

<b>CITY OF WOLVERHAMPTON COUNCIL</b>	<b>Cabinet</b> <b>31 July 2019</b>
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<b>Report title</b>	Wolverhampton Multi-Agency Safeguarding Arrangements	
<b>Decision designation</b>	AMBER	
<b>Cabinet member with lead responsibility</b>	Councillor John Reynolds, Children & Young People Councillor Linda Leach, Adults	
<b>Key decision</b>	Yes	
<b>In forward plan</b>	Yes	
<b>Wards affected</b>	All Wards	
<b>Accountable Director</b>	Emma Bennett, Director of Children's Services David Watts, Director of Adult Services	
<b>Originating service</b>	People	
<b>Accountable employee</b>	Andrew Wolverson Tel Email	Head of People 01902 555550 andrew.wolverson@wolverhampton.gov.uk
<b>Report to be/has been considered by</b>	Wolverhampton Safeguarding Board	19 June 2019

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### Recommendations for decision:

The Cabinet is recommended to:

1. Endorse the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Arrangements for children, as approved by the Wolverhampton Safeguarding Children's Board, to ensure compliance with the Social Work Act 2017 and subsequent guidance set out in Working Together 2018.
2. Endorse the application of the outlined proposals for the Wolverhampton Safeguarding Children's Board to be applied to the Wolverhampton Safeguarding Adult's Board, to ensure the continued integration of the arrangements going forward.
3. Agree that City of Wolverhampton Council, as a statutory safeguarding partner in both arrangements, participate within the Wolverhampton Safeguarding Together arrangements, as set out in Appendix 1 to this report.

**Recommendation for noting:**

The Cabinet is recommended to:

1. Note that the new arrangements for children were published on 28 June 2019 in line with statutory requirements and will take affect from 30 September 2019.

## **1.0 Purpose**

- 1.1 This report sets out the new Multi-Agency Safeguarding Arrangements for Wolverhampton, which will be known as Wolverhampton Safeguarding Together, to ensure compliance with the Social Work Act 2017 and subsequent Working Together 2018 guidance.
- 1.2 The report will highlight the consultation work undertaken by Wolverhampton Safeguarding Board in developing the proposals and highlight the main significant changes between the existing arrangements and the new ones which will be implemented from 30 September 2019.
- 1.3 A key strength of the current arrangements is the integration of the Adult's and Children's Safeguarding Boards. The report will therefore set out how the new arrangements can also be applied to the Adult's Board and maintain compliance with the Care Act 2014 requirements.

## **2.0 Background**

- 2.1 The Local Safeguarding Board 2006 regulations (part of the Children Act 2004) came into effect on 1 April 2006 and required local authorities to establish a safeguarding board made up of representative partners and independently chaired.
- 2.2 The purpose of the safeguarding board was to provide strategic oversight in five key areas:
  - a. Developing policies and procedures that safeguard and promote the welfare of children within the local area.
  - b. Communicate to agencies within the local area the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and how this can best be achieved.
  - c. Monitor the effectiveness of Safeguarding Board partners arrangements for safeguarding and, where necessary, advise on how these can be improved.
  - d. Participate in the planning of services for children in the local area.
  - e. Undertake reviews of serious cases and advise the local authority and its partners of the lessons to be learned.
- 2.3 Partners were defined in legislation as the Police, Clinical Commissioning Group, Probation Service, Youth Offending Team, Hospital Trust, Education Services and the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service. In addition to this the local area could include other partners. In Wolverhampton this included representatives from the Fire Service, Ambulance Service and Voluntary Sector.

