



Reading | West Berkshire | Wokingham

Annual Report 2019/2020

Reading, West Berkshire & Wokingham

Foreword from the Berkshire West Statutory Safeguarding Children Partners

Welcome to the Berkshire West Safeguarding Children Partnership Annual Report for 2019/2020, which provides an account of the work and progress undertaken by the multi-agency partnership to promote the safeguarding and wellbeing of children in Reading, West Berkshire and Wokingham.

Much of the focus this year has been on fulfilling and embedding our new Partnership arrangements, which were published on 28th March 2019. This has not been without challenges and we recognise that there are still improvements to be made to realise our shared responsibility and vision for children.

As Statutory Safeguarding Partners we are determined to use the new legislation to our advantage, to allow us to push our partnership arrangements forward for the benefit of our children, their families and our practitioners across all organisations. We will constantly review the partnership structure, priorities and scrutiny arrangements to ensure that we are operating pro-actively and productively to identify and meet need and make any improvements to help keep our children safe. More detail on our arrangements and future changes can be found in the 'Knowing Ourselves' section on page 29.

In a year which ended in very different circumstances than any of us could have predicted, our new Berkshire West partnership arrangements provided us with a solid platform to face the demands of the pandemic in a joined up and strategic way. We would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge and say thank you to each and every member of the Partnership, our Subgroup Members, practitioners from all our partner agencies, education colleagues, volunteers and those people out in the community for their commitment and the work they continue to do to help keep children in Berkshire West safe and to improve their life chances.



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Our Vision and Values

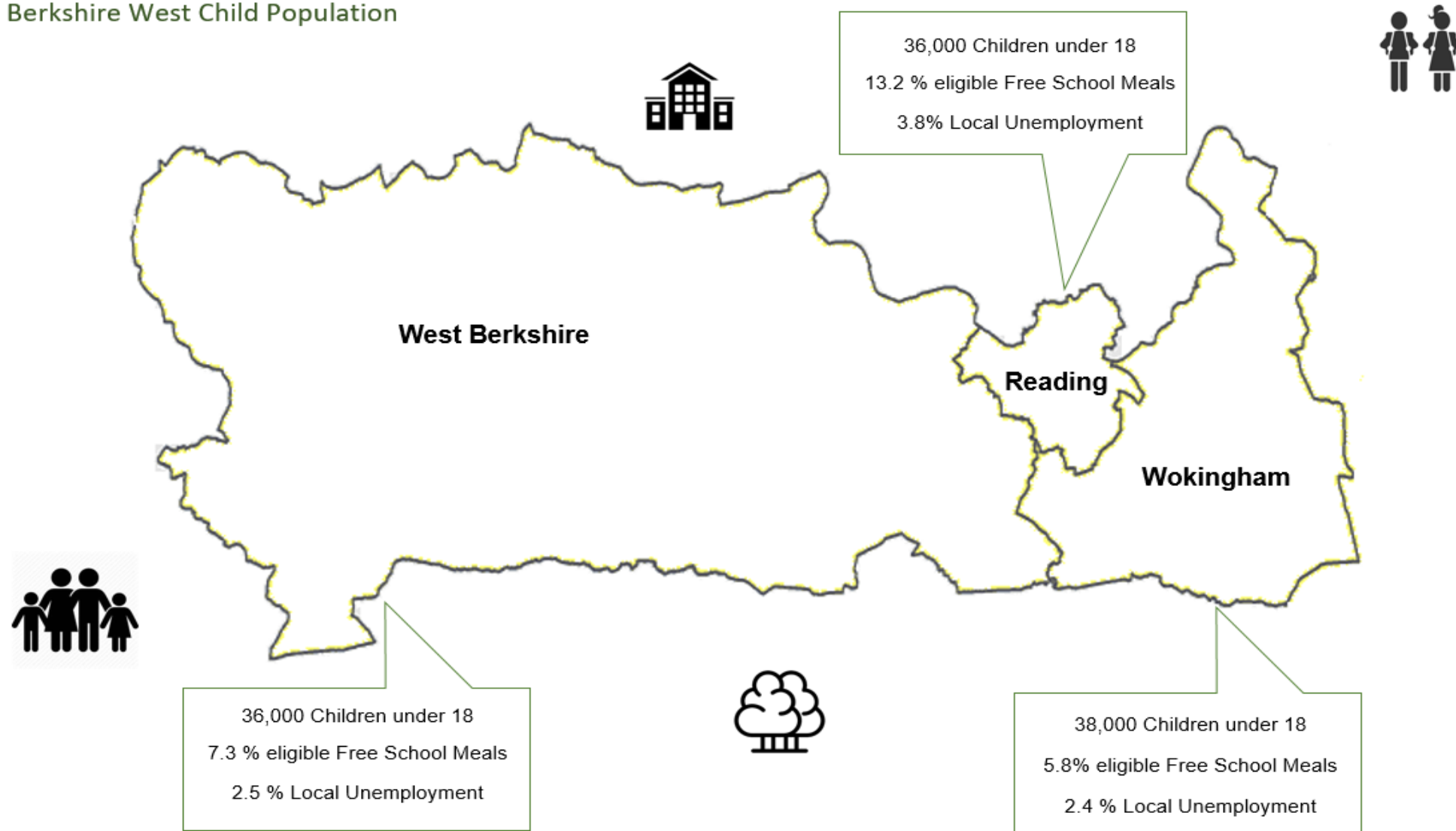
Berkshire West (Reading, West Berkshire and Wokingham) partners are strongly committed to the shared responsibility to safeguard and protect children and young people. Berkshire West benefits from excellent inter-agency engagement, and proactive leadership, of this shared safeguarding agenda.

We commit to working as partners to improve the lived experience of all children and young people in the Berkshire West area, so they can be safe and are able to live happy, positive lives and achieve their potential. Our vision is that children in Berkshire West have their needs met at the lowest possible threshold with the aim of preventing the need for escalation into targeted services.



The Local Picture

Berkshire West Child Population



Estimated numbers taken from the Childrens Commissioner Vulnerabilities in England

Executive Summary

As a newly formed partnership we are still finding our way, to make best use of the extensive, skilled personnel and resources we have available to us. We have used the previous LSCB structures as a base, retaining those elements that worked well (the cross-boundary groups) while developing and revitalising the local groups in each area. We have directly given them a stronger mandate to focus on scrutiny, impact and doing, rather than report receiving, data watching and listening – although we know we still have work to do to strengthen this.

Our first annual report as the Berkshire West Safeguarding Children Partnership focusses on the work we have undertaken together as a partnership rather than as single agencies or areas. In our first year we have some significant achievements detailed within this annual report that have been achieved by being open to new ways of working in a tri-borough arrangement. This includes:

- A clear and effective Rapid Review process that provides detailed and comprehensive learning for cases at an early stage, which has been recognised by the national Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel as best practice.
- A new website for Berkshire West Safeguarding Children Partnership that brings together all the key information from the previous LSCB websites and makes the location of information for practitioners and families clearer and easier to access.
- The locally devised and produced 'Be Brave – Speak up' online campaign which reached 81,824 (with a total number of impressions being 522,445 being watched an average 6.3 times) and shared 207 times on Facebook.
- A committed Strategic Partnership ensured the best plans were in place to identify and respond to risk to help protect vulnerable children and support practitioners during the Covid-19 pandemic.
- Collaborative working across multi-agencies captured the views of practitioners that resulted in the production of the first partnership Business Plan under the new arrangements to focus our priorities
- Local learning and key information from 5 Serious Case Reviews was delivered to 167 practitioners as an opportunity to participate in multi-agency safeguarding discussions.

The new partnership model is flexible and allows us to learn and challenge each other, share best practice, learning, skills, knowledge and expertise across the three localities. We have the building blocks in place for us to make a real impact in helping to safeguard and improve children's lives in Berkshire West over the coming months. We welcome any suggestions and feedback you may have, to help us achieve our collective goals.



