



## **Constitution for West Sussex Safeguarding Children Partnership**

### **1. Title**

The Partnership will be known as the West Sussex Safeguarding Children Partnership (WSSCP). It will be referred to throughout the remainder of this document as the WSSCP.

### **2. Introduction**

The functions of the partnership are set out in legislation (Children and Social Work Act 2017) and statutory Guidance Working together (2018) as set out below.

Local area partnership 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.

This constitution is in accordance with the published legislation, and with the guidance to date: it is intended to be used as a guide and framework to ensure that individual agency and collective responsibility are met in West Sussex. It should be read in conjunction with the Financial Partnership Agreement (Appendix 1) which outlines the governance and conditions which apply to the financial arrangements for the partnership.

### **3. Objectives**

3.1 The objectives of the WSSCP, as set out in the Children Act 2004 Section 16E (as amended by the CSWA 2017) are:

*"(1) The safeguarding partners for a local authority area in England must make arrangements for—*

*(a) the safeguarding partners, and  
(b) any relevant agencies that they consider appropriate,  
to work together in exercising their functions, so far as the  
functions are exercised for the purpose of safeguarding and  
promoting the welfare of children in the area.*

*(2) The arrangements must include arrangements for the  
safeguarding partners to work together to identify and respond to  
the needs of children in the area.*

*(3) In this section—*

- "relevant agency", in relation to a local authority area in England, means a person who—*
  - (a) is specified in regulations made by the Secretary of State, and*

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- (b) exercises functions in that area in relation to children;*
- *"safeguarding partner", in relation to a local authority area in England, means—*
    - (a) the local authority;*
    - (b) a clinical commissioning group for an area any part of which falls within the local authority area;*
    - (c) the chief officer of police for a police area any part of which falls within the local authority area."*

Section 16F of the Children Act 2004: Local child safeguarding practice reviews, states:

- (1) The safeguarding partners for a local authority area in England must make arrangements in accordance with this section—*
- (a) to identify serious child safeguarding cases which raise issues of importance in relation to the area, and*
  - (b) for those cases to be reviewed under the supervision of the safeguarding partners, where they consider it appropriate.*

### **4. WSSCP: additional requirements under the Children Act 2004**

4.1 The functions of the WSSCP are further defined by the Children Act 2004 (Section 16G):

- The safeguarding partners must publish the arrangements.
- The arrangements must include arrangements for scrutiny by an independent person of the effectiveness of the arrangements.
- The safeguarding partners and relevant agencies for the local authority area must act in accordance with the arrangements.
- At least once in every 12-month period, the safeguarding partners must prepare and publish a report on—
  - (a) what the safeguarding partners and relevant agencies for the local authority area have done as a result of the arrangements, and
  - (b) how effective the arrangements have been in practice.

4.2 The purpose of the WSSCP arrangements as detailed in Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 (WT 2018) are set out below:

The purpose of these local arrangements is to support and enable local organisations and agencies to work together in a system where:

- Children are safeguarded, and their welfare promoted.

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- Partner organisations and agencies collaborate, share and co-own the vision for how to achieve improved outcomes for vulnerable children.
- Organisations and agencies challenge appropriately and hold one another to account effectively.
- There is early identification and analysis of new safeguarding issues and emerging threats.
- Learning is promoted and embedded in a way that local services for children and families can become more reflective and implement changes to practice.
- Information is shared effectively to facilitate more accurate and timely decision making for children and families.

4.3 The WSSCP may also engage in any other activity that facilitates, or is conducive to, the achievement of its objectives.

### 4.4 WSSCP vision

An assured Safeguarding Partnership, which collectively engages with children and their families, enabling them to thrive.

Delivering our vision will mean that:

- Children and young people are safe from harm and able to thrive within their family units.
- Children and young people enjoy a healthy life, including good mental health and emotional wellbeing.
- Families are resilient and feel supported within their communities, via bespoke community led work to meet their needs.
- Our wider networks, including schools and colleges, keep our children and young people safe and helping to support and equip them with the skills they will need for their adult life.

Expected outcomes of the WSSCP's activity are that children and young people are:

- safe from maltreatment, neglect, violence, sexual abuse and exploitation criminal including sexual exploitation;
- safe from accidental injury and death;
- safe from bullying and discrimination;
- safe from crime and anti-social behaviour in and out of school;
- have security, stability and are appropriately cared for and their health and wellbeing is promoted.

