

Bolton
Safeguarding
Children

Bolton
Vision

**BOLTON SAFEGUARDING HEALTH
AND WELLBEING CHILDREN'S
BOARD**

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1. FUNCTIONS AND DUTIES OF THE BOARD

- 1.1 Bolton Safeguarding, Health and Well-being Board, referred to as 'The Board', is established in accordance with the functions described in the Children Act (2004) and the guidance outlined set out in Working Together to Safeguard Children: A guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.¹
- 1.2 It is the key statutory mechanism for agreeing how local organisations, agencies and services should co-operate to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in Bolton. It should further ensure that arrangements for working collaboratively bring about good outcomes for children and young people.
- 1.3 The specific responsibilities and duties of the Board are to:
- develop and agree local policies and procedures for inter-agency work to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children in Bolton, within the national framework provided by Working Together
 - audit and evaluate how well local services work together to safeguard children and promote their well being
 - identify and respond to key objectives and performance indicators in relation to positive outcomes for children and young people
 - encourage and support effective working relationships between different services and professional groups, based on trust and mutual understanding
 - identify and promote shared agreement and understanding across all agencies about roles, responsibilities and thresholds for intervention
 - improve local ways of working in the light of knowledge gained through national and local experience and research, and to make sure that any lessons learned are shared, understood and acted upon
 - undertake Child Death Reviews/ Serious Case Reviews where a child has died or – in certain circumstances – been seriously harmed, and abuse or neglect are confirmed or suspected as outlined in relevant guidance² and implement the recommendations from such reviews across all partner agencies

¹ Department for Education and Skills, Draft July 2005

² Working Together, Chapter 6, Draft July 2005

- improve the quality of inter-agency working through specifying needs for inter-agency training and development, and ensuring that training is delivered
 - raise awareness within the wider community of the need to safeguard children and promote their welfare and to explain how the wider community can contribute to these objectives
 - act upon concerns expressed in regard to safeguarding practice, facilitate the necessary investigations/reviews and implement outcomes
 - publish an annual report concerning local safeguarding matters
- 1.4 In addition to these specific responsibilities and duties, the Board will also:
- seek ways to identify, praise and publicise examples of positive local inter-agency practice;
 - seek ways of listening to practitioners, users³ and partner agencies and responding appropriately
 - promote practice amongst its member agencies which is sensitive to and firmly rooted in respect for differences in race, ethnicity, culture, religion and sexual orientation
- 1.5 The Board will carry out these responsibilities and duties, and any additional requirements directed by, and in accordance with the provisions outlined by the Secretary of State.⁴
- 1.6 The Board, via the Safeguarding Executive, will lead on all relevant statutory duties in accordance with the Children Act 2004, The Local Safeguarding Children Boards Regulations 2005, Working Together 2006 and other appropriate legislation and guidance.
- 1.7 The Board, via the Health and Well-being Executive, will lead a non-statutory approach to promoting and improving the health and welfare of children in Bolton.
- 1.8 The Boards broader remit has been agreed in accordance with Working Together (2006) guidance which enables local areas to expand and develop the role and functions of their Safeguarding Children's Board, where the core business of protecting children is deemed to be strong.

³ Defined for these purposes as any member of the public receiving a service from any of the board members in the discharge of their safeguarding functions

⁴ Section 13 (2), Children Act 2004

2. MEMBERSHIP

Overview

- 2.1 To carry out its responsibilities effectively the Board requires representatives from each of the main agencies responsible for working together to safeguard children.
- 2.2 Member agencies must appoint representatives whose roles and seniority enable them to contribute to developing and maintaining strong and effective inter-agency safeguarding procedures and protocols, and ensure that local safeguarding services are adequately resourced. Members should be of either be first or second tier officers within their agency.
- 2.3 Members are required to work together collaboratively for positive outcomes for children. The Board is not a forum for the reinforcement of professional or agency stereotypes or insularity but for the promotion of effective inter-agency working and co-operation.
- 2.4 Each statutory member of the Board will be required to sign, with the consent and support of their organisation, a membership agreement which details their commitment to the work of the Board.
- 2.5 The membership of the Bolton Safeguarding, Health and Well-Being Board shall be made up in accordance with the Guidance outlined in Working Together⁵. Board members should be first or second tier officers within their agency.

Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson

- 2.6 Appointments of the Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson shall be reviewed biennially by the Board, or earlier if members agree, commencing from the date of approval of this constitution by the constituent members.

The Chairperson

- 2.7 It is the responsibility of the Local Authority, after consultation with Board members, to appoint the Chairperson.
- 2.8 Where the Chairperson is not a senior officer from the Local Authority, they will be accountable to the Local Authority via the Director Childrens Services for the effectiveness of their work as the Board Chairperson.

⁵ Working Together (Drafted 2005), Paragraph 3.51, Page 57

- 2.9 The Chairperson will have a crucial role in making certain the Board function effectively and independently. They should act objectively and distinguish the role of Chairperson from any 'day job'.

The Vice-Chairperson

- 2.10 The Vice-Chair of 'The Board' will be appointed after consultation with Board members. The Vice-Chair will deputise for the Chair in their absence.
- 2.11 The Chairperson may be a Local Authority employee such as a Chief Executive or Director of Children's Services (DCS) or an individual employed specifically to fulfil this role.

Selection of Members

- 2.12 All agencies should recognise the importance of securing effective co-operation by nominating an appropriately senior officer to serve the Board.

Nomination of Members

- 2.13 Nominations for membership of the Board should be made in writing, to the Chairperson of the Board.

Duration of Membership

- 2.14 Membership of the Board will be reviewed every two years, commencing from the date of approval of this constitution by the constituent members.
- 2.15 The biennial review of membership will involve the Board reviewing the list of member agencies and confirming or modifying that list, and the secretariat writing to each chief officer of each constituent member agency seeking confirmation or notice of who is to represent that agency.
- 2.16 Individual members of constituent agencies may be replaced by their agency during the course of the two year cycle. Written notice should be sent to the Chairperson of the Board.
- 2.17 There is no limit to how long a named individual shall represent his/her agency on the Board.

Additional Members

- 2.18 An additional member from a constituent agency may be approved by a meeting of the Board prior to the review referred to in paragraph 2.15.

Nominated Deputies

- 2.19 If a member is unable to attend a particular meeting, they may nominate a representative from their agency to attend in their place.
- 2.20 Whenever possible the Chair should be advised of the representative's name and the reason for the substitution before the meeting.

Attendance of Professional Advisers

- 2.21 The Head of Service for Child Protection within Children's Services will attend the Board as a Professional Adviser.
- 2.22 Professional Advisers from other member agencies may be invited to attend meetings of the Board in a consultative capacity where this will assist the Board in its work.
- 2.23 The consent of the Chairperson should be sought in advance.

Elected Members/Non-Executive Directors

- 2.24 Elected members and non-executive directors of other board partners should not be members of Bolton's Safeguarding, Health and Well-being Board. Their role is to hold their organisation and its officers to account for their contribution to the effectiveness of the Board.

Observers

- 2.25 Observers may, with prior permission of the Chairperson, be entitled to attend a Board meeting. They may, with permission, be entitled to contribute to the discussions but they will not be entitled to vote in any matter.

3. DECISION-MAKING

- 3.1 The Board, in all situations, will seek to reach decisions by consensus. We believe this best reflects and encourages the underlying principles of inter-agency practice.
- 3.2 In situations where a consensus cannot be reached, each member shall have a vote. Where the vote is split, the Chairperson shall have a second or casting vote.
- 3.3 Voting shall be by a show of hands, except when a ballot is requested by two or more members.
- 3.4 No decisions shall be taken at a meeting unless one half plus one of the whole Board membership is present at the meeting.

