



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 cooperate to improve the wellbeing of children and young people on the Local Authority and its Board Partners. The organisations which are partners are laid out in S 13(3) of the Act. ¹

The LSCB is the key statutory mechanism for agreeing how the relevant organisations in Telford & Wrekin will cooperate to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people in the area and for ensuring the effectiveness of what they do.

The definition of safeguarding and promoting welfare of children and young people adopted by the LSCB 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.”

Effective Safeguarding arrangements in Telford and Wrekin are underpinned by the three key principles which will underpin the activities of the Board and its Sub-groups:

- Safeguarding is everyone’s responsibility
- All Services must ensure that the welfare of the child and young person is at the centre of any interventions and decisions that are made.
- All Services need to seek the views of children and young people so that they are able to tailor support for prevention and intervention.

¹ Children and Social Work Act 2017 has changed the statutory footing for LSCB; once the local arrangements have been agreed following the publication of Working Together 2018 these terms of reference will be reviewed.

2. Role and Scope of the Telford & Wrekin Safeguarding Children Board (TWSCB)

The work of the TWSCB fits within the wider context of all children's services and aims to improve the wellbeing of children and young people 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 Wellbeing. Its particular focus however is that of the 'Staying Safe' outcome.

The guidance divides the scope of the TWSCB into three broad categories:

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

The TWSCB will work across all three categories, having due regard to the central need to protect as outlined above.

The TWSCB is **not** accountable for the work of individual organisations and each Board partner retains its own lines of accountability. The TWSCB **does not** have a power to direct other organisations.

However, a key role of the TWSCB will be to gain the agreement of the partner organisations to protocols and methods of working that will ensure that safeguarding activity is conducted in a consistent and integrated manner across all the organisations represented on the Board.

The Board will function primarily as a scrutiny and decision making body and will delegate responsibility for detailed examination of all aspects of its brief to five principle Sub-groups.

Actions identified at Board meetings will be delegated to one or more of these Sub-groups with the requirement that they report back with further information and recommendations for further action at a subsequent Board meeting.

3. Statutory Board Objectives and Functions

3.1 Board Objectives

Working Together 2015 identifies the statutory objectives and functions of LSCBs:

- 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.

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

3.2 Board Functions

The Local Safeguarding Children Boards Regulations 2006 sets out that the functions of the LSCB, in relation to the above objectives and are as follows:

- **developing policies and procedures** for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in the area of the authority, 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 persons who work with children or in services affecting the safety and welfare of children;
 - recruitment and supervision of persons who work with children;
 - investigation of allegations concerning persons who work with children;
 - safety and welfare of children who are privately fostered; and
 - cooperation with neighbouring children's services authorities and their Board partners.

The TWSCB 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 will remain responsible for ensuring that their staff are compliant with these. Any procedures developed must be compatible with the TWSCB procedures and be endorsed by the governance arrangements for the agency.

- **communicating** to persons and bodies in the area of the authority the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people, raising their awareness of how this can best be done and encouraging all those involved (including the general public) to do so.

In carrying out this function the TWSCB 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.

- **monitoring and evaluating** the effectiveness of what is done by the Local Authority and their Board partners individually and collectively to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people and advising them on ways to improve 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.

- **participating in the planning and commissioning** of services for children.
- **undertaking reviews of serious cases** and advising the authority and their Board partners on lessons to be learned

Regulation 5 of the Local Safeguarding Children Boards Regulations 2006 also includes the requirement for LSCBs to undertake reviews of serious cases in specified circumstances and advise the authority and their Board partners on lessons to be learned.

The TWSCB, through its **Safeguarding Review and Learning Sub-group** will undertake reviews as laid down within the guidance. Within Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015 the remit of this Sub-group includes promoting a culture of continuous learning and improvement across the organisations that work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people in the area. The Sub-group will also take responsibility for updating, monitoring and reviewing the TWSCB Learning and Improvement Framework. The Sub-group 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 any action plan in respect of such reviews progress on which will also be reported to the Board on an at least annual basis.

The TWSCB, through its **Child Death Overview Panel (CDOP)** exercises its responsibility under Regulation 6 of the Local Safeguarding Children Boards Regulations 2006 to collect and analyse information about each child death with a view to:

- identifying whether there is a need for a Serious Case Review, any matters of concern affecting the safety and welfare of children;
- identifying any wider public health or safety concerns arising from a particular death or from a pattern of deaths; and
- putting in place procedures for ensuring that there is a coordinated response by the authority, their Board partners and other relevant persons to an unexpected death.