- 2.4 In 2008 additional responsibilities were included into the remit of the Board which required them to collect and analyses information in relation to child deaths and to also put in place procedures that ensured a co-ordinated response to such situations by the local authority and its partners.
- 2.5 Following the establishment of the Children's Safeguarding Board, in 2014 the (Adults) Care Act required local authorities to set up similar arrangements for the safeguarding of adults. These arrangements were to be established to:
- a. Assure itself that local safeguarding arrangements are in place as defined by the Care Act 2014 and statutory guidance.
  - b. Assure itself that safeguarding practice is person-centred and outcome-focused.
  - c. Work collaboratively to prevent abuse and neglect where possible.
  - d. Ensure agencies and individuals give timely and proportionate responses when abuse or neglect have occurred
  - e. Assure itself that safeguarding practice is continuously improving and enhancing the quality of life of adults in its area.
- 2.6 The arrangements were designed to undertake the three core duties of; developing and publishing a strategic plan setting out how the board will meet its objectives in conjunction with partners; publish an annual report setting out how effective the arrangements have been and commissioning safeguarding adults reviews. Although not required, the Adult's Safeguarding Board also chose to operate with an independent chair.
- 2.7 Having operated the arrangements for children's and adult's separately, in 2017 the decision was taken to integrate the two Boards and employ a single independent chair for both Boards. This has meant that since 2017 the business of the Board has been split into an adult's section, children's section and integrated section with more business being dealt with through the latter as the arrangements embedded. In addition to the integration of the Boards, another strength identified was the engagement of partners in participating in the current arrangements. Again, this strength will be built upon in the new arrangements.
- 3.0 Review of current safeguarding arrangements for children**
- 3.1 The Social Work Act, 2017 required all local areas to review their children's safeguarding arrangements in line with guidance set out in Working Together 2018. The new guidance established the Council, Wolverhampton Clinical Commissioning Group and West Midlands Police as statutory equal partners in the new arrangements.
- 3.2 The statutory partners commissioned an independent person to review the current structure of the Board, supported by a small task and finish group of senior officers from the respective statutory partners.

- 3.3 As set out in section one of Appendix 1, the review process included face to face interviews of current safeguarding board partners as well as a wider online survey. The new arrangements were formulated taking into account the outcome of the consultation which included reducing the level of bureaucracy, sharpening the focus of the priorities and building upon the strengths of the partnership and integration of the board. The review group also took account of the learning from early adopters.
- 3.4 Having reviewed the various options for the new arrangements the preferred option as set out in section three of Appendix 1, was endorsed by the statutory safeguarding partners and ratified by the Safeguarding Board on 19 June 2019. This will see the current Safeguarding Board become Wolverhampton Safeguarding Together from September 2019.
- 3.5 The significant differences between the current and new arrangements include:
- a. Reducing the number of boards and committees to an executive group made up of the statutory safeguarding partners, with the main Partnership Board becoming the scrutiny and assurance co-ordination group. In addition, following learning from early adopters, education will become the 'fourth' partner on the executive group.
  - b. Replacing the independent chair with a nominated chair from the statutory safeguarding partners and implementing a range of independent scrutiny arrangements including a bi-annual event facilitated by an independent person who will also undertake an appraisal of the executive group.
  - c. Strengthening the arrangements for engagement of the wider community and 'experts by experience' through the Community and Engagement group to ensure the voice of children, families and vulnerable adults is at the forefront in the new arrangements.
  - d. Ensuring the work of Wolverhampton Safeguarding Together is always focussed on answering the question "What difference have we made?" through the arrangements set out in section four of Appendix 1.

#### **4.0 Review of current safeguarding arrangements for adults**

- 4.1 In order to build upon the identified strengths of the Board the opportunity has been taken to review the arrangements for adult's safeguarding to ascertain if the model would enable continued integration. Following discussion and consultation with the adult's statutory partners including the Director for Adult's Services, and subsequently the wider Adult's Safeguarding Board partners, the decision has been taken to apply the model and this is reflected within section three of Appendix 1.
- 4.2 The same partners (excluding education) make up the executive group with the wider safeguarding partners, set out within the Care Act 2014, being involved in the new arrangements through the scrutiny and assurance co-ordination group. It should be noted that for adult's safeguarding the requirement to form a Safeguarding Board

remains with the Council, with the Police and Clinical Commissioning Group as partners. This is different to children's where the three partners hold joint responsibility.

- 4.3 The other key requirements set out in the Care Act 2014 will continue to be fulfilled through the new arrangements as set out in Appendix 2.
- 4.4 The new arrangements will come into effect following the last scheduled meeting of the current board on 12 September 2019. During this time a task and finish group has been commissioned to draft a transitional plan and to develop terms of reference for the other groups within the new structure. In addition to this, the Executive Group has been set up in shadow form and is meeting on a regular basis to prepare for full implementation.