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### 5. Membership of the WSSCP

5.1 Members should be people with a strategic role in relation to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children within their organisation. They should be able to:

- Speak for their organisation with authority;
- Commit their organisation on policy and practice matters; and
- Hold their organisation to account.

In nominating their representative, organisations will be asked to confirm their commitment by allowing the individual time to be a pro-active member of the WSSCP.

5.2 Additional representatives identified by the lead partners, and in consultation and agreement with the Steering Group, may become members of the WSSCP.

5.3 The seven District and Borough Councils will be represented on the Steering Group by one representative from the seven councils who will liaise with the other six councils. This arrangement will be reviewed every two years as a minimum.

5.4 Additional persons may be nominated from the list of Partner agencies to work on sub-committees on behalf of their agency.

### 5.5 Lay Members

5.51 The WSSCP will include up to two lay members from the local community. The role for lay member will relate to:

- supporting stronger public engagement in local child safety issues and contributing to an improved understanding of the WSSCP's child protection work in the wider community;
- challenging the WSSCP on the accessibility by the public and children and young people of its plans and procedures; and
- helping to make links between the WSSCP and community groups.

Lay members will operate as full members of the WSSCP, including the Partnership Board (PB) itself and on relevant subgroups. Expenses incurred (e.g. travel expenses) will be met from the WSSCP budget.

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### 5.7 Roles and responsibilities of partners

- Partners have a duty to contribute to the effective working of the WSSCP and this should take precedent where necessary over their role as a representative of their own agency.
- Partners have a duty to attend the meetings of the WSSCP. Agencies should attend 100% of meetings. Attendance will be monitored and reported and any issues regarding attendance of agencies will be raised with the agency concerned.
- Expenses of attending such meetings to be met by the core partner and which will not be considered as a financial contribution to the budget.
- Members have a duty to disclose to the WSSCP anything which may have material relevance upon any of the work of the partnership.

#### Tenure of Membership

- Whilst membership is on a rolling basis, individual representatives of partner agencies must hold a role relevant to the safeguarding of children in their agencies.

### 6. Governance and Accountability

6.1 The WSSCP is the statutory mechanism that coordinates and monitors local safeguarding arrangements put in place by local organisations. The role of the WSSCP is to hold agencies to account, but it is not directly accountable for the operational work of partners.

6.2 WSSCP does not commission or deliver direct frontline services. While safeguarding partnerships do not have the power to direct other organisations, they do have a role in making clear where improvement is needed.

6.3 The WSSCP has a role in co-ordinating and ensuring the effectiveness of local individuals' and organisations' work to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, it is not accountable for their operational work. Each agency/partner retains their own existing lines of accountability for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children by their services. Members of the WSSCP will be held to account for challenge within their own organisations.

6.4 All private/voluntary/community organisations that come into contact with or offer services to children in West Sussex will be asked as a matter of good practice to take account of this guidance.

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6.5 Independent Scrutiny – the lead partners have appointed an Independent Chair and Scrutineer to Chair the WSSCP's Steering Group and Partnership Board and provide independent scrutiny of the effectiveness of partnership working.

6.6 It is the responsibility of the three lead partners to appoint or remove the WSSCP Independent Chair.

6.7 The three lead partners, drawing on other WSSCP partners when appropriate, will hold the Independent Chair and scrutineer to account for the effective working of the WSSCP's Partnership Board and sub-groups.

6.8 The WSSCP Chair and scrutineer will work closely with all WSSCP partners and particularly with the three lead partners.

6.9 It is of note that 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.

6.10 The partnership must publish an annual report on the effectiveness of child safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in the local area. The annual report should be published in relation to the preceding financial year and ideally should fit with local agencies' planning, commissioning and budget cycles. The report should be submitted to the Chief Executive Officer, Clinical Commissioning Groups; Chief Executive and Leader of the Council; the local Police and Crime Commissioner and the Chair of the Health and Wellbeing Board for their information and scrutiny.

6.11 In addition the WSSCP will produce a business plan in line with its agreed and current responsibilities. The business plan duration will be determined by the three lead partners in consultation with members of the steering group and having regard to priorities of other local and Pan Sussex Boards and partnerships.

6.12 The WSSCP business plan and annual report will be public documents and will be posted on the WSSCP website after they are agreed by the Steering Group.

6.13 The WSSCP will act independently in respect of monitoring safeguarding arrangements and thus it is within its remit to scrutinise the safeguarding arrangements of all responsible organisations within West Sussex.

