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**Committee Name and Date of Committee Meeting**

Cabinet - 18 November 2024

**Report Title**

Multi-Agency Safeguarding Arrangements

**Is this a Key Decision and has it been included on the Forward Plan?**

Yes

**Strategic Director Approving Submission of the Report**

Nicola Curley, Strategic Director of Children and Young People's Services

**Report Author(s)**

Tony Morrissey, Head of Service, Safeguarding, Quality and Learning, CYPS

**Ward(s) Affected**

Borough-Wide

**Report Summary**

Protecting children from abuse, neglect and exploitation requires multi-agency join up and cooperation at all levels. Local organisations and agencies that work with children and families play a significant and often statutory role when it comes to safeguarding children.

The way in which these organisations and agencies work together is known as multi-agency safeguarding arrangements (MASA). Robust arrangements help to ensure that information about a child and their family is shared effectively, risk of harm is correctly identified and understood, and that children and families receive targeted services that meet their needs in a co-ordinated way.

This report contains changes to and updated information relating to the place-based arrangements for the Rotherham Safeguarding Children Partnership (RSCP), which will now also include additional arrangements for South Yorkshire Multi-Agency Safeguarding Arrangements. The previous arrangements were published in 2019 and have been updated to reflect the changes within the new Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023) statutory guidance.

The additional Multi Agency Safeguarding Arrangement for South Yorkshire will mean that Chief Executive of the ICB, Chief Constable of South Yorkshire Police and Chief Executive of the Council will meet twice a year to provide strategic oversight and agree the vision and priorities for safeguarding children in Rotherham. This will be replicated with the other South Yorkshire Local Authority Chief Executives and any safeguarding matters across the region in which collaboration would prove effective will be considered. It will also enable the sharing of good practice across the region.

As outlined in the Multi Agency Safeguarding arrangements we will continue to have our Rotherham arrangements which will be monitored locally by representatives from the ICB, South Yorkshire Police and the Chief Executive.

### **Recommendations**

1. That Cabinet endorse the South Yorkshire Multi Agency Safeguarding arrangements which include the place-based Rotherham Safeguarding Children's Partnership (RSCP) Multi-Agency Safeguarding Arrangements.
2. That Cabinet approve the Local Authority involvement in the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Arrangements and receives appropriate reports on progress against the RSCP priorities and the Annual Report on impact of the RSCP in safeguarding children and young people.

### **List of Appendices Included**

Appendix 1	South Yorkshire Multi Agency Safeguarding arrangements 2024
Appendix 2	Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023
Appendix 3	Part A Initial Equality Screening Assessment
Appendix 4	Part B Equality Screening Assessment
Appendix 5	Carbon Impact Assessment

### **Exempt from the Press and Public**

No

### **Background Papers**

No

### **Consideration by any other Council Committee, Scrutiny or Advisory Panel**

No

### **Council Approval Required**

No

## **Multi-Agency Safeguarding Arrangements**

### **1. Background**

1.1 The Children Act 2004, as amended by the Children and Social Work Act 2017, requires that the three safeguarding partners (Local Authorities, Integrated Care Board and Chief Officers of Police), make arrangements to work in partnership together along with relevant agencies to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in the area. The safeguarding partners are:

- NHS South Yorkshire Integrated Care Board (ICB)
- Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council (RMBC)
- South Yorkshire Police (SYP)

Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023), is the statutory guidance which outlines what the responsibilities of safeguarding partners are, delivered through the new safeguarding arrangements. This includes a shared accountability between the three key partners and the requirement to have independent scrutiny. The Multi-Agency Safeguarding document has been updated in 2024 to reflect the new language and changes adopted in Working Together 2023. The three key partners must publish their arrangements by December 2024. Transitional guidance has also been published to set out the change from the Local Safeguarding Children's Board (LSCB) to the new safeguarding children's arrangements, which includes new accountability arrangements for Child Death Reviews and the move away from Serious Case Reviews.

