

## Kingston and Richmond Safeguarding Children Partnership

### Independent Scrutiny Report, September 2021

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#### Executive Summary

- A. This Independent Scrutiny was commissioned to review Kingston and Richmond Safeguarding Children Arrangements (2020 to 2021) against the expectations outlined in Working Together to Safeguard Children (HMG 2018). It was a time limited, one off piece of work.
- B. Findings are outlined in the 'Kingston and Richmond Safeguarding Children Partnership; Independent Scrutiny Report' (September 2021). This report identifies KRSCP strengths, noting recommendations for continuing good practice and for addressing challenges. While some of these challenges are locally based, others reflect national problems and contexts, such as the changing landscape for health and social care provision and the management of the impact of Covid-19 on children, young people, families and service providers. The recommendations in this report should be understood within this context.
- C. The KRSCP has effective leadership arrangements compliant with Working Together 2018. The delegated leadership arrangements work well with good modelling at senior leadership level of joint multiagency partnership working. There are clear lines of communication to and from the Senior Leadership Group across the partnership, with examples of appropriate and efficient escalation of problems and problem solving activity. The KRSCP sub groups cover required focus on questions of Child and Adolescent Vulnerability; Local Learning and Review; Learning and Development; and Quality and Innovation. The co-chairing arrangements for these subgroups ensure that relevant leads from different agencies within the partnership meet regularly to share information and oversee multi-agency practice development. Core and relevant partners attendance at subgroup meetings has been affected by the additional demands on staff time emerging from Covid-19. This needs addressing through continued monitoring of staff attendance in the future.
- D. The report recommends that further work be done to ensure that review of progress of KRSCP activity takes place against the KRSCP priorities, with a particular focus on considering the impact of the work on outcomes for children. It is recommended that senior leads engage in a bi-annual review of progress of work activity against the KRSCP priorities and KRSCP business plan.
- E. The strategic leadership of the KRSCP could further link with other relevant Partnerships, Boards and Trusts to review activity on agreed priorities. In particular this includes the relevant Safeguarding Adult Boards for questions of transition from Children to Adult Services, and the Community Safety Partnerships for questions of Contextual Safeguarding.
- F. Some reoccurring problems were identified regarding some health staff engagement in Initial Health Assessments of children coming into care and of GP reporting into Child Protection Conferences. There were also suggestions that further connection is made between mental health services and services supporting children and young people who have problems with substance misuse. The report also noted that further activity could review the content of the MERLIN reports submitted by police to identify and assess reoccurring themes. The report recommends that the KRSCP address these questions in future work planning.

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- G. The commissioning of services to work with children and young people is effective and strategic. There is further scope to look at the commissioning of accessible, young person friendly, sexual health services; to undertake a review to ensure that commissioners receive full information about the quality and accessibility of commissioned services; and for taking consideration of the reach of services into some faith communities and communities that may be marginalised from mainstream services.
- H. The large body of work addressing questions of racism, and the disproportionate representation of black African and black Caribbean children in some areas of work could be supported through creating a regular item on all KRSCP subgroup agendas on 'how we are addressing questions of disproportionality'.
- I. There is evidence of a substantial and impressive body of work underway to engage with 'Contextual Safeguarding' of children outside of the home. This could be enhanced through strategic connection with the private sector with further development of licencing arrangements.
- J. The KRSCP is engaged in a range of innovative activities with and for children and young people affected by safeguarding concerns. While this is taking place at a practice level, findings from the work do not appear to be communicating into assessment of KRSCP progress against priorities and into future priority setting. The scrutiny report makes some suggestions as to how the strategic engagement of children and young people in KRSCP activity could take place.
- K. There is evidence of a strong relationship between data collection and sharing, learning from deep dives, scrutiny, local and national reviews and the development of training and workforce development activity. This could be further developed by relevant subgroups undertaking thematic reviews of how local learning has impacted on practice and how learning from rapid reviews and serious incidents is being embedded across the partnership.
- L. In summary, there are excellent examples of work safeguarding children through KRSCP activities. Recommendations outlined in the scrutiny report aim to build on this good practice in the continuing aim to improve safeguarding of children and young people.

## INTRODUCTION

### 1. Background context

Kingston and Richmond Safeguarding Children Partnership (KRSCP) commissioned Independent Scrutiny of their Local Safeguarding Children Arrangements. Areas for scrutiny outlined in this Terms of Reference (TOR) (Appendix 1) referred to The HM Government Guidance 'Working Together to Safeguard Children: A guide to interagency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, 2018' [Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018](https://www.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/711123/Working-Together-to-Safeguard-Children-2018.pdf) ([publishing.service.gov.uk](https://www.publishing.service.gov.uk))

The TOR noted that

- *The role of independent scrutiny is to provide assurance in judging the effectiveness of multi-agency arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children in a local area, including arrangements to identify and review serious child safeguarding cases. (Working Together 2018 31)*
- *The Independent Scrutineer should consider how effectively the arrangements are working for children and families as well as for practitioners, and how well the safeguarding partners are providing strong leadership; (WT 2018 33)*
- *Annual scrutiny of the priorities set by the SLG to ensure the relevance of priorities in meeting local needs;*
- *Annual review of the clarity of the information that the SLG receives to inform strategic leaders of the effectiveness of safeguarding and review of the arrangements for Independent Scrutiny.*

The TOR continues to say that *'The Independent Scrutineer will be expected to make formal recommendations to the SLG and will wish to prepare an evidenced report by means of, for example, focus groups with key individuals, including the Strategic Partners, frontline practitioners, subgroup Chairs and members, KRSCP lay members; by reading reports, the KRSCP website, Ofsted and other independent inspections of local agencies.'* (TOR, appendix 1)

### 2. Data source for scrutiny and ethical considerations

Data was sourced through review of a variety of documents (see appendix 2) and from one to one and group interviews with key staff from the KRSCP (see appendix 3). Interviewees were told that notes would be taken from the conversations with them, and that these notes would be analysed to identify themes regarding local safeguarding children policy and practice. Interviewees were told that, unless agreed in advance, quotations from interviews would not be used or attributed. Interviewees were invited to send follow up papers on topics of interest and to have second interviews if helpful. Themes emerging for the interviews were then cross referenced with findings from study of the paper work reviewed.

### 3. Analysis

It was agreed within the Terms of Reference (appendix 1) that scrutiny would employ the 'Six Steps to Independent Scrutiny' framework (<https://www.beds.ac.uk/media/268674/six-steps-independent-scrutiny-final.pdf>), as noted in the Wood Review of multi-agency safeguarding children arrangements (2021)

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/987928/Wood\\_Review\\_of\\_multi-agency\\_safeguarding\\_arrangements\\_2021.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/987928/Wood_Review_of_multi-agency_safeguarding_arrangements_2021.pdf)

Data was analysed against these six areas:

- The three core partner leads are actively involved in strategic planning and implementation;
- The wider safeguarding partners (including relevant agencies) are actively involved in safeguarding children;
- Children, young people and families are aware of and involved with plans for safeguarding children;
- Appropriate quality assurance procedures are in place for data collection, audit and information sharing;
- There is a process for identifying and investigating learning from local and national case reviews;
- There is an active program of multi-agency safeguarding children training

#### 4. Limitations and context

The work was carried out over a seven day period. Within this timeframe it had not been possible to identify and support children and young people or their carers for interview (see para 43-46 for further debate about engaging with children and young people). The focus of the work is, therefore, on data obtained from the review of documents and from interviews with staff.

Paragraph 21 of this report explains advantages and challenges that emerge from the approach to independent scrutiny adopted by KRSCP. Essentially the advantages is that an 'independent' analysis of specific topics can take place. The challenge is that the scrutiny is not embedded in prior and ongoing knowledge about the holistic range of work of the partnerships.

### **LEADERSHIP ARRANGEMENTS**

5. Leadership of the Kingston and Richmond Safeguarding Children Partnership (KRSCP) ultimately rest with the two local authority Chief Executives, the Borough Commander of the South West London Police Command Unit and the Chief CCG Nurse for South West London Health and Care Partnership.
6. Strategic leadership of the KRSCP is delegated from these three partner leads to
  - Ian Dodds, The Director of Children's services for Kingston and Richmond (representing Ian Thomas, Chief executive of Kingston Local Authority and Mark Maidment, Chief Executive of Richmond Local Authority)
  - Detective Superintendent Andy Wadey (representing Elisabeth Chapple, the Commander for The South West Command Unit)
  - Fergus Keegan, the Director of Quality, Kingston and Richmond CCG (representing Gloria Rowland, the CCG Chief Nurse for South West London CCG and South West London Health and Care Partnership)

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7. These delegated leads meet regularly, both with each other and with the senior leads they represent. This illustrates an excellent example of strong relationship based partnership working between the three core partner leads.
8. There is evidence that the three top strategic leads engage with KRSCP strategy and operation, each receiving regular updates on partnership activity from their delegated staff member. The Wood Review (2021) of the implementation of the Safeguarding Children Arrangements (2018) notes the importance of the three partner leads engaging with and overseeing partnership activity. The Chief Executive of Kingston LA was the previous chair of the KRSCP, demonstrating hands on engagement with leadership of the KRSCP. The current delegated leadership arrangements ensure that updates up to and from the three executive strategic leaders is ongoing.
9. These leadership arrangements meet the requirements of Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018. There is evidence of their clear sense of purpose and effectiveness.

