



HILLINGDON
LONDON



Children, Families and Education Select Committee

Councillors on the Committee

Councillor Heena Makwana (Chairman)
Councillor Becky Haggart OBE (Vice-Chairman)
Councillor Kishan Bhatt
Councillor Tony Gill
Councillor Rita Judge
Councillor Peter Smallwood
Councillor Jan Sweeting (Opposition Lead)

Co-Opted Member

Tony Little, Roman Catholic Diocesan Representative

Date: TUESDAY, 19 SEPTEMBER 2023

Time: 7.00 PM

Venue: COMMITTEE ROOM 5 - CIVIC CENTRE

Meeting Details: Members of the Public and Press are welcome to attend this meeting

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Terms of Reference

Children, Families, & Education Select Committee

To undertake the overview and scrutiny role in relation to the following Cabinet Member portfolio(s) and service areas:

Cabinet Member Portfolios	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cabinet Member for Children, Families & Education
Relevant service areas	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Children's Services (including corporate parenting)2. Children's Safeguarding3. Youth Justice4. Youth Services5. SEND6. Education7. Children and Families Development8. Skills & lifelong learning

This Select Committee will establish a Panel to support strong oversight of the Council's corporate parenting responsibilities. The Committee may appoint 3 Members to this Panel based on political balance. Membership may include non-Cabinet Members not on the Committee. The Committee may also appoint relevant Council officers and other external stakeholders to the Panel and agree its chairmanship and operation. In agreeing its operation, the Committee will provide for the Panel not to be able to establish any other sub-group or body to carry out its responsibilities.

Agenda

- 1 Apologies for Absence
- 2 Declarations of interest in matters coming before this meeting
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- 4 To confirm that the items of business marked as Part I will be considered in Public and that the items marked as Part II will be considered in Private
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Minutes

CHILDREN, FAMILIES AND EDUCATION SELECT COMMITTEE

27 July 2023

Meeting held at Committee Room 5 – Civic Centre,
High Street, Uxbridge, UB8 1UW

	<p>Committee Members Present: Councillors Heena Makwana (Chairman), Becky Haggart (Vice-Chairman), Philip Corthorne, Kamal Kaur, Tony Gill, Peter Smallwood, and Jan Sweeting (Opposition Lead)</p> <p>Co-Opted Member Present: Tony Little</p> <p>Officers Present: Dan Kennedy, Corporate Director of Central Services Abi Preston, Director of Education and SEND Nav Minhas, School Places Planning and Policy Manager, and Ryan Dell (Democratic Services Officer)</p>
13.	<p>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE (<i>Agenda Item 1</i>)</p> <p>Apologies were received from Councillor Kishan Bhatt with Councillor Philip Corthorne substituting. Apologies were also received from Councillor Rita Judge with Councillor Kamal Kaur substituting.</p>
14.	<p>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST IN MATTERS COMING BEFORE THIS MEETING (<i>Agenda Item 2</i>)</p> <p>None.</p>
15.	<p>MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING (<i>Agenda Item 3</i>)</p> <p>RESOLVED: That the minutes of the previous meeting be agreed</p>
16.	<p>TO CONFIRM THAT THE ITEMS OF BUSINESS MARKED AS PART I WILL BE CONSIDERED IN PUBLIC AND THAT THE ITEMS MARKED AS PART II WILL BE CONSIDERED IN PRIVATE (<i>Agenda Item 4</i>)</p>
17.	<p>TWICE YEARLY SCHOOL PLACES PLANNING (<i>Agenda Item 5</i>)</p> <p>Officers noted that the School Places Planning report was one that was presented to the Select Committee twice per year.</p>

It was noted that the forecasted need for school places had been in line with recent years, and there had been no big swings. Therefore, the need for school places was as predicted.

There had been a gradual reduction in need for Primary School places, while there was a high and rising demand for Secondary School places. There was a challenge of meeting the demand for children with additional needs, but officers were working with parents, carers and schools to meet this need. It was a statutory duty to ensure a sufficiency of school places.

In Primary Schools, there had been a gradual decline in the termly census returns since January 2019, however there had been an increase in the recent January 2023 census. Officers were working closely with schools over Published Admission Numbers (PAN).

For Secondary Schools, a correction was made to the report, whereby Secondary Schools were expected to see an increase in demand for the next four years at least (the correction was that this did not apply to year 7 only). There had been a peak for September 2023 for year 7 projections. There were bulge classes of 101 extra places in a small number of Secondary Schools.

Specialist provision was at capacity. Officers were also working with the Department for Education (DfE) and specialist providers to increase the provision to accommodate the growth.

Members referenced previous suggestions around a new Secondary School. Officers noted that there was a question of finding a suitable site for any new school. Officers were confident of being able to meet the need, whilst also providing value for money. It was noted that a new secondary school would cost tens of millions of pounds to build. However, the forecast was always under review. Members further noted consideration for pupils who move into the Borough and also increases in primary school numbers.

Members congratulated officers on managing the service, and asked how officers were working with schools. Officers noted that they liaised regularly with schools and considered the school census, finances and Published Admission Numbers. The schools estate was constantly being reviewed.

Members also asked about the big picture and noted that there were falling school rolls in inner London. Officers noted that forecasting needed to be kept under regular review. The COVID-19 pandemic and Brexit had affected 'where to live' choices. However, there was a strong Hillingdon economy, and Hillingdon was a Borough that people wanted to come to. It was noted that the birth rate was slowing slightly.

Members noted that Hillingdon was a net exporter of year 7 pupils due to parental preference, and asked how officers were supporting schools to be competitive and to be parents' first preference. Officers noted that Hillingdon school had good Ofsted outcomes. Officers also noted the partnership model

of working with schools. There were also education advisors to look at data outcomes and trends. There was strong quality in Hillingdon schools.

Officers noted that there was forecasting for a number of 'what if' scenarios. There was capacity of 4% in the system. Through the Fair Access Panel, schools could be requested to take in more pupils if required, however, unexpected swings were not likely.

Members asked about emergency procedures and flexible learning models. Officers noted that there was some capacity in the system. The role of supply teachers was noted, and there was some mobile/ temporary accommodation for temporary classroom space available. Good partnership working was noted.

Members asked why there were lower numbers for nursery and primary places. It was noted that private nurseries provided a level of free childcare, and that it was down to family choice/ family patterns. Officers were working with public health and noting levels of, for example, GP registrations.

Members asked whether numbers of high-needs children were continuing to grow at a faster rate than the overall numbers. Members further asked how much additional capacity was required for specialist schools and specialised units in non-specialist schools. Officers noted that the level of need had been increasing nationally. Hillingdon had previously been above national levels of Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) and high-needs but was now in line with national levels. Officers were doing lots of work for high-needs children. It was important to ensure that mainstream schools were as inclusive as they can be and can meet as many needs as possible. It was also important to have the appropriate level of provision for specialist placements. Hillingdon had been growing this offer via a graduated approach which included mainstream schools, specialist resource provision (SRP), designated units, and special school provision. In terms of meeting demand, officers were looking at projections around numbers and at how to change practices and culture to ensure that needs were met in every possible way. There was planned growth in the system – new SRPs and designated units were opening. There were a number of new special schools too. Therefore, demand should match provision. By around 2025-26, there would be a significant increase (roughly 30%) in the number of special school places available.

Members asked how projections were made prior to Reception. It was noted that further information on this could be provided outside of the Committee. Members also noted that there may be a slow-down in numbers in seven to eight years' time, and asked whether this would be a cause for concern. Officers noted that they were responsible for the use of funds and had to make the best use of the education estate. Members further asked about how much capacity had been taken up. It was noted that further information on this could be provided outside of the Committee.

Members asked about pupils who move into the Borough but were still having to go to school outside of the Borough. Officers noted the Fair Access Panel, which was chaired by a headteacher. If a year group was full, schools would work together to find a place. It was further noted that sometimes school places were declined by parents who may be waiting for a place at their preferred school. (In some cases, parents would be offered places that were not at their preferred schools.) It was noted that while the preference may not be met, need was being met.

Members asked about wriggle room, noting that there was a large year 6 cohort moving into year 7. Members asked if the number of unfilled places at year 7 was still below 5%. On PAN for September 2023, consideration was given to the expansion at Harlington School (*to ensure demand is met in future years, Harlington School is being expanded by 1.5 forms of entry – 45 additional places in each year group from 2023. This is part of the complete rebuilding of the school and library. The school will benefit from having new SRP units for secondary aged pupils with ASD who will be integrating into mainstream for part of their timetable and also have specialist teaching and support*). Officers also noted the four schools containing the 101 bulge places. Officers noted that the total PAN was 3,823. A school place had been offered to 3,626 pupils (of which 537 were out-of-Borough places). Hillingdon had imported 401 pupils from out-of-Borough. This gave a surplus of 333 school places or 8.7% as at National Offer Day, which would allow for any late applications. It was noted that of those who had been offered a place, some would not have received a place at their preferred school.

Members asked about the effect of bulge classes. Officers noted that bulge classes were always agreed with the relevant schools; that their timetables would be adjusted to accommodate the bulge classes; and that no concerns had been raised.

Members asked for a list of the schools that were offering bulge classes. Officers noted that more details on this could be provided outside of the meeting.

Members asked about high-needs children and the level of spending on this, and also asked if officers were confident in the current building programme meeting expected demand. Officers noted that providing additional capacity in state-funded schools was one part of the strategy, along with developing capability within mainstream schools, and early intervention. By changing this practice, it would be possible to downward forecast for special schools/ high-cost placements. There was a plan to step down high-needs places into mainstream schools with dedicated units.

Members asked about working with independent schools around spare places. Officers noted that they worked with schools to improve perceptions and understanding of options. It was noted that parents' perceptions of a certain school may not have evidence and officers would highlight benefits. There was lots of partnership working.

	<p>RESOLVED: That the Children, Families and Education Select Committee:</p> <p>1) Noted the update and actions underway to support parents and schools; and</p> <p>2) Questioned officers about the update.</p>
18.	<p>FORWARD PLAN (<i>Agenda Item 6</i>)</p> <p>Members asked about the SEND Strategy. Officers clarified that the Forward Plan within the agenda was the July Forward Plan, which listed the SEND Strategy as a Cabinet Member decision expected in July. The August and September Forward Plan had been shared with Members and listed the SEND Strategy as expected in August. Members asked if this item would come to Select Committee and officers noted that it already had come to Select Committee in November 2022, where comments were submitted to Cabinet.</p> <p>RESOLVED: That the Children, Families and Education Select Committee noted the Forward Plan</p>
19.	<p>WORK PROGRAMME (<i>Agenda Item 7</i>)</p> <p>Members asked about starting the next review. It was noted that this process could begin as the current review was coming to its conclusion. Members also suggested an item at a future Committee on how school places/ projections are used, and also an item from the School Improvement Team.</p> <p>RESOLVED: That the Committee noted the Work Programme</p>
	<p>The meeting, which commenced at 7.00 pm, closed at 7:40 pm.</p>

These are the minutes of the above meeting. For more information of any of the resolutions please contact Ryan Dell at democratic@hillingdon.gov.uk. Circulation of these minutes is to Councillors, Officers, the Press and Members of the Public.

The public part of this meeting was filmed live on the Council's YouTube Channel to increase transparency in decision-making, however these minutes remain the official and definitive record of proceedings.

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2024/25 BUDGET PLANNING REPORT FOR SERVICES WITHIN THE REMIT OF THE CHILDREN, FAMILIES AND EDUCATION SELECT COMMITTEE

Committee name	Children, Families and Education Select Committee
Officer reporting	Chris Mayo, Assistant Director Financial Management Andy Goodwin, Head of Strategic Finance
Papers with report	N/A
Ward	All

HEADLINES

This is the first opportunity for the Select Committee to discuss the current stage of development of budget planning work with regard to services within the remit of the Children, Families and Education committee. This paper gives a strategic context in which the detailed proposals to be discussed at Select Committee meetings in January 2024 will need to be considered.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. **That the Committee notes the financial context in which the 2024/25 budget setting process will take place in advance of detailed savings proposals being developed and approved at Cabinet in December 2023.**

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

2. This is the first of two opportunities within the planning cycle for the Select Committee to consider issues relating to budget planning for 2024/25 and beyond. The focus of this report is the broader financial position of the Council, with the report to be considered in January 2024 setting out the detailed budget proposals for relevant services, those proposals having been included in the report to Cabinet on the Medium Term Financial Forecast (MTFF) in December 2023.

Corporate Overview – General Fund

2023/24 General Fund Revenue Monitoring

3. A marginal underspend of £23k is reported against General Fund revenue budget normal activities as of June 2023 (Month 3), representing no movement from Month 2, with a range of risks and pressures being managed within this position. This will result in unallocated General Balances totalling £26,869k at 31 March 2024, in line with MTFF expectations.
4. Over and above specific variances being reported, there are a number of potential risk areas which continue to be closely monitored; the key items relating to progress in delivery of savings, pressures on demand-led services and inflationary pressures.
 - a. Within this position, £10,141k of the £22,762k savings planned for 2023/24 are banked or on track for delivery in full by 31 March 2024, with £7,953k or 35% tracked as being

at an earlier stage of implementation. Where slippage in savings delivery is expected this has been factored into the reported monitoring position, with the full £22,762k savings expected to be delivered in full.

- b. At this early stage in the financial year, no pressures have been reported against demand-led service budgets, although a significant increase in approaches by households seeking support with homelessness will necessitate a significant level of management action to avoid a pressure in this area. As in previous years Social Care continues to be monitored closely given the volatility and national systemic challenges across this sector.
 - c. The 2023/24 budget incorporated £21,691k to absorb inflationary pressures, with current projections indicating that a further £3,622k additional funding may be required, largely to meet the costs of a higher than anticipated staff pay award. Specific provision has been made within the Council's Earmarked Reserves to meet such costs, with this sum being offset in-year by £1,500k windfall income from the West London Waste Authority.
5. The Council holds Earmarked Reserves to manage risks and fund cyclical and project-based activities, with £20,060k being held at the beginning of 2023/24. Based on the Month 3 forecast, including the projected Local Authority pay award and an estimation for further inflationary demands above the approved budget totalling £3,622k, the Council is forecasting to drawdown £5,602k of this balance, with £4,550k of this being planned use within the Council's budget strategy, leaving a projected closing balance of £14,458k as at 31 March 2024 to support the Council's ongoing financial resilience and fund project and cyclical based work in 2024/25 and beyond.
 6. The Council's budget contains a number of areas subject to demographic pressures and higher levels of volatility which are closely monitored and discussed in the Budget Strategy & MTFF under the "demand-led growth" banner.
 7. Within the Council budget there is a Managed Vacancy Factor across the board of 3.5%, or £4,149k, to reflect natural levels of turnover and resulting structural underspend in the workforce budgets. Current indications are that the higher vacancy rate experienced during 2022/23 will continue into the new financial year and therefore result in an underspend over and above the Managed Vacancy Factor. The Council continues to closely manage recruitment activity, with post-level establishment controls providing a key mechanism for managing workforce costs at the organisational level.
 8. The Council budgeted for a pay award in 2023/24 of 4%, however, due to the exceptional inflationary environment, the current pay offer exceeds this sum and equates to approximately 5.7% with an allowance of £2,622k being in place to meet this additional uplift in the Council's workforce expenditure included in the forecast use of the Council's identified earmarked reserve for exceptional inflationary pressures above the Council's approved budget.
 9. Further provision for use of Earmarked Reserves has been included in this position, with £1,754k support for local priority initiatives, £1,535k release of grant funding to cover brought forward COVID-19 pressures in the Collection Fund, £1,000k further provision for inflationary risks and a net £191k of other costs. Windfall income from the West London Waste Authority's Energy from Waste operations has allowed £1,500k to be allocated to Earmarked Reserves, resulting in a net drawdown of £5,602k to leave a closing balance of £14,458k at 31 March 2024.

Savings Programme Update

10. The savings requirement for 2023/24 is £21,197k, which together with £1,565k brought forward from 2022/23, which gives an overall total of £22,762k to be managed in the current financial year. The savings being reported as undelivered in 2022/23 (£1,565k) were attributable to the Council managing measures required to contain and offset inflationary pressures as well the ongoing legacy issues associated with the COVID-19 pandemic. This value has been added to the budgeted savings agreed as part of the 2023/24 budget.

Table 1: Savings Tracker

Cabinet Member Portfolio	Blue Banked £'000	Green Delivery in progress £'000	Amber I Early stages of delivery £'000	Amber II Potential problems in delivery £'000	Red Serious problems in delivery £'000	Total £'000
Cabinet Member for Children, Families & Education	(150)	(150)	(361)	(774)	0	(1,434)
Services within the remit of other committees	(5,977)	(3,364)	(7,092)	(862)	(1,083)	(18,378)
Cross-Cutting	(500)	0	(500)	(1,950)	0	(2,950)
Total 2022/23 Savings Programme	(6,627) 29%	(3,514) 15%	(7,953) 35%	(3,586) 16%	(1,083) 5%	(22,762) 100%
Month on Month Movement	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%	0 0%

11. As of Month 3, £6,627k (29%) of the savings programme has already been banked, with a further £3,514k (15%) being reported as delivery in progress and £11,539k (51%) in the early stages of delivery which are ultimately expected to be delivered in full. There are a further £1,083k of savings recorded as having a serious problem with timely delivery, these savings could ultimately slip into 2024/25. Key items within this £1,083k include £600k linked to PCN banding changes where third-party approval is required ahead of implementation, with the remainder of this sum relating to timing issues on practical implementation of two further projects.
12. Where savings are at risk of not being delivered in full during 2023/24, the associated pressures have been factored into the monitoring position with compensating actions bringing the overall position back to breakeven. At this time, it is expected that the full £22,762k will ultimately be delivered in full or replaced with alternative measures in the event of any ongoing shortfall.
13. The Council is permitted to finance the costs associated with the delivery of this savings programme through Capital Receipts, with both one-off implementation costs and the support for service transformation being funded from this resource. Current projections include £4,595k for such costs, with all such costs subject to a specific funding strategy. It is anticipated that these pump priming costs will be financed from a combination of the £3,000k budget established for this purpose in 2023/24, alongside release of additional Capital Receipts secured during 2022/23.

Service Operating Budgets

14. Service Operating Budgets represent the majority of the Council's investment in day-to-day services for residents. With the Council continuing to operate in a high inflation environment driven by global and national influences, these budgets were supplemented with £21,691k

of funding to meet forecast inflationary pressures and £12,753k for demographic and other drivers impacting on demand for services going into the 2023/24.

15. Table 2 represents the position reported against normal activities for the Service Operating Budgets, the salient risks and variances within this position are summarised in the following paragraphs.

Table 2: Service Operating Budgets

Cabinet Member Portfolio		Approved Budget	Forecast Outturn	Variance (As at Month 2)	Variance (As at Month 1)	Movement from Month 1
		£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Children, Families & Education	Expenditure	96,235	96,154	(81)	(149)	68
	Income	(24,085)	(24,178)	(93)	(18)	(75)
	Subtotal	72,150	71,976	(174)	(167)	(7)
Services within the remit of other committees	Expenditure	387,373	387,316	(57)	(924)	867
	Income	(198,784)	(198,576)	208	1,068	(860)
	Subtotal	188,589	188,740	151	144	7
Total Service Operating Budgets		260,739	260,716	(23)	(23)	0

16. Detailed updates on services that fall within the remit of this committee are included below at Cabinet Portfolio level on an exception basis:

- a. **Children, Families and Education** – an underspend of £174k is being forecast at Month 3, which represents a favourable movement of £7k, with education functions including SEND and Adult Education largely breaking even, with additional expenditure being incurred to support Children in Need alongside the running of the Early Years Centres, offset by a reduction in the cost of service delivery for Looked After Children and measures put in place to contain staffing expenditure to deliver a further benefit for the portfolio. With the movement in this area relating to a number of minor updates, with no material movement reported across the portfolio.

Within this portfolio, there are three services that are reported in the Council's budget strategy under Demand-Led Growth: Children's Placements, Asylum Funding and SEND Transport. While there remains inherent volatility in demand for Looked after Children and Asylum services, at the present time budgeted provision appears sufficient. SEND Transport is currently forecasting a breakeven position, with the volatility against this budget largely impacting once the new academic year commences, the impact of the new uptake will therefore be monitored closely over the coming months.

2022/23 to 2026/27 General Fund Savings Requirement

17. While the focus of the discussion for the Select Committee should be the specific services within its remit, it is important that this discussion is conducted in the context of the overall corporate financial position. The following paragraphs outline the medium-term financial position presented in the 2023/24 Budget Setting Report approved by Cabinet and Council in February 2023.
18. At the time of budget setting, the gross savings requirement for the Council's General Fund over the period 2023/24 to 2027/28 was projected to total £55,414k which was primarily

driven by inflationary cost pressures driven by global and national economics, growing demand for services and the cost of servicing and repaying borrowing incurred in delivery of the capital programme which are expanded upon below. For 2024/25, the gross savings requirement was forecast to total £12,148k.