4. RESOURCING

- 4.1 To function effectively the Board needs to be supported by its member agencies with an adequate and reliable resource to achieve the objectives identified in the Board's Annual Business Plan.
- 4.2 The resources to support the Board should be agreed locally between members, with a shared responsibility for providing the resources to support the work of the Board. It will be the duty of the members to determine the Annual Budget.
- 4.3 Financial resources for the Board should be committed in advance into a pooled budget, in line with the financial year. Each January contributing member agencies will be required to confirm their contribution for the following financial year. Where a specific contribution has been established, each subsequent contribution should be uplifted in line with inflation.
- 4.4 This does not prevent the Board from seeking increases over and above the rate of inflation from members in order to deliver on its business plan.
- 4.5 The pooled budget will be held in a separate account and administered by Local Authority Children's Services, Finance Section. Budget reports will be made available quarterly to the Board.
- 4.6 Decisions regarding the deployment of the Board's budget and resources shall be agreed in broad terms by Board members and in line with the Annual Business Plan and outlined at the start of the financial year.
- 4.7 Day to day decisions regarding expenditure shall be devolved to the Chairs of the Safeguarding Executive and the Health and Well-being Executive. These officers will provide a quarterly overview of expenditure to the Board.
- 4.8 Commit to undertake an annual resource audit, which will identify and collate the financial and 'in kind' contributions from each organisation to the successful functioning of the Board

5. PRACTICAL AND OTHER MATTERS

Frequency of Board Meetings and Quoracy

- 5.1 The Board shall meet bimonthly. Meetings will be considered quorate when attended by one half plus one of the whole number of the Chairperson and members are present.

Minutes of Meetings

- 5.2 Minutes of the meetings of the Board shall be taken by Safeguarding Admin Support. The Chairperson of the meeting shall move that the minutes of the previous meeting shall be approved as a correct record.

Agendas

- 5.3 Agendas and papers for the Board shall normally be circulated 10 working days prior to a meeting of the Board. Those wishing to include items on the agenda should forward the item, as soon as possible to the Safeguarding Officer in order that they may prepare the agenda for the Chairperson approval. Additional items will be included in 'Any Other Business' at the discretion of the Chair.

Legal Advice

- 5.3 A Legal Adviser will be provided by Bolton Metropolitan Borough Council. The Adviser will normally attend all meetings of the Board.

Routine Reports

- 5.4 Quarterly reports will be provided to the Board on child protection activity in the preceding quarter. Reports shall not include identifying details of individuals.
- 5.5 Other relevant reports will be submitted to the Board as required.

Annual Business Plan

- 5.6 The Board shall produce an annual business plan, setting out a work programme for the forthcoming year, including measurable objectives; relevant management information relating to safeguarding issues; and progress against objectives of the previous year.

Annual Reports

- 5.7 Each constituent member of the Board will be required to produce an annual report in accordance with the agreed format.

Local Procedural Handbook and Guidance

- 5.8 The Board shall produce and be responsible for a local inter-agency procedural handbook. The handbook will provide a model for inter-agency working and criteria/threshold for intervention. The handbook will be supported by detailed inter-agency guidance which takes account of legal and procedural requirements.
- 5.9 The handbook and accompanying guidance shall be reviewed as the Board deems necessary, in light of any legal or procedural changes.

6. EXECUTIVE GROUPS OF THE BOARD

Overview

- 6.1 The following shall be established as of the Executive Groups of the Board (and may be redefined as necessary by the Board):
- Safeguarding Executive Group
 - Health and Well-Being Executive Group
- 6.2 Each Work Group shall have its own defined membership, aims and objectives. All are accountable to the Board and will provide reports to meetings of the Board.
- 6.3 The Chairperson of each Executive Group shall be a suitably experienced member of the Board wherever possible, except where members of the individual Executive Group agree that a more qualified person, who is employed by one of the constituent agencies but is not a member of Board, should act as Chair.
- 6.4 In such cases, the non-member of Board shall be co-opted onto the Board during their period as chair of the Executive Group. It is expected that the Chairperson of the Executive Groups and their membership will reflect the membership of the Board.

