

## East Sussex Partnership Protocol 2021 - 22

### 1. Joint working across the partnerships

1.1 This protocol is intended to support effective joint working between the following strategic partnership boards ('the partnerships') in East Sussex:

- East Sussex Safeguarding Adults Board
- East Sussex Safeguarding Children Partnership
- East Sussex Safer Communities Partnership Board
- East Sussex Children and Young Peoples Trust.

1.2 These partnerships are committed to ensuring that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and to working together at every level to keep people in East Sussex safe from harm and abuse and improve their health and wellbeing. The partnership arrangements with the **East Sussex Health and Wellbeing Board** are less directly aligned than with the other partnerships within this protocol as detailed at point four.

1.3 The partnerships referred to in this document also maintain close links with other safeguarding boards which operate on a Sussex-wide basis, reflecting commitment to a shared vision and collaboration regarding common themes and priorities.

1.4 Collaboration between the partnerships is based on following principles:



## **2. Purpose of the Partnership Protocol**

- 2.1 The East Sussex Partnership Protocol governs relationships between key agencies working to promote the health and wellbeing of East Sussex's communities. In relation to safeguarding, the protocol aims to secure coordinated partnership working that avoids duplication and achieves better outcomes for the people of East Sussex.
- 2.2 This document sets out the expectations of the relationships and working arrangements between the above listed partnerships, and covers respective roles and functions, shared priorities and arrangements for oversight, challenge and scrutiny.
- 2.3 Each Board has specific statutory duties, powers and roles. This protocol is intended to support the effectiveness of each partnership board. It is not intended to override or replace the statutory duties or powers of any of the individual agencies. Further details can be found on the respective website for each board/partnership/trust.

## **3. Objectives of the Partnership Protocol**

- 3.1 Each of the partnerships share a common ambition to improve the welfare and safety of people in East Sussex. Within the wider governance arrangements of the partnerships, their role is to ensure the effectiveness of the arrangements made by individual agencies and partners to safeguard and promote the welfare of adults, young people and children.
- 3.2 The opportunities presented by a formal working relationship between the partnerships and boards include:
  - Achieving a coordinated approach to delivering the boards and partnerships' goals, recognising that agency members and partnerships operate within the same geographical boundary and therefore serve the same population within East Sussex.
  - Adopting a coordinated approach to ensure the safety and health and wellbeing of adults and children in East Sussex are collectively addressed with a focus on early intervention and prevention.
  - Share relevant information across partnerships and member organisations and align business plans with shared strategic priorities to tackle key issues - such as serious violence, domestic abuse and exploitation - which impact on the health, safety and wellbeing of the residents of East Sussex.
  - Understanding the importance of consultation, engagement and feedback within our local communities to inform the partnership boards' business and priorities.

- Strategic plans, whether formulated by individual agencies or by partnerships, include safeguarding as a theme, to ensure that existing strategies and service delivery, as well as emerging plans for improvement, include effective safeguarding arrangements.
- Identifying areas of commonality and pooling evidence, expertise and resources to influence policy, practice and outcomes locally.
- Ensuring health, wellbeing and safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and each organisation and individuals within those organisations must play their full part.
- Sharing learning from safeguarding reviews and building on strengths and using our collective resources to address areas of concern or which require further development.

#### **4. Partnership arrangements with the Health and Wellbeing Board (HWB)**

- 4.1 HWBs were established by the Health and Social Care Act 2012. They are a forum for leaders from the health and social care system with responsibilities for commissioning and providing health services, public health and social care to work together to improve the health and wellbeing of the local population and reduce health inequalities.
- 4.2 HWB members collaborate to understand the needs of the local community, agree priorities through the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) and Health and Wellbeing Strategy. The HWB has strategic influence over commissioning decisions across health, public health and social care through the Health and Wellbeing Strategy. The HWB has an interest in the wider determinants of health and wellbeing including housing and education.
- 4.3 There is a statutory requirement for the East Sussex Safeguarding Adults Board and East Sussex Safeguarding Children Partnership to present their annual reports to the HWB.