Table 3: Projected Savings Requirement detail

	2023/24 £'000	2024/25 £'000	2025/26 £'000	2026/27 £'000	2027/28 £'000	Total £'000
Changes in Funding	(13,653)	(10,198)	(1,794)	(6,750)	(6,987)	(39,382)
Inflation	21,691	10,906	9,349	8,862	9,141	59,949
Contingency / Service Pressures	9,080	4,547	3,141	3,211	3,192	23,171
Corporate Items (incl. capital financing costs)	3,673	6,893	2,411	(1,114)	(187)	11,676
Annual Underlying Savings Requirement	20,791	12,148	13,107	4,209	5,159	55,414
Cumulative Underlying Savings Requirement	20,791	32,939	46,046	50,255	55,414	N/A

19. An uplift of £39,382k in recurrent funding was projected over the five-year MTFF period, primarily driven by Council Tax increase of 4.99% in 2023/24 and 2024/25, with a proposed increase of 2.8% per annum thereafter accounting for £27,387k of the increase, with a further £7,474k expected to be driven by increases in the taxbase. Government Grants were forecast to increase by £4,143k, with this wholly being front loaded in 2023/24 as a result of the Spending Review announcements and increases in Social Care Funding. Furthermore, retained Business Rates income is forecast to increase by £5,268k primarily driven by inflationary increases. This position is netted down by the unwinding of £4,890k of one-off funding, predominantly linked to the release of COVID-19 funding.
20. Inflation represents the single largest element of the underlying savings requirement, reflecting the growing cost of maintaining current service provision, with a headline pressure of £59,949k over the MTFF period, with this being materially higher than recent budget strategies due to the exceptionally high inflation rates being experienced globally and nationally, in part due to the war in Ukraine. Workforce inflation through anticipated annual pay awards accounts for £19,120k of this growth, with £9,604k inflation reflecting other contracted expenditure and expenses, offset by increases in recharges and contributions to services, all of which span across all of the Select Committees.
21. Specifically, within the remit of this committee, forecast increases on the cost of care provision and SEND Transport, where annual pay inflation linked to the London Living Wage, with further price increases as suppliers rebase prices to become pandemic ready being the key drivers behind a further £7,773k uplift.
22. Increasing demand for services linked to a growing and changing population accounts for £23,171k of the projected savings requirement, which reflects Hillingdon's growing population and the impact this has on services. Areas within the specific remit of this committee include:
 - a. Looked After Children: The COVID-19 pandemic continues to have legacy issues in this service area, leading to a further step change in funding required to support Looked after Children, which has historically seen growth of circa 4% per annum, with 2023/24 requiring a 15.8% uplift in funding to take account of the significant and sustained growth from 2020/21. Over the medium-term growth rates are projected to return to circa 4% per annum and necessitate an uplift of £3,719k in budgets by 2027/28. Numbers of Children with Disabilities are expected to grow in line with historic trends,

adding a further £223k to the cost of this service. As a result of increasing numbers of children being supported by an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP), demand for SEND Transport is expected to grow by £3,166k by 2027/28 to finance transport to education settings within and outside the borough.

- b. Asylum Funding Shortfall: While direct costs of supporting Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children (UASC) are predominantly met through specific grant, an increase in demand from children not eligible for grant funding, with a further impact being driven by subsistence for Care Leavers will necessitate a £599k uplift in the locally funded spending. It is noted that the Home Office have not increased funding rates in line with inflationary pressures, adding further pressure to the Council's budget.
23. Corporate Items, which primarily relate to the ongoing costs of financing capital investment, represent the remainder of the budget gap with £11,676k growth required over the MTFF period. Budgeted capital investment in the current programme is the key driver of a £6,475k growth in debt financing and repayment costs over the medium term. The remaining balance of Corporate Items relate to movements in the TfL Concessionary Fare Levy (£4,104k) and use of capital receipts to finance transformation activity (£1,029k), alongside moving the Council Tax Older People's Discount to being funded from base budget rather than Earmarked Reserves, with funding coming in from Hillingdon First Limited from 2023/24 and 2024/25.
 24. The approved budget presented to Cabinet and Council in February 2023 included a saving programme of £45,683k over the five-year period, leaving a budget gap of £9,731k by 2027/28 still to be found. Within the Savings Programme, £4,072k related to Further BID Reviews that were yet to be identified.

New and Emerging Risks

25. In light of the exceptional inflation environment that the economy continues to experience, the Council has begun to refresh its savings requirement over the budget strategy period, with inflation rates forecast to average at 7% for 2023 before reducing to 3% by 2024 before returning to the Bank of England target rate of 2% thereafter. The local experience suggests that inflationary uplifts to contract expenditure run at a time lag between CPI updates and spend. The Council has therefore reassessed the inflationary requirement associated with contracted expenditure, including within Social Care placements and SEND Transport, as well as rebasing workforce inflation based on the latest pay award offer. To this end, it is anticipated that further savings will be required by 2028/29 to fund additional inflationary demand, with this impact likely to be front-loaded, but set within the context of very limited government funding information being available from 2025/26 onwards.
26. Furthermore, demand-led growth continues to be monitored on a monthly basis, with the latest intelligence showing signs that the legacy elements of pandemic-driven demand for services has largely been accounted for within the Council's budget strategy, with other issues like the cost-of-living crisis impacting on services, particularly homelessness. This area will remain under close review in development of budget proposals for 2024/25 and beyond.
27. These factors are being fed into a reassessment of the savings requirement against which proposals for the 2024/25 budget and MTFF to 2028/29 are being developed, with the monthly budget monitoring updates to Cabinet providing commentary on these drivers.

Strategy to deal with the Budget Gap

28. Due to the revised forecast for the new and emerging pressures, the Council is therefore undergoing a series of reviews to address this new and the emerging position, with an ongoing update of transformational workstreams, a further review of the existing saving programme and a refresh of the Council's Fees and Charges schedule and policy to bridge this gap.
29. As part of this work, the Council will also incorporate its standard approach to assessing the savings requirements strategy, including:
 - a. Service Transformation, which represents the single largest category of savings, with items presented in this category primarily linked to implementation of the BID Programme;
 - b. Savings proposals from Zero Based Reviews represent budgets which have been identified as being surplus to requirements through the line-by-line review of outturn and similar exercises being undertaken by Finance;
 - c. Effective Procurement savings capture the benefits secured from efficiency savings from contracted services and reviews of delivery models in a number of areas;
 - d. Preventing Demand - initiatives such as the Supported Living Programme where investment in early intervention and other support can avoid more costly intervention at a later date, and;
 - e. Income Generation & Commercialisation proposals primarily relate to amendments to Fees and Charges.
30. With the current monitoring position forecasting General Balances to be £26,869k by 31 March 2024 and the Council's reserves policy setting a minimum reserves balance of £22,000k, there is a need to deliver against these workstreams at pace. The initial review of the revised savings requirement and savings programme will be presented at December Cabinet and to Select Committees in January 2024 alongside the public consultation on the budget for the forthcoming year.

Corporate Overview - Other Funds

31. The 2023/24 Schools Budget, with the exception of the High Needs Block, was agreed by Schools Forum on 18 January 2023 and was presented for approval by Cabinet in February 2023, with the detail of the High Needs Block being discussed at the March meeting of Schools Forum. The Council continues to move local distribution formulas in line with the National Funding Formula, with the local formulas moving at least 10% closer to the national formula as prescribed by the DfE. This budget deploys £358,867k of Dedicated Schools Grant and associated funding to the borough's schools, early years setting and other providers, including provisional figures for the High Needs Block of £62,084k of support for pupils with high needs. Schools Forum rejected a transfer of 0.5% from the Schools Block to support the previously noted demand for high needs places, with the Council submitting a disapplication request to the DfE on 6 February 2023, this application was successful and led to the 2023/24 Schools Budget setting an overall deficit of £2,280k before factoring in the Safety Valve Agreement funding of £7,750k including the Council's own contribution to the deficit.
32. The Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) projected position is an in-year overspend of £4,462k at Month 3, with no movement on forecasts reported at Month 2. This overspend is due to ongoing pressures in the cost of High Needs placements, where inflationary pressures which are not met by DfE increased funding and the already identified under-capacity in borough, has driven increases in the number and cost of independent placements has increased

significantly and is a key area of review within the Safety Valve work. Inflationary pressures apply across the sector have continued to increase and are impacting on the costs of High Needs placements within each type of school setting. Measures are in place to reduce the number of high cost Out of Borough Independent placements which present the largest unit cost within the High Needs Block, costing 58% more on average than In Borough Independent placements. However, these will take time to deliver. When the £21,887k deficit brought forward from 2022/23 is considered, along with the revised Safety Valve funding for 2023/24, the forecast cumulative deficit carried forward to 2024/25 is £20,879k.

MTFF Process Update and Timetable

- 33. The timetable for the budget process follows a similar format to previous years, with the consultation budget being presented by Cabinet in December for consideration by residents and Select Committees during January, before final budget proposals are considered by Cabinet and Council in February. Alongside this local process, the Council will receive indicative funding allocations for the forthcoming year from Central Government in December, which will be confirmed in advance of the new financial year starting in April.

Table 4: Budget Setting Timetable

December	Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement
	Consultation Budget Report to Cabinet
January	Public Budget Consultation
	Following year Budget Proposals to January Select Committees
February	Final Local Government Finance Settlement
	Final Budget to Cabinet and Council

Next Steps

- 34. The Medium Term Financial Forecast setting out the draft revenue budget and capital programme will be considered by Cabinet in December 2023 and issued for consultation during the remainder of December 2023 and January 2024. This will include detailed consideration by each of the Select Committees of the proposals relating to their respective services.
- 35. Key issues within the remit of this Select Committee will continue to be tracked through the Council’s budget monitoring process, with monthly reports to Cabinet detailing the latest position and outlook for 2023/24.

Implications on related Council policies

Select Committees are at the heart of how the Council shapes policy at Member level.

How this report benefits Hillingdon residents

Select Committees directly engage residents in shaping policy and recommendations from the Committees seek to improve the way the Council provides services to residents.

Financial Implications

None at this stage.

Legal Implications

None at this stage.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

The Council's Budget: General Fund Revenue Budget and Capital Programme 2023/24 – reports to Cabinet 16 February 2023 and Council 23 February 2023.

The Council's Budget: 2023/24 Revenue and Capital Month 3 Budget Monitoring – report to Cabinet 14 September 2023.

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CHILDREN'S SAFEGUARDING PARTNERSHIP ANNUAL REPORT

Committee name	Children, Families and Education Select Committee
Officer reporting	Alex Coman – Children's Services Directorate Suzi Gladish – Children's Services Directorate
Papers with report	Hillingdon Safeguarding Partnership Annual Report Children and Young People's Annual Report Easy Read Annual Report
Ward	All

HEADLINES

- The Safeguarding Partnership Annual Report summarises the work undertaken by Hillingdon Safeguarding Partnership to support and safeguard Hillingdon's residents: adults with support and care needs and vulnerable children and their families in the year 2022-2023.
- The report provides an overview of the actions taken across the local partnership to prevent and respond to abuse, neglect, and self-neglect in the year 2022-2023. It sets out how we have discharged our duties to ensure that we learn from serious safeguarding incidents and provide strategic leadership that strives to continuously develop safeguarding practice.
- There is shared and equal responsibility for safeguarding between the three statutory partners, the Local Authority, Metropolitan Police Service and NHS North West London Integrated Care Board. This approach is reinforced by the rotation of chairing responsibility across the three senior strategic Boards, the Executive Leadership Group, Safeguarding Adults Board and Safeguarding Children Partnership Board.
- Safeguarding practice does not take place in a vacuum, it is helpful to understand the wider context for this report. In 2022-2023 services locally, and nationally, continued to face additional pressures with a sustained increase in demand across all agencies to meet the safeguarding needs of residents. This is not a Hillingdon specific issue and is replicated nationally. The health, social and economic ramifications of the pandemic have been further exacerbated by the cost-of-living crisis, with widespread strain on public, voluntary and safeguarding services.
- The report sets out how the multiagency strategic partnership contributes to safeguarding practice in the Borough, outlining the progress made against the agreed priorities of the Safeguarding Partnership. Each priority has a dedicated subgroup, with an agreed plan of work that, broadly, seeks to develop practice using a framework of prevention, identification, and response.
- Our approach to learning from practice through quality assurance, reflective and statutory review ensures that we focus on practice and system development to reduce the risks of serious harm to adults or children. This includes direct engagement with frontline practitioners across the Partnership.
- Identified learning informs our training provision with a diverse offer of newsletters, practice briefings, webinars, learning events and commissioned training available. In the reporting period the number of sessions of continuous professional development attended increased by over 40%. This is largely due to improved accessibility through focussed and targeted webinars.
- In the last year the Partnership further highlighted the importance of directly consulting with adults and children with lived experience of safeguarding services, ensuring that their voices

are sought and amplified. The main report is supported by the publication of an Easy Read version, and the coproduction of our first Children and Young People’s Annual Report.

RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Committee:

- 1. Is reassured that the partnership continues to provide leadership and scrutiny of the safeguarding arrangements for Hillingdon residents;**
- 2. Is updated regarding the way in which the partnership has responded to the challenges posed by changing local, national and international contexts; and**
- 3. Is informed of the strategic priorities for safeguarding for 2022-23.**

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1. In September 2019 the Hillingdon Safeguarding Partnership arrangements were launched in line with the statutory requirements set out in the Children and Social Work Act 2017 and Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018. The Local Authority now shares equal responsibility with our statutory partners, the NHS Hillingdon Clinical Commissioning Group and Metropolitan Police, to safeguard children and young people.
2. The Care Act 2014 placed a statutory duty on each Safeguarding Adults Board to produce an Annual Report, outlining the work undertaken to achieve its strategic objectives, the work of each member to implement the Safeguarding Adults Boards’ strategy and detailing the findings of any Safeguarding Adult Reviews and subsequent required actions.
3. In promoting this join approach, both boards are now scrutinised and held to account through the multiagency Executive Leadership Group. The group is chaired by the Local Authority's Chief Executive and attended by the senior representatives of the safeguarding partners (Police and Clinical Commissioning Group).

PERFORMANCE DATA

The Safeguarding Adults Board monitors several KPIs provided by the participating agencies. Some examples of the items monitored and analysed include: number of contacts received by Social Care; Section 42 enquiries and their outcomes; source of contact; MERLINS received from Police; and the types of abuse referred; advocacy activity, etc. This data set provides the board on regular basis with a picture of safeguarding activity in the Borough and highlights any trends and areas of focus.

RESIDENT BENEFIT & CONSULTATION

Hillingdon adults with care and support needs, children and their families and carers remain safe and the safeguarding partnership continues to respond effectively and efficiently to the needs of residents.

CORPORATE CONSIDERATIONS

Corporate Finance

None at this stage.

Legal

None at this stage.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

The Care and Support Statutory Guidance, Department of Health and Social Care, October 2018 <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/care-act-statutory-guidance/care-and-support-statutory-guidance>

The Care Act 2014 - <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2014/23/section/43/enacted>

Working together to safeguard children, Department of Education, 2018 <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-safeguard-children--2>

The Children and Social Work Act 2017 <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2017/16/contents/enacted>

APPENDICES

Hillingdon Safeguarding Partnership Annual Report
Children and Young People's Annual Report
Easy Read Annual Report



**Hillingdon Safeguarding
Partnership**



Annual Report

2022-2023



The vision of the Safeguarding Children Partnership is for every child and young person to be and feel safe, enjoy good physical, emotional and mental health, have pride in their unique identities, feel that they belong and have opportunities to thrive.

The Safeguarding Adults Board's vision is for Hillingdon citizens, irrespective of age, race, gender, culture, religion, disability, or sexual orientation to be able to live with their rights protected, in safety, free from abuse and the fear of abuse.

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1 Impact Statement

Hillingdon Safeguarding Partnership has continued to strive towards achieving our vision for residents to be and feel safe and to meet their full potential. This year we have focussed on understanding the impact of our strategic safeguarding arrangements on front line practice. Alan Caton OBE, our Independent Scrutineer, analysed the effectiveness of safeguarding practice in respect of extrafamilial harm for children and of the Adult Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub and concluded that:

'...there are, in my view, many strengths to the safeguarding arrangements for children and adults across Hillingdon. I have found a strong partnership that is open to scrutiny and challenge and one that strives to continually learn and improve practice. I have not come across any areas of poor practice or weaknesses in the adult MASH, or service provision for adolescents at risk of harm.

There is strong leadership from the Executive Leadership Group and a clear sense of joint and equal responsibility from the three safeguarding partners. The partnership is one that is built on high support, high challenge and where difficult conversations are encouraged.'

Safeguarding practice does not take place in a vacuum, it is helpful to understand the wider context for this report. In 2022-2023 services locally, and nationally, continued to face additional pressures with a sustained increase in demand across all agencies to meet the safeguarding needs of residents. This is not a Hillingdon specific issue and is replicated nationally. The health, social and economic ramifications of the pandemic have been further exacerbated by the cost-of-living crisis, with widespread strain on public, voluntary and safeguarding services.

This year there have been several high-profile safeguarding reviews published, including those in respect of Child Q, and the national reviews in respect of the tragic deaths of Arthur Labinjo-Hughes and Star Hobson, and regarding safeguarding children with disabilities in residential settings. We have also seen the publication of independent reviews that set out systemic challenges within partner agencies. As a local partnership we continue to monitor closely the legislative response from central government and to identify address any local ramifications, ensuring that whilst any necessary difficult conversations are held that we do not overlook building on the strengths that can bolster our resilience.

To further our understanding of local practice a robust quality assurance schedule was implemented, with the support and expertise of safeguarding leads across the partnership. The schedule was designed to be broad, with topics ranging from self-assessment of agency compliance with the Children and Family Act, to targeted reviews of the Stronger Families approach, and the role of community multi-agency risk assessment conferences (MARAC) in safeguarding adults who self-

neglect through hoarding. The purpose of multiagency audit is to provide us with important information about our areas for development, in addition to recognising our strengths in practice.

The views and experience of frontline practitioners have been sought, with their knowledge contributing directly to the development of the Safeguarding Partnership Contextual Safeguarding Strategy. As a partnership we have engaged directly with residents who have lived experience of safeguarding services, co-producing a review tool that enabled us to explore practice from the perspective of those most impacted.

We also supported our children and young people to produce their own Annual Report, a summary of which is incorporated into this report.

2 Hillingdon Safeguarding Partnership: Safeguarding Arrangements

This report provides an overview of the activity of Hillingdon's Safeguarding Partnership. The report seeks to provide assurance around the effectiveness of our local safeguarding arrangements, and to evidence the impact of these arrangements in ensuring the safety of Hillingdon residents irrespective of age.

The Safeguarding Partnership Implementation Unit provides support and drive to both the Adult's and Children's Partnerships. A key focus of the team is to facilitate, develop and maintain links between the Safeguarding Children Partnership and The Safeguarding Adults Board. The team also seeks to develop links and coordinate activity and delivery with the other relevant strategic boards across Hillingdon and Pan-London.

The main engine of the safeguarding arrangements for children is the Safeguarding Children Partnership Board and, for adults, the Safeguarding Adults Board. The Boards have oversight of safeguarding practice and performance, resolving issues as they arise. Where this is not possible, the issue will be escalated to the relevant organisation(s) via the Implementation Unit and if the individual organisation(s) still cannot resolve the matter, it is escalated to the Executive Leadership Group.

To ensure the success, coordination, and impact of the shared arrangements we have a joint Executive Leadership Group (ELG) that provides governance, leadership, oversight and challenge to both Boards. The ELG consists of the Local Authority's Chief Executive, the Chief Nurse of Hillingdon NHS Integrated Care Partnership, and the Metropolitan Police Service Borough Commander. This group has joint and equal responsibility for safeguarding in Hillingdon. Each partner is subject to internal scrutiny in accordance with their internal governance structures. In addition to this, the ELG has commissioned regular independent scrutiny of our safeguarding arrangements for both children and adults to provide reassurance of the effectiveness of the arrangements and independent critical challenge and appraisal that supports learning and future development.

To reflect the vision of joint and equal responsibility the Boards are chaired on a yearly rotating basis by a representative of the three statutory partners. From September 2022 responsibility for chairing the Executive Leadership Group passed to the Integrated Care Partnership, for the Children's Partnership Board to the Metropolitan Police Service, and for the Safeguarding Adults Board to the Local Authority. The Boards steer learning and development for the safeguarding environment across the London Borough of Hillingdon, and are informed by independent scrutiny, quality assurance activities, and subgroups.

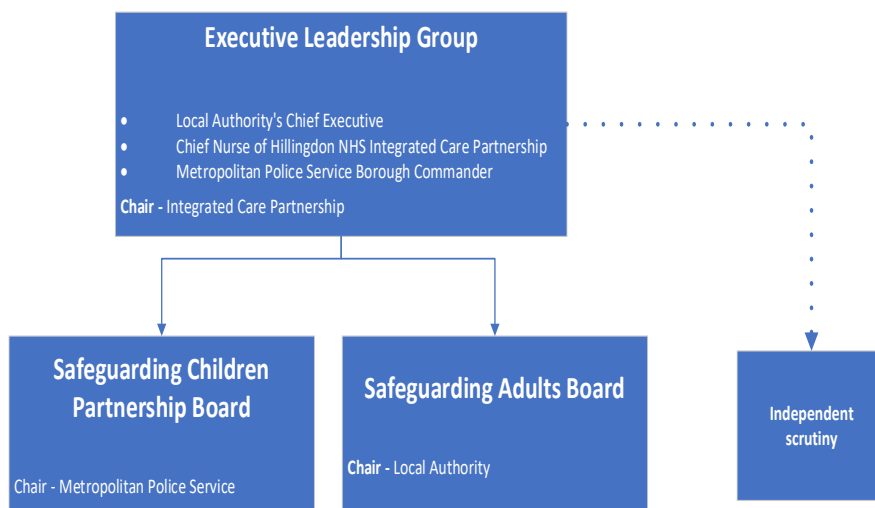


Fig 1 – Safeguarding arrangements governance structure

3 The Voice of the Person

In 2022 our Communication and Engagement Strategy was agreed. This document sets out how the Safeguarding Partnership interacts with individuals in receipt of services, the wider community, and professionals. One of the cornerstones of our local arrangements is an emphasis on understanding the lived experience of children, adults, their families, and carers. This ensures that we understand the impact of our work and provides a steer for future areas of priority and focus. To achieve this, we have proactively sought to recruit to the pan London Safeguarding Voices initiative, working with Healthwatch and attending the Older People’s Assembly to raise awareness of the role of the Safeguarding Partnership. We have also worked with the Local Authority Project Search team to quality assure our easy read products.



Adults and children with lived experience of safeguarding support were supported to co-produce the audit tool used for our ‘Voice of the Person Review’. Adults and children were consulted using a short, structured interview format. Overall, the findings paint a positive picture that most of the adults and children felt listened to by professionals. Most also felt they had received the support they needed to facilitate their communication with professionals. The positive accounts relate to encounters across the professional network: social care, health professionals, and police officers as well as direct providers of care and support.

Areas for further development include ensuring that the nuance of a person’s situation is reflected in written reports, and that reports are in plain language and are shared with the subject adult/child. There were some accounts of people struggling to contact professionals, and feeling unsure of which

professional should be helping with their specific situation. Some carers and adult's representatives felt that their knowledge and experience was not given sufficient weight, and they struggled to navigate the safeguarding network.