In addition the CDOP is charged with ensuring that a rapid response to any unexpected death is undertaken in a co-ordinated manner.

4. Governance and Operational Arrangements

4.1 Title/Identity

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

4.2 Equalities

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

4.3 Sub-groups

While the Board exercises overall responsibility for all statutory objectives and functions, it will delegate authority for the detailed examination and delivery of all aspects of these requirements to five strategic Sub-groups. These Sub-groups will be directly accountable to the Board and report back on their activities to each Board meeting. To facilitate this all Sub-groups Chairs will be full members of the TWSCB.

The five strategic Sub-groups will be:

- **Quality, Performance and Operations (QPO)**
Responsible for development of quality assurance and performance frameworks to support implementation of the Board's Strategic Plan and evidencing successful outcomes for children and young people with an emphasis on continuous improvement. The Sub-group also has delegated responsibility for the activities of Thematic Sub-groups:
 - Neglect
 - Joint Domestic Abuse
 - Joint Exploitation

- **Partnership Development (PD)**
Responsible for multi-agency activities covering learning, identifying best practice, service development, the development of policies and procedures and single and multi-agency training provision.

- **Safeguarding Review and Learning (SRL)**
Undertake reviews of serious cases to promote lessons learned and inform the children's safeguarding agenda including young people in transition.

- **Child Death Overview Panel (CDOP)**
The death of a child normally resident in Telford & Wrekin is reviewed by the joint Shropshire/Telford & Wrekin Overview Panel on behalf of the Local Safeguarding Children Board. The panel meets on a regular basis to review all of the child deaths in their area. The panel is not given any names of the child who has died; all the details are dealt with anonymously.

- **Joint Strategy, Planning and Communications (SPC)**
The SPC group will be held jointly with the Telford & Wrekin Safeguarding Children Board to ensure a joint seamless approach to the strategic direction of each board. The SPC Sub-group will support the activities of the other Sub-groups by focussing on how the Board is organised to fulfil its statutory objectives and functions and will be responsible for strategy development, business planning, governance, timetabling and coordination of Board and Sub-group activity, Board development, partner engagement and communications.

Each Sub-group will be individually responsible for how it organises its work and may establish time-limited Working or Task and Finish groups to deal with specific issues as and when required. The Sub-groups must inform the Board of any groups set up, purpose and progress as part of their update to the Board.

4.4 Relationship with other partnerships and groups

- **Telford & Wrekin Safeguarding Adults Board (TWSAB)**

The purpose of the TWSAB is to help and protect adults who have needs for care and support, who are experiencing or are at risk of abuse or neglect, and as a result of their needs are unable to protect themselves from abuse or neglect. This is whether or not the adult is having their needs met or they meet the local authority's eligibility criteria for care and support services.

The TWSCB and TWSAB have established a joint Strategy, Planning and Communications Sub-group.

The Independent Chair of the TWSAB is also the chair of the TWSCB which will enable links and sharing of good practice between the two Boards to be established where deemed necessary. The Chair will also be able to highlight concerns raised about adults that might affect children's safeguarding and vice versa.

- **Relationship with Health and Wellbeing Board (HWBB)**

The Health and Wellbeing Board has a statutory duty to improve the health and wellbeing of the area. The Board has created a new relationship between Telford & Wrekin Council, Clinical Commissioning Group and NHS England and provides an opportunity to explore new approaches to commissioning, service design and collaborative, partnership working.

The Director for Children's and Adults Services and Director of Public Health is a member of the Health and Wellbeing Board and the TWSCB and will therefore provide a link between these boards. The TWSCB will provide an annual update to HWBB on its' progress and achievements.

- **Community Safety Partnership (CSP)**

The CSP provides strategic leadership, to drive forward and oversee the progression of community safety issues either impacting upon the implementation of CSP plans or the broader community safety agenda across Telford and Wrekin. The CSP has four outcomes:

- Delivering against the Safe, Strong and Cohesive priority section of Telford & Wrekin's Sustainable Community Strategy, and the Safer & Stronger theme of the Local Area Agreement'
- Reducing crime, anti-social behaviour and issues that adversely affect the local environment;
- Reduce the harm caused by drugs and alcohol; and
- Develop policy and strategy to make Telford and Wrekin even safer and stronger.

In order to develop the links between the two boards the Chair of the CSP or their nominated representative will be a member of the TWSCB.

- **Corporate Parenting Strategic Group (CPSG)**

The purpose of the CPSG is to ensure that Children in Care (CIC) and Care leavers have the right to expect the outcomes we want for every child and young person. The CPSG will ensure that in Telford and Wrekin, this right is translated into reality; we are committed to helping every child and young person that we look after (wherever the child is placed) to achieve their potential.