#### **The Senior Leadership Group (SLG)**

10. The delegated leads (para 6) meet as a Senior Leadership Group (SLG) to oversee the work of the KRSCP. They are joined in the SLG with two Head Teachers (representing Kingston and Richmond primary and secondary schools); the Achieving for Children (AFC) Director of Children's Services; the Designated Safeguarding Nurse; and the Designated Safeguarding Doctor. The SLG chair position is rotated between the three partner leads on an annual basis, the current chair being Detective Superintendent Andrew Wadey. The SLG meets quarterly, although during the Covid-19 Pandemic they have met at least fortnightly with regular communication continuing as and when needed between meetings. This evidences strong senior management multi-agency leadership (see para 12).
11. There is less evidence of regular formal update on progress against KRSCP priorities across the three strategic leads. It was suggested that the three strategic leads meet each six months with the SLG and the chairs of KRSCP subgroups (para 13) to undertake a bi-annual review of partnership progress of achieving improved outcomes for children against the priorities agreed in the KRSCP business plan. This process needs to be made clear on the KRSCP website.

***Recommendation 1: The three strategic leads of the KRSCP connect with the SLG and subgroup chairs to undertake a bi-annual review of progress of achieving improved outcomes for children against the priorities agreed in the KRSCP business plan.***

***Recommendation 2: The KRSCP website is fully updated with current personnel and a full description of leadership and delegated leadership arrangements clarified. The website also needs updating to ensure that KRSCP subgroups are named consistently throughout the site and that SLG and chairing responsibilities are updated***

12. The SLG itself was deemed to function well, being practical, effective and transparent, with the SLG minutes available on the KRSCP website. Interviewees noted clear lines of communication up to and from the SLG, with ample evidence of issues that needed SLG decision being escalated and acted upon. It was noted that, although due consultation and

process may mean that some decisions may take time, there is a direct line to SLG members individually, or through the KRSCP Manager to prompt speed if further urgency is needed. As noted by one interviewee, staff felt that they were 'Not banging against a closed door'.

### **KRSCP subgroups**

13. The KRSCP has four subgroups accompanied by a number of networks and specialist panels. These four subgroups include the

- Local Learning and Review subgroup (LLR),
- Quality and Innovation subgroup (Q and I);
- Vulnerable Child and Adolescent subgroup (VCA);
- Learning and development Subgroup (L and D).

Feedback suggested that these subgroups are appropriate and effective in overseeing the operational management of arrangements across the KRSCP.

14. The subgroups are each chaired by two co-chairs. Each chair is from a different agency within the partnership ensuring that partner agencies share responsibility together for multi-agency safeguarding operation. This is considered to be a strong and effective model encouraging communication and joint decision making across the KRSCP. The KRSCP should be commended for establishing tight, efficient and focused subgroup activity with shared ownership of responsibility across the three core safeguarding partners.

15. Attendance from the range of core and relevant safeguarding partners at subgroup meetings is not always consistent. The LLR subgroup has a mechanism for recording attendance across the year. This clearly identified gaps and trends in attendance. It helpfully facilitates staff self-monitoring of attendance over time.

***Recommendation 3: All subgroups adopt the use of a list of staff attendance over time to be seen in each set of minutes of the subgroup meeting. Any consistent lack of attendance from one of the key safeguarding partners could then be communicated to the SLG for follow up action to ensure full representation at all subgroup activity.***

### **Engagement with education at strategic leadership level**

16. There has been considerable national concern expressed that education is not identified as a key leader in LSCP arrangements under Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018). This was addressed in the Wood review (2021) which acknowledged that education is included within Local Authority oversight. Interviewees noted the key role that education plays in safeguarding children throughout Kingston and Richmond, with data demonstrating the engagement of schools as leaders and active participants in safeguarding children activity. School Designated safeguarding leads (DSLs) are well coordinated through the DSL networks with evidence of multi-agency engagement in safeguarding initiatives. There is evidence of proactive work with schools on

- engaging with contextual safeguarding approaches to extra familial harm,
- responding to 'Everyone's Invited' to consider harmful sexual behaviours,

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- connecting with police through police officer attendance at schools and through activities such as ‘Operation Encompass’,
- the use of the Single Point of Access and of Early Help Services,
- pioneering mental health trailblazers,
- engaging with the London Healthy School Programme, developing ‘whole school’ approaches to child health and wellbeing.

This is not an exhaustive list, but it gives some examples of strategic engagement with education in KRSCP partnership activity.

17. There was some feedback questioning whether the composition of the current KRSCP SLG, with two head teachers, one representing primary and the other secondary schools, can cover full strategic leadership for all maintained as well as independent mainstream and alternative provision. This does not undermine the existing strength of the work undertaken by the two education leads on the SLG. More, it asks whether there are adequate opportunities for leaders from the range of education services to be represented at a strategic level. There is a strong argument for keeping the SLG small and fit for purpose, with a worry that expanding it may undermine its agility. Despite this, a consideration of how the breadth of education services is represented at a leadership level was deemed to be timely.

***Recommendation 4: There is consideration by strategic leads from primary and secondary maintained and independent schools, with inclusion of the KRSCP designated safeguarding leads in the two boroughs, to assess whether strategic leadership from education is fully represented within the KRSCP. If it is not, it is recommended that the SLG consider how best to ensure full representation of education at a strategic level.***

#### **KRSCP priority setting and review**

18. Analysis of data for this Independent Scrutiny suggested that while there are clear ‘vertical’ lines for communication from chairs to and from the SLG, and from chairs to their subgroup membership, there is a less formal structure for ‘horizontal’ communication between the four subgroup co-chairs and then subgroup co-chairs with the SLG. This means that there are limited opportunities for subgroup co-chairs to reflect together on new and emerging issues and progress towards agreed priorities. The suggestion from staff that meetings between the co-chairs of subgroups take place is currently being addressed. However, this could be formalised within the structure of the KRSCP and occur on a regular, potentially quarterly basis. Two of these four meetings could include the SLG (as para 11, recommendation 1). This would be a welcome development and one that offers opportunity to share learning and review progress across the partnership.

There was overarching desire to pull learning together and reflect on key issues emerging from subgroup activity, the different deep dives, the independent scrutiny of targeted areas and rapid reviews. There was simultaneous awareness that staff are extremely busy and that extra meetings are an additional workload. To ensure time efficiency, the challenge for these quarterly meetings between subgroup chairs will be to maintain focus on strategic development against the agreed KRSCP priorities. There can be a tendency for such meetings to become more operational than strategic, and so caution would be needed to maintain a genuinely strategic agenda. Staff suggested that subgroup co-chairs (with the bi-

annual inclusion of the SLG and three strategic leads) additional focus on reflection and shared strategic thinking about progress against the agreed priorities between would be welcomed.

***Recommendation 5: SLG and subgroup co-chairs consider the formal development of quarterly meetings for Subgroup chairs, two of which would be attended by SLG and the three strategic leads to review progress of safeguarding activity against the agreed KRSCP priorities.***

19. There is a plethora of evidence that the three KRSCP priorities: contextual safeguarding, mental health, and parental vulnerability are clearly communicated across the partnership. There is evidenced work activity in line with the Business plan 2020 to 2022. This has, for example, included
- a management role in Achieving for Children (AfC) for contextual safeguarding,
  - the contextual safeguarding and exploitation conferences; pilot for contextual safeguarding in a secondary school; a body of work engaging with business and community based providers to look at extra familial harm (see recommendation 22),
  - a focus on learning from reviews and audits on mental health issues with particular identification of increased child mental health problems resulting from the pandemic,
  - the use of data to identify vulnerable parents and families and deliver targeted work particularly over the pandemic where poverty, domestic abuse and mental health concerns have increased. This includes theoretically informed work on use of 'Think Family' approaches, 'Trauma Informed' practice and 'Signs of Safety'
  - work on engagement with mental health issues and parental vulnerabilities in affluent and powerful families, promoted by learning from a serious incident.
20. Ample other examples are available about ongoing work addressing the agreed priorities. What is less clear is how the partnership review together their progress against these priorities (see para 18) and how the impact of this work is assessed. Alongside the previous annual reports, the current draft KRSCP Annual Report 2020 to 2021 provides an excellent overview of data from a wide range of sources. This is to be commended. It provides a fantastic resource for the partnership to review outcomes data, including the identification of 'stubborn problems' against each of the three priorities.

