

# Joint Protocol for Safeguarding Children



Protocol outlining the relationship between:

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Bracknell Forest Safeguarding Children Board

Bracknell Forest Safeguarding Adults Partnership Board

Health & Wellbeing Board

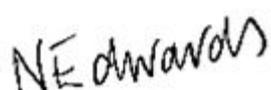
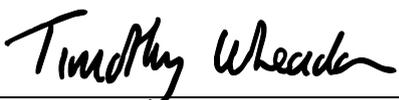
Children and Young People's Partnership

Community Safety Partnership

Corporate Parenting Advisory Panel

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This protocol will be reviewed annually to ensure it remains up to date with changing policy and legislation:

Signed	Designation
	Chair Bracknell Forest Local Safeguarding Children Board
	Chair Bracknell Forest Safeguarding Adults Partnership Board
	Chair Health and Wellbeing Board
	Chair Children and Young People's Partnership
	Chair Community Safety Partnership
	Chair Corporate Parenting Advisory Panel

Date last reviewed: April 2017

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Version Number: V2.0

**Approved by: LSCB, SAPB, HWB, CYPP, CSP and CPAP**

## 1 PURPOSE

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This Protocol relates to Boards in Bracknell Forest which are working to safeguard children, young people and adults who are vulnerable to abuse. Specifically these are:

- Bracknell Forest Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) (*Page 3*)
- Bracknell Forest Safeguarding Adults Partnership Board (SAPB) (*Page 5*)
- Health & Wellbeing Board (HWB) (*Page 6*)
- Children and Young People's Partnership (CYPP) (*Page 8*)
- Corporate Parenting Advisory Panel (CPAP) (*Page 9*)
- Community Safety Partnership (CSP) (*Page 11*)

The Protocol sets out:

- The distinct roles, responsibilities and governance arrangements for each of the above boards and partnerships, including their specific roles and responsibilities in relation to safeguarding.
- How they work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of people living in Bracknell Forest.
- Governance, accountability and coordination arrangements for thematic areas that are relevant to more than one of the above bodies.

Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. As such, this protocol aims to ensure:

- clarity around the roles and responsibilities of the above partnerships and boards
- that work is well co-ordinated with no duplication of effort.
- that we achieve more by working together.
- that working together has a positive impact on outcomes for Bracknell Forest residents.
- that there is effective challenge and scrutiny of safeguarding arrangements across Bracknell Forest.

Where the word safeguarding is used in this document it means:

- Protecting people from abuse, maltreatment or neglect.
- Preventing impairment of health or development.
- Ensuring that children and adults have safe and effective care.
- Taking action to enable people have the best life chances.

## 2 FUNCTIONS OF BOARDS AND PARTNERSHIPS

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### **Bracknell Forest Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB)**

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#### **Purpose and Functions**

The LSCB is a statutory body created under the Children Act 2004. Section 14 of the Children Act 2004 sets out the objectives of LSCBs, which are:

- To coordinate what is done by each person or body represented on the Board for the purposes of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in the area; and
- To ensure the effectiveness of what is done by each such person or body for those purposes.

Regulation 5 of the Local Safeguarding Children Boards Regulations 2006 sets out that the functions of the LSCB, are as follows:

1. Develop policies and procedures for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in Bracknell Forest, including policies and procedures in relation to:
  - The action to be taken where there are concerns about a child's safety or welfare, including thresholds for intervention
  - Training of people who work with children or in services affecting the safety and welfare of children
  - Recruitment and supervision of people who work with children
  - Investigations of allegations concerning people who work with children
  - Safety and welfare of children who are privately fostered
  - Cooperation with neighbouring children's services authorities and their Board partners.
2. Communicate to people and organisations in Bracknell Forest the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, raising their awareness of how this can best be done and encouraging them to do so.
3. Monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of what is done by the authority and their Board partners individually and collectively to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and advising them on ways to improve.
4. Participate in the planning of services for children in Bracknell Forest.
5. Undertake reviews of serious cases and child deaths and advise the authority and their Board partners on lessons to be learned.
6. Publish an annual report on the effectiveness of child safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in Bracknell Forest.
7. Provide challenge to ensure that there is a comprehensive, effective and adequately resourced early intervention strategy for the provision of services to children and young people in Bracknell Forest.