### **2. Key Issues**

2.1 The purpose of multi-agency safeguarding arrangements is to ensure that, at a local level, organisations and agencies are clear about how they will work together to safeguard children and promote their welfare. This means:

- There is a clear, shared vision for how to improve outcomes for children locally across all levels of need and all types of harm, including analysis of the voice of the child and family and insights from data.
- Ensuring that organisations and agencies are challenged appropriately, effectively holding one another to account so that when a child is identified as suffering or likely to suffer significant harm there is a prompt, appropriate and effective response to ensure the protection and support of the child.
- Senior leaders have a good knowledge and understanding about the quality of local practice, and they promote and embed a learning culture which supports local services to become more reflective and implement changes to practice.

2.2 In Rotherham, the Rotherham Safeguarding Children Partnership complies with the multi-agency safeguarding requirements in aligning delivery groups to the strategic priorities. These are:

- Child Exploitation Delivery Group
- Neglect Delivery Group
- Safeguarding in Education Delivery Group
- Performance, Practice and Learning Delivery Group

Each of these groups is chaired by senior representatives from across the partnership and they report directly to the Executive Group of the Rotherham Safeguarding Children Partnership, as per the diagram in the multi-agency safeguarding arrangements document. This ensures that the actions and methods of each group are scrutinised and overseen, with support and guidance given from the Executive.

- 2.3 Working Together 2023 sets out the expectations for the strategic leadership and accountability of Safeguarding Partnerships. This is achieved via the oversight and direction of Lead Safeguarding Partners (LSPs) and Delegated Safeguarding Partners (DSPs). Each Local Safeguarding Partnership is responsible for discharging their own statutory and legislative duties to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

Working Together 2023 also sets out that the Lead Safeguarding Partners should appoint one of the Delegated Safeguarding Partners, as the partnership chair for the multi-agency arrangements. Rotherham are proposing that this function is undertaken by the Independent Chair/Scrutineer given the knowledge the Independent Chair/Scrutineer already has in working with Rotherham. This has been shared with the Department for Education who were not opposed to this approach. In addition, there are a number of other safeguarding children's partnerships similar to Rotherham who are also retaining their independent chair who will also act as their independent scrutineer.

- 2.4 The multi-agency arrangements set out the roles and responsibilities of Lead Safeguarding Partners and Delegated Safeguarding Partners in more detail, including the proposed role of the independent chair/scrutineer. In line with the expectations set out in Working Together 2023, the key responsibilities of the safeguarding partners are to ensure that:

- There is a clear, shared vision for how to improve outcomes for children locally across all levels of need and all types of harm.
- When a child is identified as suffering or likely to suffer significant harm there is a prompt, appropriate and effective response to ensure the protection and support of the child.
- Organisations and agencies are challenged appropriately, effectively holding one another to account.
- The voice of children and families combined with the knowledge of experienced practitioners and insights from data, provides a greater understanding of the areas of strength and/or improvement within arrangements and practice.
- Information is sought, analysed, shared, and broken down by protected characteristics to facilitate more accurate and timely decision-making for children and families, and to understand outcomes for different communities of children.
- Effective collection, sharing and analysis of data, enables early identification of new safeguarding risks, issues, emerging threats, and joined-up responses across relevant agencies.
- Senior leaders promote and embed a learning culture which supports local services to become more reflective and implement changes to practice.

- Senior leaders have a good knowledge and understanding about the quality of local practice and its impact on children and families.

2.5 In addition, the Rotherham Safeguarding Children Partnership will;

- Implement local and national learning including from serious child safeguarding incidents.
- Achieve the best possible outcomes for children and families ensuring they receive targeted services that meet their needs in a co-ordinated way.

2.6 The purpose of these local arrangements is to support and enable local organisations and agencies to work together in a system where:

- Children are safeguarded and their welfare promoted.
- Partner organisations and agencies collaborate, share, and co-own the vision for how to achieve improved outcomes for vulnerable children.
- 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 local services for children and families can become more reflective and implement changes to practice.
- Information is shared effectively to facilitate more accurate and timely decision making for children and families.

