



Tees Safeguarding Adults and Children Joint Working Protocol

Teeswide Safeguarding Adults Board

Hartlepool and Stockton Safeguarding Children Partnership

South Tees Safeguarding Children Partnership

Version Number	Date Approved by the Partnerships	Review Date
One	HSSCP – August 2023 TSAB – September 2023 STSCP - October 2023	October 2024

1. Purpose

1.1 This Protocol outlines the relationship and working arrangements between the Teeswide Safeguarding Adults Board (TSAB), Hartlepool and Stockton Safeguarding Children Partnership (HSSCP) and South Tees Safeguarding Children Partnership (STSCP) to support effective joint working, to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and adults across Tees. The above Partnerships / Boards will be collectively referred to as the 'Safeguarding Partnerships' in this protocol.

The protocol sets out the principles underpinning how the Safeguarding Partnerships work within their defined remits, the interface between the Safeguarding Partnerships and the practical means for effective coordination and collaboration in pursuit of interrelated priorities.

Individually the Safeguarding Partnerships each has specific purposes and functions set out in legislation and relevant practice guidance. This protocol is intended to support the effectiveness of safeguarding efforts and work across the four Local Authority areas, it is not intended to override and/or, dilute their individual responsibilities.

2. Individual Partnership Functions and Responsibilities

2.1 Teeswide Safeguarding Adults Board

The TSAB works in partnership to safeguard and promote the well-being and independence of adults living in the Boroughs of Hartlepool, Middlesbrough, Redcar & Cleveland and Stockton-on-Tees, who are experiencing, or are at risk of abuse or neglect. The TSAB co-ordinates and monitors the effectiveness of partner organisations working together to implement their responsibilities for protecting adults whose independence is placed at risk by abuse or neglect. The TSAB is responsible for developing strategies to protect adults from abuse or neglect, and to respond effectively when abuse or neglect occurs.

The TSAB is made up of a wide range of partners from across Tees to fulfil the statutory functions set out in S43 and schedule 2 Care Act 2014.

The Boards six statutory partners are:

- Cleveland Police
- Hartlepool Borough Council
- Middlesbrough Council
- NHS North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board
- Redcar & Cleveland Borough Council
- Stockton-On-Tees Borough Council

In addition to full board membership, the TSAB has associate members who provide support to the Board either generally or on specific areas of practice.

The Care Act 2014 outlines three statutory functions for the Board:

- To develop and publish a strategic plan setting out how it will meet its objectives
- To publish an annual report detailing how effective its work has been
- To commission Safeguarding Adult Reviews (SARs), under s44 of the Act.

There are a number of themed Sub-Groups that report to the Board on specific areas of work; Communication and Engagement, Learning, Training & Development, Operational Leads, Performance, Audit & Quality Assurance, Safeguarding Adults Review.

Terms of Reference and membership of the Teeswide Safeguarding Adults Board can be found at: www.tsab.org.uk

2.2 Safeguarding Children Partnership's

Hartlepool and Stockton Safeguarding Children Partnership

HSSCP covers the two local authority areas of Hartlepool and Stockton-On-Tees Borough Councils, with a co-terminus Integrated Care Board and Police force. The four statutory safeguarding partners of the Hartlepool and Stockton-On-Tees Safeguarding Children Partnership, in accordance with Working Together 2018 (and Children and Social Work Act 2017), therefore include:

- Hartlepool Borough Council
- Stockton-On-Tees Borough Council
- NHS North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board
- Chief Officer of Cleveland Police

South Tees Safeguarding Children Partnership

STSCP covers the two local authority areas of Middlesbrough and Redcar & Cleveland Borough Councils, with a co-terminus Integrated Care Board and Police force. The four statutory safeguarding partners of the South Tees Safeguarding Children Partnership, in accordance with Working Together 2018 (and Children and Social Work Act 2017), therefore include:

- Middlesbrough Borough Council
- Redcar & Cleveland Borough Council
- North East & North Cumbria Integrated Care Board
- Chief Officer of Cleveland Police

The four safeguarding partners across HSSCP and STSCP retain an equal and joint responsibility for local safeguarding arrangements. They agree on ways to co-ordinate safeguarding services; act as a strategic leadership group in supporting and engaging others; and ensure the implementation of local and national learning.

The safeguarding partners have identified other agencies that are required to work as part of the Partnership's arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of local children. These agencies are referred to as relevant agencies and have a statutory duty to cooperate with the Partnership's published arrangements.

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

- children are safeguarded and their welfare promoted
- partner organisations and agencies collaborate, share and co-own the vision for how to achieve improved outcomes for vulnerable children
- organisations and agencies challenge appropriately and hold one another to account effectively
- there is early identification and analysis of new safeguarding issues and emerging threats

- learning is promoted and embedded in a way that local services for children and families can become more reflective and implement changes to practice
- information is shared effectively to facilitate more accurate and timely decision making for children and families

2.3 Voice of the Individual

Voice of the child

When working with children or young people it is essential to gain a clear picture of their wishes, thoughts and feelings. It is good practice to ask the child or young person which practitioner they would like to gather this information from them.

