arrangements will be reviewed on an annual basis, alongside publication of the annual report the following September. The multi-agency arrangements will be transparent and accessible via the Partnership website, which will also contain a child and family's version.

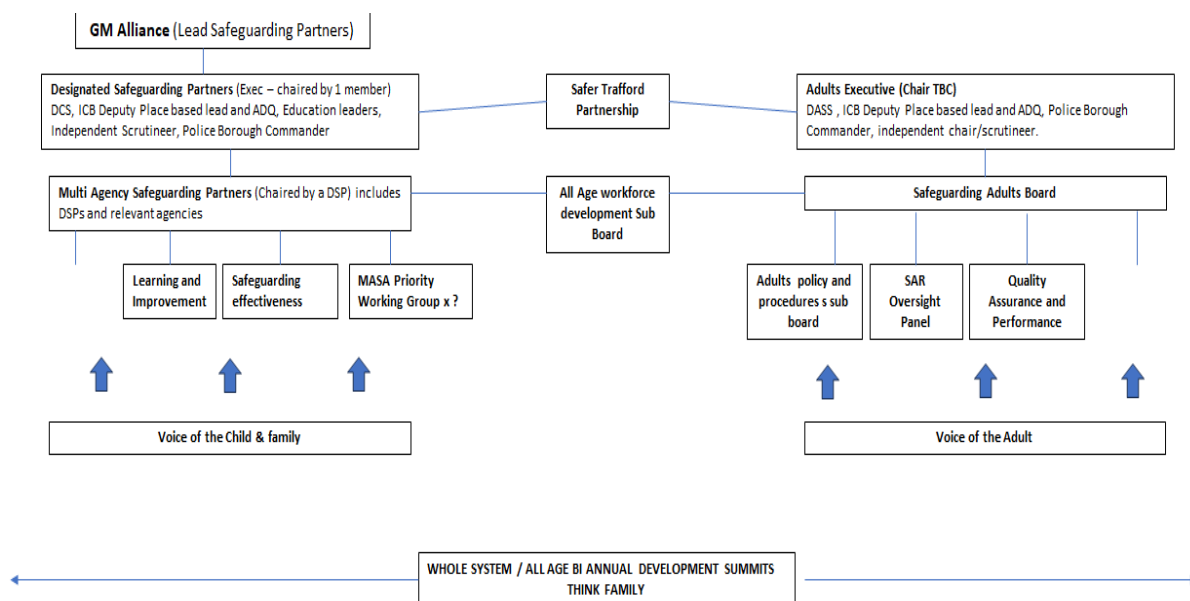
The decision to separate Children and Adults Strategic Safeguarding Partnership arrangements ensures that Trafford is compliant with the statutory guidance.

It is a requirement to have the multi-agency safeguarding arrangements published and this was achieved by the deadline of 31 Dec 2024.

The publication aims to promote transparency, improve partnership working, and ensure accountability across the safeguarding system. By publishing clear, accessible arrangements and annual reports, safeguarding partners demonstrate their commitment to protecting children and continuously improving their safeguarding practices.

These multi-agency safeguarding arrangements aim to provide a comprehensive framework to ensure children are protected, risks are identified early, and partners work together in a coordinated, transparent, and effective manner.

Overview of the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Arrangements (MASA)



The left side of the above diagram outlines the MASA. The right side of the diagram outlines the arrangements for the adult arrangements and is provided for information.

Working Together 2023 defines the Lead Safeguarding Partners as;

- The Chief Executive of Trafford Metropolitan Borough Council
- The Chief Executive of the Greater Manchester NHS Integrated Care Board
- The Chief Constable of Greater Manchester Police

In Greater Manchester, the GM Safeguarding Alliance has been developed on a regional basis to comply with requirements, to ensure that Lead Safeguarding Partners meet.

The lead safeguarding partners will meet three times a year. Through this forum, the lead safeguarding partners will provide collective leadership and deliver mutual assurance of strategic and operational safeguarding partnership arrangements for children and young people in Greater Manchester. The Lead Safeguarding Partners functions as defined in WT2023 are as follows:

- Set the strategic direction, vision, and culture of the local safeguarding arrangements, including agreeing and reviewing shared priorities and the resource required to deliver services effectively.

