CHILDREN'S AND COMMUNITY SERVICES PORTFOLIO

DECISION SCHEDULE

14 August 2012

at 10.00 am

in Committee Room A, Civic Centre, Hartlepool

Councillor Cath Hill, Cabinet Member responsible for Children's and Community Services will consider the following items.

1. **KEY DECISIONS**

    No items.

2. **OTHER ITEMS REQUIRING DECISION**

    2.1   Proposed Regular Car Boot Events at Hartlepool's Maritime Experience – *Director of Child and Adult Services*
    2.2   Appointment of Local Authority Representatives to Serve on School Governing Bodies – *Director of Child and Adult Services*

3. **ITEMS FOR INFORMATION**

    3.1   Fostering Quarterly Report 1 April 2012 – 30 June 2012 – *Director of Child and Adult Services*
    3.2   Women's Begin 2 Programme – Success and Future Development – *Director of Child and Adult Services*
    3.3   Sport and Physical Activity Team Six Month Progress Report – *Director of Child and Adult Services*
    3.4   Safeguarding Children Peer Review – *Director of Child and Adult Services*

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│   **CHILDREN'S AND COMMUNITY**   │
│   **SERVICES REPORT**   │
│   │
│   **14 August 2012**   │
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Report of: Director of Child & Adult Services

Subject: PROPOSED REGULAR CAR BOOT EVENTS AT
                      HARTLEPOOL'S MARITIME EXPERIENCE

1.   TYPE OF DECISION/APPLICABLE CATEGORY

1.1   This is a non key decision.

2.   PURPOSE OF REPORT

2.1   Nobles Promotions Ltd have made Culture & Information Services a financial
         offer to hold a weekly car boot sale at Hartlepool's Maritime Experience.
         Permission is requested to accept this offer and implement an appropriate
         contract.

3.   BACKGROUND

3.1   In September 2011 Cultural Services held a car boot event at Hartlepool's
         Maritime Experience. This was a small event but showed potential for future
         success and generated positive feedback from the public relating to having a
         car boot event in this location.

3.2   Further car boot events were held in March and April 2012 after a winter
         break. Both were unsuccessful and did not generate sellers to the event,
         though the office did receive calls from interested buyers. The low turn-out
         could be attributed to the service's lack of resources to do a mass marketing
         campaign on the same scale of other car boot event organisers in the region.

3.3   As there is some interest and the service is required to maximise income
         generation it is believed that a good option would be to offer the site to a
         private car boot event organiser. This would generate a guaranteed income
         into the Hartlepool's Maritime Experience budget. Following investigation of
         this option, Nobles Promotions Ltd, who are believed to be the biggest car
         boot event organiser in the region, were approached to determine if there
         would be any interest to run a car boot event on the site.

3.4   Nobles Promotions Ltd visited the site, were very impressed and made an offer to run a weekly car boot event on the site for a proposed fee. The car boot event would take up approximately 1/3 of the Hartlepool Maritime Experience (HME) car park thus leaving adequate parking space for Museum of Hartlepool and HME customers. Because this is an outdoor event, it was indicated that the car boot event would close in the winter months – it would end just before Christmas and begin again in late March. As part of the offer the organiser will undertake all marketing and press activity; fully staff the site and provide infrastructure including cleansing.

3.5   The car boot event would form part of the Department's events programme and run each Saturday morning 08:00hrs to 13:00hrs.

4.   PROPOSALS

4.1   The proposal before Portfolio is to allow acceptance of the offer received to test the market for one year as a trial for both parties. This will allow us to be better informed and to effectively test the market. This in turn will enable a better chance of securing a good income stream once the trial is complete and the event is established and we will then seek a longer term agreement with advice from the Procurement team.

5.   RISK IMPLICATIONS

Further clarification has been sought on some key issues following the Portfolio meeting on 10th July:-

- *Market Charter. That a car boot sale within 6.6 miles of the current town centre market may conflict with the Market Charter.* Advice from Legal has been sought on this issue (please see Legal Consideration of this report at para 5).

- *Market Charter. That a car boot sale within 6.6 miles of the current town centre market may conflict with the Market Charter.* Public Protection has been consulted on this proposal and is comfortable that the proposed car boot event on a Saturday does not conflict with the Thursday outdoor market traders. Should it transpire that the car boot events are negatively affecting the business of the Thursday market traders, then under the terms of the Market Charter, the car boot event will have to cease. Also, there has been a weekly car boot sale running at the Mayfair Centre for some time without affecting the current town centre market. The Mayfair Centre is only 3.4 miles from the town centre, Public Protection consented to this car boot event taking place. Indeed it is felt that capacity exists for a car boot sale in the south, centre and north of the town.

- *That the car boot sellers may require individual Street Trading Licences.* Nobles Promotions Ltd will enclose the car boot site and will charge an entry fee to it which removes the need for Street Trading Licences. However Nobles Promotions Ltd have indicated they wish to bring at least one fast-food van into the enclosed site.

- *Planning permission.* Advice has been sought from Planning and permission is required to change the use of the car park for car boot events. The Events team are now working on an application for planning permission to cover this and all event activity.

- .There could be a risk that holding regular car boot events on HME car park could deter visitors from visiting the HME visitor attraction and the Museum of Hartlepool. This risk has been assessed by looking at the impact on visitor numbers of other events held in the car park, e.g. twice yearly Vintage Car Rally, monthly Farmers Markets and occasional fairgrounds. Whilst it is recognised that these all have different 'clientele', our visitor records demonstrate that additional activity produces increased visitors to both the free and the paid for attractions. Nevertheless it is recognised that a risk does exist and this will be a factor to take into consideration as part of the first year assessment. On balance it is believed that this is a low risk. The extensive nature of the HME car park – which extends to the west and north of the main car park opposite the entrance - gives some comfort to ensure car parking capacity is unlikely to be exceeded.

- The purpose of this initiative is to secure additional income to assist in meeting the running costs of the site. Increased visitation will also mutually benefit both the Borough Council and the HMS Trincomalee Trust along with secondary spend in the retail facilities within the site.

5.2   FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

Based on the weekly offer that Nobles Promotions Ltd has made to use the site this will generate income, the size of which, is dependent upon how regular the event would be over the course of 12 months. This would benefit both 12/13 and 13/14 financial years. Other than providing the site for use, the Council will not be contributing any financial resource into the agreement. Nobles Promotions Ltd will provide all marketing, staffing, infrastructure and site cleansing.

5.3   LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

Legal advice given in relation to the Market Charter is as follows:
'A local authority generally can seek the 'protections' of operating such a market either through a grant by way of a Royal Charter or through reliance on the Food and Drugs legislation (The Food Act 1984 allows the establishment of a new market but not to take over an existing one). Either

way, this allows an action against any rival market operating within a six and two third miles radius of the established market. Obviously we would seek to protect our market traders against a rival operating; particularly at the same time and within such a radius, where any damage i.e. loss of takings does not need to be proved. A rival market on a different day would need some evidence of detriment to traders.'

A License Agreement would be put in place between Hartlepool Borough Council and Nobles Promotions to cover all the necessary indemnities against the Council and to stipulate how Nobles Promotions Ltd could use the site. There would be clearly written clauses in this License Agreement that would prohibit Nobles Promotions Ltd from allowing 'market stall traders' operating within the car boot event. As an integral part of the licence, Nobles Promotions Ltd, Legal and Public Protection will have an opportunity to give feedback on the clauses. The License Agreement will be reviewed annually, this will provide the opportunity to make any relevant changes to further minimise any impact on the town centre market.

5.4   STAFF CONSIDERATIONS

Culture & Information Services do not currently have the staffing capacity to market and manage a regular car boot event on the same scale as a private event organiser. The potential of additional earned income for the HME site will help to safeguard the financial health of the HME and in turn safeguard jobs. The site is heavily reliant on earning substantial income to support its revenue budget.

5.5   ASSET MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS

Weekly car boot sales will be included in Hartlepool's Maritime Experience events programme, in the same way as the monthly Farmers Market, and will be used to attract visitors and increase footfall to Hartlepool's Maritime Experience and the Museum of Hartlepool.

6.   RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1   It is recommended that, subject to planning approval being granted, permission is granted to enter into an agreement with Nobles Promotion Ltd for a one year trial period to hold car boot events at Hartlepool's Maritime Experience.

7.   REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1   Entering into such an agreement will generate income which is much greater than could be achieved by Culture & Information Services delivering a similar

event in-house on current resources and will contribute a guaranteed weekly site fee to the revenue income of Hartlepool's Maritime Experience.

8.   CONTACT OFFICER

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**CHILDREN'S AND COMMUNITY
SERVICES PORTFOLIO**
14ᵗʰ August 2012

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Report of: Director of Child and Adult Services

Subject: APPOINTMENT OF LOCAL AUTHORITY
                     REPRESENTATIVES TO SERVE ON SCHOOL
                     GOVERNING BODIES

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SUMMARY

1.   **TYPE OF DECISION**

     Non Key Decision.

2.   **PURPOSE OF REPORT**

     To request the Portfolio Holder for Children's and Community Services
     consideration and approval of the recommendations of the General
     Purposes Committee in respect of the appointment of Local Authority
     representative governors to serve on school governing bodies where,
     interest has been expressed in the vacancies.

3.   **BACKGROUND**

     Applications are invited from members of the general public, elected
     members and those governors whose term of office is about to expire or
     have expired who are interested in serving or wish to continue serving as
     a Local Authority representative governor on school governing bodies

     The following criteria were agreed by the Borough Council for the
     recruitment of Local Education Authority representative governors in
     2000. Local Authority governors should be able to show:

     - demonstrable interest in and commitment to education;
     - a desire to support the school concerned;
     - a commitment to attend regular meetings of the governing body (and
       committees as appropriate) and school functions generally;
     - good communication/interpersonal skills;
     - ability to work as part of a team;
     - a clearly expressed willingness to participate in the governor training
       programme.

A schedule setting out details of vacancies together with applications received in respect of the vacancies was considered by members of the General Purposes Sub Committee at their meeting held on 25th June 2012. (**Appendix 1**).

4.   RECOMMENDATIONS

The Portfolio Holder for Children's and Community Services approve recommendations of the General Purposes Committee in respect of the appointment of Local Authority representative governors to serve on school Governing Bodies. A schedule outlining recommendations of the General Purposes Sub Committee is attached at **Appendix 1**.

5.   APPENDICES AVAILABLE ON REQUEST, IN MEMBERS LIBRARY   AND ON-LINE

Schedule of recommendations of the General Purposes Sub-Committee

6.   BACKGROUND PAPERS

Minutes of the General Purposes Committee 25th June, 2012.

7.   CONTACT OFFICER

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Child and Adult Services Department

HARTLEPOOL
BOROUGH COUNCIL

VACANCIES
SCHOOL GOVERNING BODIES

JUNE, 2012

Contact Officer: Ann Turner
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VACANCIES FOR LOCAL AUTHORITY REPRESENTATIVES ON GOVERNING BODIES

SCHOOL INCLUDING LA GOVERNORS	VACANCIES	INTEREST EXPRESSED	RECOMMENDED FOR APPOINTMENTS
Barnard Grove Primary School Mr James Michael Kay Councillor Jean Robinson Councillor Rob Cook	Mr. James Michael Kay Term of office expires 21st September, 2012	Mr. James Michael Kay	Mr. James Michael Kay
Clavering Primary School Councillor Rob Cook Councillor Jean Robinson Mrs. Irene Green	Councillor Rob Cook term of office expires 19th September, 2012	Councillor Rob Cook	Councillor Rob Cook
High Tunstall College of Science Councillor Dr. George H Morris	Councillor Dr. George H Morris Term of office expires 15th October, 2012	Councillor Dr George H Morris	Councillor Dr. George Morris
Holy Trinity C.E. Aided Primary School Councillor Michael Turner	Councillor Michael Turner Term of office expires 3rd September, 2012	Councillor Michael Turner	Councillor Michael Turner
Lynnfield Primary School Mr. Jamie Bryant Councillor Carl Richardson	2 vacancies Councillor Chris Simmons Term of office expired 5th June 2012 Councillor Carl Richardson Term of office expires 31st August, 2012	Councillor Carl Richardson Councillor Chris Simmons	Councillor Carl Richardson Councillor Chris Simmons

SCHOOL INCLUDING LA GOVERNORS	VACANCIES	INTEREST EXPRESSED	RECOMMENDED FOR APPOINTMENTS
Owton Manor Primary School Councillor Marjorie James Mrs. Mary Raine Mrs. Judy Thompson Vacancy	2 Vacancies Vice Mrs. Stephanie Hayes and Mrs. Judy Thompson Term of office expires 31st August, 2012	Mrs. Judy Thompson	Mrs. Judy Thompson
Sacred Heart R.C. Primary School Councillor Gerard G Hall	Councillor Gerard G Hall Term of office expires 19th September, 2012	Councillor Gerard G Hall	Councillor Gerard G. Hall
St. John Vianney R.C. Primary School Mrs. Brenda J Cook	Mrs. Brenda J Cook Term of office expires 20th September, 2012	Mrs. Brenda J Cook	Mrs. Brenda Cook
St. Joseph's R.C. Primary School Vacancy	Vacancy	Mr. David W Tindall Mrs. Diane Risebury Mrs. Rachel Parker	Mrs. Rachel Parker
West View Primary School Mr. D. Wise Councillor C. Simmons Councillor S Griffin	Councillor Chris Simmons Term of office expires 31st August, 2012	Councillor Chris Simmons	Councillor Chris Simmons
Seaton Carew Nursery School Mrs Hilary Thompson Vacancy	Vacancy Councillor Geoff Lilley Term of office expired July 2011	Councillor Geoff Lilley (withdrew interest) Councillor Paul Thompson	Councillor Paul Thompson

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| **CHILDREN'S AND COMMUNITY** |
| **SERVICES REPORT** |
| |
| **14ᵗʰ August 2012** |
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Report of: Director of Child and Adult Services

Subject: FOSTERING QUARTLERLY REPORT 1 APRIL 2012
                      – 30 JUNE 2012

1.   **TYPE OF DECISION/APPLICABLE CATEGORY**

1.1   Non key.

2.   **PURPOSE OF REPORT**

2.1   To inform the Portfolio Holder of the activity and work of the Fostering
        service from 1 April 2012 – 30 June 2012.

3.   **BACKGROUND**

3.1   The Fostering Service is a regulated service and it is a requirement of the
        regulations, and good practice, to provide regular updates regarding the
        progress of the service in order that the executive side of the authority can
        be satisfied that the agency is effective and is achieving good outcomes for
        the children and young people in its care.

3.2   The Fostering National Minimum Standards (2011) Standard 25 details that
        the executive side of the local authority should 'receive written reports on the
        management, outcomes and financial state of the fostering service every 3
        months.

4.1   **STATISTICAL INFORMATION**

4.1   **Looked After Children**

        The numbers of looked after children/young people are as follows:

        Total on 31 March 2012 – 181
        Total on 30 April 2012 – 188

Total on 31 May 2012 - 184
Total on 30 June 2012 – 182

The following table details the statistical information in relation to the fostering service on 30 June 2012.

Number of foster carers on 30 June 2012	94
Number of placements available	164
Number of children in placement	149
Number of vacancies	9 – All offering placements for children under 11 years
Number of carers not available or on hold	5 carers – 7 placements 1 on hold due to need to re-assess; 1 carer on hold due to illness; 1 carer on hold due to re-assessment from Kinship to Mainstream carer. I carer on hold due to bereavement 1 carer on hold due to other support role.
Initial enquiries - where did people hear about the service?	27 Enquiries: • 25 telephone • 2 email Prompt for enquiry from a range of sources including; Hartlepool Mail (3), Evening Gazette (3) HBC website (1), TV adverts (1), FC recommendation (5)
Information packs sent out between 1.4.12 – 30.6.12	25
Initial visits - How many proceeded - Reasons for not proceeding	10 visits 8 proceeding to preparation training 2 have agreed to contact department when situation appropriate
Preparation Group May 2012	5 assessments commencing 1 postponed and 1 not yet responded
Prospective foster carers who are to attend next group	10

Carers approved by Panel 1/4/12 – 30/6/12	5 4 Mainstream 1 Connected Person
Complaints received	0
Allegations against foster carers	0
Placement Disruption	1
Numbers of carers referred for Connected Care Assessment	1
Number of referrals for placement: Placements made: (by age range) - IFA - Residential Care	22 referrals = 30 children (including 3 unborn) 11 placed in-house 2 aged >1 2 aged 1-5 1 aged 6-10 6 aged 11-17 4 (1YP x 2) 0
Number of carers de-registered	3 Mainstream 0 Connected Person

4.2 Foster Carer recruitment

The statistics reflect the positive progress that has been made in the first quarter of this year in terms of foster carer recruitment. The numbers of foster carers has increased overall from 92 to 94. The continuation of this upward trend is supported by an increase in the number of initial enquiries received and the number of initial visits made; the first quarter figure is equivalent to half of those made throughout the whole of last year.

The increase in enquiries can be attributed to the success of the revamped publicity materials and the targeting of our advertising.

We are now in the fortunate position of having 10 potential foster carers waiting to attend preparation training. The intention is to arrange this training for September/October of this year and if the increased interest in fostering continues then another group can be arranged for early in 2013.

4.3 Placement Activity

The number of children and young people being referred to the service and the number of foster placements being made has increased slightly within this

quarter. Although the number of placements made has not increased there are a number of placements pending. 72 children were placed in the year 2011-2012 and in the first quarter of this year 14 children and young people became looked after with 10 being placed in in-house foster care. 1 young person subsequently returned to a foster placement following rehabilitation.

4.4   Edge of Care scheme

The intention to implement an 'Edge of Care' scheme including foster carers able to provide foster care and family support was referenced in the annual report 2011-2012 and this development has been progressed. The recruitment of foster carers specifically for this scheme (support carers) has been actively pursued through bespoke adverts. Several visits have been made to potential carers interested in this area of work and one of the potential carers currently commencing the assessment process is a potential support care foster carer. The purpose of this scheme is to reduce the numbers of children and young people entering the care system but this outcome can not be achieved until the scheme is fully operational.

4.5   Panel activity

As can be seen within the statistical data the panel has considered and recommended the approval of five fostering households in this first quarter.

With regard to the plans for children considered by the Fostering Panel, the plan for long term fostering was recommended for approval for 4 children and there were 4 matches taken to Panel which involved 6 children achieving permanency in their foster placement.

4.6   The initial indicators for this year are that the fostering service has entered a positive recruitment phase and efforts will be focused on ensuring that we take full advantage of the increased interest in fostering to extend and improve our stock of carers. However we also need to ensure that we are able to progress the assessment and approval of the carers that we have been able to attract in a timely manner and that will be the future challenge in view of the capacity of the team. As we recruit and assess more carers we also need to maintain the high level of support and supervision to all our carers.

4.7   We do have to be mindful that our increase in carers has to match and exceed the increase in children and young people entering the care system. Also it is of significance that our numbers of children aged over ten years being referred is consistently greater than other age ranges. Conversely the number of carers wishing to care for this age group remains quite low.

4.8   Nevertheless overall the recruitment of more carers can only have positive benefits for the children in our care in that our capacity to offer choice and more robust matching will reap benefits for placement stability and effectiveness.

5.   RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1   That the Portfolio Holder notes the Quarter 1 report and the positive outcomes achieved by the fostering service during the quarter and supports our commitment to achieving continuous improvement.

6.   REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1   Portfolio holder has an important role in scrutinising the activities of the fostering services to ensure performance in this area is robust.

7.   APPENDICES AVAILABLE ON REQUEST, IN THE MEMBERS LIBRARY AND ON-LINE

7.1   None.

8.   BACKGROUND PAPERS

8.1   Fostering National Minimum Standards Services 2011
Fostering Regulations 2011

9.   CONTACT OFFICER

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CHILDREN'S AND COMMUNITY SERVICES REPORT

14th August 2012

Report of: Director of Child and Adult Services

Subject: WOMEN'S "BEGIN 2" PROGRAMME - SUCCESS
                    AND FUTURE DEVELOPMENT

1.   TYPE OF DECISION/APPLICABLE CATEGORY

Non-key.

2.   PURPOSE OF REPORT

2.1   To inform and update the Portfolio Holder on the progress and success of the Women's "Begin 2" programme to date and advise on its future development.

3.   BACKGROUND

3.1   In 2008, the Sport and Physical Activity Team within the Council's Sport and Recreation service ran a "Women's Begin 2 Run" pilot scheme to engage women in a 10 week running programme. The aim of this was to increase general fitness of women with an end goal of participating in the Race for Life which was to be the first year that such an event was to be held in Hartlepool.

3.2   The pilot programme was a huge success with 50 ladies enrolling and a subsequent average attendance of 39 every week. The majority of the sessions were held at Summerhill with the last two at Seaton Carew giving participants an insight into the Race for Life route. These sessions were delivered in partnership with Burn Road Harriers Running Club so women who did want to keep training after the programme could do so via the club.