Details of the role and functions of the LSCB can be found at: [www.bflscb.org.uk](http://www.bflscb.org.uk)

### **Governance and Accountability**

Working Together 2015 states that in order to provide effective scrutiny, the LSCB should be independent. It should not be subordinate to, nor subsumed within, other local structures.

The LSCB has a role in co-ordinating and ensuring the effectiveness of the work of local partners to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. The Board will hold organisations, individually and in partnership, to account for their performance in this respect. However, the Board is not accountable for their operational work and each Board partner retains their organisational lines of accountability for safeguarding.

The LSCB discharges many of its responsibilities on behalf of its statutory partners and as such is held to account by each of these organisations for its performance. The agreement of statutory partners is required for any work that has implications for policy, planning or the allocation of resources.

The Director of Children's Services should ensure that all appropriate local authority services engage effectively with the LSCB. The DCS is accountable to the Chief Executive of Bracknell Forest Council, and where appropriate the Lead Member for Children's Services for the effective working of the LSCB.

The Chair of the LSCB must be independent of local agencies so that the LSCB can exercise its local challenge function effectively. The Independent Chair is appointed by and is accountable to, the Chief Executive of Bracknell Forest Council. Where appropriate the Lead Member for Children's Services will also hold the Independent Chair to account for the effective working of the LSCB.

## **Bracknell Forest Safeguarding Adults Partnership Board (SAPB)**

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### **Purpose and Functions**

The Care Act 2014 puts Safeguarding Adults Boards (SAB) on a statutory footing and requires that each local authority sets up a Safeguarding Adults Board (SAB). The main objective of the Board is to assure itself that local safeguarding arrangements and partners act to help and protect adults in the area who meet the criteria set out in the Act. The safeguarding duties apply to an adult who:

- has needs for care and support (whether or not the local authority is meeting any of those needs)
- is experiencing, or at risk of, abuse or neglect
- as a result of those care and support needs is unable to protect themselves from either the risk of, or the experience of abuse or neglect

The SAB has a role in overseeing and leading adult safeguarding across the locality. It has a role too as a source of advice and assistance. This includes a focus on:

- Assuring itself that safeguarding practice is person-centred and outcome-focused
- Working collaboratively to prevent abuse and neglect where possible
- Seeking assurance that agencies and individuals give timely and proportionate responses when abuse or neglect have occurred
- Assuring itself that safeguarding practice is continuously improving and enhancing the quality of life of adults in its area.

The SAB has 3 core duties to:

- publish a strategic plan
- publish an annual report
- conduct Safeguarding Adult Reviews.

Safeguarding Adults Partnership Boards must arrange a Safeguarding Adults Review (formerly serious case reviews) when someone with care and support needs dies as a result of neglect or abuse and there is a concern that the local authority or its partners could have worked more effectively to protect them.

The SAB must also arrange a Safeguarding Adults Review if they know or suspect an adult in its area has experienced serious abuse or neglect.

There is a duty on relevant agencies to co-operate over the supply of information.

Local authorities must arrange for an independent advocate to represent and support a person who is the subject of a Safeguarding enquiry or review if the individual would experience substantial difficulty in participating.

The above includes a requirement to work effectively with partners across borders.

### **Terms of Reference and Membership**

The Terms of Reference, including membership for the SAB can be found at: [www.Bracknell Forestpartnership.gov.uk/safeguarding-adults-board/about-the-board/](http://www.BracknellForestpartnership.gov.uk/safeguarding-adults-board/about-the-board/)

### **Governance and Accountability**

The Director of Adults Services (DAS) has the responsibility to ensure that a SAPB exists. The DAS is accountable to the Chief Executive of Bracknell Forest Council, and where appropriate the Lead Member for Adults Services for the effective working of the SAB.

The Chair of the SAPB should be independent of local agencies so that the SAPB can exercise its local challenge function effectively. The Independent Chair should be appointed by and be accountable to, the Chief Executive of Bracknell Forest Council.

Although the SAPB produces a multi-agency adult safeguarding policy and procedure, it is the responsibility of each partner to develop their own organisational policy in relation to adult safeguarding which complies with the multi-agency policy.

