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<th>CABINET</th>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>ITEM NO</th>
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<td>20 March 2019</td>
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<tr>
<td>TITLE</td>
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<tr>
<td>Multi Agency Safeguarding Arrangements</td>
<td>WARD (S)</td>
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<td>CHIEF OFFICER</td>
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<td>CABINET MEMBER</td>
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<td>Director of Children’s Services</td>
<td>Children and Schools</td>
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<td>DECISION CLASSIFICATION</td>
<td>FINAL DECISION</td>
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<td>- Key</td>
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<td>To be made at this meeting on the recommendations of this report.</td>
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1. **Decision required**

Cabinet is requested to:

1.1 Note the legal requirement for the Royal Borough of Greenwich to replace the Greenwich Safeguarding Children Board (GSCB) with new Multi-Agency Safeguarding Arrangements.

1.2 Approve the Multi Agency Safeguarding Arrangements outlined in this paper for publication no later than 31st March 2019.

1.2.1 Delegate responsibility and authority for ensuring full participation with the new Multi-Agency Safeguarding Arrangements to the Director of Children’s Services.

1.2.2 It is recommended that the geographical footprint for the new arrangements should be based on local authority boundaries. However, in line with work undertaken as part of the DfE Early Adopter Programme Greenwich would be prepared to align some processes, procedures and priorities with other Multi Agency Safeguarding Partnerships if it promotes more effective use of resources and a shared approach to learning and development leading to better outcomes for children and young people.

1.2.3 It is recommended that the Independent Chair of the Greenwich Safeguarding Children Board be asked to undertake the role of Independent Scrutineer and that the Partnership Group be chaired by one of the lead representatives from the statutory safeguarding partners in yearly rotation.

1.2.4 It is recommended that the funding from each of the partners and relevant agencies should remain the same in 2019/20 with a review in 2020/21.
1.2.5 It is recommended that a tri borough (Greenwich, Lewisham and Bexley) Child Death Review Panel be agreed and become operational by 29th September 2019.

2. Introduction and Background

2.1 In 2015, the Government commissioned Alan Wood CBE, a former President of the Association of Directors of Children’s Services and ex-Director of Children’s Services in Hackney, to lead a review of the role and function of Local Safeguarding Children Boards (LSCBs) within the context of local strategic multi agency working. This was to include the child death review process, and consideration of how the intended centralisation of serious case reviews (SCRs) would work at local level. This review took place between January and March 2016. The review team consulted a number of leaders and experts in children's services including Lord Laming and Baroness Jay and in total, the review considered over 600 responses.

2.2 The report concluded that although there were highly effective LSCBs, the 'duty to cooperate'\(^1\) was not a sufficient vehicle to bring about effective collaboration between the key agencies of health, the police and local government. It recommended that Local Safeguarding Boards should be replaced by a stronger statutory partnership of the key agencies (police, NHS Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCG) and local authorities) who would in turn determine local safeguarding arrangements.

2.3 The intent was to:
- Introduce a more effective statutory framework to focus the arrangements of child protection and to ensure key agencies collaborate to deliver more effective services
- Move away from an over-prescriptive system to one that encourages and authorises local areas to determine how they organise themselves to improve outcomes for children

2.4 The government response in May 2016 endorsed the findings of the report and stated that the goal was to support and enable local agencies to work together in a system where:
- Excellent practice is the norm
- Partner agencies hold one another to account effectively
- There is early identification of 'new' safeguarding issues
- Learning is promoted and embedded
- Information is shared effectively

\(^1\) Section 10, Children Act 2004
• The public can feel confident that children are protected from harm

2.5 The Children and Social Work Act 2017 received Royal Assent in April 2017. Section 30 of the Act removes the requirement for local areas to have Local Safeguarding Children Boards. Sections 16 – 23 introduce a duty on three key partners (local authorities, police and CCG) to make arrangements with other partners as locally determined to work together to protect and safeguard children. These arrangements must identify and respond to the needs of children in the area and also identify and review serious child safeguarding cases which raise issues of importance in relation to the area.²

2.6 Where a case is reviewed under the supervision of the safeguarding partners, they must:
• Ensure that the reviewer provides a report on the outcome of the review
• Ensure that the reviewer makes satisfactory progress
• Ensure that the report is of satisfactory quality
• Provide the report to the Secretary of State and the Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel.