6.14 The Lead Member is a participative observer of the WSSCP, with speaking rights.

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### **6.2 Relationship between the WSSCP, Safeguarding Adults Board (SAB), Safer West Sussex Partnership (SWSP) and the Health and Well-Being Board (HWB).**

6.21 The responsibilities of the WSSCP are complementary to those of the SAB, SWSP and the HWB. Whilst the work of the WSSCP contributes to the wider goals of improving the wellbeing of children, it has a narrower focus on safeguarding and promoting welfare.

6.22 The WSSCP is not subordinate to the HWB and will not be subsumed within their structures in a way that might compromise its separate identity and independent voice. The WSSCP has a role through scrutiny and challenge to engage with the work of the HWB in promoting the welfare of children and young people locally.

6.23 The WSSCP should be a formal consultee during the planning and development of services for children and young people. The HWB, SAB and SWSP should pay due regard to safeguarding issues identified by WSSCP and show how they will respond in service plans.

6.24 The WSSCP as a body should work with the HWB. The three lead partners and the local authority Chief Executive and Council Leader will satisfy themselves that the relationship between the HWB and the WSSCP is working effectively.

6.25 By adopting a Collaborative Working Agreement (CWA) (Appendix 2), the WSSCP will be able to scope with Partnerships how best to scrutinise and challenge the work of the respective bodies. The objectives of the CWA are to improve the health, wellbeing and safety of all residents of West Sussex and safeguard children, young people and adults, particularly those who are vulnerable to abuse and neglect. They should work collaboratively to minimise duplication, maximise value for money and deliver effective outcomes for the residents of West Sussex. The Chairs of each body will satisfy themselves that the relationship is working effectively.

### **6.3 The Scrutiny function of the WSSCP**

6.31 WSSCP will scrutinise regular quality assurance reports by individual agencies to identify good practice and highlight any shortcomings within those agencies. This will include using performance data and intelligence to assess the effectiveness of the services and help provided to children and families, including early help. Where areas for improvement are identified, the agency in question will produce a remedial action plan. The implementation and resulting impact of the action plan may be subject to annual review by the WSSCP.

6.32 If a WSSCP partner agency is found not to be performing effectively in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, and the WSSCP is not convinced of the adequacy of the planned action to improve practice, the WSSCP Independent Chair, in consultation with the three lead

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partners, will explain these concerns to those individuals and organisations concerned, and seek to provide support and ensure adequate action is taken to improve practice.

### **6.4 Dispute Resolution between Partner agencies**

6.41 If there is a dispute between WSSCP Partners and/or the WSSCP Chair, dispute resolution procedures will be followed.

6.42 Within 28 days of the WSSCP determining that a dispute exists, the WSSCP Chair, in consultation with the three lead partners, will convene a joint meeting of the parties in dispute. This should take place as soon as is reasonably practicable, but within 3 months of the original dispute coming to attention.

### **6.5 THE WSSCP – leadership and meetings**

#### **6.51 The Steering Group:**

6.511 The Steering Group (SG) is responsible for setting the strategic direction and driving WSSCP business. The SG directs and oversees the work of the WSSCP including its sub-groups and undertaking a scrutiny function. The Partnership Board (PB) will submit reports to the SG which highlight areas of improvement and areas requiring development and or scrutiny. In addition, the SG will ensure an annual report and business plan is produced in line with the requirements of statutory guidance.

6.512 The Steering Group will meet at least four times each year. The Steering Group meeting requires at least three separate agencies to be present to be quorate, comprised of the lead partners. Members will include senior agency representatives and Subgroup Chairs.

6.513 As a minimum The Steering Group will be comprised of: -

Detective Superintendent, Safeguarding Investigations Unit, Public Protection, Sussex Police (lead partner)  
Head of Safeguarding, Clinical Commissioning Groups (lead partner)  
Director of Children's Services (lead partner)  
Independent Chair  
Director of Education and Skills, WSCC  
Designated Nurse, CCGs  
Designated Doctor, CCGs  
District and Borough Council representative  
Head of Safeguarding, WSCC CSC  
Chair of Subgroups



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### **6.52 Frequency of meetings**

- i) The Steering Group (SG) and Partnership Board (PB) will each meet on a quarterly basis for a minimum of 4 times a year. The WSSCP business year commences 1st April; these meetings shall be termed 'Ordinary Meetings'. The dates of these meetings will be set on an annual basis, ideally no later than November 15th of the previous WSSCP business year.
- ii) The WSSCP may form a subgroup of WSSCP members to carry out some of the duties of the day to day business or undertake a specific task by local agreement. This will include the Chair or Vice-Chair, two partner agencies and Business Manager. It must include a representative from each of the lead partners.
- iii) The Steering Group or Partnership Board may be convened for an extraordinary meeting at any point with a period of notice agreed between the Chair or Vice Chair and the Business Manager, preferably not less than 10 working days' notice to conduct any business relating to the SG or PB.
  