3.2   Following the pilot, evaluations from participants indicated that they would like to see a similar approach being taken with other sports such as swimming and general fitness activities and not just running. As a consequence, this led to the development of the Women's "Begin 2" programme jointly funded by Sport England, the Primary Care Trust and Hartlepool Borough Council which was developed to run over a three year period.

3.3   The programme aimed to increase the physical activity levels of women in Hartlepool. At that time, Sport England's market segmentation data for the Borough indicated that 7.73% of women were identified as "Paula's" against a national average of 3.8%, who were profiled as typically being aged 35 years plus, single parents and who did not have time to engage in sporting activity.

3.4   Based on Sport England's national "Active People" survey, Hartlepool was also identified as having particularly low participation rates for "Paula's" where 61% were not participating in any activity. The Women's "Begin 2" programme was therefore developed with the aim of providing opportunities to engage these women in entry level activity that was fun, enjoyable, and sustainable.

4.   DEVELOPMENT, PROGRESS AND SUCCESS TO DATE

4.1   The Women's Begin 2 programme focused on weekly activities which lasted up to 10 weeks in duration. At the end of each block of activity, programmes were either made sustainable through the facility at which they are based or by the women being signposted to other exit routes within the town that would allow for their activity to be sustained. The programme also looked to include and promote voluntary and coach education opportunities for those involved as well as club development for increased sustainability of the project into the future.

4.2   The programme proved to be popular. In the first year January to December 2009, 200 participants took part in the range of activities offered, of which 64 were completely new to any form of sport and physical activity.

4.3   Year two, January to December 2010 saw an increase in both the number of women participating (273) and the number of ladies who were completely new to sport and physical activity (66).

4.4   During the final and third year, January to December 2011, a variety of activities were delivered including an event to celebrate International Women's Day which took place in March 2011. The event included a number of physical activity taster sessions including zumba, yoga, chair aerobics and self defence. During the event, participants also had the opportunity to gain health advice from partners supporting the day including the Primary Care Trust, Stop smoking, Stroke awareness, healthy eating, Drug intervention, Domestic abuse, Children Centres and breast feeding.

4.5   205 women participated in the activities offered during the third year of the programme which included yoga, netball, running, street gym, Nordic Walking, spinning and Prambles (brisk walks with your push chair/buggy). 77 of these ladies were completely new to sport and physical activity and in addition, 15 women from the running programme went onto join Burn Road Harriers Running Club.

4.6   As part of the third year programme, street gym was developed after feedback was received from women who wanted to take part in a fitness based programme but in an outdoor environment. The session incorporated various types of exercise with minimal equipment allowing them to continue their activity once the programme had finished. As a further result, an indoor gym package was also developed for the winter months.

4.7   Nordic walking was also introduced as a more intense walking programme that after introduction, participants could undertake on their own or in groups. Several of those who took part in the initial programme are now actively involved in the "Walk for Health" scheme.

4.8   Prambles was introduced as an activity that gave mother/grandmother and child the opportunity to walk whether they were in a pram or on foot. After the "Begin 2" programme, participants were signposted to weekly Prambles sessions that now take place at local Children's Centres.

4.9   Initially one gym package was set up at Mill House Leisure Centre but owing to demand, a second programme was established at the Headland Sports Hall. The programmes were set up as female only sessions and following completion participants were given a free technogym key which is required to operate the gym equipment on the basis that they attended a minimum number of sessions. The free technogym key also gave ladies the opportunity to continue the use of the gym after becoming a member.

4.10   The Women's "Begin 2" Spin programme took place on three different sessions per week during the third year of the programme due to high demand. Spinning, which is a cycling workout, now takes place across the three main leisure centre sites and is extremely popular and not just amongst women. Similarly, an indoor fitness package consisting of Zumba, box circuits and swimming can now still be accessed in mainstream sessions via the leisure centres.

5.   FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS

5.1   As with any funded activity programme, the Portfolio Holder will be aware of the need to develop sustainability to ensure the continuation of the good work undertaken once the funding support ceases. This has proved to be the case with the "Begin 2" programme which has resulted in it being one of our most successful areas of work.

5.2 The "Begin 2" concept and branding is now so well known that it continues to be used as a development tool, particularly to encourage individuals to take up sport and physical activity participation. This programme has now been extended to include Men's activities which are also proving to be just as popular as the women's.

5.3 Further activities and those that are a little different to the normal ones traditionally on offer continue to be introduced such as diving, sailing, handball, water polo and orienteering. This is in an attempt to capture people's imagination and to encourage them to try something that they may find more appealing.

6.   FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

6.1 There are no financial implications to the Council as a result of this programme. Despite that the original grant funding has now concluded, due its success and the collaborative work between the Sport and Physical Activity Team and the leisure centres, the programme is able to continue on a minimum of a break even basis.

7.   SUMMARY

7.1 The Sport and Recreation service plays a vital part in the delivery of the health and well-being agenda by developing participation opportunities to encourage residents to take up a healthier lifestyle. The "Begin 2" programme has proved to be very successful in encouraging this and as part of the work, sustainability has been developed. This is of particular importance to ensure a lasting legacy of participation.

8.   RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1 The Portfolio Holder is asked to note the success of the programme and it's achievements to date along with future plans to continue to increase participation in sport and physical activity.

9.   CONTACT OFFICER

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CHILDREN'S AND COMMUNITY SERVICES REPORT

14th August 2012

Report of: Director of Child and Adult Services

Subject: SPORT AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY TEAM – SIX MONTH PROGRESS REPORT

1.   TYPE OF DECISION/APPLICABLE CATEGORY

Non-key.

2.   PURPOSE OF REPORT

2.1   The purpose of this report is to inform and update the Portfolio Holder on the work of the Sport and Physical Activity Team which is part of the Council's Sport and Recreation Service. This area of work includes Summerhill Outdoor Activity Centre and Country Park, the Outdoor Activities Service, GP Referral Programme, Learn to Swim Programme (including primary school lessons) and all targeted work aimed at increasing participation in sport and Physical Activity.

3.   BACKGROUND

3.1   The aim of the Sport and Physical Activity Team is to increase participation in sport and physical activity within Hartlepool, encouraging people to "Get Active, Stay Active and Feel Good in Hartlepool".

3.2   The Department of Health continues to recommend that adults (16+) should aim to achieve at least 30 minutes of moderate intensity activity on at least 5 days of each week. Engaging more people in sport and physical activity in order to improve health and wellbeing is therefore a key priority at national, regional and local level and given the health inequalities in Hartlepool, remains an important issue for the Council to be addressed.

3.3   A previous update on the work of the Team was given as part of a report to the Portfolio Holder on December 13th 2011 and this report now covers the period from October 2011 to the end of March 2012.

4. TEAM ACHIEVEMENTS OCTOBER 2011 – MARCH 2012

4.1 The following highlights some of the work programmes and key achievements of the Team over the six month period of October 2011 to March 2012.

4.2 **Learn to Swim Programme**

- Primary schools who attended the Council operated provision managed by the Sport and Physical Activity Team rated the instruction programme in evaluation feedback as either good or excellent.
- No part of the feedback indicated that schools rated any area of this service other than being good or excellent.
- Children from year 3 upwards achieved the 25 metre standard, which is excellent.
- 149 children accessed learn to swim lessons outside of school time at Mill House Leisure Centre.

4.3 **Summerhill**

- A considerable amount of conservation maintenance works were undertaken on site including stile construction, woodland tree thinning, coppicing and hedge laying.
- A new pond was excavated funded by the SITA Trust as part of the wider developments within the Regeneration and Neighborhoods department.
- In March 2012 following previous feasibility survey work, solar panels were installed on the southern facing roof of the Visitor Centre. There are 40 panels capable of generating up to 10KW of energy.
- Two news stiles and dog gates were installed as part of the Countryside Stewardship works.
- A bid for funding to the Landfill Tax operator BIFFA, was successful in raising £50,000. This funding will support the complete refurbishment of the BMX course altering the existing 6 straights and 5 berms (turns) into 4 straights with 3 tarmac berms. Funding has also been secured from the Dragon's Den funding stream to support the construction of a new BMX start gate.
- In March 2012 funding of just over £15,000 provided for some refurbishment of the Junior Play area. Existing features such as the gravel works, play frame and wobbly bridge were refurbished and two new play features installed. Funding has also been secured of over £19,000 from the Learning and Disability Partnership Board to support the installation of specialist play equipment designed to encourage play for children with physical and learning disabilities.
- The concourse of the Visitors Centre has been redeveloped to include a more interactive area linking to the archaeological findings and history of the site and a new partnership established with the Cultural Services team to create an "Emerge Gallery" to showcase the towns emerging artists. To date, three different exhibitions have been shown.
- Volunteer opportunities were given for volunteer groups from Houghall College and the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme.

- Over 2011/12, the team at Summerhill organised and lead 130 school activity sessions with another 39 self lead school sessions undertaken on site.
- A key partnership has continued with Hartlepool's Pupil Referral Unit (PRU) providing conservation and adventure activities for young people. 28 sessions were held.
- Phase 4 of the successful Healthy Heritage programme was completed over 2011/12. This phase had 3 distinct stream; an introductory stream for Years 2 to 5's, a transition stream for Year 6 and a team development stream for Year 7. In total 27 Healthy Heritage sessions were held involving 666 pupils and 85 support staff
- The Summerhill team organised and led 45 activity sessions for local groups. Key activities have been; archery, bouldering, high ropes, nature walks and orienteering.
- The TOREX computerised till and booking system has been installed in the Visitor Centre. This will provide a link to Sport and Recreation's Active card initiative which is in operation at the other Council leisure venues.
- Infra red counters have been installed on site and in the Visitor Centre, enabling a more robust method of footfall to be recorded.

4.4 GP Referral Scheme– (Hartlepool Exercise for Life Programme)

- The Council's Concessionary Active card for adults aged 60+ helps to keep participation costs low – currently, it is £1.60 for one hour of supervised exercise at any of the courses regardless of type A flexible approach allows new clients to observe sessions prior to participation to reduce any fears or anxiety they may have.
- The highest percentage of referrals received is for orthopaedic related conditions (53%) However, the extensive use of the HELP Scheme by the UHH Physiotherapy team confirms that they have every confidence in the quality of the service provided.
- In terms of referred clients completing a 10 week programme of activity, during these 6 months, the highest number of completions (45) came from the arthritis/falls category where specific sessions had been arranged for this client group.
- The retention rate of those referred clients still exercising after completing an initial course of 10 weeks, has risen from 68% in the first 6 months of 2011 to 76% which is an amazing achievement and a very high retention figure for this type of programme.

4.5 Outdoor Activities Team

- Both members of the Outdoor Activity Team achieved CYTECH level 2 status (qualified cycle technicians) in October. With two qualified level two bike mechanics based at Summerhill Visitors Centre, the proposed plan to develop a Cycle hub/clinic at the site became a reality.
- A grant of £10,000 from Sport England was subsequently obtained and utilising the staffs CYTECH qualifications, bike servicing and repairs for Hartlepool residents can now be offered. This has resulted in more

people being able to access sustainable transport whilst at the same time increasing the opportunities for physical activity participation.
- The Cycle hub/clinic money has also enabled the team to offer maintenance courses for the general public teaching participants how to maintain and repair their own bikes. This has created the opportunity for participants to make their personal riding more sustainable.
- The Cycle clinic/hub has to date received in excess of 110 users and these have all occurred within the initial five weeks of the programme being developed. The immediate success of it has assisted in bringing new visitors to Summerhill and feedback received is that for many, it was their first time to the site with the suggestion that they would be returning.
- The Outdoor Activities Coordinator passed the British Cycling Level 2 qualification and then more recently the BMX Level 2. This now enables the team to deliver BMX development sessions to schools and community groups that will provide a link to the North East BMX Club who base themselves at Summerhill.
- Mountain Bike GCSE and BTEC sessions are continuing to go from strength to strength, with new schools and colleges coming on board for these development sessions. Excellent feedback has been received and repeat bookings made.
- A grant of £3,000 from Sport Englands "Sportivate" programme funding has recently been awarded to the team to run mountain bike sessions linked to Brinkburn Sixth Form College.
- In financial terms the Outdoor Activities Team has had its most successful income generating year to date with year on year growth for 5 consecutive years being achieved.

4.6   **Core Sport and Physical Activity Team**

- **Walk About in Hartlepool** – this programme has grown significantly since October 2011 with 292 participants regularly walking on a monthly basis. Another 28 volunteer walk leaders have also been trained by the team and new organisations have engaged with the programme including the Centre for Independent Living and Symo which is a film group for adults with learning difficulties.
- Nordic Walking is still incredibly popular and 11 programmes have been delivered in Hartlepool. One volunteer in particular (Dave Scoot) has had a real impact on this programme and has delivered over 100 voluntary hours.
- **Ready Steady Walk** is a project designed to raise activity levels of children aged 4 – 11 years through walking. It involves walking from one Olympic host city to another and along the route, activities linking to numeracy, literacy, science, geography, history, religious education and modern foreign languages are explored. 984 children have participated in the programme from 7 different schools and the total mileage achieved so far is 31,512 miles.
- **The Together Project** - The Together Project is works with participants that are most in need of being physically active to support their quality of life and improve their health and wellbeing and sessions have been run at Alice House and two sheltered accommodation venues. Alice House has

had a positive impact with participants becoming more engaged within the sessions and improvements have been made associated to their physical and mental wellbeing including range of movement for some service users. Hartlepool Hospice and Lynton Court have been supplied with their own equipment through the Together Project so that volunteers and staff can continue to deliver the activity to their service users. This project has so far seen 53 participants since the last reporting period with a throughput of 368. More sessions are being set up with new groups to give them an entry level to being active within their own environment.

- **Men's "Begin 2"** - Men's Begin 2 has seen a total of 68 participants with a throughput of 332 since October 2011. The programme has attracted many participants that have not exercised for a long time and therefore has supported them in many positive changes.

- **Women's "Begin 2"** - Since October 2011, the programme has offered a comprehensive programme of activity for women in Hartlepool including two indoor gym package's, spinning classes, an activity package including Zumba, Box Fit, Swimming and Sailing with a total of 79 participants. Evaluations show feedback received was extremely positive with 100% satisfied or extremely satisfied participants.

- **Football (Friday Night Street League)** - Street League continues to be a diversionary activity for young people on a Friday evening. This takes place at Grayfields Recreation Ground which is within a catchment area that has in the past been subject to anti social behaviour, therefore provides something for young people to do. The League attracts young people from 9 years through to 16 years of age and the evening also provides a coaching session for under 8's to support them to develop their fundamentals skills for Football. The weekly sessions attract between 110 to 140 young people making it one of the most successful physical activity interventions for the Team.

- **Footie Tots** - Footie Tots is a programme which gives pre school children aged between 2 to 5 years the opportunity to take part in football activities in a safe and fun environment. It also gives parents the opportunity to interact with their children whilst they develop physical literacy. Furthermore, it encourages the fundamentals of the sport and movement with particular emphasis on agility, balance and coordination. On Average this session attracts 20 participants, some of which have progressed now onto the under 8 development session at Street League.

- **Disability Sport** - Disability Sports provision remains a key focus of the Sport and Physical Activity Team and more importantly working with partners, clubs and service users to ensure sustainable exit routes are available for participants. A Hartlepool Disability Sports Development Group has been established and comprises of a number of key partners and the group consults with participants and organisations to acknowledge gaps in provision in order to develop new sport opportunities.

o Football coaching has been delivered to young people with disabilities every Saturday morning in partnership with Families First and Aiming Higher. The sessions started in November 2011 and finished in March 2012 however due to their success and the developments that the young people made holistically, these are now continuing longer term. Hartlepool Tennis Club has been identified as the Tees Valley's focus club for disabled participants. This along with the development of a Wheel Chair Basketball Club will support the accommodation of more disabled athletes.

o Kurling took place in the last quarter of 2011 starting in September and a record 17 teams signed up from across the Tees Valley even though a £1.00 fee per player was introduced to support the League and enable it to continue longer term. A throughput of 462 was achieved from the League and it is envisaged that this will be re-run in the Autumn.

o Boccia restarted in January 2012 with 16 teams registering. This is currently averaging 40 to 50 participants per week.

- **Limestone Landscapes** - Limestone Landscapes planning has continued and will be moving into the delivery stages of the programme in the near future. Hartlepool is expected to gain investment for the Walk About in Hartlepool Scheme, Disability Cycling, the BMX Track at Summerhill, Friends of Seaton Park and Orienteering/Geo Cashing. It is intended that a Big Lime Walk will also be hosted in September 2012 which will accommodate all abilities of walkers.

- **Club Development, Action Groups, and National Governing Bodies (NGB's) of Sport** - Hartlepool Sport and Physical Activity Team continue to work with all of the named clubs, NGB's and Action Groups engaged in the previous 6 month period. In addition we have engaged with new clubs and are making progress to recruit more for future developments. New engagement that has been made with NGB's includes Rounder's England, British Weight Lifting, British Gymnastics, Orienteering, English Cricket Board and Bowls.

o Tees and Hartlepool Yacht Club and Hartlepool Sport and Physical Activity Team have worked closely over the past few months to develop sailing opportunities.
o Badminton Bootcamps are being piloted over the summer months to increase access to Badminton by combining it with fitness based activity. Pay and Play sessions are also being set up at Brierton Sports Centre.
o Cardio Tennis and Begin to Tennis programmes are being held pre and post Olympics. Cardio Tennis is a high intensity programme that combines cardio fitness with fundamentals of Tennis.
o A Hockey programme is being scheduled pre and post Olympics targeting females through the NGB's Back to Hockey programme using the game

Rush Hockey as the promotion. Men will also be attracted through their Into Hockey Programme.

o The establishment of a Gymnastics Development Group is being explored with five clubs in the town that deliver various disciplines of gymnastics including Trampolining, Acrobatics, Cheerleading and traditional Gymnastics. This will be done in partnership with British Gymnastics as a key element of their 2013 - 2017 Whole Sport Plan development.

o The establishment of a Go Ride Club is being explored to be based at Summerhill to increase access of Cycling to Children and Young people instead of just BMX cycling.

o A Cycling Development Network is to be established incorporating all levels and disciplines of cycling. This will include the NGB, clubs, the Outdoor Activity Team, Sustainable Transport and others involved in the development of cycling.

o There is a huge amount of work taking place with clubs and their respective NGB's. The Olympic Legacy is also a key feature within these developments as it is a great method to promote sport and the local opportunities that there are to take part. NGB's are revising their Whole Sport Plans therefore working with them is going to be paramount to ensure support and investment into Hartlepool.

- **School Coaching** - Supporting schools with coaching provision continues with coaches being deployed into school environments to support PPA, after school clubs and other activities.

- **Sportivate** - Sportivate is a Sport England initiative, coordinated by the Tees Valley County Sports Partnership and is aimed at encouraging more people aged 14 to 25 years to take part in sport and physical activity. A total of £16,544 has been received across a broad range of clubs, partners and organisations (28 in total).

- **Coach and Volunteer Development** - Hartlepool Sport and Physical Activity Team has developed a Hartlepool Coach, Leader and Volunteer Development Group to drive forward a coordinated approach to supporting managers or coaches, leaders and volunteers and also the coaches, leaders and volunteers themselves. There are four key aspects to the guidance which are recruitment, induction, development and retention and it gives practical examples and supporting resources to strengthen provision for all organisations. A Development Programme containing a broad range of workshops has been developed in response to the previous training needs analysis and an accreditation programme has also been devised. This will recognise clubs as offering quality provision for coaches, leaders and volunteers and working in partnership with the education sector, it is intended that these will be the organisations that will be recognised as placement providers.

- **Workplace Health Calendar** - The Workplace Health Programme was launched in January 2012. The programme was named Active Workplaces, Healthy Workplaces and branding was designed by Cleveland College of Art and Design. A three month programme of sport

and physical activity was produced for January to March 2012 and information was disseminated to all workplaces engaged in this programme. Some of the activities were hugely popular and some were not as successful and the programme continues to be developed. Hartlepool continues to lead the North East region in the piloting of this programme.

5.   SUMMARY

5.1   The service continues to seek out opportunities and new partnerships in order to provide innovative physical activity activities in Hartlepool. This is of vital importance as a contributory factor towards the improved health and wellbeing agenda of all residents and an integral component of the Public Health agenda.

6.   RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1   Comments from the Portfolio Holder are welcomed.

7.   BACKGROUND PAPERS

Culture, Leisure and Tourism Portfolio, 13th December 2011 – Sport and Physical Activity Team – Six Month Progress Report.

8.   CONTACT OFFICER

Pat Usher – Head of Sport and Recreation.

CHILDREN'S AND COMMUNITY SERVICES REPORT

14 August 2012

Report of: Director of Child and Adult Services

Subject: SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN: PEER REVIEW

1.   TYPE OF DECISION/APPLICABLE CATEGORY

Non Key Decision.

