Rochdale Borough Safeguarding Children Board Arrangements

RBSCB January 2018
## Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Introduction</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. RBSCB Objectives</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. RBSCB Core Functions</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. The RBSCB Chair, Accountability and Resourcing</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Information sharing</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Membership.</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Subgroups – Membership &amp; Remit</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1. Introduction

1.1 Section 13 of the Children Act 2004 requires each local authority to establish a Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) for their area and specifies the organisations and individuals (other than the local authority) that should be represented on LSCBs. This document sets out how this statutory requirement is met in the Borough of Rochdale and details the objectives and functions of the Rochdale Borough Safeguarding Children Board (RBSCB).

2. RBSCB Objectives.

2.1 The RBSCB has a range of roles and statutory functions including developing local safeguarding policy and procedures and scrutinising local arrangements. Section 14 of the Children Act 2004 sets out the objectives of LSCBs, which are:

(a) 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

(b) To ensure the effectiveness of what is done by each such person or body for those purposes.

3. RBSCB Core Functions

3.1 Regulation 5 of the Local Safeguarding Children Boards Regulations 2006 sets out that the functions of LSCB’s, in relation to the above objectives under section 14 of the Children Act 2004, are as follows:

1(a) 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:

(i) The action to be taken where there are concerns about a child’s safety or welfare, including thresholds for intervention;
(ii) Training of persons who work with children or in services affecting the safety and welfare of children;

(iii) Recruitment and supervision of persons who work with children;

(iv) Investigation of allegations concerning persons who work with children;

(v) Safety and welfare of children who are privately fostered;

(vi) Cooperation with neighbouring children’s services authorities and their Board partners;

(b) communicating to persons and bodies in the area of the authority 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;

(c) Monitoring and evaluating 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;

(d) Participating in the planning of services for children in the area of the authority; and

(e) Undertaking reviews of serious cases and advising the authority and their Board partners on lessons to be learned.

3.2 Regulation 5 (2) which relates to the LSCB Serious Case Reviews function and regulation 6 which relates to the LSCB Child Death functions are covered in chapter 4 of Working Together to Safeguard Children HMSO 2013

3.3 Regulation 5 (3) provides that an LSCB may also engage in any other activity that facilitates, or is conducive to, the achievement of its objectives.

3.4 In order to fulfil its statutory function under regulation 5 the Board uses data in order to:

- assess the effectiveness of the help being provided to children and families, including early help;
- assess whether LSCB partners are fulfilling their statutory obligations set out in chapter 2 of this guidance;
- quality assure practice, including through joint audits of case files involving practitioners and identifying lessons to be learned; and
- monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of training, including multi-agency training, to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.
3.5 The Board does not commission or deliver direct frontline services but does both provide and commission some multi-agency training. While the Board does not have the power to direct other organisations it does have a role in making clear where improvement is needed. Each Board partner retains their own existing line of accountability for safeguarding.

**4. The LSCB Chair, Accountability and Resourcing**

4.1 In order to provide effective scrutiny, the Board has to be independent. It is not subordinate to, nor subsumed within, other local structures. The Board has an independent chair who can hold all agencies to account.

4.2 It is the responsibility of the Chief Executive of the Council to appoint or remove the RBSCB chair with the agreement of a panel including RBSCB partners and lay members. The Chief Executive, drawing on other RBSCB partners and, where appropriate, the Lead Member will hold the Chair to account for the effective working of the RBSCB.

4.3 The RBSCB works closely with all RBSCB partners and particularly with the Director of Children’s Services as the Director of Children’s Services has the responsibility within the local authority, under section 18 of the Children Act 2004, for improving outcomes for children, local authority children’s social care functions and local cooperation arrangements for children’s services.

4.4 The Chair publishes an annual report on the effectiveness of child safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in the local area. The annual report is published in relation to the preceding financial year and at a time that fits with local agencies’ planning, commissioning and budget cycles. The report is submitted to the Chief Executive, Leader of the Council, the local police and crime commissioner and the Chair of the Health and Wellbeing board. It will usually also be presented to the Clinical Commissioning Group and to the sub-committees of the council which provide scrutiny.

4.5 The report is required to provide a rigorous and transparent assessment of the performance and effectiveness of local services, to identify areas of weakness, the causes of those weaknesses and the action being taken to address them as well as other proposals for action. The report also includes lessons from reviews undertaken within the reporting period.
4.7 The report lists the contributions made to the RBSCB by partner agencies and details of what the RBSCB has spent, including on Child Death Reviews, Serious Case Reviews and other specific expenditure such as learning events or training.

