

# an introduction to safeguarding

guidance for lead members for children's services

London Councils gratefully acknowledges the work of Cllr Richard Watts, Executive Member for Finance and Performance at London Borough of Islington, who led the project to compile this valuable guidance to safeguarding for lead members of children's services.

# contents

<b>1</b>	Introduction: the purpose of this guidance	4
<b>2</b>	What you should know: your legal role and responsibilities	5
<b>3</b>	What you should see: what does good look like?	8
<b>4</b>	What you should ask: finding out what's happening in your council	10
<b>5</b>	What you should do: building relationships	18
<b>6</b>	What you should know: key themes for safeguarding in 2013	21
<b>7</b>	Where should you go for further information and support	25

# appendices

<b>A</b>	What you may want to consider as part of your induction	27
<b>B</b>	Self-assessment questions for a Local Test of Assurance	28
<b>C</b>	Links to documents referred to in these guidance notes	29
<b>D</b>	Glossary of abbreviations	33

# 1

## introduction: the purpose of this guidance

### 1.1 What are you about to read?

This guidance is an introduction to safeguarding within your London Borough. It aims to outline:

- your role and responsibilities for safeguarding as Lead Member for Children's Services (Lead Member) what 'good' looks like in regard to robust local safeguarding practices
- what questions to ask to ascertain with confidence your council's performance
- how to champion safeguarding through your relationships with officers, members and partners
- the national safeguarding agenda for Children's Services in 2013
- where to go if you need more information or support.

### 1.2 What do we mean by safeguarding children?

Safeguarding is about working with children, young people and their families to take all reasonable measures to minimise the risk of harm to children's welfare. Where there are concerns about a child's welfare, a multi-agency approach is taken to address these. Safeguarding is broader than 'child protection' as it also includes prevention.

Within legislation the term 'child' refers to anyone up to 18 years-old. This guidance similarly uses 'child' and 'children' to encompass children and young people up to the age of 18.

### 1.3 Why has this guidance been compiled?

Safeguarding is fundamental to all our roles; ensuring vulnerable children are at the heart of everything we do is one of the core priorities of every local authority. This is articulated in legislation and examined by Ofsted who, during their unannounced inspections of child protection practices, will expect you as Lead Member to be able to articulate the strengths and improvement areas within your local safeguarding service and the role you have in improving them.

As a result, the London Councils' Lead Member network has commissioned this guidance to give concise and pragmatic advice on what you need to know, ask and do to champion, challenge and improve the current delivery of children's safeguarding across your local area.

### 1.4 Once you've read it, what next?

This guidance is targeted at the safeguarding element of your role as Lead Member rather than an overarching introduction to all of Children's Services. It will therefore complement your local inductions which will be designed and delivered by your own council. For suggestions of what you may wish to include in your in-house induction, see Appendix A.

- For more information about the national agenda for safeguarding, click on the underlined links embedded throughout this document. All documents and websites referred to are listed in Appendix C.
- To find out more about safeguarding within your own authority ask your Director of Children's Services (DCS) for the local documents listed in 7.1. Also discuss with your DCS the questions in Section 4.1 to assess how your service is currently performing.
- Consider what additional support and development you would like to ensure you are able to excel in your role. See 7.4 for some currently available options.

# 2

## what you should know: your legal role and responsibilities

### 2.1 Why do you need to know this?

The aim of this section is to give a brief overview of the requirements of the local authority and its senior leadership so that you know what you are legally accountable for as Lead Member. The rest of the guidance explains what you need to know, ask and do in order to ensure you are fulfilling these requirements.

### 2.2 The role of your London Borough in safeguarding children

A local authority's powers and duties in regard to safeguarding children are defined within the [Children's Acts of 1989](#) and [2004](#).

Two core elements of the 1989 Act are Section 17 and 47. Section 17 imposes a general duty on every local authority to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in need of local authority services. Section 47 defines the authority's duty, in partnership with other agencies, to initiate enquiries if they become aware that a child in their locality is suffering or is likely to suffer significant harm. If, following an initial assessment, concerns about a child's safety are identified, local authority social workers should convene a strategy discussion with the police and others to decide whether to undertake a Section 47 core assessment and take additional action to protect the child.

In the 2004 Act, Section 11 requires local authorities and partner organisations with responsibility for the care and well-being of children to co-operate. This includes health, police, probation and youth offending teams. Schools and the voluntary sector are encouraged to work in partnership with local authorities to plan and deliver services tailored to the needs of the child.

In addition, the 2004 Act requires all children services' authorities to establish a Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) and appoint a Director for Children's Services (DCS) and a Lead Member for Children's Services (LMCS).

### 2.3 The roles of the DCS and Lead Member

[Statutory Guidance on the Roles and Responsibilities of the DCS and Lead Member \(2012\)](#) provides a concise outline of each role. Table 1 (on page 7) summarises these responsibilities. The DCS directly reports to the Chief Executive. Therefore the Chief Executive can only be the DCS if this is a temporary arrangement, for example if the role is vacant and it's not appropriate to make an interim appointment. As Lead Member you report to the Leader of the Council or Mayor.

### 2.4 The roles of the Chief Executive and Leader of the Council or Mayor

The Chief Executive provides corporate leadership and must ensure that the DCS fulfils their managerial responsibilities and statutory functions for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. They must also hold the DCS to account for the effective working of the LSCB, even if the Board has an independent chair. The Leader provides political leadership and must ensure the Lead Member fulfils their statutory role, as outlined in Table 1. In addition, both Chief Executive and Leader are tasked with ensuring:

- safeguarding and improved outcomes for children are a priority both within the council and across its partners
- strategic targets to improve safeguarding and progress against them are reported to the Local Strategic Partnership
- there is appropriate capacity to both deliver an effective safeguarding service and provide early help to prevent children from needing to be safeguarded
- there is a clear and unambiguous line of local accountability for safeguarding across the DCS, Lead Member, Leader or Mayor and Chief Executive.

## 2.5 The role of the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) and your participation as Lead Member

The LSCB is the key forum for organisations to come together to agree how they will co-operate with each other to safeguard and protect the welfare of children. The purpose of this partnership is to hold each other to account and ensure safeguarding remains high on everyone's agenda. The main responsibilities of the Board are therefore to co-ordinate and quality assure the safeguarding activities of member agencies. Each Board will have its own priorities and targets based on the needs of the local community. The DCS is a statutory member of the LSCB.

The Statutory Guidance states that:

*“The Lead Member should be a ‘participating observer’ of the LSCB. In practice this means routinely attending meetings as an observer and receiving all its written reports. Lead Members should engage in discussions, ask questions and seek clarity, but not be part of the decision making process. This will enable the Lead Member to challenge, when necessary, from a well informed position”*

(London Child Protection Procedures, London Safeguarding Children Board, p487, 2010)

You must be aware of any concerns that the LSCB has in regard to the quality of safeguarding within your local authority. LSCB meetings are therefore key forums to attend and will provide a sound basis to both support, challenge and hold your DCS to account in order to improve your council's performance. These meetings will include progress from partners and updates on national issues to ensure you remain up to date on developments, confident that the local needs of the community are being taken into account and alert to any issues you may need to help resolve.

## 2.6 Do you or the DCS have other responsibilities outside of Children's Services?

Due to the breadth and importance of the roles of the DCS and Lead Member the 2004 Children's Act recommends that there are no additional functions added to these portfolios. However as some authorities now advocate an 'all age' approach to services, you may carry both children's and adults' responsibilities. If this is the case, you should ensure your council undertakes a 'local test of assurance' to show that outcomes for children are not diluted as a result. Appendix B lists the questions you need to consider.

