



**Community and Wellbeing Scrutiny
Committee**
22 November 2022

**Report from the Brent
Safeguarding Children Partnership**

**Brent Safeguarding Children Partnership
(Multi-agency safeguarding arrangements/MASA)
Annual Report 2021-22**

Wards Affected:	All
Key or Non-Key Decision:	Non-key
Open or Part/Fully Exempt:	Open
No. of Appendices:	Appendix 1 - Annual Report
Background Papers:	None
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1.0 Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 To enable members of the Community and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee to consider the Brent Safeguarding Children Partnership annual report covering the period from 1 October 2021 to 30 September 2022.

2.0 Recommendation(s)

- 2.1 The Community and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee is asked to note the contents of this report and the safeguarding children partnership annual report (Appendix A).

3.0 Detail

- 3.1 The Children and Social Work Act 2017 made provision for the locally determined arrangements agreed and delivered by three statutory safeguarding partners – local authorities, CCGs and police.
- 3.2 Subsequently, statutory guidance in the form of Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018) was published setting out the framework for local safeguarding oversight arrangements.

- 3.3 As set out in the Children and Social Work Act 2017 and the statutory guidance Working Together to Safeguarding Children 2018, the three safeguarding partners have a shared and equal duty to make arrangements to work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

Safeguarding Partners

- 3.4 The responsibility for the strategic oversight of this join-up of this locally rests with the three safeguarding partners (Brent Council, Metropolitan Police and North West London Integrated Care Board) who have a shared and equal duty to arrange to work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children in Brent.

Independent Scrutiny

- 3.5 The role of independent scrutiny is to provide assurance in judging the effectiveness of multi-agency arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children in Brent, including arrangements to identify and review serious child safeguarding cases. The independent scrutiny is part of a wider external inspection system administered by Ofsted, CQC and HM Inspectorate of Constabulary.
- 3.6 The decision on how best to implement a robust system of independent scrutiny is made locally and Brent safeguarding partners should ensure that the scrutiny is objective, acts as a constructive critical friend and promotes reflection to drive continuous improvement.
- 3.7 In Brent, the Safeguarding Partners have agreed the Independent Scrutineer function is carried out through an Independent Convener, Mike Howard. The Independent Scrutineer should consider how effectively the arrangements are working for children and families as well as for practitioners, and how well the safeguarding partners are providing strong leadership.

Brent's safeguarding partnership arrangements

- 3.8 Brent's safeguarding children partnership arrangements consist of a three-tier structure:
- Tier 1 - The Executive Group - provides high-level strategic leadership
 - Tier 2 - Brent Safeguarding Children Forum - diverse and wider-ranging partnership group
 - Tier 3 - Delivery focussed sub-groups - responsible for carrying out specific statutory duties of the partnership, these include:
 - Case Review Group
 - Joint partnerships Learning and Development Group
 - Multi-agency Audit Group

The Executive Group

- 3.9 The Executive Group membership includes senior representatives from the three safeguarding partners - Brent Council (Chief Executive and Corporate Director of Children and Young People), North West London Integrated Care Board (Director of Quality, Nursing and Safeguarding) and Metropolitan Police (Superintendent, Public Protection-Safeguarding Lead, North West BCU).

- 3.10 The Independent Convener is a standing member of the Executive Group and, as The Leader of Brent Council and the Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Schools are politically accountable for ensuring the local authority fulfils its legal responsibilities for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, they are also members of the Executive Group.

Brent Safeguarding Children Forum

- 3.11 The Brent Safeguarding Children Forum is the wider partnership forum accountable to the Executive Group, it is chaired by the Independent Scrutineer.
- 3.12 The Brent Safeguarding Partners selected the agencies and organisations as members of the Forum. These agencies and organisations have been chosen as they provide key strategic and operational insight for the safeguarding of children and young people in Brent.
- 3.13 The membership of the Forum includes representation from the safeguarding partners, identified relevant agencies (including schools and other education settings, health service providers, the Probation Service, CAFCASS) and lay members.
- 3.14 The Safeguarding Partners recognise the importance of involving the local community and therefore the Forum has two lay members.

The lay members act as valuable ambassadors to help build stronger links with the local community as part of the new arrangements and are encouraged to:

- promote awareness of safeguarding across Brent's communities
- represent the community voice at Safeguarding Forum meetings
- engage with Brent's people and local groups to support community cohesion

Partnership support staff arrangements

- 3.15 Support staffing arrangements for the Brent safeguarding children partnership arrangements are funded and resourced by Brent Council.
- 3.16 The Strategic Partnerships Team is responsible for leading the coordination of the arrangements and is managed by the Strategic Partnerships Manager. The team is based in the Communities and Regeneration Department of the Council.
- 3.17 Alongside the safeguarding children partnership arrangements, the Strategic Partnerships Team also coordinates activities for other strategic partnerships in Brent including; Brent Safeguarding Adults Board, Brent Health and Wellbeing Board, Integrated Care Partnership and Brent Children's Trust.
- 3.18 This staffing structure enables stronger strategic coordination between the strategic partnerships in Brent to both avoid duplication and develop joint initiatives. It also successfully facilitates a level of independence from the operational safeguarding activity of the council.

- 3.19 The Brent Council Governance Team provide some administration support for both the Executive Group and Safeguarding Forum meetings (approximately 1 day a month).
- 3.20 During the period of reporting, the Brent Safeguarding Children's Partnership carried out a range of activities, see the annual report (Appendix A) for further information. Further details of the functions and activity of the Executive Group, Forum and sub groups are laid out in the annual report (Appendix A).

4.0 Financial Implications

- 4.1 The safeguarding partners agree the partnership financial funding to support the local arrangements on an annual basis and the financial year runs from the 1 April to the 31 March the following year.
- 4.2 For the 2021/22 financial year, the Safeguarding Children Partnership had an annual budget of £63,500 excluding staff costs.
- 4.3 The contributions that make up the safeguarding partnership budget are:

• Metropolitan Police	£5,000
• NWL Integrated Care Board	£45,900
• Probation Service	£1,600
• London North West University Healthcare NHS Trust	£11,000
- 4.4 The local authority makes additional contributions in the form of staffing costs to support the running and coordination of the safeguarding partnership arrangements.
- 4.5 A full breakdown of the budget is included in the annual report (please see Appendix A).

5.0 Legal Implications

- 5.1 The safeguarding partnership is exercising its functions within the legislative framework of the Children and Social Work Act 2017.
- 5.2 The statutory guidance in the form of Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018) sets out the framework for local safeguarding oversight arrangements.
- 5.3 The Child Safeguarding Practice Review and Relevant Agency (England) Regulations 2018 sets out the duties on local authorities to notify the Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel of serious safeguarding incidents that meet the reporting threshold and the legislative requirements of the safeguarding partners in meeting their obligations to review the partnership working in these cases.

6.0 Equality Implications

- 6.1 The multi-agency safeguarding children arrangements in Brent have been jointly developed by Brent Council, NWL Integrated Care Board and the North West Basic Command Unit, Metropolitan Police.
- 6.2 The three safeguarding partners have a shared and equal duty to make arrangements to work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children in Brent. In discharging their duty safeguarding partners must be assured by partner agencies in the borough that multi-agency services are accessible, inclusive and responsive to the diverse needs of Brent's children and young people, including those with additional needs and/or vulnerabilities
- 6.3 The safeguarding partners also ensure that services are culturally aware and skilled in identifying, assessing and meeting the individual needs of Brent children and their families.

REPORT SIGN-OFF

Nigel Chapman

Corporate Director Children and Young People