There will be sovereignty around decision making processes. Partners will be accountable through their own organisation's decision making processes for the decisions they take. It is expected that members of the SAPB will have delegated authority from their organisations to take decision within the terms of reference.

## **Health and Well-Being Board (HWB)**

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### **Purpose and Function**

The Health and Social Care Act 2012 established health and wellbeing boards as a forum where key leaders from the health and care system work together to improve the health and wellbeing of their local population and reduce health inequalities. Its focus will be on securing the best possible health outcomes for all local people.

The HWB aims to:

- Drive whole system leadership and set and hold the vision for health and social care across Bracknell Forest.
- Be a focused strategic partnership board to deliver improved outcomes.
- Have oversight of the delivery of the commissioning strategies of the organisations to support the delivery of the health and wellbeing strategy.
- Deliver its statutory responsibilities set out above.

The key functions of the HWB are:

- To prepare a Joint Strategic Needs Assessments (JSNA) and Joint Health and

Wellbeing Strategies (JHWS), a statutory duty of local authorities and clinical commissioning groups (CCGs).

- To encourage integrated working between health and social care commissioners, including providing advice, assistance or other support to encourage arrangements under section 75 of the National Health Service Act 2006 (i.e. lead commissioning, pooled budgets and/or integrated provision) in connection with the provision of health and social care services.
- To sign off the Better Care Fund BCF (formerly known as the Integrated Transformation Fund)
- Produce a pharmaceutical needs assessment: This was formerly a responsibility of the primary care trust but the Health and Social Care Act 2012 transferred responsibility for the developing and updating of PNAs to health and wellbeing boards.
- To use its power of influence to encourage closer working between commissioners of health-related services and the board itself.
- To use its powers of influence to encourage closer working between commissioners of health-related services (such as housing and many other local government services) and commissioners of health and social care services.
- Any other functions that may be delegated by the council under section 196(2) of the Health and Social Care Act 2012.

The HWB is responsible for the improvement of outcomes across all aspects of health and wellbeing in Bracknell Forest. Children and young people's safeguarding and the safeguarding of adults at risk of harm are key elements of this. The HWB will ensure relevant consideration is given to safeguarding for both children and adults through:

- Addressing safeguarding holistically in local needs assessment; including by considering and addressing information provided by the LSCB and SAPB on safeguarding priorities.
- Integrating safeguarding into the development of the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment and the Health and Well-Being Strategy
- Having oversight and receiving assurance from Children and Adult CYPs, Healthy Communities Partnership (Public Health), LSCB and SAPB that safeguarding is being integrated into commissioning arrangements at both strategic and operational levels.

### **Terms of Reference and Membership**

The Terms of Reference, including membership for the HWB can be found at: <http://democratic.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/mgCommitteeDetails.aspx?ID=632>

### **Governance and Accountability**

The HWB will be accountable for its actions to its individual member organisations.

There will be sovereignty around decision making processes. Representatives will be accountable through their own organisation's decision making processes for the decisions they take. It is expected that Members of the HWB will have delegated authority from their organisations to take decisions within the terms of reference.

## Children and Young People's Partnership (CYPP)

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### **Purpose and Function**

The CYPP supports collaborative working and decision making that improves health and social care outcomes for children and young people in Bracknell Forest. The CYPP will work to secure sustainable, appropriately integrated health, social care and education, delivered to children and young people, from pre-birth up to transition to adulthood, with high quality delivery and outcomes. This will be done through effective partnerships between health, local authority and wider partnership organisations in Bracknell Forest, and through working collaboratively with children, young people and families.

The main function of the CYPP is to manage the overall agenda for the Partnership and oversee the setting of the priorities. It will ensure that:

- There is a Children and Young People's Plan, which is the strategic plan for services for children and young people and this is monitored on a quarterly basis
- There is a Joint Commissioning Strategy in place that reflects the commissioning strategy and intentions of the partner organisations.
- There is an approved annual Commissioning Priorities and Projects Plan setting out the commissioning and decommissioning intentions of health and local authority, reflecting the intentions of partner organisations.
- The Commissioning Plan is monitored through a Commissioning Projects Tracker.
- The performance of contracts is monitored through a Contracts Tracker, ensuring that access and quality standards are met and improvement plans where required are delivered.
- There is a proactive approach to risks and issues ensuring that these are raised in a timely manner are acted upon, and are escalated as required.
- There is a JSNA that brings together the evidence of the need in Bracknell Forest.
- Commissioning and decommissioning intentions are aligned to other health and local authority plans.
- The work of the three Local Children and Young People's Partnership Boards is monitored to ensure effective delivery of outcomes in line with key strategic priorities as set out in the Children and Young People's Plan.