We asked children and adults what good listening means, with their responses condensed into four key aspects of practice:

- Making dedicated time and space
- Tailoring communication to individuals and families
- Relationship and rapport building
- Acting on what people say and communicating what is being done.

There is an overarching theme of care and compassion, when people felt that professionals genuinely cared about their situation, often at times of crisis in their lives, they felt more listened to. How effectively professionals conveyed this was impacted by whether they had made dedicated time and space to listen, whether they made efforts to find ways to communicate meaningfully, and whether they acted on what was said.

A member of the Safeguarding Partnership team separately met with the various children's consultation and engagement groups coordinated by the Local Authority. Thirty-six children with lived experience of safeguarding were consulted. These children are from a range of ethnicities, gender identities, cultures, religions, countries, and some had disabilities and neurodiversity needs. Their views were sought about their interactions with the wide range of professionals that have supported them, and their families and peers. With support Hillingdon's children and young people have produced an annual report, this is available as a standalone document with a summary of key points below:

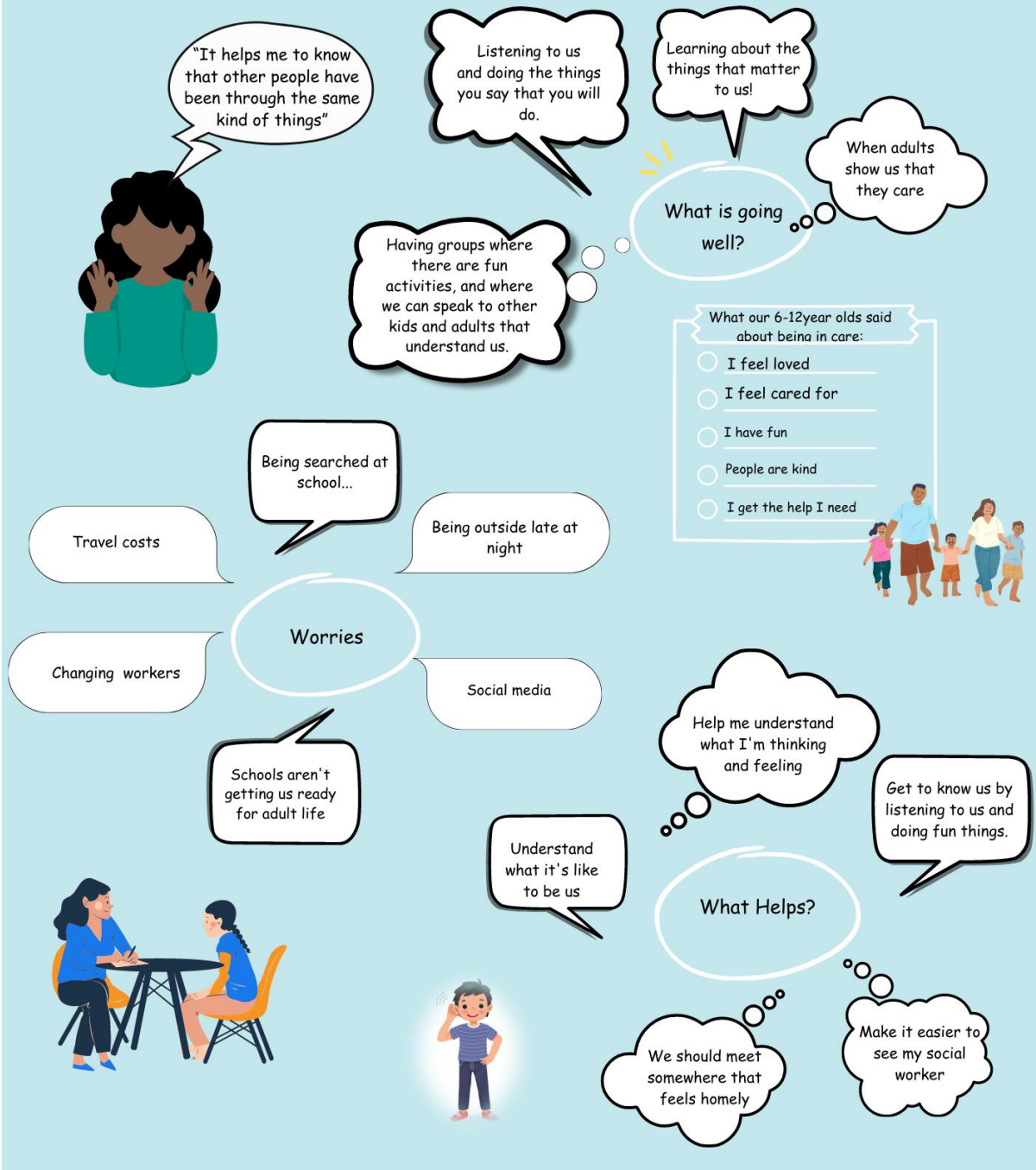


Hillingdon Safeguarding Partnership



The Safeguarding Partnership is all the people that help and support us. Our social workers, doctors, carers, mental health workers, nurses, police officers, GPs, housing officers, mentors, support workers and many more.


Children's Voice



4 Safeguarding Priorities

This section outlines the highlights of multiagency working in the last year. To reflect our ethos of shared and equal responsibility for safeguarding we have continued to encourage partner agencies to chair subgroups. This has been less successful in the last year due to increasing pressures on operational services, in consequence most subgroups are chaired by the Local Authority, or a member of the Implementation Unit. Subgroups are generally well attended across all aspects of partnership work, statutory partners are represented in all, with relevant agencies attending according to the focus of the subgroup. There have been some challenges in securing the engagement of education representatives.

Children's
Priorities



4.1 Children's Priorities

The **Strategic High-Risk Panel** is usually co-chaired by the Metropolitan Police and Children and Young People's Services. Due to changes in local senior policing in practice this subgroup has largely been chaired by the Local Authority representative. The focus of the subgroup is to develop a collaborative strategic response to children at risk of extrafamilial harm. The overarching objective is to prevent, intervene and disrupt child exploitation. The panel collates and scrutinises information from a variety of sources and partners to identify trends and themes. This facilitates multiagency solution-focussed discussions to determine the best way to strategically address the identified needs and priorities.

In the last year the Panel completed a review that considered the early identification of children at risk of extrafamilial harm. This highlighted the need for the Education Inclusion Toolkit for Schools to be finalised, with agreement and publication in September 2022. The review further identified a need for increased awareness of the concept of 'adultification', which recognises that children who are from a global majority ethnic group are more likely to be treated as older than they are, and therefore less in need of protection. Most recently the Panel identified a need for year 6 children to have access to age-appropriate information about exploitation, resulting in workshops being offered to all Hillingdon primary schools by the Local Authority Adolescent Development Service.

In March 2023 the subgroup agreed the **Hillingdon Contextual Safeguarding Strategy**, with a plan to undertake a pilot of the approach in the Hayes area of the Borough.

The Contextual Safeguarding Approach recognises that children can experience harm outside of their families and provides a framework for

professionals to intervene in the contexts in which harm takes place – for example in schools, neighbourhoods and parks. The Safeguarding Partnership has made a successful bid for funding to support the pilot and developed a framework for locality assessments.

The **Child Sexual Abuse** subgroup formed in December 2021. The remit is to raise awareness of all forms of child sexual abuse in the community and across the partnership, to develop strategies that improve practitioner capacity to identify sexual abuse, increasing knowledge and confidence and to develop the partnership response where a child sexual abuse concern is identified. The subgroup considers issues of equality and diversity, including the additional risks and vulnerabilities faced by children with disabilities. Over the last year the subgroup has continued to work closely with the Centre of Expertise for Child Sexual Abuse, developing a bespoke resource for schools to improve the response to child-on-child sexual abuse. Training needs have been identified, and met, through the creation of subject specific briefings, and piloting a new course in respect of children with disabilities. A range of useful resources for practitioners have been collated and made available on the Safeguarding Partnership Website.

In August 2021 the Local Authority launched the **Stronger Families** approach to early help services in Hillingdon. This is a locality-based approach with three hubs, each developing networks to support children and families in the local community. In 2022-23 the subgroup has continued to provide scrutiny and strategic vision for the approach, enabling direct feedback from partners to identify and address any implementation issues, and to share information and updates about the progression of services. The subgroup concluded a multiagency review of the service highlighting strengths and opportunities for further development. The review found that the Stronger Families approach was



well embedded across the partnership, with positive feedback from families. As with any system change there were some early challenges, however these have largely been resolved within the subgroup and the focus is now on widening multiagency participation and ownership of plans for children, ensuring that support is provided by the right person, at the right time.

4.2 Shared Priorities

The **Domestic Abuse** Subgroup reported to the Domestic Abuse Steering Executive in addition to the Safeguarding Adults Board and Safeguarding Children Partnership. In 2022 the subgroup concluded, with almost all identified areas of work progressed, excluding the development of a domestic abuse dataset as this is now being progressed by the Domestic Abuse Steering Executive. The impact of the subgroup was evident in disseminating the learning from the Domestic Homicide Review O, the development of, easy read guides to accessing support and practice briefings around routine enquiry in domestic abuse. The subgroup also achieved assurance around multiagency practice in respect of domestic abuse where there is a safeguarding element. Whilst the subgroup has ceased meeting there continues to be an ongoing link directly into the Domestic Abuse Steering Executive to ensure that safeguarding needs of victims, their children, and adults with care and support needs remain a priority.

Domestic Abuse: Routine Enquiry

Domestic Abuse is any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are, or have been, intimate partners or family members, regardless of gender or sexuality. It is not limited to people who live together. Domestic abuse is a crime, including coercive control. Children are also victims if they see, hear, or experience the effects of the abuse.

Research tells us that victims are more likely to disclose abuse and seek help if asked a direct question. This briefing will support all professionals to find the confidence to ask questions in order to support victims and their children to access safety.

The **Joint Strategic Safeguarding and Trafficking** Subgroup is a multi-agency subgroup of the Hillingdon Safeguarding Partnership. To date the group has been co-chaired by Border Force and the Safeguarding Partnership Team. The subgroup works to improve practice around the identification, prevention and response of all trafficking and safeguarding issues concerning children and adults arriving at or travelling through Heathrow Airport.

Over time significant achievements have been made in increasing and embedding awareness, understanding and partnership working around safeguarding adults and children at the airport. Ongoing police and Border Force operations are embedding and sustaining awareness of how to recognise and respond effectively to safeguarding issues, amongst all the people who work in the airport – including staff in all capacities. Modern Slavery Practice Guidance, currently in draft, will help solidify best practice across the entire professional network, including all stakeholders at Heathrow Airport. The membership and scope of the group is under review by key members, considering the extensive achievements so far, and ongoing areas of complexity.

The focus of the **Practice Development Forum (PDF)** is to ensure that learning from any statutory or non-statutory review, local or national, is disseminated across the safeguarding partnership as required. The Practice Development Forum also considers learning from audits and other statutory reviews. The group has a core membership across both partnerships, in recognition that learning from practice usually has applicability across both sectors. This year there have been four affiliated Task & Finish groups: Child Learning from Practice; Adult Learning from Practice; Female Genital Mutilation, Safeguarding and the Cost of Living.

During the year, to help disseminate and share information in different ways, we continued to publish and disseminate our Partnership Newsletter which continues to provide professionals with an accessible and practical overview of key practice developments, resources and learning from practice.

We believe that in addition to good information sharing, learning activities and good communication, quality assurance plays an important role in assessing and evaluating the impact of various activities and the effectiveness of the safeguarding arrangements. A coherent structure to the quality assurance activities of the partnership and an analytical approach is now being provided through the annual 2022-23 multiagency quality assurance schedule that is further explored later in this report.

The Safeguarding Partnership proactively raises awareness of **safeguarding themes and issues** throughout the year to continuously reinforce knowledge and increase alertness to issues of abuse and neglect. Through doing so it contributes to a community of residents and professionals who are well informed to prevent harm before it occurs and know how to seek help when needed.

This year the Partnership has promoted:

- Anti-Slavery Day
- Safeguarding Adults Week
- Mental Health Awareness Week
- International Men's Day
- Safer Internet Day
- Child Exploitation Awareness Day
- World Suicide Prevention Day

Safeguarding Adults Is Everyone's Business

Hillingdon safeguarding adults board

Frank depends on his daughter. He has to wait all day for personal care whilst she is at work. She won't allow anyone to help. She says it will cost too much.

Neglect is a Safeguarding Concern

Do you know a vulnerable person who may be suffering abuse, neglect or self neglect?

Report to Social Care Direct
Call: 01895 556633
Email: socialcaredirect@hillington.gov.uk
Complete: [online form](#)

Scan this QR Code to complete the form



Tools and resources are developed in advance and shared across the professional network in addition to being available on our websites. Input from expert leads across the partnership is sought where required, both in the development of resources, and in ensuring that

the target audience is reached. There is evidence to support direct impact on safeguarding practice, and positive feedback from safeguarding partners about the usefulness of the resources.

4.3 Adult Priorities

The **Making Safeguarding Personal (MSP)** subgroup has been operational since March 2020, concluding in December 2022. The subgroup led on the strategic development of the MSP agenda in Hillingdon, ensuring that adult safeguarding services are person-led, and outcome focused through quality assuring existing practice and procedures and raising the profile of MSP throughout safeguarding agencies. Over the course of operation, the subgroup undertook a multiagency audit of practice, with learning shared widely via webinar. In response to identified need the subgroup also produced a range of practice briefings including guidance around use of interpreters, access to justice and the promotion of best practice in safeguarding enquiries. There has been positive feedback regarding the impact of briefings on practice, with the Hillingdon Hospital reporting routine use of the access to justice briefing to support health professionals to better know when to contact the police and thereby safeguard adults with care and support needs.

Key Messages For Practice

Timely and appropriate reporting to police promotes access to justice

People with care and support needs can face particular challenges in accessing protection from crime, exercising their rights and accessing justice when they have been a victim of crime.

Only the police can investigate crimes, NOT any other professionals or employers

Employers and other practitioners often start investigating alleged crimes before reporting to the police. This makes successful prosecution much less likely. It is not appropriate for safeguarding enquiries or complaint responses to amount to an investigation of crimes.

You do NOT need proof that a crime has taken place before you report it

A reasonable suspicion is all you need. You do not need to be certain.

Early involvement of police can increase access to justice

This optimises the ability of the police to gather evidence and increase safety of the adult at risk

Sometimes reports to police should be made without a victim's consent

Reporting crimes to the police can protect other people, can protect life, and can prevent future crimes. There are some circumstances where you should report alleged crimes regardless of the victim's consent.

The **Mental Health and Safeguarding** subgroup formed in August 2021, with work concluding in February 2023. It has fulfilled its stated purpose:

- to identify and share local and national learning from serious cases and expert practice knowledge from subgroup members and embed that in systems and practice across the partnership to reduce the risks of abuse and neglect and self-neglect for adults with mental health problems, and

- to improve outcomes and quality of life in cases of abuse, neglect and self-neglect for adults with mental health problems.

The subgroup established links with health led strategic fora to avoid duplication and to ensure that areas of work were progressed in the most appropriate forum. The subgroup established the need for focussed practice development, delivering a multiagency webinar that continues to be available to the Partnership and producing practice briefings. The subgroup scrutinised local quality assurance processes, highlighting a need for clinical focussed auditing to incorporate the identification of and response to social care needs or safeguarding concerns. The Local Authority also introduced an AMHP (Approved Mental Health Professional) focussed quality assurance programme to address the same need. There continues to be a direct link between the Safeguarding Partnership and Suicide Prevention Steering Group and Learning from Suspected Suicides Panel.

The **self-neglect** subgroup is led by the Head of Service for Safeguarding in Adult Social Care. In the last year the subgroup has progressed through the strategic objectives to raise awareness of self-neglect, to improve practitioner knowledge, capacity and confidence and to develop the multiagency safeguarding response. One key area of work has been the quality assurance of processes where an adult is self-neglecting and there are concerns about hoarding behaviour that may also pose a risk to others, for example through clutter posing a fire hazard. This area of practice has crossover with those more focussed on community, rather than individual, safety. In consequence the audit considered the intersection between adult safeguarding and community multi-agency risk assessment conferences.

The audit considered barriers to best practice, interagency working and information sharing and identifying good practice. Actions taken in response to the audit have included raising awareness of referral pathways, increasing practitioner knowledge of the Clutter Image Rating Scale, and practice development around the implementation of the Mental Capacity Act.

5 Learning from Practice



It is acknowledged that learning can be gained from recognising good practice but also from those circumstances where we, as a partnership, could have responded differently to a child or adult's circumstances. Systemic learning and practice improvement is not only based on local experience but includes that which stems from regional and national research, policy, and practice. This approach seeks to ensure that safeguarding practice in Hillingdon is research informed and evidence

based and that our residents receive services that are of a high standard delivered by a partnership that strives to continuously improve.

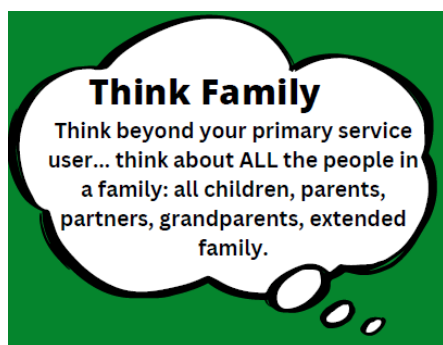
A fundamental duty of both the Safeguarding Children Partnership and Safeguarding Adults Board is to review those cases that may meet the criteria for a statutory review of practice. This review process is undertaken in line with the statutory guidance set out in Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 and the Care and Support Statutory Guidance 2014.

A notification to the Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel (the National Panel) is made when a child has suffered serious harm, and that abuse and/or neglect is known or suspected. For each serious incident notification, a multiagency Rapid Review is convened to bring together and consider information known about the child by all agencies involved and to identify any areas of learning. The Rapid Review is held within 15 working days of the notification, with a report detailing the circumstances of the child, the actions of involved agencies, any learning identified and a decision around Local or National Child Safeguarding Practice Review. In the last year two Rapid Reviews have been convened, both concluding with recommendation for a Child Safeguarding Practice Review.

The Hillingdon Safeguarding Adult Review Panel is chaired by a Metropolitan Police Detective Superintendent with responsibility for safeguarding. It has a core membership of senior representatives from key agencies, with others mandated to attend according to the specific requirement of the case. The purpose of the Panel is to review circumstances that may meet the criteria for a Safeguarding Adult Review (SAR) as specified in the Care Act 2014. In 2022-23 the Panel considered 7 referrals, concluded two Safeguarding Adults Reviews, with a third currently in progress.

Learning from Practice Frameworks have been implemented to promote the continuous improvement of safeguarding practice in both adult and child services. The Task and Finish Groups have a broad remit that includes undertaking non-statutory learning reviews, progressing actions, and identifying any thematic barriers to good practice.

In the last year 4 learning reviews have been completed, these provide an opportunity to proactively analyse and reflect on practice. Each learning review considers the implications of the circumstances for wider safeguarding practice with children and adults. Learning is addressed and disseminated using a variety of methods according to need. This includes direct engagement with frontline practitioners and managers, through changes to policies and procedures, and through the development of practice briefings or inclusion in the Safeguarding Partnership Newsletter that is widely circulated. Overarching themes identified in the last year include:



- The importance of a Think Family approach, ensuring that practitioners consider the needs of all family members.
- Recognising and responding to neglect of children and adults, and support for carers.
- Understanding the lived experience of children and adults and ensuring that this is central to practice.

5.1 Safeguarding Learning Events

Hillingdon Safeguarding Partnership delivered a webinar on the 27th of September 2022 to disseminate learning from two **Safeguarding Adults Reviews (SARs)**. The webinar was open to all practitioners across the safeguarding network: police, NHS staff, social care, private and voluntary sector care and support providers, housing staff and anyone else with contact with adults with care and support needs. Invitations to register for attendance were circulated via the Safeguarding Partnership Newsletter, and through distribution to members of the Safeguarding Adults Board and Safeguarding Children Partnership.



The Learning Event sought to highlight key aspects of learning from the Safeguarding Adults Reviews with a direct contribution from the family of one of the adults concerned. The event focussed on four key elements of practice:

- Understanding the lived experience of adults
- The impact of coercive and controlling behaviour
- The role of diagnostic overshadowing for adults with mental health difficulties and physical health needs
- The application of the Mental Capacity Act in safeguarding practice

In total 88 practitioners attended, with representatives from a range of services including the voluntary sector, care providers, acute and community health services, children's social care, adult social care and the Integrated Care Board.

Each attendee was asked to complete a feedback form focussed upon the impact of the Learning Event, with all rating the webinar as being good or excellent, and all finding the resources shared to be useful. Examples of impact on practice are outlined below:

'The critical importance of using professional curiosity and critical thinking - e.g., by focusing on needs & experiences of the person rather than relying on carers views/ abusers perspectives, building

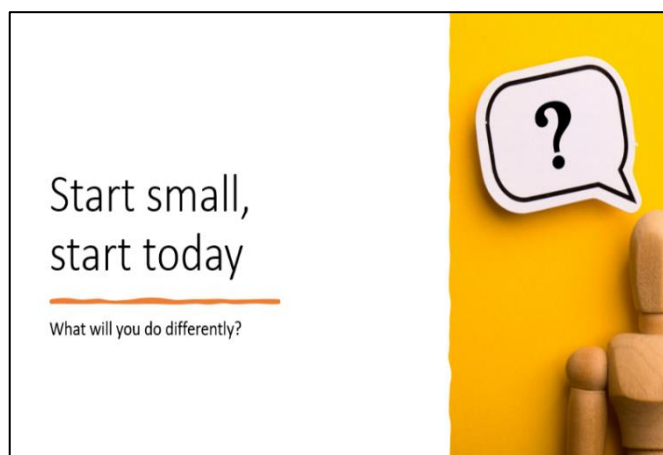
relationships, remaining committed to ethical, legal & evidence-based practices, and being aware of disguised compliance and diagnostic overshadowing, demonstrating the sensitive and competent management of evolving risks/complexities and challenge obstructive notions/attitudes from families, LPAs or other professionals.'