#### **5. Mechanisms for collaboration**

- 5.1 To achieve our aims the partnerships will:
  - Present their annual reports and/or business priorities to each other's boards as well as to the HWB. Sharing annual reports provides an opportunity for the boards and partnerships to comment on performance, progress of areas of joint working, and identify any future areas for joint working.
  - Share formal board meeting discussions. Meeting agendas and resulting actions/recommendations for the four boards and partnerships will be shared with the respective chairs and business managers. This will provide an

opportunity for support, challenge and alignment of business plans to feed into the planning process for strategies and plans.

- Members who sit on more than one board are expected to attend meetings regularly. They have a key role in ensuring they represent their organisations and share information on the issues and concerns being discussed at both boards. They are a key mechanism for linking and sharing information at this strategic level.
- Identify the lead partnership and respective responsibilities for a particular issue or priority and adopt a collaborative approach across policies or areas of mutual interest.
- Ensure that there is a shared approach to practice reviews in the county and the learning to emerge from these. This will include Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews (CSPRs), Safeguarding Adults Reviews (SARs) and Domestic Homicide Reviews (DHRs) and in relation to drug and alcohol related deaths.
- Identify opportunities to develop joint communication plans, to ensure that key safeguarding messages are shared effectively across the partnerships and partner organisations.

## **6. Shared priorities and responsibilities**

6.1 There are a number of shared priorities where the partnership Boards will need to ensure that leadership and accountability for issues is clear and that information is effectively shared. These shared priorities relate to protecting adults and children from harm, abuse and neglect and include:

- Domestic violence and abuse.
- Mental health and emotional wellbeing.
- Child sexual exploitation, missing people, rape and sexual violence and abuse, and harmful practices (Female Genital Mutilation, Forced Marriage and 'so called' Honour Based Violence).
- Serious and organised crime, including modern slavery, human trafficking, county lines and fraud and scams.

6.2 Newly emerging themes which the partnerships will prioritise over this year will include:

- Serious violence, including firearms, knife crime and homicides.
- Drug and alcohol related harm/death.
- Transitions from Children's to Adult's Services.
- Working with multiple complex needs and adopting a trauma-informed approach.

- 6.3 Where a piece of work with cross-cutting themes is identified, the other boards will be contacted to clarify the relevance of the theme for them. The relevant boards will then agree:
- The planning and commissioning of services that meet the needs of the East Sussex population.
  - Responsibility and accountability for the area of work.
  - Which board will lead and the mechanisms for other partnerships to support and feed into this work.
  - Information sharing and reporting arrangements.
- 6.4 The White Paper 'Integration and Innovation: working together to improve health and social care for all' (February 2021) ahead of the implementation of the Health and Care Bill later in 2021 includes a proposal to develop local Integrated Care Systems (ICS), which will strengthen relationships between the NHS and local authorities. This will enable a more joined up approach to planning and provision and ensure a greater focus on responsive high-quality coordinated care, which supports prevention, early intervention and wellbeing. ICSs will be made up of Integrated Care Boards who will be required to establish Integrated Care Partnerships bringing together health, social care and public health (and potentially representatives from education, policing, social care providers and housing) with a view to improving health and care outcomes for their communities. ICSs will provide a mechanism for bringing together these existing workstreams and building further on partnership relationships.
- 6.5 The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 has for the first time created a statutory framework for the delivery of support to those experiencing domestic abuse and their children. The Act places a duty on local authorities to appoint a multi-agency Domestic Abuse Local Partnership Board to assess the need for accommodation-based domestic abuse support in their area and develop and publish a strategy for the provision of such support having a regard to the needs assessment.
- 7. Review of protocol**
- 7.1 The Business/Development Managers across the Safeguarding Adults Board, East Sussex Safeguarding Children Partnership and Safer Communities Partnership meet on a monthly basis to progress areas of work in relation to shared priorities, including sharing updates on practice reviews and producing joint communications and briefings.
- 7.2 The effectiveness of this protocol will be reviewed and evaluated at least annually by the Business/Development Managers across the partnerships, where joint areas of work for the forthcoming year will be agreed.

