

REVIEW OF LOCAL SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN BOARD ROLE AND FUNCTIONS: TERMS OF REFERENCE

Aim

- To undertake a fundamental review of the role and function of Local Safeguarding Children Boards (LSCBs) within the context of local strategic multi-agency working, including the child death review process, and to consider how the intended centralisation of serious case reviews (SCRs) will work effectively at local level.

Objectives

- Examine the current role of LSCBs within the local authority multi-agency space, including a consideration of what multi-agency arrangements need to achieve locally, how that might best be achieved, and where accountability for ensuring the effectiveness of child protection arrangements should lie.
- Identify what success looks like and the factors that make LSCBs successful or unsuccessful, and consider whether alternative structures to the existing model might ultimately improve the outcomes for children and young people
- Consider the impact on the role of LSCBs arising from centralisation of the SCR process and suggest how learning from SCRs in future can be effectively embedded in local practice.
- Consider how SCRs relate to other reviews, for example domestic homicide reviews.
- Identify what makes an effective Child Death Overview Panel (CDOP) and explore which body is best placed to review child deaths to ensure that CDOPs are managed and held to account effectively.

In working towards these objectives the reviewer will need to take into consideration:

- Relevant published research and reports, including the reports from the national panel of independent experts on serious case reviews.
- The findings from the LSCB projects currently being funded by the government to pilot different and innovative ways of working.
- Findings from the SCRs: Learning into Practice Project being funded by the Innovation Programme and led by NSPCC and the Social Care Institute for Excellence.
- The triennial review of SCRs being carried out by the Universities of East Anglia and Warwick.

Scope and constraints

All options for the future of multi-agency working are open. The reviewer will take a view on what system (if any) would operate most effectively.

The government intends that the process of commissioning and publishing SCRs should be managed at national rather than local level. The reviewer should focus on identifying what issues may arise as a consequence of this change process, rather than on the details of how the centralisation process itself will operate.

The government is not proposing to withdraw the child death review process. The review will look at how well CDOPs work and propose measures to improve the learning from child death reviews.

Communications and Outputs

The reviewer will:

- Discuss the progress of the review of LSCBs at regular intervals with the overarching Project Board managed by DfE.
- Provide updates to the Child Protection Implementation Taskforce as required.
- Present interim findings to the Project Board in mid-February 2016.
- Send a written report to the Secretary of State for Education by the end of March 2016, including recommendations linked to the above objectives.