The CYPP is responsible for the improvement of outcomes across all aspects of children and young people's lives. Children and young people's safeguarding is a key element of this. The CYPP will ensure relevant consideration is given to safeguarding for children and young people, including as they transition into adult services by:

- Addressing safeguarding holistically in local needs assessment; including by considering and addressing information provided by the LSCB and SAPB on safeguarding priorities.
- Integrating safeguarding into commissioning arrangements at both strategic and operational levels
- Embedding and integrating safeguarding into service arrangements

### **Governance and Accountability**

The CYPP is a thematic partnership which is accountable to:

- The executive teams of membership organisations with delegated authority via the representative members.

- The Health and Wellbeing Board.

Each organisation remains accountable for delivery of the agreed elements that sit within their own remit.

A copy of the Joint Strategic Plan for Children and Young People (2014 – 2017) can be found at: <http://boris.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/cypp-review-2014-to-2015.pdf>

## Corporate Parenting Advisory Panel (CPAP)

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### Purpose and Function

Bracknell Forest Council's Corporate Parenting Advisory Panel considers matters concerning the Council's role as a Corporate Parent to children and young people Looked After and those receiving Aftercare services. In particular with regard to improving the health, education, employment, training and housing outcomes for children and young people Looked After through:

- Ensuring integrated planning and activity for children Looked After and actively promoting opportunities for children Looked After by the Council.
- Ensuring effective communication arrangements are in place between panel members and the children and young people who are Looked After.

The main functions of the Corporate Parenting Panel are:

- To promote awareness of and commitment to the corporate parenting role within the Council and to develop expertise and knowledge among elected members and officers through information and training.
- To inform, advise and make recommendations to the Executive, and other relevant parts of the Council, about matters to do with children and young people in the care of the Council.
- To promote the needs of looked after children in any inter-agency planning led by any of its member agencies (for example, the Children' & Young People's Plan) and monitor effectiveness of joint working.
- To monitor the Council's performance as a corporate parent against the promises in the Pledge and the key performance indicators in relation to children looked after and care leavers.
- To ensure that children's needs in relation to issues of race, ethnicity, disability, religion, language, age or sexual orientations are fully addressed.
- To actively promote work experience and work opportunities ring fenced for care leavers both within the Council, partners and stakeholders.
- For Panel members to undertake visits to the Council's short break unit for Children and participate in Regulation 44 (Care Standards Act 2000) visits with officers.
- To identify and disseminate local and national best practice for those children and young people in receipt of Care and Aftercare services.
- To ensure that the views of looked after children, young people and their parents fully inform all policy, planning and strategic development.

The core business of the Corporate Parenting Panel relates to safeguarding for children and young people, including during their transition to adult services. The panel's aims will reflect a child's entitlement to:

- Feel safe, protected and valued in a strong, sustained and committed relationship with at least one carer.
- Live in a caring, healthy and learning environment.
- Feel respected and supported in his / her cultural beliefs and personal identify.
- Have access to appropriate education and opportunities in order to fulfil their potential.
- Have access to effective healthcare, assessment, treatment and support.
- Have opportunities to develop positive social skills, talents and abilities and to spend time in freely chosen play, cultural and leisure activities.
- Be prepared for leaving care by being supported to care and provide for him/herself in the future.

### **Terms of Reference and Membership**

The Panel shall comprise the following Members:

- Five to seven elected Members according to the usual apportionment arrangements.
- Substitutes for each of the above.
- Executive Member for Children, Young People and Learning as a non-voting member.
- Two lay members co-opted onto the panel, one a foster carer and one an adult with experience of the care system as a child.