- Lead their organisation's individual contribution to the shared priorities, ensuring strong governance, accountability, and reporting mechanisms to hold their delegates to account for the delivery of agency commitments.
- Review and sign off key partnership documents: published multi-agency safeguarding arrangements, including plans for independent scrutiny, shared annual budget, yearly report, and local threshold document.
- Provide shared oversight of learning from independent scrutiny, serious incidents, local child safeguarding practice reviews, and national reviews, ensuring recommendations are implemented and have a demonstrable impact on practice (as set out in the yearly report).
- Ensure multi-agency arrangements have the necessary level of business support, including intelligence and analytical functions, such as an agreed data set providing oversight and a robust understanding of practice.
- Ensure all relevant agencies, including education settings, are clear on their role and contribution to multi-agency safeguarding arrangements
- To deliver multi-agency safeguarding arrangements at a local strategic level, each LSP has appointed a delegated safeguarding partner (DSP) who will meet as an Executive Group. These are named as:
 - Director of Children's Services
 - District Commander (Greater Manchester Police)
 - Chief Nursing Officer (Integrated Care Board) with the Associate Director of Nursing and Quality (Greater Manchester Integrated Care Board) as the Delegated Place DSP.
 - Independent Scrutineer
 - Education leaders (Early years, schools and colleges)
 - Lead member (participant observer)

The executive will meet on a quarterly basis.

One of the changes from the previous arrangements is the chairing responsibilities. There is no role for an independent chair of MASA arrangements as the guidance places the emphasis is on the accountability of the three statutory Safeguarding Partners. The chairing of this executive group will be on an 18 month rotational basis from one of the statutory partners.

Working together does outline the role of independent scrutiny, which is a requirement, and this role is about being a 'critical – friend', providing rigorous and effective support and challenge at both a strategic and operational level and providing independent advice when there are disagreements between agencies, (for example). In Trafford we will be retaining our previous independent chair, Liz Murphy, as our scrutineer.

The functions of the DSPs as set out in Working Together 2023 are as follows:

- I. Delivery and monitoring of multi-agency priorities and procedures to protect and safeguard children in the local area, in compliance with published arrangements and thresholds.
- II. Close partnership working and engagement with education (at strategic and operational level) and other relevant agencies, allowing better identification of and response to harm.
- III. The implementation of effective information sharing arrangements between agencies, including data sharing that facilitates joint analysis between partner agencies.
- IV. Delivery of high-quality and timely rapid reviews and local child safeguarding practice reviews, with the impact of learning from local and national reviews and independent scrutiny clearly evidenced in yearly reports.
- V. The provision of appropriate multi-agency safeguarding professional development and training.

The MASA also has, within the structure, a partners board and the function of this is for DSPs and relevant agencies, as defined in working together, to come together as organisations and agencies whose involvement is required to safeguard local children.

This is an opportunity to collaborate, problem solve and network at a partnership forum.

There will continue to be the need to have subgroups as these focus on driving key areas such as:

- Improve Safeguarding Practice Across the Partnership
- Monitor and Challenge Safeguarding Performance
- Develop and Implement Effective Policies, Guidance, and Procedures
- Embed Learning from Good and Challenging Practices
- Review and Analyse Key Factors in Serious Child Safeguarding Cases
- Provide High-Quality Multi-Agency Training
- Engage Education Partners in the highest levels of Safeguarding governance

- Priority action groups for agreed strategic priorities – the priority action groups are not yet confirmed as there needs to be a priority setting workshop for the 2025/28 strategic plan. Current priorities continue to be the priority for the remainder of this reporting year. (Exploitation, Domestic Abuse, Neglect, Mental Health & Governance)

It is agreed that there are links with the MASA arrangements and the community Safety Partnership for Domestic abuse and that there will be a joint Children and Adults workforce development sub group. It is also accepted that Children and Adults safeguarding agendas will always be interlinked and therefore it is agreed that twice per year there will be all age summits so that safeguarding remains connected.