Carol Cammiss



Deborah Glassbrook



Andy Sharp



Debbie Simmons



Rebecca Mears

Governance, Accountability and Transition to the New Arrangements

Berkshire West Multi-Agency Safeguarding arrangements were created as a result of revised statutory guidance, effective since July 2018. A Multi-Agency Safeguarding Arrangements (MASA) Programme Board was established to over-see the transition from the three Berkshire West LSCB's to the new partnership arrangements, with the final meeting in April 2020. The Statutory Safeguarding Partners now hold the oversight, governance and responsibility of the Partnership arrangements. The composition of the Statutory Partnership meetings, based on published guidance consists of:

- Directors of Children's Services - Reading, West Berkshire and Wokingham
- Nurse Director - Berkshire West Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG)
- Head Protecting Vulnerable People Thames Valley Police
- Independent Scrutiny representative

Link to BWSCP arrangements: <https://www.berkshirewestsafeguardingchildrenpartnership.org.uk/scp/about-the-scp/berkshire-west-multi-agency-safeguarding-arrangements>

Transition and Embedding the New Arrangements in Berkshire West

Multi-Agency Safeguarding Arrangement (MASA) Programme Board

The MASA was set up as a transitional project Board to agree and oversee the new Berkshire West arrangements over a 2 year period. Members consisted of the senior managers/directors from the three Local Authorities, Thames Valley Police, Clinical Commissioning Group, Royal Berkshire Foundation Trust and Berkshire Healthcare Foundation Trust. The MASA continued to scrutinise and monitor the implementation of the arrangement as a 'safety net'; this was a safe space for partners to look objectively at the new ways of working and to identify any risk. MASA could objectively take the wider viewpoint and seek to trouble shoot and escalate issues where necessary, so as not to distract the partnership from embedding the new arrangements and the work of helping to improve the safeguarding of our children.

The new arrangements have now been in place for 1 year and the MASA Programme Board concluded its work in April 2020. The BWSCP Statutory Safeguarding Partners have now incorporated the function of the MASA into its core business.

Learning and Challenge: Over the period of the MASA there were significant organisation restructures and movement of staff within senior leader roles across the 3 areas, which resulted in an element of 'stop start', although the final goal remained. Colleagues from the health organisations were the consistent members of the project and provided the stability and focus to bring the Berkshire West vision to fruition.

This level of coordination and engagement across Berkshire West would have been unlikely under the old LSCB arrangements. Our new structure has strengthened relationships between the three localities, which has directly resulted in more proactive and open discussions. The Statutory Safeguarding Partners have acknowledged that the partnership feels less defensive than it used to when challenged by an Independent LSCB Chair. Partners feel responsible, therefore have a more pro-active approach to making it a success. It is a significant achievement in a short space of time to make such a cultural shift, considering the amalgamation of three demographically different Local Authority areas.

Berkshire West Strategic Partners Group

We no longer have an Independent Chair for the Partnership. The Statutory Safeguarding Partners oversee, direct and Chair the partnership, and during the first year was supported by the Strategic Independent Scrutineer to provide challenge and scrutiny.

The merging of the Partnership across 3 Local Authority areas has been ambitious as the three Berkshire West areas (Reading, West Berkshire and Wokingham) are demographically, economically and geographically different; the shared borders mean that many children live in one area and might attend nursery, school or college in another area, travelling across borders for recreational activities and shopping etc. All partners agreed that there would be benefits from a partnership arrangement in collaborative working and sharing good practice, whilst retaining and responding to a local nuance and need; while thinking strategically about where improvements can be made that affect the whole Berkshire West child population such as exploitation, domestic abuse and any cross border emerging risks. This approach supports those multi-agency partners that span the three areas in particular health and Thames Valley Police.

The Statutory Safeguarding Partners meet 3 to 4 times per year with the flexibility to have contact in between the meetings to ensure any significant Berkshire West concerns can be discussed and resolved. Multi-agency partnership discussions for each area take place at the Independent Scrutiny and Impact Group's (ISIG) where those nuances for that locality can be determined and addressed.

Learning and Challenge: It has been an ambitious journey to amalgamate across three Local Authority areas. A consequence of one of the agencies spanning a much wider geographical area has presented challenges and we recognise that these organisations will require earlier notice of requests for resource or finances to enable them to consult within their agency before a final agreement is reached.

Strategic Scrutineer View: The Partnership has, in recent months, begun to form in a more robust and meaningful way of working. In part, this has been supported by independent scrutiny, as we want to strengthen Chairing arrangements. The focus and commitment to pull together in response to the Covid-19 pandemic has also driven alternative and positive ways of working, with these factors resulting in the Partnership gaining some traction and this success will be the platform on which to build further improvements.

Impact of Partnership Working: The Strategic Group have the absolute expectation that the members of the group have the expertise and mandate to hold the decision-making powers for their organisation; and able to commit resources or funding appropriate to each agency as required whilst recognising the difference of scale and geographical responsibilities. The rapid response to the Covid-19 situation is testament to

the commitment and pro-active leadership by the Partners to ensure the best plans were in place to identify and respond to risk to help protect vulnerable children and support practitioners.

Children's Safeguarding Leaders Group

There is no longer a safeguarding 'Board' in Berkshire West (see page 32 for the Partnership structure). It is vital that the wider partners feel included and have a voice in the focus and work to help improve safeguarding and outcomes for children. The Children's Safeguarding Leaders Group are the wider members of the 3 former LSCB's and they have an important role to play in the effectiveness and success of the partnership.

It was agreed that this large group meets three times per year in a workshop/forum style format, to discuss key themes and problem solve on a wider footprint. The first meeting of this group helped to determine the key priorities of the partnership for 2019/21. The forums are also an opportunity to share information and learning from across agencies; and essentially the voice and experience of children and practitioners to identify and share areas of good practice; and to think about how we critically examine, review and identify local safeguarding themes and priorities allowing us to problem solve together where there are areas of risk as a safeguarding partnership.

Learning and Challenge - View of the Strategic Independent Scrutineer: The role of the Leaders Forum remains under-developed, and the Partnership needs to think swiftly, strategically and tactically about how it will be inclusive to other agencies, organisations and services that contribute to help keep the children in Berkshire West safe.

Impact of Partnership Working: Collaborative working across multi-agencies to capture their views as to where the focus and priority of the work of the partnership and subgroups, resulted in the production of the first partnership Business Plan under the new arrangements.

Education Leaders Involvement

Schools play a pivotal role in the Partnership as they were key members of the LSCB's. As a relevant agency, education colleagues were involved in the transition discussions throughout and we were very clear that the voice of schools needed to be retained as a strong influence in our future arrangements. Schools/education settings had not been named as a statutory safeguarding partner, but we are determined that this important universal service, with their experience and support in safeguarding, is not absent from key discussions.

Education colleagues play an active part in our Independent Scrutiny & Impact Groups and School Engagement Subgroups and they are crucial to ensuring that these meetings can focus on the local safeguarding issues for our children in each area.

The Section 175 Subgroup provides a mechanism for education leaders to inform and lead the development of improving safeguarding across schools, early years and further education settings; enabling us to learn and share information, intelligence, communication and good practice across Berkshire West.

Review of Child Death Overview Panel (CDOP) arrangements (Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018)

The Berkshire West Multi-agency Safeguarding Arrangement Project Board (MASA) had full oversight of the pan Berkshire review of the Child Death Overview Panel (CDOP) arrangements. This enabled local scrutiny and ensured full compliance with the new guidance in Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 in regard to process and review structures of the CDOP framework, before the publication of its function.

We have historically had a successful joint Child Death Overview Panel (CDOP) working across the six local authorities in the county, Bracknell Forest Council, Reading Borough Council, Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead, Slough Borough Council, West Berkshire Council and Wokingham Borough Council. This existing Pan Berkshire arrangement was already broadly in line with new requirements in Working Together 2018, therefore the key changes required and now implemented linked predominantly to the process of case management through the CDOP system.

The CDOP Panel members are employed in multi-agency services and the individual Safeguarding Partnerships (or Boards) in Berkshire. Members bring their individual expertise to review information on all child deaths, looking for possible learning and patterns with the aim of making improvements in services, policy, procedures and communications to prevent future deaths.

Link to Pan Berkshire CDOP arrangements published June 2019 <https://www.berkshirewestccg.nhs.uk/cdop>

Effectiveness of the Safeguarding Arrangements

Safeguarding Activity and Impact in Response to Covid-19

In March 2020 the United Kingdom was facing the impact of a global pandemic following a worldwide outbreak of a Covid19, which over the first 3 weeks of March became increasingly serious, with outbreaks being recorded nationally and increasing exponentially. By 23rd March 2020 the Prime Minister has closed schools and announced that the country should 'stay at home', effectively enforcing a 'lockdown' on the free movement of the population, to attempt to control the spread of the virus. At the same time, public services were seeing an unprecedented impact.

As a partnership, it was clear that agencies needed to come together in a swift, cohesive way to manage the situation, which was changing almost daily. The Berkshire West Statutory Safeguarding Partners, along with Royal Berkshire Foundation Trust, Berkshire Healthcare Foundation Trust, South Central Ambulance Service, Emergency Duty Service and Education colleagues from all 3 areas formed the Berkshire West Covid-19 Group to conduct virtual meetings.