*'Even if support has been refused, this does not stop you from sharing information in order to continue to safeguard' * A person with an LPA does not always have the last say regarding safeguarding in the best interest of the service user'.*

'I am from Children's Services, but thinking about the adults' own needs, rather than just the needs of the child - reading and using the resources in team meetings and reflective supervision'.

In March 2023 a Learning Event and Workshop was held to share the findings of our **Serious Youth Violence Reflective Review**, and to launch the Contextual Safeguarding Strategy. The event was aimed at practitioners, managers and strategic leads across the Safeguarding Children Partnership, with invitations extended to key individuals in the Metropolitan Police Service, Central and North West London NHS Foundation Trust, The Hillingdon Hospital, Children and Young People Services, Voluntary and Community Organisations, and the Integrated Care Partnership. The event was held in person, over two sessions, with 52 professionals attending.

At each session the key findings of the review were shared, with practice themes for the Safeguarding Partnership identified and attendees supported to think critically in the application of these to their roles as individual professionals, and the contribution of their agency to reducing the risk of extrafamilial harm using the contextual safeguarding approach.



Relationship Based Practice:

- *'Promote a relationship-based approach across my schools and colleges'.*
- *'Listen and ensure the child's voice is heard to understand more about their life... and how I can support them from a health point of view'.*
- *'...taking a child first approach, listen to children's views and understand that their behaviour or actions may be triggered by a past event in their lives'*

Early Help and Support:

- *'Being more alert to risk factors and supporting practitioners to think about younger siblings – not waiting for an incident to happen'.*
- *'Identify SEN issues as early as possible'.*

- *'To take note early on when a child is struggling in terms of any undiagnosed or unmet health needs – follow up thoroughly.'*

Professional Curiosity:

- *'Be more curious and question, if in doubt, more than once! Share information'*
- *'Continue to challenge perceptions and be curious.'*
- *'Follow up regularly and in an appropriate timeframe – question!'*

Practice Development:

- *'Share knowledge from today... talk about it and how we can disseminate across the organisation'*
- *'Promote understanding of the contextual safeguarding approach and strategy across services'*
- *'Consider location more 'think context!'*

Partnership Working:

- *'Think about how therapy services are working with children's social care in collaboration to identify, assess and support harder to reach children and families.'*
- *'Look at how our communities/third sector and faith groups can support the review implementation'*
- *'Have the wider conversation... think about how we can widen the links and connections... conversations!'*

6 Quality Assurance

One of the core functions of the Safeguarding Partnership is to seek assurance about practice in Hillingdon. To this aim we have undertaken a wide range of auditing activity in the last year:

- | | |
|---|--|
| - Compliance with s11 of the Children and Families Act, 2004 | - Children's Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub |
| - Education Safeguarding (s175/157 The Education Act) | - Stronger Families Review |
| - Safeguarding Adults Partnership Audit Tool (SAPAT) | - Children's Strategy Discussions |
| - Community Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (Self-Neglect and Hoarding) | - Thematic Review of risk of extrafamilial harm for 11–14-year-olds |
| | - The impact of the Graded Care Profile Tool in safeguarding children from neglect |
| | - The Voice of the Person |



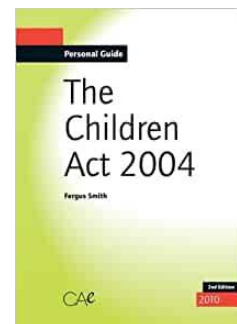
Each audit has been completed with the support and expertise of representatives across the multiagency group, with methodology adjusted according to the nature and matter under review. Methods used include self-assessment, file audits, roundtable discussions and the development of bespoke review tools.

Where reviews considered the quality of safeguarding practice the outcomes were largely positive, providing assurance about the impact of multiagency safeguarding

arrangements on practice in Hillingdon. Where a summary of the audit/review has not been provided elsewhere in this report a brief overview is provided in this section.

The findings, analysis and recommendations of each review have been communicated to the relevant subgroup and Safeguarding Board, with a standalone report produced for each area of focus. The engagement of safeguarding partners with the review process has been generally positive, however it was not possible to conclude the generic adult safeguarding audit (SAPAT) due to a low response rate. The review seeking to establish the impact of the Graded Care Profile 2 on practice with children suffering neglect found that it is the exception for the tool to be used, therefore the focus shifted to understanding the barriers to implementation, and highlighted the need for Safeguarding Partners to ensure that there is adherence to strategic approaches that have been agreed.

Section 11 of the Children Act 2004 places duties on a range of organisations and individuals to ensure their functions, and those of any services that they contract out to others or license, are discharged having regard to the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. The application of this duty varies according to the nature of each agency and its functions. The audit findings provided assurance that the organisations that completed the self-assessment are, in the vast majority, discharging their duties with regards to the welfare of children. The areas of strength for the partnership are leadership and accountability, safer recruitment, information sharing, complaints and whistleblowing. There are opportunities for development around listening to the voice of the child, management of allegations against people in positions of trust relating to their conduct outside of their work, ongoing monitoring of Disclosure and Barring Service checks, and ongoing monitoring of training compliance. There is also an opportunity to enhance the child safeguarding components of local licensing processes.



The purpose of the **section 157/175 Education Audit** is to enable the Local Authority to assure themselves that providers across Hillingdon are discharging their statutory responsibilities and following guidance relating to the safeguarding of children and young people. The audit also contained questions in respect of good practice and the priorities of the Safeguarding Children's Partnership. Key findings were that, of those settings that responded, statutory safeguarding requirements appear to be met, with some evidence of excellent practice. Due to variations in application of the review tool between settings the reviewers assessed that the audit did not provide the level of assurance desired. In consequence an Education Safeguarding Subgroup will be created, and tasked with coproducing an audit tool with schools, and revisiting the findings of this audit.



The **Stronger Families: MASH Review** found that all the children's files reviewed had a clearly recorded analysis that considered the child and family history, factors that may affect parenting capacity, the child's lived experience with a clear risk assessment and rationale for the recommended outcome. The Review highlighted the need for clarity around arrangements for consent when making MASH checks, and to standardise a core group of agencies to contribute to MASH assessments, with a need to revisit the MASH Standard Operating Procedure to ensure that there is a shared and accurate understanding of processes and protocols. The Review also highlighted that, in the sample group, there was no evidence of contact with key men in the children's lives, with this issue being highlighted to frontline practitioners.

The Strategy Discussion Review found that thresholds for strategy discussions were consistent, with consideration of individual needs when there were varying complexities within the family. There was evidence of information sharing by the multiagency partners with positive engagement and attendance identified specifically from education services. Areas for development included that strategy discussions had been held in the absence of police representation, and the need to ensure that there is appropriate representation from Health professionals.

7 Training Programme

The purpose of the Safeguarding Partnership training programme is to ensure that practitioners have the most relevant and up to date opportunities for ongoing professional development. To promote accessibility training is delivered through a range of methods, including online, face to face and via webinar. Training by our children and young people is delivered in person. Over the last year we have continued to diversify the training offer, to include a greater range of subject areas with focus upon the areas of priority identified by the Safeguarding Partnership.

The Safeguarding Partnership also benefitted considerably from a comprehensive training programme undertaken as part of the **Female Genital Mutilation Project**, with 175 professionals attending sessions on Female Genital Mutilation, Breast Flattening and Child Abuse linked to Faith or Belief. The impact of this project on professional development is significant, with a programme of awareness raising workshops arranged monthly throughout the year to ensure the sustainability of the project, and a bespoke eLearning module developed.

Our informal partnership with the **Centre for Expertise in Child Sexual Abuse** enabled the following professional development opportunities across the Borough:

- 104 Education professionals attended workshops to design and pilot a guide for professionals supporting children following incidents of harmful sexual behaviour. This included an overview of the signs and indicators of Child Sexual Abuse.
- 19 practitioners attended pilot training focussed on CSA and Safeguarding for Youth Justice professionals.
- 34 practitioners attended pilot training 'Making it matter, changing our practice in response to sexual abuse of disabled children'. Attendees included LADO, GP, Education, Social Workers, and Support Workers.
- 36 practitioners attended the Pan London training: Multiagency intra-familial child sexual abuse.

In recognition of the pressures faced by frontline practitioners the Safeguarding Partnership has also implemented a programme of **webinars**. These are sharply focussed, last around 90 minutes and address a specific topic or area of practice. All webinars are made available on the Safeguarding Partnership websites and can be accessed using a password that is shared with Hillingdon Practitioners.

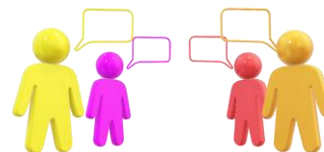
Webinar	Attendees
AXIS, Mobile and Detached Youth Services - early identification of vulnerability to exploitation	74
Safeguarding Adults with Mental Health Needs	56
Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking Awareness	48
Making Safeguarding Personal	96
Safeguarding Learning Event: Learning from Safeguarding Adults Reviews	65
Total:	339

Following attendance delegates are asked to complete a feedback form, this enables the Partnership to monitor the **effectiveness and impact** of sessions.

Core Training Offer Feedback:

- 98% of delegates rated their understanding of the topic after training as very good to excellent.
- 96% rated the quality of the training as very good to excellent.
- 96% of delegates agreed or strongly agreed that they could apply learning from the training to their practice area.
- 98% of delegates reported that their confidence in the subject area was improved.

Housing Officer: Learning from SARs 'I feel I have a good understanding of safeguarding, having worked in social care for over 20 years and having personal experience with a disabled relative. I have just moved into a role in housing, so the webinar reminded it me it is not just people with social care needs that can be subject to/have safeguarding needs.'



Adult Social Care: Self-Neglect 'I work in a locality team and often receive allocation of people who self-neglect. This was a refresher and help me to consider my practice with this service users.'

Early Years' Service: Contextual Safeguarding Workshop 'I work with under 5's but some of my families have siblings that may require support, I would be able to sign post them.'

Education: LADO, Managing Allegations 'To be more observant of colleagues with whom I work so I can identify issues that relate to safeguarding and knowing how to proceed'.

Education: Adultification Bias 'made me personally aware of how students may feel, and to make me question how I respond and react to incidents and ensure I am not judgemental'

Children and Young People's Services: Domestic Abuse 'In my role as a social worker I have worked with families that domestic abuse has deeply affected the relationship of the parents and has had a tremendous impact on the children. As a child's social worker, this... has enhanced my knowledge and makes me feel more confident in my approach'.

1713 sessions of professional development have been facilitated by the Safeguarding Partnership in 2022-23, this is a 43% increase on 2021-22 (1191) and speaks to the impact of the webinar programme, Safeguarding Learning Events, and the positive effect of building relationships with key sector leads. This total does not include training delivered through the Local Authority's FGM Project.

8 London Borough of Hillingdon – Children and Young People Services

Children and Young People Services provides support to children, families, and carers where there are welfare or safeguarding concerns. There is evidence to support the effectiveness of our **Stronger Families** approach with the Hub responding to over 26,000 contacts. Out of these contacts over 11000 were received via the Early Help Assessment which can be accessed and completed anywhere and at any time by all professionals. Almost 1,500 children



have been referred to our Stronger Families Localities Teams, ensuring that their needs are assessed, and proportionate support is provided to all who need it at the earliest possible stage. This empowers our families to address their needs and utilise the resources available to them in their communities and extended networks and it also reduces the need for statutory social work intervention in the life of the family.

Where statutory assessment is required, it is provided promptly and during the year, 4000 child and family assessments were completed, with over 5000 individual children being supported and protected through statutory plans, either child in need or child protection.



During this financial year the government has mandated the National Transfer Scheme for **unaccompanied asylum-seeking children**. We welcomed this as we believe that children who seek asylum in the country will have their needs best met by a fairer distribution across the country. We work

with national and regional forums to facilitate swift moves to the other identified areas to minimise the inevitable impact further disruption would have to these children's lives through breaking links built in Hillingdon.

In Hillingdon, this new initiative had a significant impact on the numbers of children in our care with the total number at the end of the year being 364 as opposed to 463 at the end of the last financial year. The percentage of asylum-seeking children has also decreased from 34% to 27% but it remains significantly above the England average of 7%. Children and Young People's Services continue to work closely with partners in Border Force, Home Office, National Transfer Scheme and the wider professional network to safeguard children who seek asylum.

During the year another notable transformation has seen strengthened governance arrangements around education and SEND provision by reintegrating SEND and Education services within Children's Services, under the leadership of the Executive Director of Children's Services. A new Director of Education & SEND is starting in May 2023, and a Head of Virtual Schools and Vulnerable Cohorts already in place providing strong leadership, drive and vision to the service moving forward.

Our strengths-based model of practice and focus on **contextual safeguarding** has led to a reduction of need for child protection plans with sustainable change achieved through greater collaboration with children, parents and professionals. Where possible children are supported to choose their own

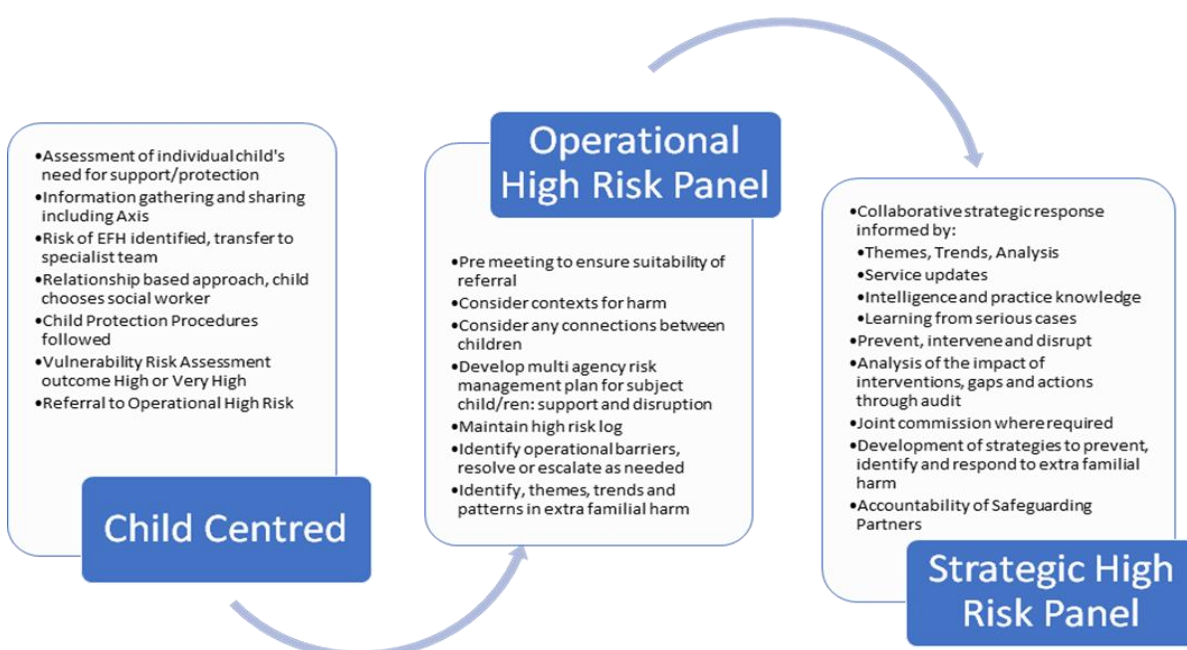
social worker, with devolved budgets enabling frontline staff to make decisions and implement support identified with families with reduction in delay and bureaucracy. There has been a positive outcome to our pilot Your Choice Programme and the progress made in Hillingdon by the program is recognised across London. This approach utilises Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) principles in engaging young people and their families, achieving measurable and sustainable change.

This year our practice in respect of extrafamilial harm was the subject of independent scrutiny. The independent scrutineer met with frontline practitioners from our social work team, youth justice service and AXIS and made positive findings in respect of safeguarding practice with vulnerable adolescents, with areas of consideration that will further develop our approach to this complex area of practice.



Whilst we know that we are meeting the needs of individual children, we recognise that where there is a risk of extrafamilial harm, there is a need for a broader approach that considers the risks faced by children in the wider social environment. To this

end we welcome the development of the Safeguarding Partnership Contextual Safeguarding Strategy. As co-chairs of the Strategic High Risk Panel we aim to develop a collaborative strategic response to children at risk of contextual risk factors outside of the family home. The overarching objectives are to prevent, intervene and disrupt child exploitation. The panel collates and scrutinises information from a variety of sources and partners to identify trends and themes. This facilitates multiagency solution-focussed discussions to determine the best way to strategically address the identified needs and priorities.



In August 2021 we launched our **stronger families** programme to promote early identification of need and to develop wrap around support in the communities before the needs of the families reach a level where statutory intervention is required. We monitor the progress of the Stronger Families implementation jointly with our safeguarding partners through the Stronger Families Partnership Group which is a sub-group of the Safeguarding Partnership Board. The group is co-chaired by a Local Authority Head of Service and by an Assistant Director in ICB. The group is well attended by police, schools (primary and secondary), Health, Social Care, CAMHS and safer communities and domestic abuse leads providing constructive scrutiny and multifaceted challenges and solutions.

The vision of Stronger Families is that “Hillingdon families are empowered to be and feel strong, safe and healthy through the provision of early and targeted support to reach their full potential”. This approach is underpinned by several components which work well together to support our children, families and communities. The services are accessed through the 24/7 Stronger Families Hub that includes an online interface, one email address, one telephone number and one online form. Locality services are provided through three locality teams which are in key areas of the borough and through our multi-agency Family Hub (Uxbridge Family Centre).

The Stronger families Hub operates 24 hours, 7 days a week to promote a timely, dynamic, and responsive service at the point of need. The 24/7 model allows practitioners to have the required time to make informed, evidenced based decisions in real time rather than being confined to office hours and ‘traditional’ working practices. Out of Hours Service continues to provide seamless cover from 17:00 – 09:00 and during these hours two



triage officers, a Senior Practitioner and a Social Worker are available to assist in addition to a senior manager on call. Additionally, there 24 hours Approved Mental Health Professional (AMHP) Service works alongside the Stronger Families Hub for out of hours adult related matters. These include statutory mental health act assessments and support for people with learning disabilities, older people, and vulnerable adults. Through this approach we are ambitious in seeking to maximise access to support out of traditional office hours and we aim to be flexible and responsive to families’ needs, including parents and carers who are working as well as families who experience difficulties out of office hours.

The Stronger Families Hub and the electronic portal are accessed via the council’s website by all professionals. The referral is directly linked to the child’s electronic record and facilitates access to a wide range of support services including key working locality teams, SEND, SENDIASS, Portage, Participation Team, Adolescent Development Services as well as statutory support and protection

services. These services are accessed through the completion of an Early Help Assessment which serves the dual purpose of assessment of children with additional needs as well as referral to statutory support services for children who may require this.

Joint, locality work is at the centre of the way in which we work with then partnership to identify needs early and to support our families to identify their support networks and to build resilience without the need for statutory intervention. To make this aspiration a reality, our three locality-based key working teams cover three defined areas and provide holistic partnership working with statutory (health, education, police, children’s centres) and voluntary sector partners. In addition to working with individual families, the offer to our families in the localities also includes regular multiagency surgeries for families and professionals where they can explore, discuss, and review emerging issues and the services and support available or needed to address any emerging pressures. To address identified and emerging needs, we continue to provide a comprehensive training offer to our colleagues and all staff across the whole of the Stronger Families workforce received training in evidence-based approaches such as the Parenting Apart intervention.

To respond to the families’ needs and to support them in accessing the right universal support we are pleased to work closely with our Supporting Families Employment Advisor who is an experienced practitioner with a good understanding of the Universal services and who can bridge the gap in enabling families to have access to holistic support such as in housing, unemployment, mental health, benefits, and neglect. In addition to providing information and consultation, the Supporting Families Employment Advisor is invited, with the consent of families, to attend CIN and Core Group meetings thus enabling professionals and families to access to expert advice and to navigate the benefits system and debt management support services.

Here in Hillingdon, we opened our first multi-agency Family Hub: Uxbridge Family Centre. The modern and easily accessible hub created a unique opportunity for the co-location and coordinated delivery of a variety of services for children and families such as children’s contact, the Youth Justice Service, the Multi Agency Psychology Service and Children’s Centre services and a range of health services from antenatal care for mothers to sexual health for adolescents.



To support evaluation and development of the **Stronger Families** model following 12 months of operation three separate strands of review have been completed. The multiagency MASH review was led by the Safeguarding Partnership and considered the learning from the Solihull Joint Targeted Area Inspection, a review within the Stronger Families Subgroup, and an Internal Audit that considered the quality of information received, recording and decision making. Positively all three found that the approach is effective, and increasingly well embedded. We will triangulate areas of good practice and areas for further development in the coming year. We also routinely seek feedback from the children and families that are supported, with a sample highlighted below:

"I really benefited from going on the Domestic Abuse and Parenting programmes and feel more empowered and confident in parenting, which has also reduced stress."

"She made us feel very comfortable, was non-judgemental and accepting of us and understanding/sensitive to our circumstances. Never once intrusive! So very respectful! She just knew how to strike the perfect balance. I could go on and on singing her praises. The service has now come to an end and we will miss her dearly. We would like to let you know she had such a significant and positive impact on our lives and helping us get back to normality after so much adversity. This will never be forgotten."

"I felt like I could say anything. I felt quite comfortable. She gave us ideas on how to bring ourselves closer in the family. I have started having a closer relationship with my Mum and I am attempting to build one with my dad. My Key Worker was very understanding, and we connected fast."



The MASH continues to function well alongside our partners, and they screen and progress those contacts and referrals where there is a need for statutory intervention on the families. Both the SF Hub and MASH will use a BRAG (Blue/Red/Amber/Green) rating mechanism to determine the level of risk and need each contact will have. From the information and advice being provided for those contacts assessed as Blue to the immediate action and request for a strategy discussion for those who are assessed as Red, the Hub and MASH work effectively together and with all the other partners to provide the right response to the contacts received, at the right time, focussing on the families' strengths but also providing a comprehensive and accurate assessment of risk.