You may be asked to share this assessment if you are undergoing an external peer review. Ofsted may also want to examine this as part of their inspection of your leadership and governance arrangements for Children's Services.

# table 1

## The shared and distinct roles of the DCS and Lead Member for safeguarding as stated in Statutory Guidance

### Your responsibilities as Lead Member:

- political responsibility for the leadership, strategy and effectiveness of Children's Services
- key role in defining local vision and setting political priorities for Children's Services within the broader council setting
- providing strong strategic leadership, support and challenge without getting drawn into the day-to-day operational management of local services
- ensuring the needs of all local children, including the most disadvantaged and vulnerable, their families and carers are addressed through the provision of services
- being a 'participating observer' of the Local Safeguarding Children's Board by engaging in discussions but not participating in the decision-making process, allowing the Lead Member to remain independent to challenge the DCS when necessary.

### Responsibilities of the DCS:

- professional responsibility for the leadership, strategy and effectiveness of Children's Services
- securing the provision of services which address the needs of all children including the most disadvantaged and vulnerable, their families and carers
- responsible for performance of education and social care services for children, ensuring effective systems are in place to discharge these, whether directly provided or commissioned from other providers
- ensuring children are involved in developing and delivering local services
- being a member of the Local Safeguarding Children's Board
- being a member of the Health and Wellbeing Board (HWB), promoting the interests of children and driving the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment.

### Both roles are responsible for:

- ensuring there are clear and effective arrangements to protect children from harm
- getting the needs of children considered by other in-house services and in council-wide planning, commissioning and delivery
- leading, promoting and creating opportunities for co-operation with local partners to improve outcomes and wellbeing of children
- working closely with the Director of Public Health
- promoting prevention and early intervention by understanding local needs and securing provision of appropriate services
- establishing local arrangements with partners to reduce child poverty
- being effective and caring corporate parents for looked after children

## 3

# what you should see: what does good look like?

### 3.1 The seven factors of effective safeguarding

You need to feel confident that your safeguarding services are effective, regardless of whether or not you are expecting an Ofsted inspection. The key agencies (Ofsted, Local Government Association, LSCB, Children's Improvement Board) have all defined in various formats what good looks like. A review of this advice indicates that there are seven essential factors for safe and effective safeguarding. The framework on the next page provides an overall summary.

The framework articulates what you will see in a high performing authority. In a high risk authority, you will see the opposite, as summarised by Lord Carlile in his review of Doncaster Council. Carlile's review was undertaken after the assault of one young victim and subsequent serious assault the following weekend of two young victims by two brothers, aged 10 and 11, in 2009. Both brothers were subject to a child protection plan.

//...in the period 2005-09 there was an unparalleled level of dysfunction in Doncaster. This was caused by an absence of professional leadership resulting from a series of interim Director appointments. Further, a lack of political vision for Children's Services caused by inter and intra Party conflict and the newness of the elected mayoral system provided an inadequate foundation for service management and development. The situation was compounded by high staff turnover, the unregulated and excessive use of agency staff, a breakdown of trust between partners characterised by an inadequate multi-agency safeguarding system, a lack of robust safeguarding policies and procedures to give guidance to staff, and poorly organised 'front door' and triaging arrangements which were unable to deliver even a basic assessment service. //

(The Edlington Case, A Review by Lord Carlile, para 82, 2012)

# The seven essential factors for effective safeguarding: a framework

## 1 Council Leadership

Senior leaders are committed to a shared vision for safeguarding and have a common understanding of priorities for improvement; there is stability and clear accountabilities across senior roles; there is open debate, robust challenge and urgent action when required in action when required.



## 2 Culture

Learning culture exists across services and is modelled by senior managers; staff understand the vision; reflective practice informs continual improvement



## 3 Resourcing

Senior leaders ensure the service is appropriately resourced; demand is anticipated enabling workforce planning; workloads are reasonable



## 4 Workforce Development

Staff receive learning and development appropriate to their role; supervision is regular and reflective; poor performance is managed



## 5 Performance Management

Robust data is regularly shared with members and managers and drives improvement; internal audit and external assessment is welcomed



## 6 Partnership Working

There is effective joint working at strategic and operational levels based on trust and regular communication; partners attend meetings; prevention and early intervention is prioritised; information sharing protocols are in place; good practice is shared; improvement plans are joint



## 7 Improved Outcomes for Children

Children's voices are listened to and strongly influence service improvements and individual interventions; children and families access early help; referral rates are reducing; children report that they feel safe; outcomes are well measured; performance against national indicators is improving.

## 4

# What you should ask: finding out what's happening in your council

## 4.1 How does your council measure up against the seven factors?

The following pages provides a description of what good councils do for each of the seven factors of effective safeguarding. They also provide a list of questions against each of the seven factors which you need to know the answers to for your authority. These can be used in discussion with your DCS to provide a robust overview of the current strengths, challenges and priorities for your safeguarding services.

## The seven essential factors for effective safeguarding:

- 1 Council Leadership
- 2 Culture
- 3 Resourcing
- 4 Workforce development
- 5 Performance management and quality assurance
- 6 Partnership working
- 7 Outcomes for service users

# 1 Council leadership

## What good looks like

- There is a clear line of accountability for safeguarding. The Chief Executive, Leader or Mayor, DCS and Lead Member can articulate their individual roles and responsibilities. Where there is a need for a Local Test of Assurance, this has been completed (see 2.6).
- Political and managerial leadership across the council is committed to the importance of safeguarding. As a result the council has a clear vision for safeguarding children based on a robust understanding of local needs, influenced by the views of children and families and appropriately resourced.
- The Chief Executive, Leader or Mayor, DCS and Lead Member have a shared understanding of the strengths of the service as well as areas for improvement; they can articulate local and national priorities for safeguarding children and are able to evidence how the council is working with partners to make progress against these.
- Relationships at a senior level (between The Chief Executive, Leader or Mayor, DCS and Lead Member) are robust and honest, enabling appropriate challenge. Roles are also stable as turnover is low.
- Where there is evidence of underperformance or failure, senior leaders act with urgency.

## What you should be asking

- Where do we articulate our council and partnership vision for safeguarding? How confident are you that there is political and corporate understanding and support for safeguarding? Is there awareness across elected members of the pressures and priorities of Children's Services? How confident are you that elected members understand and fulfil their corporate parenting role?
- Where do we articulate senior leadership's safeguarding responsibilities? How do frontline staff know who is accountable for safeguarding in this council?
- How do you and your management team ensure you are visible across the service? What feedback do you get from frontline staff about how accessible you are as a management team?
- If you have, or are planning, to restructure your service, have you sought an external view from someone who is not a close colleague?
- What impact do current corporate changes (for example re-structures, budget savings, new IT systems and different ways of working) have on the capacity of your service?
- What do you see as the Lead Member role in regard to championing safeguarding? Are there corporate or partnership blockages in regard to the safeguarding agenda? What support would you like me to provide?

## 2 Culture

### What good looks like

- Colleagues are engaged in the shared vision which reflects that children are at the heart of everything they do. As a result they can articulate the overall direction of travel and help shape how it is achieved. Colleagues report high levels of morale when surveyed.
- Colleagues work in a learning culture. They describe this as an environment that is open, where their professional judgement is respected and listened to and where reflective practice and challenge is encouraged so that services continually improve.
- This is not limited to safeguarding teams but applies across the whole of Children's Services, where colleagues are encouraged to see the pathway of support provided and the impact services have on each other; there is no silo working.
- The vision and culture are modelled by senior managers who are accessible and visible to front line staff. Senior managers managing change engage and communicate with staff whenever possible; they are aware of and guard against the potential for change fatigue among staff.
- Reflective practice informs continual professional improvement; as a result, case file auditing and observation of practice is the norm among the workforce. Senior managers are keen to listen to and accept front line feedback; colleagues are empowered to put into place their suggestions and can see improvements that arise from their feedback.
- Colleagues share best practice, both within the council and with partners, through case studies, speaking at partnership forums etc.