- the right of a child or young person to be heard is included in the UN Convention of Rights
- the Children's Act 2004 emphasises the importance of speaking to the child or young person as part of any assessment
- the importance of speaking to a child or young person and gathering their views has been consistently highlighted in lessons learned from serious case reviews.

What do we mean by 'the child's voice'?

This not only refers to what children say directly, but to many other aspects of their presentation. It means seeing their experiences from their point of view.

Why is the child's voice important?

Child focused work means children feel listened to, plans are more successful when they are involved and prompt decisions are made about safeguarding when necessary.

Voice of the adult

It is important that the adult is at the heart of safeguarding procedures; they should have a voice, they should be involved in the process, be kept informed and able to state what outcomes they would like to see at the conclusion of the process.

*'I am asked what I want as the outcomes from the safeguarding process, and these directly inform what happens'. **

TSAB is committed to Making Safeguarding Personal (MSP), promoting a person centred, outcome focused and strength-based approach to safeguarding adults; engaging the individual in a conversation about how best to respond to their safeguarding situation in a way that enhances involvement, choice and control as well as improving quality of life, wellbeing, and safety.

*Safeguarding Principle of Empowerment.

3. Areas of common interest

There are a number of themes and/or areas of common interest that have relevance across the Safeguarding Partnerships. It is intended that the Safeguarding Partnerships will seek to work together and take a thoughtful and pragmatic approach to achieve the best outcomes for people and to ensure that there is limited duplication of effort and resource. The Safeguarding Partnerships recognise the need to provide services and support that is both coherent and efficient and importantly in ways that those in need of safeguarding services and/or those that are impacted by them can easily understand and work with. It is important

that leadership and accountability for these cross-cutting themes is clear, and information is properly and effectively shared.

The themes/areas of common interest that have been identified for consideration of closer and more joined up working are:

- Alcohol/Substance Misuse
- Child and Adult Exploitation
- Contextual Safeguarding
- Domestic Abuse
- Forced Marriage and 'Honour' Based Violence
- Housing
- Human Trafficking and Modern Slavery
- Mental Health
- Missing from Home
- Radicalisation and PREVENT Strategy
- Transitions

4. Principles of Joint Working

The responsibility of the Safeguarding Partnerships is to model the principle of joint working by ensuring the workforce has the appropriate resources to protect those most at risk of abuse and neglect and that the partnerships are assured that these are used effectively, and the organisations responsible for their protection are held to account.

The following principles of joint working underpin the work of the Safeguarding Partnerships.

4.1 Working together on themes of common interest

As outlined in Section 3 identified themes have relevance across the Safeguarding Partnerships. Where a piece of work with a cross-cutting theme is identified, the other Safeguarding Partnerships will be informed to ascertain the relevance of the area of work for them. The relevant Safeguarding Partnership will agree the following:

- The approach to be taken
- Which Board/Partnership will lead on the workstream and how the other Partnerships will contribute to this area of work
- Communication, engagement, and reporting arrangements
- Consideration of collective data/intelligence analysis
- Responsibility and accountability for the area of work

4.2 Think Family

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and adults most at risk of abuse and neglect is a shared responsibility. All practitioners should consider the needs of the whole family, taking into account family circumstances and responsibilities, including young carers and recognising the importance of the voice of the adult/child.

The Safeguarding Partnerships commit to adopting a 'Think Family' approach to providing early support to help reduce the risk of abuse and neglect and promote a timely and robust intervention when this is needed, promoting a workforce that is trauma informed and understands the need to reduce the impact of adverse childhood experiences.

4.3 Sharing information about risk

The Partnerships will share relevant information with each other in relation to any key risks and/or concerns to ensure organisations are aware of emerging risks relevant to their area of work and enable the partnerships to consider strategic actions to manage and/or reduce these risks.

It is essential that collaborative working, and good information sharing is established and embedded throughout organisations. Overarching Information Sharing Agreements exist across the Partnerships to facilitate the lawful and secure sharing of information.

4.4 Mutual challenge and support

All the Partnerships will mutually challenge and support one another to optimise safeguarding arrangements across Tees. In addition, the Safeguarding Partnerships Chair/Scrutineer meetings will allow for further opportunities to challenge and support the strategic direction of the adjacent partnerships.

4.5 Sharing good practice and resources

Relevant good practice and resources will be shared to ensure the Safeguarding Partnerships continue to develop and increase their effectiveness, ensuring the best outcomes are achieved for vulnerable people across Tees. This will include sharing training and development opportunities, policies and practices, opportunities for collective data analysis and learning from other partnerships.