All **domestic abuse** referrals received are risk rated every day by a Police Sergeant in the MASH and the MASH work closely with our in-house Hillingdon Independent Domestic Abuse Advocacy Service (HIDVA). The service has direct access and communication with colleagues from various areas of the council and other agencies including children's social care, adult's social care, housing, community safety team, etc. this approach supports multiagency working and relationship-based practice which is at the centre of our wider approach.

As a service we are committed to tackling the lasting harms caused by **child sexual abuse** in all forms. Our targeted youth services have engaged with schools to raise awareness of online risks with a view to reducing the risk of children being exposed to harmful content/abuse online. Our frontline practitioners accessed specialist training delivered by the Centre of Expertise for Child Sexual Abuse. This was particularly beneficial for those practitioners working with our most vulnerable children with disabilities. The youth justice service and AXIS team assisted in the pilot of specialist training, providing feedback to the Centre of Expertise.

We know that children can also engage in sexually harmful behaviour towards their peers, this is a complex and sensitive area of safeguarding practice and necessitates the ability to balance the needs of the child, with the imperative to protect other children. The AIM2 assessment tool provides an evidence-based framework for understanding sexually harmful behaviours and assessing and managing risk. In the last year we have trained 6 social workers and youth justice service practitioners and managers in the use of the tool.

The AXIS team has continued to proactively raise awareness of the signs and symptoms of child sexual exploitation, with routine inclusion in the monthly newsletters, and a leading contribution to Child Exploitation Awareness Day, undertaking direct work with young people to increase awareness and reduce risk.

9 London Borough of Hillingdon Adult's Services

The significant increase in the number of Safeguarding Adult referrals reported in 2021/22 has been maintained during 2022/23 with a further increase in the overall number of referrals being made. Up to April 2023 there were a total of 14789 safeguarding adults' referrals received over the year, in contrast to 12938 in the previous year. This equates to a further 13% increase in referrals to the service. This increase has seen a significant pressure across the service in managing this volume of activity.

During the same timeframe, the total number of referrals that progressed to a Section 42 Adult Safeguarding enquiry reduced by 50% to 1793 enquiries up to April 2023. This change has occurred due to the intervention of Adult Social Care MASH in undertaking activity on a number of referrals by understanding and mitigating risk resulting in not progressing to the formal enquiry stage.

Safeguarding concerns have continued from a broad range of referrers. It is of note that referrals from Primary Health and GP's have increased over the year. There is a significant increase in the last quarter of the year of referrals from Secondary Health settings which will be monitored into next year. Police Merlin's have remained the highest source of referrals with the number remaining steady in each quarter of the year. Other referrers have remained fairly static over the year with a similar number of referrals being made each quarter.

The type of abuse identified has been recorded for all the completed section 42 enquiries. It is of note that previously the outcome of type of abuse could have been recorded multiply times if more than one issue was identified, this has now been modified to include just one. This change in recording may have affected some of the current data and trends. Neglect has been identified as the most common type of abuse recorded and significantly higher than all other categories. Self-neglect, emotional and financial abuse are also regularly identified as a confirmed type of abuse. Domestic Violence has appeared to have decreased in completed section 42 enquiries, but this may be due to the recording of a single category only. The sub-group around Domestic Violence has now concluded its work in this area.

Adult MASH activity continues with partners to focus on risks, to minimise the risk of abuse occurring and ensure our responses to concerns were timely, robust and effective. This approach has seen a reduction in the number of referrals resulting in section 42 enquiries and improved timeliness on outcomes and mitigation of risks following referral.

Once referrals have progressed to a section 42 safeguarding enquiry, the process for completion is led by Adult Social Care to the point of closure of the enquiry. This year has seen a focus on the improvement of the timeliness of completion of section 42 enquiries. This is monitored through identification of those enquiries which have taken more than 50 days to complete. There has been significant improvement in performance across adult social care in this area. In March 2022, 77 section 42 enquiries were ongoing beyond 50 days and the longest being open for 479 days. At the end of March 23 there were 52 enquiries ongoing with the longest open for 304 days. This is a 32% reduction in the number of enquiries taking longer than 50 days to complete.

The length of time to close a section 42 has reduced due to the MASH team undertaking some of the enquiry work. There are times where it takes longer for the s42 enquiries to be concluded once its allocated to other service areas, such as when there is ongoing police investigation, awaiting information from partners i.e., conduction of Serious Incident Investigations, provider concern process, allocation of advocates or where family members are out of the country and would like to be part of the process



The LBH safeguarding referral form has been developed for compliance purposes and is in line with Care Act 2014. It has been rolled out to all ASC and partners, this will ensure that risks are mitigated more swiftly by ensuring the welfare of vulnerable adults and family as a whole.

Adult Social Care continue to be dedicated to working collaboratively with partners around the issues in safeguarding against **self-neglect**. The self-neglect subgroup led by Adult Social Care has concluded with a range of effective actions and outcomes being completed as described earlier in this report. The learning from the SAR's on self-neglect has been shared and disseminated through the teams with the intention of imbedding the learning across the service as a whole.

The identification of **neglect** as a lead category for completed section 42 enquiries is noted from the data of completed section 42 enquiries. Following this neglect will become a key priority within the SAB and across the service in this next year. Neglect concerns are often linked to providers of services/care to individuals and groups (Table 7). The Provider Risk Panel and Care Governance processes are robust in identifying, supporting and taking action with providers when concerns are raised. The Quality Assurance service monitor and assess the safety around provisions and this monitoring is often linked to the Section 42 Enquiry for a particular individual.

This year has seen the complete end of Covid 19 restrictions which have had a significant impact on care and support at home and in the community over the previous two years. The increase in safeguarding activity across Adult Social Care attributed in part to the Covid 19 situation has been maintained across all areas of Adult Social Care in the past year. The return to normal life has not resulted in pre pandemic numbers of activity across Adult Social Care.

Independent scrutiny of the safeguarding arrangements in Hillingdon takes place annually. The report this year overall was very positive and outlines a range of activities and developments made across Adult Social Care to improve safeguarding and outcomes.

Going forward into the next year a further transformation of Adult Safeguarding services is likely to occur, currently there is active planning and preparation being undertaken to ensure that any changes are effective and enhance the current offer and activity into the next year.



Planning of work on themes and practice will continue this year with a continued focus on **domestic abuse** and understanding data on this. Work is ongoing to promote a greater alignment with police colleagues and reduce/end calls to 101. Training will remain a key feature within the service promoting and providing training both for internal staff and internal staff of partners. Finally, there will be a review of incoming concerns and information to the public on how to safeguard themselves and others with greater information being made available and shared.

10 NHS North West London Integrated Care Board

Child Safeguarding: The North West London Integrated Care Board (ICB) has worked to progress the safeguarding priorities as agreed by the Hillingdon Safeguarding Children Partnership; contextual Safeguarding, child sexual abuse, stronger families.



The ICB safeguarding team has contributed and supported the development of the **contextual safeguarding** strategy. This approach has been used to better understand the incidents of serious youth violence in the borough. The ICB safeguarding team and commissioners have been fully engaged with the work of the child sexual abuse subgroup. **CSA** services for children and young people in northwest London are in the process of a service development programme with the aim to provide a local Child Sexual Abuse Hub. Children and young people will benefit from a local service providing a multi-agency holistic approach to care.

The TigerLight (Barnardo's) services will continue to provide psychological support to children and young people who have experienced sexual abuse.

The Stronger Families model of care and access to services has been fully supported by the ICB and shared with primary care at GP Forums.

We have implemented '**learning from practice**' through a comprehensive training offer to ICB staff and the wider health workforce and bespoke training for primary care via the GP Forums. GP forums have included the learning from both local reviews and national reports. In addition, speakers from Hillingdon Local Authority have attended to outline models of care and referral pathways. The ICB

training offer has included the learning from the LCSPR Child Q and the complexities of identifying and meeting the health needs of asylum seekers – training delivered by the Helen Bamber Foundation.

The ICB has worked to deliver a consistent approach designed to consolidate and share learning from **domestic abuse** related reviews and investigations across the health network. It has disseminated key information to partners across different settings, including primary and secondary care, to ensure the issue remains on the agenda of key forums.

A challenge for the ICB has been that of vacancies which have been covered with interim staff, however both the Hillingdon designated nurse safeguarding children and the designated nurse looked after children posts have now been successfully recruited to.

The ICB has in place a comprehensive training programme for designated professionals (level 4/5) and supervision offer so meeting professional standards as outlined in both statutory and intercollegiate guidance. The ICB has extended this training offer to the wider workforce.

The ICB has worked to engage primary care with the HSCP training offer by circulating the training programme and encouraging attendance. In January 2023 two GPs took advantage of specialist training hosted by HSCP from the Centre of Expertise on Child Sexual Abuse.

Primary care services (GP Practices) took part in the HSCP Section 11 Audit. The response rate was extremely good with 29 practices submitted and the majority self-assessing as over 80% compliant with safeguarding standards.

There are several Home Office commissioned Interim Accommodation Sites, managed by an accommodation provider, housing asylum seeking individuals and families. The ICB has worked closely with primary care and health providers to understand and meet the health needs of asylum seekers placed the accommodation sites in Hillingdon which has led to the development of a model of onsite health services and co-ordination on-site rapid responses to health needs by teams such as the roving immunisation teams.

Adult Safeguarding: The North West London Integrated Care Board (ICB) has been making progress towards the four priority areas: making Safeguarding Personal, addressing financial and material abuse, promoting mental health, and safeguarding, and tackling self-neglect.

The ICB continues to promote a systemwide person-led approach to how partners respond to safeguarding concerns which includes a consistent approach toward the Mental Capacity Act and other relevant policy areas. The ICB has also provided joint training and learning opportunities to

promote awareness of safeguarding best practices and has also worked with partners to address financial and material abuse and improve mental health outcomes.

The ICB remains committed to driving a pilot project with the local authority learning disability service to improve annual health checks for people with learning disabilities as part of the wider **mental health** transformation workstream.

The ICB continues to participate in the multi-agency suicide prevention panel and self-neglect subgroup and ensures all relevant learning is shared across channels including informal briefings and key forums so that partners remain up-to-date on all safeguarding matters.

The ICB continues to take part in the **JSSAT** Subgroup and has ensured that vital information and learning has been disseminated across North West London. It has also increased awareness among health partners of interconnected issues like human trafficking and sexual slavery, and enhanced knowledge and awareness of partners responsibilities and options for further support.

11 Metropolitan Police Service (MPS)

The Public Protection service manage investigations into allegations of domestic abuse and stalking, sexual abuse and child abuse. The portfolio also has a team of Police Conference Liaison Officers, who work with children who are being supported through Child Protection plans. The strand also manages referrals into the BCU and external referrals to partners through the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) and Child Abuse Investigation Team referrals desk. In addition, the Public Protection Teams have strand ownership of mental health and missing people as well as Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and online images of children. Public Protection will also contribute to statutory reviews of safeguarding practice.



In March 2022 the MPS went through His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire & Rescue Services (HMICFRS) Peel Inspection, a further review was conducted that placed the MPS into an Engage Monitoring Phase with a comprehensive action plan. This occurred in March 2023, there has also recently been a Baroness Casey report in reflection of various challenges around Public Protection. These challenges are being addressed corporately.

Further to this Operation Aegis, our central public protection inspection and improvement team, visited the BCU to complete regular checks which have varying results. The learning from this has being addressed at a local level throughout the Public Protection portfolio, the larger challenges are being picked up in Organisational Learning Governance Board.

West Area Borough Command Unit continue to support the application of **making safeguarding personal (MSP)** principles in day-to-day activity, with the core elements included in training, supervision, and continuous professional development. In almost every interaction police officers have with the public, there is a focus on engagement, inclusion, choice, and control, with the individual's views sought as to what they would like the outcome to be. Whilst this cannot always be achieved, the individual is asked, and their voice heard. Police have a variety of mechanisms to ensure MSP is at the forefront of our work, our training includes the Mental Capacity Act with officers encouraged to understand how to support people's understanding of their choices and whether they can understand these and weigh them up. There are a range of practical measures in place including provision for video recorded interviews for those in the community who may be eligible to give their accounts in this way, rather than by written statement; provision of wider special measures within the court arena; use of intermediaries for vulnerable and intimidated witnesses, use of advocates, including IDVA's, ISVA's and appropriate adults. We follow the Victim's Code of Practice, which aims to empower victims, by providing support and information they need, setting out services and information that victims are entitled to. It also sets out the level of contact they can expect from police, their entitlements and choices and gives entitlements to specialist support.

Referrals to Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) for high-risk victims of domestic abuse also play an important role in MSP. Across West Area, MARAC referrals average around 1500 - 1800 per year. MARAC is another mechanism to ensure the safety of vulnerable victims of abuse and importantly, their voice can be represented by an IDVA, who represents the victim's views and wishes and ensures the victim's safety remains the focus of the meeting. The MASH plays a key role in MSP, identifying people's views and outcomes from an early stage, achieving a clear understanding of risk and promoting a joined-up approach.

West Area are regarded as one of leading mental health teams in London, in terms of assessing and managing risks relating to vulnerability. 2021 saw the introduction of the 'Risk Management and Demand Reduction' (RMDR) protocol. This protocol allows the team to capture all risk/demand information that comes into the team; assess the risks and collaborate with internal and external partners to ensure there is an approved and proportionate joint response. In Hillingdon alone, over 522 individuals have entered the RMDR assessment process, 36 of which were considered at highest risk of causing harm to themselves or others.

In 2022, data held by the MH team shows that in Hillingdon there were 14 suicides, 169 near suicides and over 250 people were detained under s136 Mental Health Act, compared to around 300+ in 2021. In addition, 329 people were voluntarily taken to the Emergency Department by police for care, this

is up 100 since the previous year. Police used the Mental Capacity Act in over 13 cases down from 45 in 2021.

Our CAIT team continue to be one of the busiest teams in the Met, with the fourth highest volume across London. In April 2022 to May 2023, the team dealt with over 1284 offences, all of which would have been initially reviewed by our Referrals Team. Of this number, around 683 were then allocated to the Investigation team. Just over a third of all investigations concern allegations of neglect and child cruelty and around 56% concerns allegations of assault, with the remainder largely comprising of allegations of sexual abuse. This breakdown is consistent with other BCU's across the Met. Victims of child abuse are more concentrated in older children with those aged 12-17 accounting for 44% of cases, followed by those aged 6-11, who accounted for 36% of all cases. Those children aged 0-5 year accounted for 18% of cases, and the remaining cases concerned adults who had reported non-recent abuse.

CAIT officers undertake the Specialist Child Abuse Investigation Development Programme, which is an accredited course focussing on child development in the context of abuse, understanding sexual offending behaviour, investigating child abuse, multi-agency working, attachment and development, trauma and offences. In addition to this mandated training, there continues to be an investment in CPD, with training masterclasses offered for CAIT and CAIT referrals to undertake. This features topics such as NAI.

In 2022, the MPS jointly launched the revised **London Child Exploitation Protocol**. This followed on from the London Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) protocol but expanded the focus from just sexual exploitation to all forms of child exploitation. In doing so it opened the door for local authorities and partners to refer in concerns about children at risk of and being exploited in a range of ways. In West Area, the Child Exploitation Team work alongside other policing teams, including our Gangs Unit and Missing Persons, as well as working closely with external partners. The team engage with partners at the Operational High-Risk Panel which provides tactical oversight of child exploitation across the borough and all key stakeholders. Support for victims and families is an intrinsic part of every investigation strategy. In 2022 the team investigated 200 reports of exploitation up from 130 in 2021.

Of the 200 reports reviewed, 82 were referrals from Hillingdon. Of the Hillingdon reports there has been 2 Child Abduction Warning Notices served, and several interventions and visits to local hotels of concern under Operation Makesafe. The 82 referrals are broken down into 28 for CSE, 40 for where Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE) is present and 4 showed an overlap of both CSE & CCE. 7 of these reports were transferred to other forces. Referral pathways for reporting child exploitation are varied and include from Children's Services, calls made to police or through police directly coming across

cases of exploitation, with the remaining referrals coming from colleagues in education and online reporting or third party reports.

2022 has continued to be a busy year from our OCSAE team (Online Child Sexual Abuse and Exploitation), which saw nearly 250 crimes being referred to West Area, with 73 relating to Hillingdon, this was a decrease from the year before when 105 were recorded. (Crimes which involve online indecent images of children). The demands placed on the investigation team are significant, both in terms of volume, but also in terms of the impact such crime types can have on their own welfare. Despite the challenges, they face, the team have secured some excellent results.

Hillingdon, like many other London boroughs, has seen increases in recorded domestic abuse crime – a crime we know disproportionately affects women. WA BCU has continued to see the highest volume of both domestic abuse incidents and domestic abuse offences across the Met, with over 17,573 incidents /offences over the past year – which equates to 12% respectively of the Met’s total overall volume. In Hillingdon alone there has been 5235 Offences/Incidents of Domestic Abuse. Calls to domestic abuse incidents and offences accounts for 20% of total I grade (immediate response), and S grade (response within 60 minutes) calls responded to by Emergency Response Policing Team (ERPT) colleagues.

The volume of crime coming into our Community Safety Units (CSU) has brought some real challenges in recent months and we have bolstered team strengths with colleagues from other Units to ensure our operating levels remain satisfactory. The Met has recently undertaken a complete review of Public Protection and it has been recognised that additional permanent resource is required longer term to ensure our teams remain able to deliver high standards of victim care and importantly, bring offenders to justice. Supporting the work of our Emergency Response colleagues and Community Safety investigators, West Area also has a strong risk management approach, with an experienced MARAC team and Stalking Protection Order officer.

In 2022, WA BCU secured the most Stalking Protection Orders (SPO) of any other BCU thanks to the efforts of our dedicated SPO officer (31 SPO’s). We absolutely recognise the importance of these orders to keep victims safe, some of whom will have been subjected to unwanted, fixated and obsessive conduct for many months.

We also participated in the 16 Days of Activism which took place from 25th November to 10th December 2022. This was a great opportunity to amplify what goes on in WA throughout the year; to arrest perpetrators and protect victims of domestic abuse. Surge activity over the 16 days saw collaboration with the Prison Intelligence Unit, Digital Operations, Met Intelligence, and Economic

Crime Team to locate and arrest offenders. Within WA BCU, the Met's 'Engagement Bus' was also deployed, allowing officers to speak with women around under-reporting and raise awareness of domestic abuse in the community. The results of this Operation led to over 74 arrests, 20 charges, several separate Domestic Violence Protection Notices to ensure women experiencing abuse were safer within the community.

12 Agency Contributions

12.1 Central and North West London NHS Foundation Trust (CNWL)

CNWL provides NHS services throughout a person's life, in physical and mental health and everything in between, at GPs and hospitals to the community and in their own home. CNWL provide a wide range of adult and children services in Hillingdon, which include the 0-19 Service, Child Integrated Therapy Services, Child Development Service, Community Adult and Children Nursing, Community Physical Health Services, Addiction Support Services and Mental Health Services for Adults and Children.

CNWL has maintained its position as a core member of both the SAB and SCP, including contributions to the Independent Scrutiny Process. CNWL is a fully engaged member of the Safeguarding Partnership. Our regulator, the CQC, have not inspected any children's services this year. The CQC undertook Mental Health Act visits to all acute wards, with a positive outcome and no regulation actions identified.

CNWL responded to the Section 11 Safeguarding Partnership audit which ensures that we are discharging our functions to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. No concerns were raised for CNWL, but an area for strengthening will be capturing and recording the Voice of the Child / Lived experience of children at all contacts. Our next steps will be to discuss this with children's managers with a view to updating our recording systems.



Our **Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS)** have embedded safeguarding champions within services; these champions provide support and advice to mental health professionals. We have extended our Early Help offer to include Mental Health Support Teams who work with children and

families in 5 Hillingdon schools. Our services for children under the age of 5 are in development, as part of our wider commitment to early help. CAMHS seek children's views through a patient feedback group. CAMHS is represented on strategic subgroups where required, in recognition of the increased need for support for those children impacted by exploitation we have introduced a prioritisation pathway.

The Multi Agency Psychological Support Service (MAPS) works with children in care, and the professionals that support them. MAPS provides consultation for professionals, and trauma focused interventions for care experienced children. We also have a dedicated clinical nurse specialist embedded in the Youth Justice Service, offering professional consultation and assessing those children who meet the CAMHS threshold for emotional wellbeing needs.

We have launched **Year of the Child**; a programme that will celebrate and promote CNWL's large portfolio of children's services. We want to showcase our expertise in this area, working with families, carers and young people to gain insight into their experiences. This campaign will run a monthly calendar of wellbeing sessions and educational workshops, spotlighting our service lines, sharing the work and achievements in the children and young people space. Available for CNWL teams and staff, as well as parents, families, carers, schools and others, the sessions will promote a variety of specialist health topics. The programme will culminate in a conference that brings together teams from across the organisation to explore neurodiversity pathways.

CNWL recognises the importance of the multi-agency response needed to prevent children suffering **extra-familial harm**. CNWLs Safeguarding Children Team have been a core contributor to the Education Toolkit, which is now in place across Hillingdon, to assist schools in supporting children to access health services for unmet health needs that may present early on and, if left unassessed, may lead to persistent disruptive behaviour and in the long term lost education. Children out of education are at greater risk of contextual safeguarding.

CNWLs Safeguarding Children Team are core members who work in Partnership with the Local Authority and other agencies who attend the High-Risk Panel for children at risk of contextual safeguarding. CNWL are committed to supporting the **Contextual Safeguarding** strategy that has recently been launched by the Partnership, in line with the Serious Violence Duty.

The CNWL Safeguarding Children Team have provided the 0-19 service with workshops on **Child Sexual Abuse** to increase awareness and knowledge of this priority area. These staff are seeing children regularly and may observe behaviours that indicate a risk of Child Sexual Abuse. The Safeguarding Children Team attended Child Sexual Abuse Partnership subgroup meetings and shared

good practice within CNWL through training delivered to children's teams and acknowledged areas of improvement such as the voice of the child in every contact with particular relevance to Child Sexual Abuse. CNWL offer Trust wide Level 3 safeguarding children training on Child Sexual Abuse and online harm. CNWL have made Child Sexual Abuse a priority for the Trust in the coming year and will be enhancing resources for staff for identifying children at risk of Child Sexual Abuse.