### What you should be asking

- What has been communicated to frontline staff about the overall direction safeguarding? How are staff included in shaping this vision?
- How are we embedding the cultural changes recommended by Munro? What are the key challenges to this? What progress have we made and what evidence do we have of this?
- What are our current challenges to prevent internal silo working, both within Children's Services and more widely across the council? How do you ensure managers and staff across Children's Services recognise they are all part of the same system?
- How successfully have we supported frontline staff to manage risk rather than be risk averse? How confident are you that children are being removed from families at the appropriate time? How do your managers support social workers to make bold decisions?
- What do staff say it's like to work here?
- As a service, how do we ensure we learn from our mistakes? What examples of recent lessons learnt have changed practice and improved outcomes for children?

## 3 Resourcing

### What good looks like

- There is continued political commitment to invest in Children's Services with resources for safeguarding and early intervention being prioritised.
- There is robust analysis of current and anticipated service demand alongside accurate profiling of both the existing and the future workforce required to meet that demand. As a result there is a workforce strategy which supports the overall direction of travel and identifies any shortfalls in capacity or capability. Plans are in place for how gaps will be met. Profiling demonstrates that the workforce is representative of the local community.
- As part of the workforce strategy, there is an agreed approach to recruitment, retention and staff development to ensure there are sufficient capacity, skills, experience and capability to deliver safe and effective services.
- Safer recruitment processes are in place. Success in recruiting and retaining staff is regularly monitored through vacancy, turnover and absence rates. Absence rates are also reviewed to identify areas of potential stress. This information is shared with all managers to help manage their teams and services.
- The council uses its flexible workforce in a planned and cost effective way to meet requirements identified in the workforce strategy, including use of external interims, contractors and agency staff.
- Workloads are monitored through supervision and performance management (eg the ratio of social workers to cases is tracked and complex cases are weighted accordingly); workloads are manageable.

### What you should be asking

- How confident are you in the analysis of future service demand? Do you anticipate any sudden changes in population needs (eg from immigration, rising unemployment etc)? How do you use this information to plan your flexible workforce? What are the major predicted gaps in our current workforce we need to meet in the next 12, 24, 36 months? What plans are in place to address these?
- What are your current staff turnover, vacancy and absence rates? How do these compare to our statistical neighbours? What's the story behind the statistics? How confident are you in this data? What impact do current rates have on our ability to deliver a safe service?
- What are the key reasons for sickness absence? How do you identify potential stress hotspot areas among teams?
- How do you know if caseloads are manageable and regularly reviewed? What is an appropriate caseload ratio and how do you weight it to take into account complexity of cases?
- How confident are you that safer recruitment practices are in place and effective? What are the most challenging posts to fill and how are you proactively addressing this?

## 4 Workforce development

### What good looks like

- Staff speak highly of the support they receive from their managers. This includes regular supervision and annual reviews. Reflective supervision includes both a review of case work and a discussion of the support or development an individual may need. The quality of supervision and annual review is monitored through staff surveys.
- Managers ensure staff have access to a range of learning and development opportunities to improve their professional practice. Newly qualified workers are appropriately supported and allocated a reasonable caseload. Post-qualifying and advanced qualifications are available. Coaching and mentoring are encouraged.
- Managers identify, challenge and manage poor performance.
- Safeguarding is part of induction and included within mandatory training tailored to each role. Up-to-date training records are kept.

### What you should be asking

- What percentage of staff currently receive regular supervision? What do staff say about the quality of their supervision? How are managers supported to ensure they are supervising staff appropriately? What do we know about the quantity and quality of staff annual appraisals?
- How do we assess individuals' confidence and capability in implementing safeguarding procedures? How are development needs identified and met? How do you know if there is a culture of addressing poor performance across your service?
- How informed are staff for the recent changes to the Ofsted framework? How are we preparing colleagues to be observed by inspectors during future Ofsted visits?
- How do you know whether your managers are well regarded by their teams? What feedback do managers receive on their ability to manage?
- How do you decide what training to commission and how do you know it has had the desired impact?

## 5 Performance management and quality assurance

### What good looks like

- There is a robust performance management framework that is regularly reviewed by service managers and elected members through scrutiny. Data accuracy is continually challenged and improved so that the story beneath the statistics is understood and there is confidence that they are a fair reflection of the service.
- A dashboard of performance indicators is regularly shared with managers so they can effectively manage and improve their team's performance.
- There is a comprehensive and consistent approach to gathering and making use of customer feedback as well as a clear, well communicated complaints process. As a result, the views of children and families contribute to planning and evaluating the effectiveness of provision and shape service improvements. There is direct evidence of action taken as a result of complaints upheld.
- There is a strong internal audit regime to assess quality of delivery. The council also undertakes regular self-assessment and welcomes external challenge. Improvement actions are therefore identified from a wide range of sources eg performance management data, internal audit processes, external inspection, serious case reviews, service user feedback and complaints.
- Actions for improvement are collated in a single improvement plan. This plan reflects the overarching vision for safeguarding, is appropriately resourced and regularly reviewed to ensure there is clear evidence of outcomes delivered. The plan is ambitious, driving service improvement rather than service maintenance.
- Inspection readiness is a theme but not a driver as there is confidence in practice and actions are clearly being implemented to address any identified gaps.

### What you should be asking

- What performance data should be monitored? How accurate is our performance data? How often is it updated? Who is it distributed to? How confident are managers in understanding the data? How do we perform against the national indicators? Do we have a data bank that we are ready to share with Ofsted should they arrive next week? Who will oversee the inspection process when you get the call?
- What is our quality assurance process? Is it independent? How frequently is it undertaken? How have the results been used to improve practice and outcomes?
- How often do we audit case files? What has this told us about how we need to improve? What has resulted from this? Tell me about the three cases you have selected to share with Ofsted. Why have you chosen these and are you comfortable with the judgements?
- What are the recent themes from the internal audits, external inspections and peer review, serious case reviews, complaints received, and other service user feedback? What do these tell us are our key strengths? What are key challenges? Where are these collated and who agrees what actions are required? What progress has been made; what has been the impact? What are the priority actions for the next three months?

## 6 Partnership working

### What good looks like

- There is effective partnership working at both strategic and operational levels. This is based on a clear, shared vision for safeguarding children that is translated into measurable objectives and owned by each agency.
- There is evidence of regular communication, trust and challenge across local partners. As a result there is strong attendance and engagement in strategic partnership meetings (including the Health and Wellbeing Board, the LSCB and the Strategic Children's Partnership) and at operational level meetings (including child protection conferences). Where there is non-attendance, the partner quickly resolves this.
- There is a strong partnership focus on prevention and early intervention; as a result there is a clearly defined multi-agency offer of early help to meet diverse local needs.
- Information sharing across partners is effective and there is common understanding about key safeguarding processes, including interpretation of thresholds for access to child protection and use of the common assessment framework. When applying thresholds, frontline staff competently manage the risk rather than being risk averse.
- Partners learn by sharing good practice, reflecting on serious case reviews and near misses, discussing outcomes from multi-agency audits and joint improvement planning.
- The Health and Wellbeing Board prioritises safeguarding, identifies opportunities for joint commissioning and leads a partnership approach to commissioning.
- LSCB provides a robust challenge and scrutiny role to partners.