2.   PURPOSE OF REPORT

2.1   To present to Portfolio Holder information regarding the Safeguarding Peer Review which will take place in Hartlepool during week commencing 10 September 2012.

3.   BACKGROUND

3.1   The Children's Improvement Board, the national body responsible for driving 'Towards Excellence for Children, sector led improvement and support in children's services', aims to work towards excellence in Children's Services through the development of a self improving system, underpinned by the following objectives:

- Securing improvement work that is focused on galvanizing Children's Services to achieve the best possible outcomes for children and young people; working in particular on the need to avoid service failures, improve performance in relation to the more intractable challenges and sustaining progress during a period of significant economic restraint.

- Building on existing capability in Children's Services, corporately and with partners to diagnose improvement challenges, identifying risks to performance and commissioning effective evidence based and value for money solutions.

- Being systematic about sharing knowledge about what works across the sector and ensuring that there is effective brokerage of best practice solutions.

- Contributing to the development and implementation of policies designed to improve the lives of children.

  The success of 'Towards Excellence for Children' will be demonstrated by better outcomes for children nationally.

3.2   The Peer Review programme is delivered by the Local Government Association (LGA), in partnership with the:

- Association of Directors of Children's Services (ADCS)
- Centre for Excellence and Outcomes (C4EO);
- Social Care Centre for Excellence (SCIE).

3.3   Attached at **Appendix 1** is the Peer Review Guidance Manual which provides detailed information about the purpose, process and arrangements for a Safeguarding Peer Review.

4.   **HARTLEPOOL PEER REVIEW**

4.1   As a part of sector led improvement in the North East of England, Hartlepool Borough Council has requested a peer review to examine how, with its partners; it is fulfilling its safeguarding children responsibilities in order to enhance its improvement plans. The Review is scheduled to commence on the 10th September 2012 and will take place over five days.

4.2   It is important to note that a review is not an inspection and should not be conducted like one by either the review team or the council and its partners. The review is intended as a learning process involving critical friends in dialogue with the authority and its partners. The outcome will be a clear statement of good practice and areas for development from the peer team.

4.3   Joyce Thacker, Director of Children's Services for Rotherham, will lead the review together with a team of specialists from other authorities and organisations from across England.

4.4   The Peer Review Team will consist of:

- Team Leader
- A Lead Member for Children's Services;
- An Operational Manager/Senior Social Work Practitioner;
- An NHS Manager/Practitioner for Children;
- A Review Analyst;
- LGA Review Manager – manages the overall process and advises the team and council.

4.5　　The review is an interactive exercise. During the review the peer team will examine evidence from a number of sources including:

- Performance data;
- A variety of documentation;
- An on-line questionnaire undertaken by front line staff;
- A case mapping exercise undertaken by the council and partners;
- A wide range of interviews conducted with elected members and staff from the council, partners, commissioned services to explore standard themes.

4.6　　The review will be structured around key safeguarding themes and established probes, which explore these themes in detail. To ensure robustness of the review process the following themes are standard items that will always be explored as a part of a review:

- Effective Practice, Service Delivery and the Voice of the Child;
- Outcomes, Impact and Performance Management;
- Working Together (including the Health and Wellbeing Board);
- Capacity and Managing Resources;
- Vision Strategy and Leadership.

4.7　　In addition to the standard items, each peer review should determine local Key Areas of Focus. For the Hartlepool Review, the following areas have been identified:

- Reviewing focus since the 2010 Inspection of Safeguarding and Looked After Services;
- Quality of practice and care planning;
- Impact of early intervention and service re-modelling;
- Effectiveness of commissioning and contract monitoring arrangements;
- Contribution of the LSCB;
- Impact of NHS changes on partnerships.

4.8　　A multi agency Implementation Group including the local authority, PCT, Foundation Trust and the police has been established to co-ordinate the collection of data, plans and other information for the Review.

5.　FEEDBACK

5.1　　At the end of the week, the team leader will deliver a feedback presentation to the council and its partners followed by a prioritisation conference in which local partners will have the opportunity to reflect upon the findings of the review.

5.2　　Following the review, the findings will be communicated in writing by the peer review team detailing:

- An executive summary of key issues;
- Good practice and areas for development;
- Outcome of the prioritisation workshop.

5.3   This letter is not published by the Children's Improvement Board, it will be up to local partners to decide where and when the outcome of the review will be reported and discussed giving consideration to local media interest. It is anticipated that the findings of the review and subsequent action taken will be useful to inform future inspections of safeguarding arrangements.

6.   RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1   For the portfolio holder to note the arrangements for the Safeguarding Peer Review which will take place during week commencing 10 September 2012.

7.   REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1   The portfolio should be aware of arrangements for the peer review in accordance with their duties as Lead Member for Children's Services.

8.   APPENDICES AVAILABLE ON REQUEST, IN THE MEMBERS LIBRARY AND ON-LINE

Appendix 1 - Peer Review Guidance Manual

9.   BACKGROUND PAPERS

Peer Review Guidance Manual

10.   CONTACT OFFICER

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Safeguarding Children –

Peer Review Guidance Manual

May 2012
(V19)

Table of contents

1. Introduction

This guidance manual is designed to help councils, their partners, members of staff, peer teams and managers of reviews to understand the ethos and aims of a peer review and how they actually operate. It is not intended to be totally prescriptive as each review will have its own individual features. However, it contains the experience and learning from over 50 safeguarding reviews and the steps set out in the manual provide a firm base for ensuring that each review can be conducted successfully.

The fundamental aim of each review is to help councils and their partners reflect on and improve safeguarding services for children and young people.

The manual contains general areas of guidance for all those persons involved in the review. The manual also contains a number of specific appendices that only those concerned with that aspect of the review need read. Attention is drawn to these in the general sections of the manual.

It is important to remember that a review is not an inspection and should not be conducted like one by either the peer team or the host council. Rather, it is a supportive but challenging process to assist councils and their partners in recognising their strengths and identify their own areas for improvement. The key purpose of the review is to stimulate local discussion about how the council and its partners can improve safeguarding outcomes for children and young people.

Each review will be different and will be tailored to the individual needs of a council and its partners. There will be core elements common to each review but also optional elements from which the overall review can be designed. Which elements are used will be the subject of discussion with the host council and its partners.

The review is an inter-active exercise. During the review the peer team will examine evidence from a number of sources. These will include:

- performance data (core)
- a variety of documentation (core)
- an on-line questionnaire undertaken by front line staff (core)
- a case mapping exercise conducted by the host council/ partners (core)
- an audit validation exercise (optional)
- case records review (optional)
- a wide range of interviews conducted with elected members and staff from the council, partners, commissioned services etc. exploring standard themes (core) and other key lines of enquiry chosen by the council/ partners (optional)

The review will conclude with a presentation by the review team. This will provide the team's views on the strengths of local safeguarding provision and areas for further consideration. The host council and its partners will then facilitate a workshop (assisted by the peer team) to consider the findings of the review and identify their immediate priorities.

A feedback letter covering the main points of the review and the workshop will then be sent to the host council.

Although this will be the end of the formal peer review, the Local Government Association (LGA) will ask the council for feedback on the impact and experience of taking part in the review. Opportunities for sector support and discussion of how good practice identified can be disseminated will be pursued through the regional sector support arrangements. In addition, the LGA Principal Adviser will discuss with the council any corporate implications of the review.

The words 'council and authority' are interchangeable in the manual depending on the context.

The Children's Improvement Board (CIB) commissions Safeguarding Children Peer Reviews as a national programme available to all councils at a time that makes sense for them. If councils ask for their review to be co-ordinated with an LGA corporate peer challenge, the Principal Adviser will discuss this with the council chief executive and the peer review team. Peer Reviews are complementary to the 'peer challenge' arrangements agreed in each region. Peer challenge can be focused on any aspect of children's services and the methodology is agreed locally; it is helpful if peer challenge and peer review activity are co-ordinated so that councils have the space and capacity to take advantage of both processes.

Over time the LGA will use the learning from the reviews to contribute to the developing body of good practice to be used by councils in their own improvement journeys.

Peer reviews are a unique, and privileged, opportunity for peer teams and the host council to engage in challenge and to learn about safeguarding. Every council and every review team is different and so each review will be different. All those involved in planning and participating in the review should keep one question uppermost in their minds during the review process – "What will most help the council to move forward?" If you do this, it's hard to go wrong.

Good luck and enjoy your review.

2. The review themes

The review will be structured around key safeguarding themes and established probes which explore these themes in detail. To ensure robustness of the review process the following 'standard' themes will always be explored as part of the review:

- Effective Practice, Service Delivery and the Voice of the Child
- Outcomes, Impact and Performance Management
- Working Together (including Health and Wellbeing Board)
- Capacity and Managing Resources
- Vision, Strategy and Leadership

In addition, councils may wish to identify specific areas within the themes for particular examination or to add additional themes that are particularly relevant to their situation. This should be discussed between the council, Review Manager and Team Leader at an early stage. Requests for additional key lines of enquiry will be accommodated if they are within the general safeguarding remit and realistic within the time constraints of the review.

Full details of the 'standard' themes and probes are given in Appendix 1 which the council and peer teams should read.

3. Basic stages in a review

The information in the table below sets out the basic stages in a review. Sections 6 - 12 and the supporting appendices contain more detailed information regarding how the actual methodology will work at each stage. The manual indicates which appendices need to be read by the council and which by the peer team.

Attention is also drawn to Appendix 18 which details specific issues relating to councils in intervention.

Stage	Time Period	Action
Initial enquiry	Any	Council indicates that it may wish to have a review. A discussion takes place between the council CIB Safeguarding Lead to discuss why a review may be appropriate, any particular focus, dates, peer team requirements and any necessary background information.

Set up meeting and formal proposal, including the initial scope of the review	At least three months before date of review	Council confirms it wishes to have a review. CIB Safeguarding Lead issues formal proposal letter including confirmation of additional areas explored and date for on-site work
Allocation of Review Manager and Support. Advise Ofsted of the date of the review	As soon as council confirms date for a review	LGA allocate Review Manager, Project Co-Ordinator and issue Guidance Manual to council
Identification of Peer Team	As soon as council confirms requirements.	Review Manager requests nominations, which are agreed with the council as soon possible.
Initial Preparation	Commence as soon as council confirms date for a review	Review Manager undertakes initial desk research regarding the council and contacts council Review Sponsor to discuss review arrangements. During this stage the Review Manager should personally visit the host council to discuss arrangements if they have not already done so
Review Preparation	At least two months before on-site review	The council and its partners start to collate documentation and begin the process of completing the front line questionnaire. Council commences case mapping activity. Dates for optional Audit Validation or Case Records review agreed (if either of these options are to be used)
Audit validation (optional)	To be completed at least two weeks before review	An Operational Manager Peer will conduct an audit validation and prepare report for the review team
Case records review (optional)	To start at least four weeks before review, with initial report two	An Operational Manager peer will conduct a case records review and prepare

	weeks before on-site work and complete in the on-site week	report
Final Review Preparation	To be completed **at least** two weeks before review. In practice the documents should be sent to the Review Manager and Off-Site Analyst as soon as possible to allow for preparation of off-site analysis report	Case file mapping report completed, performance data compiled and front line questionnaires completed. Council finalises interview programme for on- site work. All the above to be sent together with documents set out in Appendix 6 to peer team
Pre -Review analysis	At least 10 days before review	Review Manager compiles front line questionnaire analysis report. Review Analyst examines performance data, documents (audit validation and case records reviews, if chosen) case mapping report and questionnaire report. Review Analyst produces off site analysis report and sends to Review Manager. Both reports to be sent to peer team
First Thoughts Presentation preparation	Around week before review	Team Leader, Review Analyst and Review Manager (and optionally senior operational manager peer if a case records review has been undertaken) meet to prepare draft of First Thoughts Presentation. Draft sent to peer team.
On-Site	On-site stage	Council delivers Overview Presentation. Peer team deliver First Thoughts Presentation, conduct interview programme, produce final presentation and council/ team facilitates prioritisation workshop
Post review	Within three weeks of	Review Manager drafts

	on-site stage ending	Feedback Letter, agrees draft with team Draft letter subject to LGA Quality Assurance procedures and sent to host council for comment within three weeks of the review. Comments received from council within two weeks of letter being issued and final version issued to host council, regional CIB contact and LGA Principal Adviser Discussions held re further support Evaluation of review undertaken

4. Confidentiality, data protection and personal data

Confidentiality

Each party (council, partners, LGA and peer review team) shall keep confidential all confidential information belonging to other parties disclosed or obtained as a result of the relationship of the parties under the Safeguarding Children Peer Review and shall not use nor disclose the same save for the purposes of the proper performance of the peer review or with the prior written consent of the other party.

The obligations of confidentiality shall not extend to any matter which the parties can show is in or has become part of the public domain other than as a result of a breach of the obligations of confidentiality or was in their written records prior to the date of the peer review; was independently disclosed to it by a third party; or is required to be disclosed under any applicable law, or by order of a court or governmental body or other competent authority.

As can be seen in the review stages there are optional parts of the review that may involve team members having access to personal data. **It is vital that the following principles are understood by the council, partners and members of the peer team and adhered to at all times.**

Data Protection

The council, partners, LGA and peer team members agree that data (including personal data) as defined in the Data Protection Act 1998, relating to the

processing of the peer review may to the extent that it is reasonably necessary in connection with the peer review may:

(a) be collected and held (in hard copy and computer readable form) and processed by the peer review team and

(b) may be disclosed or transferred:

(i) to the peer review team members and/or

(ii) as otherwise required or permitted by law.

5. The peer review team

The LGA convenes a team to deliver each peer review. The team represents the variety of interests in an integrated children's sector, and typically might comprise:

Team member	Indicative number of days involvement
• A Director/Assistant Director of Children's Services (team leader)	7 (2 off site, 5 on)
• A Lead Member for children's services	6 (5 days on site, plus pre reading)
• An operational manager/senior social work practitioner	6 (5 days on site plus pre reading) Plus audit validation and/ or case records review if required (around 2 days for each)
• An NHS manager/ practitioner for children	6 (5 days on site plus pre reading)
• In addition, a Review Analyst provides a summary of documentation and data with the Review Manager. Wherever possible the Off-Site Analyst should also attend throughout the peer review on site work	Up to 7 (2 days report writing and assisting with First Thoughts Presentation plus on-site days)
• The Review Manager	11 (6 off site, 5 on site)

The following points should be noted:

1) The above team is a 'standard team'. In practice it may be necessary to add additional team members (e.g. police, education specialist or a Chair of a LSCB) depending upon the areas to be explored, local circumstance, partnership arrangements etc. Where a council has significant representation from two or more political parties, a councillor from each of the two largest parties in the council will normally be invited onto the peer team. Likewise, the voluntary sector may be represented on the review team, where requested.

2) The indicative number of days should not be exceeded without prior approval from the CIB Safeguarding Lead. Similarly any additional peers must be specifically approved by them.

3) In practice it has been found to be very helpful if team members specialise or lead in examining one or more of the themes and in preparing the final slide presentation for that theme. The Review Manager should suggest and agree such specialisation during the run up to the on-site work

4) The Review Manager will try to ensure that members of the team have 'down time' during the review to deal with any urgent personal/ non review matters. However, such time is usually very limited as the review process is very intensive

In addition a Project Co-ordinator will be appointed to assist with logistical arrangements, payment of expenses etc. S/he will not normally attend the on-site work.

There may also be occasions when, for the purposes of gaining first hand experience of a peer review, LGA may request the permission of a council for another LGA member of staff or prospective peer to participate

Team roles, ground rules and skills required

Although they will work as a team throughout, each member of the team does have specific responsibilities and there are basic ground rules under which the team should operate.

These responsibilities and ground rules are summarised in Appendix 2, which all members of the peer review team should read. The peer team should also read Appendix 3 where the skills peers will need to fulfil their roles are outlined.

Liaison with the council

The Review Manager will liaise regularly with the council while the peer team is being drawn up in order to ensure the team matches the council's requirements as closely as possible. The aim is to have a complete team allocated at least six weeks prior to the on- site stage commencing. This is a guideline, as circumstances may dictate otherwise and the main priority is to ensure suitability of team members.

The council should be formally consulted by the Review Manager once the team has been drawn up to ensure acceptability. Acceptability includes ensuring that particular team members do not have a significant current or previous relationship with the council, which could affect their ability to be impartial (e.g. previous employment, a close relationship with a senior officer or member within the council to be reviewed etc.) or a commercial interest.

Where a team member withdraws at short notice the Review Manager will propose an alternative as soon as possible taking into account that the availability of peers will be limited.

Finalising the team

Once the team has been agreed, the Review Manager must request the Peer Support Team to issue all team members with a purchase order to confirm the arrangements for their attendance.

Safeguarding Children Community of Practice

Team members are encouraged to join the Safeguarding Children Knowledge Hub (KHub) group, which has replaced the community of practice. This is hosted on the Local government Association website via Knowledge Hub and allows access to a wide variety of discussion forums, materials, knowledge etc.

The Knowledge Hub can be accessed at https://knowledgehub.local.gov.uk/ You will then need to register.

6. The council team and responsibilities

The host council must supply three individuals/ groups of people to facilitate the smooth operation of the review. These are listed below and their responsibilities set out in Appendix 4 which the council should read:

- Council Review Sponsor
- Council Review Organiser
- Council Case Mapping Chair and Team

In addition the council should be aware of its responsibilities in agreeing to and participating in the review process. These responsibilities are set out in Appendix 5 which the council should read

7. Set up and scoping stage

When a council indicates that it is interested in hosting a review, a member of the CIB Safeguarding Lead will arrange a meeting with a senior manager within the council who will act as the council's Review Sponsor. The Chief Executive should also be invited to this meeting together with the lead member for children's service, Chair of LSCB and key partners e.g. the NHS and the police.

The purpose of the meeting will be to confirm that a review is appropriate, consider the focus, additional key lines of enquiry, the timetable, peer team requirements and any necessary background information.

If it has not been done already, CIB Safeguarding Lead will seek the permission of the council to inform Ofsted that a review will be taking place and the proposed dates. It must be stressed that the sole purpose of this notification is so that Ofsted can take this into account when planning their own inspection programme.

A formal proposal letter will then be sent by CIB Safeguarding Lead to the council confirming the discussion and proposed arrangements for the review.

8. Initial preparation stage

The Review Manager will then commence the initial preparation stage. This should include a meeting between the Review Manager and the council's Review Sponsor and Review Organiser.

In advance of the meeting the Review Manager should:

- liaise with the relevant LGA Principal Advisor for background on the council
- read latest inspection letters and scan through the council's website;
- brief themselves on the political composition of the council;
- find out about the council's children's services plans and priorities

The purpose of the meeting is to:

- confirm the council's aims for the review, ensuring that the focus of review agreed is still appropriate to meet their requirements
- develop the Review Manager's understanding of the key safeguarding issues faced by the council and local community

- confirm the key areas for the review to focus on
- consider the peer review methodology and expectations of the council, discuss the process and look at the practical arrangements
- confirm arrangements for the case mapping group and case mapping exercise are in place
- confirm arrangements for the audit validation/ case records review exercises are in place, if these options are chosen
- consider arrangements for the final presentation and workshop

It is important that the Review Manager ensures that the council is aware of its responsibilities for ensuring a smooth and productive review as laid out in Appendices 4 and 5, which the council should read

The Review Manager will also contact each member of the peer team to ensure that they understand the process, discuss team roles, make sure they have a copy of this manual, identify any queries or special requirements etc.

Communications and Publicity

The purpose of a review is to promote learning and improved outcomes. In that context, the council should consider communications and publicity regarding the review and its findings as early as possible.

Although the final letter is the property of the receiving council and is not published by the CIB or LGA, its purpose is to enable improvement and learning; it is not a document intended to be kept a secret. Although untested, it is unlikely that a Freedom of Information request for the final letter could be resisted, it is safest to presume from the outset letter will be shared and plan to manage this positively.

The council will want to consider where and when the outcome of the review will be discussed e.g. the LSCB or the children's partnership. If the final letter is to be reported to the council executive, a scrutiny committee or a NHS body, it will become a public document. There may be local media interest but pro-active PR is not recommended.

It is likely that at a subsequent inspection the council will wish to take credit for participating in peer review and peer challenge. In that circumstance Ofsted are likely to ask to see a copy of the letter and request information about any actions taken in response.

There is a standard 'What's it all about' leaflet that the Review Manager will supply to the council and partners to act as a basis for communications with staff.

The final letter will be sent to the DCS and copied to the Chief Executive, Lead Member and Leader of the Council.

9. Review Preparation

These are crucial stages of the review process and vital to the ultimate success of the review. It requires considerable commitment by the host council and their prime responsibilities are set out in Appendix 5.