CNWL attend the Safeguarding Partnership **Stronger Families** subgroup and support the Early Help model in place for families to access the right help at the right time. CNWL refer families in for Early Help assessments and the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) Health Practitioner sits within Stronger Families, and works alongside a range of professionals who respond to referrals made into Stronger Families. The increasing demand from MASH is noted by the Trust.

In response to the **Making Safeguarding Personal** agenda CNWL expects that, where a safeguarding concern arises for an adult, patients are asked what they would like to happen. Gaining the patient's consent is a key aspect of Making Safeguarding Personal and therefore it is vital that this is asked on each occasion. If the patient does not give consent, a SA referral will not be made to LBH, unless there are reasons to override this consent e.g., public, or vital interest. For any patients lacking the capacity to consent to the referral, a best interest decision will be made on their behalf. Family members will be involved in the decision if the patient is happy with this. The referral form asks staff to document that the person has the mental capacity to understand and has given consent for the concern to be raised, which ensures staff have asked the question.

A representative of CNWL participated in the SAB **self-neglect** sub-group. This is the most common type of abuse raised by physical health services in 2022-23, indicating that practitioners can recognise and respond to this form of harm. We disseminated widely the self-neglect practice tool developed within the subgroup. Our Safeguarding Adults and Mental Capacity Act Specialist is available to provide advice and support as needed.

We recognise that adults with **mental health** needs are particularly vulnerable to abuse and neglect, with data highlighting domestic abuse as the most common cause of concern raised by mental health services. Where there is a safeguarding referral made by mental health services, this is copied to the Safeguarding Adults and MCA specialist to liaise with the Local Authority MASH and ensure that outcomes are understood.

CNWL held our 5th Annual **Domestic Abuse** (DA) conference in the year with the theme; "The Domestic Abuse Act – has it gone far enough?" Over 600 attended the conference, comprising of staff and a growing network of people with lived experience, who are aiding CNWLs development of service

provision. Our DA Prevention Co-ordinator supports the development of the DA Network, MARAC representatives' meetings, facilitates extensive training and supports the drive to forward our DA agenda. Advanced DA training to become an ambassador takes place every 2 months as do DA Ambassador Forums. CNWL continue to facilitate quarterly round table DA webinars, which in 2022/23 included: parent to child DA, intersectionality and sibling abuse. A DA audit has been completed over a 3-month period to assess the quality and quantity of recording around DA and the learning will be disseminated in 2023/24. Over the past 18 months we have implemented Routine Enquiry of all women entering CNWL services to record this information systemically. The CNWL DA policy has been refreshed this year and is available to all staff to support the identification and support of DA and supports recognition, response and support needed for families impacted by DA.

Learning from practice is shared in a variety of ways across CNWL. There is a dedicated section within the Trust's intranet site which is regularly updated with any new developments and guidance pertinent to safeguarding. Learning is also shared within supervision and training sessions. 7 minute briefings are also utilised to give professionals focussed learning from a case or incident. These are used in team meetings and supervision to embed learning and change practice. We have also introduced a Safeguarding Calendar of events for staff which provides further learning opportunities throughout the year.

The Trust also publishes a weekly 'Clinical Message of the Week', which is regularly used to disseminate information pertinent to safeguarding. Safeguarding themes in 2022/23 have covered the following: "Sexual abuse and sexual violence awareness week", "Cost of living Crisis", "Clearly documenting Safeguarding issues is essential for safe care", "Safeguarding node" (our database alert system for safeguarding concerns), "How do you determine if an injury to a child is non-accidental or neglectful" and "Child & Adult safeguarding escalation procedure". The Clinical Message of the Week is circulated to all CNWL staff.

CNWL have introduced SCARF (Safe, Compassionate, Accountable, Reflective and Fair) principles to create a workplace where we feel enabled, supported and empowered to see situations as opportunities to learn and opportunities to grow. These principles are used to underpin a responsive and respectful learning culture.

The Heads of Children and Adult Safeguarding continue to facilitate a Safeguarding Children and Adults Forum enabling both safeguarding teams to have a reflective learning space on joint safeguarding issues. Topics discussed in 2022/23 have included: Perinatal and Substance Use interface, Adult Mental Health and Children and Families interface, FGM, Domestic Homicide Reviews and Human Factors Training.

Case reviews often reflect that escalation has not been used effectively within safeguarding. We have therefore refreshed our CNWL Safeguarding Escalation procedure, and this is now an integrated document for escalating adult and child safeguarding cases.

CNWLs Safeguarding Children Team were proactive in the Hillingdon **FGM Project**. This is aligned to a CNWL annual priority to improve awareness and the identification of FGM. We have now launched and promoted the use of an FGM Screening Template and guidance. This project supported making resources available and provided training opportunities for CNWL staff. CNWL also contributed to the FGM Harmful Practices conference. CNWL staff attended the FGM Train the Trainer training for delivering multi-agency FGM training that will be co-facilitated and rolled out in 2023. Prevention of FGM remains a priority within CWNL.

CNWL recognise the importance of safeguarding supervision and training to ensure staff are equipped and supported to do their jobs. Our Safeguarding Children Supervision guidelines have been refreshed and circulated to staff. CNWL staff can access the Partnership for training as well as a range of CNWL training opportunities. Safeguarding Adult and Safeguarding Children training compliance is monitored and reported on regularly for assurance purposes.

CNWL recognise that preparing court reports and police statements can cause anxiety in the professional workforce so, in conjunction with CNWL's legal department, the team developed guidelines and a flowchart to equip practitioners with the skills they require to complete reports and potentially act as witnesses in court.

12.2 Local Authority's Designated Officer (LADO) and Education Safeguarding

Our team consists of four positions, the LADO, who manages all allegations against professionals who work with children, the Lead Child Protection Advisor to Schools, the Domestic Abuse Lead for Schools, and the Child Employment, Performance and Licensing Officer. The team provides an Annual Report to the Children's Safeguarding Partnership Board that details performance across the financial year.

In 2022-2023 the LADO received 218 referrals, a 10% increase on 2021-2022. Of the 202 referrals received against individuals, 12.87% (26 referrals) were substantiated. This is a decrease from last year, where 19.8% (39 referrals) were substantiated. Most referrals (93) resulted in no further action after initial consideration. In most of these cases, following a threshold discussion or meeting, there was further action required by the referrer to address a conduct matter or learning need despite the threshold of harm not being met. In these cases, the LADO would provide advice and guidance to employers on suitable action.

Since January 2023, as per London Child Protection Procedures 2022, the LADO has been recording all consultations held which have not met threshold for a formal referral but where advice and guidance have been provided around individuals conduct or concerns raised. Over the last quarter of the year (Jan- March 2023) there have been 63 recorded consultations. As this is newly captured data, it cannot be benchmarked against previous years, but it does highlight the advisory and supporting role of LADO who, in addition to the referrals processes provides ongoing advice and support to other professionals.

During the reporting year, education staff remained the largest source of referrals accounting for over 50% of the total. Almost half of these referrals relate to agency or locum staff within education settings, many having been in the setting for a short period (ranging from a few days to a few weeks). In most of these settings there has been identified learning for the education setting and employing agency about how these staff are inducted and supported within their role. This seems to be an increasing trend which will be monitored in the next year and discussed with the schools through Designated Safeguarding Leads network meetings led by the Child Protection Lead for schools. The LADO and Child Protection Lead for Schools will produce LBH guidance on working with agency staff relevant for all settings.

Referrals were relatively evenly split between other sectors with health professionals, foster carers, early years workers and children's residential home workers being the next most referred cohorts. The 'other' section (accounting for 17 referrals) mainly related to carers working with children and young people with additional needs. The least referred, with no referrals in the year 2022-23 were faith group leaders followed by members of the police force, childminders, and voluntary sector workers for which the LADO received 2 referrals per sector. Whilst this may indicate a positive trend, it could also show a reduced awareness relating to the role of LADO in these sectors, particularly within faith groups. Plans will be developed in the next year for reaching out to these settings and ensuring access to information and awareness of the LADO process.

A trend that became apparent this year was that a large percentage of the alleged victims of harm were children with a range of disabilities, including children who are non-verbal. This trend was captured through the review of individual referrals, however learning from this, we adapted the recording system to capture disability of the victims, thus allowing us better analysis and monitoring of this trend going forward.

Nationally, concerns have been raised regarding LADO oversight of concerns about settings and therefore, the LADO will continue to review LBH processes in this area, alongside national guidance as it is established. Following on from the Hesley review the DfE has requested that the LADO national

network devise a LADO handbook. We are engaging with the pan London LADO group to support this work and we will incorporate the national recommendations into our local practice and procedures.

12.3 Children's Rights and Participation Service

The Children's Rights & Participation team are part of the Safeguarding, Partnership and Quality Assurance Service. The remit of our team is to undertake engagement activity with children and young people who have contact with Children and Young People's Services, and to ensure that the voices of children are respected and heard. In the last year our achievements include:



- Engaging with 253 individual children through Children in Care Councils (CiCCs) and other activities.
- Supporting young people to volunteer 455 hours of their time in addition to attendance at CiCC's.
- The launch of the out of Borough virtual children in care council group 'Stepping In'.
- Developing the successful Tuesday football sessions with coaching support from Brentford football club.
- Celebrating 525 individual young people who were nominated for KICA awards.
- Delivery of a high successful KICA event with 117 winners attending the event
- Identified and supported young people to be involved in the recruitment to 21 roles within Children's Social Care, including social work apprentices, newly qualified social workers, Personal Advisors, AXIS officers, school safeguarding lead and team managers.
- Facilitated Walking in Our Shoes training to 253 professionals.



Individually, young people tell us that they benefit from a sense of community, additional professional support and from opportunities to have their voices heard. Young people have told us that *"You don't know how much I have enjoyed working with you guys, I don't even know what to say at this point saying thank you to you wouldn't be enough for helping me and trying to support every one of us. Making us think or feel you're like mother or an older sister for us. Every-time we needed help or needed*

something you are already trying your best all I got to say is thank u for making last year on of the best years of my life” and “I really feel like you are my family.”

12.4 The Hillingdon Hospital

The Hillingdon Hospital NHS Foundation Trust provides services from both Hillingdon Hospital and Mount Vernon Hospital. The trust has a turnover of around £222 million and employs over 3,300 staff. We deliver healthcare to the residents of the London Borough of Hillingdon, and increasingly to those living in the surrounding areas of Ealing, Harrow, Buckinghamshire and Hertfordshire, giving them a total catchment population of over 350,000 people.

Hillingdon Hospital is an acute and specialist services provider in North West London, close to Heathrow Airport for which it is the nearest hospital for those receiving emergency treatment. Providing most services from the trust, Hillingdon Hospital is the only acute hospital in Hillingdon with a busy Accident and Emergency, inpatients, day surgery, and outpatient clinics. The trust also provides some services at Mount Vernon Hospital, in cooperation with a neighbouring NHS Trust.

The Safeguarding Families Team is now fully established although some staff are still new in post, including the head of service who started In Q2 of 2022-23. The focus of this team remains for safeguarding to be at the forefront of our clinical care. This includes engagement of frontline staff, provision of training, engagement, and representation across local, national, and strategic partnerships. Generally, we have been facilitating training, building resilience, and providing supervision for various groups of staff across the organisation as well as within the team. We have had a focus on building the team, leadership and developing the safety net meetings to build relationships within the team and external to the hospital.

The Trust is a fully engaged member of the Hillingdon Safeguarding Partnership, attending subgroups, Boards and contributing to learning and practice improvement locally. The Trust continued to observe a notable increase in presentation of young people with mental health needs during the 2022-23 year. This is a continued trend since the pandemic commenced. There are an increased number of adults with mental health presentations where clinicians have completed a safeguarding referral. The mental health agenda led by the Mental Health lead has been progressed by implementation of various new policies and governance processes including the ligature and environmental risk assessment policy.

We have increased the frequency of Trust led multiagency meetings. These are to ensure that we have a broad spectrum of professional expertise available to consider individual cases, and we access the Partnership escalation procedures as required.

Safeguarding Children: We are also active members of the **stronger families** subgroup. Weekly multi-agency meetings occur with CAMHS, social care, Sorted, ARCH, psych liaison, HIDVA and Axis. The meetings discuss Hillingdon Hospital safeguarding children's cases of the previous 7 days. These meetings have improved collaboration and identify areas for improved partnerships. Our policy for safeguarding children is in place. Our adults at risk policy is currently being reviewed and will go to Safeguarding Committee in Q4. The Domestic Abuse policy was ratified in Q3.

We have given training and communicated around **self-neglect** and again seen an increase in referrals plus an increase in Mental Capacity assessments. Our weekly safety net meeting has helped us develop a pathway and we have escalated patients to the high-risk daily meeting to ensure multi-disciplinary discussions.

Contextual safeguarding is a key component of our level 3 training and has been highlighted in trust communications. We have Axis attendance at training and at the weekly safety net meeting. The safety net has helped us build relationships with the stronger families hub and helped improve communication and collaboration, as well as participating in our level 3 training.

Domestic Abuse and safeguarding remains a priority, we work closely with the hospital IDVA to identify and support patients who are victims. The safeguarding team train weekly in A&E and raise the profile of our service at the front door with the aim of helping practitioners identify who might be victims of trafficking or modern slavery.

There has been significant learning via section 42 enquiries. Training, communications, MDT working has all enabled learning from incidents. Significant progress has been made with self –neglect and mental capacity assessments. We have successfully addressed a backlog in s42 enquiries and have worked to build relationships with social care. The main themes of alleged unsafe discharge and pressure ulcers remain but are both Quality initiatives for the trust and remain a priority for 2023-2024.

From a children's perspective, raising the profile of 16- and 17-year-olds has been a significant piece of work that has had several strands. The focus has been on A&E and the wards predominantly, challenging staff and empowering them to take responsibility for raising concerns and following procedures.

In the last year the Learning Disability Clinical Nurse Specialist has raised awareness of the needs of people with learning disabilities, producing best practice guidance and maternity specific guidance for people with learning disabilities. We continue to monitor implementation of the Mental Capacity Act, with an increase in the number of assessments overall, and especially in relation to discharge

destination and self-neglect. Our mental health lead has continued to raise the profile of the mental health agenda, with progress made in policies and governance. We have worked to build Dementia Quality initiatives including purchase of the magic table with support from the charity, recruiting dementia companion volunteers and provide dementia activity bags. The safeguarding children clinical nurse specialist role is established and developing to support the named nurse and provide a presence on the paediatric ward and in paediatric A&E.

12.5 Stronger Communities and Prevent – London Borough of Hillingdon

The work of the Stronger Communities team supports the council's aim, "along with its partners, to create a strong and resilient community in Hillingdon, to counter extremism and hate in all its forms, while bringing communities together to promote cohesion and integration. To build a strong sense of belonging and pride where all people feel valued and included, whether living, working within, or visiting the borough."

The team is represented in the Stronger Families and Female Genital Mutilation groups, providing a link to voluntary and community section organisations. We ensure that any emerging safeguarding issues, learning, and training opportunities are disseminated throughout our networks.

This year we developed bespoke training, in conjunction with counter terrorism police, to raise awareness of the influence of extreme far-right ideologies. We continue to work closely with schools, focussing on building resilience and staying safe online. In respect of adult safeguarding, it is recognised that neurodiversity and mental health difficulties can increase vulnerability to radicalisation, therefore we maintain close links with voluntary and statutory services.

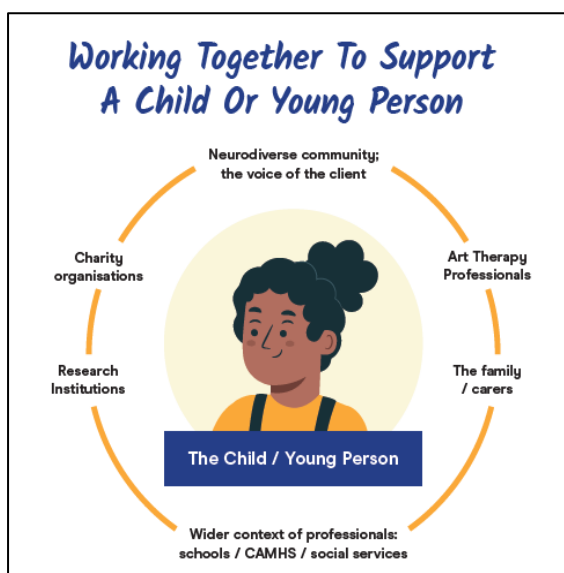
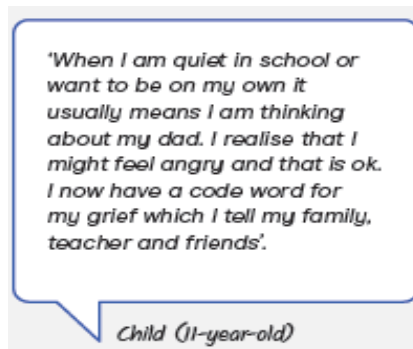
We continue to deliver our MOPAC (Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime) funded programme in collaboration with police, schools, the college, the University, and community, aimed at tackling hate crime and extremism. Workshops have been delivered in schools. With pupils discussing topics relating to promoting equality and diversity, challenging discrimination, and tackling hate. Pupils through their discussions have been able to demonstrate awareness of diversity in Britain, and understanding of core values including unity, respect, democracy, how to report concerns and more, leading to increased resilience and cohesion.

In working with our local communities, the programme has also included the recruitment and training of 124 Hate Crime Upstanders. The Hate Crime Upstanders have been recruited from across local voluntary and community organisations and council services and other partner agencies, to enable them to better understand all forms of hate crime, how to report incidents and support those from within the community who may be victims.

12.6 Harlington Hospice – Psychological and Emotional Support Service

Our team provides support to children, adults and their families who are affected by bereavement and loss. This year the child and adolescent service joined with adult services at Harlington Hospice transforming into the Psychological and Emotional Support Service.

We participate in multiagency safeguarding forums for individuals we are working with as required. More widely we engage with the Borough-wide transformation group, and internally with the Harlington Hospice Safeguarding Steering Group, contributing to the review and update of safeguarding policies. Where there is learning from an individual circumstance, this is disseminated throughout the team and wider organisation. The team is represented on the Safeguarding Boards, and within relevant subgroups



A key focus in the last year has been to adapt our practice approach to better reflect the needs of children and young people who are living with neurodiversity. We were successful with our research in Neurodiversity and Grief, attending the hospice UK conference in November 22 and were awarded first place in the research poster. This featured the work we do to assess risk, providing pre and post bereavement support to neurodivergent children/young people. The project now features in the Hospice UK Innovation hub.

13 Priorities for 2023-2024

Hillingdon Safeguarding Partnership continues to strive for excellence in practice, our commitment to continuous development of local services for children, adults, their families, and carers is fundamental to all aspects of our work. This necessitates a reflective and dynamic approach to strategic safeguarding; willingness to recognise our opportunities for development, and to build on what we do well. In the coming year the Partnership will focus on embedding the learning from quality assurance processes, and core practice challenges. Our underpinning principle of amplifying the voices of children and adults provides us with an impetus to understand and respond to the lived experiences of those individuals, and families, in need of support or protection.

The **Safeguarding Adults Board** will focus on:

- Neglect
- Learning from Practice

The **Safeguarding Children Partnership Board** will focus on:

- Contextual Safeguarding
- Child Sexual Abuse
- Stronger Families
- Education Safeguarding

The shared priorities of Practice Development, Female Genital Mutilation, and safeguarding in relation to Heathrow Airport (JSSAT) will remain. As strategic subgroups conclude an agreed workplan further areas of focused work will be identified.

14 Appendices

Appendix 1: Training Programme

Training Programme	
<p>Core Offer:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Working Together to Safeguard Children (and Refresher) - Adult Safeguarding - Core Groups and Child Protection Plans - Trauma Informed Practice - Recognising and Working with Child Neglect - Safeguarding Adults from Self-Neglect and Hoarding - Safeguarding Disabled Children - Safeguarding Adults from Neglect - Female Genital Mutilation - LADO: Managing Allegations <p>Domestic Abuse:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Impact on Children and Young People - Intimate Partner Violence - Supporting Older Survivors Affected by Domestic Abuse 	<p>Safeguarding Adolescents:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Contextual Safeguarding - Adulthood Bias and Safeguarding Children - Learning from Practice – Serious Youth Violence and Contextual Safeguarding Workshop <p>Child Sexual Abuse:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Responding to Child Sexual Abuse Concerns - Pilot: CSA and Youth Justice - Pilot: Signs and Indicators for Schools - Pilot: CSA and Disabled Children - Sex Pressures and Social Media - Sexual Harassment and Responding to Incidents - Traffic Light Tool: Harmful Sexual Behaviour - CSE Boys and Young Men <p>Lived Experience:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - True Honour: Modern Slavery - True Honour: Forced Marriage - Walking in Our Shoes Training



Children & Young People's Annual Report

2022-2023



**Hillingdon Safeguarding
Partnership**



The Safeguarding Partnership is all the people that help and support us. Our social workers, doctors, carers, mental health workers, nurses, police officers, GPs, housing officers, mentors, support workers and many more.

Children's Voice



Listening to us and doing the things you say that you will do.

Learning about the things that matter to us!

When adults show us that they care

What is going well?

Having groups where there are fun activities, and where we can speak to other kids and adults that understand us.

- What our 6-12year olds said about being in care:
- I feel loved
 - I feel cared for
 - I have fun
 - People are kind
 - I get the help I need



Being searched at school...

Travel costs

Being outside late at night

Worries

Changing workers

Social media

Schools aren't getting us ready for adult life

Help me understand what I'm thinking and feeling

Get to know us by listening to us and doing fun things.

Understand what it's like to be us

What Helps?



We should meet somewhere that feels homely

Make it easier to see my social worker

Introduction

Hillingdon Safeguarding Partnership is committed to listening and learning from the expertise and experience of our children and young people. This year we have amplified the voices of children and young people through working with them directly, explaining the role of the Safeguarding Partnership, and seeking their input into quality assurance. During discussions the children and young people were encouraged to share both their own experiences, and their wider knowledge of their siblings and peers, to ensure that the learning can be applied widely across the partnership. The young people reported that they felt valued that their contribution could lead to change and help other children feel safer.