### What you should be asking

- How is intelligence from different agencies shared and used to protect children and to provide early help? How can this be improved?
- What is our shared approach to prevention and early intervention and what impact is it having?
- What are we doing locally to identify if there are 'covert' issues, such as gang activity, child sexual exploitation, missing children, faith-based child abuse etc?
- How well attended are strategic and operational multi-agency meetings?
- How do you know that key professionals (the police, health service, schools and early years settings, adult social care, youth services etc) understand safeguarding protocols, make appropriate referrals and have a common interpretation of thresholds?
- What progress has been made against the Troubled Families agenda? What are the key actions for the next three months?
- What do you anticipate will be the main challenges from the new Ofsted single integrated inspection framework? Are there any major changes across partners that is likely to cause instability eg implementation of new IT systems, changes to leadership, re-structuring etc?

## 7 Outcomes for service users

### What good looks like

- There are a range of activities to engage children and capture their voice; this influences both wider commissioning decisions and individual outcomes. As a result, the voice of the child is strongly evidenced in case files and, when asked, children say that they are consulted about and contribute to their own individual plans.
- Children and their families understand how to access 'early help' and as a result there is a reduction in referrals. When asked, children know where to access help if they need it and feel that a range of agencies including schools, the police and youth service work effectively to keep them safe and informed. Children report that they feel safe.
- Safeguarding indicators are good. For example, cases are allocated within 24 hours; the quality of initial and core assessments is good, are completed within the prescribed timescales and take account of children's differing needs and individual circumstances; reviews are regular; all appropriate plans are in place; plans are SMART, outcome-focused and managed regularly; the number of repeat referrals is falling.
- Effective arrangements are in place to identify and monitor children missing from home, care and education with evidence of effective multi-agency working.

### What you should be asking

- How do you know whether children feel that their wishes and feelings are considered by the professionals involved in their case and that they understand what is happening and why? How is this fed into the development of the service?
- How do you know whether the services you provide have made a difference? How safe do children engaged with your services feel? What is done as a result to help them to be safe and to feel safe?
- How can you show that the help and protection given to children is equally accessible, responsive and robust, irrespective of the age, ethnicity, culture, faith, gender, gender identity, religion, sexual orientation, language or disability of the child?
- How do you measure and understand the quality and timeliness of professional decision making for vulnerable children and young people? Are referrals dealt with promptly? Are there any backlogs? If so, why and what action is being taken? How many initial and core assessments are completed within required timescales? Are cases promptly reviewed? How many child protection plans are currently in place?
- Is the number of child protection plans increasing or decreasing, and why? How does the number of plans compare with comparator authorities? Are cases with child protection plans subject to regular visits? How do you know whether plans have improved children's outcomes?
- What are your referral rates? Are there any patterns in re-referrals? How do you analyse why referral occurs? How does this inform service improvement?

## 5

# what you should do: building relationships

## 5.1 Your relationship with the DCS and wider Children Service colleagues

### *Stay strategic*

The roles of the DCS and Lead Member are parallel but distinct. The [Statutory Guidance](#) requires the Lead Member to provide 'strong strategic leadership, support and challenge without getting drawn into the day-to-day operational management of local services (p3)'. The latter is the remit of the DCS. Your role in championing safeguarding can and should be transformational. By focusing on vision, culture and relationships, both internal and external, and aligning these to an ambitious agenda for children's safety and wellbeing, you will have substantial impact on managers, staff, partners and your community. By contrast, focusing solely on operational issues will only ever achieve limited transactional change.

### *Build trust in order to challenge*

Your relationship with your DCS will be a key element to your success. It should be based on the shared understanding that you are both driven to deliver outstanding outcomes for children across your local area. Early on you may want to talk through how you prefer to work together, including the need for openness and honesty ensuring, for example, you are both able to discuss if there is something you don't know or need to be better at and can work collaboratively to achieve this. If you have honesty, you are also more likely to have robust debate and challenge; this will be core to a healthy working relationship.

### *Encourage external review*

If your council has not already scheduled a [LGA Peer Review](#), it is highly recommended you do so. The LGA will arrange for a trained team of colleagues from other authorities and agencies to undertake a robust and challenging evaluation of your approach to safeguarding. They will meet with senior officers, partners, frontline staff and yourself

and will undertake a review of relevant data and documentation. As a result you will receive a report with recommendations to build on good practice and improve areas requiring further development.

### *Role model to embed cultural change*

The learning culture advocated within Munro is one that all council services should strive for. It encourages engagement, challenge and continual improvement in order to deliver the best possible outcomes for our communities. Culture is strongly influenced by those in a leadership role. How you interact with managers and staff will be fundamental: it can either encourage staff to identify areas of improvement and empower them to deliver service improvements or, alternatively, cause colleagues to be reluctant to 'put their head above the parapet' and focus instead on finding work elsewhere.

### *Consider [Appreciative Inquiry](#)*

There is a growing momentum across Children's Services to adopt an Appreciative Inquiry approach. We tend to undertake internal assessments by asking 'what's gone wrong' and 'what needs to be fixed'. This can focus on the negative which may be perceived as disengaging and uninspiring. Appreciative Inquiry asks 'what is going right', 'what are we good at' and 'how can we build on that?' It underpins the [Signs of Safety](#) approach to social work and will be recognised by staff. In a profession where colleagues are often pilloried by the press, building on the positive can have a substantial impact in engaging people in the cycle of continual improvement.

## 5.2 Your relationship with scrutiny

For the improvement of Children's Services, you will want to ensure scrutiny of safeguarding is robust and other elected members have both the scrutiny skills and understanding of Children's Services to effectively challenge and improve them. The following feedback from Ofsted describes what good scrutiny can look like:

/// *The Chair of Scrutiny demonstrates vision, effective leadership and commitment to improving outcomes for children and young people. Children and young people are routinely actively represented and involved in the work of the overview and scrutiny committee and there is good evidence of their views influencing the work of the council in a number of areas across the partnership. The Chair attends key forums across the partnership, Corporate Parenting Forum and Health and Wellbeing Board (shadow). Review of progress against local and national priorities is supported by attendance by senior officers from across service areas. ///*

(Ofsted Child Protection Ofsted Inspection, 2012)

Develop the relationship with your scrutiny chair so you are confident the process is as effective as it can be; the [LGA Safeguarding Children Scrutiny Guide](#) provides a good outline of what robust scrutiny in this area looks like.

### 5.3 Your relationship with other elected members

*Overall awareness of safeguarding within the council*  
During Carlile's review of Doncaster Council, he reported on elected members' understanding of Children's Services:

/// *The average Doncaster Councillor is poorly informed about the Edlington case and about the improvements or otherwise in children's services. Although there are periodic presentations about those services to the plenary council, they are brief and little written information is given to members prior to such presentations. The potential for well-targeted, pertinent questioning is extremely limited as a consequence. That there is a Lead Member for Children's Services in the Cabinet is not especially reassuring. Hard as he may work, it is impossible for one Councillor to acquire and retain, with an appropriate critical faculty, all the necessary information and keep the council as a whole properly informed. ///*

(The Edlington Case, A Review by Lord Carlile, para 86, 2012)

While you have specific legal accountabilities for your role, every member must be engaged the children's agenda. Members must understand the priorities

and pressures for children in their community and how they can support children in their locality to be listened to and understood. As Carlile states, it is not enough to undertake a tick box presentation; members must be able to articulate, understand and challenge the authority's journey to keep children safe.

