



## **Protocol between the Wiltshire Safeguarding Children Board (WSCB) and Wiltshire Children and Young People's Trust ('Children's Trust')**

### **1. Aim**

The Wiltshire Safeguarding Children Board (WSCB) and the Wiltshire Children's Trust have important but distinctive roles in keeping children safe. The aim of this Protocol is to ensure complete clarity about local accountabilities underpinned by effective local challenge.

### **2. The Wiltshire SCB**

The WSCB is a statutory body created under the Children Act 2004. It is responsible for challenging all relevant organisations on their performance in ensuring that children and young people are kept safe. The WSCB is responsible for developing local policies for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. It is also responsible for identifying multi-agency training needs and evaluating the extent to which training needs are being met by all services for children/young people, including commissioned services.

The WSCB is not a delivery body, it is a scrutiny body. However, it would expect to initiate activities which investigate and improve practice in safeguarding. It has the authority to call any agency to account for its safeguarding activity.

### **3. The Children's Trust**

The Children's Trust is a non-statutory partnership to promote cooperation between partner organisations to improve outcomes for children and young people aged 0 – 19, and, in particular, vulnerable children and young people (including those with disabilities up to the age of 25). The Children's Trust is particularly focused on early intervention and integrated service delivery. It is a strategy development body which promotes strong joint planning and effective commissioning of services. It is responsible for developing and promoting a child and family-centred, outcome-led vision for all children and young people via the Children and Young People's Plan. The plan identifies the Trust's priorities for children and young people, clearly informed by their views and those of their parents/carers and a comprehensive needs analysis. The Children's Trust monitors performance on its priorities at a high level and is responsible for putting in place robust arrangements for inter-agency governance.

## 4. Responsibilities

### The overall role of the WSCB is to:

*Assess the effectiveness of safeguarding practice in Wiltshire based on performance management and continual monitoring and evaluation, including regular multi-agency auditing.*

In relation to the Children's Trust, the WSCB will:

- Present its Annual Report on the effectiveness of safeguarding in the local area to the Trust and identify areas where support from the Children's Trust is required (e.g. to review gaps in, and effectiveness and performance of, service provision).
- Advise the Children's Trust on ways to improve and highlight any areas of underperformance in safeguarding work by member organisations.
- Hold the Trust Chair to account for action taken by the Trust to safeguard children and young people in all its activities, providing appropriate challenge on performance information, and requiring a formal response from the Chair. Where it is evidenced that a Children's Trust partner is not undertaking its safeguarding responsibilities effectively, the WSCB Chair will raise the concerns with the Chair of the Children's Trust.
- Ensure that Trust Members are aware of learning from Serious Case Reviews and other non-statutory reviews.
- Inform the Trust whether training needs are being met by all services for children/young people (including commissioned services). This will be done in a timely manner to ensure this can be incorporated into forward plans.
- Invite the Chair of the Children's Trust or a representative to attend WSCB meetings, as needed.

The WSCB is not accountable for the operational work of local individuals and organisations. Each organisation retains its own existing lines of accountability for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children through its services.

### The role of the Children's Trust in relation to safeguarding is to:

- Provide an annual report to the WSCB on progress on the actions resulting from the Children & Young People's Plan and the impact on keeping children safe and promoting their welfare.
- Consult the WSCB as part of the production of strategies and plans to ensure these take sufficient account of safeguarding issues.
- Take note of recommendations and identified areas for improvement made by the WSCB and include a commentary on these as part of the regular reports.
- Invite the Chair of the WSCB or a representative to attend the Children's Trust meetings, as needed.
- Include the impact on keeping children safe as part of any reviews on the effectiveness of Trust governance and partnership arrangements.
- Assess multi-agency training needs and commission/provide training accordingly – this will take into account any feedback or findings forwarded by the WSCB.

**Both bodies will:**

- Work together to ensure that messages and information about keeping children safe are disseminated within partner organisations, including collaborating on stakeholder events.
- Have an ongoing and direct relationship, communicating regularly.
- Work together to ensure action taken by one body does not duplicate that taken by another.
- Ensure there are no unhelpful strategic or operational gaps in policies, protocols services or practice.
- Ensure performance management arrangements are aligned.

**5. Role of the Director of Children's Services and Lead Member for Children's Services**

The Director of Children's Services (DCS) and the Lead Member for Children's Services have central roles. The DCS has the lead responsibility for improving outcomes for children and young people in Wiltshire. The Lead Member for Children's Services is politically accountable for ensuring that the Local Authority fulfils its legal responsibilities for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people. The Lead Member will provide the political leadership needed for the effective coordination of work with other relevant agencies with safeguarding responsibilities (such as the police and health trusts). The Lead Member will also take steps to assure themselves through scrutiny and challenge that effective quality assurance systems for safeguarding are in place and are functioning effectively across service areas and levels of need.

The DCS and the Lead Member will be members of both the Children's Trust and the WSCB.

**6. Public accountability**

The wider public has an important role to play - keeping children/young people safe is everyone's responsibility. Wiltshire's Children's Trust will continue to seek the views of the local community and consult children, young people and their families when drawing up plans. Similarly, the WSCB has two young people as full members and 1 Lay Member to increase communication links with the local community and support stronger public engagement in, and understanding of, children's safety issues. The WSCB will also continue to engage with children and young people to ensure their views are taken into account in any developments.

**7. Operational arrangements**

- The Children's Trust and WSCB will share their meeting minutes after every meeting and will make current membership lists available on request.
- The Children's Trust and the WSCB will jointly hold an annual event to meet with frontline staff from all relevant agencies to explore the effectiveness of safeguarding at all levels of need. The findings from this will be incorporated into relevant strategies and implementation plans.
- The DCS and Lead Member will attend both the Children's Trust and WSCB. This will ensure clear lines of communication and reduce the opportunity for duplication.
- This protocol will be reviewed on an annual basis or when national guidance affecting either body is revised or introduced.
- Chairs and/or members (including from sub-groups) are invited to events, meetings and workshops of the Boards, Executives and associated sub-groups as appropriate. In addition,

where it is apparent that a specific and seamless piece of work is required a joint sub-group will be formed with members from both bodies (eg such as the Joint Early Help sub-group focussing on early intervention).

- The Chairs will meet at least 3 times a year to report on and discuss the effectiveness of their collaborative working.
- Both bodies will seek advice and support from the Voice and Influence Team to ensure they are engaging fully with children, young people, their families and carers and fully understanding their needs and views.

## **8. Resolution process**

Where either body is concerned that this protocol is not succeeding in ensuring strong partnership working to keep children safe, resolution should be sought through documented communication between the two Chairs. Where the challenger is not satisfied with the response received, as a next step the matter can be referred to the Public Services Board.

## **9. Protocol acceptance and agreement**

This protocol is agreed by the undersigned on behalf of the Wiltshire SCB and the Wiltshire Children's Trust:

Wiltshire Safeguarding Children Board

Wiltshire Children and Young People's Trust



Chair

Chair

Date 15/12/2014

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