- iv) If any urgent decision is required on any matter, the three lead partners may decide to delegate responsibility to the Chair (or Vice Chair) in consultation with the Business Manager and as many members of the SG or PB as practicable. Wherever possible, consultation with all SG or PB members should be undertaken. Urgent decisions are defined as any decision relating to any matter of WSSCP business which is required at less than 10 days' notice.

### **6.53 Quoracy**

- i) To be quorate, any ordinary Steering Group meeting must be attended by representatives of the three lead partners.
- ii) The Partnership Board meeting must have a minimum of six agencies representing at least four separate agencies including West Sussex Children's Social Care (WSCSC), Sussex Police and Health Partners in order for the meeting to proceed and decisions stand.
- iii) For any extraordinary or sub-group meeting to be quorate a minimum of 3 separate partner agencies must be represented and this must include a representative of each of the three lead partners (Police, Health partnership and WSCSC).
- iv) Urgent decisions will stand where taken outside of any meeting by the Chair (or Vice Chair) in consultation with the business manager and at least two separate Board partner agencies.

### **6.54 Reports to the Steering Group and Partnership Board**

- i) The WSSCP will follow a plan of work as set out in the Business Plan
- ii) The Agenda for each ordinary meeting will be circulated at least 5 days before the scheduled meeting.
- iii) Any items to be considered for the agenda may be submitted to the WSSCP business manager up to 10 days prior to any scheduled meeting who will consult with the Chair or Vice Chair.

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- iv) Items may be added to the agenda at any time with the permission of the Chair or the Vice Chair.
- v) Reports relating to any agreed agenda item must be circulated at least 5 days before any scheduled meeting.

### **6.55 Minutes of the Steering Group and Partnership Board**

- i) Every Steering Group (SG) and Partnership Board (PB) meeting will be minuted.
- ii) Minutes will not be regarded as confirmed until signed off at the next SG or PB meeting.
- iii) Minutes may contain confidential information which may refer to information which should not be made public; this will be marked as "Official" or "Official Sensitive" and should not be shared outside the membership of that meeting without the written permission of the Chair.
- iv) The meetings of the WSSCP will not be held in public, although the notes of the Board may, subject to issues of confidentiality and legal considerations, be a public document and may be posted on the WSSCP website.

### **6.56 Reports to or from the Steering Group and Partnership Board**

Reports to the Steering Group and Partnership Board should be presented using an agreed front sheet.

Reports to the Steering Group and Partnership Board for scrutiny agenda items should be submitted on an agreed template.

Reports to or from the Steering Group (SG) and Partnership Board (PB) may be circulated beyond the membership of these groups if the SG or PB agrees, and in the action is in compliance with Data Protection legislation including The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). This clause *does not* apply to any papers relating to Local learning Reviews such as a Local Child Safeguarding Practice Review (LCSPR) and legacy Serious Case Reviews although the Steering Group or Partnership Board may permit such circulation with the agreement of the Independent Chair.

### **6.57 Decision Making**

- i) Ordinary decision making will be by majority consensus, with dissenting views to be clearly recorded in the minutes of the meeting.
- ii) In the event of a split decision, the three lead partners will make the final decision. In doing so they may decide to delegate responsibility to the Independent Chair or ask the Independent Chair to act as a mediator.
- iii) Where urgent decisions are required this must be in accordance with section 6.52 above.

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### 6.6 WSSCP Functions and Offices

#### 6.61 Independent Scrutiny

6.611 It is the responsibility of the three lead partners to make arrangements for independent scrutiny of the WSSCP. The lead partners decided to commence local arrangements by employing an Independent Chair. This decision will initially be under annual review to consider how effective the current arrangements are and whether the objectives of the WSSCP are being met under the auspices of an Independent Chair.

6.612 When appointing to the independent chair role, the three lead partners must ensure that the appointee is of sufficient standing and expertise to command the respect and support of all partners, will be someone independent of the local agencies so that the WSSCP can exercise its local challenge function effectively.

6.613 The expenses of an independent appointment will be met from the WSSCP Budget.

6.614 The Chair should:

- (a) Ensure the effective operation of the Steering Group and Partnership Board, facilitating and enabling the engagement of all WSSCP member agencies in decision making.
- (b) Secure an independent voice for the WSSCP.
- (c) Act objectively and independently from any other role held.