The Director of Children and Adults Services, along with the Assistant Director for Children's Safeguarding and Specialist Services are members of both groups and will provide the link between the two partnerships.

An annual update from the CPSG is presented to the TWSCB to ensure appropriate linkages are made.

- **Children & Family Partnership Board**

The purpose of the Children and Families Partnership Board (CFPB) is to promote the wellbeing of children, young people, families and carers in Telford and Wrekin by taking a critical look at the challenges facing children, young people and families and agree partnership action to address them.

The lead for the Board, Lead Cabinet member for Children and Adults, Early Help & Support is a member of both Board and provides the linkages.

The TWSCB regularly challenges the progress made by the Children & Family Partnership Board, especially in relation to its effectiveness and impact on acute safeguarding services.

4.5 Board Meetings

Board meetings will take place quarterly on a Wednesday.

An annual Board timetable will be published no less than four weeks before the commencement of the year indicating the date, time and venue for all Board meetings and Sub-group meetings; where possible agenda items will also be timetabled.

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 working days and submitted for approval to the next meeting.

5. Board Membership

5.1 Introduction

Section 13 of the [Children Act 2004](#) "*specifies the organisations and individuals (other than the local authority) that should be represented on LSCBs*". [Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015](#) further details the representation on the Board.

All members of the Board and its Sub-groups 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.

All Board members will identify at least one nominated substitute to attend the Board when they are not available. Substitutes will receive all Board papers. It is expected that the lead

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Board member will keep them briefed on Board activities in order that they can make a positive contribution if called on to attend Board meetings. In nominating their representatives, organisations will be asked to confirm their commitment to allowing the individual time to be pro-active members of the Board.

On accepting the role, individual members and their substitute(s) will be asked to confirm their commitment to tasks detailed in the Membership Agreement. The recruitment processes used by Board agencies in recruiting Board members should be appropriate and relevant to their role as Board member.

If a Board member misses two consecutive meetings without sending apologies or a substitute, 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 proviso also applies to Sub-group membership.

5.2 Independent Chair

The Chair of the Board will be appointed by the Managing Director of Telford & Wrekin Council with the agreement of a panel of statutory partners. Before appointing anyone to the role, they must be satisfied that the person has appropriate references and a current Disclosure and Barring Service check. The Chair will be held to account by the Managing Director in the performance of their functions relating to the Board.

Wherever 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 will have the casting vote. The roles and responsibilities are stated in the job description for the post.

The Vice Chair of the TWSCB will be from an external agency and be nominated by their agency and appointed by the Board.

If the Chair, or Vice Chair, is not able to be present at any meeting, a substitute Chair may be appointed for that meeting, with the agreement of members.

The Chair will publish an annual report on the effectiveness of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in the local area which will cover the preceding financial year.

The Chair will be supported and advised by Telford & Wrekin Council's Partnership Manager.

5.3 Board Partners

In line with Working Together 2015 the Board will be comprised of the Independent Chair, the Partnership Manager and the following partners:

	Organisation/Representing/Job Role
Independents	Independent Chair
Telford & Wrekin Council	Director of Children and Adults Services
	Assistant Director: Children's Safeguarding and Specialist Services
	Assistant Director: Education and Corporate Parenting

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	Assistant Director: Health, Wellbeing and Public Protection (Public Health representative) (Chair of Joint Domestic Abuse Sub-group)
	Local Authority Legal representative (Chair of SRL Sub-group)
	Lead Member for Children & Adults, Early Help & Support (<i>Observer</i>)
Health	NHS Local Area Team representative
	Shropshire Community Health NHS Trust (SCHT) representative
	Shrewsbury and Telford NHS Hospital Trust (SaTH) representative
	Midlands Partnership NHS Foundation Trust (MPFT) representative (Chair of QPO Sub-group)
	T&W Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) representative (Chair of SPC)
	Designated Doctor
	Designated Nurse (Chair of Child Death Overview Panel)
	Designated GP
Police	Local Policing Commander Representative (Chair of Safer Telford & Wrekin Partnership and Joint Exploitation Sub-group)
Education	Private Early Years representative
	Primary School and Team Safeguarding Voice [®] representative
	Secondary School representative
	Special School representative
	Academy School representative
	Further Education representative
	Lead Governor representative
Probation	National Probation Service (NPS) Representative (Chair of PD Sub-group)
	Community Rehabilitation Company (CRC) representative
YJT	West Mercia Youth Justice Team (YJT)
CAFCASS	Children & Family Court Advisory and Support Service (CAFCASS)
Housing	Wrekin Housing Trust
Voluntary	Chief Officer Group Representative

5.4 Roles and Responsibilities of Members

The core tasks for the board member are:

- To attend all Board meetings and ensure that their organisation is appropriately represented at Sub-group meetings, as named representative ensuring consistency and

continuity within the Board. Where members of TWSCB are unable to attend a meeting, they will send an informed substitute.