***Recommendation 6: The helpful data outlined in the draft annual report 2020 to 2021 is used in the future to map progress against the agreed three priorities. Next year's KRSCP annual report could then be structured under headings of the key priorities, with relevant data reporting on progress against them.***

21. Working Together (2018) requires independent scrutiny of Local safeguarding Children Arrangements. The five paragraphs in Working Together 2018 explaining Independent Scrutiny offer flexibility for partnerships to decide how their scrutiny takes place. KRSCP had one Independent Scrutineer until the end of January 2021 and has subsequently employed different independent scrutineers to assess targeted topic areas of work. There is ample evidence that the resulting reports are comprehensive and have been used across the



partnership to inform action plans and future work. Despite these advantages, there is a related challenge of how the partnership ensures that one-off targeted topic based scrutiny is fully aware of the wide breadth of partnership working and how scrutiny of one area of work will cross reference to scrutiny of another. This could be mitigated by incorporating learning from different strands of scrutiny into the meetings advocated in recommendation 5 above.

***Recommendation 7: the proposed bi- annual meetings of Senior Leads, SLG and subgroup chairs (see para 18, recommendation 5) review how the topics chosen for audits, deep dives and Independent Scrutiny feed into the review of progress against current KRSCP priorities.***

***Recommendation 8: That this bi-annual review consider how priorities are impacted by achievements towards meeting the desired outcomes for improving the safety and wellbeing of children across the partnership***

### **The role of the KRSCP Manager**

22. There was considerable acknowledgement of the essential role played by The Manager of the KRSCP within the functioning of the KRSCP. The role is seen an essential component to the effective running of the partnership. There was extremely positive feedback about the efficient management of the partnership, the timely and effective work of the manager and of the support and advice she gives to members of the partnership. There was also recognition of the increased responsibilities for the manager brought about through the removal of a chair of the partnership (pre Working Together 2018 LSCBs were required to have an independent chair) and the changes in review of serious incidents, with the introduction of Rapid Reviews and Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews through the new Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel. A national coordination of LSCP business managers has recognised the changing role partnership managers play under Working Together 2018 (see The Association of Safeguarding Partners [www.Theasp.org.uk](http://www.Theasp.org.uk)).

***Recommendation 9: The SLG review the support that might be needed for the increased responsibilities held by the KRSCP Manager under ‘Working Together to Safeguard Children’ 2018***

### **KRSCP and the Child Death Overview Panel**

23. This Independent scrutiny assessed the relationship between KRSCP and the South West London (SWL) Child Death Overview Panel (CDOP). The terms of reference for this scrutiny did not include assessment of the CDOP work functions per say, but of an assessment of the relationship between the panel and partnership. There was evidence of constructive and appropriate process for referrals to be made to the CDOP and for communication about learning from CDOP activity. There is, for example, work underway to better understand ‘Sudden and Unexpected Infant Death’ as a result of a local case managed through CDOP and the 2021 published learning from the national Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-review-investigates-babies-harmed-by-fathers-and-stepfathers>

24. Questions were raised about the potential overlap between CDOP and Rapid Review processes. These were considered and addressed within the Local Learning and Review subgroup (LLR).

**The interface between KRSCP and other strategic boards and partnerships.**

25. There are connections at an operational level between practitioners working across the KRSCP and those working with other partnerships and boards, such as those focused on community safety, emotional health and wellbeing and adult services. There appeared to be less connection at a strategic level to share work strategies, identify and cross reference priorities and oversee joint work where appropriate. In particular this emerged for KRSCP work on contextual safeguarding and its connection with activities developed under the two community safety partnerships (one each for Kingston and Richmond). Strengthening and potential streamlining of KRSCP operational work activities under contextual safeguarding activity may be enhanced through further strategic collaboration between KRSCP SLG and The Richmond Community Safety Partnership and the Safer Kingston Partnership. Similarly, the transition of young people from children's to adult's services, particularly mental health services, could be improved through focused activity linking KRSCP SLG with senior leadership of the two Adult Safeguarding Boards: Richmond and Wandsworth Safeguarding Adults Board and The Kingston Safeguarding Adults Board. While the issues facing resourcing and availability of CAMHS are indeed a national problem, the local response to young people's transition from CAMHS to adult mental health services may be further improved by strengthening the strategic links between the KRSCP and the two related Safeguarding Adults Boards. There is a large body of work informing the question of transition into adult services, much located with 'Research in Practice' who document research findings, training and support packages on understanding and managing transition<sup>1</sup>. There also appeared scope to further embed strategic links to the CCG Quality and Performance Committee.

These collaborations may helpfully accompany a bi annual review of the KRSCP business plan (see recommendation 5). This could map where different partnership activity may overlap and engage senior managers in discussion about how, when and why services may support each other to reach the agreed priorities. Such activity could inform future priority setting, with shared concerns of safeguarding needs of young people identified and addressed through action plans noting different boards and partnership's engagement at strategic points of intervention.

***Recommendation 10: The SLG map which other partnerships or boards they need to connect with for strategic planning; identifying safeguarding children priorities; developing action plans that cross reference work activity; and reviewing processes to pool learning for future development.***

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.researchinpractice.org.uk/all/content-pages/slides/transitions-supporting-young-people-in-transition-to-reach-positive-outcomes-in-adulthood/>

### Leadership engagement with Early Help

26. There is demonstrable strategic leadership of initiatives to address 'Early Help' across the partnership. The Early Help Strategic Board, chaired by the Director of Children's Services, coordinates multi-agency activity work on pathways to early help for children, young people and families, illustrated on the Early Help section of the KRSCP website. For example, there is evidence of the GP forum learning from participation in 'resilience network' activity, and of data sharing with the Early Help Strategic Board regarding parents facing substance misuse, alcohol problems and domestic abuse. This work informs Early Help Services which are evident in the resilience networks, Project X and engagement with schools. These activities have led to improved referrals to Early Help Services.
27. The Early Help Strategic Board helpfully notes the importance of separating 'outcomes' from 'process' in their work and the need for Key Performance Indicators to measure steps up, as well as steps down, into Early Help.

While this work is to be commended, some questions emerged about the availability of early help services for

- children demonstrating early indication of mental health problems
- coordinated support following children and young people's discharge from hospital, including young people attending A and E following incidents of serious youth violence
- some communities, such as the Korean communities and some faith based communities who may feel marginalised from safeguarding children partnership activities
- Those impacted by housing problems while 'Housing' may not be fully engaged with safeguarding children activities, both on the Early Help Strategic Board and throughout partnership work on contextual safeguarding activity.

***Recommendation 11: The Early Help Strategic Board continues and develops its presence across the KRSCP. An audit of 'reach into the community' could address direct engagement with***

- ***the Youth Offending service regarding diversionary activities,***
- ***housing providers, including social housing providers encouraging them to link with activity undertaken on contextual safeguarding (see recommendation 22);***
- ***voluntary sector providers, particularly those who may provide early help services for children and young people with developing mental health problems;***
- ***targeted communities known to be marginalised from access to statutory services such as the Korean community***

**Health, Police and LA engagement in safeguarding children activity during Covid-19 (see also para 39 and 55)**

28. While there is appreciation that the Covid-19 pandemic has impacted on all strands of service provision, there is overt acknowledgment that the health service has been under enormous pressure during the pandemic with relocation of staff and increased demands on GP and

hospital provision. This has compounded some existing and long standing difficulties in ensuring that GP health assessments for children at the point of their reception in to care, and GP reporting into Child Protection Conferences, are occurring as a matter of course. It has also made health colleagues attendance at KRSCP subgroups and other related meetings more challenging.

29. There is a recognised lack of GP and Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) attendance at Multi-agency Risk, Vulnerability and Exploitation (MARVE) group meetings, leading to a request to the SLG in 2020 for pressure to increase funding for CAMHS. This follows recognition of the success of the ‘trailblazers’ activity but acknowledges that there remains a dearth of provision for children and young people following identification of mental health problems and a lack of CAMHS staff attending KRSCP subgroup meetings to push for expanded provision.

In addition, there was acknowledgment of the connections between children and young people’s substance misuse and mental health problems, with a suggestion that further collaboration between substance misuse and mental health services is encouraged. There is evidence of some improvement of this following an Achieving for Children (AfC) Task and Finish Group on the topic.