Thirty-six, children and young people were consulted in small groups settings, with familiar peers and adults to support them. Contributions were made by our Children in Care Council, for Looked After Children from age 6 plus and care leavers up to age 25, and the Youth Voice participation group, for children aged 12- 17 years who have experience of safeguarding services or the Youth Justice Service. The young people were from a range of ethnicities, gender identities, cultures, religions, countries, and some had disabilities and/or neurodiversity needs. They thought about their interactions with the wide range of professionals that have supported them. This included social workers, doctors, carers, mental health workers, nurses, police officers, care providers, GPs, housing officers, mentors, support workers and many more. We hoped to understand their lived experiences and gain their expert knowledge of what it feels like to be in receipt of a safeguarding service. The following questions were asked:

- Have you felt listened to by the Safeguarding Partnership?
- What do you think we do well?
- How can we make things better for children and young people?
- What worries you or makes you feel unsafe living in Hillingdon?
- Is there anything you could suggest that could help change this?

1. How well were you listened to?

Reliability - Most young people said that the Safeguarding Partnership have listened to them, by explaining their roles, attending their meetings, listening to their views, and sharing them with senior leaders who can influence and make change.

The young people described the Safeguarding Partnership team as “nice” they “call people to account”, “credible” and “on it all the time”.

Validating – The young people felt appreciated and empowered when they saw how their information was used. Particularly when their quotes were used in the Voice of the Person review.



Consistency - Meeting a regular face from the safeguarding partnership team has helped the young people to build relationships and become more open and honest about their lives and experiences.

Empowerment - They felt that they were not judged and that their views were held as being as important as those of the adults.

Trustworthiness – They were updated on some of the decisions and changes that have been made by senior leaders that care about them.

Shared understanding – They understood that some of their recommendations were quicker to action than others, timescales and plans were communicated. Any recommendations that were not realistic were discussed openly and honestly in a respectful way.

Respected – The children and young people felt that creating an annual report from their perspective was a good idea, however they felt the Safeguarding Partnership should provide quarterly updates in person to children and young people.

2. What is working well?



Building Rapport - When workers go above and beyond and show children and young people that they care. Children find it helpful when practitioners travel to places to meet them where they feel comfortable.

Safe Spaces – Environments that are designed to be accommodating and welcoming for children and their families.

Awareness Raising Interventions - Learning about things that matter and impact their daily life such as Pride Month, Black History Month, National Child Exploitation Day, Mental Health Awareness week and drug and alcohol use prevention sessions.

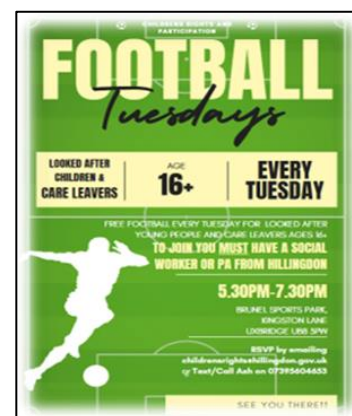
Positive Activities - Discussion groups, activity days, food and sweets from Children’s Rights and Participation Team and Safeguarding Partnership.

Engagement - Attending groups where there are fun activities, and they can speak to other young people and adults that help and have similar experiences. *“It helps me realise that other people have experienced similar things”.*



Implementing Change - Professionals making an effort to speak to young people and make changes based on important information they have heard. Following consultations, returning to the young people, to explain how they have used the information and recommendations.

Care Experienced - Younger children said that were grateful to be in care because they live with people that show them *“love”*, are *“kind”*, *“feeling cared for”*, having *“fun”* and getting the *“help that they need”*.



3. What are we worried about?

Wider Community - Seeing and hearing about poor street lighting, people hanging around, grooming, stabbings, violence against women and girls, crime, gangs, thefts, acid/bleach attacks and fights.

Fear - Having to be 'street smart' *"I shiver when I walk past some people sometimes, I have to run away feeling scared because I can't fight"*. Being outside late at night *"...you learn to manage the fear because its normal"*.

Negative relationships with some professionals due to a lack of trust (police) and/or high turnover (mental health staff/ social workers)

Police presence *"Seeing police on the streets knowing they are there for safety still scares me, as they may suspect me of something although I am innocent"*.

Experiencing racism

Poverty – *"Children living in poverty not getting enough food and needing extra lessons so they can do well at school and in life"*.

Being searched at school (metal detectors/bag/ body) *"makes people think dangerous things are happening and I should be worried"*.

School exclusions – *"Schools should do their best to keep children there, it's hard to get into a new good school if you have a bad record... that can mess up your life!"*.

Life Skills - *"Core subjects are not core any more"*.

Expenses - Travel costs are expensive when surviving on subsistence.



Social media – Regular exposure to videos of people being hurt or publicly humiliated.

Media - The media sharing information about professionals hurting/ abusing people.

Support for Parents - *"Some people are having children younger; therefore, they might need more support about good routines and boundaries to keep their child safe"*.

4. How can we make things better for children and young people?

Training – Practitioners should be encouraged to think from a child/ young person’s perspective - *“They should attend walking in our shoes, then they can feel what it’s like to be us”. “Professionals should get to know us by listening, doing fun things and having an interest in the things that I enjoy.”*



Voice of the child – Consulting and co-producing with children and young people, then updating them about any progress or developments.

Speaking to a wide range of young people, in places that they enjoy spending time (youth clubs, classrooms, sports clubs) and with adults that they trust.

Mental health services – *“there should be help and support earlier, rather than leaving things to become bigger problems”.*

Developing relationships is important if adults want honesty. Frequent changes of workers are not helpful. Particularly with key workers, social workers, and mental health workers.

The duty process is unhelpful – contacting teams or managers for support if their practitioner is absent should be easier.

Appointments with health professionals, *“Especially doctors should be quicker, by the time they call back the problem is often gone.”*



Resources - Making the community safer by having more youth centres, mentors, sense of belonging, fun activities, building better relationships with the police, providing self-defence sessions to decrease violence.

Housing Support - Providing better housing options and support for care leavers *“you may feel alone, and people see you less because you are an adult”.*

Earlier Intervention - *“Teaching children about things when they are younger is important, they often get into trouble because they don’t know things are wrong. Sometimes they learn it’s wrong when it’s too late”.*

5. What changes would you like to see?

Increased education and awareness - Arrange for experts to speak to children and young people in classrooms at school about life skills.

"Small groups are less intimidating".

"Educate us on why drugs are bad and what happens if you take certain drugs, not just DONT TAKE DRUGS".

"Large assemblies don't work".

"See me in places I am comfortable, reach out to me, visit me regularly, come and watch the things I enjoy, put me to live in places that I am comfortable... I know I may not be able to get my own flat but try to understand my feelings.

Sometimes I am scared, and I have nightmares, but I may not always be able to tell you because I keep saying the same thing over and over again and still nothing changes. I will always say I am fine, find a different way to ask me about my feelings."

Youth Provision - Provide more activities for young people to get involved in such as football, tournaments, swimming, dance, fun days, more youth clubs, ESOL, more sessions from the Children's Rights and Participation team.

Shorter waiting lists for mental health services

Trauma Informed Environments – Ensuring the environment where children work with practitioners is welcoming and comfortable. Consider consulting with children to create safer spaces that *"feel more like home, especially if you have to attend a hospital or an office"* *"The contact rooms in the family hub are great"*.

Peer mentors - young people should be able to help provide preventative interventions to other children that they can relate to.



Training – Mandatory agreement for practitioners that work with children and families to attend walking in our shoes training delivered by care experienced young people.

Communication - Using social media, discussion groups or activity days to communicate important changes that impact young people. Better understanding and advertising of services locally that can provide help and support.

Transitional Safeguarding – Better support for young people when they turn 18, particularly care leavers.

Roundtable discussions with managers and senior leaders from across the partnership. Managers could explain their roles, processes and how they can improve things for young people. *"If they can't come in person attend our events or join us on zoom"*.

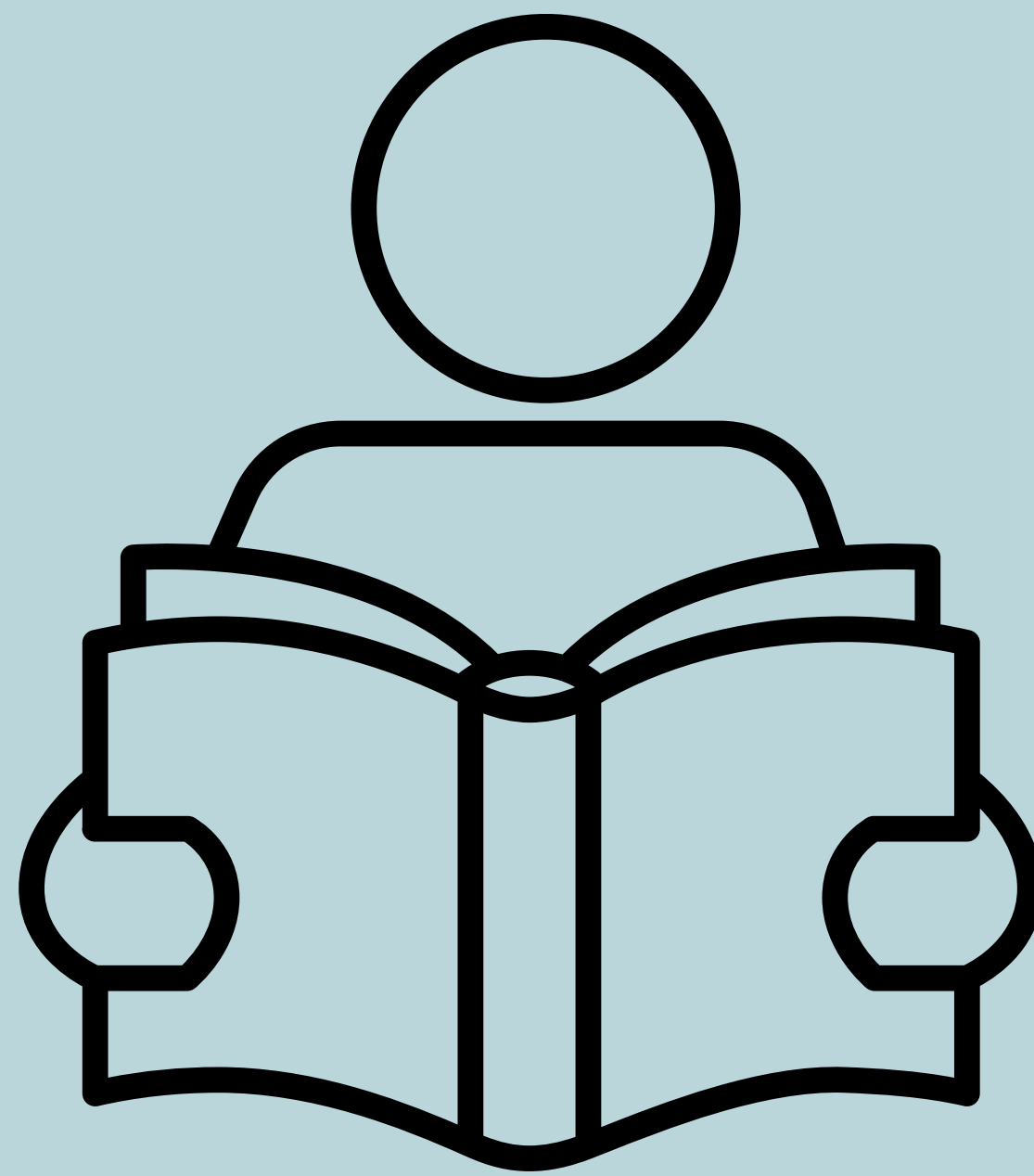


**Hillingdon Safeguarding
Partnership**



Annual Report

2022/2023



Easy Read Version

What is the Safeguarding Partnership?



The Safeguarding Partnership is a group of people from different organisations.

This includes the London Borough of Hillingdon, Police, NHS and Healthwatch.

We work to keep children and adults safe from abuse and neglect.



Our aim is for all people to live in safety with their rights protected.

People should not be abused, or feel scared.



Every year we must write a report to say what we have done, how well we have done it, and what we plan to do next.

This report is about our work to keep adults safer.



Every year we ask a man called Alan Caton to come and check our work, and help us to do things well.

Alan Caton is our Independent Scrutineer.



This year Alan came to look at the Adult Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH). This is the team that looks at all concerns about abuse and neglect.

Alan met with lots of people, and looked at how we work together. Alan found the MASH is working well, and he gave us some ideas for what we can do next.

What we have done.



We trained professionals about different types of abuse and how to help adults and children to be safe.

This year we have trained lots more professionals than ever before.

We write papers called briefings and have a newsletter to keep people informed.



We asked adults and children what professionals do well, and what could be better. We worked together to write a survey that we used to ask other children and adults what they thought

Social workers helped other children and adults to complete the survey.

We listened and wrote a report to help professionals know what works best.



Sometimes things can go wrong. It is important to learn from this.

We talk about what could have been done better and write it in a report called a Safeguarding Adults Review.

We learned from two Safeguarding Adults Reviews.



The Safeguarding Adults Reviews reminded us that:

Sometimes adults are not able to look after themselves.

It is important to know all about adults and to listen to their families and carers.



Professionals need to talk and listen to each other more carefully.

It is important to know about physical and mental health.



We work together in meetings called subgroups.

Subgroups have people with all different jobs so that we can learn and plan together. There is always police, social care and health professionals.

Subgroups work on one topic, and make a plan about what needs to happen.



Our Mental Health and Safeguarding subgroup finished all of the work on the plan.

We made plans to help us check that practice is good.

We trained professionals, and wrote guides to help them.



Our Domestic Abuse subgroup also finished all of the work on the plan. We looked carefully at how professionals from all different services help victims of domestic abuse.

We wrote an easy read guide to getting help for adults who need support.



The Self-Neglect subgroup worked to help professionals know how to help people who cannot help themselves.

Self-neglect is when someone is not able to keep themselves clean, safe and well. Sometimes people do not want help even though they need it.



We worked with Heathrow Airport and Border Force to make sure we are helping people that are trafficked.

This part of the report tells you some of the important things that have happened this year.



Adult social care have had a busy year, with lots more people needing help and protection.

Neglect is the most common reason for an adult to need support or protection.



The police service is trying to reduce crime and increase safety.

This includes stopping domestic abuse, and to help people with mental health problems.



The NHS has been working with GPs, making changes to mental health services and supporting people who are living in hotels.



Our local hospital has a specialist nurse to help people with learning disabilities and to train other staff.

The Safeguarding Team have been training doctors and nurses across the hospital to improve their work with patients.



Our community health teams have held training around domestic abuse, and how to make sure that people can make their own decisions, and to help them when this is not possible.

What will we do next?



All of the organisations will keep working together to keep people as safe as possible.

We will keep learning and improving.



Next year we are focussed on getting better at helping people who are being neglected.

Neglect is when a person does not get the care that they need



We want to make sure that the views of adults, and their carers and families are heard.

This is to help us to understand what it feels like to have a safeguarding service, so that we can get better.



If you have any ideas or questions please let us know.

Call: 01895 277855

Email: safeguardingpartnership@hillingdon.gov.uk



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POLICY REVIEW DISCUSSION & GUIDANCE

Committee name	Children, Families and Education Select Committee
Officer reporting	Ryan Dell, Democratic Services
Papers with report	Appendix A - Review topic selection scorecard
Ward	All

HEADLINES

To discuss ideas on suitable review topics by the Committee. To assist, this report provides guidance on the Committee’s remit, an overview of how reviews can be undertaken, potential new and previous review topics and a scorecard to use to assess.

RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Committee:

- 1. Note the guidance on undertaking policy reviews in Appendix 1;**
- 2. Seek to make use of the scorecard attached in Appendix 1 (Annex A) to assess any policy review topic ideas;**
- 3. Develop a single or shortlist of potential topic ideas over the coming months or year for officers to scope further and report back to the Committee on feasibility.**
- 4. Delegate to the Democratic Services Officer, in conjunction with the Chairman (and in consultation with the Opposition Lead) any further agreement on review topic selection as required.**

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

The Committee’s direct remit of activity

This Select Committee’s specific Terms of Reference are set out below. This sets the parameters (or service areas) in which the Committee can undertake a policy review, present findings, request reports and provide direct input on matters:

Cabinet Member Portfolios	Cabinet Member for Children, Families and Education (Councillor Susan O’Brien)
Relevant service areas	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Children's Services (including corporate parenting) 2. Children’s Safeguarding 3. Youth Justice 4. Youth Services 5. SEND

	6. Education 7. Children and Families Development 8. Skills & lifelong learning
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This Select Committee has also established a Panel to support strong oversight of the Council’s corporate parenting responsibilities. The Committee will appoint 3 Members to this Panel based on political balance. Membership can be any Councillor, not in the Cabinet. The Committee also appoints relevant Council officers and other external stakeholders to the Panel and has previously agreed operation and Terms of Reference

Selecting a topic and undertaking a review

Appendix 1 attached provides detailed guidance on selecting topics and undertaking any policy review. A Scrutiny Topic Scorecard is provided to assist with this. Further guidance can be sought from Democratic Services.

Previous policy reviews

It is advised not to review an area that has either been recently reviewed by a committee or is subject to internal review or planned service transformation to avoid duplication and additional resourcing. A list of past reviews over the last 5 years, pertinent to this Committee’s remit is shown below for information:

2020/21

- [Making the Council More Autism Friendly](#)
(considered at the Virtual [Cabinet meeting on 22 April 2021](#))

2019/20

- [Combating the homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying of young people in Hillingdon](#)
(considered at the [Cabinet meeting on 20 June 2019](#))

2017/18

- [Supporting Children with Special Education Needs and Disabilities in their Early Years](#)
(considered at the [Cabinet meeting on 15 February 2018](#))
- [Criminalisation of Looked After Children \(LAC\)](#)
(considered at the [Cabinet meeting on 25 January 2018](#))

Possible topics under current consideration

Members may wish to present their own new topic ideas at the meeting and provide details of what particular aspects merit a review to assist officers in any scoping exercise.

It is important to differentiate between “information reports” you may wish to come before a committee to look at a service and then “review topics” which are more in-depth reviews resulting in a final report and the focus of this report.

As mentioned in Appendix 1, one way to 'test out' a potential policy review topic would be to add it as an 'information report' to an upcoming meeting on your work programme, to probe the matter further with Council officers or other stakeholders and ascertain whether it merits a fuller review – again perhaps running it through the Scrutiny Topic Scorecard provided.

Implications on related Council policies

A statutory role of the Select Committees is to undertake reviews and make recommendations to the Cabinet who are responsible for the Council's policy and direction. Reviews selected should be consistent with the Council's policy and budgetary framework.

How this report benefits Hillingdon residents

None at this stage, pending any findings and recommendations devised in the final report.

Financial Implications

None at this stage.

Legal Implications

None at this stage.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

NIL.

Appendix 1 - Guidance on undertaking policy reviews

Over the years, Hillingdon's overview and scrutiny committees have undertaken successful in-depth reviews of Council services and policies. This has resulted in a number of positive changes locally, with some also affecting policy at a national level. Such committees engage Councillors in a wide range of Council activity and build a greater understanding about service provision to residents.

Policy reviews generally seek to:

1. Address a [significant] matter affecting the Borough
2. Seek to improve the delivery and/or efficiency of local services
3. Consider changes to policies or procedures to improve outcomes to residents/users

REVIEW PHASES

The typical phases of a review are as follows and set out further below:

- 1 Selection of topic
- 2 Scoping the review / setting out objectives
- 3 Witness & evidence stage (this is the main activity)
- 4 Findings and Draft recommendations (possible early report draft)
- 5 Final report approved by Committee
- 6 Referred to Cabinet for consideration
- 7 Monitoring the implementation of recommendations once approved / amended by Cabinet at meetings, i.e. in six months

1. Selection of topic

It is always best to sound out and check the feasibility of potential review topics early on, as there will be lots of ideas coming forward and often knowing what topic will add most value will be difficult to gauge at this stage. It is important not to generalise, e.g. a review into waste services.

It may also not be known whether a topic is currently under review by the Cabinet or Council officers or part of a planned service transformation in due course. All of this and other factors need to be investigated and in particular, any duplication of review activity should not take place.

Whilst most policy reviews last a number of months, not all policy review ideas will suit this and may benefit from a single meeting review. It really depends on the scope of the review. It very narrow, i.e. a particular service policy, then a single meeting review may suffice. If a review seeks to look at an entire way a service operates then a number of months may be required to ensure you can undertake all your witness sessions and secure the necessary evidence and information before you formulate your findings.

Ideas for review topics can come from a number of sources including:

- Committee Members
- Cabinet Members.
- Council officers
- External partners / organisations
- Residents
- Ombudsman findings

When Councillors or the Committee itself considers a potential review topic, it is recommended running it through the Scrutiny Topic Scorecard (see Annex A). This gives you the opportunity to ‘score’ topics based upon their impacts under the following criteria:

Resident focused	Influence	Achievable
Correct remit	New	Wider support
Drives improvement	Drives transformation and efficiency	National impact

Another way to consider a potential review topic, is to add this as an information item at an upcoming meeting on your work programme, to probe the matter further with Council officers and ascertain whether it merits a fuller review – again perhaps running it through the Scorecard above.

It is strongly advised that one review topic is undertaken at any one time, given resources.

2. Scoping report

Once a topic is agreed upon by the Committee, then officers will prepare a scoping report setting out the objectives of the review for your consideration. The scoping report will show how the review can be timetabled and structured, i.e. through themed witness sessions, along with details of potential witnesses and other contextual information to get the review started, e.g. lines of enquiry or questioning of witnesses.

The scoping report is a ‘live’ document owned by the Committee. Should the review’s focus change mid-review, then the scoping document and its objectives can be adapted.

