

A short guide to deciding whether to initiate a Serious Case Review or other Practice Learning options

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 This quick reference guide refers to all children and young people who are considered to be residents in the Barking and Dagenham area.
- 1.2 It applies to all agencies who have information where:
- i. Abuse of a child is known or suspected **and**
 - ii. The child has died
- Or**
- iii. Abuse or neglect of a child is known or suspected **and**
 - iv. The child has been seriously harmed **and** there is cause for concerns as to the way in which the authority, their Board partners or other relevant persons have worked together to safeguard the child.
- 1.3 Until Working Together 2018 comes into effect, we are required to use the *criteria* set out in Working Together 2015. The full criteria can be found in the statutory guidance [here](#) (chapter 4: Improving child protection and safeguarding practice).
- 1.4 As part of the transition from Working Together 2015 to Working Together 2018 there is also an interim process set-out in the “*Working Together Transitional Guidance*”¹ accessed [here](#). This will remain in place until 29 September 2019.
- 1.5 This document describes the local process for discharging these transitional arrangements when deciding to initiate an SCR or other action.

2. Notification of a Serious Incident

- 2.1 Any agency can inform the LSCB of an incident they believe should be considered for a Serious Case or Practice Learning Review. To do so, the local [Notification of Serious Incidents](#) referral form should be completed and sent to the LSCB Business Manager elizabeth.winnett@lbbd.gov.uk via secure means.
- 2.2 Under the interim guidance, the 3 Safeguarding Partners (Local Authority, Police and CCG) must be notified within **five working days** as must the

¹ As part of the transitional arrangements from Working Together 2015 to Working Together 2018 the National Child Safeguarding Practice Panel is now in operation under an interim operating protocol. These transitional arrangements require that:

- i. The criteria for a Serious Case Review should be followed from Working Together 2015; and
- ii. The national Child Safeguarding Practice Panel requests Rapid Response meetings are held locally, with the recommendation from these meetings referred to the Panel through the online Serious Notification form as set out in Working Together 2018.

Secretary of State and Ofsted. Where a looked after child has died this notification applies whether or not abuse is known or suspected.

- 2.3 The transitional arrangements require that the national Child Safeguarding Practice Panel will also be notified (within **five working days**) of any events where abuse or neglect is known or suspected and:
- (a) The child dies (including suspected suicide) or is seriously harmed in the local authority's area;
 - Or
 - (b) While normally resident in the local authority's area, the child dies or is seriously harmed outside England.
- 2.4 These incidents will also be reported to the LSCB as part of the regular Tracker Report.
- 2.5 All notifications described above are required to be coordinated through the Local Authority and will be managed by the Head of Safeguarding and Quality Assurance with support from the LSCB Business Manager.

3. The Consideration Approach

- 3.1 On receipt of a '*Notification of Serious Incident*' referral form, and following discussion with the Independent Chair of the Safeguarding Board, options for managing the consideration process will be agreed. The options include:
- Convene a meeting
 - A virtual meeting (Skype or circulation of material/comments)
 - Sufficient information is already available on which to base a decision
- 3.2 In preparation for any of the consideration options agencies will be asked to review any involvement they have had with the case in question and provide a concise synopsis of the nature of their engagement and any potential areas of concern. This must include an initial chronology of events. This information should be provided to the LSCB Business Manager. Any papers will be circulated ahead of any decision-making fora.
- 3.3 If a Consideration Panel is convened it will usually be chaired by the Head of Safeguarding and Quality Assurance. Where this presents a potential conflict of interest the Independent Chair may choose to appoint an alternative Chair.
- 3.4 Each Consideration Panel will comprise a core membership the Chair and representatives from Health, Police and Children's Social Care. Additional members will be co-opted as required, this will be based on the agencies involved with the case being considered. The Consideration Panel chair will

decide who the co-opted members should be in discussion with the Independent Chair of the Safeguarding Board.

3.5 Whatever approach for consideration is chosen there must be a recommendation to the Independent Chair regarding; the reasons for the recommendation and key agencies which should be involved. The criteria for any recommendations are set out in paragraph 1.2. The recommendation² will generally cover:

- Initiation of a Serious Case Review;
- Initiation of a Practice Learning Review;
- Initiation of single-agency Internal Management Reviews (Local Authority) or Serious Incident Review (Health agencies); or
- Other action/ no further action.

