

Swindon Safeguarding Partnership

**Multi-agency Safeguarding Arrangements for
Children and Adults at Risk**

May 2019

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Introduction

This document sets out how the safeguarding partners in Swindon intend to coordinate their safeguarding services and how they will work together with relevant organisations and agencies to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and adults at risk with regard to local need.

Children

The Children and Social Work Act 2017 and its accompanying guidance [Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018](#) place a shared and equal duty on the statutory safeguarding partners to make arrangements to work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children in a local area.

Adults

The [Care Act 2014](#) requires that every local authority must set up a Safeguarding Adults Board (SAB), whose main objective is to assure itself that local safeguarding arrangements and partners act to help and protect adults in its area who meet the criteria for safeguarding. The local authority lead for the Safeguarding Adults Board in Swindon is the Director of Adult Services.

Safeguarding Partners

As defined in the Children Act 2004 (as amended by the Children and Social Work 2017) and the Care Act 2014, the lead representatives of the safeguarding partners are:

- The Chief Executive of the local authority
- The Accountable Officer for the clinical commissioning group for an area, any part of which falls within the local authority area
- The chief officer of police for an area, any part of which falls within the local authority area.

In Swindon, the lead representatives have delegated their responsibilities for the safeguarding arrangements to:

- Swindon Borough Council – David Haley, Corporate Director Childrens Services
- Swindon Borough Council – Sue Wald, Corporate Director Adult Social Services and Health
- Swindon Clinical Commissioning Group – Gill May, Director of Nursing and Transformation
- Wiltshire Police – Deborah Smith, Detective Superintendent Head of Public Protection

The safeguarding partners have equal and joint responsibility for local safeguarding arrangements, which is underpinned by equitable and proportionate funding including through any contributions from relevant agencies. The delegated representatives have the responsibility and authority for ensuring full participation with the safeguarding arrangements.

Although the lead representatives have delegated their responsibilities to those named above, they remain accountable for any action or decisions taken on behalf of their respective agency. Decisions involving policy, resourcing and commissioning will include full participation by Cabinet Members and the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC).

The safeguarding partners have drawn up an agreed Memorandum of Understanding that sets out how they will work together to ensure the effectiveness of their arrangements. Both the Memorandum of Understanding and the arrangements set out in this document will be reviewed by the Safeguarding Executive at the end of 2019/20.

The area covered by the arrangements is defined by the Swindon Borough Council local authority boundary. Partners to these arrangements may have responsibility for services outside this area either due to their organisational boundaries overlapping other local authority areas or because they have responsibilities for children or adults at risk living in another area. Some partners may also need to work to another area's arrangements, for example during a case review commissioned by another area, and where this is the case the Safeguarding Partnership will help facilitate communication with other areas and engagement by partners.

Transition

Working Together: Transition Guidance sets out how LSCBs and the new Safeguarding Partners should work together to ensure the orderly transition of Serious Case Reviews and Child Death Reviews. The Safeguarding Partners in Swindon will oversee the transition and ensure that is in line with the guidance as follows:

Serious Case Reviews

Until the end of the 12-month grace period in July 2020, the Safeguarding Partnership's Practice Review Group will oversee and complete any (children's) Serious Case Reviews, which were ongoing at the time the new arrangements came into being.

Child Death Reviews

When these arrangements become operational (July 2019) the responsibility for Child Death Reviews will transfer to Public Health (LA) and the CCG and governance will be via the Health and Wellbeing Board. Between July 2019 and November 2019, the LSCB will complete any cases which were outstanding at the time the new partnership arrangements started but will not commence any new reviews. Any cases which are not completed by 29 November 2019 will be passed to the child death partners

Purpose

The safeguarding partners in Swindon are committed to a partnership model that focuses on continuous learning and improvement with a clear line of sight on frontline safeguarding practice. The partners will promote a shared commitment to work together to improve outcomes for children and adults at risk.