## **Partnership working in practice: Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking**

Within East Sussex, the Safer Communities Board leads on the Pan Sussex Modern Slavery Delivery Plan. The Safer Communities Partnership Business Plan sets out the shared priorities across the partnership boards to ensure a collaborative approach to enhancing understanding and raising awareness of modern slavery and to developing effective multi-agency mechanisms to tackling the issue. A number of achievements and initiatives have been established across the boards to support the response to modern slavery including:

- The Pan Sussex Anti-Slavery Network meets on a quarterly basis and has successfully established links with a number of national and regional networks in order to learn more about best practice and gain a more holistic focus on work required to address modern slavery.
- The implementation of multi-agency training across the partnerships to ensure that practitioners working in First Responder roles are aware of their duties under the Modern Slavery Act 2015 to notify the Home Office via the National Referral Mechanism of anyone they believe is a victim of modern slavery or human trafficking.
- Development and implementation of bespoke training for Councillors to enable a better understanding of their role in tackling modern slavery and human trafficking.
- East Sussex County Council (ESCC) has demonstrated its commitment to working towards eradicating modern slavery in the county by signing up to the United Nations Global Sustainable Development Goal 8.7 Modern Slavery Pledge, to take immediate and effective measures to eradicate forced labour, end modern slavery and human trafficking and secure the prohibition and elimination of the worst forms of child labour by 2030.
- Development of an e-newsletter produced jointly by the Safer Communities Partnership, Safeguarding Children Partnership and Safeguarding Adults Board targeted at practitioners working as a Single Point of Contact for modern slavery queries, with the aim of maintaining awareness and knowledge of modern slavery work and responsibilities.
- Development of a modern slavery referral pathway and toolkit to support practitioners working in the field of Adult Social Care and Health.
- ESCC and Sussex Police are engaged with Operation Innerste. This is a national programme recognising the specific risk to unaccompanied asylum-seeking children from trafficking. The approach takes a welfare-based intervention when asylum seeking children first have contact with the UK police due to their experiences with police in the countries they are fleeing.
- The East Sussex Safeguarding Children Partnership Multi Agency Child Exploitation (MACE) process explores how exploitation can be disrupted and how we can keep the children safe. The most at risk children are reviewed each month. At any one time, there are usually 20 - 30 children being overseen by MACE.

### **Partnership Working in Practice: Domestic Abuse**

The Domestic Violence and Sexual Abuse Management Oversight Group provides strategic and operational oversight of multi-agency responses in East Sussex to domestic violence and abuse (DVA), sexual violence (SV) and other forms of violence against woman and girls (VAWG). This group is accountable to the East Sussex Safer Communities Partnership and includes representation from the Safeguarding Children Partnership and Safeguarding Adults Board.

The overarching strategic outcome for the group is that local residents and communities are free from DVA, SV and VAWG by increasing survivor safety; holding perpetrators to account; decreasing social tolerance and acceptance; and increasing people's ability to have violence-free, safe and equal lives.

Areas of responsibility for the group include:

- Supporting planning for future service delivery by maintaining a picture of victim and perpetrator profiles in East Sussex.
- Identifying any emerging risks and issues and agree appropriate actions.
- Monitoring the performance, quality and effectiveness of the Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) process and develop, coordinate and monitor a MARAC action plan.

The group also supports the sharing of learning from DHRs, and relevant recommendations from CSPRs and SARs any other relevant review commissioned by a local organisation or partnership.

The partnership boards continue to jointly deliver multi-agency training in relation to domestic violence and abuse to support a whole family approach in understanding the impact of domestic abuse of children on adults.

## Appendix 1

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### **About the Boards and Partnerships**

The following section gives an overview of each board or partnership, its purpose and statutory responsibilities, interdependencies with the other boards or partnerships, and where to find further information.