3.6 If the recommendation from the consideration process is that the criteria for a Serious Case Review has not been met the following points should be considered:

- Any particular concerns about a single agency;
- Where there has been no agency involvement, and this in and of itself is a cause for concern;
- Where more than one Local Authority, Police area, or Clinical Commissioning Group is involved, including cases where families have moved around;
- Where the case may raise issues relating to safeguarding or promoting the welfare of children in residential settings or in secure accommodation.

These additional points should be detailed in the findings submitted to the Independent Chair alongside any relevant supplementary recommendations.

3.7 A consideration process may also be initiated under the following circumstances:

- Where a Practice Learning Review has already been initiated, or no further action taken, and information that was not previously available emerges that may change the type of review that is required e.g. an escalation to Serious Case Review.
- Where a Serious Case Review has been initiated, and during the course of the review the Independent Author feels that the criteria for a Serious Case Review is no longer met.

² The agreed of the Consideration option will also fulfil the Rapid Review of the case as required by the National Panel within 15 working days.

3.8 In these situations, a presentation of the *new information* will be made for consideration, and a consequent recommendation made to the Independent Chair who will decide the next action.

4. Next Steps

4.1 On receipt of the consideration recommendations the Independent Chair will decide the next steps and will set out the reason for the decision.

4.2 If it is agreed to initiate a Serious Case Review an Independent Author will be appointed to lead the review and produce the Serious Case Review Report. In certain circumstances an Independent SCR Panel Chair may also be appointed, particularly when the review is of a complex nature.

4.3 Where a Practice Learning Review is agreed this may be conducted by:

- An independent reviewer
- Head of Safeguarding and Quality Assurance
- Another senior officer from any of the key agencies

This decision will be taken in conjunction with the Independent Chair of the Safeguarding Board.

4.4 Individual agencies will appoint senior managers from their organisation as either SCR panel members or to lead the internal review within their agency to form part of the final report (either SCR or PLR).

4.5 In accordance with the transitional guidance, the National Panel will also be notified of the decision of the Independent Chair. This will be done by the Head of Safeguarding and Quality Assurance/LSCB Business Manager using the prescribed on-line form

4.6 Whatever outcome is agreed there must be consideration of any other action that may be in place. This will include:

- NHS Serious Incident reporting
- LeDeR reviews
- Police enquiry or other action
- Other internal action in agencies

4.7 The conduct of any safeguarding action must set out the ways in which any of these additional factors will work together throughout the process.

4.8 A process and decision-making pathway is set out over the page with the required timescales.

5. Further Support

- 5.1 For support, guidance and advice any agency may contact the Head of Safeguarding and Quality Assurance at teresa.devito@lbbd.gov.uk or the LSCB Business Manager at elizabeth.winnett@lbbd.gov.uk.
- 5.2 This document concerns itself solely with the process for determining the initiation of a Serious Case Review or otherwise. For guidance on conducting Serious Case Review or Practice Learning Reviews, please see separate guidance.
- 5.3 In addition, please refer to the following statutory guidance:

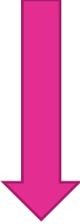
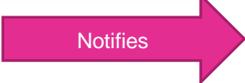
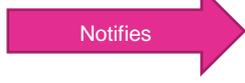
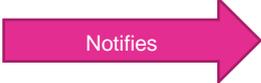
Working Together to Safeguard Children (2015). Click [here](#).

Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018). Click [here](#).

Working Together Transitional Guidance. Click [here](#)

Appendix A

Process and Decision-Making Pathway following Death or Serious Injury

<p>0 - 5 working days</p>	 <p>Referral passed to LSCB based on criteria in WT2015: Referrals from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ CDOP ○ Other agencies ○ LSCB Members ○ Other LSCB ○ Out of area services
<p>5 – 10 working days</p>	<p>Notify LSCB:</p> <p>LSCB Support  National Panel (via online proforma)</p> <p>LSCB Chair  Strategic Partners (form SCR1)</p>  <p>Consideration process:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Convene a meeting ○ A virtual meeting (Skype or circulation of material/comments) ○ Sufficient information is already available on which to make a decision (the agreed option will fulfil the Rapid Review element required by the National Panel)  <p>Recommend option to LSCB Chair:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) SCR if WT2015 criteria considered met (WT2015 page 76 para 18) (ii) PLR (iii) other action by agencies (iv) Other follow-up
<p>10 - 13 working days</p>	<p>LSCB Independent Chair decision using criteria in WT2015 (p76 para 18) (para 1.2 of this guide)</p> <p>Inform:</p> <p>LSCB Support  LSCB Members and National Panel</p> <p>Strategic Partners advised</p>
<p>Day 15</p>	<p>Review Initiated (SCR or PLR or other action)</p>