The Swindon Safeguarding Partnership will support, enable and challenge each other to work together to:

- Provide effective and informed leadership to the local safeguarding system;
- Deliver their shared responsibility for the safeguarding of children, young people and adults at risk in the borough;
- Promote positive working relationships with each other and children, adults and families;
- Identify and act on learning, and
- Provide assurance to the Swindon community

The Swindon Safeguarding Partnership believes that effective safeguarding is founded on practitioners developing lasting and trusting relationships with the children and adults they work with as well as each other. The Partnership will look beyond organisational constraints and boundaries to build a culture which improves outcomes for all. The partnership has agreed a behaviours framework that promotes and delivers: accountability, openness, trust, innovation, commitment, respectfulness, curiosity and collaboration.

Swindon Safeguarding Partnership – Membership

In line with both Working Together 2018 and the Care Act 2014, the Swindon Safeguarding Partnership will include as members all organisations, agencies and individuals that will enable it to be effective in safeguarding of children and adults.

The Swindon Safeguarding Partnership will comprise of the named statutory safeguarding partners and those agencies and organisations listed below, each of whom has been chosen because they have varying degrees of contact with children and/or adults at risk and those who care for them:

- The Armed Forces
- Avon & Wiltshire Mental Health Partnership NHS Trust
- British Transport Police
- Care Quality Commission (CQC)
- Charitable and Voluntary Organisations; including faith groups
- Childminders
- Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service
- Clinical Commissioning Group
- Dentists
- Dorset & Wiltshire Fire & Rescue Authority
- Education Providers including Early Years and childcare settings
- General Practitioners and other relevant Primary Care Professionals
- Great Western Hospital NHS Foundation Trust
- Healthwatch Swindon
- Housing Providers
- Independent Fostering Agencies
- National Health Service England
- NSPCC
- Opticians
- Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust
- Probation – The National Probation Service and the Community Rehabilitation Company
- Pharmacists
- Residential Care Homes & Care Providers (children & adults)
- Swindon Borough Council Services
- The Secure Estate (Prisons, Secure Training Centres etc.)
- South West Ambulance Service Foundation Trust
- Swindon Advocacy Movement
- UK Visa, Immigration, Enforcement and Border Force
- Wiltshire & Swindon Coroner's Office
- Youth Offending Service
- Where appropriate, other services commissioned by any of the above

Representatives should be able to promote the effectiveness of the Partnership through their responsibility and accountability for the services their agencies deliver to children & adults at risk, and through their ability to influence the effectiveness of their agencies contribution to multi-agency safeguarding.

The voice of children and adults at risk is central to the work of the partnership and their involvement in the development of services and multi-agency responses to their needs will be developed through the Partnerships Engagement Subgroup.

The Safeguarding Partnership Strategic Executive will review the membership of the partnership annually.

Independent Scrutiny

“The role of independent scrutiny is critical to provide assurance in judging the effectiveness of services to protect children.

Independent scrutiny can also assist when there is disagreement between the leaders responsible for protecting children in the agencies involved in multi-agency arrangements.

It will be a local decision how best to implement a robust system of independent scrutiny. Safeguarding partners should involve a person or persons who are independent, for example by virtue of being from outside the local area and/or having no prior involvement with local agencies.”

Working Together 2018

Swindon Safeguarding Partnership recognises the benefits of rigorous and independent scrutiny of its safeguarding arrangements and believes that the effectiveness of those arrangements can best be measured through the analysis and challenge of performance information, the impact of quality assurance activity on outcomes for children and adults at risk, and its arrangements for and response to Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews and Safeguarding Adult Reviews.

The Partnership will therefore commission an Independent Chair of the Safeguarding Executive, Independent Reviewers for Quality Assurance activities and, where appropriate, Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews and Safeguarding Adult Reviews.

The Independent Chair of the Safeguarding Executive will support the statutory safeguarding partners in the establishment of the new arrangements. This role will be reviewed at the end of the first year of operation. The safeguarding partners expect that, subject to this review they will share the chairing of the Safeguarding Executive on an annual and rotating basis from April 2020.

