



TELFORD & WREKIN SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN BOARD TERMS OF REFERENCE

1: INTRODUCTION

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children requires effective co-ordination. For this reason the Children Act 2004 requires each Local Authority to establish a Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB).

Section 10 of this Act places a duty to co-operate to improve the well being of children on the Local Authority and its Board Partners. The organisations which are partners are laid out in S 13(3) of the Act.

The associated guidance (Chapter 3 of Working Together) also states that the Local Authority should secure the involvement of other relevant local organisations (3.62) and specifies the duty of individual members to contribute to the effective work of the LSCB (3.65).

The LSCB is the key statutory mechanism for agreeing how the relevant organisations in Telford & Wrekin will co-operate to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in that locality and for ensuring the effectiveness of what they do.

NB the definition of safeguarding and promoting welfare of children adopted by the SCB and based on Government Guidance is:

“Making sure that children grow up in safety and in a way that they are cared for; protecting them from harm or ill-treatment; making sure that their health or development is not damaged in any way and doing this in a way that means that children have the best possible chances in life.”

2: ROLE OF LSCB

The work of the LSCB fits within the wider context of all children's services' aims to improve the well being of children in Telford & Wrekin in respect of all the Every Child Matters Outcomes: Being Healthy, Staying Safe, Enjoying and Achieving, Making a Positive Contribution and Achieving Economic Well-being. Its particular focus however is that of the 'staying safe' outcome.

The Working Together Guidance makes it clear that the SCB is separate from and independent of the Children's Trust.

However, each acts as a 'critical friend' to the other to ensure that safeguarding children and young people is achieved locally. (see 2.4 of the Children's Trust Partnership agreement)

To strengthen the links and make clear the Trust's responsibilities in respect of Safeguarding, the CYPP has 'keeping children safe from maltreatment, neglect violence or sexual exploitation' as one of its key priorities.

3: LSCB OBJECTIVES

(These are set out in S14(1) CA 2004)

To co-ordinate what is done by each person or body represented on the Board for the purposes of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in Telford & Wrekin

To ensure the effectiveness of what is done by each person or body for that purpose.

NB: Safeguarding and promoting welfare includes **protecting from harm**. The guidance is clear that ensuring that work to protect children is properly co-ordinated and effective remains a key goal of the LSCB.

4: SCOPE OF LSCB

The guidance divides the scope into 3 broad categories:

- Activity that affects all children
- Pro-active work that aims to target particular groups of children
- Responsive work to protect children who are suffering or at risk of suffering significant harm.

T&W SCB will work across all three categories, having due regard to the central need to protect as outlined above.

The LSCB is **not** accountable for the work of individual organisation's work and each Board partner retains its own lines of accountability. The LSCB **does not** have a power to direct other organisations.
(but see 5.3 below)

5: LSCB FUNCTIONS

(These are set out in the LSCB Regulations 2006)

5.1 Policies & Procedures

The LSCB will develop and review policies and procedures relating to:

- Actions to be taken where there are concerns about a child's safety or welfare
- The training of persons who work with children or in services affecting the safety and welfare of children
- The recruitment and supervision of persons working with children
- The investigation of allegations in respect of such persons
- The safety and welfare of children privately fostered
- The means of co-operating with other LSCBs; Children's services authorities and others (e.g. cross border procedures)

The LSCB will also from time to time consider the need for local protocols in relation to specific matters.

Each agency is required to develop their own internal procedures as necessary and remain responsible for ensuring that their staff are compliant with these. Any procedures developed must be compatible with the LSCB procedures and be endorsed by the governance arrangement for the agency.

5.2 Communication and raising awareness

The LSCB has a key role in communicating the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children within Telford & Wrekin; in raising awareness on how this can best be done and in encouraging all those involved (including the general public) to do so.

In carrying out this function the LSCB will consult with children and young people and take their views into account in the planning and delivery of services and, as part of its work programme, will establish a communications strategy.

5.3 Monitoring and evaluation

The LSCB will monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of what is done by the Local Authority and its partners individually and collectively to safeguard and promote the welfare of children within the Borough.

If, as a result of such activity, the Board finds areas for improvement it will advise and support the development of policy, procedure or practice to achieve such improvements.

The Board also has a responsibility in undertaking its monitoring function to report any identified weaknesses in services. This role will be undertaken by the Chair of the Board, initially through the normal reporting mechanisms of the organisation concerned but, if necessary, to the Director of Children's Services, the relevant inspectorate or government department.