Overview of Key Achievements

The partners have a healthy transparent relationship that allowed them to share key organisational concerns, what they thought was working well and to be able to problem solve and work together to help provide the support required to help keep children and families safe. Multi-agency partners were committed to twice weekly conference video calls to identify risk, share information and monitor and scrutinise contingency plans to continue business as usual to support (as much as safely possible) and identify our vulnerable children, young people and their families.

| Covid-19 The Partnership Response | | |
|-----------------------------------|---|--|
| | Identified Risk/Need | Key Achievements/Response |
| 1. | Service Continuity and changes in working practices. | Each agency developed and shared Business Continuity Plans Covid-19 meetings facilitated the opportunity for services to report their experiences, and to challenge colleagues on their individual responses. Multi-agency mapping of resources that may be affected by the pandemic and included discussion on staffing resource, sickness, redeployment to assess and problem solve where there was risk and need. Service preparation and risk identification post 'Lockdown' Partners have embraced the emerging use of technology to allow front line practitioners to attend and facilitate strategy discussions and child protection conferences remotely. There has been a notable increase in engagement with meetings. |
| 2. | Responding to risk and the impact of mental health issues | Covid WhatsApp Group for colleagues to be able share 'live' information when required (e.g. out of hours or to convene an exceptional meeting) |

| | | |
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| | | Compare multi-agency data, discuss emerging risks and are in the process of determining what the impact of lockdown, and its relaxation, will be on our families. |
| | | Oversight and agreement of key communications to families and staff in response to the wider impact of 'lock-down' e.g. emotional health |
| | | BHFT worked with Children's Services across Berkshire West to identify particularly vulnerable families to ensure that both services work together to ensure these families are seen face-to-face by a practitioner |
| | | Berkshire Healthcare video raised awareness of Domestic Abuse for their services who were using video consultation methods. This approach was to display a 'notice' behind the clinician on the call, with Domestic Abuse helpline details, in a discreet format. |
| | | Thames Valley Police video campaign specifically aimed at children to explain what Domestic Abuse is, and to encourage children to reach out if they were worried about themselves or another person. |
| | | BWSCP issued an agreed Berkshire West Wide statement, in support of families being able to access their regular support mechanisms such as family and friends, if it is safe to do so, with the reassurance that they will not be prosecuted or fined to help keep children safe. |
| 3. | Communication and agreement of swift production of communication materials for practitioners and communities | Production of #Be Brave Speak up social media campaign (see below) |
| | | BHFT #Coping; Family life during the Lockdown was widely promoted via social media and to children and families via schools. |
| | | BWSCP issued an agreed Berkshire West Wide statement, in support of families being able to access their regular support mechanisms such as family and friends, if it is safe to do so, with the reassurance that they will not be prosecuted or fined to help keep children safe |
| | | Covid-19 specific BWSCP web page created to share a multitude of resources for families, young people and communities |
| | | ICON (crying baby) resources have been widely shared among partner agencies, to share with new parents |
| 4. | Learning | Shared national learning from the TASP – Association Safeguarding Partners webinars |
| | | Pan Berkshire Business Manager meetings to share information across Berkshire |

View of the Independent Scrutineer: The Covid-19 pandemic, has proved to the Partnership that it is possible to do things differently, despite there being challenges and obstacles. It is on this basis that if the Statutory Partners can continue to inject some pace, authority and purpose to the revised arrangements as there is a solid foundation on which to build.

Impact of Partnership Working: As soon as the 'lock-down' situation was declared, the Statutory Safeguarding Partners and other key organisations initiated a twice weekly Covid-19 Partnership meeting. This has enabled those agency decision makers and partners with the ability and expertise to problem solve issues as they arise respond to need in an effective coordinated way.

The discussion and work undertaken as a partnership in response to Covid-19 has specifically allowed us to review and influence the local Midwifery and Health Visiting response since lockdown. This has directly led to changes in the service provision and the way front line practitioners are working with families.

The production and wide distribution of the '**Be Brave – Speak Up**' video campaign, which encouraged communities to report any suspicion of abuse or neglect they may have concerns about in their neighbourhoods. This covered children and adults safeguarding and was rolled out across all agencies in both domains. It was also shared as part of a targeted Facebook campaign and reached **81,824** views and was shared across many organisations and regions.

Business Plan and Subgroup Safeguarding Activity and Impact

Our Priorities 2019 – 2021

Identifying our priorities was a collaborative effort, hearing the views of colleagues from a wide range of partner agencies and evidence from data, auditing and inspection along with themes from local serious case reviews informed the first Business Plan; which was published in November 2019.

The Independent Scrutineers facilitated a workshop with our Children's Leaders in September 2019 to think about how we critically examine and review local safeguarding priorities, identify and problem solve together areas of risk as safeguarding leaders. During the initial priority setting discussions, a number of key areas were identified and included contextual safeguarding, emotional health and wellbeing and early help which resulted in the following priorities:

- Priority 1 - Emerging Safeguarding risks to young people in today's society
- Priority 2 - Intervening Earlier
- Priority 3 - Engagement of Children, Families and Practitioners
- Priority 4 - Effectiveness of the new Partnership Arrangements

The following information sets out a summary of achievements by the Partnership and Subgroups to progress the Business Plan and priority areas of work.

Berkshire West Case Review Group

Rapid Review Process

A significant change in Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 was the move to conducting Rapid Reviews within set timeframes following the notification of a significant child safeguarding incident to the Department of Education.

Members of the Case Review Group, on behalf of the Partnership, conduct reviews of cases and make multi-agency decisions where the criteria for serious harm is met, in line with statutory guidance. Locally there is a clear established rapid review process and guidance. All identified cases are reviewed, progressed and monitored through the multi-agency Berkshire West Case Review Group. The skilled, committed and disciplined partnership subgroup produce clear, focussed reports within statutory timeframes. The analysis of multi-agency involvement information and chronologies informs and identifies any immediate actions that need to be taken to ensure the safety of the child, key learning points and good practice. Practitioner sessions are held to understand the workers experience and inform learning which is shared across the multi-agency partnership in classroom training events and published information.

Overview of Key Achievements

The national Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel has been complimentary about the quality of the Rapid Review reports submitted to date. They have stated that our analysis has been detailed and well thought through, and for the most part agreed with our next steps and the decisions for further review. There has been some challenge from the national Panel in two of the cases, including one where they felt our suggested Local Child Safeguarding Practice Review was unnecessary as we had already provided clear analysis and learning, and discussions are ongoing.

| Berkshire West Case Review Group | | |
|----------------------------------|--|---|
| | Safeguarding Activity Practice Reviews | Outcomes |
| 1. | Rapid Review undertaken for 9 children following a notification of significant child safeguarding incident (for the period April 2019 to August 2020 – time of writing this report) | 3 cases - Multi-agency decision to undertake Local Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews 3 cases - Multi-agency decision to undertake some additional local learning focussed on specific issues identified by the Rapid Review 3 cases - Rapid Review process provided sufficient multi-agency analysis, no further action |
| 2. | 5 additional cases considered by the Case Review Group | 4 children no further review 1 child Internal Management Review with multi-agency input |
| 3. | Thematic Local Learning from 5 previous serious case reviews delivered <ul style="list-style-type: none">Systematic sexual abuse of a large sibling group | 6 multi-agency events were held across Reading, West Berkshire and Wokingham and attended by 167 delegates with positive feedback Learning Event Slides produced and disseminated 7 Minute Briefings produced and disseminated: |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Life changing injury to a new born • Poisoning of a toddler • Death of a young baby • Physical abuse of a primary age child | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Childs Voice and Experience • Clare's Law • Professional Disagreement/Escalation • Information Sharing • Working with Fathers/Male Carers |
| | | Learning from national reviews disseminated across multi-agency organisations |
| 4. | Core Business - Rapid Review Compliance & Case Review Process | Rapid Review Process written and under constant review: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guidance • Agency Involvement Reporting templates • Case for Consideration Templates |

The Case Review Group continues to promote active discussion about any cases that colleagues may feel meet criteria for a level of multi-agency review. Colleagues from any agency can submit a case for consideration document, and the group will then coordinate receipt and review of multi-agency information in relation to the case. If, on consideration, it is then felt that the case meets the criteria for a notification of significant child safeguarding incident, then the relevant local authority is instructed to do so as a retrospective notification. This is an open, honest but challenging group, where individuals actively scrutinise safeguarding practice.

Local Learning from previous Serious Case Reviews

The purpose of a Serious Case Review (now Local Child Safeguarding Practice Review) is to look at the response of organisations working alongside children and families, to identify any improvements that can be made to the services they provide; and as a partnership for us to understand and share good practice and learning to improve and promote the wellbeing of our children and young people.

The common themes and learning from 5 previous serious case reviews was an opportunity for practitioners to come together to reflect on the case learning and think about what we can do differently. The Learning event slides, published reports and 7-minute briefings can be found here: <https://www.berkshirerwestsafeguardingchildrenpartnership.org.uk/scp/professionals/serious-case-reviews>

Overall the feedback from the learning events was extremely positive being described as 'very informative' 'with a good pace of discussion'. Delegates found the events helpful as it enabled them to participate in real multi-agency focused discussions relating to safeguarding. Delegates described the session as a helpful opportunity to hear and understand the role of other professionals, including their responsibilities and expectations of themselves and each other. The content and delivery of the events was described as interesting and thought provoking and raised good discussion and learning within the case scenario groups.