5. Arrangements to support coordination between the Partnerships/Board

To ensure effective joint working across the Partnerships/Board the following arrangements to facilitate a coherent and coordinated approach are agreed.

5.1 Reporting

Annual Business Plans will be shared between the Safeguarding Partnerships in the formulation stages to identify gaps, avoid duplication and enable coordination and shared business priorities where areas of work overlap. Where appropriate to do so, Safeguarding Partnerships may be asked to input into the development of each other's key reports.

Annual Reports will be shared between Safeguarding Partnerships to inform priority setting. The Independent Chairs/Scrutineers of the Safeguarding Partnerships will present their individual Annual Reports to the relevant Health and Wellbeing Board and relevant Local Authority Scrutiny Committees.

It is recognised that other partnerships across the Tees area exist and impact upon effective safeguarding work, including but not limited to the four Community Safety Partnerships. It is the intention to widen this protocol to include other partnerships to further enhance joint working across Tees.

5.2 Shared Learning from Reviews

There are several types of Learning Reviews which may be undertaken in response to a death or occurrence of serious abuse and/or neglect which are set out in legislation and statutory guidance. The statutory reviews include:

- Safeguarding Adults Review (SAR)
- Child Safeguarding Practice Review (CSPR)
- Domestic Homicide Review (DHR)

There is a separate Joint Review Protocol in place across Tees to support this process. The purpose of this protocol is for the Teeswide Safeguarding Adults Board, Tees Community Safety Partnerships and Tees Safeguarding Children Partnerships to develop a more coordinated approach and to improve lines of communication between partnerships with regards to learning from reviews. <https://www.tsab.org.uk/professionals/tees-safeguarding-children-and-adults-joint-review-protocol/>

5.3 Independent Chair/Scrutineer Meetings

The Independent Chairs/Scrutineers will meet at least four times a year, to ensure system leadership is effectively embedded across the partnership landscape. The meetings will involve sharing refreshed priorities and plans for the coming financial year to ensure co-ordination across the Safeguarding Partnerships. Additional meetings can be arranged as required.

5.4 Business Manager Meetings

Safeguarding Partnership Business Managers will meet at least five times a year. The meetings will involve a standing agenda item on Learning Reviews and Audits, providing an opportunity to discuss and take forward shared learning across adult and children's services. The meetings will also provide opportunities for the Safeguarding Partnerships to work together on specific projects e.g. communication and engagement, training, policies and shared learning from reviews.

5.5 Joint Work Programme

A joint work programme will be formulated by the Safeguarding Partnership Business Managers that will be subject to bi-annual review and scrutiny at the aforementioned Independent Chair/Scrutineer meetings and further reported at individual Safeguarding Partnership meetings.

5.6 Communication and Engagement

The Safeguarding Partnerships will develop a joint annual calendar of activity, highlighting key awareness campaigns and events across the year which have cross-cutting themes. Communication and engagement plans will be shared across the Safeguarding Partnerships at the beginning of the financial year, any emerging or unscheduled opportunities will be communicated between Business Managers and/or lead officers. This will ensure that opportunities for co-ordinating consultations, communications and engagement are fully maximised.

5.7 Cross Partnership Representation

Where there is a cross-over in membership of the Safeguarding Partnerships in respect of either an individual or partner organisation, members will be responsible for communicating and sharing relevant information to facilitate effective joint working.

The individual Safeguarding Partnerships will have a standing agenda item of updates from adjacent strategic partnerships for link members to update on any emerging issues and/or opportunities to collaborate further. Partnership/Executive Group meeting minutes will be shared across the Safeguarding Partnerships.

5.8 Training

The TSAB, HSSCP and STSCP host a 'Teeswide Safeguarding All' suite of e-learning safeguarding courses in conjunction with Me-Learning. The e-learning platform provides staff and volunteers working with vulnerable people: adults, children, young people and families, with access to a wide range of courses which are free of charge.

The Partnerships will also consider other joint opportunities to commission training to be delivered to adults and children's safeguarding partner organisations across Tees.

6. Review and monitoring

The effectiveness of this protocol will be jointly reviewed annually by the Independent Chairs/Scrutineers and Business Managers. This protocol can be amended at any time by agreement between all Safeguarding Partners and/or in response to any local, national, or legislative changes.

As mentioned in Section 5.1 it is intended to widen this protocol to include other partnerships that impact on safeguarding efforts across the Tees area. Safeguarding Partnerships are committed to engage with those partnerships and will respond positively to any requests to be included in the protocol.

Signatories

Name	Role	Signature	Date
Darren Best	Independent Chair, Teeswide Safeguarding Adults Board		13/09/23
Kathryn Boulton	South Tees Safeguarding Children Partnership		11/10/23
Melanie John-Ross	Hartlepool and Stockton Safeguarding Children Partnership		7/11/23