***Recommendation 12: With the SLG, health leads undertake a review to assess what can be done to improve on (a) Initial Health Assessments of children coming into care (b) GP reporting into Child Protection Conferences and (c) GP and CAMHS attendance at relevant subgroup meetings and at the developing Multi-Agency Child Exploitation Group (MACE)***

***Recommendation 13: The KRSCP support the AfC substance misuse services to consider further strategic connection with Tier 2 CAMHS, located within the emotional health services of AfC and Tier 3 and 4 CAMHS located within the South West London St George’s Hospital.***

30. There is similar recognition that all services have been negatively impacted by the pandemic, with additional pressures placed on police staff. Records of attendance at subgroup meetings and some other specific interest groups show that police attendance has particularly suffered. The benefits of police engagement and indeed leadership of subgroup and task force activity is fully appreciated across the KRSCP, with the impact of constructive engagement evidenced such as

- engagement with contextual safeguarding initiatives,
- enhanced information sharing
- work on operations such as ‘encompass’,
- engagement with the community and business sector on crime prevention,
- the visiting of children and young people who maybe gang affected or impacted by criminal exploitation within their own environments prior to escalation of significant problems

The scope for joint agency working and for assessment of impact of this constructive engagement can be lost if police are unable to participate fully in subgroup activity and leadership.

***Recommendation 14: Police attendance at subgroup meetings is monitored via recording (as per recommendation 3). Where poor attendance is identified, the SLG assess how this may be remedied through immediate measures or longer term escalation to the SLG.***

#### **The commissioning of KRSCP services**

31. There are case examples of effective working of the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) with learning apparent from one-off cases. There is an effective system for feedback from the LADO service to commissioners of services, as evidenced in a particular case of September 2020.
32. Commissioners have demonstrated flexibility during the pandemic, commissioning services to provide food responses and emergency delivery to those particularly impacted by poverty and distress caused by the pandemic. Commissioners have appreciated access to KRSCP training and other materials available on the website. There is an interest in exploring further opportunities for:
  - extending the range of ‘self –help’ videos shared between commissioners,
  - hearing from professionals directly about their safeguarding activity and experience of working with and for commissioned services,
  - the experiences of families, children and young people to be conveyed to commissioners,
  - commissioning to be further data informed, assisting assurance that early help services target those most in need.

For example, there was a question of whether the current work within AfC looking at the provision of sexual health services could lead to commissioners reviewing the adolescent sexual health service provision, with an onus on checking the contact and relationship with schools nurses and GPs.

***Recommendation 15: Commissioners are asked to provide an update on how they maintain an ongoing review of the quality of services that they commission, and how this informs their future decision making regarding commissioning of services.***

***Recommendation 16: Commissioners and AfC connect specifically to look at adolescent sexual health needs with communication about services available clearly conveyed to school nurses and to health centres and GPs.***

***Recommendation 17: Commissioners to be included in the development of a strategy to engage with children and young people on the development and implementation of safeguarding services (see para 43-46).***

#### **Disproportionality and racism**

33. The Home page of the KRSCP website rightly notes the impact of ‘Black Lives Matter’ with KRSCP leadership recognition of the need to fight discrimination and hate, and to address

inequalities experienced by children within the boroughs. This statement is accessible and stimulating for website readers.

There is range of work across the KRSCP to bring this statement to life, often under the title of challenging disproportionality. The KRSCP also recognises the question of how disproportionality impacts on children living in poverty, on children with SEND and on LGBTQ children. These activities are well documented in the KRSCP Annual Report 2020 to 2021. Efforts to understand and address disproportionately include

- work by AfC's Youth Offending service (YOS) to understand and challenge the disproportionate numbers of children impacted by poverty, the disproportionate number of non-white children impacted by knife crime and the poor outcomes for dual heritage and black African and black Caribbean children involved with the youth justice system, now highlighted as a priority for the work of the Youth Justice Board moving forward,
- continual audit to reveal the high number of dual heritage and black African and black Caribbean children 'looked after',
- Referring to the Quality and Innovation audits of receptions into care, use of the Youth Resilience Service and of children impacted by serious youth violence to develop workforce training and further intervention strategies,
- Being aware of the high numbers of non-white children and those impacted by poverty involved with the Resilience Service,
- Engaging with partnership activity to identify where children with SEND may be over or under represented and to develop strategies to challenge discrimination experienced by children with SEND,
- targeted work with LGBTQ children within AfC,
- creating translations into different languages of key documents.

This is a snap shot from a wide range of work taking place across the KRSCP to understand and address questions of racism and disproportionality overall. More could be done to strategically integrate this into every aspect of KRSCP work to further identify, challenge and monitor improvements.

***Recommendation 18: Each Subgroup has a reoccurring agenda item of 'considering disproportionality in our work' with an onus on the creation of action plans to address inequality and to reach to all relevant partners (such as housing, probation, voluntary sector providers) to ensure that a shared commitment to challenging discrimination is understood and acted upon.***

***Recommendation 19: Commissioners of services review their scrutiny of the commitment of commissioned services to challenging inequality and discrimination and in working to identify and challenge disproportionate use of service provision.***

**Leadership Engagement with children at a strategic level (also see paras 43-46) and working with Lay Members**

34. The paragraphs 43 to 46 further address questions of engagement with children and young people at a strategic level across the partnership activities. While there are a number of innovative participatory activities taking place to directly involve children and young people in
- decision making,
  - identifying and conveying their own concerns around how to be safeguarded,
  - what they and others can do to keep themselves safe,

there is little evidence that this work is feeding back into KRSCP strategy and longer term action planning.

This could be mitigated by considering how young people's views and options about safeguarding focus, practice and desired outcomes can be accessed and incorporated into longer term planning. There are examples across the country of how some LSPPs are doing this, either by consulting youth parliaments and youth councils, engaging young people as independent scrutineers, as safeguarding advocates and/or through consultation with representatives from targeted groups specifically impacted by safeguarding issues.

Questions of representation and diversity of voice come to the fore when considering this work, highlighting the need for proper thought about why engagement with children and young people on safeguarding matters is taking place, how it should be done and how the children and young people involved can be supported. This is a process that demands time and resource. The value of ensuring methods are available to access and hear young people's experiences and to engage them in strategic thinking about current and future safeguarding activity is invaluable and advocated for within Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018.

***Recommendation 20: the SLG and subgroup chairs a) consider information within para 43-46 of this report b) assess whether resources can be made available to engage children and young people in the strategic thinking about current and future safeguarding activity, c) address how engagement with children at a strategic level may take place d) look to what support structures should be in place for such activity to engage children and young people safely and offer career development opportunities for those impacted by safeguarding concerns.***

35. Consultation with the two lay members demonstrated the valuable contribution that can be made through active and ongoing collaboration with representatives from the local communities. Lay members voiced appreciation of the considerable support they receive from the KRSCP Team. It was noted that lay member engagement not only offers volunteer time and support to the KRSCP, but also builds links between the partnership and the community it represents.

Lay members noted how their involvement in KRSCP communication outlets such as social media (specifically twitter accounts), newsletters and leaflets (displayed in schools, health

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clinics and local shops and businesses) provide opportunity for their own local knowledge to enhance communication channels to and from the KRSCP.

It was felt that the lay member role is most helpfully executed when a lay member is committed to a particular task or activity with a clear focus. Lay members particularly noted that they would appreciate:

- Agreeing with KRSCP a clearly defined task for them to undertake,
- opportunities to shadow some safeguarding staff or activities,
- access to a safeguarding mentor to advise on any work activity the lay person is undertaking,
- knowledge of a lay member network for linking across partnerships.

***Recommendation 21: The SLG consider opportunities to appoint lay member(s) from communities deemed to be marginalised, such as the Korean community and/or communities particularly impacted by safeguarding issues such as serious youth violence. The resourcing of any such initiative would need serious consideration before a decision to move ahead is confirmed.***

#### **THE INVOLVEMENT OF THE WIDER SAFEGUARDING PARTNERS (INCLUDING RELEVANT AGENCIES) IN SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN**

36. There is evidence of active assessment of which relevant partners need to be engaged with safeguarding activity and how and where they connect within the partnership.

#### **KRSCP engagement with Housing**

37. As noted in recommendation 11 above, there may be additional opportunity to engage with housing as a relevant partner in safeguarding children activity. It was noted that both boroughs are working on the development of a new housing strategy. It is hoped that plans for community based developments, such as the development of the reopening of the Kingston Kingfisher Leisure Centre, can continue to engage with children and young people to consider questions of access and of child safety.
38. It was also noted that housing plays a large role in
- Supporting children who are, or have been looked after and in care and in reviewing housing contribution to efforts to reduce the number of out of borough placements,
  - Advancing child safety by, for example, particular housing associations working with the youth service to hear the voice of local young people about how to improve safety and wellbeing,



- Considering how Housing can support the KRSCP Early Help Strategy 2020 to 2024<sup>2</sup> and the implementation the Domestic Abuse Act 2021<sup>3</sup>.