6.615 The Independent Chair is responsible for chairing all WSSCP Partnership Board and Steering Group meetings. The Chair will agree the agenda and correct and agree the minutes. The Chair will represent the Steering Group and Partnership Board at formal meetings with e.g. Ofsted, Police and Crime Commissioner for Sussex, the Health and Wellbeing Board, and other bodies as required.

#### 6.62 Vice Chair.

6.621 The Vice Chair of the Steering Group will be appointed following consultation with the three lead partners.

6.622 The Vice Chair Will deputise for the Independent Chair in any decision-making role where the Chair is unavailable or where such decision making has been delegated to the role by the Independent Chair or Steering Group/Partnership Board.

#### 6.63 WSSCP business manager and WSSCP business support team.

6.631 The Partnership manager is not a member of the SG or PB but will be employed by one of the partner agencies to manage and facilitate the business of the WSSCP SG, PB and sub-groups.

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6.632 The expenses of the WSSCP business support team will be met from the WSSCP budget or will be provided as a contribution from one of the Partner Agencies.

6.634 The Partnership manager will take a lead role in liaison between partner agencies, and with neighbouring Safeguarding Children Partnerships

6.635 The SCPs of West Sussex, Brighton & Hove and East Sussex now work across the Pan Sussex geographical footprint to ensure consistency of policies and procedures across the local area.

- The 3 SCP Managers will meet quarterly to discuss policy, child protection procedures and arising issues and are referred to as the Pan Sussex Procedures Group.
- The WSSCP may at any time work in co-operation with any other neighbouring SCPs to establish subgroups or working groups as determined by the WSSCP(s).

### 6.64 Legal Advice

6.641 The three lead partners appointed a WSCC Legal Adviser to the WSSCP to advise and assist the Steering Group and Partnership Board, as and when required.

6.642 Legal Advisor attendance is not required at the Steering Group, Partnership Board or any of the WSSCP subgroups, but may do so if requested by any partner agency. Any legal advisor attending the SG, PB or a sub-group is not a member of the SG/PB or sub-group.

6.643 Any expenses arising from the provision of Legal Advice to the WSSCP will be met from the budget or will be provided as a contribution from the three lead partners.

6.644 The Legal Advisor to the WSSCP does not provide legal advice to individual Partners.

### 6.65 Financial advice and support

6.651 The local authority agreed with the lead partners to provide financial advice and support to the WSSCP, concerning the management and operation of the budget.

6.652 The cost of such support will be met from the budget or will be provided by the local authority as a contribution. This arrangement will be reviewed annually.

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6.653 Financial support to individual Partners will not be included within this provision.

### **6.7 Sub-groups**

6.71 Please refer to Appendix 5 for the WSSCP Structure Chart. The following will be delivery sub-groups of the WSSCP:

- (i) Case review group (CRG)
- (ii) Quality Assurance (QA)
- (iii) Child Exploitation (CE)
- (iv) Learning and Development (L&D)
- (v) Neglect working group (NWG)
- (vi) Safeguarding Liaison Group (SLG)

6.72 Each subgroup will operate in accordance with Terms of Reference which have been agreed by the Steering Group and are reviewed annually.

6.73 Membership of sub-groups will consist of: Nominated agencies, including some discretionary WSSCP members, and representatives of those agencies required by statutory legislation to participate. Membership of WSSCP subgroups will be and reviewed at least every two years and signed off by the Steering Group.

6.74 The sub-groups will be chaired by WSSCP members and partners agreed by the SG who will be responsible for making written reports to the SG on a quarterly basis, as a minimum reporting requirement.

6.75 Each WSSCP sub-group will have a Vice-Chair elected by the sub-group.

6.76 Any changes to the chairing arrangements or terms of reference for the subgroups should be referred to the WSSCP business manager for consultation with the Chair or Vice-Chair of the Partnership Board. Amendments will normally be referred to the Board for ratification.

6.77 At each meeting of a sub-group there should be a Chair or Vice Chair present together with representatives from at least two other agencies. Wherever possible the three lead partner agencies should be represented at all sub-group meetings.

6.78 Sub-groups will meet at intervals agreed by the WSSCP and all agencies will be responsible for contributing to the resourcing of these under the power conferred on them by the Children Act 2004 (S16 I), and in accordance with the Financial Partnership Agreement (Appendix 1).