During this stage the host council and Review Manager must liaise closely and ensure that the following are prepared and supplied to the peer team in accordance with the timescales laid down:

- pre review documentation (see Appendix 6)
- performance data (see Appendix 6)
- case mapping report (see Appendix 7)
- audit validation and case records reports if these options are chosen (appendices 12 and 13)
- frontline staff questionnaire (see Appendix 9)
- on-site interview programme (see Appendices 10 and 11)

NB It is essential that the council read all the relevant appendices

10. Audit Validation

This is an optional element. If chosen, it will be conducted by an Operational Manager Peer prior to the on-site stage and s/he will prepare a report for the peer team. This will help inform the First Thoughts Presentation and the Effective Practice, Service Delivery and the Voice of the Child theme of the review. A brief report for the council will be available to the council and appended to the final feedback letter

The process and methodology for undertaking this exercise is set out in Appendix 12

11. Case Records Review

This is also an optional element. If chosen, it will be conducted by an Operational Manager Peer prior to the on-site stage and s/he will prepare an initial report for the peer team and council. A final report will be appended to final review letter. This will help inform the First Thoughts Presentation and the Effective Practice, Service Delivery and the Voice of the Child theme of the review. A brief report for the council will be available to the council and appended to the final feedback letter.

The process and methodology for undertaking this exercise is set out in Appendix 13.

12.   First Thoughts Presentation preparation

The Review Manager, Team Leader and Review Analyst should meet (if a case records review or audit validation exercise has been undertaken the Operational Manager Peer should also attend) and prepare a draft First Thoughts Presentation. This will be **circulated to the peer team in the week before the on-site stage.**

The purpose of this presentation is to give the review team's initial reaction to the evidence provided and focus where further investigation is required during the on-site work. It is not intended to be a definitive or detailed statement of the teams' opinion, as it is far too early in the review process for this to be given. Nor at this stage does every point have to be clearly evidenced. Instead it is to flag up to the council key issues that have caught the attention of the team and to start a dialogue with the council about these.

NB It is probable that the First Thoughts Presentation will vary considerably from the Final Presentation that will take place after the on-site stage.

The presentation should draw upon the pre-review analysis report, the performance data, case mapping report, front line questionnaires and any information supplied by the council itself (plus the audit validation and case records exercises if these have been conducted).

A standard format is available for this, which will structure the presentation. The Review Manager will provide this.

It is important that a date to prepare this presentation is fixed as soon as the Team Leader, Review Analyst and date of the review are known.

13.   On-site stage

The sub-sections below go through the key stages of the overall on-site stage. This is the 'centre piece' of the whole review process and is heavily dependent upon the review preparation stages having been undertaken thoroughly. It is a demanding week for both the peer team and the host council and requires considerable joint working and good will to ensure its success. It is a joint process and should be approached as one – including the 'no surprises' policy outlined below.

No surprises policy

A 'no surprises' policy should be adopted throughout the review. This means the council should be provided with regular feedback on the key issues emerging during the on-site work.

The Team Leader and Review Manager should also give the council's Review Sponsor a good understanding of what will be presented at the Final Presentation. This gives the chance to resolve any outstanding issues and ensure appropriate language and wording are used. However, it is the independent peer team's presentation and they should present what they have found (both strengths and areas for further consideration) in an open, easy to understand and constructive manner, albeit in a manner that is sensitive to the council's situation.

The peer team should aim to give a draft of their proposed Final Presentation to the Review Sponsor at around 17.30 hours on day 4. Should this not prove possible it should be no later than first thing day 5. This should then be discussed by the Council Review Sponsor (and any of their team that they wish to invite), the Team Leader and the Review Manager (plus other members of the peer team as appropriate). This will allow for final crafting of the presentation the following morning.

There are particular matters to be taken into account where the host council is in intervention. These issues are covered in Appendix 18 which the council and peer team should read if relevant.

First peer team meeting

Prior to day 1 of the on- site stage the team will have its first meeting the afternoon/ evening of the day before the review starts on site. The Review Manager will facilitate this meeting and it will cover**:**

- team introductions
- ensuring that the team is familiar with the methodology and programme of interviews
- agreeing who will specialise in any particular themes (if not agreed by e-mail beforehand
- agreeing who will conduct which interviews the following day (may be held over to day 1 if required)
- answering any queries the team may have.

This meeting should be conducted in an informal yet business like approach. It is important that the team get to know each other, are comfortable with their roles, understand the methodology and tasks required to complete the review process.

The team may wish to share some initial thoughts regarding the council and the review but care must be taken to ensure that confidential matters are only addressed in a suitable environment.

Council Overview Presentation and Peer Team First Thoughts Presentation

The on-site stage starts with the team discussing amongst themselves in the base room the draft First Thoughts Presentation and agreeing the final version of this. At this stage the team should also try to capture for themselves the key issues that require exploration during the on-site review.

The team will then meet council and partner representatives during which the council may present a short Overview Presentation for the review team prior to the on-site stage. The presentation should be for no more than 20 minutes and consist of around 4 slides as follows:

- council and Safeguarding context of the area
- areas of strength
- areas the council wishes to develop further
- planned key actions to achieve the desired development

The Team Leader will then present the teams' First Thoughts Presentation, which should last between 20 – 30 minutes.

The team and council representatives can then discuss the two presentations, identifying areas of agreement, apparent differences and refine areas of focus for the on-site stage. The intention is to start a dialogue between the council and that will continue throughout the on-site stage.

It is for the council and its partners to decide who to have at this meeting but a maximum of 12 is recommended. It is suggested that the council considers inviting, for example:

- Lead member for children's services
- Director of Children's Services/Council Review sponsor
- Leader of the Council
- Chief Executive
- Relevant Assistant Directors/ Heads of Service
- LSCB Chair
- Principal Social Worker
- Relevant Health colleague/s/Director of Public Health
- Police representative/s
- Voluntary sector representative/s
- Head teacher representative/s

Both presentations and discussion should be completed by lunchtime on day one so that interviews may commence in the afternoon.

On-site interviews

This will form the main activity during the rest of day one to day four of the on-site stage. The ground rules for how the peer team will operate during this stage are given in appendix 2. A typical on-site programme is given at Appendix 11.

The feedback and prioritisation conference

The final phase of the on-site stage will be a feedback presentation by the peer team, led by the Peer Team Leader, to the council and its partners. This will be followed immediately by a prioritisation conference, facilitated by the council (with support from the peer team), in which all the key players in the local partnership will have the opportunity to reflect upon the findings of the review.

There is a standard format to the feedback presentation and the Review Manager will explain this to the team. Each member of the team will contribute to drafting the presentation, often taking personal responsibility for a specific theme(s). The language used should be straightforward and be an honest and open summary of the team's findings as regards both strengths and areas for further consideration.

The presentation should identify any good practice that the team think should be shared within the council's region or be submitted for validation as 'emerging, promising or validated' local practice through the C4EO process.

How the prioritisation conference should operate will be subject to the individual circumstances of the council. The Council Review sponsor, Team Leader and Review Manager should agree the format as early as possible during the review process. Appendix 16 gives further details regarding approaches to the conference which the council and peer team should read.

14. The written feedback

Following the on-site stage, the peer team will compile a letter based on the peer review findings comprising:

- An executive summary of the key issues
- good practice and areas for further development identified throughout the process.
- the outcome of the prioritisation workshop

The format, method of compiling and an example feedback letter are set out in appendix 17. It should be borne in mind that the review is not intended to produce a judgment nor to make extensive recommendations. The feedback letter should include sufficient detail to enable readers who were not at the presentation to understand the findings of the review.

15. Post Review evaluation

The views of the receiving council are secured through a telephone interview with the DCS undertaken within a month of review completion.

Evaluation questionnaires are sent to the review team by the Project Co-ordinator after the final letter is issued to the council. The Project Co-ordinator should check whether questionnaires have been returned and arrange to issue a reminder if not.

Review Managers will also feedback on the performance of peers.

Appendix 1 – Safeguarding Children Themes Overview

In order to ensure the integrity and fitness for purpose a safeguarding review always includes the following 'standard' themes however other key lines of enquiry may be added at the request of the council if relevant to safeguarding and practical within the time available.

Effective practice, service delivery and the voice of the child
Outcomes, impact and performance management
Working Together (including Health and Wellbeing Board)
Capacity and managing resources
Vision, strategy and leadership

Set out below is a summary of the individual points that the peer team will consider during the review. At appendix 1A more detailed probes are supplied to give additional points of focus or depth of enquiry.

The principles of valuing equality and diversity are built into the themes and detailed probes. However, to aid the easy capture of these principles a set of detailed probes that the team should consider is set out at the end of Appendix 1A. These should not form a separate part of the final presentation but the team should consider whether they have been covered.

Effective practice, service delivery and the voice of the child

How do the council and partners demonstrate that:

- the child's journey leads to improving outcomes and the child's voice is present in service planning and care management
- systems, processes and practice deliver effective safeguarding, and support social workers and other professionals in ensuring that the child's voice is paramount
- children and young people and their families have access to the right services at the right time appropriate to their level of need
- there is a culture of learning and reflective practice that leads to improved practice and outcomes
- services are delivered in an integrated way which narrows the gaps in outcomes for disadvantaged groups against a background of improved outcomes for all?

Outcomes, impact and performance management

How do the council and partners demonstrate that:

- performance against local and national priorities is improving and this has had an impact on the outcomes for children and young people
- interventions (from early help to specialist services) are effective in improving outcomes
- there is an agreed multi-agency performance management framework which includes regular management information reports, Equality Impact Assessments and quality assurance processes
- there is a good performance management culture that ensures priorities are met and that action is taken to address under performance
- scrutiny and challenge is effective with a good understanding of safeguarding issues?

Working Together (including Health and Wellbeing Board)

How do the council and partners demonstrate that:

- all partners are engaged with and are active in safeguarding and child protection issues including working effectively, both individually and collectively, to deliver local priorities through the local children partnership arrangements, the LSCB and the Health and Well-being Board
- partners are working together to ensure effective early help, taking a whole family approach that ensures the engagement of all relevant partners e.g. housing, benefits, adult services, health etc.
- there are up to date multi-agency policies and procedures including appropriate sharing of information
- the LSCB business plan clearly identifies outcomes and is aligned with other children plans
- the LSCB engages with and understands the views of the local community, particularly children and young people, regarding safeguarding
- progress is being made in developing the Health and Wellbeing Board and other partnerships with appropriate focus on safeguarding?

Capacity and managing resources

How do the council and partners demonstrate that:

- there is an effective commissioning framework that has been agreed, is supported by all partners, and reflects the views of children, young people and families
- commissioning has enabled support to reach the diverse community and resources are used equitably to meet the needs of the whole community

- financial and physical resources are managed effectively to meet current requirements and future challenges
- there is a sufficiently skilled, trained and supported workforce for children's services
- training reinforces the importance of child centred practice which focuses on improving outcomes?

Vision, strategy and leadership

How do the council and partners demonstrate that:

- there is an ambitious and clear vision with explicit priorities which reflect the scale of the challenges faced as regards safeguarding children and which is informed by children, young people and families
- priorities are based upon locally determined needs and the voices of children and young people
- the priorities recognise the diverse make-up of the community and are sufficiently stretching
- there are clear and resourced strategies and plans which are owned and shared by the leaders and all employees across the council and by its partner organisations to deliver priorities and improve outcomes
- leading members and senior staff provide effective political, managerial and professional leadership for children services and co-ordinate this with other key partners

Appendix 1A Safeguarding Children Themes – Detailed Probes

Set out below is a list of suggested probes that the peer team may wish to explore depending upon the circumstances of the individual council and its partners

Effective practice, service delivery and the voice of the child

How do the council and partners demonstrate that:

- **the child's journey leads to improving outcomes and the child's voice is present in planning and care management**
- **systems, processes and practice deliver effective safeguarding, and support social workers and other professionals in ensuring that the child's voice is paramount**
- children are seen regularly and alone by a social worker/lead professional and given opportunities to disclose their concerns and experiences
- frontline staff are enabled to use professional judgement effectively
- there are clear pathways for children and young people through universal and targeted services, into specialist support services
- children and families move easily through the system depending on their needs, with appropriate step up and step down processes
- progress has been made in enabling social workers to spend more time with children and their families
- case loads are appropriate to the capacity and experience of staff
- children and young people are involved in their assessment and consulted on their care plan
- case discussions, decisions and the reasons for them are clearly recorded with the analysis of risk clearly documented
- managers – at all levels - regularly review the quality of practice through case audits and observing practice
- CIC, children in need and child protection plans focus on outcomes and the difference that interventions will make, with clear timescales and accountabilities
- there is a good understanding of the processes and tools to support integrated working and supporting children and families with additional needs, and that there is consistent adoption and use of these processes and tools e.g. CAF
- systems are in place for monitoring how the whole child protection system is working including ensuring that cases can be tracked through the system and there are not hold-ups or "log-jams" which result in delays or cases being unallocated
- case files and/or electronic records across all agencies are kept up to date

- frontline staff, including foster carers and managers from all agencies are aware of safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures, and these are implemented consistently
- the whole system approach to children services, as well as individual services, is regularly reviewed

- **children and young people and their families have access to the right services at the right time depending on their level of need**
- early help is having an impact such as reducing the number of referrals
- there is integrated front line delivery, organised around the child, young person and their family in a setting that supports family life rather than professional or institutional organisation
- initial access arrangements – including front line "duty" services are regularly reviewed across all partner agencies
- there is clarity about the roles and responsibilities of front line staff and managers in making decisions about case work e.g. there is a scheme of delegation or similar document
- children know who they can contact when they have concerns about their own safety and welfare
- the views of children, young people and families are taken into account and feedback is given on action taken
- children, young people, families and carers receiving services are aware of how to complain and make representations, and have easy access to advocacy services
- accessible and comprehensive information about services for children, young people and families in the area, is available for all age groups and communities
- comments, compliments and complaints from staff, service users and the community are taken seriously and impact on service delivery and performance

- **services are delivered in an integrated way which narrows the gaps in outcomes for disadvantaged groups against a background of improved outcomes for all**
- outcomes for those children and young people who are most at risk are improving and performance information support this
- services take account of the social and ethnic composition and economic environment of the community and are closing outcome gaps between vulnerable children and their peers
- service planning and delivery take full account of the equality and diversity needs of the workforce and the community it serves
- services are accessible and reaching all sectors of the community

- **there is a culture of learning and reflective practice that leads to improved practice and outcomes**
- supervision is regular and timely and staff feel adequately supported and have time for reflective practice
- supervision, audit and other management arrangements enable practitioners to reflect on and manage risk positively and safely
- workload pressures and the emotional needs of staff are taken into account in supervision as well as professional and management issues
- mechanisms for gaining service users views on service quality and effectiveness, are in place and making a difference
- staff surveys are undertaken and there is evidence that survey results impact on outcomes, service delivery, training and performance
- there is regular self-assessment of safeguarding, child protection and the broader children's services, with a focus on achieving outcomes
- children, young people, parents and carers are involved in developing, monitoring and training for safeguarding services
- front-line staff and managers are asked for views on safeguarding/child protection services and this feedback informs service planning and delivery
- staff and managers are given feedback on action taken
- the culture ensures a child-based, outcomes approach as distinct from a focus on systems, processes and meeting time indicators
- there is learning from Serious Case Reviews, sector led improvement, research and best practice
- all managers have received relevant training to manage safeguarding and child protection issues?

Outcomes, impact and performance management

How do the council and partners demonstrate that:

- **performance against national and local priorities is improving and this has had an impact on the outcomes for children and young people**
- **interventions (from early help to specialist services) are effective in improving outcomes**
- they are performing well against national and local priorities and have an impact on the outcomes for children and young people
- through their actions, they are improving opportunities and outcomes
- account is taken of the social and economic environment and they are closing outcome gaps between vulnerable children and other groups in the community
- performance information indicates improved outcomes for those children and young people who are most at risk
- there is evidence of service user satisfaction

- vulnerable children, young people and their carers are involved in the determining and achievement of these outcomes

- **there is an agreed multi-agency performance management framework which includes regular management information reports, Equality Impact Assessments and quality assurance processes**
- **there is a good performance management culture that ensures priorities are met and that action is taken to address under performance**
- a clear and effective performance management framework is in place
- there is a shared and accurate understanding of how the partnership is performing and that the critical success factors and costs, and how the partnership compares to others, is known
- processes and systems help identify risk and address weak performance
- the performance management framework and organisational culture focuses on outcomes for individual children and not just meeting targets
- performance management is supported by high-quality, timely and well-understood performance information
- there is a local dataset across all partners that includes qualitative as well as quantitative indicators
- the data set includes outcomes, quality is regularly reviewed and enables local and national comparisons
- equality and diversity indicators are used explicitly
- inspections, peer reviews/challenge and other sector led improvement activities are used to improve performance

- **scrutiny and challenge is effective with a good understanding of safeguarding issues**
- the LSCB and council scrutiny function play a key role in monitoring and reviewing progress against objectives and outcomes, including informing the council and its partners with clearly researched conclusions and proposals
- Members are aware of the performance management framework and provide effective challenge?

Working Together (including the Health and Wellbeing Board)

How do the council and partners demonstrate that

- **all partners are engaged with and are active in safeguarding and child protection issues including working effectively, both individually and collectively, to deliver local priorities through the local children partnership arrangements, the LSCB and the Health and Wellbeing Board**

- **partners are working together to ensure effective early help, taking a whole family approach that ensures the engagement of all relevant partners e.g. housing, benefits, adult services, health etc.**
- the children's partnerships, LSCB and Health and Wellbeing board have appropriate governance arrangements, clear roles and accountabilities
- they are working together in an effective partnership manner and with integrated working arrangements
- all partners are contributing effectively to the partnership arrangements and are devoting sufficient resources to fulfil their responsibilities
- there is a process to ensure that innovative practice that improves outcomes or cost effectiveness is evaluated and shared

- **there are up to date multi-agency policies and procedures including appropriate sharing of information**
- partnership working is adding value and producing efficiencies, including through the provision of shared management and services or the operation of local budgets, as appropriate
- the LSCB provides sufficient challenge on impact, outcomes and effectiveness of service delivery, to its member organisations
- the LSCB is a learning organisation and encourages learning across the partnership
- the LSCB contributes effectively to the overall performance management framework and challenges performance across partner agencies, ensuring that action is taken at organisational level, in services and individually, to address underperformance
- the LSCB regularly reviews the effectiveness of supervision and management with particular regard to the quality of work, and risk assessment and decision making
- the LSCB has an effective process for undertaking and learning from SCRs and there is a process for considering near misses
- LSCB members regularly engage with front line staff and managers in their agency and feedback their views on practice issues to the LSCB

- **the LSCB business plan clearly identifies outcomes and is aligned with other children plans**
- there is a clear LSCB business plan which identifies priorities, targets and accountabilities for achieving these
- there is a clear relationship between the LSCB business plan and those of its individual partners
- there is focus on child protection while the broader child safety issues such as road safety and bullying are managed effectively
- there is transparency between all agencies on the resources and budgets allocated for safeguarding and child protection including staffing, with reference to the One Children Workforce and social work reform

- there is clear accountability for safeguarding for each partner agency and this feeds down into their own respective organisations to the front line
- the LSCB periodically evaluates the effectiveness and overall impact of safeguarding, and child protection practice and services
- there a multi-agency training strategy which identifies safeguarding and child protection training needs at all levels with a delivery plan that includes training for Councillors, non-executive members of NHS partners and school governors
- the multi-agency training strategy is evaluated effectively

- **the LSCB engages with and understands the views of the local community, particularly children and young people, regarding safeguarding**
- membership of the Children Trust or equivalent and the LSCB reflect the diversity of the community which they serve
- policies and processes, including Serious Case Reviews are understood and take account of diversity issues
- all parts of the diverse community including those that services find are hard to reach and vulnerable children, young people and families, are engaged

- **progress is being made in developing the Health and Wellbeing Board and other partnerships with appropriate focus on safeguarding**
- good progress is being made in ensuring that the Health and Wellbeing Board arrangements are in place and functioning effectively
- children services are well represented and safeguarding children is seen as a priority for this Board
- there is a clear linkage between the work of the Health and Wellbeing Board and the LSCB
- effective contact is being made with local clinical commissioning groups as these become established
- local commissioning groups are being encouraged to engage with children's services
- the impact on outcomes and services of the changes in commissioning arrangements is closely monitored?