Independent Scrutiny and Impact Groups (ISIG)

Reading, West Berkshire and Wokingham each have a local Independent Scrutiny and Impact Subgroup (ISIG). A significant change for the newly merged Berkshire West Partnership was the recruitment of the Independent Scrutineers to help us to focus on reviewing the sufficiency and effectiveness of partnership's safeguarding arrangements, including the impact and outcomes for children and young people. The Independent Scrutiny and Impact Groups are a conversion from the previous local LSCB Quality and Performance Groups, and their function is to include challenge and support from an Independent scrutineer.

As a partnership we wanted to move away from safeguarding assurance based on annual reports and work towards embedding a partnership learning culture and mature systems leadership which will require all partners to take an active responsibility for the support and challenge of each other. Independent Scrutineers would be key as a systems leader modelling this way of working, to improve outcomes for our children.

| Overview of Key Activities Independent Scrutiny and Impact Groups (ISIG) | | |
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| | Scrutiny Outcomes | Activity Themes |
| 1. | Thematic approach scrutiny Linked to the Business Plan with a local perspective provides the partnership, as a whole, with three different conversations, approaches and share possible solutions | On-line Safety – risks and themes for our children |
| | | Missing – is it Exploitation |
| | | Agency Covid-19 response |
| 2. | Response/Risk to Covid-19 'what value and impact can the partnership have in keeping children safe during these testing times, and how can that value be evidenced' | Positive Operational Scrutineer report compared the responses from organisations across Berkshire West, highlighting common themes, areas of agreed risk, what has been the impact, Report and included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What we were worried about • What was working well • What support is required • Future planning |
| 3. | Child's voice and experience Members bringing the voice and experience of children and practitioners to understand the barriers to improved service delivery. | Examples: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ISIG Exclusion audit in Wokingham included the voice of children whose experience has been echoed in national learning from those children exploited. • Surveys undertaken locally to understand the impact of Covid-19 have clearly included the statements and information from children and young people. |

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| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> An annual Peer Mentor Conference takes place in West Berkshire and looking to how we can work with organisers to include workshops that provide us with additional information to support our priorities. |
| 4. | Multi-agency audit of specific themes, to better understand the experience of children and/or to identify development work/improvement | <p>Royal Berkshire NHS Foundation Trust (RBFT) Child Death Rapid Response</p> <p>Pan Berkshire BHFT Rapid Response home visit service model and specification against the profile of unexpected child deaths in Berkshire West and to consider the immediate and subsequent support needs of bereaved families</p> <p>RBHFT High Impact Users Audit has identified clear multi-agency recommendations in relation to joint support for these children. These are being discussed with statutory partners.</p> <p>Child Exploitation, Child Sexual Exploitation – EMRAC – West Berkshire. Positive annual audit of the effectiveness of the EMRAC process which has fed actions into the local exploitation action plan.</p> <p>Multi-agency Exclusion – Wokingham</p> <p>Contacts to Wokingham Children’s Social Care from Royal Berkshire Hospital</p> |
| 5. | Develop and improve partnership scrutiny & challenge Empowering each member to challenge and be challenged to improve outcomes for children while representing their own organisation to promote reflection to drive continuous improvement? | <p>Scrutineer mentoring of the Group – ‘Characteristics of good scrutiny’</p> <p>New reporting template that includes key scrutiny questions to focus on the experience of children and where improvements can be made</p> <p>The Rapid Review process has shown evidence of openness and multi-agency scrutiny on a case by case basis, leading to detailed analytical reports.</p> |
| 6. | Core Business Effective, clear priorities and responsibilities to help improve safeguarding outcomes Performance information to spot patterns and trends (reporting exceptions, strengths and weaknesses to the partnership). Each agency is responsible for their own performance reporting and should bring analysis and narrative based on exception reporting | <p>Review of data set - simpler dataset, reflecting core multi-agency safeguarding measures that includes data from across the three Berkshire West areas, and with South East or England benchmark information where available</p> <p>Thematic schedule linked to priority area & sub-group activity</p> <p>New Terms of Reference and revised membership</p> <p>Independent Scrutineer observations and reflection to inform future work.</p> |

Impact: One of the locality areas specifically discussed sexual abuse in the ISIG meeting. All members were asked to take back to their organisations to think about how we identify those children at risk of or subject to sexual abuse. We subsequently saw a rise in referrals for sexual abuse in that locality.

View of the Operational Independent Scrutineer: The partnership has shown during the Covid-19 'lockdown' period that they have a solid foundation which enabled them to work together swiftly to ensure professionals, children and families were safeguarded as much as possible. Risk was managed and shared so that all agencies felt supported and not isolated. This has been positive, and the reports provided all highlighted the importance of this. The challenge for the Partnership post lockdown is to consider this and look at how to build on the foundations that have been laid to ensure continued joint working, shared management of risk and effective multi-agency response to children and their families.

View of the Strategic Independent Scrutineer: The work and impact of the Independent Scrutiny and Impact Groups (ISIGs) has had very limited impact across areas where there may be shared risk e.g. exploitation and missing children. In part this is due to a revised format which was only agreed in November 2019 and which will be first trialled in February 2020. It is likely that this will take several months to embed. As such, information from these ISIGs has yet to find its way to the Statutory Partnership meetings and the learning and feedback loops have not yet formed or tested.

Independent scrutiny has highlighted the need for stronger business planning processes and multi-agency auditing to have pace and purpose. Scrutiny has also helped revise arrangements with the Independent Scrutiny Groups, resulting in early signs of greater focus, clarity and purpose; these groups have a pivotal role in driving the Partnership's business priorities forward. Further independent scrutiny will be needed in order to help all those involved maintain momentum to the changes introduced.

Learning and Challenges

As the independent scrutiny roles are new, the effectiveness of this function will be part of our review of the new arrangements. We will identify what has worked, what needs to change and amend these arrangements as required. We recognise that thematic scrutiny and multi-agency audits need to be a focus and include the child's voice and experience to identify development work. There needs to be an improvement in the tracking and progress of recommendations and agreed actions and have clear, measurable outcomes for children and their families.

The current Covid-19 pandemic has hampered our ability to take forward some actions from our first set of thematic discussions in regard to progressing the scheduled theme discussion and a survey to capture the voice of practitioners, however, it has also provided positive examples of the impact of our new partnership arrangements in enabling us to tackle the 'lockdown' situation from a Berkshire West perspective.

Overview, Activity and Highlights of the BWSCP Subgroups

Work to meet the priorities as set out in the Business Plan and core business is carried out across a range of local, Berkshire West and Pan Berkshire subgroups. A brief account of the remit and achievements for each group is set out below. We are working to a consistent Berkshire West approach, influencing culture to enable the sharing of skills and identify best practice across a wider footprint, to help improve the life chances for all our children. Local subgroups maintain and respond to emerging trends and local need.

| Berkshire West Children's Safeguarding Leaders | | |
|---|---|---|
| Children's Leaders in Berkshire West have a very important role to play in the effectiveness of the partnership as they share the voice and experience of children and practitioners which informs the focus of our work; by sharing any identified safeguarding themes and risk for children, ideas or areas of good practice to improve the way we work together as a partnership. The Children's Leaders Forum aims to meet three times per year in a workshop style format, to discuss key themes and problem solve on a wider footprint. | | |
| | Outcome | Activity/Highlights/Impact |
| 1. | Voice of Children and Practitioners Collaborative work to share identified safeguarding themes and risk for children, | Children's Leaders Forum <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The concerns and worried for children and practitioners determined the priorities of the BWSCP Business Plan 2020/2021 • Consulted with and agreed outcomes from High Impact User Audit • Role in 'good Scrutiny & Challenge' • Priority Setting Survey circulated to the group to inform the Business Plan |
| 2. | Communication A consistent and timely dissemination of key information and safeguarding messages across organisations | Dissemination of communication and key messages across organisations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BWSCP Learning & Development Offer • Learning from local and national Serious Case Reviews • Private Fostering • Policy & Procedure updates |
| 3. | Core Business A clear remit and understanding of the partnership's new arrangements and role of a Children's Leader in Berkshire West | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Terms of Reference • Simple guide to BWSCP • Regular communication key information and safeguarding messages for dissemination across organisations |
| Learning and Challenge | | |
| We recognise that we have work to do to fully engage the wider partnership as we embed our new arrangements now that there is no longer a 'main' board and the Forums have stalled, in some part due to Covid-19 and social distancing, as we have no clear timeframes as to when we can meet as a large group. Many of the representatives of this group are members in the Subgroups and are committed to continually improve our response to help safeguard children. | | |

View of the Strategic Scrutineer: The role of the Leaders Forum remains under-developed, and the Partnership needs to think swiftly, strategically and tactically about how it will be inclusive to other agencies, organisations and services that contribute to keeping the children in Berkshire West safe.