Subject to review the partners intend that from April 2020 independent scrutiny of the safeguarding arrangements will be provided by an Independent Chair of the Performance and Quality Assurance Subgroup who will work with the Safeguarding Executive to identify areas of challenge and to develop and monitor improvement plans. In evaluating the effectiveness of the safeguarding arrangements, the Performance & Quality Assurance Subgroup will also consider the findings and recommendations of single agency inspections and Joint Targeted Area Inspections.

Reviewers of quality assurance activity will work with the Performance and Quality Assurance Subgroup to conduct quality improvement activities aligned to the Partnership’s Business Plan. All partners will be responsible for ensuring that learning from these is embedded in their own organisation and across the partnership.

Reporting

The Swindon Safeguarding Partnership will produce an independently scrutinised Annual Report which sets out what the partnership has done and how effective its multi-agency safeguarding arrangements have been in practice. It will include actions relating to safeguarding and domestic homicide reviews and what the safeguarding partners and others have done as a result. In addition, the report will include:

- evidence of the impact of the work of the safeguarding partners and relevant agencies, including training, on outcomes for children and adults at risk.
- an analysis of any areas where there has been little or no evidence of progress on agreed priorities
- a record of decisions and actions taken by the partners in the report’s period (or planned to be taken) to implement the recommendations of any local and national safeguarding and/or domestic homicide reviews, including any resulting improvements
- ways in which the partners have sought and utilised feedback from service users to inform their work and influence service provision.

The report will be published on the partnership's website and distributed across the range of agencies that make up the partnership

In line with legislation a copy of the report will also be sent to the Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel and the What Works Centre for Children's Social Care. The Partnership will also share the report with equivalent bodies for Health and the Police.

Dispute Resolution

Safeguarding partners and relevant agencies must act in accordance with the arrangements for their area and will be expected to work together to resolve any disputes locally. Public bodies that fail to comply with their obligations under law are held to account through a variety of regulatory and inspection activity. In extremis, any noncompliance will be referred to the Secretary of State.

Working Together 2018

The Swindon Safeguarding Partnership will expect and support organisations and agencies to hold one another to account and to challenge appropriately when concerns or disputes relating to the effectiveness of the multi-agency safeguarding arrangements arise.

The Partnership will maintain a risk register to document organisational and strategic issues that might impact on the Partnership's ability to meet its statutory obligations.

The Risk Register will be reviewed by the Partnership's Executive and a summary of the risks and mitigating actions as well as the impact of challenge will be included in the annual report.

Funding and Resourcing

The three safeguarding partners may make payments towards expenditure incurred in conjunction with local arrangements for safeguarding and promoting welfare of children locally.

The safeguarding partners should agree the level of funding secured from each partner, which should be equitable and proportionate, and with each relevant agency, to support the local arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in their area. The funding should be transparent to children and families in the area and sufficient to cover all elements of the arrangements.