***Recommendation 22: The work activities of KRSCP contextual safeguarding approach to managing extra familial harm, and the KRSCP Early Help Strategy 2020 to 2024, could consider scope for further engagement with housing. The role for housing in safeguarding children could be assessed against implications of the implementation of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021. With these actions in mind, consideration should be made of how Housing staff can take advantage of KRSCP multi-agency training opportunities, could be better represented on the Vulnerable Children and Adolescent (VCA) subgroup, on the Learning and Development (L&D) Subgroup, the newly developing strategic MACE and , where appropriate, on the SLG.***

### **KRSCP engagement with private sector providers**

39. Work on contextual safeguarding and extra familial harm, as outlined in Working Together (2018), and on the contextual safeguarding website ([www.contextualsafeguarding.org.uk](http://www.contextualsafeguarding.org.uk)) note the role of local business, hoteliers, entertainment venues, fast food providers and retail in identifying and managing safeguarding children concerns. Interviewees noted that engagement with local private sector providers was developing well before the Covid -19 pandemic but that this work has been undermined through lockdowns and staffing pressures. Similarly, outreach activity with faith and community groups has been negatively impacted by the pandemic.

AfC and KRSCP have been undertaking a range of activity to engage with local communities including 'walk abouts' and linking with private sector providers. This activity included:

- distribution of the NSPCC 'Safeguarding in faith communities'<sup>4</sup>,
- running 'Safe in Faith' and 'speed dating' events linking faith and community group leaders with LADO and safeguarding practitioners,
- supporting community groups and private sector providers to create and write safeguarding policies.

This ongoing work demonstrates a commitment to these activities, with regular community walkabouts, a 'Hotel Safeguarding group' and focused outreach 'weeks of action'. It is hoped and expected that this work will be revitalised as we move on from the impact of the Covid-19 Pandemic.

To further promote this work, the KRSCP could look to schemes to incentivise local business, hoteliers, entertainment venues, fast food and retail providers by advertising their positive contribution to safeguarding children. This could be encouraged through a 'Safeguarding

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[https://kingstonandrichmondsafeguardingchildrenpartnership.org.uk/media/upload/fck/file/EH%20Partnership%20Strategy%209%20Nov%202020%20\(1\)F.pdf](https://kingstonandrichmondsafeguardingchildrenpartnership.org.uk/media/upload/fck/file/EH%20Partnership%20Strategy%209%20Nov%202020%20(1)F.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2021/17/contents/enacted>

<sup>4</sup> <https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/safeguarding-child-protection/for-faith-communities>

Award' scheme and through licencing arrangements that publically endorse a private sector providers safeguarding strategy.

***Recommendation 23: KRSCP/AfC could link with the Kingston Statement of Licencing Policy 2021 to 2026<sup>5</sup> and with Richmond Licencing<sup>6</sup> to consider how they engage with private sector providers to promote their role in safeguarding children and adolescents outside the home.***

***Recommendation 24: that the SLG and chairs of KRSCP subgroups, particularly the VCA subgroup, consider whether 'safeguarding awards' can be created and given to specific private sector providers or community based services to reward proactive initiatives to safeguard children, and young people.***

#### **KRSCP engagement with some faith and marginalised communities**

40. Throughout this independent scrutiny many practitioners and leaders of work streams discussed how they try to engage with marginalised communities, such as, for example, the Korean community and with faith based communities. There were seen to be opportunities to further engage in efforts to:

- increase the number of local foster placements, with a recognition that a high number of children are placed out of borough and away from their local area,
- Extend the reach of preventative work on serious youth violence and early help services,
- Better understand community structures and hierarchies to help engagement with children who may be impacted by physical, sexual or/and or emotional abuse within the home, including the prevention of harmful sexual practices.

Further concerted efforts for outreach into communities affected could take place, identifying where women, children, young people from these communities may be accessed. In line with research findings on the topic<sup>7</sup>, such work recognises that engagement with faith based and marginalised communities should not only rely on contact with community 'leaders' but also needs to engage with women, children and families at ground level, undertaking outreach to school and nursery provision, to health centres, food banks and other community contexts.

***Recommendation 25: with KRSCP priorities in mind, the VCA subgroup could link with community safety colleagues to undertake an audit of local marginalised communities and faith based communities and with community settings where a disproportionate number of children and young people are impacted by safeguarding concerns. They could then develop an engagement strategy with local communities, taking a 'bottom up' approach as advocated by findings from relevant research.***

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.kingston.gov.uk/downloads/file/278/statement-of-licensing-policy>

<sup>6</sup>

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.beds.ac.uk/sylrc/current-programmes-and-projects/faces/>

### **KRSCP Engagement with Youth offending Service and the youth service**

41. Collaborative work between youth offending service and the youth service is evident, particularly through work undertaken by AfC and in particular, activities assigned to Project X. This evidences outreach work with relevant agencies and in events such as the 'Richmond Annual Youth Crime Conference' traditionally run by the youth service in partnership with police. There is enthusiasm to extend the number and reach of such events to include Kingston schools. The opportunity to make them further contextual and multi-agency by including health colleagues (including those based in A & E and in sexual and mental health services) and potentially representatives from local businesses, retail and fast food outlets could be further addressed in the planning and delivery of events. There would also be further opportunity to engage with children and young people affected by serious youth violence in the planning and delivery of the events.

***Recommendation 26: Project X, the VCA sub- group and leads of contextual safeguarding activity consider how the model of the successful Youth Crime Conference can be extended in reach and frequency to further include colleagues from health, community safety, the private sector and children and young people.***

42. The 'Youth Out Loud' project disseminates exciting and accessible information about health to and with young people. The range of materials about health and emotional wellbeing on the website is impressive. This work shows how some young people can play an important role in talking about health issues, facilitating learning for others. There are fewer examples of how this model extends to children and young people impacted by other safeguarding concerns such as serious youth violence; physical, emotional and sexual abuse; working as a young carer; and managing dilemmas emerging from needing or having a SEND diagnosis.

***Recommendation 27: The 'Youth Out Loud ' project undertake a review to identify the components deemed to make it successful. YOL and the VCA subgroup then identify the 'top topics' where information sharing and engagement with children and young needs to take place, in line with the KRSCP priorities. The YOL model could then facilitate the production of learning materials with and for young people on identified topics. If a health focus is essential to the work of YOL, the work could include health implications of each additional topic.***

### **CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S AWARENESS OF AND INVOLVMENT WITH PLANS FOR SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN**

43. There are excellent examples of activities engaging children and young people on the development and delivery of specific activities, demonstrating a variety of ways KRSCP has been accessing children and young people to assess their safeguarding needs, to disseminate information to them and to engage them in setting priorities for future specific work (see para 46). These are outlined below. As noted above, there is little evidence of this work feeding back into the strategic thinking of the overall partnership.
44. Although not specifically using the wording of child and youth participation, questions about the 'voice of the child' have been raised by Ofsted visits. The Ofsted inspection for Kingston

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2019 gives 'outstanding' grade to all but 'The experiences and progress of children who need help and protection' which was graded 'good'; and The Ofsted visit to Richmond of 2017 gave the grade of 'good', with a follow up focused visit noting more work is 'needed to understand, evaluate and maximise the impact of this work on improving children's experiences and outcomes' (Ofsted letter from focused visit 2019).

45. The genuine desire from practitioners to hear and learn from children and young people and the recognised expertise in conducting participatory activity (see para 46) provides a clear rationale for considering if the KRSCP can resource a targeted piece of work on engaging with children and young people to look at
- KRSCP current and potential future priorities,
  - The effectiveness of current bodies of safeguarding work assessing impact on their lives.

There is a body of work about safe engagement of children and young people on safeguarding topics<sup>89101112</sup> that can help inform this potential work. It is recognised that this is a complex area fraught with challenge, but fundamentally worthwhile.