### **East Sussex Safeguarding Adults Board**

#### **Board Purpose**

The East Sussex Safeguarding Adults Board is a multi-agency statutory partnership, established by the Care Act 2014, which provides leadership and strategic oversight of adult safeguarding work across East Sussex.

The overarching purpose of the Safeguarding Adults Board is to help and safeguard adults with care and support needs from abuse, neglect and exploitation.

The shared vision of the East Sussex Safeguarding Adults Board is for all agencies to work together effectively to enable the citizens of East Sussex to live free from abuse and neglect, and to promote widely the message that safeguarding is everybody's business.

Members of the Safeguarding Adults Board work together to:

- Actively promote collaboration and commitment between organisations.
- Work together on prevention strategies.
- Listen to the voice of adults with care and support needs and carers to deliver positive outcomes.

#### **Statutory duties**

Under the Care Act 2014, we are required to:

- Develop and publish and Strategic plan setting out how we will meet our objectives and how our partner agencies will contribute to this.
- Publish an annual report detailing how effective our work has been.

Arrange for SARs to be undertaken when the criteria are considered to have been met.

#### **Board Priorities**

The current East Sussex Safeguarding Adults Board objectives and priorities are set out in the [Strategic Plan 2021 - 2024](#)

Key priority areas are:

1. Embedding MCA in practice.
2. Safeguarding transitions for young people at risk.
3. Working with multiple complex needs.

## East Sussex Safeguarding Children Partnership

### Board Purpose

The purpose of the East Sussex Safeguarding Children Partnership is to support and enable all professionals working with children and families in East Sussex to work together in a system where:

- Children are safeguarded and their welfare promoted.
- Partner organisations and agencies collaborate, share and co-own a vision for safeguarding children.
- There is early identification and analysis of new safeguarding issues.
- Learning is promoted and embedded in a way that local services for children and families can become more reflective and implement changes to practice.

Information is shared effectively to facilitate accurate and timely decision making for children and families.

### Statutory Duties

#### Children Act 2004

- Sections 16E-K establish the roles and responsibilities of safeguarding partners. Section 16E defines 'safeguarding partners' as the local authority, a clinical commissioning group and the chief officer of police within the local authority area.
- Section 16F requires local safeguarding partners for a local authority area to make arrangements to identify serious child safeguarding cases which raise issues of importance in relation to the area.
- Section 16G requires safeguarding partners to publish their arrangements, and to ensure scrutiny of how effective the arrangements have been by an independent person.
- It also requires the safeguarding partners to prepare and publish, at least once in every 12-month period, a report on the work that they have done as a result of their arrangements, and how effective the arrangements have been in practice.

### Board Priorities

East Sussex Safeguarding Children Partnership Priorities for 2020-2023 are:

1. Education safeguarding.
2. Child exploitation.
3. Embedding a learning culture.
4. Safeguarding under 5s.

It is considered that the voice of the child and contextual safeguarding should be cross cutting over all the East Sussex Safeguarding Children Partnership priorities.

## East Sussex Safer Communities Partnership

### Board Purpose

The East Sussex Safer Communities Partnership is committed to reducing and preventing crime, the fear of crime, anti-social behaviour, re-offending, domestic abuse, combating the misuse of drugs, alcohol and other substances and ensuring services are delivered effectively on a local level.

The East Sussex Safer Communities Partnership is the statutory County Strategy Group which provides strategic leadership for addressing community safety matters across East Sussex.

The partnership is accountable to the East Sussex County Council Scrutiny Committee and through the Lead Member for Adult Social Care. Agencies with a responsibility for community safety as required by The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 to share information and work together to address crime and disorder. This includes publishing a plan for the reduction of crime and disorder in their area.

The East Sussex Safer Communities Partnership priorities are cross cutting and continue to be closely aligned with other plans that involve working with local communities and partners to keep East Sussex safe.

### Statutory Duties

The **Crime and Disorder Act 1998** gave specified authorities a duty to work together to develop crime and disorder audits and implement reduction strategies.