#### *Specific awareness of [Corporate Parenting responsibilities](#)*

When a child becomes looked after by the local authority, the tasks of their parents become the responsibility of everyone who works for the council, its partners and all elected members. Although there is no specific mention of Corporate Parenting in either of the Children Acts, the concept has been widely adopted and is listed as part of the statutory role shared by DCS and Lead Member.

Corporate parenting is different from ordinary parenting in that the focus is not necessarily on forming personal relationships with individual children. It is about prioritising the needs of all young people in care and creating the right conditions for them to thrive. In doing so, all elected members must ask:

- is this good enough for my child?
- would this have been good enough for me as a child?
- is this the best that we can achieve?

All elected members should be able to articulate what they understand by the role of Corporate Parent and how they fulfil it. [The National Children's Bureau website](#) dedicated to Corporate Parenting includes tools, case studies and training materials.

#### *Specific awareness of the [Child Poverty Act 2010](#)*

In Oct 2012 the Child Poverty Action Group and 4in10 at Save the Children reported that:

/// *London has the highest rate of child poverty of any English region with as many poor children in London as in all of Scotland and Wales. 592,000 or 37% of all children in London live below the poverty line. ///*

(The Implementation of the Child Poverty Act: examining Child Poverty Strategies in London Local Authorities, p4, 2012)

It is one of your statutory duties as Lead Member, shared with the DCS, to establish local arrangements with partners to reduce child poverty. This initiative has strong links to both Troubled Families and approaches to prevention and early intervention and should be integrated within council and partners' approach to child safety and wellbeing. As a minimum, all elected members should be able to:

- articulate the local nature and causes of poverty in your area and identify which areas and communities are most at risk
- understand the duties defined in the Child Poverty Act and who has responsibility for this corporately and politically
- be aware of the council's approach and prioritise it, ensuring that tackling child poverty underpins all related strategies eg children, employment, community and health and wellbeing strategies.

*What do you need to do about other members' understanding of these issues?*

Find out from your DCS what activities have been delivered to date; talk to other elected members to understand their level of knowledge; if you have concerns, raise this with the Leader or Mayor and engage with your in-house member support services. You need to be assured how these aspects are being covered within member induction, be clear whether there any additional development needs and push to ensure these will be met.

#### **5.4 Your relationship with partners**

Good working relationships across agencies will always be a pivotal element in ensuring effective safeguarding for children. Your role is crucial in building positive relationships at a strategic level across sectors; strategic partnership meetings such as the HWB and LSCB will enable this. There will be other multi-agency meetings that you may find it useful to tap into, such as the Community Safety Partnerships or Council for Voluntary Services. Remember to develop links with non-statutory agencies who may not be regular attendees at these forums. Tap into the networks of other elected members and officers you are working with to grow your own circle of influence.

#### **5.5 Your relationship with the community**

If you are to ensure that children are at the heart of everything the council does it is vital that you know what children and families are saying about local services. The Joint Strategic Needs Analysis (JSNA) will provide a profile of your local community. However you also want to ensure children's voices are directly heard and influence strategy. Find out from your DCS what service user panels are held, how children who use council services are asked their perspective and what evidence there is to show their views have been acted on. If you have a customer insight team, find out how they have recently involved children in gaining their views and what methods work well in engaging this part of the community. Where possible attend panels, service user events and focus groups so that you are up to date with what children say they need in order to feel safe in your community.

# 6

## what you should know: key themes for safeguarding in 2013

### 6.1 Why do you need to know this?

You need an overarching understanding of the national themes impacting on Children's Services at present to place in context the challenges and priorities within your own safeguarding service. The following are six current priorities common to all authorities.

### 6.2 The Munro Review

*What's it about:* In June 2010, Prof Eileen Munro was asked to undertake an independent review of child protection in England. The review found the current system was highly bureaucratised and overly concerned with compliance. Frontline staff delegated upwards for fear of making wrong decisions, the focus on policies and procedures resulted in 'tick box' inspections and children's had been lost sight of. Munro's recommendations are based on three themes:

- placing greater trust and responsibility in skilled frontline professionals
- focusing on the needs, views and experiences of vulnerable children
- reducing central government prescription and unnecessary bureaucracy.

*What's the challenge?* The Munro recommendations are far reaching and underpin significant change across Children's Services. One of the greatest challenges is to embed a culture of continuous improvement which empowers frontline colleagues to make decisions and supports staff to learn from their mistakes rather than allocating blame. This will not be an instant change in an environment that still retains high levels of regulation, constant media scrutiny and where errors of judgment can have tragic consequences.

*What does this mean for the Lead Member role?* The London Children's Safeguarding Board discussed the implications of Munro for elected members in

2011; see the [LSCB site](#) for further papers from the conference. The role of the Lead Member is pivotal to Munro:

*“Reform of the child protection system will depend heavily on strong, skilled leadership at a local level. Leaders need to know their organisations well and constantly identify what needs to be realigned in order to improve performance and manage change. Developing these leaders is, therefore, critical to success.”*

[\(The Munro Review of Child Protection: Final Report, section 7.4, 2011\)](#)

Munro identifies the need for all four leads (Lead Member, Leader or Mayor, DCS and Chief Executive) to have an open channel of communication with the LSCB Chair so that they are all fully aware of any areas of concern that the LSCB may have. Munro also discussed the unique role of the Lead Member as 'participant observers' on LSCBs and encouraged Lead Members to play a full role in discussions, asking questions and seeking clarity when needed in order to bring challenge to the debate.

Finally, as a senior leader within the authority your approach to promoting continual improvement as opposed to fostering a culture of blame is fundamental. Role-modelling this in your contact with officers will be crucial in supporting the cultural change that your DCS will be advocating across all Children's Services.

### 6.3 Improved strategic partnerships

*What's it about?* [The 2004 Children's Act](#) required the creation of Children's Trusts of which the DCS and Lead Member were key members. Trusts provided a forum for the council, health, police, probation, youth offending team and other partners to prioritise and plan to meet the needs of local children and families.

In 2010 the Department for Education withdrew statutory guidance on Trusts, no longer requiring the creation of a partner-wide Children and Young People's Plan. However the wider duty to co-operate to improve children's wellbeing remained. As a result in most areas some form of children's strategic partnership has continued and is often still known as the Trust. The Lead Member remains a key member of this group.

Duties for children's wellbeing are also articulated in the [Health and Social Care Act 2012](#), transferring significant responsibility for public health to local government. From April 2013 Health and Wellbeing Boards (HWBs) will identify priorities, drive improvements and co-ordinate action to improve the health and wellbeing of children and adults and to tackle health inequalities. The DCS sits on the Board plus at least one elected member. HWBs tend to include the Lead Member for Adult Social Care but this does not preclude the Lead Member from also attending.

*What's the challenge?* The relationship between the children's strategic partnership and newly formed HWB will be crucial in improving outcomes for children. For an effective working relationship, [a recent LGA study](#) recommends that local leadership ensures there is:

- a review of existing structures and partnerships so that roles and responsibilities are clear, as streamlined as possible and partnerships remain strategic and outcome-focused
- a shared local vision is developed based on robust needs analysis
- strong leadership both in individual organisations and collectively to clearly define current and future priority areas
- local authority senior leaders, including the Lead Member and DCS, to be represented on both bodies to ensure issues are discussed and decisions made quickly.

*What does this mean for the Lead Member role?*

Whether you are a member of your HWB or not, you need to have good links with the Board and ensure there is a clear fit with the children's strategic

partnership. Your statutory requirement to work closely with the Director of Public Health will help you achieve this. You will also want to ensure there is a clearly defined implementation plan based on a shared vision that reflects the needs of local children; partners will be actively engaged in delivering the plan and will provide updates of measurable progress at partnership meetings.