2.6.1 Other key elements of the duty are:
• The safeguarding partners must publish the arrangements
• The arrangements must include the provision of a scrutiny function by an independent person of the effectiveness of the arrangements. This role does not replace and should not be conflated with the separate requirement for overview and scrutiny within the local authority as set out in the Local Government Act 2000 and described in the Council’s Constitution.
• The child death review partners for a local authority area in England must make arrangements for the review of each death of a child normally resident in the area.

2.7 The DfE issued the revised version of Working Together to Safeguard Children in 2018. This statutory guidance sets out the requirements for the three safeguarding partners, while allowing them freedom to determine how they organise themselves to meet those requirements and improve outcomes for children locally.

2.8 In May 2018, the statutory partners (local authority, police and CCG) in the three London boroughs of Greenwich, Lewisham and Bexley submitted a joint bid to the Department for Education (DfE) for ‘early adopter’ funding to

² The full wording of Sections 16 – 31 are set out in Appendix A

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move to new children’s safeguarding partnership arrangements in line with changes made within the Children and Social Work Act 2017 and new statutory guidance. The application was successful with initial notification being made in July 2018.

2.9 The bid sought to identify ways that the three boroughs might work together to explore how multi-professional strategic oversight in a geographical region where children move between local areas might reduce duplicated effort in the three areas and result in better outcomes for children. This work began in August 2018 and will conclude in March 2019. There is an expectation by the DfE that any borough that was an Early Adopter site will publish their borough multi agency safeguarding arrangements by 31st March 2019, three months in advance of the national deadline. Full implementation is required no later than 29th September 2019.

2.10 Discussions have been undertaken between the Royal Borough of Greenwich, Greenwich CCG and the police as well as relevant agencies about the most effective way of meeting the statutory requirements and improving safeguarding while retaining the strengths of the Greenwich Safeguarding Children Board.

3. **Available Options**

3.1 New multi-agency safeguarding arrangements are required by legislation, therefore no change to the existing arrangements is not an option.

3.2 Local arrangements can cover two or more local authorities. Where more than one local authority joins together, the local authorities can agree to delegate their safeguarding partner duties to a single authority. This option is not recommended.

3.3 New local authority safeguarding arrangements can be developed to build upon the strengths of the Local Safeguarding Children Board. This is the preferred option as outlined below.

4. **Proposed Structure and Arrangements**

4.1 It is proposed that the new arrangements be called the Greenwich Safeguarding Children’s Partnership. An appointed Independent Scrutineer will meet regularly with the Local Authority Chief Executive, the Leader, the Lead Member for Children and Schools, the Managing Director of Greenwich
CCG and the Borough Commander for the Police South-eastern Basic Command Unit.

4.2 Responsibility for strategy would sit with an Executive Group comprising the lead representatives and a senior advisor from each of statutory partners with flexibility to co-opt other relevant professionals where appropriate. The Executive would be a strategic leadership group responsible and accountable for the effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements in the Royal Borough of Greenwich.

4.3 A Partnership Group with representatives from key relevant agencies (as defined in The Child Safeguarding Practice Review and Relevant Agency (England) Regulations 2018) will have a strategic role, working closely with the Executive Group and subgroups to agree strategic priorities, monitor, challenge and provide leadership to ensure that their agencies meet their statutory responsibility to safeguard children. The Lead Member for Children and Schools will be a participant observer of the Partnership Group.

4.4 There will be four subgroups, each chaired by a member of the Partnership Group:

- **Audit** – responsible for involving frontline operational leads, managers, staff and parents and children (where appropriate) in multi-agency audits to determine what is working and what needs to improve in multi-agency safeguarding practice. Makes recommendations for change to the Executive and Partnership Board.

- **Learning from Incidents** – responsible for recommending when notifications to the National Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel should be made, undertaking rapid reviews and reviewing cases locally that raise issues of importance in relation to safeguarding in the area.

- **Strategic Multi Agency Child Exploitation (SMACE)** – responsible for working collaboratively to provide oversight of the Greenwich response to child sexual exploitation (CSE), sexually harmful behaviour, exploitation by criminal gangs, modern day slavery and county lines, online abuse and extremism.

- **Schools Safeguarding Network** - responsible for providing a communication channel between all schools and the Greenwich Safeguarding Children Partnership and acting source of peer support for schools in meeting safeguarding responsibilities. The purpose of the Schools Safeguarding Network is to communicate the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children to all schools within the Royal Borough of Greenwich.
4.5 Task and finish groups, drawing upon multi agency expertise, will be convened to drive forward agreed priority objectives and emerging themes.