Berkshire West Berkshire West Learning & Development Subgroup

Organise forums and training in line with requirements from Working Together 2018, multi-agency needs analysis, emerging themes and learning from national and local serious case reviews.

Working Together 2018: Chapter 1 paragraph 5: The three safeguarding partners should consider what training is needed locally and how they will monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of any training they commission for those working in universal and specialist services and include new and emerging threats, including online abuse, grooming, sexual exploitation and radicalisation.

Working Together 2018 Chapter 2: Section 2 In line with organisation s11 responsibilities, it is a requirement that single agencies provide a level of safeguarding training to all staff and volunteers working with children, young people that is dependent on their role and provide regular safeguarding updates and refresher training as part of their ongoing development. This requirement is monitored by the Pan Berkshire s11 Subgroup.

| Outcome | Activity/Highlights/Impact |
|--|--|
| Learning and Development Opportunities across Berkshire West to multi-agency practitioners, schools, voluntary and community workers in regard to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Emerging Threats Radicalisation | Multi-agency Forums: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Contextual Safeguarding: to understand the risks outside the family, behaviours and indicators and to promote the: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Simple Child Exploitation Tool Professional Disagreement/Escalation policy Contextual Safeguarding 7-minute Briefing Trauma Informed Practice and Adverse Childhood Experiences Embedding a Contextual Safeguarding Approach Looking Beyond Disguised Compliance |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Share learning from local, national serious case reviews | Free multi-agency Learning Forums (see page 13 for more information) |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved understanding interagency roles and skills required to work in collaboration effectively with partner agencies | Commissioning of Effective Multi-agency Working classroom sessions 54 multi-agency practitioners completed the course across the 3 localities. |

| | |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consistent Universal Safeguarding to identify the symptoms and triggers of abuse and neglect and to share that information appropriately to help to provide children with the help they need | <p>Universal Safeguarding E-learning Over 8,000 practitioners and volunteers completed the Universal e-learning training over an 18-month period</p> <p>E-learning links to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Female Genital Mutilation Safer Recruitment Prevent and links to Home Office resource and e-learning |
| Learning and Challenge | |
| <p>As the partnership have no allocated budget for training, Forums and provision of training relies on the partnership goodwill and expertise to deliver quality sessions that respond to the differing levels of skills, need and agency focus. To date this has been a successful way in which to deliver training. Evidencing the impact of training is an area that is being grappled with nationally, evaluations are circulated to delegates and we continue to try new ways of assessing impact.</p> <p>Covid-19 has impacted on the provision of planned forums and training from the BWSCP due to the continuation of 'lockdown' as we are unable to access venues for the foreseeable future and various agencies use differing IT platforms. Members of the group across agencies and Learning & Development Teams are looking at ways to successfully provide training using a virtual blended approach.</p> | |

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| Berkshire West Communication Subgroup The Communication & Engagement subgroup's purpose is to communicate all aspects of the wider safeguarding agenda across a range of mediums and audiences to promote a consistent key safeguarding messages, learning, information, signpost to advice help and support available to children, young people, families/carers, schools, multi-agency practitioners and the voluntary, community and faith sectors. | | |
| | Outcome | Activity/Highlights/Impact |
| 1. | <p>Promote the wider safeguarding agenda to increase safeguarding awareness, understanding and knowledge to children, young people, and general public, practitioners across multi agencies, communities, and voluntary sector and faith groups.</p> <p>Promote Safeguarding Campaigns in response to local and national learning from serious case</p> | <p>Merged website: There have been 104,799 views on 76 pages over the past 12 months</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commissioned joint refreshed website with links to the 3 local area information Safeguarding information signposting links to help and support, training and learning for children, young people, parents/carers, practitioners, voluntary community sector and general public across the wider safeguarding agenda Covid-19 specific help and support pages for children, parents/carers and multi-agency practitioners <p>Social Media Facebook and Twitter</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2/3 scheduled themed posts per week |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | reviews, Child Death Overview Panels, emerging risks and sharing the wider partnership campaigns to raise awareness and promote safeguarding. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local Authorities and other safeguarding partnerships have used/shared our communication <p>Campaigns:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Be Brave – Speak up’ campaign reached 81,824 (with a total number of impressions being 522,445 being watched an average 6.3 times) and shared 207 times on Facebook Covid-19 sharing multi-agency information Lift the Baby Campaign Water Safety Open Windows |
| 2. | Strengthen partnership working to promote the safeguarding agenda for children and widen the reach to raise awareness and promote the wellbeing of children. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Subgroup merge with Safeguarding Adults Board from March 2020 Voluntary sector members Community Safety Partnership members <p>The audience reach of communication has been extended as we have received enquiries from sports clubs, voluntary sector and out of area schools.</p> |
| Learning & Challenge | | |
| The offer from the Communication Subgroup has made great strides this year as the statistics for social media platforms and the website demonstrate that it is being well used. We continue to develop and update the site and have made links to the Berkshire West Safeguarding Adult Board and will work to further strengthen the links community groups. | | |

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| Berkshire West Education Leaders s175 Subgroup Members include Local Authority Education Safeguarding Leads, Early Years Managers and key Local Authority colleagues. A consistent approach to provide a mechanism for education leaders to identify and lead a consistent approach to the development of safeguarding improvement across schools, early years and further education settings. | | |
| | Outcome | Activity/Highlights/Impact |
| 1. | Improve the welfare and safety of children by overseeing and monitoring of the education and early years annual safeguarding surveys related improvement and develop methods to test the returns. | Annual Schools Safeguarding Survey Request from BWSCP: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aligned timeframes for the request and return NSPCC s175 across the 3 areas Outcomes and themes used a benchmark to identify where improvements can be made Continued work for a consistent approach to test the s175 – Awaiting consultation with schools Safeguarding Governor Audit |

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| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Governor Toolkit to be launched September 2020 <p>Early Years Annual Survey:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Test current annual surveys to agree a consistent approach across the 3 areas to improve engagement and safeguarding with the Early Years providers Communication and letters to providers to encourage the return of annual surveys |
| 2. | A consistent communication approach across the 3 locality areas by the recognition of good practice and the sharing of learning and tools to support all education and early years settings to safeguard children | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Covid-19 Child Protection Policy addendum offered to schools Best practice remote learning Agreed and shared and consistent safeguarding messages across the 3 localities to include Shared early years safeguarding campaigns Bulletins for early years newsletters |
| Learning/Challenge | | |
| The 3 areas have very different approach and culture in supporting schools and early years settings, we are seeing a strengthening of relationships in the group and a willingness to share good practice, communication and materials to learn from one another as we work to a consistent approach across the 3 localities by consultation and discussion with schools and the early years services. | | |

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| Berkshire West School Engagement Subgroups 3 Local Subgroups in Reading, West Berkshire and Wokingham The group members are Headteachers and Local Authority Safeguarding Leads/representatives, to provide a mechanism for education leaders to identify and inform the development of safeguarding and improvement across schools and ensuring that issues specific to the school/education community have a voice and can be escalated for discussion to the Statutory Safeguarding Partners. | | |
| | Summary Outcome | Summary Activity/Highlights/Impact |
| 1. | Identification of risk and mitigation of issues relating to schools to include problem solving | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oversight of exclusion and attendance in one area (this will be replicated across the 3 localities) Challenge to SEND provision and Fair Access Policy in one area Schools are confidently using the Professional disagreement/escalation policy |
| 2. | Mechanism for consultation and two-way dialogue with the Partnership, enabling the views, experience and risk identified by Education Leads to inform the safeguarding leadership of the | <p>Oversight and consultation to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agree and sign off s175 annual survey and outcomes Learning from Reading Festival |

| | | |
|--|---|--|
| | Berkshire West Safeguarding Arrangement and vice versa. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Golden thread to s175 Subgroup, Partnership and Designated Safeguarding Leads • Direct DSL agendas agree key safeguarding messages to schools |
| <p>Impact:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concerns were raised at meeting in Reading in regard to children transitioning to secondary schools, this was raised with the One Reading Group and a Primary Year 6 project was established. A transition plan is in place and contact has been made with Year 7 transition leads at all secondary schools. Identified children will receive light touch support over the summer and support will be on offer to all secondary schools from September through to December. • The Groups have lobbied for support to children's mental health and have influenced the commissioning of Kooth in Berkshire West that is being funded by the Clinical Commissioning Group, Wokingham Council, West Berkshire Council and Brighter Futures for Children. Kooth is an online counselling service for young people and adults offering information, blogs and interactive session with trained therapists. | | |
| <p>Learning/Challenge</p> <p>The three groups currently operate to a different format and purpose, we have changed the support from the BWSCP business unit to drive a consistent approach and work towards scrutiny, improvement and impact for children rather than information sharing. Schools are now confident in sharing their safeguarding concerns and are transparent about the experiences of children; we are seeing some groups bring challenge to the partnership which we will build on and take forward work to identified concerns to help improve safeguarding outcomes for children and share best practice and communication.</p> | | |