#### 6.4 Prevention and early intervention

*What's it about?* In 2011 [Graham Allen](#) MP reported on the social and financial benefits of early intervention. Munro similarly recommended the importance of identifying issues promptly and providing 'early help' for children and families in order to prevent longer term, more damaging issues from arising which inevitably require more resource intense interventions. All Children's Services are therefore required by government to have a Prevention and Early Intervention Strategy. These arrangements are inspected by Ofsted:

*“The Inspectorates are agreed that child protection does not begin at the point at which a referral is made to children's social care. What Professor Munro described as 'early identification' and 'early help' are firmly within the scope of the inspection of the arrangements to protect children.”*

[\(Proposals for the Joint Inspection of Multi-Agency Arrangements for the Protection of Children, Ofsted, p5, 2012\)](#)

*What's the challenge?* No-one disputes the significant gains to be made in focusing on prevention and early intervention. However the challenge comes in re-focusing a traditionally reactive service into one that adopts a pro-active approach. This requires a properly resourced and integrated program of activity across universal, targeted and specialist children's services from all sectors.

*What does this mean for the Lead Member role?*

The [Statutory Guidance](#) on the Lead Member role states you 'should understand local need and secure provision of services taking account of the benefits of prevention and early intervention'. To do this, you need to ensure this is prioritised both internally and across partners; it should be both recorded and monitored within internal and local partnership plans.

You may also need to ensure other elected members are aware of the resource needs and benefits resulting from this agenda to ensure there is on-going financial support for it.

### 6.5 Troubled Families

*What's it about?* The government is working with local authorities and partners to help 120,000 troubled families in England turn their lives around by 2015. Troubled families are defined as:

*//...a cohort of families with problems that are being passed on through the generations; that these families have members who are often vulnerable and in crisis; that they often cause problems to others around them, and that, despite huge efforts put in by so many, they absorb public services without their problems ever being fully dealt with. //*

(Letter from Louise Casey to all Local Authority Chief Executives, 2011)

The aim is to ensure children in these families have the chance of a better life and, at the same time, to lower costs to the taxpayer. This requires a partnership approach to identifying who the families are and allocating a key worker to work with them intensively. The government has established a payment by results approach and have committed to pay up to £4,000 per family towards the cost of successful intervention. These families will already be known to your Children Services who should be actively involved in this agenda.

*What's the challenge?* The initial strategic challenge will be ensuring that all partners are engaged and agree to a shared approach. The subsequent operational challenge will be engaging families who are selected to be part of this programme. Whilst there is some central funding, it is likely there will need to be local resourcing to support the implementation.

*What does this mean for the Lead Member role?* As Lead Member, you will be a key strategic driver of the Troubled Families agenda. Ensure that the children's strategic partnership engages all partners in the roll-out and that it champions, influences and reviews the implementation of the project.

### 6.6 Tackling child sexual exploitation

*What's it about?* High profile cases of sexual exploitation by individuals, groups and gangs continue to come to light, often highlighting concerns around the vulnerability of children in care to sexual exploitation. The government has tasked LSCBs to assess the nature and extent to which this is an issue in their locality, share good practice, disseminate guidance and ensure robust arrangements are in place across all partners. Appropriate arrangements must also be in place to collect and share information about children in care who go missing.

*What's the challenge?* Any local strategy to child sexual exploitation can only be effective if it has multi-agency backing. A cross-borough or regional strategy may also be appropriate: child sexual exploitation often involves the movement of victims from one area to another or perpetrators may live in one area and associate in another.

*What does this mean for the Lead Member role?* The Lead Member should encourage all elected members to ensure they have a general awareness of child sexual exploitation so that they are able to identify any potential issues within their own communities. In addition, as 'participating observer' at the LSCB you should be confident that partners have compiled, implemented and are monitoring an effective multi-agency approach that is based on a robust analysis of local concerns. For more background information and a list of questions to ask in your role as Lead Member, see the [LGA website](#).

### 6.7 Inspection

*What's it about?* The local authority's child protection function is regulated by [Ofsted](#). Inspections are held every three years but will be more frequent if the previous inspection has identified that significant improvement is required. In 2012 Ofsted introduced unannounced inspections. During the two weeks inspectors are on site they will undertake the following: a review of documentation and data, interviews with senior and frontline colleagues, case audits, shadowing frontline colleagues and observing meetings. In doing so, they will look to understand the individual experience of children as they progress through the system. Ofsted will comment on: overall effectiveness of the service; capacity and areas for

improvement; safety of children; quality of provision; contribution of health agencies; leadership and management of the service; performance management; quality assurance and wider partnership working. Potential outcomes are outstanding, good, adequate and inadequate.

In June 2013 Ofsted announced new arrangements for single integrated inspections. The new regime will begin in autumn 2013. Inspectorates for care, probation, prisons, police and the Crown Prosecution Service will unite to trace the child's journey.

*What's the challenge?* All Children's Services want to be 'inspection-ready'. However the challenge is to be always prepared due to a strong ethos of continual improvement rather than gearing up for a specific event which requires significant effort beforehand and results in a slump of focus afterwards.

The proposed new single integrated inspection framework supersedes plans to launch separate frameworks for inspections of child protection and services for children looked after. Key changes in the proposed framework are that grade descriptors will now include a description of 'good' in each judgement area, the Local Safeguarding Children Board will be included within the inspection and that a judgement of 'inadequate' in any key judgement area will limit the overall effectiveness judgement to inadequate.

The three key judgement areas are:

- the experiences and progress of children who need help and protection
- the experiences and progress of children looked after and achieving permanence
- leadership, management and governance.

*What does this mean for the Lead Member role?*

- Prior to inspection, review the questions in Appendix C with your DCS so that you have a clear understanding of the current state of your safeguarding services. Ensure you regularly attend the LSCB and children's strategic partnership meetings so that you are confident you understand the priorities and progress across partners. Ask to see local documents recommended in section 7.1 so you understand the inspection journey the authority has been on to date. Discuss with the DCS what they have done to ensure that staff across Children's Services are prepared for potential inspection.
- During an inspection, be prepared to meet with inspectors from Ofsted. They will want to hear your perspective on the current strengths and development areas for safeguarding across the council and wider partnership.
- After an inspection ensure that the learning is reviewed and used to continually improve services through an agreed and regularly updated improvement plan.

# 7

## where you should go for further information and support

### 7.1 Top local documents to access

For a local picture of safeguarding across your council and partners, there will be a data bank of performance information, policies and plans compiled by your DCS in preparation for an unannounced inspection. Ask to see this and in particular check out the following:

- your council's Children Service's vision, strategy and plan for this year and last
- any additional improvement plan which records actions resulting from self-assessments, internal audits, external reviews or Ofsted inspections; this should be regularly updated to show progress against actions
- the most recent Ofsted child protection report for your council ([published on-line](#))
- any recent LGA Peer Review if undertaken
- your local children's strategic partnership strategy and plan
- your LSCB annual report.

### 7.2 Top national documents to access

Internet links are embedded throughout this document to provide access to additional information if required. These are also listed in full in Appendix D below. Out of all the sources cited, these are the top recommended 'must reads':

- [Statutory Guidance on the Roles and Responsibilities of the DCS and Lead Member](#) (2012) (2012,pp10) for a summary of senior leader roles.
- [Local Government Association's \(LGA\) Must Knows for Lead Members of Children Services](#) (2012,10x7pp) for 10 easy-to-read information

sheets on the key aspects of the entire Lead Member role.