### **6.77 WSSCP Children and Young People's voice**

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6.771 The voice of children and young people must be reflected in our service delivery as it helps to inform both our future priorities and measurement of service delivery outcomes.

### **6.8 Additional Groups, Networks and Forums**

The WSSCP will work with the following networks and forums, linking in at Steering Group, Partnership Board and operational delivery group levels to ensure that we work together to deliver the best possible outcomes to children and young people in West Sussex.

#### **6.8.1 Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) Network**

The Designated Safeguarding Lead in every school should take lead responsibility for safeguarding and child protection (including online safety). The DSL role is described in Keeping Children Safe in Education, 2018 as to provide: "support to other staff on child welfare and child protection matters, to take part in strategy discussions and inter-agency meetings, and/or to support other staff to do so, and to contribute to the assessment of children". In West Sussex DSL networks meet on a termly basis in addition to an annual conference.

#### **6.8.2 Safeguarding Children Health Safeguarding Forum**

The Safeguarding Children Health Safeguarding Forum meets quarterly to discuss safeguarding matters of concern, and to share best practice.

#### **6.8.3 Safeguarding West Sussex VCS (Voluntary and Community Sector) Forum**

The purpose of the Safeguarding West Sussex VCS Forum is to maintain an independent network of VCS Safeguarding leads, facilitating a meaningful link between the WSSCP and the forum organisations.

### **6.9 Pan Sussex Groups**

#### **6.9.1 Pan Sussex Steering Group**

The Pan Sussex Strategic Leadership group meets twice a year to assess the impact of partnership work across Sussex, identify opportunities for Pan Sussex delivery of initiatives and to drive targeted and resource efficient practice. The group is led by the 3 local authority area Directors of Children's Services and senior leaders from Sussex Police and CCGs.

#### **6.9.2 Pan Sussex Child Death Over-view Panel (CDOP)**

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6.921 The Purpose of the CDOP is to monitor and review the deaths of all children under 18 years in West Sussex. The group's aim is to better understand how and why children in our county die and use the findings to take action to prevent other deaths and improve the health and safety of our children. The child death review partners must make arrangements for the analysis of information about deaths in the area.

CDOP may also, if they consider it appropriate, make arrangements for the review of a death in their area of a child not normally resident there.

### **7.0 Decision-making**

7.1 Any matter requiring a decision to be made by WSSCP between meetings and which does not, in the opinion of the Chairperson, require a special meeting to be convened, will be decided by the Chairperson in consultation with the three lead partners. Any decision made should be reported and ratified at the next WSSCP Steering Group meeting.

### **8.0 Participation and engagement**

8.1 It is vital that children and young people, parents and communities, including e.g. children with disabilities, LGBTQ, BAME and faith groups in West Sussex are aware of the importance of safeguarding children, and that this is everybody's business.

8.2 To promote this the WSSCP will engage with focus groups, building on those groups that are already established, where these exist. The views of children and young people will be sought about priorities and effectiveness of Safeguarding services and reported to the Steering Group or Partnership Board.

### **9.0 Complaints**

9.1 The WSSCP will respond to any complaints related to its functions in line with the Complaints Policy of West Sussex County Council. In accordance with guidance in Working Together 2018, and the Pan Sussex Safeguarding Children Procedures, any complaint relating to an individual partner agency will be referred to that agency and dealt with by, and under the complaint process of that agency.

### **10.0 Freedom of information requests**

10.1 Under the Ministry of Justice's extension to the Freedom of Act 2000, Local Safeguarding Children Partnerships are not deemed as Public Authorities under the Act and therefore exempt from requests for the disclosure of information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

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### **11.0 WSSCP funding**

11.1 Working Together 2018 states that the three lead partners should make suitable arrangements to provide SCPs with reliable resources (including finance) that enable the SCP to be strong and effective. It is expected that Members should share the financial responsibility for the WSSCP in such a way that a disproportionate burden does not fall on a small number of partner agencies.

11.2 The Children Act 2004, S16(I) , as amended by the C&SW Act 2017 enables partners to make arrangements for funding and payments in respect of the running of the WSSCP, or to provide staff, goods services accommodation or other resources, but it does not require them to do so.

11.3 Payments may be made by direct contribution, or into a pooled budget. WSSCP partners must have the delegated authority of their agency to commit any payments, or to provide staff, goods services accommodation or other resources in respect of the running of the WSSCP.

11.4 The Partnership's financial year is from the 1<sup>st</sup> April to the 31<sup>st</sup> March each year, with contributing agencies providing contributions by 30<sup>th</sup> April of the new financial year.