Capacity and Managing Resources

How do the council and partners demonstrate that:

- **there is an effective commissioning framework that has been agreed, is supported by all partners, and reflects the views of children, young people and families**

- **commissioning has enabled support to reach the diverse community and resources are used equably to meet the needs of the whole community**
- there is a clear, joint commissioning strategy that focuses on outcomes
- commissioning processes and principles are understood and used to ensure value for money, efficiency and effective service delivery
- agreed outcome priorities consistently and successfully drive commissioning and service development; commissioning is based on needs, priorities and outcomes and commissioning decisions are based on the evidence of what works
- commissioning arrangements are in place to support sustainable improvement including joint commissioning where appropriate
- commissioners across the children's partnership arrangements work effectively together
- processes are in place to ensure the effective use of community budgets or similar, where appropriate
- major service reconfiguration and change to improve outcomes has been achieved through commissioning and market development
- partners and stakeholders, including children, young people and families understand and support the approach taken to commissioning
- frontline staff and service users are involved in the commissioning processes, such as identifying priorities, service planning or service evaluation
- there is good engagement with the third sector in terms of capacity building and market development, and the procurement process supports the third sector
- commissioning arrangements provide an appropriate mix of delivery mechanisms and help to ensure value for money
- models of service delivery are constantly challenged

- **financial and physical resources are managed effectively to meet current requirements and future challenges**
- the Council's medium term financial strategy and other agencies' financial plans take account of the needs and challenges within children services and safeguarding
- there are robust arrangements for reviewing resourcing allocations and for the re-allocation of resources where required
- resources are re-allocated to tackle changing priorities, inadequate performance and where improved outcomes can be achieved
- resources and capacity are available to identify and support children and families who are vulnerable or "in need", but who are not receiving direct safeguarding or child protection services
- capital resources are used to support the achievement of service priorities
- the ICT strategy is effective in meeting the needs of children services

- resources such as buildings, staff, back-office functions, pooled budgets, etc. are shared with other partners, where appropriate
- better outcomes are being delivered at lower cost
- new working practices have been adopted to maximise productivity
- there is effective risk and project management
- front line staff are aware of the costs of prevention, early help, child protection and other safeguarding services and are able to assess value for money and service effectiveness

- **there is a sufficiently skilled, trained and supported workforce for children's services**
- **training reinforces the importance of child centred practice which focuses on improving outcomes**
- the Children and Young People's workforce strategy includes an analysis of the capacity to deliver and keep children safe and that an employer's self-assessment has been undertaken
- the standards for employers of social workers have been adopted and performance against them has been reviewed and acted upon
- a supervision framework is in place, and supervision is well-developed and is regularly evaluated
- there is sufficient opportunity for continued professional development and evidence of good take up
- reflective practice is supported and encouraged
- the appraisal scheme has led to changes in training, supervision, continuous professional development opportunities, etc.
- there is a culture of learning from evidence based practice and from research, inspections, complaints and Serious Case Reviews
- there is a culture that supports the achievement of its goals and which embraces the introduction and implementation of change
- there is specialist and multi-agency training (including common induction) available for front line staff, including specific training for staff who deal with initial referrals and access arrangements
- all staff understand the part they play in children services and how they are held to account
- complaints are taken seriously and have led to improvements in services or practice
- whistle-blowing procedures are used appropriately and the LADO system operates effectively
- there are systems in place for monitoring the quality, impact and effectiveness of safeguarding and child protection training, including multi-agency training
- there are robust and effective recruitment and selection procedures in place to ensure that all staff, elected members and non-executives (including school governors and lay members of panels) are suitable to work with children and young people

- the demography of staff reflects the demography of the community, including at management levels?

Vision, Strategy and Leadership

How do the council and partners demonstrate that:

- **there is an ambitious and clear vision with explicit priorities which reflect the scale of the challenges faced as regards safeguarding children, and which is informed by children, young people and families**
- **priorities are based upon locally determined needs and the voices of children and young people**
- **the priorities recognise the diverse make-up of the community and are sufficiently stretching**
- the ambition and vision is shared at all levels and by the community
- the specific needs of vulnerable children and young people are taken into account when determining local priorities and service design
- national priorities, and national policy initiatives are taken into account in implementing whole system change locally
- the Children and Young People's planning process involves an assessment of safeguarding and child protection needs
- the local Joint Strategic Needs Assessment includes appropriate information on safeguarding and child protection
- they have engaged with, listened to and taken account of the views of children, young people, parents, carers and the community in the planning, commissioning, delivery and review of services
- the views of the local community are sought and feedback is given

- **there are clear and resourced strategies and plans which are owned and shared by the leaders and all employees across the council and by its partner organisations to deliver priorities and improve outcomes**
- there is a Children and Young People's Plan (CYPP) or similar document that outlines priorities, plans for safeguarding children and young people and clearly demonstrates how outcomes will be improved
- consideration is given in the CYPP, of whether current resources across all agencies are sufficient and used in the right way, providing value for money
- the CYPP outlines the importance of prevention and early help, the expected impact on improving safeguarding outcomes and demonstrates a whole systems approach to meeting the needs of children and their families
- there is a Prevention and Early Help/Intervention Strategy/Plan that shows how the needs of children and families will be met and safeguarding outcomes will be improved
- plans across the partnership are aligned, where appropriate

- there is an information and communication strategy which ensures everyone, including the whole community, knows what they need to do to keep children safe
- the CYPP demonstrates a good understanding of local needs and use of data and performance information to inform the commissioning strategy

- **leading members and senior staff provide effective political, managerial and professional leadership for children services and co-ordinate this with other key partners**
- Members and senior officers are visible and known to frontline staff
- there are agreed structures and responsibilities at leadership level for children services and these are supported by appropriate training and resources, including equality awareness training
- all councillors are aware of their corporate parenting responsibilities, have attended appropriate training (including leadership where appropriate) and they have a personal involvement in driving the children services agenda
- risk in children services is identified accurately and managed effectively and leaders create a climate where risk is openly and constructively discussed
- the safeguarding and child protection accountabilities of the Leader of the Council, the Lead Member for Children Services, the Chief Executives of the council and the PCT, the Director of Children Services, the chair of the LSCB and other key partners are transparent and rigorous
- the relationships between the key Members and officers are effective and productive
- there is a good working relationship between the Lead Member and Scrutiny
- there is a clear and accountable decision making process for children services that functions effectively in practice

Equality and Diversity

- **the principles of equality and diversity are valued and are incorporated into all the partnership's functions**
- there is an equalities, diversity and community cohesion strategy across the council and its partners that includes children services
- outcomes are improving for all vulnerable children regardless of ethnicity, disability or other equality issues
- the local communities and their diverse needs are well mapped and this is reflected in the JSNA
- reports to council and senior managers include Equalities Impact Assessments and equality and diversity indicators are used explicitly
- there is good access to advocacy, translation and interpreting services and literature is available in a wide range of community languages, including Makaton

- community groups are encouraged to plan, develop and run their own services
- local communities are fully engaged in safeguarding
- the Equality Framework for Local Government is embedded and reinforced by members and senior officers?

Appendix 2 – Peer review team roles and ground rules

The following summarises the key responsibilities of the peer review team. However, all peers should expect to work as a team and be flexible in the working methods adopted on site.

Peers should read the information relating to these roles and the ground rules that should apply to all peers, at the end of this appendix. **In addition they must ensure that they are aware of and adhere to the principles of data protection and confidentiality laid out in section 4 of this manual.**

Review Manager

The role of the Review Manager is to:

- manage the overall review process and advise the team and council

- act as the first point of contact for the council and support it in preparing for the review, including conducting the pre-meeting and liaising over the timetable and key documents

- source the peer team through the Peer Support Section

- act as co-ordinator, facilitator and adviser to guide the team through the review process

- ensure that a pre-review analysis is undertaken and communicated to the team

- ensure that the interviews and visits schedule is communicated to the team

- prepare a report on the results of the front line questionnaire and circulate this to the team

- together with the Team Leader and Review Analyst, prepare a First Thoughts Presentation and circulate this to the team

- facilitate team meetings as required

- ensure that the final presentation is prepared by the team on time

- draft, with the Team Leader, the final written feedback to the council and partners (using the relevant LGA quality assurance procedures) and liaise with the team and council to agree this

- provide insights into how the council and partners are performing against the themes including any specialist area allocated

- manage the formal evaluation process

Review Team Leader

The role of the Team Leader is to:

- lead the team as regards professional safeguarding issues and judgements throughout the review

- act as the 'public face' of the review, fronting it to the council and partners, building positive and constructive relationships

- attend the scoping meeting with the council and Review Manager, if possible

- input specialist advice around the safeguarding review – in general, and around any specialist theme agreed

- study the off-site analysis report, case mapping and front line questionnaire report undertaken in advance of the review and read such other documents as may be necessary to conduct the review

- help prepare and contribute to the First Thoughts Presentation

- undertake a programme of interviews during the on-site work

- help prepare the final presentation, including drafting slides for any specialist themes agreed and deliver this to the council and its partners

- lead the final feedback conference with support from the Review Manager

- help prepare and contribute to the final written feedback

- use relevant skills and experience to provide insights into how the authority is performing over the themes

- contribute to the formal evaluation process.

Other specialist peers (see also Review Analyst role below)

The role of other specialist peers is to:

- input specialist advice around the safeguarding review – in general, and around any specialist theme agreed

- study the pre-review analysis report, case mapping and front line questionnaire report undertaken in advance of the review and read such other documents as may be necessary to conduct the review

- optionally, the Operational Manager Peer may also wish to attend the meeting to prepare the first draft of the First Thoughts Presentation

- undertake a programme of interviews during the on-site work

- help prepare the final presentation, including drafting slides for any specialist themes agreed and be prepared to answer questions on these

- participate in the final feedback conference

- contribute to the final written feedback

- contribute to the formal evaluation process

N.B. The Operational Manager Peer may also be required to undertake the audit validation and/or case records exercises, if these options are chosen

Member peer

The role of the member peer is to**:**

- provide a councillor perspective on the review particularly regarding policy, decision making and community leadership

- input specialist advice around the safeguarding review – in general, and around any specialist theme agreed

- study the off-site analysis report, case mapping and front line questionnaire report undertaken in advance of the review and read such other documents as may be necessary to conduct the review

- undertake a programme of interviews during the on-site work

- help prepare the final presentation, including drafting slides for any specialist themes agreed and be prepared to answer questions on these

- participate in the final feedback conference

- contribute to the final written feedback

Review Analyst

To ease the burden of the peer team and to provide an additional level of input, a Review Analyst will also be appointed to undertake a document and data review. The role of this peer is to:

Pre – on-site

- undertake an examination of the key data, case mapping and front line questionnaire report and documentation provided by the council

- produce a report on his/ her findings (the Review Manager will supply a sample report if required)

- help prepare and contribute to the First Thoughts Presentation

  On Site

- input specialist advice around the safeguarding review – in general, and around any specialist theme agreed

- undertake a programme of interviews during the on-site work

- help prepare the final presentation, including drafting slides for any specialist themes agreed and be prepared to answer questions on these

- participate in the final feedback conference

- contribute to the final written feedback

- contribute to the formal evaluation process

Project Co-ordinator

LGA will appoint a Project Co-Ordinator who will:

- ensure general liaison with the team, and the council and partners regarding logistics, accommodation and expense payments

- liaise with the team to identify any dietary requirements, mobility issues etc.

- provide all members of the peer review team with the following, two weeks before the on-site week commences:

  o copies of key documentation provided by the council
  o team, council and LGA contact details
  o administrative details e.g. claiming expenses, hotel arrangements

- organise the formal evaluation process

- provide general support to the Review Manager

Team ground rules

Some team members may not have met before or previously taken part in a review and it is important that everybody is clear about the parameters within

which they will be operating. To aid this, a set of ground rules have been developed and peers should be familiar with these and ensure they are comfortable with them. The Review Manager should discuss and agree ground rules with the team at the meeting on the evening prior to the on-site week, although it is also good practice to flag up the rules at first contact.

i) Ensure a positive experience for the council and its partners and the peer team

It is important to focus on the strengths of the council and their partners, as much as the areas for possible improvement.

Every team member will have their own professional and personal responsibilities during the week of the peer review, and will want to be in regular contact with their family. However, the council and its partners must always feel that their needs are being prioritised. The Review Manager will try to ensure that team members are provided with opportunities in the timetable during the course of each day to make phone calls and look at emails. Mobile telephones should be turned off at all other times.

A peer review is a people-focused process and it is vital that everyone the team comes into contact with perceives them as professional, attentive and courteous.

ii) Value colleagues' input

Team members will have different views, perspectives and knowledge, which should be respected and valued. Assimilating the views of all team members into the feedback presentation requires all team members to be willing to listen and engage in constructive debate, and to be prepared to challenge and be challenged. It is important that people feel comfortable expressing their views.

The review process can be intense, demanding and tiring so it is important that people are tolerant and supportive of one another during the week.

iii) Confidentiality and dealing with sensitive issues

Information that team members glean during their interviews and visits is absolutely non-attributable to individuals and this must be emphasised by the peer team at the start of every interview, focus group etc. and respected at all times, without exception.

Again, attention is drawn to the principles set out in section 4 of the manual and which must be adhered to at all times.

It is vital for the credibility of the review that the team establishes a climate of trust in which people feel they can be open and honest.

A key motivation for peers is the opportunity to learn from others. Peers are encouraged to return to their own authority at the end of the process and talk about their experiences. However, in doing so, peers should respect the fact that some of the information the team comes across may be sensitive in nature and must not be used in a way that could undermine the council, or the integrity of the peer review process.

It is difficult to predict what issues may arise during the course of a review. If a team member comes across anything in an interview, visit or workshop etc. of a 'whistle-blowing' nature, it is important that they share this with the Review Manager and Team Leader immediately – **before acting on it in any way**.

The Review Manager and Team Leader will need to make a judgement as to whether the matter is sufficiently serious to be raised with the authority e.g. where there are serious concerns about the safety and welfare of children. The Review Manager will involve the Council Review Sponsor at this point. It will be for the council to decide on any appropriate action.

When compiling the peer written feedback or feedback slides, every effort must be taken to ensure that we do not present information which criticises individuals directly or in a way which enables them to be identified. However, the review team may decide that it is important to report back in a general way on issues relating to individuals, where a body of evidence exists.

v) Guidance for interviews

Wherever possible, interviews will be conducted by two persons. There may be circumstances, however, where the interview programme means that this is not possible.

All peer team members should follow the basic principles below:

Ahead of each interview or visit, if opportunity allows, agree with your partner the areas to be covered. In addition, agree who will provide the initial introductions and scene setting, and who will take notes (if not both of you).

At the start of each session, first introduce yourself, and then invite your colleague/s to do the same. Also take the lead in outlining:

- that the review is not an inspection. It is a supportive but challenging process to assist councils and their partners in celebrating their strengths and identifying their own areas for improvement. The key purpose of the review is to stimulate local discussion about how the

council and its partners can become more effective in delivering improved outcomes for children and young people.
- the team is only there at the request of the council; it is not being imposed on the council.
- team members are acting as 'critical friends', looking at both strengths and areas for further consideration.
- the views of a wide range of people both inside and outside the council are being gathered
- the process depends on people being open and honest about what the council is good at, and what issues need to be addressed.
- all the information that the team gleans is absolutely non-attributable to individuals or specific groups

A set of example interview questions is set out in Appendix 14 which may be useful to help frame each interview. Outside of the introductions, peers should not talk about their own council and experiences unless it is strictly relevant to do so. Ensure everybody is enabled to contribute in workshops and that nobody monopolises them. Do not mention comments made by named interviewees in other forums.

Remember that these interviews are for the team to gain information. They should be conducted in an informal manner and with open questions. Peers should not use the interviews to give opinions/ judgements.

At the end of each interview or workshop, peers should ask if those being interviewed have any questions they would like to ask, or any concerns they would like to raise. Thank colleagues for their time and, assuming it has been the case, their openness and honesty.

It is absolutely essential that interviews are conducted within the agreed time limits for the discussion. Any over-running will create logistical difficulties. If there is a need for further discussion the Review Manager should arrange for a second interview.

vi) Capturing information

All team members must keep notes from interviews, focus groups etc. in a clear and accessible way, using proportionate and objective language and ensuring that all points are based on substantiated information. The notes of interviews and focus groups will be collected by the Review Manager, retained as part of the supporting evidence for the review and archived. These written notes should be factual records of the discussions that have taken place.

Where statements are made by individuals, it is important that peers ask for details of examples and evidence to illustrate the point made – this provides

vital evidence for the team. The team should not at any time act on 'hearsay' or unsubstantiated information. All evidence should be triangulated and robust.

Members of the team will be provided with notebooks in which to make their notes. However, a commonly used technique is for team members to also complete a 'post it' for each relevant point and place these on flip charts in the base room under the relevant themes. This allows for the team to easily share information, have a 'feel' for what has been covered, identify gaps and disagreements etc. The Review Manager will agree with the team exactly how such an approach will operate.

Appendix 3 - Peer team skills

Delivering a peer review requires a considerable number of different skill sets and competencies. The following is a summary of the attributes that peers will require when undertaking the roles outlined in Appendix 2.

Interpersonal skills and 'emotional intelligence'

- being able to gain trust quickly and be able to build rapport
- being able to convey a true interest in the council's work
- having empathy and awareness of sensitive issues (especially where, for example, the receiving council had just had an inspection)
- understanding of the context of the receiving council
- being able to ask challenging questions in a sensitive and constructive manner
- having good listening, communication and facilitation skills.

Good 'subject' knowledge

- knowing what good practice looks like
- front-line knowledge and practical experience
- personal credibility and a proven track record of delivery
- up to date knowledge of service trends, examples of innovation etc.
- an appreciation of the perspective of service users
- respect for how other LAs work, and recognise that LAs have the right to accept or decline recommendations for changing ways of working.

Analytical skills

- being able to assimilate and analyse lots of information quickly
- being able to review the evidence and distil it down to the key messages
- being able to triangulate evidence and look at messages from different sources
- being able to recognise inconsistencies and/ or identify lack of evidence
- curiosity and questioning skills.

Challenge and Objectivity

- being able to identify the questions that require exploration

- being able to pursue lines of enquiry with rigor and thoroughness, including asking sensitive questions in a constructive manner

- being able to identify both strategic and detailed issues

- being able to explain the reasons for peer findings and to deal with questions arising from this
- being able to deliver 'difficult' messages in a professional and consistent manner
- being able to listen to challenge and assess it correctly in an objective manner
- being able to contribute actively to team discussions, put forward ideas and appreciate and assess others input.

Personal management and attributes

- being able to plan one's own time

- being able to produce concise and accurate summaries/ presentation whilst under time pressure

- adaptability to deal with changes to interview schedules etc.

- team player

- physical and mental stamina (Review Managers will ensure any mobility or special requirements are taken into account throughout the review process)

Appendix 4 – Council team roles

The following summarises the key responsibilities of the council team.

Council Review Sponsor

This should be a senior manager within the council (preferably the Director or Assistant Director of Children's Services). The role of the Review Sponsor is to:

- commission the review

- ensure there is high level commitment to the review process within the council and its partners

- where necessary ensure that people are available for interview

- be the main link between the council and LGA on points of principle regarding the review, themes to be explored etc.

- ensure that the Council Overview Presentation is prepared for delivery on the morning of day one of the on-site stage

- to ensure that all the facilities and organisation required for the audit validation exercise to be undertaken (if chosen) are in place

- to ensure that all the facilities and organisation required for the case records exercise to be undertaken, (if chosen) are in place

- provide oversight for the council's case mapping chair and ensure that the case mapping report is prepared and delivered to the Review Manager within the timescales stated

- provide oversight for the council's Review Organiser and ensure that all their responsibilities are completed within the timescales stated

- receive and collate comments on the draft feedback letter

- contribute to the formal evaluation process.

Council Review Organiser

The role of the Council Review Organiser is to:

- be the 'single point of contact' with the Review Manager and LGA Project Co-ordinator on all logistical details e.g. base room, catering, transport etc.

- prepare the draft timetable in consultation with the Review Sponsor and ensure that people are available for interview

- supply the required documents to the review team

- distribute the front line questionnaire

- establish and monitor the work of the case mapping group

- be available during the on-site stage for requests from the team additional documents, meetings etc. In practice the Review Manager will need to see the Council Review Organiser at fairly frequent intervals during the on-site stage

Case Mapping Chair and Team

The role of the case mapping chair and team is to:

- ensure that all the requirements of the case mapping exercise outlined in Appendix 7 are met

- compile a case mapping report and ensure that this is submitted within the time frames required

- be available during the on-site stage to discuss the case mapping findings.

    N.B. If the audit validation and/or case records review options are also chosen it is likely that the Case Mapping Chair will also be required to support and facilitate those exercises.

Appendix 5 – Key council responsibilities

The council should be aware of its responsibilities when requesting a review. These can be summarised as follows:

- identification of a Review Sponsor, Review Organiser and Case Mapping Team to undertake the responsibilities outlined in Appendix 4

- attendance at a set up meeting by the Review Sponsor and Director of Children's Services (if not the same person), Review Organiser and, if possible, the lead member for children's services and key partners

- assurance that key personnel will be available and participate as required in each element of the review. This may involve taking part in the case mapping exercise, completion of the front line questionnaire, taking part in a one hour interview, and/or attending the final prioritisation conference day at the end of the on-site week

- organisation of the interview schedule in conjunction with the Review Manager and ensuring that people will attend. This should be completed and finalised with the review manager two weeks before the on-site stage

- management of the front line questionnaire distribution, completion and return to LGA by the agreed deadline

- provision of the data and documentation to LGA as outlined in the methodology (Appendix 6), by the agreed deadline

- ensuring that on-site rooms for the First Thoughts Presentation and feedback and prioritisation conference are organised – both need PowerPoint projectors and flipcharts. Please ensure that any security/ encryption issues are identified and resolved to allow for presentations to be loaded onto local computer systems

- attendance at the initial workshop and feedback and prioritisation conferences by personnel from the council and its partners, as agreed with LGA Review Manager

- provision of a base room for the peer review team for the duration of the on-site week as outlined in the guidance manual, including the provision of appropriate refreshments. The requirements for this room are set out at the end of this appendix.