- [Munro's Progress Report](#), (May 2012, pp63) to understand the challenges facing councils in the implementation of Munro's recommendations.
- [The Edlington Case](#), (Nov 2012, pp62) on warning signs for ineffective safeguarding and lessons learnt from Doncaster Council.
- [Proposed Arrangements for Single Integrated Inspections](#) for changes to be enforced from autumn 2013.
- [Department of Education's Children's Safeguarding Performance Information Framework](#) (Oct 2012, p22) for all national indicators that record the impact and effectiveness of safeguarding children.

### 7.3 Additional support for your council

*London Safeguarding Children Board*

The [London Safeguarding Children Board](#) website hosts a range of audit tools and guidance notes as well as papers from its annual safeguarding conferences and other related events. The Board's [manual](#) which defines in detail local safeguarding procedures can also be accessed through the site. Further information is available through the London Board Manager, Ian Dean on 020 7934 9714 ([ian.dean@londoncouncils.gov.uk](mailto:ian.dean@londoncouncils.gov.uk)).

### 7.4 Additional support for your role

*In-house support*

Talk to your in-house member support services to help define what your development needs are and how best to meet them. This should be part of an organised induction into your role as Lead Member.

### *London Safeguarding Children Board*

The Board has facilitated a programme since 2009 to support Lead Members in carrying out their safeguarding responsibilities. Sessions are usually chaired by a Lead Member, with key inputs from senior safeguarding practitioners from the London boroughs, including LSCB Chairs and Assistant Directors for Children's Social Care. See the site for an [outline agenda](#) or contact Ian Dean on 020 7934 9714 for information ([ian.dean@londoncouncils.gov.uk](mailto:ian.dean@londoncouncils.gov.uk)).

### *Local Government Association*

It is highly recommended that you check out the [LGA website](#) which provides a wide range of practical and up-to-date support and guidance including:

- Free one day [Induction](#) for new Lead Members; the next event will be 17th July
- recently refreshed [workbooks](#) on a variety of skills, for example engaging young people, chairing, media and communications, influencing and community leadership

- top 10 [must knows](#) providing practical advice and helpful links for every aspect of the Lead Member role
- practical advice, toolkits and case studies on [safeguarding issues](#) including child sexual exploitation, corporate parenting, quality assurance and local approaches to children's strategic partnerships
- leadership development activities, including the highly regarded [Leadership Academy: Political Leadership in Children's Services](#), for which one lead member place is offered to each local authority free of charge.

For more information about any of the LGA support on offer, please contact Caroline Bosdet, Senior LGA Advisor, on 07876 106183 ([caroline.bosdet@local.gov.uk](mailto:caroline.bosdet@local.gov.uk)).

# Appendix A

## what you may want to consider as part of your induction

### During the first week

**1** Meet with the Leader or Mayor to discuss the role, its scope and the Leader or Mayor's awareness of current priorities, challenges and progress.

**2** Meet with the DCS to:

- clarify your separate and shared responsibilities (see Table 1)
- discuss service strengths and issues of concern (consider Appendix C)
- agree which internal and external meetings you each attend
- discuss how you and the DCS will work with the Lead Member for Adult Social Care and the Director for Adult Social Care
- ask for the local documents listed in 7.1
- consider how you will work together effectively
- ask their view as to key contacts you need to meet as part of your induction.

**3** Meet with Member Services to:

- discuss practicalities, e.g. Criminal Records Bureau check, member allowances, ICT requirements
- start to consider what development opportunities will help in your role eg London Safeguarding Children Board or LGA programmes outlined in 7.4
- familiarise yourself with the corporate meeting and planning timetable; identify key activities or decisions coming up.

**4** Meet with your Personal Assistant to

- discuss how you like to work
- schedule in significant meetings including
- Leader and Deputy Leader's meetings
- Scrutiny meetings
- Cabinet meetings
- DCS and senior management team meetings
- Partnership meetings including Health and Wellbeing Board and LSCB.

### During the first month

**5** Meet with key internal stakeholders including

- Scrutiny Chair for Children

- Children's Senior Management Team
- Lead Member for Adult Social Care.

**6** Consider how you will be visible to colleagues from across Children's Services; discuss with the DCS the opportunities to attend staff meetings and conferences to share your role and hear colleagues' suggestions for service improvement.

**7** Meet with the manager responsible for Performance Management and Quality Assurance within Children's Services to familiarise yourself with national and local indicators and the regular reports produced.

**8** Familiarise yourself with the key legislation for your service; seek advice from the DCS and/or Legal Services for support in this regard.

**9** Read the latest minutes for partnership groups eg local Youth Forum, Youth Parliament, Children's Strategic Partnership, Local Safeguarding Board, London Safeguarding Board, Corporate Parenting Board, Health and Wellbeing Board, etc.

**10** Organise introductory meetings with key partners including health, police, probation, youth offending and the Director of Public Health.

### During the first six months

**11** Continually review your development needs. Use the London Lead Member network to make contacts, share good practice and gain support from others in your role (see 7.3 for contact details).

**12** Consider the development needs across elected members; where there is awareness raising needed (eg in safeguarding, corporate parenting, tackling child sexual exploitation, child poverty, engaging with children in our communities, etc) talk to Member Services and your DCS about how this can be delivered.

# Appendix B

## self-assessment questions for a Local Test of Assurance

### Statutory Guidance on the Roles and Responsibilities of the Director of Children's Services and the Lead Member for Children's Services

A robust self-assessment will (a) review the six bullet points below as required by the Statutory Guidance and (b) review each of the individual statutory responsibilities of the LMCS and DCS roles (see Table 1, p9) and provide evidence that every aspect is met effectively.

- Clarity about how senior management arrangements ensure that the safety and the educational, social and emotional needs of children and young people are given due priority and how they enable staff to help the local authority discharge its statutory duties in an integrated and coherent way
- Clarity about how the local authority intends to discharge its children's services functions and be held accountable for them from political, professional, legal and corporate perspectives
- The seniority and breadth of responsibilities allocated to individual post holders and how this impacts on their ability to undertake those responsibilities

- The involvement and experiences of children and young people in relation to local services
- Clarity about child protection systems, ensuring that professional leadership and practice is robust and can be challenged on a regular basis, including early and help and work with other agencies
- The adequacy and effectiveness of local partnership arrangements and their respective accountabilities.

The guidance states that effective assurance checks should be integrated as part of an authority's usual decision-making and scrutiny structures and should be reviewed regularly to ensure that they continue to be effective. The assurances should be agreed by council and should be reviewed within any external peer review.

Where Ofsted identify an issue arising from the authority's arrangements for discharging the DCS and LMCS functions, they may also decide to look at the quality and effectiveness of the authority's assurance process.