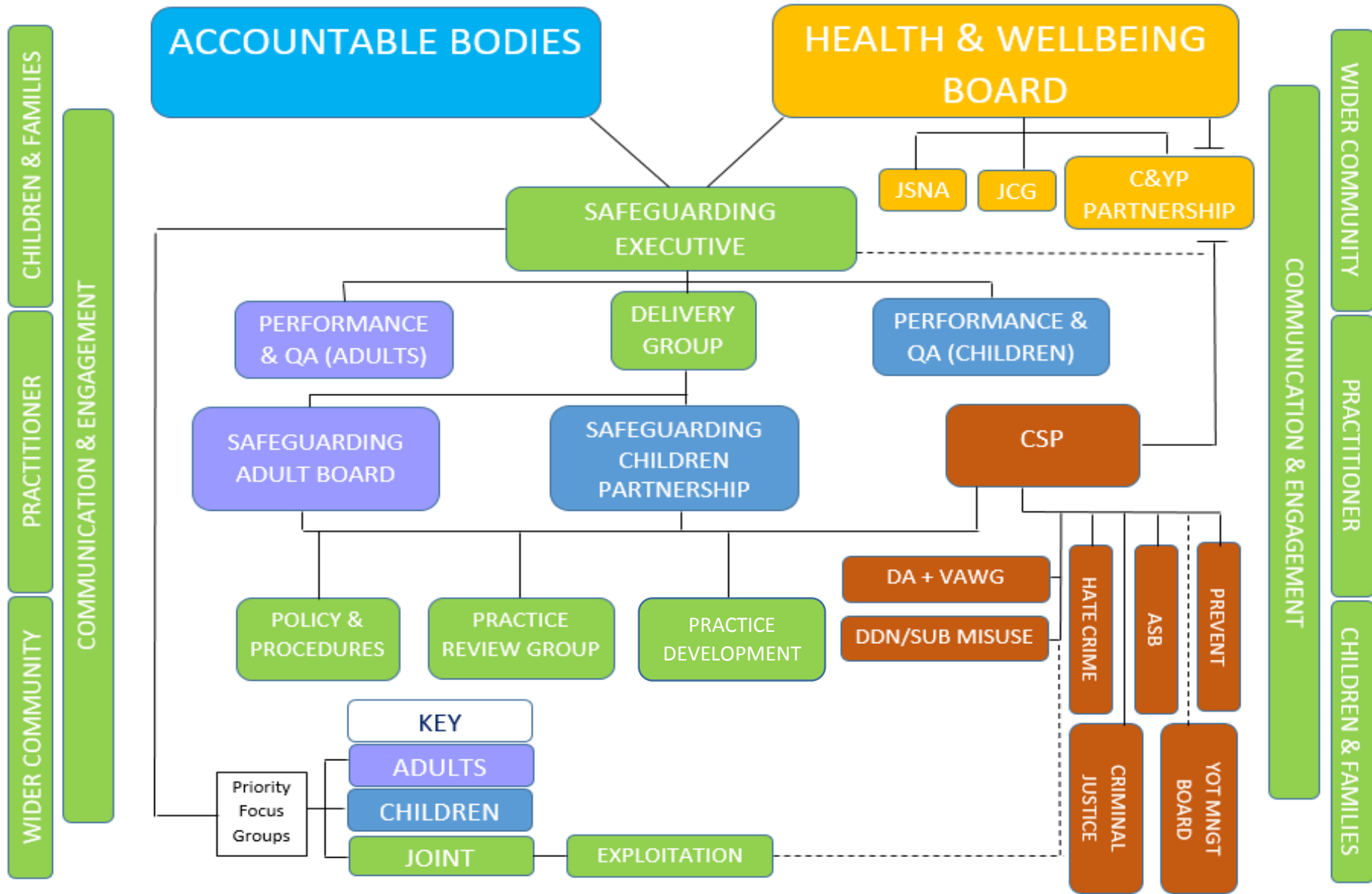
Working Together 2018

Section 14 of the Care Act 2014 states that Members of a SAB are expected to consider what assistance they can provide in supporting the Board in its work. This might be through payment to the local authority or to a joint fund established by the local authority to provide, for example, secretariat functions for the Board. Members might also support the work of the SAB by providing administrative help, premises for meetings or holding training sessions. It is in all core partners' interests to have an effective SAB that is resourced adequately to carry out its functions.

The funding arrangements for the Swindon Safeguarding Partnership will be developed and agreed ahead of the commencement of the new arrangements and contributions will be set out in a Memorandum of Understanding signed by the lead representatives and those with delegated responsibility for the arrangements as set out above. The safeguarding partners will provide through financial or in-kind contributions the resources required to deliver on their ambition for effective multi-agency safeguarding arrangements as set out in this document and the partnership's annual business plan.

The safeguarding partners have made arrangements for the partnership to be supported by a business support team which will comprise a Strategic Manager for Safeguarding, 1.6fte Partnership Development Managers and 2.5fte Administrative Support staff. The team will be employed and line managed by Swindon Borough Council on behalf of the safeguarding partners.