- provision of suitable rooms for all interviews (people's individual offices are fine for these)

- ensure that comments on the draft feedback letter are returned within two weeks

- contribute to the feedback and evaluation process

- commitment to ensuring the agreed action plans are followed through and an appropriate monitoring mechanism put in place.

Team base room

The council must ensure that there is a suitable base room for the team throughout the on-site stage. This must be close to where the bulk of the on-site interviews will be held. The team will spend a considerable amount of time in this room and so consideration should be given to ensuring that it is large enough to accommodate comfortably all members of the team, equipment and has adequate light and ventilation

The room must be for the sole use of the team members, with all interviews and focus groups being held elsewhere. It needs to be private and lockable, with sets of keys for team members going in and out at different times. It also needs to be accessible to the team after hours. The room will need to be equipped with the following:

- a telephone

- two computers - one with access to the Internet and the council's Intranet and e-mail system

- a high speed, good quality black and white printer

- two flipcharts with marker pens and replacement paper (flip charts should be able to be hung on the walls)

- a central meeting table providing adequate room for each person on the review team

The team will require around 200 large-sized post-it notes of different colours, for use in the team base room and during workshops and focus groups. A box of biro pens and some blue tac, plus access to a nearby fax machine and photocopier are also needed.

Catering

Tea, coffee, water, fruit juice, fruit, biscuits and other light snacks should be provided in the room or nearby and be accessible at any time throughout the

day and evening. The team will need to be provided with lunch each day, either in the team base room or from the canteen. It is important that catering arrangements are planned in conjunction with the timetable for the week.

The Project Co-ordinator will liaise with each of the team members in advance and notify the council in good time of any specific dietary requirements they may have.

Appendix 6 - Documentation and data required at review preparation stages

During the initial review preparation stage, the host council should assemble the key documents that the peer team will need to see before arriving on site, and supply appropriate performance information. **These must be sent to the Review Manager and Project Co-ordinator at least two weeks before the on-site stage and preferably 4-6 weeks before on site stage.**

The council should consider what documents the peer team will need to see in order to understand the council's context, strategy, action plans, performance and ways of working. Wherever possible these should be the actual documents themselves rather than links to web sites. Details of significant developments and initiatives should also be provided.

However, the council must recognise that the peer team has a finite amount of time to read and understand documentation and so must not be swamped with unnecessary detail. It is far more important at this stage that the team has a clear understanding of the key issues and is able to ask for any supplementary information it may require whilst on site.

It is helpful, therefore, if councils can highlight or draw to the team's attention the key parts of any documentation (and why this is key)

The following is a list of the typical documents that should be provided at this stage **in addition to the case mapping report and performance data below:**

- LSCB Business Plan, Annual report, policies and procedures and minutes of last six meetings
- Children and Young People's Plan or equivalent
- Ofsted annual performance profile/annual assessment letter for last three years
- Any self-assessment, if available
- extract from Joint Strategic Needs Assessment for Children and Young People
- extracts from other strategic or corporate plans relating to children's services
- joint commissioning strategy
- summary of directorate's budget
- Ofsted inspection reports of children's services
- reports from peer reviews or peer challenge processes
- Workforce Strategy
- recent Section 11 audits

- executive summaries and recommendations of Serious Case Reviews for last two years
- local 'working together' and child protection procedures
- examples of a case record and other audit reports
- caseload management reports
- any scrutiny reports on safeguarding and reports to scrutiny
- any guidance to staff/other agencies on safeguarding thresholds
- reports on engagement with children, young people, and communities regarding safeguarding
- results of any surveys of children, young people and parents on staying safe for last three years
- staff survey reports relating to children's services
- sample CP policies from schools, commissioned services, other agencies
- examples of commissioned/funded services relevant to safeguarding
- equalities impact assessment reports relating to children services, if available
- other relevant documents the authority wishes the peer team to consider – but only if absolutely essential to aid the team's understanding (the team will feel free to ask for additional documentation while on site).

Specific health related documents

- any Health CP report and action plan resulting from SCR / Child concern event
- Health Board reports and minutes from Safeguarding Committees/Groups/Clinical Commissioning/Health and Wellbeing Board
- Annual Report for the NHS Boards and Annual Public Health Report
- section 11 audits – compliance reports from commissioning bodies and individual providers where these are not included in Annual reports to LSCB
- safeguarding children audits and assurance to the relevant Health Boards (or similar documents)
- training needs analysis and how effectiveness is measured
- organisation structures for safeguarding children specialists
- information sharing arrangements within health
- updated health CP policy and procedures
- information on how the LA shares information on at risk families to health organisations and in particular A&E departments, Walk in Clinics, GP practices and NHS Direct
- CQC return
- health policies and procedures relevant to safeguarding.

Team members will need to read those documents that are relevant to their particular focus during the review (the Review Analyst will read them all). However, all team members will read as a minimum:

- LSCB Business Plan
- CYPP or equivalent
- JSNA extract
- self-assessment, if available
- Off-site analysis report

Hard copies of any documents provided should also be placed in the team base room.

Obviously the above presents an enormous amount of reading for the peer review team. As stated, councils are encouraged to draw attention to the key parts of documents that will be of use to the team.

Performance Data

In addition to the above documents, please send your most recent performance monitoring reports regarding safeguarding. These should include England and nearest neighbour/regional comparative data and trend data where available. The Children's Improvement Board data set and/or Ofsted's performance profile would also be helpful.

Appendix 7 – Case mapping

Guidance for case records mapping group exercise

The mapping group's work should begin as soon as possible after the initial set-up meeting has taken place. The final report should be submitted to the Review Manager two weeks before the review team is due to come on-site. The report will feed into the 'initial thoughts' presentation and feedback prioritisation conference. The exercise is not intended as a substitute for the LSCB case file audit process, but might identify some issues that the LSCB may wish to pursue.

The task

The task of the mapping group is to build a three-dimensional picture or 'thick description' of safeguarding, with particular attention to interfaces between different agencies and levels of the system. It is a multi-agency qualitative overview rather than a single agency quantitative audit. Two kinds of question frame the work of the mapping group:

- In what way are the processes of different agencies working well or encountering difficulties in achieving improved outcomes for children and young people?

- What is the evidence for progress or lack of progress in creating partnerships to safeguard children?

The mapping group are asked to examine case records in four areas of practice to build the local picture of multi-agency functioning. The four areas are:

- Cases where domestic violence/drugs/alcohol/adult mental health/learning disabilities is evident
- Cases not quite reaching the thresholds for child protection
- Cases where children have been harmed while being subject to a child protection plan
- Cases where children have been re-registered

The process

The authority provides the peer review manager with a list of ten case record numbers from each of the above four areas. It is important to remember that processes and procedures have changed significantly over that last few years and while an historical overview of long term work is useful, for the purposes of this work, it is best to concentrate on files that are relatively recent for all agencies.

The review manager randomly selects three case records numbers from each list. Once made available, the mapping group select one case (from each set of three) to map for each area. The group can select more than one case from each set but one from each should be the minimum.

- The authority will need to identify what records are held by other agencies. Representatives from partner agencies should map the data held on their agency records and bring their 'maps' to the mapping group. It is essential that reports from all agencies working with the child/family are included in the group's deliberations.

- All records will be held by the authority/agencies in their usual place of keeping at all times, but made available to the appropriate mapping group team members as required. The records will be accessed by the mapping group team members in the usual place of keeping and not removed from this location.

To respect the confidentiality of the case records, the peer review team will at no point access the records.

Who is involved?

The local children's services authority will identify 6-8 sector-wide practitioners (i.e. operational staff/practitioner level 3 and 4 across the sector) to undertake the mapping work. Group members will work in pairs.

It is suggested that a third tier officer responsible for safeguarding should lead the group.

The team should comprise at least:

- social workers undertaking initial assessments and long term child protection work
- a health visitor/frontline health professional
- a CAIT or frontline police officer
- CAMHS, YOT and/or Youth Worker
- a designated teacher and,
- a voluntary sector representative

N.B. The team should not include any person who has previously managed any of the cases.

Milestones

Over the course of the mapping group exercise, the group will work together to map the local picture through their study of the case records. It is proposed that they meet as a group a minimum of three times. Meetings may be structured as follows:

- First meeting: to establish the various tasks, select the case records for review, agree roles, agree who should offer guidance if difficulties are encountered, and set dates for meetings two and three. The first meeting may also wish to add to the guidance questions, any issues relevant to local circumstances
- Second meeting: for a progress check and troubleshooting, and to prepare interim findings

- Third meeting: to finalise report back to peer review team (via the review manager) using the template below.

The team members, working in pairs, should try to address the 12 groups of questions (see below) probably in two sessions and feed their findings into the overall group meetings.

The mapping group will need to provide the peer review team with their findings at least two weeks before the review team come on site.

Defining a plan of work

At the first meeting it will be necessary to:

- Select the four or more case records defined above and consider how best to review these, identifying which agencies hold records relating to the particular case
- Confirm the pairs and lead responsibility for each case
- Taking on board the milestones set out above; agree a timescale for completion and reporting back to the third meeting of the mapping group. Also agree how to draw together findings from each strand of work and feed this back to the review team.

What kinds of questions?

It is important to establish at the outset that the aim of this exercise is essentially descriptive – the questions being asked are 'What' and 'How' questions rather than 'Why' or 'Who' questions. Above all the mapping group is **not** interested in asking 'Who is to blame for something not working well?'

The group should assume that some things they encounter will be going well, and some not so well – it is important that they consider all aspects.

A set of questions (see below) is for use by the mapping group to help direct their focus in reviewing each case.   These are not exclusive and may not be relevant in all cases.

Producing findings

The aim is to generate snapshots of partnership working regarding safeguarding in the sector. They can provide clear indicators of where improvement in practice or working relationships is needed. Where the mapping exercise identifies 'problems', this should focus on ways in which processes such as information sharing can be improved.

Feedback to the peer review team should cover the following issues:

- Outline difficulties experienced in undertaking the task such as access to records, changes in personnel through the life of the mapping group, inadequate recording, lack of co-operation of partner agencies, etc.

- identify strengths and challenges in the following areas:
  - o the effectiveness of practice (outcomes specified and achieved)
  - o quality of interventions
  - o rigorousness of recording and management oversight
  - o responsiveness and timeliness of interventions
  - o joint working and information sharing
  - o impact of CAF
  - o accessibility of information particularly from a child or carer's perspective.

The following is suggested as a template for this feedback:

1) Introduction
   1. how was exercise carried out, over what period of time, who was involved, who led the work
   2. what cases were selected (in brief, e.g. child living with domestic violence)
   3. what records were accessed/which could not be accessed

2) Brief outline of each case
      For each case:
   1. reason for contact/involvement
   2. agencies involved
   3. what worked well/did not work well
   4. which records were accessed, were they clear and up to date, were there chronologies and contact information sheets, single/common assessments or multiple assessments, timeliness and appropriateness of conferences and reviews, who attended, were there outcome based plans?

3) Thematic findings, for example,
   1. File/record management
   2. Service planning
   3. Children's engagement and voice of the child
   4. Interagency working
   5. Participants' observations
   6. Funding and systems

4) Conclusions and learning points
      Following key questions from guidance as appropriate

Generic questions for mapping group

In respect of the four (or more) cases, the mapping group pairs should consider:

i.   Is there clear identification of the lead agency/professional in the case, and is there evidence that this is clear to the child/young person and their family/carers?

ii. Is there evidence that children are seen alone, their voices heard and there views taken into account during assessment, care planning and review?

iii. Do initial and core assessment processes look as though they are sector-wide and unified amongst core partners in the local sector? Is assessment information shared appropriately, both in professional and electronic (accessibility) terms?

iv. Is there evidence of multiple/duplicated assessment processes in the case? What steps, if any, are agencies known to be taking to integrate assessment processes, or agree protocols which will reduce duplication? How far has CAF impacted on reducing multiple assessments?

v. Are the records of all agencies well kept, with up-to-date basic and case summary/chronology information? Can chronologies be accessed from the integrated children's system? What would a child/young person say about the case file maintenance and clarity of the story?

vi. Where the case has moved between agencies, or between tiers within the same service, are referral/intake processes efficient and responsive? If not, what are the patterns of difficulty?

vii. Is there evidence of effective multi-agency co-operation and risk assessment on cases? Do any risks in the case seem to be appropriately assessed (multi-agency), recorded and acted upon?

viii. What evidence is there that actions and plans are being explained properly to the child/young person? Are children and young people asked what difference the interventions have made? Is practice in the case driven by the outcomes sought for the child/young person and are these specified anywhere?

ix. Where a case moves across agency boundaries, or where significant costs are associated with decision-making (e.g. out of borough/county placements or school transport), do effective resource mechanisms/protocols exist to facilitate decisions, allow money to follow cases etc.? Does the case reveal evidence of significant resource deficits in respect of workforce, budgetary or commissioning issues?

x. Do the case records reveal evidence of effective frontline practice and management? Is there evidence of the provision of regular and effective supervision within the services involved with the case, but with particular reference to the lead professional? Are decisions clearly recorded and signed off by senior managers?

xi. Is there evidence that different agency information systems are integrated, or capable of managing the flow of information between different systems, so that information follows the child/young person?

xii. Is there evidence that recruitment and retention issues have any effect on the outcome of the cases? Did the cases have a practitioner allocated that is/was an agency or permanent member of staff? (Please record the number of lead professional changes in the life of the child.)

xiii.   What mechanisms are in evidence to show that the agencies involved in the child/young person's life, are measuring the impact and difference that they are making through the services that are provided? Is there evidence that the frontline staff are aware of the particular set of performance indicators that are relevant to these cases?

(The 12 questions should be addressed by the team members working in pairs – perhaps in two sessions, each pair session being interspersed with a meeting of the mapping group to share findings)

Appendix 8 – Pre-Review analysis report

Purpose

The pre-review analysis report is intended to help the peer team focus on key issues affecting the council and give an overview of its performance. It is at its most helpful when it contains an overview of performance and comments against each of the themes and additional areas of focus that the team has been asked to explore. It will form a major part in the compilation of the First Thoughts Presentation and in focussing the team's activities whilst on site.

The extent to which this is possible will depend to some extent upon the quality of the documentation submitted by the council, the thoroughness of the case mapping exercise etc. It may be necessary for the report to highlight issues that require further evidence or questions that the team may wish to explore on-site.

The Review Manager can provide the Review Analyst with an example off-site analysis report in order that they may appreciate the requirements of the report.

Process

The review analyst analyst should undertake an analysis of key documentation (see below) the case mapping report and the performance data. If available in time, it should also take into account the questionnaire analysis report compiled by the Review Manager.

The report should be sent to the Team Leader and Review Manager in time for them to read and understand its contents before they meet the week before the on-site stage to prepare the draft of the First Thoughts Presentation. The minimum documents that should be used to compile the report are set out below:

- Performance data
- case mapping report
- council's self-assessment' (if provided)
- Children and Young People Plan (CYPP)
- Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) Business Plan
- prevention and early intervention strategy
- extract from Joint Strategic Needs Assessment
- Ofsted inspection reports and other review/challenge reports
- local 'working together' and child protection procedures
- examples of consultation with and feedback from children and young people

In practice, it is also useful for the Review Analyst to look at relevant sections of the council's web site.

Document Analysis Framework

The following framework should help structure the document analysis:

Document Analysis Framework:

The following framework should structure the document analysis:

	In place/partially in place/not in place	Evidence/documents
The voice of the child is evident in the key documents of the council and its partners		
There is a clear vision for children's services that is outcome focused		
The vision includes a robust approach to safeguarding children		
The vision is consistent through all council and partner agency documents,		
The JSNA identifies child protection and safeguarding needs		
The is good joint commissioning regard safeguarding services		
Child protection and safeguarding needs identified in JSNA are prioritised in CYPP or equivalent		
LSCB business plan identifies actions to address child protection priorities and is outcome focused		
LSCB business plan and CYPP are compatible		
LSCB business plan is regularly updated and takes account of CYPP		
CP policies and procedures are regularly updated and		

are compatible with most up to date guidance		
Serious case reviews and reports from the Child Death Panel are sound (where appropriate)		
The CYPP and LSCB business plan demonstrate evidence of learning from Serious Case Reviews and Child Death Panel reports		
Case recording is regularly audited by senior managers		
Overview and Scrutiny have reviewed child protection and safeguarding		
Clear and consistent child protection policies are in place in all schools and provider services		
Equality and diversity are embedded through documents, practice and outcomes		
Data show evidence of continuous improvement		
Data is used in support of prioritisation		
Data is reported to leaders and managers appropriately		
Data exceptions are investigated with appropriate actions		
Other comments/documents seen		
Plans address priority and other actions identified in Ofsted inspections		
Plans and priorities reflect trends in performance data.		

Appendix 9 – Front Line Questionnaire

The peer review process includes a survey through a questionnaire of front line staff (key strategic personnel are seen individually during the on-site process). The questionnaire asks the staff to reflect on, and offer their perceptions of local safeguarding.

The questionnaire is completed electronically by means of a Survey Monkey and the LGA Project Co-ordinator will send the council Review Organiser a link to be sent to staff invited to complete the questionnaire.

It is suggested that the link be sent to a wide range and large number of front line staff who inter-act with service users as follows:

Local Authority and Schools
- Front line professional social workers
- Other front line staff in social work teams
- Immediate supervisors of social work teams
- Case conference chairs
- Independent Reviewing Officers
- Education welfare officers
- Designated teachers
- Special Educational Needs Co-ordinators
- Local authority designated officers

Health and related
- Health visitors
- Mid wives
- School nurses
- Designated doctors
- Designated nurses
- A+E staff
- CAMHS Staff
- Other front line health professionals

Police
- Child protection teams
- Other front line staff concerned with safeguarding

Voluntary Sector
- Front line voluntary staff

The front line questionnaire should be completed at least two weeks before the on-site stage.

Obviously how the council choses to communicate with staff and partners regarding the questionnaire is at their discretion but it is strongly suggested that the following are stressed during any communication:

   a) the council has invited the LGA to provide a peer review of Safeguarding Services for Children and Young People
   b) this is not an inspection – the review team will be serving officers and members from other local authorities who will act as critical friends and be looking to highlight areas of good practice and where some further development may be required. There is no judgement or rating arising from the review
   c) the team will be gathering information from a wide variety of sources including documents, statistical data and interviews with key individuals and groups of staff and partners
   d) as part of the information gathering, they would like to understand the views of front line staff on how Safeguarding services are operating. Although there will be a staff focus group arranged as part of the interview programme this obviously cannot accommodate all staff and so you are invited to complete a questionnaire to provide your views. The link to this is attached
   e) please note that the individual responses go directly to the Local Government Association peer team. The council will not see individual responses and the peer team will only report back on general trends from the questionnaire with individual confidentiality being totally respected
   f) we hope as many people as possible will respond.

Based upon the responses received, the Review Manager will compile a report on the key points emerging from each question. This report will then be used to inform the preparation of the First Thoughts Presentation and will be sent to the team as part of the pre-reading.

The questionnaire is set out below:

1. Name

2. Name of Organisation

3. Is the organisation you work for:

Local Authority
NHS Organisation
Police
Voluntary or Community Sector Organisation
Other (please state nature of organisation)

4. How confident are you that multi-agency safeguarding procedures you experience are working well?

Very confident

Confident
Neither confident or not confident
Not confident
Not very confident at all
Don't know

If not confident or not very confident at all, how could your multi-agency safeguarding procedures be improved?

Comment box

5. How well established is the use of CAF in your area or service?

Very well established
Well established
Not well established
Don't know

6. Are the outcomes intended for children and families clear in the care plans you see?

Outcomes are always clear
Sometimes clear
Rarely clear
Don't know

7. How would you rate the arrangements for information sharing as regards safeguarding?

Very good
Good
Neither good nor poor
Poor
Very poor
Don't know

If neither good nor poor, poor or very poor, how could arrangements for information sharing be improved?

Comment box

8. Are multi-agency risk assessments undertaken?

Always
Most of the time
Sometimes
Never
Don't know

9. **Are you clear about who can make safeguarding decisions in respect of individual children?**

   Yes
   No
   Don't know

   If no, please briefly outline below in what circumstances you are unclear.

   Comment box

10. **Are children/young people seen alone when required by your safeguarding procedures?**

    Yes
    No
    Don't know

11. **Are children and young people appropriately involved in decisions affecting them?**
    Yes
    No
    Don't know

    If no, how could children and young people be better involved?