Each elected member will undertake a Link Member role in respect of one or more of the following areas:

- Housing/Care-Leavers
- Asylum seekers
- Work Experience and Apprenticeships for looked after children Placements
- Short Breaks
- Youth Services/Leisure/Social activities for looked after children

The lead officers for the Panel will be the Head of Service for Looked After Children, the Chief Officer for Children's Social Care, the Virtual School Head, (or Assistant Virtual School Head) supported by an Officer from Performance Management and Governance and other officers as necessary.

The Director of Children, Young People and Learning will attend periodically.

Arrangements will be made by the Panel for the direct and indirect involvement of Looked After Children and young people.

Members of the Panel will be required to attend appropriate training and be subject to a check by the Vetting and Barring Scheme.

### **Governance and Accountability**

The Corporate Parenting Advisory Panel will meet four times a year. In addition there will be one panel training session a year and an annual event to celebrate looked after children's successes and stimulate further improvements to the service. The normal rules for a quorum for Panel meetings shall apply. The Panel will have no direct decision-making powers but will make recommendations where appropriate to the Executive.

## Community Safety Partnership (CSP)

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### Purpose and Function

The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 established CSPs and the Crime and Disorder (Formation and Implementation Strategy) Regulations 2007 requires that CSPs undertake an annual audit of crime, disorder and the misuse of drugs within their areas and then publish a 3 year CSP Plan. The regulations require CSPs to refresh their Strategic Assessment and Plan annually.

The CSP is the key partnership for promoting safer and stronger communities and addressing crime and disorder reduction at the borough level. It is the strategic body through which partners work to address those issues which affect residents across the whole of Bracknell Forest and which are best addressed together from the perspective of strategy, economy and efficiency.

### Key functions:

- Take a Bracknell Forest wide approach to tackling common issues and responding to shared challenges.
- Commission the production of the annual partnership strategic assessment to analyse need and determine priorities.
- Agree borough level community safety priorities and the summation of those within the annual Community Safety Plan.
- Conduct reviews of domestic homicides as required by the Domestic Violence Crime and Victims Act 2004 and advise the authority and their Board partners on lessons to be learned.
- Provide the Thames Valley Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) with a single point of contact and engagement in relation to Bracknell Forest wide issues, actively working to maximise efficiency and reduce duplication.
- Represent the community safety partners within Bracknell Forest in discussions with the PCC.
- Oversee/advise and ensure effective deployment of partnership community safety funds, where they exist.
- Oversee the effectiveness of substance misuse commissioning from a crime and disorder perspective.
- Provide a dissemination platform for legislative changes and guidance which has borough wide implications.
- Provide strategic direction and decision making for the operational sub groups across the Community Safety Partnerships.

The CSP will ensure relevant consideration is given to safeguarding for children, young people and adults by:

- Addressing relevant safeguarding issues in local strategic assessment; including by considering and addressing information provided by the LSCB and BFSAB on safeguarding priorities.
- Include relevant safeguarding issues in the Community Safety Partnership Plan.
- Integrating safeguarding into commissioning arrangements at both strategic, tactical and operational levels.

## **Governance and Accountability**

The Community Safety Partnership Board is a statutory body and is the borough's response to the Crime and Disorder (Formation and Implementation Strategy) Regulations 2007.

### **3 HOW THE BOARDS AND PARTNERSHIPS WORK TOGETHER**

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The boards and partnerships have distinct, yet complementary functions. Safeguarding is not the core purpose for all of the boards and partnerships, but it is a key theme that unites them all.

The information provided in the section above, outlines the roles and responsibilities that each board / partnership has in relation to safeguarding. This section sets out how they will work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and adults in Bracknell Forest.

#### **Key principles:**

- **We will offer mutual challenge and support:**

The LSCB and SAPB have a specific remit to ensure the effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements across partners. As such they will work with, and where necessary offer challenge to the HWB, CAP, CSP and the CYPP to ensure that they safeguard and promote the welfare of children and adults in the work that they do.

Independent of the scrutiny roles of the LSCB and SAPB, the boards and partnerships will offer each other mutual challenge and support in order to optimise safeguarding arrangements and ensure we are achieving the best possible outcomes for our children, young people and adults.