- To contribute to the development of the TWSCB Strategy and Action Plan.
- To act as central point of contact and to pro-actively disseminate information relating to TWSCB within your organisation or networks.
- To provide specialist advice and information, including national and regional information to the TWSCB in respect of your organisation or sector's area of work as appropriate.
- To adhere to the Information Sharing Agreement of the TWSCB.
- To raise to the attention of the TWSCB and Chair any areas of personal conflict of interest which will be discussed prior to any meeting.

6. Board and Sub-groups Administration and Support

The Chairs of the Board and its Sub-groups will be responsible for agreeing agendas and for reviewing and approving minutes. During Board and Sub-group meetings the Chairs will be responsible for identifying decisions taken, actions agreed, any further work to be commissioned and the individual and organisation responsible. They will also agree deadlines for completion of any tasks identified.

The Board will be supported by Telford & Wrekin Council's Partnership Management Team, including the following positions:

- Partnership Manager
- Partnership Development Officer
- Assistant Partnership Development Officer
- Business Support Officer

In this role, Chairs will be supported by Business Support Officers who will be responsible for taking notes at meetings, producing draft minutes, communications with members following meetings regarding follow-up activities, expediting reports and responses, circulation of agendas and papers for meetings and arrangements for securing meeting rooms.

Each Principle Sub-group will be required to produce a written report of its activities for submission to each Board meeting which identifies the work it has undertaken and any exceptional items which the Board needs to be made aware of and any recommendations requiring a decision from the Board.

All Board papers should be made available for distribution at least one week ahead of the meeting and Board minutes will be circulated no more than three weeks after the meeting.

7. Financing

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 TWSCB partner and other members will be encouraged to contribute to the development of the work of the Board. The Board's annual report will detail the contributions from partners as well as include what the TWSCB has spent.

8. Monitoring and Inspection

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Whilst a role for the TWSCB is to monitor and review the work of all agencies involved in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people within Telford and Wrekin, it will also be subject to scrutiny and review itself by OFSTED.

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

The TWSCB Annual Report will be submitted to the Chief Executive, Leader of the Council, the local Police and Crime Commissioner and the Chair of the Health and Wellbeing Board as required by Working Together 2015. The report will be shared with all partners to be distributed to their staff as well as being published on the Board website for public access.

9. Confidentiality

The personal and business information held by the TWSCB and its constituent agencies are subject both to the common law duty of confidentiality (i.e. where the information is not a matter of public knowledge, and is entrusted by an individual in confidence where there is general obligation not to disclose the information without consent) and to the Data Protection Act 2018 which provides for the protection of personal information.

For the purpose of this agreement, all personal and business information is considered to be 'confidential information', unless specifically stated otherwise.

10. Freedom of Information

Under the Ministry of Justice extension to the Freedom of Information Act 2000 Local Safeguarding Children Boards are not deemed as Public Authorities under the Act and therefore will be exempt from requests for the disclosure of information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

11. Complaints

The Board is intended to be a collaborative, co-operative body and needs to ensure that no particular sector or member is unduly favored. Problems and issues should normally be debated and resolved at Board meetings. Reference should be made to the TWSCB Escalation procedure for further details on the process to follow when issues remain unresolved at Board meetings.

The Board shall refer all complaints from members of the public in relation to the provision or performance of any function of a member organisation to the Board Partner's own internal complaints handling process.

Complaints regarding the operation of the Board should be addressed to the Chair who will investigate and attempt to reach satisfactory resolution with the complainant.

Complaints about the Chair of the Board should be addressed to the Managing Director: Telford & Wrekin Council.

12. Monitoring and Inspection

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The TWSCB's role is to ensure the effectiveness of work to safeguard and promote the wellbeing of adults at risk of abuse or neglect and as such the TWSAB will monitor and evaluate this through its work. The TWSCB will publish performance against objectives set out in the business plan within the Annual Report.

13. Overview and Scrutiny

The TWSCB and its members will co-operate with any reasonable request by the Council in respect of its Overview and Scrutiny functions under Section 21 Local Government Act 2000 and as a minimum will meet twice a year to provide independent dialogue on Safeguarding.