    Comment box

12. **Are parents and carers involved effectively in case conferences?**

    Yes
    No
    Don't know

    If no, how could parents and carers be better involved?

    Comment box

13. **Are child protection referrals always dealt with according to your local LSCB procedures?**

    Yes
    No
    Don't know

    If no, what are the reasons for this?

Comment box

14. Are child protection services meeting the needs of vulnerable and hard to reach groups in your community?

Yes
No
Don't know

If no, which groups or children are not being offered a good service?

Comment box

15. Do you think all non-specialist staff (e.g. school classroom assistants, GP receptionists etc.) know what to do if they are worried a child is at risk?

Yes
No
Don't know

If no, what action needs to be taken to ensure all non-specialist staff know what to do?

Comment box

16. Does the supervision/clinical oversight offered to you and your colleagues enable reflective practice?

Yes
No
Don't know

If no, how could supervision be improved?

Comment box

17. Is your multi-agency training helping you deliver a better service?

Yes
No
Don't know

If no or unsure, how could the training be improved?

Comment box

18. Have you heard about the learning from your areas Serious Case Reviews, Child Death Reviews, inspections and audits?

Yes
No
Don't know

If no, how could sharing the learning be improved?

Comment box

19. How regularly are you given opportunities to learn from research and best practice?

Regularly
Irregularly
Rarely
Never
Don't know

If anything other than regularly, how could opportunities to learn from research and best practice be improved?

Comment box

20. Do you know how well your team and service is performing?

Yes
No
Don't know

If no, how could the information and its availability be improved?

Comment box

21. Does the performance information include comparison with similar services?

Yes
No
Don't know

22. Do you know what the Safeguarding Board priorities for improvement are?

Yes
No
Don't know

23. Do you think these priorities are appropriate for your authority?

Yes
No
Don't know

If no, what should they be?

Comment box

24. Do you think safeguarding has enough priority in your service or agency?

Yes
No
Don't know

If no, what else should the Trust be doing?

Comment box

25. Are the arrangements for dealing with professional differences working effectively?

Yes
No
Don't know

If no, how could they be improved?

Comment box

26. Are there enough frontline staff in all agencies[1] to meet the demand for safeguarding services?

Yes
No
Don't know

If no, in which services or localities are the problems most critical?

Comment box

27. Are paper and electronic case records in your agency accurate and up to date?

Yes – both are up to date
Yes – electronic records only
Yes – paper records only
No
Don't know

If no, how could recording be improved?

The term agency applies to all partners working with children including the local authority the NHS police voluntary sector etc

Comment box

28. How effectively do the IT systems you use support your professional practice?

Very effectively
Quite effectively
Not very effectively
Not at all
Don't know

What improvements would you suggest?

Comment box

29. Are the offices and other facilities available to you and your colleagues fit for purpose?

Yes
No
Don't know

If no, how could they be improved?

Appendix 10 – On-site interview programme

The on-site stage is the 'centre piece' of the whole review process. Its smooth operation is vital to the success of the review and requires careful planning. It is essential that during the preparation of this stage that there is good liaison between the Council Review Organiser and the Review Manager (who will advise on practicalities etc.). The timetable should be finalised two weeks before the actual on-site stage commences

Practical timetable pointers

Compiling the programme and taking into account all diary commitments of those involved, practical arrangements, etc. can be time consuming. It is strongly suggested that this work is commenced as soon as possible with a rough draft being given to the Review Manager at an early stage so that s/he can advise on any practical difficulties they can foresee.

It is important to understand how the review team will operate during the review and how this will affect the on-site programme

- the peer team will not operate as one single team during the review. Instead they will split into smaller teams (usually two people) to ensure that between them they can see all the people required during the review period

- generally there should be two interview streams running at any one time (see example interview programme below). However, if required and where the size of the team permits, three streams may operate on occasion to allow for full coverage of all those who need to be seen or where diary commitments force this to be necessary

- the membership of the teams will alter during the period of the review. This means that all interviews, focus groups etc. must end at the same time so that review team members can swap over

- individual interviews should be scheduled for one hour. In practice the peer team should interview for three quarters of an hour and use the remaining time to allow for crossover of teams, note writing etc.

- focus group sessions should be for one and a half hours

- the teams will need to visit a number of key sites such as referral/intake team base, A+E, commissioned services, etc. Transport arrangements and time for travel for these visits need to be taken into account particularly in large county areas

- site visits are time consuming and should only be built into the programme where they are essential to the teams understanding of the performance and good practice of the council and its partners. However, a visit to A+E should always be part of the programme.

- parking arrangements for the team while on site should be in place

- if it's not possible for an interviewee to be on-site, a phone call may be acceptable if agreed with the Review Manager beforehand.

- the review team will need to meet together at stages of the review to compare notes, ask for additional information, etc. Slots for this need to be built into the timetable

- in order to cover as much ground as possible, the timetable may include evening sessions, but be careful people aren't too overloaded

- workshop venues need to be big enough to divide into smaller groups

- practicalities of transport to and from the council and the team hotel should also be taken into account

- peer teams need breaks for lunch and comfort breaks!

Peer teams should not arrange to see individual children or groups of children and young people during the on-site week.

There may be some exceptions where it is appropriate to meet a focus group of young people e.g. to see a group of Youth MPs, children in care council etc. In such circumstances the Review Manager must discuss the arrangements for holding such discussions with the Council Review Sponsor and this must include a representative from the council.

People the team should see during the on-site stage

It is important that the council thinks about who the team should see while on site in order to be able to understand how the council and its partners are organised, their strategies, performance etc. This must take account of any particular themes that the council has asked the team to explore.

As the roles and circumstances of each council are different, it is impossible to give a definitive list as to who should be seen by the team. Set out below is a list of people that the team would normally expect to see. Key strategic members and officers will need to be seen individually but, where appropriate, other groups of staff etc. may be seen in the form of focus groups.

Who	Notes
Council Leader	
Lead member for children's services	
Opposition member for children services	
Chair of children's scrutiny	

Council chief executive	
Director of Public Health	
NHS senior managers	
DCS	
AD Safeguarding	
AD School Improvement	
Head of Safeguarding	
Principal Social Worker	
Lead of case mapping group (if not included in above)	
Case mapping group members	Focus group
AD Business Support	
Head of Youth Services	
Front line staff (Practitioners)	This should be a focus group of around 6 – 8 'front line' practitioners. The purpose of this group is to discuss safeguarding practice 'on the ground'
Council and Partners Focus Group	This should be a focus group of around 12 people from across the partnership. The purpose of this focus group is to discuss how partners work together 'on the ground', leadership, information sharing etc.
Focus group of 'lay people' involved in safeguarding e.g. foster parents	
Director of Adult Services	
Chair of LSCB	
Manager of LSCB	
Designated Teacher(s)	
Chair(s) school governors	
NHS managers	
Designated Doctor(s)	Can be focus group with designated nurses and midwives
Designated Nurse(s)	Can be focus group with designated doctors and midwives
Head of Midwifery/HV services or midwives focus group	Can be focus group with designated doctors and nurses
CEO(s) of commissioned services	Can be focus group
Other members of LSCB not included above	Can be focus group
Head of CAMHS	
Mental Health Trust CEO	
Senior PO/Borough Commander and other relevant police representatives	
Police domestic violence lead	
Voluntary sector representatives	Can be focus group
Reps from both commissioners and providers	Can be focus group

Acute Trust CEO/safeguarding leads	

Where a council has requested themes in addition to the standard themes it is essential that they also consider who else should be seen to allow for an exploration of these themes

Site Visits

The review team should also have the opportunity to undertake site visits (e.g. to commissioned services etc.) where the council has identified that these add real benefit to the knowledge of the team. As these visits are time consuming they should only take place where they really do add benefit and consideration should also be given where possible to the visit combining one or more of the interviews/focus groups above.

It is essential that these site visits include a visit to the following:

- Accident and Emergency
- Duty desk/frontline access points

Appendix 11 - Sample on-site programme

The timetable below gives an indication of how an on-site programme may look. It should be studied in conjunction with Appendix10. Please note that this is intended as a guide, and will need to be amended to suit the needs of the individual review.

For each interview, the council should supply name/s, job title/s and location.

Day 1 - Monday

TIME	A	B
08.30- 9.00	Team shown to base room, domestic arrangements etc.	As stream A until after lunch
9.00 -11.00	Team finalise First Thoughts Presentation and capture main issues etc.	
11.15 -13.00	Council Overview Presentation and Team First Thoughts Presentation	
13.00 -14.00	Lunch	
14.00-15.00	Director of Children's Services	Chair of school governors
15:00 16:00	Head of Safeguarding	Council Leader
16.00 – 16.15	Break	Break
16.15-17.30	Lead member for Children's services	Designated Nurse/s
17.30 - 18.30	Head of CAMHS	Police DV Lead
18.30 onward	Team meeting	Team meeting

Day 2 - Tuesday

	Team meeting	Team meeting	
18.15			
TIME	**A**	**B**	**Additional interviews**
8.30 -9.00	Team gathers in on-site room	Team gathers in on-site room	
9.00 -10.00	LSCB Chair	NHS senior manager (s)	
10.15 -12.30	Commissioned service visit or focus group (commissioned services/ voluntary sector etc.)	Duty Desk/ Front Line access point and practitioner focus group	
12.30 -13.30	lunch	lunch	
13.30-14.30	AD Safeguarding	AD Business Support	Review of case recording system (if this option taken)
14.30-16.00	Council and partners focus group	Focus group lay people (Foster Parents etc.)	
16.00-16.15	Team break	Team break	
16.15-17.15	Principal Social Worker	Mental Health trust CEO Safeguarding lead	
17.15-18.15	Head of Youth services	Director of Adult services	

Day 3 – Wednesday

| 18.00 | Team meeting | Team meeting | |

TIME	A	B	Additional interviews
8.30 - 9.00	Team gathers in on-site room		
9.00 -10.00	Debrief with sponsor	AD school improvement	
10.15 -12.30	Visit A+E	Commissioned service visit or focus group (commissioned services/ voluntary sector etc.)	Case record review group (if this option is taken)
12.30 -13.30	lunch	lunch	
13.30 -14.30	Designated doctor/s	Council Chief Executive	
14.30 -15.30	Acute Trust CEO/Safeguarding lead	Senior Police officer/Borough Commander	
15.30 -16.30	Designated teacher/s	Head of Midwifery/ |Midwives	
16.30 -17.00	Team break	Team break	
17.00 -18.00	LSCB members (not included elsewhere)	NHS Senior Managers	

Day 4 – Thursday

TIME	A	B	Additional interviews
8.30 -9.00	Team gathers in on-site room		
9.00 -10.00	Debrief with sponsor	LSCB manager	
10.10 -11.00	Chair of Children's Scrutiny		
11.00 -12.00		Leader/Opposition spokesperson	
12.00 -13.00	lunch		
13.00 - 17.30	Peer review team prepares Final Presentation and prioritisation conference	Peer review team prepares Final Presentation and prioritisation conference	
17.30 –18.30	Team Leader, Review Manager and other team members if required submit draft final presentation to DCS/ Senior Team. Discussion held		
18.30	Team Meeting	Team Meeting	

Day 5 – Friday

TIME	
08.30 – 11.00	Team completes Final Presentation, prepares for workshop and gathers notes
11.00 – 3.00 (approx.)	Final Presentation and Workshop (see Appendix 16 for suggested programme)

Appendix 12 - Audit Validation

Purpose

If chosen the exercise described below must be conducted in accordance with the principles set out in section 4 of this manual as regards personal data, data protection and confidentiality.

This process will examine how the council uses case audit to assess and improve the quality of practice. Prior to the on-site stage the Operational Manager Peer will undertake an audit validation and prepare a report for the review team. The report should look at three questions:

a) how effective is the local audit process in assessing the quality of practice (through looking at previously audited cases)
b) how well are the audit reports used by managers
c) what action is taken in response to audit reports?

Method

Six weeks ahead of the on- site week the council will provide a list of 20 cases that have been audited on a single or multi agency basis during the previous 3 months; the review manager will choose 5 cases randomly from the list to be reviewed. In order to prepare the report the peer will attend the council for one day, approximately a month ahead of the on-site week to review the audits and the case files. They will also have a conversation with the social workers and their managers and this should be arranged with the council in advance of the visit. The peer will be allocated a further day to write up their findings and prepare a report for the peer review team (which will also be appended to the final feedback letter).

It is very important that the conversations with staff are conducted in keeping with the spirit of the peer review i.e. as a supportive critical friend and not as an inspector.

a) The Local Audit

The peer should examine the case audit process itself and also look at examples of completed case audits. This will require the peer to look at a sample of five cases that have been audited by different managers, and comment on how accurately the case audit has been able to assess the quality of practice in the case examples.

A good case audit process should include the essential elements outlined below. The peer should assess how well the council's approach covers these elements.

Practice area	What to look for
Basic information	The case audit should identify if basic information about the family has been provided on file. This would include

	case details such as ethnicity of children, family relationships, the key concerns or difficulties that families are facing.
Effectiveness of current and previous interventions	The case audit should be able to identify the impact of previous and current intervention, whether it has been positive and achieved desired changes within the family. If possible the case audit should be able to identify particular factors associated with the success of any help the family have received. A good case audit should be able to separate out the contribution of both the competence of the worker involved and the actual intervention itself and how it helped.
Assessment of need and analysis – have risk and protective factors been considered?	The case audit should be able to identify clearly the risk factors that impact on the child in the family, for example, domestic violence, drug and alcohol abuse, mental health problems, isolation etc. The case audit should also be able to see if protective factors have been considered by the agencies involved. It should be possible for the case audit to identify how the risk and protective factors have been balanced to produce a good assessment which looks not only at the difficulties within the family but also at their strengths. The case audit may focus on the quality of the analysis provided in assessments.
Service response	The case audit should be able to identify whether the service response has been efficient and timely. This is likely to be mainly in response to referrals to the agency and will include whether the agency acted promptly, kept the referrer informed of actions, and took appropriate action following the referral or receipt of new information.
Effective planning and review	Case audits will often look at care plans, child protection plans and other documents which set down plans for a child. The case audit should be able to identify if such plans are child centred, have clear and measurable objectives and identify who is doing what and when. The case audit should look at the timeliness and effectiveness of reviews of care plans.
Building a trusted and effective relationship	The core of good social work practice, the case audit should be able to comment on the extent to which the family are involved in decision making and planning and the skill of the practitioner in building a relationship with the child and family. Particular features for example, proactive approaches to involving extended family in safeguarding or the involvement of fathers, may be pertinent in some cases and would be expected to be considered within the case audit.
A child centred	The case audit should look at whether the child has been

approach including attention to equality and diversity	seen alone and his or her views considered in decisions and case planning. The audit should look at evidence of practice which pays attention to a child's individual needs, and the response to factors relating to their age, ethnicity, or disability.
Multi-agency involvement	The case audit should look at the effectiveness of multi-agency working and the impact on the case of other agency involvement. Communication and information sharing will be key elements which should be considered by the case audit. Specific difficulties within and between agencies should be identified in order to identify themes and patterns which may emerge across a number of cases.
Management, supervision and oversight of practice	Most agencies will require first line managers to provide evidence of supervision on the case file itself and in these instances the case audit template should include attention to supervision notes or management direction and sign off at various stages. However the agency may use other mechanisms for checking the quality of supervision which are outside any case file audit and which should be considered. In particular it is unlikely that any critical reflection activity will be documented on the case file but would be an important element of supervision.
Quality of case recording	The case audit should look at the standard of case recording including factors such as clarity of information, concise report writing, up to date entries in the file, recording of basic information, and the presence of key documents for example, chronologies, core assessments etc.
Process monitoring	There are various processes which need to operate smoothly to support good practice. In particular, child protection procedures being implemented in line with statutory guidance but also other organisational processes such as case allocation, transfer, use of threshold criteria and referral to other agencies. The case audit should consider how well these processes have been followed in any one case.

b) Reports received by management

The peer should examine the reports received as a result of case audits and should consider the following factors:

1. How well have patterns and themes been identified in the case audit report?

2. How detailed is the report and does it provide concise findings which are accessible to the reader?
3. What is the time lag between the audits being carried out and the report being received by management?
4. Do the reports provide a good balance between quantitative, qualitative and outcome measures?
5. To what extent do the reports focus on quality of practice and the impact upon families?
6. Is it possible to identify effective interventions with families and the skills of practitioners in helping children and their families to achieve improved outcomes?
7. Is it possible to identify shortfalls in practice in different parts of the service or even down to individual practitioners and if so, are there any contextual issues that should be considered, for example staff shortages or other resource issues?
8. Is good practice recognised and if so, to what level of detail?
9. Is there a clear set of recommendations in the report and are they SMART?
10. Have case audits been directed at priority areas of concern within Children's Services?

c) Actions taken in response to case audit reports

The peer should establish the following, primarily through interview with managers and quality assurance staff, but also by looking for written evidence of the way the whole process operates:
1. Is there evidence that recommendations have been acted on?
2. Is there a structure for regular monitoring of casework audits with follow up checks that actions have been completed?
3. How are learning feedback loops built in to the case audit and to what extent do the lessons from audits reach front line managers and practitioners?
4. Are there any mechanisms for receiving feedback about the service from children and families, and if so, are they aligned with the findings from case audits?

The Report

The report (4-6 pages) should be completed at least two weeks before the team arrive on site so that it can be included in the preparation of the first thoughts presentation. This report will be made available to the council and will be appended to the final feedback letter.

Appendix 13 Case Records Review

Optional case record review

If chosen the exercise described below must be conducted in accordance with the principles set out in section 4 of this manual as regards personal data, data protection and confidentiality.

For authorities wishing to have a more in depth look at effective practice, the Peer Review Team can undertake an additional process looking at a limited number of case records. While this would not be the equivalent of the Ofsted case record inspections, it would help authorities to identify key practice issues such as outcome focus, chronologies, evidence of the voice of the child, evidence of reflective thinking and analysis, management oversight and multi-agency risk assessments.

The case record review will consist of two elements:

- an exploration and discussion of 6- 8 case files before the on-site stage
- on-site review of current referrals and assessments

The purpose of the first element is to consider front line case management and good practice and to see if the content of the records is consistent with views expressed by social workers and managers.

The second element is intended to provide an up to the minute view of current practice in managing referrals and assessments.

It is very important that this exercise is conducted in keeping with the spirit of the peer review i.e. as a supportive critical friend and not as an inspector.

The process

Approximately 6 weeks before the on-site stage, the Review Manager will request a list of around 30 open safeguarding cases for selection. The 30 cases should be selected at random from current allocated cases. The list provided to the Review Manager should include ICS number, date of birth, gender, language, religion, case status child in care (CLA), child protection (CP) including dates CP plans, child in need (CIN), disability status, ethnicity, start date and team where case held.

Depending on the issues identified in the authority's self-assessment (if any), Ofsted inspections and/or set up meeting, 6 to 8 files will be selected for review by an Operational Manager Peer. The details of the chosen files will be forwarded to the authority at least 4 weeks before the on-site week. Which cases are selected should take into account, for example, re-registration, CP and disability, cases held in assessment teams for a lengthy time still with CIN status, section 20 in child protection team for a long time, babies open with CIN category for several months, team with disproportionately high caseload, etc.

The peer assigned to the case records review will set aside two days to review the actual records and consider data quality, quality of assessment and work undertaken, management direction and oversight and write a report. During the on- site week peers will meet with the social workers and managers to discuss the cases. During these discussions peers may wish to make use of the questions outlined for the Practitioner Focus Group set out in Appendix 15.and explore to what extent the social worker and manager:

NB Social workers interviewed in this process should not be included in other focus groups.

- have identified the salient issues for the child and are addressing these
- have a good understanding as to what is going on in the case
- have an outcome focus
- are tracking progress
- understand the purpose of case recording

Feedback from the initial review of cases will be available to the review team and council through the peer completing a case record outcome report (see Appendix 13 A below) for each case and a narrative report on any trends or key issues identified. Feedback from the discussions with staff will also be shared during the on-site week. A final report should then be prepared and will be appended to the final feedback letter to the authority.

On-site work

Early in the on-site work, the peer(s) undertaking the case record review will access the case recording system and review a selection of records focused on current referrals and assessments, up to 6 cases again using the outcome report sheet below.

Appendix 13A - Case Record Outcome Report

Question	Response with comments
Are care plans outcome focused with timescales?	
Are the outcomes regularly reviewed and is there evidence that alternative approaches are employed if outcomes aren't achieved in a timely manner?	
Is there evidence that the child has been spoken to on their own and their views taken into account in care planning?	
Is there a good quality, multi-agency assessment, completed within appropriate timescales?	
Is there evidence of reflective practice and analytic thinking in the development of care plans?	
Is there a multi-agency risk assessment?	
Is there evidence of partnership working and appropriate contributions by partners to assessment, care planning and service delivery?	
Is there evidence of management oversight?	
Is there evidence that supervision is regular and effective?	
Is there an up to date chronology and does it include all relevant data?	
Are all appropriate data fields and contact details completed and up to date? (On-site review stage only)	
General Case Comments	

Appendix 14 - Example Interview Questions for Safeguarding Peer Reviews

These questions are your prompts and not a script. You will need to adapt them to the person (or group) you are meeting and in response to the initial findings e.g. in the section on frontline practice you may need to ask about staff shortages and morale in areas other than social work and health visiting.