Structure



Safeguarding Partnership Delivery Groups

Swindon Safeguarding Executive

Meeting **8 times per year** the Executive comprises:

- The Independent Chair
- The Director of Children's Services, Swindon Borough Council (SBC)
- Executive Nurse, Swindon Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG)
- Head of Public Protection, Wiltshire Police
- The Director of Adult Services, Swindon Borough Council (SBC)
- The Director of Public Health, Swindon Borough Council (SBC)
- A representative of education providers

The following will receive papers relating to the meetings of the Safeguarding Executive and will be invited to attend when there are policy, resourcing and commissioning decisions to be addressed:

- Police & Crime Commissioner for Swindon & Wiltshire
- Swindon Borough Council Cabinet Member for Adults
- Swindon Borough Council Cabinet Member for Children
- Chief Executive of Swindon Borough Council
- Accountable Officer for Swindon Clinical Commissioning Group
- Chief Constable of Wiltshire Police

The core role of the Executive is to:

- ensure all elements of the Partnership are working effectively;
- to receive and respond to recommendations from the Independent Chair and any other sources of scrutiny and challenge.
- to set the budget and agree expenditure; to agree the Partnership's Business Plan and its Annual Report;
- to make decisions as to the commissioning of Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews (CSPR) and Safeguarding Adult Reviews (SARS). The Independent Chair will make these decisions during 2019/20 with the Chair of the Executive assuming this role from April 2020;
- to ensure there is a response to new and emerging safeguarding issues;
- to understand the performance and impact of safeguarding services; and,
- ensure the views and experiences of children and adults at risk inform the work of the Partnership
- oversee the transition of serious case reviews and child death reviews from the LSCB to the new Safeguarding and Child Death arrangements as appropriate.

Subject to review the chairing of the Executive is to be shared between the 3 statutory partners from April 2020

Swindon Safeguarding Adult Board & Swindon Safeguarding Children Partnership

Meeting four times per year these two groups will:

- Focus on performance and practice related to the Partnerships priorities;
- Seek, listen and respond to the voice of children and adults at risk
- Contribute to forward Business Planning; and,
- Contribute to and receive the Annual Report.

Delivery Group

Meeting four times per year the chairs group will support the Executive by ensuring that:

- the partnerships business plan is on track;
- each sub group is working effectively;
- agencies are properly represented across them all; and,
- where the work of one sub group can add value to that of another it is properly identified; and,
- that between them the priorities of the safeguarding partnership are being delivered.

Performance and Quality Assurance (PQA)

In due course, and to provide independent scrutiny, an Independent Chair will be commissioned to lead the Partnership's Performance and Quality Assurance function. Their role will be to provide scrutiny and challenge to the Safeguarding Executive and enable them to use data and intelligence to plan the focus and work of the wider partnership. The partnership will develop an overarching Assurance Framework which set out the ways in which partners will be held accountable for their safeguarding activity.

Each of the Adults and Childrens PQA groups will meet **four times per year** with dates set to coincide with the availability of performance data. The PQA discharges the core quality assurance and performance management functions of the Partnership.

PQA is responsible for the analysis of the Partnership data set and for setting and delivering the quality assurance programme for the Partnership. It will use evidence-based approaches to determine practice issues or service areas that require in-depth scrutiny and challenge. The Business Support Team will coordinate the multi-agency quality assurance programme and provide support for any quality assurance activity.

The two groups will take place on the same day and be arranged so as to enable joint areas of interest to be addressed by both groups together.

Workforce Development (WD)

Meeting **four times per year**, WD is responsible for the implementation of a practice improvement strategy and the delivery of an effective multi-agency learning and development programme that has a demonstrable impact on outcomes for children and adults at risk. The group will:

- Develop a multi-agency training offer that meets the needs of those working to safeguard and protect children and adults at risk;
- Oversee the commissioning of training providers and with the Business Support Team, review the quality and effectiveness of the training provided;
- Provide the Safeguarding Executive with assurance as to the effectiveness of the multi-agency training offer and its impact on frontline practice; and,
- Ensure that safeguarding training delivered within partner agencies is compatible with national and local requirements.

The majority of training is to be commissioned through external providers and the Business Support Team will manage the procurement, commissioning and contract management processes. In addition to this core provision, some of the multi-agency training will be provided by partner agencies and this too will be managed by the Business Support Team.