11.5 West Sussex County Council, on behalf of WSSCP, will act as the accountable body and administer the pooled budget. The funding agencies will be informed of any under spend which is carried into the following year. Similarly, the funding agencies will need to agree as to how any projected overspend should be managed.

11.7 A financial statement will be provided to the WSSCP Steering Group Meeting twice per annum and a Financial Statement included in the Annual Report each year.

### **12. Amendment and review**

12.1 This Constitution should be reviewed annually and following any revision of statutory guidance. It may additionally be considered for amendment at any meeting of the WSSCP provided that prior notice of amendment is formally tabled for the meeting.

The constitution should be read in conjunction with the West Sussex Safeguarding Children Partnership arrangements, published in June 2018.



# West Sussex Safeguarding Children Partnership

## Appendix 1 – Financial Partnership Agreement

### Introduction

This appendix sets down the agreement by which the partner agencies of the WSSCP finance the WSSCP's core activities.

### Background

Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 states:

- Working in partnership means organisations and agencies should collaborate on how they will fund their arrangements. The three safeguarding partners and relevant agencies for the local authority area should make payments towards expenditure incurred in conjunction with local multi-agency arrangements for safeguarding and promoting welfare of children.
- The safeguarding partners should agree the level of funding secured from each partner, which should be equitable and proportionate, and any contributions from each relevant agency, to support the local arrangements. The funding should be transparent to children and families in the area, and sufficient to cover all elements of the arrangements, including the cost of local child safeguarding practice reviews.

Partner agencies must have the delegated authority of their agency to commit any payments, or to provide staff, goods services accommodation or other resources in respect of the running of the WSSCP.

Principles on which the West Sussex Safeguarding Children Partnership shared budget is based.

#### Principle 1

The Core budget of the WSSCP provides the financial resource for the WSSCP to employ:

1. An Independent Scrutiny function
2. A team of officers to support the work of the WSSCP
3. A working budget to ensure the core responsibilities of the WSSCP are met

#### Principle 2

The financial contributions of the agencies to the WSSCP do not replace the contribution of time and capacity of professional leads within partner agencies to the activities of the WSSCP.

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### Principle 3

In order to provide an effective WSSCP team and business plan the budget will be agreed on a three-year basis with a reviewed during each year by the contributing agencies to ensure that the contributions meet the agreed level of activity.

### **Contributions of Individual Agencies**

This will be determined on an annual basis.

### **Management of underspend/overspend**

It is recognised that the WSSCP may within any one year have expenditures which cannot be budgeted for. An example maybe a number of Local Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews (LCSPR).

During any year, any under spend will be carried forward in a reserve account into the next year.

The budget holders of contributing agencies will decide how the under spend will be managed. If there is a projected overspend the budget holders of contributing agencies to decide how the overspend will be managed.

It is the responsibility of the WSSCP business team to monitor the yearly budget to be able to warn the budget holders of any potential overspend/under spend

The Parties agree that West Sussex County Council shall hold the Fund on trust for the Parties and maintain the Fund on behalf of all of the Parties. West Sussex County Council shall require that the Accountant meets with the Partnership Manager on a quarterly basis and the business manager then reports to the WSSCP on a six monthly basis and provides the WSSCP with such information as required to enable the WSSCP to monitor the operation of the Fund and to ensure that the WSSCP functions are funded within the resources of the Fund as provided for in the Budget.

### **Financial contributions**

Each Party shall pay its Contribution in respect of each Financial Year by 30<sup>th</sup> April of that Financial Year.

The amount of the Contribution payable by each Party in respect of a Financial Year shall be the Relevant Proportion of the Total Contribution.

### **Review of Financial Arrangements**

Budget holders of contributing agencies may meet as required to review the finances of the WSSCP by:

1. Receiving a budget statement from the WSSCP Partnership manager supported by WSSCP finance personnel.
2. Review the planned spending against expected spending.

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3. Make recommendations to the Steering Group on whether the WSSCP's finances will continue to support the WSSCP business plan and core responsibilities.
4. Agree how to manage any under or overspend.

# West Sussex Safeguarding Children Partnership

## Appendix 2: Collaborative Working Agreement – Extract from CWA

### West Sussex Collaborative Working Agreement (CWA)

*Between West Sussex Safeguarding Children Partnership, Safeguarding Adults Board, West Sussex Health and Wellbeing Board, and Safer West Sussex Partnership*

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#### Mission statement

To consistently improve the health, wellbeing and safety of our residents via a coherent West Sussex partnership alliance that maximises opportunities and targets resources to enhance the quality of life for all. We will work to safeguard and protect the most vulnerable people in our communities and develop an environment which promotes the health and wellbeing of all.