4.8 All RBSCB member organisations have an obligation to provide the RBSCB with reliable resources (including finance) to enable the RBSCB to be strong and effective. Members share the financial responsibility for the RBSCB in such a way that a disproportionate burden does not fall on a small number of partner agencies. The funding arrangement in Rochdale as of April 2017 is:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organisation</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rochdale Borough Council</td>
<td>£238,926</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schools within Rochdale Borough</td>
<td>£20,962</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heywood, Middleton and Rochdale CCG</td>
<td>£77,471</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greater Manchester Police</td>
<td>£12,450</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rochdale Boroughwide Housing</td>
<td>£10,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Probation Service (CRC NPS)</td>
<td>£3,090</td>
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<tr>
<td>CAFCASS</td>
<td>£550</td>
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5. Information Sharing.

5.1 Chapter 1 Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015 sets out how effective sharing of information between professionals and local agencies is essential for effective service provision. The Board plays a strong part in supporting information sharing between and within organisations and addressing any barriers to information sharing. This includes ensuring that a culture of information sharing is developed and supported as necessary by multi-agency training.

5.2 In addition, the RBSCB can require a person or body to comply with a request for information, provided the information requested is for the purpose of enabling or assisting the RBSCB to perform its functions. Any request for information about individuals must be necessary and proportionate to the reasons for the request. The Board is also mindful of the burden of requests and takes care to explain why the information is needed.

6.1 Section 13 and 14 of the Children Act 2004, read with regulation 3 of the LSCB Regulations and the Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009, set out the required membership of an LSCB.

Here in Rochdale, this means that the Board is made up of representatives from the following organisations:

- Greater Manchester Police;
- Greater Manchester Probation Trust;
- The Local Authority;
- The NHS Local Area Network;
- The Clinical Commissioning Group;
- Pennine Care NHS Foundation Trust;
- Pennine Acute Hospitals NHS Trust;
- NHS England;
- Cafcass;
- The Voluntary Sector;
- Lay members representing the local community;
- Two School Headteachers
- School Governor Representation;
- Further Education College

6.2 All schools (including independent schools, Academies and free schools) have duties in relation to safeguarding children and promoting their welfare and these are covered in chapter 2 Working Together to safeguard Children 2013. Local authorities must take reasonable steps to ensure that the LSCB includes representatives from of all types of school in their area listed at regulation 3A of the LSCB Regulations. Here in Rochdale the education sector are represented by two head teachers as set out above.

6.3 Government Guidelines require that LSCBs should work with the Local Family Justice Board. Here this liaison is carried out via the Greater Manchester Safeguarding Partnership of which the Board is a member.
6.4 The Board also has a protocol in place regarding the relationships and mutual accountabilities between the Board and the Children and Young People’s Partnership and the Health and Well-being Board.

6.5 The members of the RBSCB are people with a strategic role in relation to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children within their organisation. They can and do:

- speak for their organisation with authority;
- commit their organisation on policy and practice matters; and
- hold their own organisation to account and hold other members to account.

6.6 The RBSCB also draws on appropriate expertise and advice from frontline professionals from all the relevant sectors. This includes a designated doctor and nurse.

6.7 Lay members operate as full members of the RBSCB, participating as appropriate on the Board itself and on relevant committees. One Lay Member sits on the Communications and Community Sub-group and helps to make links between the RBSCB and community groups and to support stronger public engagement in local child safety issues and an improved public understanding of the RBSCB’s child protection work.

6.8 The Lead Member for Children is a participating observer of the RBSCB. In practice this means she routinely attends meetings as an observer and receiving all its written reports and makes a valued contribution, she provides an immediate and effective link with the council’s cabinet and leader.

6.9 To meet these requirements the RBSCB membership as of January 2018 is as below:
7. RBSCB Subgroups and Remit

7.1 The RBSCB has a number of sub-groups, on a standing basis and commissions “task and finish groups” as required to:
• carry out specific tasks, for example: maintaining and updating procedures and protocols; reviewing serious cases; and identifying inter-agency training needs;
• provide specialist advice, for example: in respect of working with specific ethnic and cultural groups, or with disabled children and/or parents;
• bring together representatives of a sector to discuss relevant issues and to provide a contribution from that sector to RBSCB work, for example: schools, the voluntary and community sector, faith groups;
• focus on defined geographical areas within the RBSCB boundaries.