2.7 In order to work together effectively, the safeguarding partners with other local organisations and agencies will develop processes that:

- Facilitate and drive action beyond usual institutional and agency constraints and boundaries.
- Ensure the effective protection of children is founded on practitioners developing lasting and trusting relationships with children and their families.
- To be effective, these arrangements must link to other strategic partnership work happening locally to support children and families. In Rotherham we have regular meetings that bring together the chairs of the children's and adults' safeguarding boards, the chair of the health and wellbeing board, the chair of the children and young people's transformation board and the chair of the safer Rotherham partnership. These meetings, supported by the business units for the various boards, ensure that priorities and business plans are shared and aligned.

### **3. Options considered and recommended proposal**

3.1 Cabinet is asked to endorse the multi-agency safeguarding arrangements, including maintaining an Independent Chair/Scrutineer in Rotherham. Endorsement of the South Yorkshire and Rotherham Safeguarding Children Partnership multi-agency safeguarding Arrangements will ensure the Council has set out its commitment in line with its duty to ensure that there are safeguarding arrangements in place for all children and young people.

3.2 Cabinet is asked to approve the Local Authority involvement in the South Yorkshire and Rotherham Safeguarding Children Partnership multi-agency safeguarding arrangements

3.3 The alternative option is not to endorse the South Yorkshire and Rotherham Safeguarding Children Partnership multi-agency safeguarding arrangements. This is not recommended as the South Yorkshire and Rotherham Safeguarding Children Partnership multi-agency safeguarding arrangements is a co-produced multi-agency document that incorporates how partners will work together to safeguard children and young people in Rotherham and the governance arrangements associated with this, including the role of the independent scrutineer.

#### **4. Consultation on proposal**

4.1 The development of the revised multi-agency safeguarding arrangements have involved collaborative working across South Yorkshire and Rotherham, including the Rotherham Safeguarding Children Partnership, Children and Young Peoples Services, Strategic Leadership Team (SLT), Legal Services and Finance.

4.2 The proposed multi-agency safeguarding arrangements have been discussed at Wider Partnership Meetings in the context of the changes contained in Working Together 2023.

4.3 The multi- agency safeguarding document has been circulated and agreed with the Rotherham Safeguarding Children Partnership Executive Group.

#### **5. Timetable and Accountability for Implementing this Decision**

5.1 The document will be reviewed annually or in line with relevant legislative changes and updates.

#### **6. Financial and Procurement Advice and Implications**

6.1 There are no financial implications arising from review of the multi-agency safeguarding approach.

#### **7. Legal Advice and Implications**

7.1 There are no legal implications arising from the review of the multi-agency safeguarding approach.

#### **8. Human Resources Advice and Implications**

8.1 No direct HR implications within this report.

#### **9. Implications for Children and Young People and Vulnerable Adults**

9.1 Implications to vulnerable children and young people are covered within the report and in appendices.

## 10. Equalities and Human Rights Advice and Implications

10.1 Equality and human rights are considered within the Rotherham Safeguarding Children Partnership Multi-Agency Safeguarding Arrangements.

## 11. Implications for CO<sub>2</sub> Emissions and Climate Change

11.1 No direct CO<sub>2</sub> Emissions and Climate Change implications within this report.

## 12. Implications for Partners

12.1 Implications for partners are reflected in the Rotherham Safeguarding Children Partnership Multi-Agency Safeguarding Arrangements.

## 13. Risks and Mitigation

13.1 These are referred to in the Rotherham Safeguarding Children Partnership Multi-Agency Safeguarding Arrangements.

## 14. Accountable Officers

Tony Morrissey, Head of Safeguarding

Approvals obtained on behalf of Statutory Officers: -

	<b>Named Officer</b>	<b>Date</b>
Chief Executive	Sharon Kemp OBE	04.11.24
Strategic Director of Finance & Customer Services (S.151 Officer)	Judith Badger	22.10.24
Assistant Director, Legal Services (Monitoring Officer)	Phil Horsfield	23.10.24

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