#### Purpose of Collaborative Working Agreement

This Collaborative Working Agreement outlines the cooperative working relationship between the following West Sussex multi-agency boards and partnerships:

- West Sussex Safeguarding Children’s Partnership (WSSCP), (which replaced the West Sussex Safeguarding Children’s Board with effect from June 2019)
- West Sussex Safeguarding Adults Board (WSSAB),
- Health & Wellbeing Board (HWB) and
- Safer West Sussex Partnership (SWSP)

It aims to improve the health, wellbeing and safety of all residents of West Sussex and safeguard children, young people and adults, particularly those who are vulnerable to abuse and neglect. The four boards and partnerships are all part of the West Sussex multi-organisational system and have key interrelationships between them. Consequently, there is a need to work collaboratively to improve outcomes for the residents of West Sussex, minimise duplication, and maximise value for money. In this context, the agreement gives an overview of:

- Roles and responsibilities of the boards and partnerships, and accountabilities
- Interdependencies between partnerships and cross cutting themes

Collaboration between the partnerships is based on the six key principles set out in Figure 1 below.

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Figure 1 Collaboration between the partnerships is based on six key principles



### Why have a Collaborative Working Agreement?

All four boards and partnerships share a common ambition contributing to the wider goals of improving the health, wellbeing and safety of all people in West Sussex. The purpose of this agreement is to set out a framework within which the boards and partnerships will work together to achieve these goals. Within the wider governance arrangements of the four boards and partnerships, their role is to ensure the effectiveness of the arrangements made by individual agencies and partners to safeguard and promote the welfare of adults, young people and children.

- The opportunities presented by a formal working relationship between HWB, SWSP, WSSAB and WSSCP are summarised as follows:
- Identifying a coordinated approach to delivering the boards and partnerships' goals, recognising that all partnerships operate within the same geographical boundary and therefore serve the same population within West Sussex.
- Strategic plans, whether formulated by individual agencies or by partnerships, should include safeguarding as a theme to ensure that existing strategies and service delivery as well as emerging plans for improvement include effective safeguarding arrangements so that residents in West Sussex are safe and their wellbeing is protected.

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- Aligning business plans with strategic shared priorities such as tackling key issues which impact the health, wellbeing and safety of people in West Sussex such as health inequalities, violence and exploitation.
- Identifying areas of commonality and pooling evidence, expertise and resources to influence policy, practice and outcomes both locally and beyond the boundary of West Sussex.
- Securing an integrated approach to the JSNA to include, where appropriate, analysis of safeguarding data, including evidence of prevalence of issues relating to safeguarding such as child exploitation, and neglect.
- Aligning WSSCP and WSSAB Business Plans with the West Sussex Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy and the County Community Safety Agreement to improve outcomes and demonstrate impact.
- Ensuring health, wellbeing and safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and each organisation and individuals within those organisations must play their full part.
- Sharing learning and building on strengths and using our collective resources to address areas of concern or which require further development.

### 2. Shared Responsibilities of the four Boards and Partnerships

WSSAB, WSSCP, HWB and SWSP are interdisciplinary and multi-agency partnerships with the aim of working collaboratively to improve the health, wellbeing and safety of the residents of West Sussex. To this end, the partnerships, including the various agencies that make up the partnerships, are all part of the West Sussex multi-organisational system and have a duty to ensure that these shared responsibilities and actions are carried out and embedded in their organisational strategies and delivery plans. Their responsibilities are:

- The WSSCP and WSSAB are responsible for facilitating and assuring effective partnership work; they work with partners to ensure procedures and processes are in place to promote the welfare, prevent and minimise risk and maximise the safety and wellbeing of adults and children in West Sussex. The two safeguarding boards are responsible for supporting and collaborating with each other and the HWB and SWSP on their safeguarding procedures and delivery.
- The Safer West Sussex Partnership has the responsibility to understand the nature and extent of crime and disorder issues including offending and substance misuse issues and to set out a plan to address them.
- The Health and Wellbeing Board is responsible for recognising and prioritising the health and wellbeing needs of the county, including issues relating to the wider determinants of health such as violence, education, housing etc., and agree a joint strategy to best meet those needs.

# West Sussex Safeguarding Children Partnership

## Appendix 3: Governance Structure