4.6 The chart below details the proposed structure of the Greenwich Safeguarding Children Partnership:

4.7 The above arrangements will be subject to the formal decision making arrangements of the individual organisations. Therefore, the Council will need to take any formal decisions in accordance with the Functions & Responsibilities section of the Constitution.

4.8 Royal Greenwich will maintain and be responsible for its own safeguarding arrangements. However, in recognition of the borders of the police Basic Command Unit, movement of children and families across borough boundaries and similar safeguarding issues, a Tri Borough Strategic Executive group composed of representatives from the Greenwich Executive Group, the Lewisham Executive Group and the Bexley Working Group will meet twice a year to develop shared priorities and approaches.

5 Key Issues, Requirements and Recommendations

5.1 The statutory guidance names the chief executive as the local authority’s lead representative for the new safeguarding arrangements but allows for the delegation of this function to a senior officer in the local authority who will have responsibility and authority for ensuring full participation with the
It is recommended that this responsibility be delegated to the Director of Children’s Services.

5.2 The geographical footprint for the new arrangements is based on local authority areas, but two or more local authorities can join together and delegate their safeguarding responsibility if they choose to do so. It is recommended that the local authority, police and CCG in Royal Greenwich should retain full responsibility for the safeguarding arrangements within the borough. However, in line with work undertaken as part of the DfE Early Adopter Programme Greenwich would be prepared to align some processes, procedures and priorities with other Multi Agency Safeguarding Partnerships if it promotes more effective use of resources and a shared approach to learning and development leading to better outcomes for children and young people.

5.3 LSCBs were previously inspected by Ofsted as part of the Single Inspection Framework and in the 2016 Greenwich Safeguarding Children Board was rated as ‘good’. Under the new legislation, there are no national or formal inspection regimes for the new safeguarding arrangements. Instead, the partners are required to satisfy themselves of the effectiveness of the arrangements through scrutiny by an independent person. While the decision on how best to implement a robust system of independent scrutiny is to be made locally, safeguarding partners should ensure that the scrutiny is objective, acts as a constructive critical friend and promotes reflection to drive continuous improvement. In practice, this role may be filled by a single individual, or may be a combination of a ‘Scrutineer’ working with peer reviews and other methods of measuring effectiveness. The corporate statutory scrutiny arrangements for each responsible agency are not compromised nor should they be replaced or conflated by the role of the Safeguarding Scrutineer which has a separate function.

5.4 Under the new legislation, the role of Independent Chair has been abolished and a new role of Independent Scrutineer established. It is recommended that the Independent Chair of the Greenwich Safeguarding Children Board be asked to undertake the role of Independent Scrutineer. The Partnership Group will chaired by one of the lead representatives from the statutory safeguarding partners in yearly rotation.

5.5 Guidance states that the three safeguarding partners should agree the level of funding required to safeguard children in the area. The amount should be
equitable, proportionate and cover all costs including local child safeguarding practice reviews. During the next year, the Greenwich Safeguarding Children Partnership will seek opportunities to increase the efficiency and efficacy of the safeguarding arrangements in the borough and ensure that they are cost neutral for the Council. **It is recommended that the funding from each of the partners and relevant agencies should remain the same in 2019/20 with a review in 2020/21.**

5.6 Because over 80% of child deaths have a medical or public health cause and it is estimated that only 4% require a serious case review, ownership of child death reviews was moved from the Department for Education to the Department of Health. In order to ensure that information from the Child Death Review process is systematically captured and to enable learning to prevent future deaths the Department of Health has recommended that a minimum of sixty child deaths per year should be reviewed. The legislation allows CCGs and Local Authorities to combine to deliver the Child Death Review function. In 2017/18 RBG recorded thirty-five child deaths so it would be unable to operate independently. Together Bexley, Lewisham and Greenwich recorded seventy-five deaths during that same period. **It is recommended that a tri borough (Greenwich, Lewisham and Bexley) Child Death Review Panel be agreed and become operational by 29th September 2019.**

6. **Reasons for Recommendations**

6.1 Although the Wood report recommended the abolition of Local Safeguarding Boards, it did recognise that there were a number of effective ones. The Greenwich Safeguarding Children Board was rated as good in 2016 and in the recent JTAI (2018), inspectors wrote “**There is strong partnership working in Greenwich and a shared commitment to improving services for all children at risk of harm... The effective work of the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB), strong leadership in many agencies and a shared belief in a partnership approach provide fertile ground for practice to further evolve and improve.**”

6.2 A key feature of effective partnership working in Greenwich is that the culture is not complacent. There is unanimous commitment to the first sentence of Working Together “**Nothing is more important than children’s welfare**”. This underpins a recognition that even if arrangements are ‘good’ there is room for improvement. Consequently, the opportunity offered by the new legislation to have a greater say over the remit of the partnership, promote innovation and deliver better efficiency has been welcomed.
6.3 However, we believe that evolutionary and incremental change is most likely to deliver improvements. These recommendations have been developed to ensure that Greenwich complies with its legal requirements and lay the groundwork for further improvement without destabilising effective arrangements and past success.