5.4 Planning and Commissioning

The LSCB will participate in the local planning and commissioning of children's services through its involvement in the Children & Young People's Plan (CYPP) and membership of the Children's Trust Board (CTB). As noted above the CTB has a key priority relating to safeguarding, the action plan of which mirrors the LSCB business plan

5.5 Functions in relation to child deaths

5.5.1 The LSCB, through its Serious Case Review Panel will undertake reviews as laid down within the guidance. The Panel will report to the Board on an individual and aggregated basis with regard to lessons to be learnt, including any changes required to local policy or practice; and will monitor an action plan in respect of such reviews progress on which will also be reported to the Board on an at least annual basis.

5.5.2 The LSCB through its child death overview panel (CDOP) will review the information in respect of every child death and will identify any case to be referred to the SCRCP (if not already identified); any matters of concern affecting the safety and welfare of children in the area; and any wider public health or safety concerns arising from a particular death or from a pattern of deaths in the area.

In addition the LSCB will ensure that a 'rapid response' to any unexpected death is undertaken in a co-ordinated manner.

6: LSCB GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS AND OPERATIONAL ARRANGEMENTS

6.1 Title/Identity

The LSCB will be known as “Telford & Wrekin Safeguarding Children Board”. It will have its own logo.

6.2 Independence

The LSCB has a distinct identity within the Children’s Trust arrangements and a clear responsibility to undertake a scrutiny role in respect of these. This will include an audit programme as part of the overall work programme.

The LSCB will be consulted by the Children’s Trust on issues which affect how children are safeguarded and their welfare promoted.

The LSCB will be formally consulted as part of the development and review of the CYPP

(See also section 2 and 5.4 above)

6.3 Equalities

In undertaking any activity, the LSCB will take account of the need to promote equality of opportunity and to meet the diverse needs of children and their families within Telford & Wrekin.

6.4 Executive Group

Within Telford & Wrekin the LSCB will make use of existing arrangements to facilitate the close working with the Trust, maximising resources and reducing duplication. The executive group consists of nominated representatives of the Board partners who lead on the implementation of the SCB Business Plan and related sub groups.

6.5 Sub Groups

Any sub group working on behalf of the LSCB will be established by the Board; be accountable to it; and report to it.

The current sub groups of the SCB (in addition to the Executive Group) are:

- Child Death Overview Panel (CDOP)
- Serious Case Reviews (SCR)
- Training
- Children abused through exploitation (CATE)
- Think Family
- Safer Schools Partnership
- Domestic Abuse
- E-Safety

6.6 Board Meetings

Board meetings will take place 4 times a year

The Chair may call an extra-ordinary meeting at any time, and members can make a written request for such a meeting to the Chair. (NB this will normally only be considered if several members make such a request)

A Board meeting will only be quorate if 10 people are present from at least 3 statutory partners

All Board meetings will be minuted; draft minutes will be distributed within 15 days and submitted for approval to the next meeting.

6.7 Forum

The SCB is committed to involving as many people as possible in the various aspects of safeguarding and will, therefore, establish a Forum in addition to the main board to allow for a wider exchange of information and discussion.

7: MEMBERSHIP

7.1 Introduction

All members of the Board will be named, designated representatives of their organisation or sector.

Members will have a strategic role in relation to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children within the organisation. They will be able to speak for their organisation or sector; commit them to policies and practice and hold them to account.

In nominating their representative, Organisations will be asked to confirm their commitment to allowing the individual time to be a pro-active member of the Board. On accepting the role, individual members will be asked to confirm their commitment to tasks detailed in the Membership Agreement. (see Roles and Responsibilities below)

All Board members will be required to demonstrate that they have a current (i.e. not more than 3 years old) satisfactory Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) check. It is expected that any necessary checks will be undertaken by the member's organisation.

If a Board member misses two consecutive meetings without sending apologies or an appropriate representative, then the Chair, on behalf of the Board, will write to that member. If non-attendance continues, the Chair will write to the senior person of that agency seeking a replacement. (This also applies to sub group membership)

7.2 Chair

The Chair of the Board will be appointed by the Director of Children's Services (DCS) on behalf of the Local Authority following consultation with Board members.

Before appointing anyone to the role, the Director of Children's Services must be satisfied that the person has appropriate references and a current CRB check

The Chair will be appointed for a period of two years with a review at the end of the first year.

The Vice Chair of the LSCB will be the Head of Safeguarding & Corporate Parenting.

The Chair and Vice Chair will be accountable to the Director of Children's Services in the performance of their functions relating to the Board.