| <p>Berkshire West Strategic Child Exploitation Subgroups Three Local Subgroups Reading, West Berkshire and Wokingham</p> <p>To monitor and challenge the effectiveness of the strategic activity undertaken by the partnership to safeguard and promote the welfare of all children who may be subject to Child Sexual, Criminal Exploitation; including the wider exploitation of children those missing from home, education and care; on-line safety, children involved in or at risk of harmful practices including Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), Forced Marriage and Honour Based Abuse, Modern Slavery (including trafficked children, domestic servitude, and labour exploitation), Radicalisation (in terms of religious, political or ideological extremism and those at risk of being drawn into terrorist activity as described by the PREVENT agenda.</p> | | | | | | | | |
|---|--|--|--|---------------------|------------------------------------|----|--|--|
| <table> <tr> <th></th><th>Summary of Outcomes</th><th>Summary Activity/Highlights/Impact</th></tr> <tr> <td>1.</td><td> <p>ALL GROUPS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lead and monitor a partnership response to CE through the collation and analysis of qualitative and quantitative data to identify themes, </td><td> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategy and Action Plan in place for each locality that is monitored • All groups monitor and review local data and profiling reports • Dissemination and adoption of the Pan Berks CE simple and social work screening tool and the Pan Berkshire EMRAC Risk Matrix • BWSCP Signpost to free on-line child exploitation training. </td></tr> </table> | | | | Summary of Outcomes | Summary Activity/Highlights/Impact | 1. | <p>ALL GROUPS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lead and monitor a partnership response to CE through the collation and analysis of qualitative and quantitative data to identify themes, | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategy and Action Plan in place for each locality that is monitored • All groups monitor and review local data and profiling reports • Dissemination and adoption of the Pan Berks CE simple and social work screening tool and the Pan Berkshire EMRAC Risk Matrix • BWSCP Signpost to free on-line child exploitation training. |
| | Summary of Outcomes | Summary Activity/Highlights/Impact | | | | | | |
| 1. | <p>ALL GROUPS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lead and monitor a partnership response to CE through the collation and analysis of qualitative and quantitative data to identify themes, | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategy and Action Plan in place for each locality that is monitored • All groups monitor and review local data and profiling reports • Dissemination and adoption of the Pan Berks CE simple and social work screening tool and the Pan Berkshire EMRAC Risk Matrix • BWSCP Signpost to free on-line child exploitation training. | | | | | | |

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| | <p>trends and respond to patterns of concern</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raise awareness of CE with practitioners across partner agencies, schools, voluntary sector to develop a shared multi-professional understanding of CE and provide a timely, consistent response • Support the work of the BWSCP Independent Scrutiny & Impact Groups and progress the work of the Business Plan | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BWSCP Multi-agency Contextual Safeguarding Forum attended by 35 practitioners across the 3 localities. • BWSCP summary and circulation of learning from the Child Practice Review National Panel and other local and national reviews. • Contribution to the Independent Scrutiny & Impact Groups (ISIG) thematic review in regard to On-line Safety – linked to the BWSCP Business Plan priorities • NHS England funded County Lines 4 sessions • Circulation and promotion of the PREVENT referral process across schools and agencies • Promoted with School intelligence sharing with TVP , on-line advice and information for parents • Circulation Oxford Against Cutting Webinars across agencies <p>Engagement in the work of the Police Crime Commissioner Early Intervention Fund</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Berkshire Youth work directly with allocated schools across the 3 localities • County Lines Alter Ego performance delivered to year 7 + in 10 secondary schools in each area and a session in each school for practitioners and parents • Fearless Workshops |
| 2. | Reading | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Group supported and monitored the review of EMRAC. In September 2019 Reading launched a new meeting structure Child Exploitation and Missing Operational Group (CEMOG) to ensure focus on the identification of themes and trends (contextual risk) rather than solely focusing on the individual children at risk moving away from a case management approach. At CEMOG the discussions for each child are more creative and include the need for disruption activity and building an intelligence picture. • Child Exploitation Triage and Review (CETAR) take place monthly. Police and Youth Services attend. • Comprehensive profiling reports of missing and exploited children |
| 3. | West Berkshire | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compiled a comprehensive profile of exploited children in West Berkshire • Refreshed the Child Exploitation Strategy and Action Plan • Briefed members and other local leaders about Child Exploitation • Undertook an audit of the effectiveness of EMRAC • Tracked and monitored Child Exploitation Indicator Tool completion • Analysed return home interviews to continue to develop practice and protect children • 399 Return Home Interviews were offered with an increased conversion rate of 61% |

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| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Piloted a Contextual Safeguarding approach locally • Promoted community understand and reporting of suspected child exploitation • Undertook child exploitation 'test purchases' in hotels • Delivered county lines briefing sessions to staff and partners • Undertook youth work in schools to support children affected by exploitation • Enhanced the weekly joint agency missing children risk meeting through tasking • Maintained high levels of intelligence sharing with the police and subsequent disruption of county lines • Utilised MAPS and EMRAC to deploy detached youth workers to 'hot spots' |
| 4. | Wokingham | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of 'hot spot' mapping of children missing and exploited • Reading FC Kicks Project working with children excluded and at risk exploitation • Reading FC Positive Pathways Project work with 5 schools where children are at risk of exploitation • Alter Ego 'Click' Theatre performance delivered to all Primary school children in year 5 & 6. To help them to learn about online risk, safety and healthy online behaviours and relationships. • Tough Love – Coercive Control Alter Ego production delivered to year 7 pupils in all secondary schools • Multi-agency Cyber Crime webinar from SE Organised Crime Unit • 11 social work/practitioner attended County Lines Conference • Gang Awareness Training was attended by 64 multi-agency practitioners |
| Learning/Challenge | | |
| <p>The pandemic outbreak has impacted on organised planned training events for practitioners and provision of some prevention projects for children across the 3 localities and include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mentors in Violence programme March 20 (Schools - all localities) • Cyber Crime Practitioner Conference May 20 • BWSCP Safeguarding Adolescent Forum • Only Fools Carry Knives – Wokingham <p>BWSCP Business Unit has recently changed the way the Subgroups are supported, there is an opportunity to share the best practice across the 3 areas to improve outcomes for children i.e. the success rates in West Berkshire in engaging missing children to take part in Return Home Interviews and the high numbers of young people accessing substance misuse services could provide valuable learning.</p> | | |

Pan Berkshire Policy & Procedures

The Safeguarding Children Partners have a range of statutory functions listed within Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018. These include developing policies and procedures, thresholds for intervention. The purpose of the Pan-Berkshire Policy and Procedures subgroup is to ensure that the Berkshire Statutory Safeguarding Partners develop and maintain high quality safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures that remain in line with key national policy and legislative changes.

Clear policies and procedures are required across the county to ensure consistent safeguarding practice is maintained for the benefit of the Berkshire's children, young people and families.

| | Summary of Outcome | Summary of Activity and Impact |
|----|--|--|
| 1. | <p>Develop policies and procedures for safeguarding and child protection to be used by partner agencies working across all six Berkshire authorities; all policies and procedures remain in line with National policy and legislative changes</p> <p>Ensure policies and procedures are published and remain updated in line with national policy and legislative changes and are updated accordingly.</p> | <p>Refreshed Terms of Reference in line with Working Together 2018 and the new arrangements across the Berkshire Safeguarding Children Partnerships</p> <p>Rigorous schedule of policy and procedure updates that are reviewed, agreed, signed off and monitored by a multi-agency group from across Berkshire Out of a total of 51 chapters, 31 (61%) have been reviewed since April 2019, and all have been reviewed between from early 2018 to date.</p> <p>The Allegations against Staff or Volunteers who work with Children Chapter has been significantly changed and agreed across organisations.</p> <p>Agreed updated chapters are published in Tri.x in January and July</p> <p>Communications - A twice yearly Policy and Procedures Newsletter is created following each procedure update, for onward dissemination to staff via all Berkshire Boards/Partnerships. This newsletter gives details of the changes made. The accompanying email highlights key procedure changes to support the targeting of messages to the workforce.</p> <p>BWSCP host, co-ordinate, support and manage the Policy & Procedures Subgroup function on behalf of the Berkshire Safeguarding Partnerships</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commission and hold the joint funded contract for publishing the Policy & Procedures • Monitor the schedule and publish and disseminate policy updates |
| 2. | <p>Response to Covid-19 - At the onset of the pandemic, the Subgroup (and Statutory Partners) agreed a blanket statement to be included in the procedures. This stated that authorities were to risk assess situations as they occurred and were to remain flexible to ensure the most positive outcome with regards to families moving across Local Authority boundaries during lockdown. The published statement remains in place and will be reviewed at each sub group meeting to ensure its continued relevance.</p> | |

Learning/Challenge

As part of the new multi-agency safeguarding children arrangements across Berkshire, all the partnerships have remained committed to a pan Berkshire approach to safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures.