## **5.0 Evaluation of alternative options**

- 5.1 As part of the review three options were presented to the statutory partners for consideration. Options one and two were rejected for the reasons set out below.
- 5.2 Option one was to make no changes and continue with the existing arrangements. This option was rejected based on the feedback from partners around the desire to reduce bureaucracy and provide more focus in any arrangements going forward.
- 5.3 Option two was to retain the current board structures but with no independent chair. Whilst it was considered that this would potentially allow for a wider range of scrutiny methods, as outlined above it did not respond to the changes desired by partners.

## **6.0 Reasons for decisions**

- 6.1 The Council, along with its statutory partners were required to review the existing safeguarding children arrangements in line with the Working Together 2018 guidance. Having considered the options and decision outlined within this paper Cabinet are required to endorse the Council's participation within the new arrangements in order to remain compliant with statutory requirements.
- 6.2 It is felt that the review of children's arrangements presented an opportunity to review the adult's arrangements in order to maintain integration and provide the best opportunity to improve outcomes across the whole life course. Therefore, Cabinet are being asked to endorse applying the arrangements to the Adult's Board.

## **7.0 Financial implications**

- 7.1 The approved budget for the safeguarding partnership board for 2019-2020 is £271,000. This is made up of contributions from various partners shown in the table below:

Partner Contributions	£000
Statutory:	
Local Authority	158
Clinical Commissioning Group	78
West Midlands Police	31
Total Statutory Partner Contributions	267
Other:	
CAFCAS	1
SWM Community Rehabilitation Company Ltd	1
National Probation Service	2
Other Partner Contributions	4
Total Contributions	271

- 7.2 The new proposed arrangements set out in Appendix 1 will need to be contained within the existing budget otherwise additional partner contributions will need to be agreed in order to ensure a balanced budget.

[NM/10072019/U]

## 8.0 Legal implications

- 8.1 The Council is one of three statutory partners named within the legislation for both children's and adults safeguarding arrangements. The other two partners are Wolverhampton Clinical Commissioning Group and West Midlands Police. For children's safeguarding partners have equal responsibility for the safeguarding arrangements, however, this is not the case for adults with responsibility for the arrangements sitting with the Council.
- 8.2 The arrangements ensure compliance with the (Children's) Social Work Act 2017 and (Adult's) Care Act 2014 respectively.

[SB/07072019/U]

## 9.0 Equalities implications

- 9.1 The work of the Safeguarding Board is to ensure the systems within the city protect some of the most vulnerable people. The new arrangements seek to ascertain deeper engagements from a wide range of groups and residents on the safeguarding issues that matter to them. This will be driven through the community and engagement group which will provide feedback and engagement in the current priorities and the development of new ones.

- 9.2 A number of the groups who would be engaged with through the work of Wolverhampton Safeguarding Together will have protected characteristics as defined within the Equalities Act 2010.

## **10.0 Environmental implications**

- 10.1 There are no environmental implications arising from this report.

## **11.0 Human resources implications**

- 11.1 A review of the current arrangements for supporting the safeguarding functions will be undertaken to ensure they continue to be fit for purpose.
- 11.2 Any proposals for changes to the current arrangements will be managed in line with the Council's policies for re-structures and in consultation with employees and their unions.

## **12.0 Corporate landlord implications**

- 12.1 There are no corporate landlord implications arising from this report.

## **13.0 Health and Wellbeing Implications**

- 13.1 Safeguarding is intrinsically linked to the health and wellbeing of the residents of Wolverhampton. An area of current focus is the arrangements for child deaths. These have been reviewed across the Black Country and it is proposed to transition responsibility to the Health and Wellbeing Together Board with clear oversight from the new safeguarding arrangements. This will be put forward for approval at the Health and Wellbeing Together Board in September.

## **14.0 Appendices**

Appendix 1 – Wolverhampton Safeguarding Together – Our Arrangements for Safeguarding Children and Young People in Wolverhampton

Appendix 2 – Care Act 2014 safeguarding arrangements compliance table