Where ever possible the Board will seek to establish a consensus on any decisions made. If this is not possible however, and a vote is required amongst Members, the Chair (Vice Chair) will have the casting vote.

The roles and responsibilities are stated in the job description for the post.

The Chair will be supported and advised by the Safeguarding Advisory Service Manager

If neither the Chair nor the Vice Chair are able to be present at any meeting, a substitute Chair may be appointed for that meeting, with the agreement of members.

7.3 Board Partners

Whilst the responsibility for establishing a Board rests with the Children's Services Authority (CSA), certain agencies are named with the Children Act 2004 as Partners. Each of these agencies will be represented on the LSCB in addition to the CSA.

These include:

West Mercia Police;
West Mercia Probation Trust;
Youth Offending Service;
Shropshire & Staffordshire Strategic Health Authority;
NHS Telford & Wrekin (PCT);
Shropshire and Telford Hospital Trust;
South Staffordshire and Shropshire Foundation Trust
Connexions (now within LA)
CAFCASS;

7.4 Board Members

Organisation	Representative
Telford & Wrekin Council	Lead Member for C&YP
Children's Services	Director of Children's Services and Heads of Service
Adults and Community Well being	Joint Commissioner: Mental Health
Police	Sup't. Headquarters PPU and local DCI
Local Probation Trust	Area Manager
Youth Offending Team	Service Manager
Strategic Health Authority	Programme consultant for children's services
NHS Telford & Wrekin	Deputy Director for Child and Family Support Director of Patient and Community Engagement Designated Doctor Designated Nurse
NHS Acute Trust	Trust Director
South Staffordshire & Shropshire NHS Foundation Trust	Director of Quality & Professional Practice
A person providing services under Section 114 of the Learning and Skills Council Act 2000	Head of Service
NSPCC	Area Manager
Safer Communities Partnership	Strategic Manager
CVS	Chief Executive
Lay members	By appointment
Schools	Head Representatives from Primary, secondary and special schools

7.4 Co-opted Members

In addition the Board reserves the right to co-opt members for specific purposes such as providing specialist advice or undertaking a defined task on their behalf.

7.5 Officers

To assist it in carrying out its role, the Board will expect certain officers to be present at Board meetings. These include the Safeguarding Advisory Service Manager; Principal Officers for Child Protection; the Principal Officer for Adult Protection; and the LSCB Training & Development Officer.

7.7 Roles and responsibilities of Members

Individual members have a duty to contribute to the effective work of the LSCB.

The key roles of a member are:

- To contribute to the effective working of the LSCB in promoting high standards of safeguarding work and fostering a culture of continuous improvement.
- To represent their organisation or sector on the LSCB, speaking with authority for that body; committing the organisation or sector on policy and practice matters and holding them to account in respect of its work to safeguard and promote the welfare of children within the Borough.
- To represent the LSCB within their organisation or sector; ensuring that it is meeting its obligations to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.
- To be an objective member in undertaking assessments and scrutiny functions of the LSCB. Where necessary this should take precedence over the role as organisational or sector representative.

Members will undertake their roles in accordance with the T&WSCB Membership Agreement

8: Work Programme

The Chair and executive group, in consultation with the Board, will establish a work programme for the LSCB. This will include aspects of 5 above and will reflect the priorities within the CYPP.

The Board will publish an Annual Report on its work based on the previous financial year (i.e. April – April)

9: Financing and staffing

The guidance states that 'To function effectively the LSCB needs to be supported by its member organisations with adequate and reliable resources'.

Funding agreements will be in place with each LSCB partner and other members will be encouraged to contribute to the development of the work of the Board.

The staffing support to the Board will be provided by the Safeguarding Advisory Service. This will include administrative support; the management of information; and professional advice to Members.

10: Monitoring and inspection

Whilst a role for the LSCB is to monitor and review the work of all agencies involved in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children within Telford & Wrekin, it will also be subject to scrutiny and inspection itself:

On a six monthly basis (or as requested) the Chair of the Board will meet with the Director of Children's Services and with the Lead Member for Children's Services.

The Annual Report will be presented to the Children's Trust and will be publicly available.

With its links to the CTB and the responsibility for progressing key priorities in respect of Staying Safe, the LSCB within Telford & Wrekin can be clearly held to account in respect of its success in progressing the safeguarding agenda.

The effectiveness of the LSCB will contribute to judgements made in the Corporate Area Assessment; the unannounced safeguarding inspection and any individual service inspections