The Sub group remains an efficient function that is well supported group by multi-disciplinary/agency members across Berkshire who take responsibility for reviewing chapters with the set timeframes as indicated in our agreed schedule. The Pan Berkshire Policy & Procedures are widely published, and we are assured that practitioners have access to procedures that are regularly updated with changes to statutory legislation and guidance, as well as regularly reviewed to ensure local accuracy and appropriateness to help keep children safe across Berkshire.

Pan Berkshire s11 Safeguarding Children Partnership/Board Panel

Section 11 of Children's Act 2004 places duties on a range of organisations and individuals to ensure their functions and any services that they contract out to others, are discharged having regard the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

| | Outcome | Activity |
|----|--|--|
| 1. | Set clear expectations with the Safeguarding Partnership/Boards and host organisations in regard to the timeframe and process for submission of s11 self-assessment audits to the Panel. Review and evaluate s11 returns of the full three yearly audit and mid-review of s11 Children Act 2004 in order to assess agencies compliance with the duty to safeguard and provide feedback to those organisations submissions to help to improve the safeguarding of children in Berkshire. | In 2019/20 there have been 5 s11 Panels where 20 full s11 submissions have been evaluated by the multi-agency Panel. |
| | | Two organisations have been asked to re-submit to the Panel where immediate improvements were identified. <ul style="list-style-type: none">One organisation's mid-review has been brought forward to ensure improvements have been implemented |
| | | The s11 panel offer support and guidance to organisations where required. |
| | | BWSCP host, schedule, co-ordinate, support and manage the s11 function on behalf of the Berkshire Safeguarding Partners/Board. <ul style="list-style-type: none">Organisations present in person s11 self-assessment in person to the PanelEach organisation receives a feedback letter from the Panel outlining good practice and where improvements could be madeScheduled return for all organisation full and mid-review s11 submissions |

Learning/Challenge

The S11 Subgroup has a consistent Chair and membership. The aim has been to operate a process which is able to provide a high level of challenge to organisations with a view to promoting good practice in safeguarding and to act as a critical friend. The feedback from presenters from the organisations has been positive and the panel members feel that the format and tool is robust.

Pan Berkshire Child Exploitation Subgroup

This Pan Berkshire group allows for sharing of information, communication, good practice and development of safeguarding opportunities towards improving outcomes for all children and young people across the Berkshire area specifically in relation to exploitation. The group is attended by Local Authority operational leads and Safeguarding Children Partnership/Board Managers.

| | Summary of Outcome | Summary of Activity |
|---------------------------------|---|---|
| 1. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">Identify emerging threats, risks and opportunities in order to inform an understanding of how and why some young people become vulnerable to or suffer from exploitation.Enable a common understanding of service delivery, including a consistent approach to the assessment of risk | <ul style="list-style-type: none">Development Pan Berkshire Risk MatrixGap analysis of services across Berkshire to respond to exploitationPan Berkshire benchmarking dataShare national and local learning/themes, information and communicationCo-ordinate the Pan Berkshire EMRAC Chairs to share good practice and across border intelligenceShare best practice of profiling across Local Authority areas |
| Learning & Challenge | | |
| | The Pan Berkshire CE Subgroup has a committed membership group from the six Berkshire Local Authorities and Safeguarding Children Partnerships. Work in this group has had a 'stop/start' element as there have been numerous Chairs over the last 18 months. The current Chair from Thames Valley Police is very experienced and is committed to taking the work of the group forward. | |

BWSCP Subgroups Learning & Challenge

The Subgroup structure has not changed since the LSCB function. Generally, all Subgroups meet 4 times per year and have achieved many successes. The Subgroups are committed to helping to improve safeguarding for children, however, due to organisation restructures and movement of key staff, some of the work has had a stop/start element to it. We want to find new ways of working that makes a difference and has a positive impact on the lives of our children; for this we need a culture shift from the LSCB ways of working, that was report and data focussed to a child and practitioner experience led focus. There is still a place for reporting, but it must demonstrate the impact, voice and experience of children. We will make these changes by having a consistent message and approach across all groups, by asking 'what have children and their families told us' and for proposed work and activity 'will this make a difference to our children'. We have recently seen some change that characterises children's experiences for us to understand what life looks like for them and we will build on this and work to replicate the culture across all groups.

We have started to share learning and good practice across the three areas, especially across the education and early years' settings, thus reducing duplication of work and enhancing support to those services. The Subgroups need to have a clear remit as to the outcomes they need to achieve in line with our priorities and business plan, considering emerging themes to enable us to evidence the work of the organisations/agencies who deliver services to children and families in Berkshire West.



Under 18 Population in Berkshire West

| | |
|----------------|--------|
| Reading | 36,000 |
| West Berkshire | 36,000 |
| Wokingham | 38,000 |

Children Subject to Child Protection Plan (Rate per 10,000) March 20

| | |
|------------------|----|
| Reading | 75 |
| West Berkshire | 30 |
| Wokingham | 37 |
| England 18/19 | 44 |
| South East 18/19 | 41 |

Number of Children in Need (CIN) including Children in Care and Child Protection (Rate per 10,000)

| | |
|------------------|-----|
| Reading | 392 |
| West Berkshire | 265 |
| Wokingham | 273 |
| England 18/19 | 334 |
| South East 18/19 | 304 |

Children in Care (Rate per 10,000) March 20

| | |
|------------------|----|
| Reading | 75 |
| West Berkshire | 44 |
| Wokingham | 26 |
| England 18/19 | 65 |
| South East 18/19 | 53 |

Number of Contact/ Referrals (Rate per 10,000) March 20

| | |
|------------------|-----|
| Reading | 696 |
| West Berkshire | 455 |
| Wokingham | 467 |
| England 18/19 | 545 |
| South East 18/19 | 536 |

Number of Section 47 enquiries initiated (Rate per 10,000) March 20

| | |
|------------------|-----|
| Reading | 188 |
| West Berkshire | 150 |
| Wokingham | 171 |
| England 18/19 | 168 |
| South East 18/19 | 172 |

Number of permanent exclusions in primary and secondary schools (including academies and special) 2019/2020

| | |
|----------------|----|
| Reading | 17 |
| West Berkshire | 7 |
| Wokingham | 13 |
| | |
| | |

Number of fixed term exclusions – primary and secondary schools (including academies and special) 2019/2020

| | |
|----------------|-----|
| Reading | 986 |
| West Berkshire | 810 |
| Wokingham | 246 |
| | |
| | |

First Time Entrants into the Youth Justice System - per 100,000 of 10-17 population Oct 18-Sept19

| | |
|----------------|-----|
| Reading | 296 |
| West Berkshire | 102 |
| Wokingham | 83 |

Total number of children 0-18-year olds admitted to RBFT mental health issues including self-harm - Q4 19/20

| | |
|----------------|----|
| Reading | 70 |
| West Berkshire | 24 |
| Wokingham | 65 |

Domestic Incidents involving children - All Occurrences March 2019 – April 2020

| | |
|----------------|------|
| Reading | 2283 |
| West Berkshire | 1430 |
| Wokingham | 1429 |

Domestic Incidents involving Children - Flagged as Domestic Crime March 2019 – April 2020

| | |
|----------------|------|
| Reading | 1286 |
| West Berkshire | 1198 |
| Wokingham | 627 |

Knowing Ourselves - Year 1 Summary Review of the Partnership Arrangements

The Berkshire West Safeguarding Children Partnership (BWSCP) new arrangements began on 30th June 2019, following a year-long period of consultation, planning and execution of the proposals supported by the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Arrangement (MASA) Programme Board. A review of the arrangements by the Strategic Partners at the end of year 1 in July 2020 confirms a clear decision and commitment to remaining as one Safeguarding Partnership across Berkshire West and agreed budgets have been set.

There are many very positive elements of the new arrangements:

- There has been excellent attendance and support from a wide range of partners at all sub groups, including 3rd sector, with a rich and sophisticated level of skill and knowledge, which comes together to promote challenge in a safe way
- Willingness to think differently has been a strength, even when partners have felt anxious deviating from the old familiar format
- The Partnership Support Team has emerged as a real strength in helping to steer the partnership on its new journey and supporting the core business held in the subgroup structure and the outcomes outlined in the report
- The statutory partners are cohesive in their approach to making the arrangements work and driving forward change to improve outcomes for children

What needs to change:

- What does independent scrutiny look like and how can we achieve it?
- How do we get the best from our ISIGs to make an impact for children?
- How do we incorporate the operational senior leaders into the statutory level, whilst maintaining the executive focus, expectation and responsibility?