The Business Support Team will provide quarterly reports to the Workforce Development Group to include quantitative and qualitative information as to the effectiveness of the training offer. The Business Support Team will lead on the evaluation and quality assurance of the training offer. This will involve engagement with participants and their managers to evaluate the impact of training on frontline practice and a programme of course observations carried out by members of the partnership to quality assure the training providers.

Practice Review Group (PRG)

Meeting **4 times per year** the Practice Review Group will consist of senior officers from different agencies such as health, children social care, adult social care, community safety and police and will receive referrals on cases that may meet the criteria for a statutory such as a Child Safeguarding Practice Review and Safeguarding Adults Review.

The group will also receive and consider referrals for cases that provide for additional learning where those cases do not meet the criteria for a statutory review.

The Group will discuss the referrals and use statutory criteria to make recommendations to the Independent Chair (from April 2020 to the Safeguarding Executive) and any relevant statutory bodies such as the national panel on Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews. Where safeguarding practice reviews are commissioned the Practice Review Group will establish a review reference group to oversee the individual review process. Reviews will be commissioned in such a way as to ensure that the reports can be published in full. The Reports will be published on the Safeguarding Partnership website and will remain publicly available for at least one year.

The group will consider how best to disseminate the learning identified through case reviews and will advise the Safeguarding Executive on how the learning should be embedded and tested through the work plans of subgroups such as Policy & Procedure, Workforce Development and Performance & Quality Assurance.

The Practice Review Group and the Safeguarding Executive will adhere to statutory guidance as set out in Chapter 4 of Working Together 2018 and Section 44 of the Care Act 2014.

The Practice Review Group will arrange for the transition from Serious Case Reviews to Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews in line with Working Together: Transitional Guidance. Until July 2020, the Practice Review Group will also oversee and complete any (children's) Serious Case Reviews, which were ongoing at the time the new arrangements came into being. As of 30th April 2019, there are three SCRs to be concluded.

Policies and Procedures (P&P)

Meeting **four times per year**, P&P will:

- lead on the development of relevant multi-agency guidance and policies;
- respond to national policy, guidance or research findings as well as learning from case reviews to develop local guidance as required; and,
- In relation to safeguarding children, contribute to the maintenance, development and promotion of the South West Regional Child Protection Procedures.

Thresholds Documents

Of particular importance to the effectiveness of the multi-agency safeguarding arrangements for children is the partnership's threshold guidance which sets out the criteria for action in response to different levels of need.

Swindon Safeguarding Partnership has published its thresholds for action guidance '[The Right Help at the Right Time](#)' and it includes:

- the process for the early help assessment and the type and level of early help services to be provided
- the criteria, including the level of need, for when a case should be referred to local authority children's social care for assessment and for statutory services under:
- section 17 of the Children Act 1989 (children in need)
- section 47 of the Children Act 1989 (reasonable cause to suspect a child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm)
- section 31 of the Children Act 1989 (care and supervision orders)
- section 20 of the Children Act 1989 (duty to accommodate a child)

All agencies that make up the partnership are expected to use the thresholds guidance to identify and respond to the needs of children.

Communication & Engagement (C&E)

Meeting 4 times a year this group will lead on the Partnership's communication and engagement strategy. This will include:

- Consultation and engagement with children and adults at risk to promote their involvement in the development of services and multi-agency responses to their needs; and,
- Liaison with sector specific safeguarding groups (e.g. Designated Safeguarding Leads in schools Forum, Social workers through the Principal Social Worker, the Health Forum etc.);
- Co-ordination of an annual plan of targeted engagement with communities to raise awareness of identified safeguarding issues and consult on issues communities identify as being of concern.

Priority Focus Groups (PFG)

These groups will focus on the Partnership's priorities and identified emerging threats. They will consist of representatives from organisations that play a key role in delivering the identified improvements in services for children and families and adults at risk will meet as frequently as required. Where appropriate they will be time limited with clear terms of reference and SMART action plans. For as long as the group is needed the Chair would attend meetings of the Delivery Group