1. Introduction

What is your direct involvement in safeguarding?
What areas of safeguarding activity are you responsible for?

2. Overview

What do you see as the strengths in respect of safeguarding children?
- in children's social care?
- in children's services as a whole?
- in the local strategic partnership?

What are the key safeguarding outcomes in your service or area of responsibility?
What do you see as the areas of concern or for development in respect of safeguarding children?

- in children's social care?
- in children's services as a whole?
- in the local strategic partnership?

3. Personal responsibility and quality assurance

How do you find out about and know what the quality of safeguarding work is?
- in your service or area of responsibility?
- in other areas of children's services?

4. Outcomes:

- how are they monitored and measured?
- what is their direction of travel?

5. Partnership

What is the quality of the relationship between Children's Services (in particular Social Care) and for example?
- Adult Mental Health Services?
- Adult Learning Disability Services?
- Drugs/Alcohol Services?
- Domestic Violence Services?

6. Frontline management

How do you know how effective your frontline managers are in delivering safe and good quality practice?
How are frontline managers supported to deliver better practice?
In what ways are they involved in developing and evaluating plans to improve safeguarding?

7. Frontline Practice

What % of social worker/health visitor posts have permanent staff and agency staff in them?
What % are vacant and are not covered by temporary staff?
How long, on average, do social workers/health visitors stay?
What is the size of average caseloads?
Is morale amongst social workers/health visitors poor/good/very good?
What is the quality of supervision?
Are information systems working efficiently and effectively to support good practice?

8. LSCB

How is the LSCB improving safeguarding in the area?
What difference has the LSCB made to the lives of local children?
How effective is the LSCB in holding children's services and other agencies to account?

9. Involving Children / Parents and using the Evidence Base

How are safeguarding services for children changed and developed in response to:
- the views of children, young people and families?
- evidence from research about what works?
- the diverse needs of the community?

10. Political Oversight

In what ways are councillors involved in safeguarding in the area?
How do they support and encourage improvements in safeguarding in the area?

Always try to obtain a specific example that evidences their answers

Appendix 15 - Practitioner Focus Group

The purpose of the Practitioners Focus Group is to allow for a 'face-to-face' discussion regarding effective practice at 'front line' level.

The following are suggestions as to questions and issues that can be explored during the structured Practitioner Focus Group.

General Questions/ Issues:

- Encourage them to identify what they think they do well, most people find it really hard to do this but it pushes them
- Seek stories about the best of the past: knowledge and experience of self and others and the context: what helps for example enabling policies/ procedures, practice/ethos, culture, and environment
- Ask for their proudest moments, the high points and why they think it worked so successfully (what they think ingredients for success are)
- Find out what is valued about the present, what they think works
- Invite wishes for the future to enable individuals to reframe the challenges and identify where they want to get to.
- Find out about what they want more of

Specific Questions

Ask them to think about a couple of their recent cases. Then explore:

- how did they focus on the child and young person?
- how did they ensure they achieved the outcomes of the care plan and if they have not what did/are they doing about them?'
- what was their thinking?
- who did they work with?
- how were they supported?
- how were they challenged?
- how did they overcome obstacles?
- how did their manager know what was happening?
- how did they record their work, did it reflect what actually happened, or what they thought, including safeguarding risks and concerns?
- how do or are they demonstrating to others the effectiveness of what they are doing?
- what do they think the child or young person would say about what they did?
- what evidence, theory, and models do they use to help inform your assessment and professional judgement.

Appendix 16 - The feedback and prioritisation conference

The process and purpose

The final phase of the on-site stage of the review will be a feedback presentation from the team, immediate questions for clarification etc. and then a conference in which the key players in the local partnership will have the opportunity to reflect upon the findings of the review and to begin to take forward the work arising from it. **This requires planning by the host council and peer team.** This planning should be discussed by the Review Sponsor, Team Leader and Review Manager as early as possible and checked throughout the review process.

The purpose of the prioritisation conference is to:

- allow for discussion and understanding of the findings of the review
- to ensure that there is ownership and agreement of these findings
- to identify priorities for action
- to enable all partners to share in this exercise

Conditions for success of the feedback conference

The following have been found to be essential to ensuring the success of the feedback and prioritisation phase:

- the "whole system" should be there. Attendance should include a cross-section of all relevant parties and particularly those people who have either taken part in the review and any senior figures who were unable to do so
- time should be split between both large and small group discussion
- the emphasis is on identifying priority areas for action (it is not intended that detailed action plans be formed at this stage)
- there is an emphasis on problem solving and sharing rather than being backward looking or apportioning blame
- responsibility for taking forward priorities is established
- a suitable venue with space for all participants to move around

Outputs from the conference

It is anticipated that the conference will enable participants to gain a better understanding of each other's perspectives and concerns about safeguarding, improve the development of a common language and culture, and identify priorities and a way forward.

Feedback and prioritisation conference – Example agenda

The appropriate timetable and process for the feedback and prioritisation phase will depend upon the individual circumstances and need of each council (see also Appendix 18 dealing with councils in intervention).

The following are two suggested agendas for the final day. The Review Sponsor, Team Leader and Review Manager should determine the exact format well in advance of the final day itself:

Example 1

11.00	Feedback presentation by review team and immediate questions for clarification
12.00	Immediate feedback/reaction from DCS
12.15	Prioritisation: attendees should be asked to indicate what they feel are the priorities for action arising from the review (one way to do this is to have the review findings on the wall of the room and ask attendees to indicate with a sticky dot the two or three that they feel are the priorities)
12.30	Lunch
13.00	Results of prioritisation fed back to plenary session. The four or five most urgent priorities will then be discussed in further detail in small groups to begin to develop action plans. These can be led by any agency and should be led where possible by the agency/individual that will have some responsibility/commitment to seeing the improvement achieved.
14.00	Feedback from groups and discussion
14.30	DCS outlines next steps and closes the conference
N.B.	There may be a need for a final informal de-brief between the team and council after the conference event.

Example 2

10.30	Feedback presentation by review team and immediate questions for clarification
11.30	Immediate feedback/ reaction from DCS
11.45	Coffee

12.00	Small group working on prioritisation focussing on a) what are the key priorities identified? b) what immediate steps can be taken to move this forward?
13.00	Lunch
13.30	Group feedback, discussion and questions
14.30	DDC outlines next steps and closes the conference
N.B.	There may be a need for a final informal de-brief between the team and council after the conference event.

Appendix 17 - Final Letter

After the on-site stage, the council should be sent a final letter no later than three weeks after the review. This letter is not intended to be a comprehensive report. It should be an easy to read summary of the main findings of the review and the prioritisation conference.

The structure of the final letter is as follows:

- short introduction
- a narrative executive summary of the main review findings
- detail and good practice recommended to be shared regionally or via C4EO
- summary strengths and areas for consideration (this is just the bullet points from the feedback presentation)
- findings from the feedback presentation bullet points (these should be annotated only where absolutely necessary for clarity)
- summary of the outputs from the prioritisation conference
- close (including details of follow-up)
- where the audit validation and/ or case records exercise is undertaken the reports from these should be attached as an appendix

The Review Manager should prepare a draft of this letter and submit it to the team for comment. Once comments from the team (or just the Team Leader if there are no substantial points required from the team) have been received the Review Manager should send the draft to the LGA Head of Safeguarding, the Safeguarding Review Programme Manager and the relevant local Principal Adviser for quality assurance. Once all comments have been taken into account, the letter will be issued to the DCS by the LGA Safeguarding Team. A copy will sent to the Council Leader, Lead Member, Chief Executive, the LGA Principal Adviser and the regional SLI contact.

An example final letter is given in Appendix 17A

Appendix 17A - Example final letter

Dear   ,

Thank you for taking part in the Children's Services Safeguarding Peer Challenge. The team received a really good welcome and excellent cooperation and support throughout the process. It was evident to us that all those we met were interested in learning and continued development.

We agreed to send you a letter confirming our findings. As you know the safeguarding challenge focused on six key areas including one specifically requested by you i.e. the increase in number of Looked After Children (LAC) and those subject to Child Protection Plans (CPP). This letter sets out a summary of our findings on these areas. It includes the good practice we noted and areas which you might want to consider further. Some of the points raised during the feedback workshop held on 15 August 2011 are also included.

It is important to stress again that this was not an inspection. A team of peers used their experience to reflect on the evidence you presented on safeguarding vulnerable children and young people.

Executive Summary

A summary of the overall key conclusions of the peer team was that Noname Council (NC) and its partners have managed to continue to provide high quality services for vulnerable children and young people during a time of significant change and have a passion to improve services still further. In particular NC has excellent early years provision, good LAC outcomes and many excellent examples of incorporating the voice of the child into the development of its services.

This approach is supported by a culture of working together and a desire to continue to develop services suited to the complex needs of the diverse community.

The team were particularly impressed by the passion and commitment of all the staff they met. There was also consistent praise for the openness and accessibility of service leaders.

The council has undergone very significant change and financial challenges recently and has consciously protected its services for vulnerable children and young people during that time. Now that the immediate re-organisation is over it would be timely to take stock of the new context and financial restraints and consider how you will ensure sustainability and whether this would this be helped by fewer more focused activities. This consideration should then be distilled down into a new integrated strategy and efforts made to ensure that it is understood at all levels.

The passion of the council, staff and partners has already been mentioned. However, with this passion and desire comes potential difficulties in the current climate. Partly as a result of NC's desire to protect vulnerable children

and young people, the number of LAC and those subject to CPP's has risen. The team felt that a too risk averse culture had developed and that NC and its partners need to examine the application of thresholds as part of a targeted plan to reduce LAC and CPP numbers. There is a danger that unless this is tackled the quality and sustainability of your overall services could be compromised. The plan should also ensure the avoidance of drift through more effective oversight and challenge from managers and reviewing officers and re-directing resources towards coherent, targeted activities for children at the threshold of care.

The new financial climate and need for even greater focus on determining priority areas and value for money will require even greater scrutiny and challenge amongst all partners. Key to this will be two main areas: firstly, the need to develop scrutiny functions that provide a sharp approach to ensuring that policy development and individual initiatives are providing the best possible value e.g. a possible area for this could be early intervention which appears to lack a costing model with targets for changes in activity and expenditure. Secondly, it would be timely to look at the structure of the Local Safeguarding Children's Board (LSCB) to ensure it is shaped to fulfil its changing role and to refocus activity on robust challenge and scrutiny. These comments are made with the intention of supporting your desire to provide high quality services. They are not intended to detract from your major strengths of good relations, ambition, passion and 'can do' approach. Rather we hope you can use them to focus and build on your good progress.

The main strengths and areas for further consideration presented to you were as follows:

Summary Strengths

- Continued high quality services for vulnerable children and young people during a time of significant change
- High ambition to provide the best outcomes for children and young people
- Range of good performance indicators
- Good partnership working at strategic level
- Good LAC outcomes
- Desire to apply learning throughout authority
- Evidence of user engagement
- Excellent early years provision
- Some good engagement with diverse communities
- Exploitation of the advantages of the size of the authority and your sense of place

Summary Areas for Consideration

- Ensure that clear priorities are in place following service re-organisation
- Need for a coherent overall strategy that encapsulates all activity, including targeted intervention and prevention
- Unclear as to how the resource strategy supports the direction of travel
- Good strategic initiatives but not always understood on the ground

- Need to manage professional and organisational cultures across partnerships to refocus activity with vulnerable children
- Ensure the current LSCB Board is shaped to fulfil its changing role

Detailed Findings

The table below highlights the good practice noted by the Peer Review Team and areas for further consideration by the council and its partners

Effective practice, service delivery and the voice of the child	**Strengths** • Service remodelled and developing Munro approach • High morale and highly committed staff, well supported through supervision • Good intelligent analysis of service pressures needs and demands • Repeat referrals have been reduced and set up caseload weighting • Systems in place to drive up quality of analysis in assessments and to improve decision making • Re-focusing on higher priority cases and closing down child in need cases • Effective leaving and after care service • Out of hours service and joint working is exemplary • Impressive range of activities to engage YP and capture their voice across LA and partners • Genuine commitment to do this and no hint of tokenism • Examples of real changes to physical environment as a result of children's voice • Increasing range of engagement and innovative ways of capturing YP voice including use of social media • Increasing attendance in review process **Areas for Further Consideration** • High numbers and levels of case work activity is unsustainable and impeding effective practice • Improve quality of referrals and develop joint alternative strategies for managing concerns • Clearer strategy for managing workflow into, through and out of the service • Develop social workers skills and confidence to do direct work with families and to effect change

	• Asian children under represented at point of referral and need to continue to develop services for the particular needs of that community • Need to be able to show the impact of participation on outcomes • Voice of child not as evident in health • Need to be vigilant that new cohorts of children are equally engaged
Outcomes, impact and performance	**Strengths** • Good outcomes for children in most areas • Provision for LAC is good/ outstanding • Placement stability of children is good • Most care leavers doing well • Most safeguarding indicators are good • Good recruitment of foster placements • Emerging understanding of diverse communities **Areas for Further Consideration** • Inconsistency in quality of assessments • Case Mapping identified possible issues regarding inter-agency working • Ensure that you are not too risk averse in the application of thresholds • Gaps in mental health provision for Children and Adolescents • Shaping services to meet the needs of diverse communities
Working Together (including Health and Wellbeing Board)	**Strengths** • Good partnership working at strategic level • Willingness and a culture of working together • Evidence of regional LSCB working • Multi agency audits and serious case review work • Approach to training is innovative • Evaluation and response to expressed needs of diverse communities **Areas for Further Consideration** • Ensure the current LSCB Board is shaped to fulfil its changing role • LSCB needs to refocus activity on robust challenge and scrutiny role • Develop formal conduit between LSCB and Children's that focuses on safeguarding • Work needed with partners to challenge

	• an over cautious application of thresholds • Strengthen cross agency ownership of core groups
Capacity and managing resources	**Strengths** • Continued commitment to invest in children's services • High morale and highly committed staff, well supported through supervision • Staff (and partners) praise for accessibility to management • Regular supervision dealing with both case and development needs • Good high level challenge from senior members • Suite of performance indicators used regularly **Areas for Further Consideration** • Unclear as to how the resource strategy supports the direction of travel • Early intervention lacks costing model with targets for changes in activity and expenditure • Wider commissioning needs to consider safeguarding priorities • Scrutiny appears underdeveloped as regards safeguarding • Is performance and management information actively used at team level?
Vision , Strategy and Leadership	**Strengths** • High ambition to provide the best outcomes for children and young people • Broad political commitment to safeguarding • Partners provide good collective leadership • Key plans are of high quality and give a clear sense of leadership and vision • Engagement with the broader health and well- being agenda • Good emerging work with diverse communities **Areas for Further Consideration** • Enhance the robustness of wider Member challenge • Clear and communicable overall

	strategy required
	• More explicit statement of milestones and links with resources
	• Leaders need to manage professional and organisational cultures across partnerships to refocus activity with vulnerable children
	• Creation of a sense of urgency and purpose
Increase in LAC and CPP	**Strengths**
	• Awareness of the issues and understanding of the data
	• Investment to save approach (foster placements) has created additional capacity
	• Corporate parenting group monitoring LAC data every six weeks
	• ASU continues to divert young people from care successfully
	Areas for Further Consideration
	• There are too many children with a CP plan/LAC
	• Commitment to reduce numbers needs to be matched by focused plan with targets and a less risk averse approach
	• Avoiding drift through more effective oversight and challenge from managers and reviewing officers
	• Re-directing resources towards coherent, targeted activities for children at the threshold of care
	• Clarify the purpose and availability of support services to enhance exit strategies
	• Re-define and re-model Corporate Parenting Group to ensure wider ownership and collective responsibility

Following the team's presentation and answering of immediate questions,
your authority then ran a workshop with a wide variety of stakeholders. The
main points that came out of group working at the workshop were:

- Need for new over-arching strategy that recognises changing circumstances and is understood at all levels
- Develop a culture that enables all agencies to take a more measured approach to risk
- Improve quality and consistency of assessments
- Creation of joint alternative preventative strategies
- Increased information sharing – ensuring that all 'pieces of the jigsaw' are visible

- Reduce LAC/ CPP numbers
- Review LSCB to reflect new role
- Ensure all available agency details and contacts are known
- Review Corporate Parenting Panel to ensure that it operates with a membership and approach that supports fully the corporate parenting responsibilities.

'You and your colleagues will want to consider how you incorporate the team's findings into your improvement plans, including taking the opportunity for sector support through your regional arrangements or the LGA's Principal Advisor.

Once again, thank you for agreeing to receive a review and everyone involved for their participation.

Paul Curran

Head of Safeguarding Programme
Local Government Association

Appendix 18 – Guidance for councils in intervention

There are a number of additional factors that should be taken into account during the review process in the case of councils that are subject to intervention. The following points cover those most likely to be encountered but discussion should take place between the Review Sponsor, Team Leader and Review Manager as to how the review and feedback is undertaken to meet the key question of 'What will most help the council to move forward?".

Improvement Board

As a minimum the Chair should be added to the list of those individuals who should be interviewed during the on-site process. The DfE representative on any Improvement Board may also be interviewed. The council should consider how else they wish to involve the board in the review process e.g. considering the scope and any key lines of enquiry, attendance at First Thoughts Presentation, feedback session etc.

Managing the feedback

In the case of a council in intervention, it must be borne in mind that the feedback presentation and letter will usually be seen by a wider group of stakeholders (e.g. the Improvement Board, Ofsted, DfE etc.) and may be used by these stakeholders to help form judgements regarding the council's progress. There are also likely to be increased sensitivity generally around any feedback. Whilst care should always be taken in preparing feedback, this is particularly important in the case of a council in intervention.

It is useful to help bear the following points in mind:

- feedback must be measured and factual. Peer teams (and councils) should avoid any temptation to identify strengths unless these really are making a difference to safeguarding services (e.g. do not give praise just to give encouragement or balance number of points against areas for further consideration). Similarly, areas for consideration should only be included where these are of significance to general progress
- language used should be as simple as possible to avoid any chance of mis-interpretation
- points must be as securely backed by evidence as possible. Whereas in non-intervention councils the peer team may flag up issues where there is only inconclusive evidence this should not be done in intervention cases (even in non-intervention cases the team should make clear that they have only gathered partial evidence)

Feedback Letter

There are specific issues to take into account when preparing the feedback letter, although all the points under the general feedback should also be borne in mind.
There are two additional competing pressures:

- Councils will usually want the feedback letter ready for presentation to their next Improvement Board. The Council Review Sponsor and Review Manager should discuss this when drawing up the review timetable to ensure that this is possible, reserve time to draft and agree the feedback letter with the team and council etc. Every effort should be made to try to ensure that the feedback letter is available for the next Improvement Board meeting and this may involve considerable shortening of the normal three week timescale. If absolutely necessary – and with the Review Sponsor's agreement – a draft feedback letter may be made available for Improvement Board consideration

- The points regarding the use of plain language in the general feedback section should be borne in mind and the general format of the feedback letter should not change. However, in feedback letters for council's in intervention it may be necessary to enlarge on the bullet points made in the feedback presentation to ensure absolutely that the point can be understood by someone who was not at the feedback session. This means that feedback letters to council's in intervention may need to be longer than with other councils (and produced in a shorter time!).

Review Manager should also agree well in advance the dates for QA with the Head of Safeguarding and Programme Manager

Prioritisation Workshop

The purpose and sample agendas for the Prioritisation Workshop are given in Appendix 16. As an approved Action Plan will invariably already be in place, the format and questions posed at this workshop may require amending as it would not be appropriate to start another Action Plan 'from scratch'. A suggested agenda for councils in intervention is given below but the final format should be discussed and agreed between the Review Sponsor, Team Leader and Review Manager:

10.30	Feedback presentation by review team and immediate questions for clarification
11.30	Immediate feedback/ reaction from DCS
11.45	Coffee
12.00	Small group working on prioritisation focussing on a) what does this say about the progress we are making on implementing our action plan? b) where has there been good progress and where do we need to move things forward still faster?
13.00	Lunch
13.30	Group feedback, discussion and questions
14.30	DCS outlines next steps and closes the conference (there may be a need for a final informal de-brief between the team and council after the conference event)

Contact the Local Government Association
Telephone: 020 7664 3000
Email: info@lga.gov.uk
Website: www.local.gov.uk

For a copy in Braille, Welsh, larger print or audio, please contact us on 020 7664 3000.
We consider all requests on an individual basis.