A key focus of the arrangements is the effectiveness of the Independent Scrutiny and Impact Groups, we recognise this is still working to gain traction and will be the focal point of the improvements we need to make moving forward.

The two Independent Scrutineers were commissioned to work alongside the partnership during the initial year of the new arrangements. The Scrutineers provided some helpful and insightful narrative to the partnership work and challenge during meetings of the Independent Scrutiny and Impact Groups. However, after a review by the Statutory Safeguarding Partners, we have agreed that this resource has not proved to be as advantageous as the partnership anticipated. On reflection, we have acknowledged that these were new roles and our expectations were maybe not as clear as we had originally thought. After consideration, we decided that this model of independent scrutiny has not delivered the desired results for the BWSCP, and the scrutineer's contracts were renewed beyond July 2020.

What does independent scrutiny look like, how can we achieve it? Changes to the published Multi-Agency Safeguarding Arrangements:

The Strategic Partners have agreed that the Designated Professional for Safeguarding will assume the role of independence within the partnership. This will include chairing the ISIG meetings in each area, chairing the Case Review Group and overseeing the Rapid Review/Local Safeguarding Practice Review processes, chairing and providing the link between the Strategic Statutory Safeguarding Partners Group and a newly formed Operational Safeguarding Partners Group, plus taking on line management responsibility for the Partnership Business Unit.

The Statutory Safeguarding Partners Group is held at the highest executive level as this is essential for governance and accountability in line with published guidance. This executive level can somewhat exclude the operational leaders within the statutory organisations, who have the sophisticated knowledge of the services they represent and can add valuable insight into the work of the partnership. The new Operational Safeguarding Partners Group can add context of how services work together and to facilitate planning of the work required by the partnership and another level of scrutiny and impact.

The role of the Designated Professional for Safeguarding is employed by, but independent from, the Clinical Commissioning Group, but to add clarity and further independence, a matrix management system will be set up to allow the post holder to report to a senior manager outside of the statutory agencies.

There will be times during the year where the partnership will need to look for a further level of external scrutiny to demonstrate complete impartiality on specific pieces of work, e.g. large multi-agency audits, peer review. These will be decided and agreed as they arise, and the partnership will seek the most appropriate independent level of input for the specific task. This ensures that Berkshire West maintains the integrity of its collective and resourceful approach to scrutiny and impact, whilst assuring a 'fresh-eyes' approach to our work when required.

The details of this model of working are still being finalised and will be tested for a period of 1 year from September 2020.

Focus and Business Plan 2020 -2021

In addition to the changes set out above, the current Business Plan 2019 – 2021 work will continue and will be updated to include:

- Practitioners understand the impact of domestic abuse on children and young people, with appropriate support in place to mitigate the risk
- Improve feedback from children and families to further inform and improve service planning

The Strategic partners have agreed to align the Threshold documents across the 3 localities. Key safeguarding partners such as Health and Police have different geographical operational boundaries and having 3 different threshold guidance documents to work to, can be a restraining force to achieving good consistent safe practice. Aligned threshold documents will enable Local Authority staff and partners to understand and train staff in implementing a consistent approach across the partnership, whilst ensuring that nuances on a local level are maintained.

Appendix 1:

Berkshire West Safeguarding Children Partnership Budget 2019 -2020

The combined budget figures are shown below. In 2019/20 each locality holds an individual budget which are unchanged from the previous year. Any underspend will be rolled over to 2020 – 2021 and used to cover expenses incurred by Local Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews.

2019 – 2020 Partner Contributions

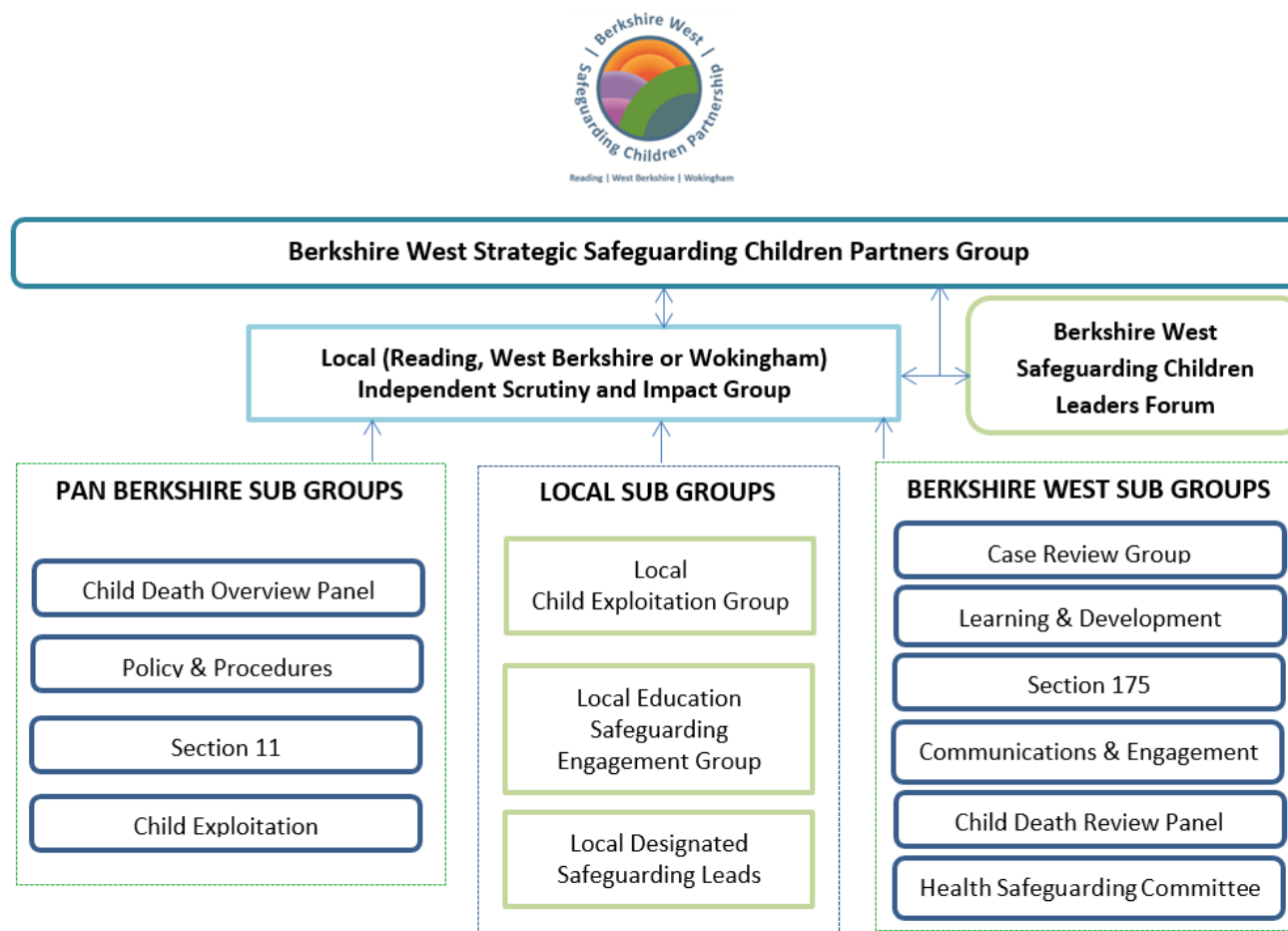
| | |
|--|---------|
| Brighter Futures for Children | 50,000 |
| West Berkshire | 50,000 |
| Wokingham | 50,000 |
| Clinical Commissioning Group | 50,000 |
| Thames Valley Police | 20,000 |
| Others (including NPS, TVCRC, CAFCASS) | 3,700 |
| | |
| Total | 223,700 |

2019 - 2020 Spend

| | |
|--|---------|
| Staff cost (including on costs, travel expenses, mobile phones) | 174,000 |
| Independent Scrutineers (including recruitment costs) | 29,400 |
| All other expenses, including room hire, website, online procedures contributions, printing etc. | 12,650 |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| | |
| Total | 216,050 |

Appendix 2

Berkshire West Safeguarding Children Partnership Structure Chart (2019/20)



Get involved and find out more

Berkshire West Safeguarding Children Partnership (BWSCP) link to website: <https://www.berkshirewestsafeguardingchildrenpartnership.org.uk/scp> .

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: <https://www.facebook.com/BWSafeguardingChildrenPartnership/>

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V6 October 2020 – Author Sherrie Newell