# ↘ appendix C

## links to documents referred to in these guidance notes

### Page 5

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1989/41/contents>  
Children's Act, 1989

### Page 5, 10

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2004/31/contents>  
Children's Act, 2004

### Page 6, 12, 17, 22, 27

<http://www.education.gov.uk/aboutdfe/statutory/g00206029/statutory-guidance-on-the-roles-and-responsibilities-of-the-director-of-childrens-services-and-the-lead-member-for-childrens-services>  
Statutory Guidance for Children's Service's on Roles and Responsibilities of DCS and Lead Member, 2012

### Page 8

<http://www.londonscb.gov.uk/procedures/>  
London Safeguarding Children Board Child Protection Procedures, 2010

### Page 9

<http://www.education.gov.uk/childrenandyoungpeople/safeguardingchildren/protection/b00219296/munro>  
Papers relating to Prof Munro's Review of Child Protection, 2011-12

### Page 10

[http://media.education.gov.uk/assets/files/pdf/m/8875\\_dfe\\_munro\\_report\\_tagged.pdf](http://media.education.gov.uk/assets/files/pdf/m/8875_dfe_munro_report_tagged.pdf)  
Prof Munro's Final Review of Child Protection, 2011

### Page 9, 23, 24

[http://www.londonscb.gov.uk/elected\\_members/](http://www.londonscb.gov.uk/elected_members/)  
London Safeguarding Children Board support for elected members including conference papers on the implication of the Munro Review for elected members, 2011

### Page 10

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2012/7/contents/enacted>  
Health and Social Care Act, 2012

### Page 11

<http://www.nfer.ac.uk/nfer/publications/LGCH01/LGCH01.pdf>  
LGA research report on 'Local Authorities' Approaches to Children's Trust Arrangements' considering the relationship between Health and Wellbeing Boards and Children Trusts, 2012

### Page 11

<http://www.dwp.gov.uk/docs/early-intervention-next-steps.pdf>  
Graham Allen's report on Early Intervention: The Next Steps, 2011

**Page 11, 14, 22**

<http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/proposals-for-joint-inspection-of-multi-agency-arrangements-for-protection-of-children>

Ofsted Proposals for Joint Inspection of Multi-Agency arrangements for Child Protection, 2012

**Page 12**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/policies/helping-troubled-families-turn-their-lives-around>

Background and links on 'Helping Troubled Families Turn Their Lives Around', updated 2013

**Page 12**

[http://www.local.gov.uk/c/document\\_library/get\\_file?uuid=22ab225d-2064-4949-aea9-3711edaafe7a&groupId=10171](http://www.local.gov.uk/c/document_library/get_file?uuid=22ab225d-2064-4949-aea9-3711edaafe7a&groupId=10171)

Letter from Louise Casey on Troubled Families to all Local Authority Chief Executives, 2011

**Page 13**

<http://www.education.gov.uk/childrenandyoungpeople/safeguardingchildren/a00200288/tackling-child-sexual-exploitation>

Background and links on 'Tackling Child Sexual Exploitation', updated 2013

**Page 13**

[http://www.local.gov.uk/web/guest/safeguarding-children/-/journal\\_content/56/10171/3790391/ARTICLE-TEMPLATE](http://www.local.gov.uk/web/guest/safeguarding-children/-/journal_content/56/10171/3790391/ARTICLE-TEMPLATE)

LGA information on Child Sexual Exploitation with list of questions every Lead Member should be asking, updated 2013

**Page 13, 22**

<http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/framework-for-inspection-of-local-authority-arrangements-for-protection-of-children>

Ofsted's current framework for child protection inspections, 2012

**Page 15, 19, 22**

<https://www.education.gov.uk/publications/eOrderingDownload/The%20Edlington%20case.pdf>

Lord Carlile's review of child protection at Doncaster following the Edlington Case, 2012

**Page 17**

[http://www.local.gov.uk/web/guest/peer-challenges/-/journal\\_content/56/10171/3511045/ARTICLE-TEMPLATE](http://www.local.gov.uk/web/guest/peer-challenges/-/journal_content/56/10171/3511045/ARTICLE-TEMPLATE)

What to expect from a LGA Peer Review, updated 2012

**Page 18**

[http://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/newTMC\\_85.htm](http://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/newTMC_85.htm)

Understanding Appreciative Inquiry: solving problems by looking at what's going right, undated

**Page 18**

<http://www.signsofsafety.net/>

Introduction to the Signs of Safety approach to social work, updated 2013

**Page 18, 21**

<http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/inspection-reports/find-inspection-report>

Type a council's name into Ofsted's search facility to find a report, updated 2013

**Page 18**

[http://www.local.gov.uk/c/document\\_library/get\\_file?uuid=7672e279-f584-4b42-ba7c-039e9d94d8e7&groupId=10171](http://www.local.gov.uk/c/document_library/get_file?uuid=7672e279-f584-4b42-ba7c-039e9d94d8e7&groupId=10171)

LGA guide to scrutiny of safeguarding, 2009

**Page 19**

<http://socialwelfare.bl.uk/subject-areas/services-client-groups/children-young-people/localgovernmentassociation/143757/corporateparenting.pdf>

LGA corporate parenting resource pack for elected members, 2012

**Page 20**

<http://www.ncb.org.uk/>

National Children's Bureau information and support on Corporate Parenting, updated 2013

**Page 20**

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/9/contents>

Child Poverty Act, 2010

**Page 20**

<http://www.cpag.org.uk/content/implementation-child-poverty-act-london>

Child Poverty Action Group report on implementation of the Child Poverty Act across 17 London Boroughs, 2012

**Page 22, 23**

[http://www.local.gov.uk/web/guest/cyp-improvement-and-support/-/journal\\_content/56/10171/3554809/ARTICLE-TEMPLATE](http://www.local.gov.uk/web/guest/cyp-improvement-and-support/-/journal_content/56/10171/3554809/ARTICLE-TEMPLATE)

LGA top ten tips for Lead Member, updated 2012

**Page 22**

<https://www.education.gov.uk/publications/standard/publicationDetail/Page1/DFE-00063-2012>

Professor Munro's report on progress against her initial findings, 2012

**Page 22**

<http://www.education.gov.uk/childrenandyoungpeople/safeguardingchildren/protection/b00209694/perf-info>

Department for Education Children's national safeguarding performance indicators, 2012

**Page 22**

[http://www.local.gov.uk/web/guest/cyp-improvement-and-support/-/journal\\_content/56/10171/3487171/ARTICLE-TEMPLATE](http://www.local.gov.uk/web/guest/cyp-improvement-and-support/-/journal_content/56/10171/3487171/ARTICLE-TEMPLATE)

Introduction and links relating to the Children's Improvement Board, updated 2013

**Page 23**

<http://www.londonscb.gov.uk/procedures/>

London Safeguarding Children Board manual of safeguarding procedures, 2011

**Page 24**

<http://www.local.gov.uk/councillor-development>

LGA elected member development site, updated 2012

**Page 24**

[http://www.local.gov.uk/web/guest/events/-/journal\\_content/56/10171/3925902/EVENT-TEMPLATE](http://www.local.gov.uk/web/guest/events/-/journal_content/56/10171/3925902/EVENT-TEMPLATE)

LGA Lead Member induction event details, updated 2013

**Page 24**

<https://knowledgehub.local.gov.uk/web/beacouncillor/welcome/-/results/councillor%20workbooks%20welna>

LGA elected member workbooks, updated 2012

**Page 24**

<http://www.local.gov.uk/children-and-young-people>

LGA practical advice, toolkits and case studies on safeguarding issues, updated 2013

**Page 24**

[http://www.local.gov.uk/web/guest/councillor-development/-/journal\\_content/56/10171/3606810/ARTICLE-TEMPLATE](http://www.local.gov.uk/web/guest/councillor-development/-/journal_content/56/10171/3606810/ARTICLE-TEMPLATE)

LGA Leadership Academy for Lead Member s, updated 2012

# ↘ appendix D

## glossary of abbreviations used

<b>DCS</b>	Director of Children's Services
<b>DfE</b>	Department for Education
<b>HWB</b>	Health and Wellbeing Board
<b>JSNA</b>	Joint Strategic Needs Analysis
<b>LGA</b>	Local Government Association
<b>LMCS</b>	Lead Member for Children's Services
<b>LSCB</b>	London Safeguarding Children's Board
<b>Ofsted</b>	Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills





London Councils  
59½ Southwark Street  
London SE1 0AL  
[www.londoncouncils.gov.uk](http://www.londoncouncils.gov.uk)  
020 7934 9813

**publication date:** May 2013