7.2 Some of the RBSCB subgroups function as ‘joint’ subgroups with the Rochdale Borough Safeguarding Adult Board (RBSAB).

7.3 The following tables set out the RBSCB sub group structure with joint RBSCB/RBSAB are shown in green;

7.3 The Excellence in Practice sub-group has a broad membership to ensure that relevant information is brought to the table to enable opportunities for more collaborative approaches to be developed and to identify gaps in services. In essence the members of the sub-group have “a foot in the camp” in respect of all relevant services and planning forums which impinge on the provision of good services for children and young people at risk of harm. They come together to make sure services are appropriately “joined up” in their thinking and
to give assurance to the Board that a full range of services is in place and service models reflect good practice.

7.4 Individual subgroup remits:

a) Quality Assurance & Performance Improvement

- monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of what is done by the Local Authority and Board partners both individually and collectively to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, report this to the Board, who can then in turn provide advice on ways to improve performance and quality.

b) Training & Development

- To ensure that safeguarding children’s training is provided to all agencies providing services to children and young people
- Ensure that assurance is gathered so that safeguarding and child protection training assists practitioners to deliver effective services to children and families

c) Serious Case Review

- To ensure that, at a strategic level on behalf of the RBSCB, organisational lessons are learnt, and changes are instituted, from the review of serious cases of child abuse, neglect or death, to prevent future incidents of serious child abuse or death.

d) Serious Case Review Screening Panel

- To screen cases and make recommendation regarding commissioning a serious case review and/or a learning lessons review following the guidance contained in Chapter 4 section 1-18 Working Together to Safeguard Children 2013

e) Policy & Procedure

- To ensure the Rochdale Borough Safeguarding Children Board (RBSCB) fulfils the responsibilities placed on it in to have in place policies and procedures as set out in Working Together to Safeguard Children 2013.

f) Communication & Communities

- Promote shared strategic vision alongside the Children’s Partnership and raise awareness of Safeguarding across agencies and the public

g) Child Death Overview Panel

- collecting and analysing information about each death with a view to identifying —
(i) any case giving rise to the need for a review
(ii) any matters of concern affecting the safety and welfare of children in the area of the authority;
(iii) any wider public health or safety concerns arising from a particular death or from a pattern of deaths in the Borough of Rochdale.

The RBSCB operates a tri partite agreement with Oldham LSCB and Bury LSCB to meet this remit

h) Excellence in Practice

- To ensure that agencies are providing an appropriate range of services to children young people and their families using good practice models.

j) Complex Safeguarding

- The purpose of the subgroup is to receive thematic strategies/plans, developments (statutory/practice) and provide a challenge and support role within the context of the respective operational delivery in the following work streams and provide reassurance to both Boards:
  - Child sexual exploitation
  - Missing from home, care and education
  - Radicalisation
  - Female genital mutilation
  - Modern slavery
  - Extremism
  - Gangs & violence
  - Honour based violence
  - Prevent

The strategies will reflect local needs.

7.5 Subgroup working arrangements:

- Each subgroup is Chaired by a member of the Board
- Terms of Reference for each subgroup are agreed by the RBSCB
- Action plans, linked to the RBSCB strategic objectives are developed by each subgroup
- The subgroup Chairs provide quarterly reports to the RBSCB updating the board on the implementation, achievements and outcomes of their individual subgroup action plans.

7.6 Through its members, the Board is involved with the Children and Young People’s Planning Partnership, the Council’s Children’s Services Improvement Board, the Domestic Abuse Partnership, the Health and Well-being Board, the Adult Safeguarding Board, the Clinical Commissioning Group, the Community Safety Partnership and many other strategic forums and Members are expected to raise relevant items that impact on the Board’s business priorities.

7.7 The Board works to a business plan. The strategic objectives in the 2017-18 business plan are:

1. Effectively engage and communicate the need to safeguard, promote the welfare of children and reduce the risk of harm
2. Promote and improve positive outcomes for all children in need of protection
3. Ensure that agencies consistently demonstrate ownership and delivery of high quality practice influenced by policies and procedures which promote good outcomes and demonstrate good practice
4. Monitor and evaluate the effectiveness and impact of agency and RBSCB safeguarding arrangements