Safeguarding Executive Group

- 6.5 The Safeguarding Executive shall meet every six weeks. Membership of the Safeguarding Executive shall reflect the constituent member of the Board agencies. Members of the Safeguarding Executive should be second or third tier officers within their agency.
- 6.6 Arrangements with other organisations and individuals to be co-opted onto the Safeguarding Executive will be made as and when the need arises.
- 6.7 The Safeguarding Executive shall deal with specific issues, matters of business and daily operational concerns regarding the 'Stay Safe' outcome⁶ on behalf of the Board.
- 6.8 The Chairperson of the Safeguarding Executive will report progress and highlight issues to the Board.
- 6.9 The Board will delegate decision –making, where appropriate, to the Safeguarding Executive.

⁶ Every Child Matters Outcomes Framework, Department of Further Education and Skills, October 2005

Health and Well-Being Executive Group

- 6.10 The Health and Well-being Executive shall meet every six weeks. Membership of the Health and Well-being Executive shall reflect the constituent member of the Board agencies. Members of the Health and Well-being Executive should be second or third tier officers within their agency.
- 6.11 Arrangements with other organisations and individuals to be co-opted onto the Health and Well-being Executive will be made as and when the need arises.
- 6.12 The Health and Well-being Executive shall deal with specific issues, matters of business and daily operational concerns regarding the 'Be Healthy' outcome⁷ on behalf of the Board.
- 6.13 The Chairperson of the Health and Well-being Executive will report progress and highlight issues to the Board.
- 6.14 The Board will delegate decision –making, where appropriate, to the Health and Well-being Executive.

7. WORKING GROUPS OF THE BOARD

- 7.1 The following are currently working groups of the Board and the Executive Groups and be redefined and amended as required:

WORKING GROUP	PRIMARY PURPOSE
Serious Case Review	To conduct and identify 'lessons to be learned' from investigations into child deaths where abuse or neglect are known or suspected to be a factor
Guidelines and Procedures	To develop, deliver and review inter-agency procedures and protocols for working together and responding to the needs of children, in line with current government guidance and legislation and in repose to local issues.
Inter-agency training, Staff Development and Publicity	To develop, deliver and review a rolling programme of inter-agency training that responds to the needs of professionals and is reflective of current government guidance and legislation and local issues. To produce and edit public information and other literature as required.

⁷ Every Child Matters Outcomes Framework, Department of Further Education and Skills, October 2005

Quality Assurance	Identify and highlight areas of strong inter-agency working. Monitor and evaluate inter-agency systems, protocols and procedures, in line with current government guidance and legislation and in repose to local issues.
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- 7.2 Each working group shall have its own defined membership (3rd and 4th Tier Officers), aims and objectives. There will be clear delineated tasks and explicit lines of communication and accountability to the Board, via the Executive Groups.
- 7.3 Each working group will report to the relevant Executive Group at every meeting, detailing the work undertaken and planned. The working groups will report to the Board as the Executive Groups deem necessary.
- 7.4 The Chairperson of each working group shall be a suitably experienced member of an Executive Group wherever possible, except where members of an Executive Group agree that a more qualified person, who is employed by one of the constituent agencies but is not a member of an Executive group, should act as Chair. In such cases, the non-member shall be co-opted onto the Executive Group for the duration of their period as Chairperson.

8. EQUALITY AND PARTICIPATION OBJECTIVES

- 8.1 Bolton's Safeguarding, Health and Well-being Board believes that in society certain groups and individuals have suffered and continue to suffer discrimination on grounds of race, colour, religion, gender, age, disability, marital status and sexual orientation.
- 8.2 The commits itself to opposing such discrimination in all instances where such considerations have no material bearing on the needs of any particular child, and of actively promoting anti-discriminatory practice in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people in Bolton.
- 8.3 Children from all cultures are subject to abuse and neglect. All children have a right to grow up safe from harm. In order to make sensitive and informed professional judgements about a child's needs, and parents' capacity to respond to their child's needs, it is important that professionals are sensitive to differing family patterns and lifestyles and to child rearing patterns that vary across different racial, ethnic and cultural groups.