- **We will share good practice and resources**

To help each of the boards and partnerships to develop and improve, relevant good practice and resources will be shared. This could include policies and practices, including those identified in other authorities, or opening out training and development opportunities across the wider partnerships.

- **We will work together on themes of common interest:**

Some themes have relevance across a number of the boards and partnerships. In such cases there will be joint working to reduce duplication of effort. Arrangements for this are set out in more detail in the next section.

- **We will be open and honest:**

The key partnerships will work together in a way that is open and honest, recognising that we are all seeking to achieve the best possible outcomes for Bracknell Forest residents.

- **We will talk to each other about areas of risk**

We will share information on key risks or concerns. This will help the different boards and partners to maintain a good understanding of emerging risks that may be relevant to their work and support the principle of offering mutual challenge and support.

- **We will think partnerships**

All of the partnerships and boards will seek to adopt a mind-set where they stop and consider the wider partnerships context in relation to the work that they are doing. Where there is benefit in informing, or working together with other partnership they will seek to do this.

### **Reporting arrangements between partners**

The reporting arrangements for regular / annual reports will support closer working between the partnerships. It is expected that reports will clearly state the response and / or action that is required from the receiving Board and that reports will be tabled with sufficient time for appropriate discussion and challenge, for issues relevant to that partnership to be identified and necessary action agreed.

- The LSCB will present their Annual Report to the HWB, CYPP, CSP and ASPB in the Autumn.
- The LSCB will receive the Annual Report from the ASPB and CPAP and the HWB strategy and JSNA.

In the case of issues or exception reports which fall outside of the above fixed reporting protocol:

- Any of the Chairs can make a written request to another partnership for information or consideration of any area of concern
- Any of the Chairs can make a request for an item to be placed on another partnership meeting agenda
- Any of the Chairs can request a meeting with one or more of the other partnership Chairs to consider and agree a way forward regarding specific issues

Where an area of concern cannot be resolved within the above framework, a resolution meeting will be held between the Board Chairs and officers at Director / Head of Service level.

### **Annual meeting**

The partnership Chairs of the CYPP, CSP and LSCB meet on a quarterly basis and these chairs are also members of the CAP and HWB and ASB. There is a standing agenda item providing updates on issues within the partnerships. This enables greater understanding of each other's structures, reporting mechanisms and shared priorities.

## **Common membership**

Where there is common membership between the partnerships, these common members have a role in ensuring that relevant information is communicated across the partnerships, and they should raise relevant issues to the appropriate board or partnership Chair.

In particular, the following people will have a key role in ensuring continued strong relationships between the partnerships.

**Director of Children's Services (DCS)**

**Director of Adult Services (DAS)**

**Director of Public Health (DPH)**

**Lead Member for Children, Young People & Education**

**Lead Member for Adult Services, Health & Housing**

**The Local Authority Chief Executive**

## **The role of the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) and Panel**

PCCs have a legal responsibility to hold their chief officer to account for their duties in terms of protecting children. Specifically, section 1(8) (h) of the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 states that: 'The police and crime commissioner must, in particular, hold the chief constable to account for the exercise of duties in relation to the safeguarding of children and the promotion of child welfare that are imposed on the chief constable by sections 10 and 11 of the Children Act 2004.' The Police and Crime Panel, which consist of Member representatives across the Thames Valley in turn holds the PCC to account. The PCC and Panel are therefore key partners who should be consulted with on any safeguarding concerns.

## **4 WORKING TOGETHER ON THEMES OF COMMON INTEREST**

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There are a number of pieces of work or themes which are relevant to more than one partnership. In such cases the default position should be that partnerships seek to work together to achieve the best outcomes and reduce duplication of work.

When a piece of work or theme is identified that is likely to have relevance across more than one partnership:

- The other partnerships should be contacted to discuss the relevance of the theme / piece of work
- There should be agreement across those partnerships for whom the theme / piece of work is relevant on the following:
  - The approach to be taken
  - Which partnership will lead and how all partners will contribute
  - Responsibility and accountability for that particular piece of work / theme
  - Communication / reporting arrangements

It is recognised that this is likely to require formal discussion and decision making at partnership meetings. However, in most cases this should not delay work from starting.