46. The existing range of activities taking place to include children and young people in safeguarding children shows appropriate staff expertise, experience and skills to take this work further forward. Some of these examples include:
- The existence of designated participation leads in some health settings where monthly meetings with children and young people review their experiences of health care services,
  - A focus within AfC on youth participation and engagement which consults with children and young people on a wide range of issues through focus groups, peer research, events and on line surveys,
  - The AfC consulting with children and young people to address the interface between the leaving care and looked after team, and the work of the Children in Care Council,
  - A previous activity where young offenders with complex histories of criminal exploitation were taken to present to staff at Scotland Yard,
  - Engagement with a young person with custody experience to create 'prison care' packs for other young people in custody,
  - Ground work between the youth service, young carers representatives and Education to encourage children and young people to become 'Safeguarding Youth Representatives',
  - Offering importunity for young people to work as apprentices in the health service,

<sup>8</sup> <https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/Search?term=youth+participation+>

<sup>99</sup> <https://www.childrengsociety.org.uk/information/professionals/resources/youth-voice-on-school-exclusions>

<sup>10</sup> [www.our-voices.org.uk](http://www.our-voices.org.uk)

<sup>11</sup> [https://nya.org.uk/quality/hear-by-right/?gclid=Cj0KCQjwkbukBhDRARIsAALysV4b\\_uuY-akwctCZ2CjtSC98xc0fJeRnGIH2UZWeFwcbRkkgXLFpsBAaAiVLEALw\\_wcB](https://nya.org.uk/quality/hear-by-right/?gclid=Cj0KCQjwkbukBhDRARIsAALysV4b_uuY-akwctCZ2CjtSC98xc0fJeRnGIH2UZWeFwcbRkkgXLFpsBAaAiVLEALw_wcB)

<sup>12</sup> Warrington, C. (2020) *Creating a safe space: Ideas for the development of participatory group work to address sexual violence with young people*. [Download the report \[PDF\]](#)

- Working with the Children in Care Council to run residential events with Looked after children,
- Engagement with children and young people in some KRSCP training initiatives (see para 66)
- Youth Out Loud creating film and other outputs with children and young people,
- Working with young people to create the publication 'Keeping You Safe': The KRSCP annual report for young people,
- Working with head teachers and pupils to produce magazines by and for children during lockdown including consultation with SEND children to ensure accessibility,
- Engaging young people in deep dives and in conference presentations.

***Recommendation 28: Following full consideration of the cost, staffing implications and following a trauma informed audit of safety for participating children and young people, the KRSCP develop a strategy for engagement with children and young people affected by safeguarding concerns. This might consider one or more of the following:***

- a. Undertaking an audit of existing organised representative groups of children and young people that exist within Kingston and Richmond ( such as, for example, leaving care groups, youth parliaments and school youth councils, health interest groups) and develop a strategy for consulting with them about how they can be represented in planning and delivering safeguarding services,***
- b. Establishing a Children and Young People Safeguarding Panel, Trust or Board with strategies to identify representation of children impacted by safeguarding concerns,***
- c. Recruiting children and young people as independent scrutineers or as safeguarding advocates,***
- d. Running a series of 'special interest groups' where practitioners and children and young people work together on topics of concern, reviewing safeguarding activity and looking to creating future plans,***
- e. Developing an 'outcome' focused strand of work lead by the four subgroups to engage with children and young people on qualitative reviews of safeguarding practice, learning and, albeit representative accounts of safeguarding impacts.***

#### **QUALITY ASSURANCE PROCEDURES FOR DATA COLLECTION, AUDIT AND INFORMATION SHARING**

47. It is nationally recognised that data held by police, CCGs and Local Authorities on their work with children, young people and families follow different formats, collection processes and analysis. Relevant partners such as education, youth service, probation and housing also collect different data sets from their work activities. Pooling such data across the partnership is challenging. Strong mechanisms are in place across the partnership, and specifically through the work of the Quality and Innovation subgroup, for the collection and sharing of data from core and relevant partners. This is evidenced within the KRSCP draft Annual Report (2020 to 2021) which gives a comprehensive overview of data. This is an essential source of

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information from partners, giving them data against which they can map progress against priorities.

48. Effective processes are in place to identify areas for further investigation through follow up audits or deep dives. The Q and I subgroup analyse data to assess whether further deep dives are needed. For example the three specific pieces of work on 'Domestic Abuse', 'Missing Children' and 'Journey to Exclusion' were prompted by data showing high numbers of referrals because of domestic abuse, concern about numbers of missing children and school exclusions. Learning and training events on these topics followed, disseminating the information across the partnership and demonstrating learning loops.
49. Considerable effort goes into encouraging all schools to do Section 11 audits which are used to give insight into weakness and strengths amongst service providers, information of which then informs forums for designated safeguarding leads (DSL). For example, it became clear that there was a lack of training for school staff on pressures faced by LGBTQ children and young people. This led to input in a DSL forum on the topic with contribution from a teacher with experience and knowledge on the issues.
50. The Vulnerable Child and Adolescent subgroup have similarly used data to provide focus for their work, for example using analysis of MARVE referrals to identify disproportionality within the youth offending service.
51. It was noted that gaps in data do exist, with a desire for further data and information from sexual health services. It is hoped that the move to Integrated Care Services (ICS) may incorporate further opportunity for local data sharing between health and KRSCP.

***Recommendation 29: local plans for implementation of the ICS look to opportunities to enhance data and information sharing between sexual health services and KRSCP.***

#### **Accessing and using police data to guide KRSCP activity**

52. The London Metropolitan Police Service is establishing a shared dash board for their data. This will not provide individual local London boroughs with data pertaining to their separate activities. This will mean that until systems are developed by the London Met to distribute local data, the KRSCP will rely on local resources to identify which police data is needed and how it can be analysed and shared.
53. There has been concern that there is little analysis of cross cutting themes emerging from the high number of individual MERLIN reports, each sent separately to the LA.

***Recommendation 30: The Q and I subgroup consider the viability of running intermittent analysis of a cross section of MERLIN reports to identify any reoccurring safeguarding themes or patterns.***

54. There was a suggestion that changes in data might be mapped against KRSCP priorities to illustrate change and progress over time. The Quality and Innovation Subgroup do this work manually themselves on specific chosen topics, but the activity is time consuming and, it is suggested, could be carried out more efficiently and speedily by a data analyst focusing on

mapping changing data according to priority goals. This could then be used to ensure regular progress against priorities, help to continually review outcomes and set future longer term priority planning.

***Recommendation 31: further resource (more time allocation from data analysts) is allocated to work with the Quality and Innovation Subgroup to support regular review of data against the KRSCP priorities.***

### **Data and information sharing during the pandemic**

55. The Covid -19 pandemic had significant impact on data collection and use. Positive learning was achieved through partners meeting regularly in Covid-19 planning meetings to share and review new and emerging data. For example, data has shown an increase in the number of children and young people with eating disorders leading to a heightened awareness of the need for early intervention with children on healthy eating and managing disorderly eating during the pandemic. Data concerning young carers has been analysed to encourage schools, through the designated safeguarding lead forums, to assess the impact of the pandemic on pupils with caring responsibilities. The development of an audit on early year's services is, although interrupted by the pandemic, resulting in a 'Safeguarding and wellbeing framework' tool for the large nursery and child minder workforce to use as we move on from the pandemic.

### **Everyone's Invited**

56. As noted on the KRSCP home page of the website, prompted by 'Everyone's Invited', concern has been raised about harmful sexual behaviours in schools. The KRSCP have demonstrated agility in response to these deeply embedded, but more recently emerging issues by holding an emergency DSL forum on the topic attended by 94 schools. Central government has asked partnerships to explain what is being put in place to identify and prevent Harmful Sexual Behaviours (HSB) in schools. The challenge for this work will be to ensure that initiatives are genuinely multi-agency and that they are maintained over time.
57. It is recognised that multi-agency preventative work can be constructive in illustrating profiles of young people who may be demonstrating HSB. An audit on HSB in May 2020 noted that there is invariably a history of harm and abuse behind those demonstrating HSB, but that referrals may not be made early enough to MARVE or to the Single Point of Access (SPA).

***Recommendation 32 : The Quality and Innovation, the VCA and Learning and Development (L&D) Subgroups maintain a focus on how multi-agency working is taking place to identify and prevent harmful sexual behaviours in schools and other service providers; and that follow up from the audit on HSB (May 2020) continues.***

**'IDENTIFYING AND INVESTIGATING LEARNING FROM LOCAL AND NATIONAL CASE  
REVIEWS' AND  
'MULTI-AGENCY SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN TRAINING'**

58. Effective structures and procedures are in place for learning from national safeguarding research and reviews and for this learning to be disseminated across the partnership. For example, learning from academic research into contextual safeguarding and serious youth violence is, along with findings from national reviews, applied to inform the development of this work in KRSCP. Learning from national reviews, such as the Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel's work on 'Safeguarding children at risk from sudden unexpected infant death' (July 2020) is integrated into training materials and briefings for the workforce. There is evidence from the review of paper work and from interviews with staff that there is a wide dissemination of up to date and accessible learning and training materials, supported by specific one off events, task and finish groups, deep dives and scrutiny activity.
59. There is similarly evidence of using local learning from locally based serious incidents, rapid reviews and serious case reviews or, more recently Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews. There are evidenced learning loops where a serious incident prompts a deep dive or piece of independent scrutiny, which then produces learning materials circulated across the partnership in briefing papers such as a seven minute briefing and then integrated into training. Evaluations of training sessions encourage participants to consider the impact of the training on their practice. These learning systems are clearly in place and there is a strong and active body of work focusing on learning and workforce development across KRSCP.
60. There is appropriate focus on the need for timely training keeping abreast with emerging learning. To this end, there is recognition that as some case review processes can take an extended period of time, learning can emerge through the process rather than waiting for final publication of the review report.
61. Audits of safeguarding data have prompted the need for specific training. For example, data and discussion about disproportionality was reflected in the Learning and Development subgroup (June 2020) which identified need for 'training the trainers' on questions race, equality, diversity, unconscious bias, working with diversity and equality. Similarly, an identified increase in referrals of children with mental health problems to the Single Point of Access (SPA) team prompted further training and information sharing on the impact of Covid-19 on children and young people's mental health and wellbeing.
62. This strong learning culture has been enhanced by selected staff recently attending training on the SCIE 'learning together' approach to learning from reviews. This has helped key staff to identify what to review and how to extract systemic learning from review activity. The attendance at this SCIE training was multi-agency resulting in a shared understanding across the partnership of how to extract systemic learning.
63. Questions emerged about whether there is further opportunity to look at cross cutting themes from the number of local rapid reviews, and case reviews. There is recognition that the urgency of completing an individual one off review can undermine scope to identify reoccurring themes that might emerge across a number of reviews. It was appreciated that



this would require a specifically funded work stream; collating KRSCP case reviews of the last two year period and extracting common themes for local learning.