- Section 5 of the Act sets out that the specified authorities' joint responsibility for preventing and reducing crime and disorder in the area. They are 'responsible authorities' and have a duty to co-operate through a Community Safety Partnership. These partnerships have a statutory duty to reduce reoffending; tackle crime and disorder; anti-social behaviour; alcohol and substance misuse; and any other behaviour which has a negative effect on the local environment.
- The 'responsible authorities' have responsibility, under Section 6 of the Act, for formulating and implementing 'a strategy for the reduction of crime and disorder in the area'. 'Before formulating the Strategy, the responsible authorities shall carry out, taking due account of the knowledge and experience of persons in the area, a review of the levels and patterns of crime and disorder in the area and of the level and patterns of the misuse of drugs in the area.' This is known as the Strategic Assessment.
- Section 17 of the Act place a duty on the local authority to "Without prejudice to any other obligation imposed upon it, it shall be the duty of each authority ... to exercise its various functions with due regard to the likely effect of the exercise of those functions on, and the need to do all that it reasonably can to prevent, crime and disorder in its area (including anti-social and other behaviour adversely affecting the local environment) and the misuse of drugs, alcohol and other substances in its area".

**DHRs** were established on a statutory basis under the Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims Act 2004. DHRs are commissioned by the East Sussex Safer Communities Board and paid for by contributions by core statutory partners: ESCC, NHS East Sussex Clinical Commissioning Group, National Probation Service, and the District and Borough Community Safety Partnerships, with ad hoc discretionary contributions from other community safety partners, such as East Sussex Fire and Rescue Service. The Multi-agency Statutory Guidance for the Conduct of DHRs was last refreshed in 2016. In line with the national Ending Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) strategy, currently being refreshed, the statutory guidance reinforces the position that domestic violence and abuse is ‘everyone’s business’. DHRs have a key role in this as their main purpose is to prevent domestic violence and homicide and improve service responses for victims by developing a coordinated multi-agency approach to ensure that abuse is identified and responded to effectively at the earliest opportunity. The guidance highlights the importance of taking a holistic approach when considering the facts presented during scrutiny of practice by agencies and professionals.

The **Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015**, Section 26 places a duty on specified authorities, in the exercise of their functions, to have “due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism”.

The **Modern Slavery Act 2015** consolidated the current offences relating to trafficking and slavery and introduced a range of new measures around the prevention of modern slavery events and the support and protection of victims of modern slavery. Under the Act, specified authorities have a duty to notify the Home Office of any individual encountered in England and Wales who they believe is a suspected victim of slavery or human trafficking.

There is a pending **serious violence** duty on public bodies which will ensure relevant services work together to share data and knowledge in order to target interventions and reduce serious violence.

### Board Priorities

Priorities 2020 – 2023:

- Serious organised crime, including county lines, modern slavery and human trafficking, and fraud related harm.
- Serious violent crime, including knife crime.
- Domestic violence and abuse, rape and sexual violence and abuse, stalking and harassment and harmful practices.
- Drugs and alcohol related harm.

Work streams identified through other partnership processes:

- Preventing violent extremism.
- Reducing re-offending.

- Anti-social behaviour and hate crime.
- Road safety.

## **East Sussex Children and Young People's Trust**

### Board Purpose

The aim of the Children and Young People's Trust is to work collaboratively to improve the outcomes for children, young people and families.

### Statutory Duties

The Children and Young People's Plan constitutes the statutory Child Poverty Strategy for East Sussex.

### Board Priorities

- Improve the school readiness of pupils.
- Helping more parents enter, sustain and progress in work.
- Improve the quality of life of low income families in other ways where possible.
- Ensuring effective early help and safeguarding for children and young people.
- Improving education, attainment and skill levels of young people aged 14 -19, including through a strong academic route and better access to a wider range of apprenticeships, vocational training and work experience opportunities.
- Improving support to children, young people and families to help maintain and enhance emotional wellbeing and mental health.