6.4 We believe that the proposals outlined in this paper are the most effective arrangements for the present, but will, where necessary, adapt to ensure that we continue to develop an environment in which leaders know what is necessary and are able to deliver a system to ensure that practice leaders and practitioners have the knowledge, judgment, skills and support necessary to protect children.

7. **Consultation Results**

7.1 A working party comprising the Director of Children’s Services, Senior Assistant Director of Children’s Social Care, Director of Quality and Integrated Governance at Greenwich Clinical Commissioning Group, the Designated Nurse for Safeguarding, the Head of Safeguarding for the Police Basic Command Unit and the current Chair of the Greenwich Safeguarding Children Board have met to agree outline proposals which were discussed at the Executive Board on 24th January 2019.

7.2 All current members of the Greenwich Safeguarding Children Board Executive Group as well all members of existing sub groups were asked to participate in an on-line consultation (Appendix B) to identify positive aspects of the current arrangements as well areas for improvement. Open questions were asked to ensure that respondents had freedom to focus on areas that were most important to them.

7.3 The response was overwhelmingly positive. Existing arrangements were highly valued and respondents indicated a desire to ensure that areas of good practice were retained. Respondents were positive about the opportunities offered under the new arrangements including the focus on joint ownership and accountability across the partnership. Responses have shaped the specifics in the development of the new arrangements.

8 **Next Steps: Communication and Implementation of the Decision**

8.1 Following approval by Cabinet, the proposed new arrangements will be submitted to the DfE for a final compliance check.
8.2 Upon receipt of their approval, the new safeguarding arrangements will be published by 31st March 2019 with an implementation date of 29th June 2019.

9. **Cross-Cutting Issues and Implications**

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<td><strong>Legal</strong> including Human Rights Act</td>
<td>Sections 16–23 of the Children and Social Work Act 2017 set out the arrangements for local multi-agency safeguarding partnerships to replace the previous model of local safeguarding children boards (LSCBs). The safeguarding partners for a local authority area (named as the local authority, clinical commissioning group and police) are required to make arrangements for themselves and relevant agencies to work together in exercising their functions for the purpose of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in the area. The Act also makes further provisions regarding local child safeguarding practice reviews, including enabling the Secretary of State to make regulations which provide for enforcement and requiring the safeguarding partners to prepare and publish a report on their work at least once every 12 months. There is provision in the Act, Section 21, which enables the safeguarding partners for two or more local authority areas in England to agree that their areas are treated as a single area and to allow those authorities to arrange for one of them to carry out the functions on behalf of the other. The arrangements set out this report will ensure that the safeguarding partners are</td>
<td>John Scarborough, Head of Legal Services, 6 March 2019</td>
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able to identify and respond to the needs of children in the area and also identify and review serious child safeguarding cases which raise issues of importance in relation to the area.

Under the Responsibility for Functions section of the Council's Constitution, Cabinet is authorised to take the decisions set out in paragraph 1 of the report.

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<thead>
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<td>This report requests that Cabinet Committee note the legal requirement for the Greenwich Safeguarding Children Board be replaced by new multi-agency safeguarding arrangements. Resources to meet the cost of the proposed change in arrangements are currently cost neutral, but may be affected by changes in borough or other external contributions.</td>
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<td>Carolyn Knowles, Head of Accountancy and Business Change 13th February 2019</td>
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<th>Equalities</th>
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<tr>
<td>The decisions recommended through this paper have a remote or low relevance to the substance of the Equality Act. There is no apparent equality impact on end users.</td>
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<td>Henrietta Quartano Senior Assistant Director 13th February 2019</td>
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<th>Staffing establishment</th>
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<td>There are no staffing implications.</td>
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<td>Henrietta Quartano Senior Assistant Director 13th February 2019</td>
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10. **Report Appendices**

10.1 The following documents are to be published with and form part of the report:

- **Appendix A**: Consultation with current members of Executive and Sub Groups on Greenwich Safeguarding Children Board
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