***Recommendation 33: The SLG consider resourcing the Learning and Development and Quality and Innovation subgroups to undertake thematic reviews of local learning from rapid reviews and serious incidents occurring within the partnership. Such a review would not only extract common themes for learning but look at how the impact of learning from disseminated materials and training events can be evaluated.***

64. It was also suggested that the evaluation of individual training and learning events included a six month and one year follow up, offering opportunity for impact assessment of generic learning from all training. There is an existing 'Learning and improvement tracker' which records the activities of local learning which could be developed to assess learning over time.

***Recommendation 34: the Learning and Development subgroup assess how they may instigate a process of six monthly and annual review of the impact of training on multi-agency practice and identify if such activity is possible within existing resource envelop. If this is inhibited by the current resource envelop, the problem of how to engage in such cross cutting learning should be taken to the SLG for review.***

65. There is good evidence of innovative approaches to engaging children and young people in training processes, including working with young people to present at training events, to assist in writing and disseminating materials (such as the work of Youth Out Loud on health related matters).
66. There is recognition that engaging children and young people in the creation, delivery and dissemination of training requires specific resources. A successful funding application to the London Mayor's office supported the training of young people to be mental health practitioners in schools. Although the funding for this programme now ended, efforts are being made to continue the initiative, noting the need for accessible training for universal services on mental health prevention.

***Recommendation 35: the Learning and Development and the Quality and Innovation subgroups link with any future consideration of strategic development of KRSCP's engagement with children and young people (see para 43-46) to include costings for supporting children and young people to become training practitioners and training mentors.***

67. Covid-19 has prompted the use of delivering training on line. This has resulted in a good uptake of shorter, easily accessible training courses. The disadvantage is that online training does not offer the same opportunity for informal discussion and information sharing between multi-agency colleagues as occurs when colleagues are physically together over a longer time period. This is being addressed by the Learning and Development subgroup who are considering a portfolio of different means of delivering training. The costs for hire of buildings for face to face training are challenging and can inhibit the development of off line training.

***Recommendation 36: The Learning and Development subgroup is supported to identify priorities for face to face training events in the future and, where necessary, resourced to facilitate this multi-agency face to face training.***

**Concluding remarks**

68. This scrutiny has identified commendable KRSCP safeguarding children policy and practice as well as identifying areas for future development. Any scrutiny should be mindful of the pressures faced by staff working under changing and demanding circumstances. This has been particularly exaggerated during the Covid-19 pandemic. It is hoped that the suggestions and recommendations made in this report are helpful and will contribute toward the collective aim to better safeguard children through child centred multi-agency policies and practices.

## Appendix One:

### Terms of Reference for KRSCP Annual Independent Scrutiny

#### Introduction

This Terms of Reference is for a piece of Independent Scrutiny work to be undertaken in August-September 2021, including some paragraphs for inclusion into the Annual Report 2020-21 and the preparation of a Scrutiny Report (which will be published) and its presentation at the Strategic Leadership Group (SLG) on 1<sup>st</sup> October 2021 10am-1pm.

Areas for comment in the Independent Scrutiny Report:

- *The role of independent scrutiny is to provide assurance in judging the effectiveness of multi-agency arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children in a local area, including arrangements to identify and review serious child safeguarding cases. (Working Together 2018 31)*
- *The Independent Scrutineer should consider how effectively the arrangements are working for children and families as well as for practitioners, and how well the safeguarding partners are providing strong leadership; (WT 2018 33)*
- *Annual scrutiny of the priorities set by the SLG to ensure the relevance of priorities in meeting local needs;*
- *Annual review of the clarity of the information that the SLG receives to inform strategic leaders of the effectiveness of safeguarding and review of the arrangements for Independent Scrutiny;*

#### Methodology

The scrutiny will use the 'Six Steps to Independent Scrutiny' ([www.beds.ac.uk/saferyounglives](http://www.beds.ac.uk/saferyounglives))

- The three core partner leads are actively involved in strategic planning and implementation
- The wider safeguarding partners (including relevant agencies) are actively involved in safeguarding children
- Children, young people and families are aware of and involved with plans for safeguarding children
- Appropriate quality assurance procedures are in place for data collection, audit and information sharing
- There is a process for identifying and investigating learning from local and national case reviews
- There is an active programme of multiagency safeguarding children training

Questions will address each of these six areas connecting, wherever possible, with impact on desired outcomes for safeguarding children. The questions will be explored through three methods: document analysis, focus groups and interviews.

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### *Documents to be scrutinised include:*

- KRSCP Annual Report 2020-21; To scrutinise the annual report and add some paragraphs from scrutiny of the report  
<https://kingstonandrichmondsafeguardingchildrenpartnership.org.uk/about-krscp/annual-report-42.php>
- SLG (Strategic Leadership Group) minutes:  
<https://kingstonandrichmondsafeguardingchildrenpartnership.org.uk/about-krscp/structure-37.php>
- Sub group minutes, including any summary of multi-agency audits including section 11 audits.
- Summaries from any LSCP training events, training materials, evaluations of training
- Overview of any emergency procedures introduced to manage covid -19
- CDOP (Child Death Overview Panel) interface with the KRSCP and its Annual Report; 2020-21. I am suggesting that the scrutiny does not extend to a full scrutiny of all CDOP activity but is limited to scrutiny of the interface between the LSCP and CDOP
- KRSCP Business Plan 2020-22;  
<https://kingstonandrichmondsafeguardingchildrenpartnership.org.uk/about-krscp/business-plan-185.php>
- Management of serious incidents: process for managing rapid reviews, CSPRs, sample copies of Rapid Reviews (redacted) and list of published SCR /CSPRs, the KRSCP website, Ofsted and other independent inspections of local agencies.

### *Focus groups may take place with*

- frontline practitioners,
- subgroup Chairs and members,
- KRSCP lay members;
- Children and young people (themselves and/or representatives) (CJS, SEND, AP, children looked after)

### *One to one interviews may take place with*

- the three strategic leads;
- manager of CDOP
- training manager(s)
- Business manager

Findings from the document review, focus group and one to one interviews will be mapped against each of the six steps. Specific recommendations for each of the six areas will be made with summary recommendations for the LSCP

### **Products:**

- An evidenced report
- Short paragraph(s) input into annual report 2020-2021

## Independent Scrutiny of Kingston and Richmond Safeguarding Children Partnership 2020-2021

### **Time line:**

Document analysis: 2 days (16 hours): throughout August 2021

Interviews/focus groups: 3 days: 2nd Sept/ 13<sup>th</sup> Sept / 14<sup>th</sup> September 2021:

Report writing: 2 days: 16/17 /20<sup>th</sup> Sept 2021

Report submitted: 24<sup>th</sup> Sept 2021

*Total number of days : 7*

NB: Jenny Pearce can attend the proposed meeting on 20<sup>th</sup> October.

### **Commissioned by:**

Owain Richards, Detective Superintendent , KRSCP Chair, South West BCU

Ian Dodds Director of Children's Services Kingston and Richmond

Fergus Keegan, Director of Quality Kingston and Richmond CCG.