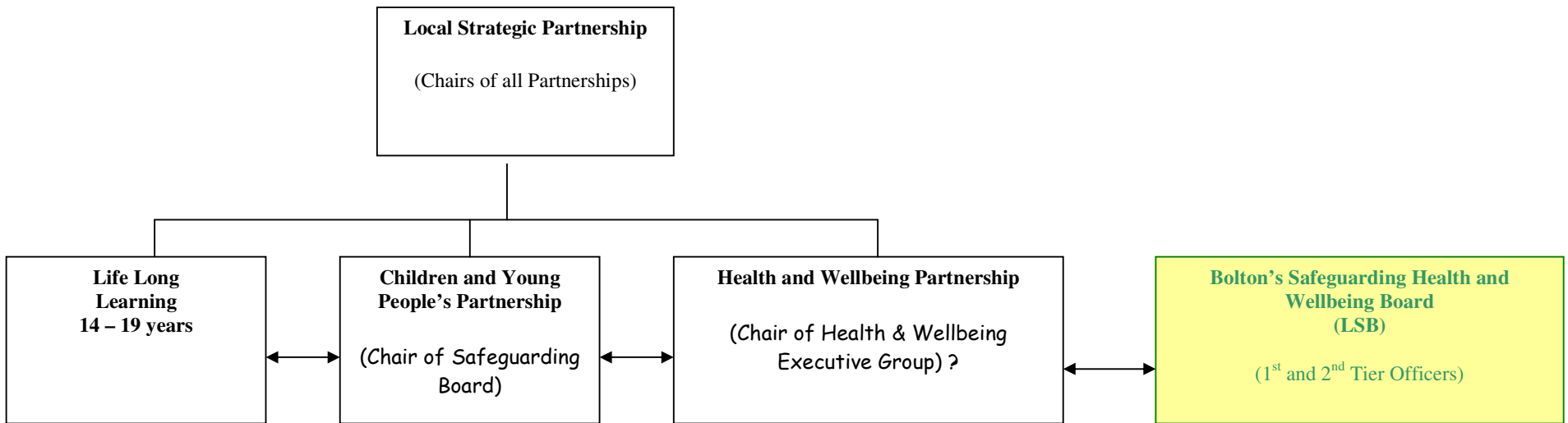
- 8.4 Professionals should also be aware of the broader social factors that serve to discriminate against black and minority ethnic people. Working in a multi-racial and multi-cultural society requires professionals and organisations to be committed to equality in meeting the needs of all children and families, and to understand the effects of racial harassment, racial discrimination and institutional racism, as well as cultural misunderstanding or misinterpretation.⁸
- 8.5 All staff of the Board's member agencies should guard against myths and stereotypes – both positive and negative – of black and minority ethnic families. Anxiety about being accused of racist practice should not prevent the necessary action being taken to safeguard a child.⁹
- 8.6 The Board will actively promote partnership with parents and carers amongst its member agencies. Families have a unique role and importance in the lives of children, and knowledge about their children. Well founded decisions by agencies must draw on that relationship and knowledge wherever possible.¹⁰

⁸ Working Together (Draft 2005) paragraph, page

⁹ Working Together (Draft 2005) paragraph, page

¹⁰ Working Together (Draft 2005) paragraph, page

WIDER CONTEXT OF THE BOLTON SAFEGUARDING HEALTH & WELLBEING CHILDREN'S BOARD WITH PARTNERSHIPS



STRUCTURE OF THE BOLTON SAFEGUARDING HEALTH & WELLBEING CHILDREN'S BOARD AND SUB GROUPS