**Appendix 2: Papers reviewed for Independent Scrutiny of KRSCP Safeguarding Arrangements**

<b>KRSCP Website:</b> Documents and papers accessed and reviewed
<b>Safeguarding Commissioning Working Group : Minutes</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 23<sup>rd</sup> March and 14<sup>th</sup> May 21</li> </ul>
<b>Early Help Strategic Board : Minutes</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 27<sup>th</sup> January 21</li> <li>• 30<sup>th</sup> March 21</li> </ul>
<b>Vulnerable Child and Adolescent (VCA) Subgroup: Minutes</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 27<sup>th</sup> April 2020</li> <li>• Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> June 2020</li> <li>• 7<sup>th</sup> October 2020 2-4 pm</li> <li>• Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> January 2021</li> <li>• 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2021</li> </ul>
<b>Local Learning Review Subgroup: Minutes</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 16<sup>th</sup> March 2020</li> <li>• 12<sup>th</sup> May 2020</li> <li>• 8<sup>th</sup> July 2020</li> <li>• 21<sup>st</sup> Sept 2020</li> <li>• 13<sup>th</sup> Oct 2020</li> <li>• 8<sup>th</sup> Feb 21</li> <li>• 23<sup>rd</sup> March 21</li> </ul>
<b>Learning and development Subgroup: Minutes</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• June 2020</li> <li>• September 2020</li> <li>• December 2020</li> <li>• March 21</li> </ul>
<b>Quality and Innovation Subgroup: Minutes</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 4<sup>th</sup> Feb 20</li> <li>• 6<sup>th</sup> Aug 20</li> <li>• 3<sup>rd</sup> Dec 20</li> <li>• 23 Feb 21</li> <li>• 25<sup>th</sup> May 21</li> <li>• 13<sup>th</sup> July 21</li> </ul>
<b>Strategic Leadership Group Meetings</b> As available on website Nov 2019 to June 2021
<b>Independently commissioned Deep Dives and IS reports</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Impact of Domestic Abuse on children; Independent Scrutiny Report; Nicola Brownjohn (May 2021)</li> <li>• Scrutiny of arrangements to identify and review serious child safeguarding cases in Kingston and Richmond; Chris Robson (August 2020)</li> <li>• Scrutiny Paper - The Journey to Exclusion Through a Safeguarding Lens; Chris Robson (January 2021)</li> <li>• Report on the multi-agency response to missing children: Chris Robson, (Jan 2020)</li> <li>• Scrutiny of LSCP, Safeguarding during the covid pandemic : Chris Robson (June 2020) (with supplementary report accompanying this)</li> </ul>
<b>Covid Planning Group meeting : Minutes</b> Jan 21 24 <sup>th</sup> Feb 21 March 21

<p>April 21</p> <p><b>Internal Challenge conversation /quick audits /rapid reviews</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• KRSCP Challenge Conversation: Criminal Exploitation – local next steps; Elisabeth Major (August 2020)</li> <li>• KRSCP Early Help Quick Audit 17<sup>th</sup> December 2020 V1; authored Tracey Welding KRSCP Board Manager (January 2021)</li> <li>• Draft Multi-Agency Audit Regarding Excluded Children Tracey Welding, Lucy MacArthur and Elisabeth Major (December 2020)</li> <li>• KRSCP Scrutiny of Transition Plans; A multi-agency group of senior leaders virtual meeting to consider 8 plans re case Q and S (9th September 2020)</li> <li>• Scrutiny of arrangements to identify and review serious child safeguarding cases in Kingston and Richmond (Chris Robson August 2020)</li> <li>• Transitions Task and Finish Group (May 2021)</li> <li>• KRSCP MARVE Mental Health Audit. ( not authored) (December 2020)</li> <li>• KRSCP Multi-agency audit Child Neglect. Tracey Welding and Elizabeth Major (April to July 2020)</li> <li>• KRSCP Harmful sexual behaviour Multi-agency Audit (Elisabeth Major May 2020)</li> <li>• KRSCP Local Learning Review Subgroup Everyone’s Invited Kingston and Richmond Rapid Review (June 2021)</li> <li>• Summary of findings from the HSB/Everyone’s invited Questionnaire (Lucy MacArthur June 2021)</li> <li>• School Section 11 safeguarding audits received for 2020 to 2021 academic year (Lucy MacArthur)</li> <li>• KRSCP Deep dive focus Adolescent Safeguarding (July 2019)</li> <li>• Learning hub deep dive theme ‘Missing’ : process chart 2020</li> <li>• Seven minute briefing on ‘Safeguarding in affluent communities’</li> <li>• Seven minute briefing on ‘working with allegations’</li> <li>• Seven minute briefing: ‘London Best Practice around serious youth violence KRSCP’</li> <li>• Local Learning Review Subgroup KA Kingston Rapid Review (July 21)</li> <li>• Kingston and Richmond Safeguarding Children Partnership Ulric Child Safeguarding Practice Review (5th May 2021)</li> </ul>
<p><b>Health reports:</b>  Richmond IQPR CLCH Children Safeguarding report Q1; Trish Stewart (Associate Director of Safeguarding ) and Catherine McLinden (named nurse for safeguarding children) (July 21)</p>
<p><b>L&amp;D report</b>  Kingston and Richmond Safeguarding Children Partnership Learning &amp; Development Annual Report 2020-2021</p>
<p><b>KRSCP Draft annual report 2020 to 2021</b></p>
<p><b>Designated Safeguarding Forums:</b>  Snapshot from governors. ‘What DSLs learnt at the DSL forums for maintained and independent schools 2020 to 2021  DSL forums for maintained and independent schools 2021 to 2022 (both authored by Lucy MacArthur KRSCP Education Safeguarding Coordinator )</p>
<p><b>Deep dive Process and overview 2019 to 2022</b>  Local Learning Review Subgroup : terms of reference Oct 2020  KRSCP Learning and Improvement Tracker ( Jan 2020- June 2021)</p>

**Appendix 3: Interviews with KRSCP personnel**

<b>KRSCP Manager</b>	Ongoing contact between Elisabeth Major and Jenny Pearce throughout the IS activity
<b>KRSCP Deputy Partnership Manager</b>	Tracy Welding
<b>KRSCP Education Safeguarding Coordinator:</b>	Lucy MacArthur
<b>Lay members:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aisha Bicknell</li> <li>• Debbie Ramsay</li> </ul>
<b>Learning and development manager</b>	Daksha Mistry
<b>Police Borough Command Unit Commander South West London Met Police</b>	Elisabeth Chapple
<b>Public Health Commissioners</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mark Jordan, Service Development and Commissioning Lead</li> <li>• Daniel Green, Corporate Head of Service, Kingston Council</li> </ul>
<b>Chairs of Multi-agency Risk, Vulnerability and Exploitation Group (MARVE)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DCI Amanda Mawhinney</li> <li>• DCI Clive Vale (Vulnerable Child and Adolescent subgroup chair)</li> <li>• Sara Doyle, AD Identification and Assessment, AFC</li> <li>• James Dickson Leach, Assistant Detective Inspector, South West London BCU</li> </ul>
<b>Designated nurse for children 'looked after' for CCG</b>	Vicky Fraser
<b>Richmond Healthwatch</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Guilia Mazzu , Kingston Healthwatch</li> <li>• Helena Wright, Richmond Healthwatch (Youth Outloud)</li> </ul>
<b>KRSCP Strategic leads on SLG</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ian Dodds. Director of Children's Services, Kingston and Richmond</li> <li>• Andy Wadey: Detective Superintendent, South West London Business Command, Met police</li> <li>• Fergus Keegan: Director of Quality, Kingston and Richmond CCG</li> </ul>
<b>KRSCP Subgroup Chairs :</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Alison Twynam, Director of Children's social care, AFC (Vulnerable Child and Adolescent subgroup)</li> <li>• Louise Doherty, Designated Nurse, Kingston (Local Learning Review subgroup)</li> <li>• Sian Thomas Designated nurse, Richmond , (Quality and Innovation subgroup)</li> <li>• Trish Stewart, Associate Director of Safeguarding, Central London Community</li> </ul>



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	<p>Health Care trust (Local Learning Review subgroup)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Suzanne Parrott, Head teacher Virtual School (Learning and Development sub –group and Carrie Mark, Director of Quality, Achieving for children (Quality and Innovation subgroup) : both unable to attend focus group because unwell)</i></li> </ul>
<b>Achieving For Children</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grace Over, SEND Participation Officer and lead, AfC</li> <li>• Chris McPhee, Participation Officer, AfC</li> <li>• Michael Connors, Youth Engagement Lead, AfC</li> <li>• Frankie Campbell Named Nurse, South West London St George’s Mental Health Trust,</li> <li>• Alex Quennell, Participation Officer, AfC</li> <li>• Guilia Mazzu, Youth Out Loud, Healthwatch</li> </ul>
<b>Richmond Public Health Team:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kate Jennings, Senior Public Health Lead, Richmond Council</li> <li>• Dr Natalie Daley, Consultant in Public Health, Richmond Council.</li> <li>• Graeme Markwell, Senior Public Health Lead, Richmond Council</li> <li>• Paul Martland, Head of Child Health and Early Help, Wandsworth Council</li> </ul>