3. Witness and evidence stage

Ultimately, the Committee’s efforts are at their best when external witnesses and residents participate, adding value to intelligence gathering and findings. In support of this, Committees have undertaken a variety of both formal and informal activity “in meetings” and “outside meetings”. It is important to pull together a broad evidence based for any potential findings later on. Additionally, the ability for Councillors to bring their ‘local’ insight is highly valuable. Activities the Committee can undertake include:

- Surveys / social media
- Promotion of review to seek views
- Invite the relevant Cabinet Member to attend for their views
- Question key council officers
- Hold informal workshops
- Networking events, e.g. with partners

- Have closed meetings, i.e. confidential, such as social care clients
- Commission reports from council officers / externally
- Request data and intelligence on the topic
- Visits to other local authorities
- Undertake site visits within the Borough or council facilities
- Appoint experts or advisors to join the Committee throughout its review
- Selecting the best range of witnesses to get a real user / resident perspectives
- Invite national experts in their field

Whilst information will be provided to Councillors, it may be helpful when preparing for this stage of a review, that Councillors:

- Prepare their draft questions for each witness in advance;
- Read a witness bio or find out more about their organisation;
- Do their own additional research on the topic - you may find something officers don't!
- Use their network of councillors in other local authorities to seek views;
- Tell residents at Surgeries / Ward Walks about your review, get their thoughts.

4. Findings and draft recommendations & 5. Final Report

After hearing from witnesses and receiving evidence, the Committee then will meet to pull together all the information and shape its collective findings, i.e. what needs to be improved or changed as a result.

The Committee will form 'draft' recommendations from this, which consistent with the Protocol on Cabinet and Scrutiny Relations, are usually shared with the Cabinet Member for their feedback and valuable insight.

In developing any recommendation, the Committee should bear in mind the following:

- Meet the initial aims / objectives of the review
- Be SMART, Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-bound
- Not be a short-term fix, but a lasting outcome
- Consider the financial aspect, e.g. cost neutral, provide savings or if at a cost, then affordable – and if possible aligned with the MTFF (budget planning process)
- Be based on a broad evidence base as possible and 'user or resident' insight
- Not create additional bureaucracy, e.g. if it relates to a policy, then to seek to review or amend existing policies (unless there is an absolute imperative for a new policy)
- If publicity or wider engagement or education is recommended, to target such communications as best as possible rather than generally
- Consider 'conclusions' as well as any specific recommendations.

Around this time, the Democratic Services Officer supporting the Committee will advise further on findings and drafting recommendations. Throughout this process, their role is critical to the Committee, to guide Members and secure the information and any witness activity that Members wish to undertake. They also work with the Chairman to bring the final draft report for the Committee to approve before it is scheduled to Cabinet.

6. Referred to Cabinet & 7. Monitoring of recommendations

The Committee's report will be shared with the Leader and Cabinet Member and scheduled to a

Cabinet meeting as soon as possible. There is a legal requirement for any such report to be considered by the Cabinet.

Should Cabinet approve the Committee's recommendations, then they become official policy and officers are charged with implementing them.

A post report review is undertaken in say 6 months or a years' time to see how the Committee's recommendations have been implemented. This is scheduled on your work programme.

Annex A – Scrutiny Topic Scorecard 2022-2026

	<i>Criteria scores showing 1-5 (5 being the highest, 0 the lowest). Then add up the total score. The higher the better review.</i>									
Topic	Resident focused	Correct remit	Influence	New	Achievable	Wider support	Drives improvement	Delivers transformation and efficiency	National impact	Score

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See criteria descriptions overleaf...

Detailed criteria to assess review scoring *(5 being the highest, 0 the lowest)*

Resident-focused – The topic will have high impact on residents and the community, with public interest and scope for making a positive difference (can be universal or a targeted group of people or an area of the Borough e.g. young people or a particular town centre)

Correct remit – A topic that is clearly covered in the Committee’s Terms of Reference and does it cut clearly into the domain of other Committees (unless a cross-cutting brief). If it does, then see if you can narrow the focus of the topic.

Influence - A topic that relates to a service, event or issue in which the Council is in control of, has a significant stake in or influence over the matter, e.g. with partners.

New - A new, fresh topic preferably. One which has not previously been reviewed by a Committee in the last 2-3 years, or which is not currently being reviewed by another Committee or internally by Cabinet Members and Officers, e.g. through service transformation.

Achievable – A topic that is not open ended. One where the Committee’s work programme can accommodate the review. Where there is likely to be a good level of expertise and information to draw on to complete. Does the topic need to be narrowed to make it more achievable?

Wider support - A topic that is likely to receive buy-in from the Committee and wider Council, e.g. Cabinet Members, Officers. Or support is welcome from partner organisations to review the matter.

Drives improvement - A topic where performance levels of a service have dropped on a consistent basis, or the contractor is not performing against agreed standards or there are significance (evidenced) complaints or feedback from residents on the matter.

Delivers transformation and efficiency – a topic in support of the Council budgetary objectives, any areas where service re-modelling is under consideration in the medium to longer-term, that with Members’ insight can help to deliver future savings, efficiencies and value for money services to residents. A topic where new ways of working could be adopted to benefit service delivery.

National impact – A topic where emerging or recent legislation mean that it would be timely to review the matter to ensure Hillingdon Council is well prepared. Or a topic, that whilst Hillingdon focussed, could potentially be of benefit to other local councils or governmental authorities.

CABINET FORWARD PLAN

Committee name	Children, Families and Education Select Committee
Officer reporting	Ryan Dell, Democratic Services
Papers with report	Appendix A – Latest Forward Plan
Ward	As shown on the Forward Plan

HEADLINES

To monitor the Cabinet's latest Forward Plan which sets out key decisions and other decisions to be taken by the Cabinet collectively and Cabinet Members individually over the coming year. The report sets out the actions available to the Committee.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Children, Families and Education Select Committee notes the Cabinet Forward Plan.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

The Cabinet Forward Plan is published monthly, usually around the first or second week of each month. It is a rolling document giving the required public notice of future key decisions to be taken. Should a later edition of the Forward Plan be published after this agenda has been circulated, Democratic Services will update the Committee on any new items or changes at the meeting.

As part of its Terms of Reference, each Select Committee should consider the Forward Plan and, if it deems necessary, comment as appropriate to the decision-maker on the items listed which relate to services within its remit. For reference, the Forward Plan helpfully details which Select Committee's remit covers the relevant future decision item listed.

The Select Committee's monitoring role of the Forward Plan can be undertaken in a variety of ways, including both pre-decision and post-decision scrutiny of the items listed. The provision of advance information on future items listed (potentially also draft reports) to the Committee in advance will often depend upon a variety of factors including timing or feasibility, and ultimately any such request would rest with the relevant Cabinet Member to decide. However, the 2019 Protocol on Overview & Scrutiny and Cabinet Relations (part of the Hillingdon Constitution) does provide guidance to Cabinet Members to:

- Actively support the provision of relevant Council information and other requests from the Committee as part of their work programme;
- Where feasible, provide opportunities for committees to provide their input on forthcoming executive reports as set out in the Forward Plan to enable wider pre-decision scrutiny (in addition to those statutorily required to come before committees, *i.e. policy framework documents – see para. below*).

As mentioned above, there is both a constitutional and statutory requirement for Select Committees to provide comments on the Cabinet's draft budget and policy framework proposals after publication. These are automatically scheduled in advance to multi-year work programmes.

Therefore, in general, the Committee may consider the following actions on specific items listed on the Forward Plan:

	Committee action	When	How
1	To provide specific comments to be included in a future Cabinet or Cabinet Member report on matters within its remit.	<p>As part of its pre-decision scrutiny role, this would be where the Committee wishes to provide its influence and views on a particular matter within the formal report to the Cabinet or Cabinet Member before the decision is made.</p> <p>This would usually be where the Committee has previously considered a draft report or the topic in detail, or where it considers it has sufficient information already to provide relevant comments to the decision-maker.</p>	<p>These would go within the standard section in every Cabinet or Cabinet Member report called "Select Committee comments".</p> <p>The Cabinet or Cabinet Member would then consider these as part of any decision they make.</p>
2	To request further information on future reports listed under its remit.	<p>As part of its pre-decision scrutiny role, this would be where the Committee wishes to discover more about a matter within its remit that is listed on the Forward Plan.</p> <p>Whilst such advance information can be requested from officers, the Committee should note that information may or may not be available in advance due to various factors, including timescales or the status of the drafting of the report itself and the formulation of final recommendation(s). Ultimately, the provision of any information in advance would be a matter for the Cabinet Member to decide.</p>	<p>This would be considered at a subsequent Select Committee meeting. Alternatively, information could be circulated outside the meeting if reporting timescales require this.</p> <p>Upon the provision of any information, the Select Committee may then decide to provide specific comments (as per 1 above).</p>
3	To request the Cabinet Member considers providing a draft of the report, if feasible, for the Select Committee to consider prior to it being considered formally for decision.	<p>As part of its pre-decision scrutiny role, this would be where the Committee wishes to provide an early steer or help shape a future report to Cabinet, e.g., on a policy matter.</p> <p>Whilst not the default position, Select Committees do occasionally receive draft versions of Cabinet reports prior to their formal consideration. The provision of such draft reports in advance may depend upon different factors, e.g., the timings required for that decision. Ultimately any request to see a draft report early would need the approval of the relevant Cabinet Member.</p>	<p>Democratic Services would contact the relevant Cabinet Member and Officer upon any such request.</p> <p>If agreed, the draft report would be considered at a subsequent Select Committee meeting to provide views and feedback to officers before they finalise it for the Cabinet or Cabinet Member. An opportunity to provide specific comments (as per 1 above) is also possible.</p>
4	To identify a forthcoming report that may merit a post-decision review at a later Select Committee meeting.	<p>As part of its post-decision scrutiny and broader reviewing role, this would be where the Select Committee may wish to monitor the implementation of a certain Cabinet or Cabinet Member decision listed/taken at a later stage, i.e., to review its effectiveness after a period of 6 months.</p> <p>The Committee should note that this is different to the use of the post-decision scrutiny 'call-in' power which seeks to ask the Cabinet or Cabinet Member to formally re-consider a decision up to 5 working days after the decision notice has been issued. This is undertaken via the new Scrutiny Call-in App members of the relevant Select Committee.</p>	<p>The Committee would add the matter to its multi-year work programme after a suitable time has elapsed upon the decision expected to be made by the Cabinet or Cabinet Member.</p> <p>Relevant service areas may be best to advise on the most appropriate time to review the matter once the decision is made.</p>

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BACKGROUND PAPERS

- [Protocol on Overview & Scrutiny and Cabinet relations adopted by Council 12 September 2019](#)
- [Scrutiny Call-in App](#)

**Scheduled
Upcoming
Decisions**

Ref

Further details

Ward(s)

Final
decision by
Full Council

Cabinet
Member(s)
Responsible

Relevant
Select
Committee

Directorate /
Lead Officer

Consultation related
to the decision

**NEW
ITEM**

Public or
Private
(with
reason)

SI = Standard Item each month/regularly Council Directorates: AS = Adult Services & Health P = Place C = Central Services R = Resources CS= Children's Services

Cabinet meeting - Thursday 12 October 2023 (report deadline 25 September)

141a	Consultation on changes to school admissions arrangements	As an education authority the Borough must plan for a sufficiency of places and efficient use of resources. There has been a slight decline in demand across the primary sector, with some fluctuations, but it is clear that the level of primary surplus places continues to be too high, pooling in a few schools. There is the opportunity to review the number of primary places and potentially reduce Published Admission Numbers (PAN) in some schools to ensure schools and the authority best meet the needs of all pupils across the Borough, and make effective use of resources in schools and between them. Therefore, the Council is proposing to reduce the Published Admission Number for a number of Hillingdon primary schools. This will be consulted on before a final decision is made by Cabinet.	All		Cllr Susan O'Brien - Children, Families & Education	Children, Families & Education	CS - Laura Baldry / Hayley Murphy / Jenny Chalmers			Public
SS	The Annual Report Of Adult and Child Safeguarding Arrangements	This report provides the Cabinet with a summary of the activity undertaken by the Safeguarding Children Partnership Board and the Safeguarding Adults Board to address the identified local priorities. The Cabinet will consider this report and approve the activity and the local priorities for the two boards.	All		Cllr Susan O'Brien - Children, Families & Education / Cllr Jane Palmer - Health & Social Care	Health & Social Care / Children, Families & Education	CS / AS - Alex Coman / Sandra Taylor	Select Committees		Public
SI	Public Preview of matters to be considered in private	A report to Cabinet to provide maximum transparency to residents on the private and confidential matters to be considered later in Part 2 of the Cabinet meeting and agenda.	TBC		All Cabinet Members	All	C - Democratic Services			Public

Cabinet Member Decisions expected - October 2023

063	SEND Strategy	Following consultation, the Cabinet Member will consider approval of the Council's Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Strategy - a collaborative document outlining the vision and priorities for service delivery to children, young people and young adults in Hillingdon over the next few years.	Various		Cllr Susan O'Brien - Children, Families & Education	Children, Families & Education	CS - Julie Kelly	Children, Families & Education Select Committee		Public
SI	Standard Items taken each month by the Cabinet Member	Cabinet Members make a number of non-key decisions each month on standard items - details of these are listed at the end of the Forward Plan.	Various		All	TBC	C - Democratic Services	Various		Public

Scheduled Upcoming Decisions

Ref

Further details

Ward(s)

Final decision by Full Council	Cabinet Member(s) Responsible	Relevant Select Committee	Directorate / Lead Officer	Consultation related to the decision	NEW ITEM	Public or Private (with reason)
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SI = Standard Item each month/regularly Council Directorates: AS = Adult Services & Health P = Place C = Central Services R = Resources CS= Children's Services

Cabinet meeting - Thursday 9 November 2023 (report deadline 23 October)

149	DPS for Alternative Provision - Education and SEND	Cabinet will consider the establishment of a Dynamic Purchasing System (DPS) framework for Alternative Provision for Education and Special Educational Needs and Disabilities. Alternative provision is education outside school arranged by local authorities for pupils who, because of exclusion, illness or other reasons, would otherwise receive suitable education.	N/A		Cllr Susan O'Brien - Children, Families & Education	Children, Families & Education	CS / R - R Verma / Kathryn Angelini		NEW ITEM	Private (3)
SI	Public Preview of matters to be considered in private	A report to Cabinet to provide maximum transparency to residents on the private and confidential matters to be considered later in Part 2 of the Cabinet meeting and agenda.	TBC		All Cabinet Members	All	C - Democratic Services			Public
SI	Reports from Select Committees	Reports, findings and recommendations for consideration by the Cabinet, when referred from the appropriate Committee.	All		All	TBC	C - Democratic Services	TBC		Public

Cabinet Member Decisions expected - November 2023

SI	Standard Items taken each month by the Cabinet Member	Cabinet Members make a number of non-key decisions each month on standard items - details of these are listed at the end of the Forward Plan.	Various		All	TBC	C - Democratic Services	Various		Public
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Cabinet meeting - Thursday 14 December 2023 (report deadline 27 November)

110a	The Council's Budget - Medium Term Financial Forecast 2024/25 - 2028/29 (BUDGET FRAMEWORK)	This report will set out the Medium Term Financial Forecast (MTFF), which includes the draft General Fund reserve budget and capital programme for 2023/24 for consultation, along with indicative projections for the following four years. This will also include the HRA rents for consideration.	All	Proposed Full Council adoption - 22 February 2024	Cllr Martin Goddard - Finance	All	R - Andy Evans	Public consultation through the Select Committee process and statutory consultation with businesses & ratepayers		Public
SI	Public Preview of matters to be considered in private	A report to Cabinet to provide maximum transparency to residents on the private and confidential matters to be considered later in Part 2 of the Cabinet meeting and agenda.	TBC		All Cabinet Members	All	C - Democratic Services			Public
SI	Reports from Select Committees	Reports, findings and recommendations for consideration by the Cabinet, when referred from the appropriate Committee.	All		All	TBC	C - Democratic Services	TBC		Public

Cabinet Member Decisions expected - December 2023

SI	Standard Items taken each month by the Cabinet Member	Cabinet Members make a number of non-key decisions each month on standard items - details of these are listed at the end of the Forward Plan.	Various		All	TBC	C - Democratic Services	Various		Public
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Ref	Scheduled Upcoming Decisions	Further details	Ward(s)	Final decision by Full Council	Cabinet Member(s) Responsible	Relevant Select Committee	Directorate / Lead Officer	Consultation related to the decision	NEW ITEM	Public or Private (with reason)
SI = Standard Item each month/regularly Council Directorates: AS = Adult Services & Health P = Place C = Central Services R = Resources CS= Children's Services										
Cabinet meeting - Thursday 11 January 2024 (report deadline 11 December 2023)										
SI	Public Preview of matters to be considered in private	A report to Cabinet to provide maximum transparency to residents on the private and confidential matters to be considered later in Part 2 of the Cabinet meeting and agenda.	TBC		All Cabinet Members	All	C - Democratic Services			Public
SI	Reports from Select Committees	Reports, findings and recommendations for consideration by the Cabinet, when referred from the appropriate Committee.	All		All	TBC	C - Democratic Services	TBC		Public
Cabinet Member Decisions expected - January 2024										
SI	Standard Items taken each month by the Cabinet Member	Cabinet Members make a number of non-key decisions each month on standard items - details of these are listed at the end of the Forward Plan.	Various		All	TBC	C - Democratic Services	Various		Public
Cabinet meeting - Thursday 15 February 2024 (report deadline 29 January)										
110a 6606a 99	The Council's Budget - Medium Term Financial Forecast 2024/25 - 2028/29 (BUDGET FRAMEWORK)	Following consultation, this report will set out the Medium Term Financial Forecast (MTFF), which includes the draft General Fund reserve budget and capital programme for 2024/25 for consultation, along with indicative projections for the following four years. This will also include the HRA rents for consideration.	All	Proposed Full Council adoption - 22 February 2024	Cllr Ian Edwards - Leader of the Council / Cllr Martin Goddard - Finance	All	R - Andy Evans	Public consultation through the Select Committee process and statutory consultation with businesses & ratepayers		Public
141b	Changes to school admissions arrangements	Continuous review of school places and Published Admissions Numbers ensures schools and the Council can best meet the needs of all pupils across the Borough, and make effective use of resources in schools and between them. Following consultation on proposals to reduce Published Admission Numbers (PAN) in some schools, Cabinet will receive the outcome of the consultation and make the necessary decisions.	All		Cllr Susan O'Brien - Children, Families & Education	Children, Families & Education	CS - Laura Baldry / Hayley Murphy / Jenny Chalmers			Public
SI	Public Preview of matters to be considered in private	A report to Cabinet to provide maximum transparency to residents on the private and confidential matters to be considered later in Part 2 of the Cabinet meeting and agenda.	TBC		All Cabinet Members	All	CS - Democratic Services			Public
SI	Reports from Select Committees	Reports, findings and recommendations for consideration by the Cabinet, when referred from the appropriate Committee.	All		All	TBC	CS - Democratic Services	TBC		Public

Ref	Scheduled Upcoming Decisions	Further details	Ward(s)	Final decision by Full Council	Cabinet Member(s) Responsible	Relevant Select Committee	Directorate / Lead Officer	Consultation related to the decision	NEW ITEM	Public or Private (with reason)
SI = Standard Item each month/regularly Council Directorates: AS = Adult Services & Health P = Place C = Central Services R = Resources CS= Children's Services										
Cabinet Member Decisions expected - February 2024										
SI	Standard Items taken each month by the Cabinet Member	Cabinet Members make a number of non-key decisions each month on standard items - details of these are listed at the end of the Forward Plan.	Various		All	TBC	CS - Democratic Services	Various		Public
Cabinet meeting - Thursday 21 March 2024 (report deadline 4 March)										
SI	Public Preview of matters to be considered in private	A report to Cabinet to provide maximum transparency to residents on the private and confidential matters to be considered later in Part 2 of the Cabinet meeting and agenda.	TBC		All Cabinet Members	All	CS - Democratic Services			Public
SI	Reports from Select Committees	Reports, findings and recommendations for consideration by the Cabinet, when referred from the appropriate Committee.	All		All	TBC	CS - Democratic Services	TBC		Public
Cabinet Member Decisions expected - March 2024										
SI	Standard Items taken each month by the Cabinet Member	Cabinet Members make a number of non-key decisions each month on standard items - details of these are listed at the end of the Forward Plan.	Various		All	TBC	CS - Democratic Services	Various		Public
Cabinet meeting - Thursday 18 April 2024 (report deadline 1 April)										
046	Standards and quality of education in Hillingdon during 2022/23	The Annual Report to Cabinet regarding children and young people's educational performance across Hillingdon schools.	All		Cllr Susan O'Brien - Children, Families & Education	Children, Families & Education	CS - Abi Preston	Select Committee		Public
SI	Public Preview of matters to be considered in private	A report to Cabinet to provide maximum transparency to residents on the private and confidential matters to be considered later in Part 2 of the Cabinet meeting and agenda.	TBC		All Cabinet Members	All	C - Democratic Services			Public
SI	Reports from Select Committees	Reports, findings and recommendations for consideration by the Cabinet, when referred from the appropriate Committee.	Various		All	TBC	C - Democratic Services	Various		Public
Cabinet Member Decisions expected - April 2024										
SI	Standard Items taken each month by the Cabinet Member	Cabinet Members make a number of decisions each month on standard items - details of these standard items are listed at the end of the Forward Plan.	Various		All	TBC	C - Democratic Services	Various		Public

Scheduled Upcoming Decisions

Ref

Further details

Ward(s)

Final decision by Full Council	Cabinet Member(s) Responsible	Relevant Select Committee	Directorate / Lead Officer	Consultation related to the decision	NEW ITEM	Public or Private (with reason)
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SI = Standard Item each month/regularly Council Directorates: AS = Adult Services & Health P = Place C = Central Services R = Resources CS= Children's Services

CABINET MEMBER DECISIONS: Standard Items (SI) that may be considered each month

SI	Urgent Cabinet-level decisions & interim decision-making (including emergency decisions)	The Leader of the Council has the necessary authority to make decisions that would otherwise be reserved to the Cabinet, in the absence of a Cabinet meeting or in urgent circumstances. Any such decisions will be published in the usual way and reported to a subsequent Cabinet meeting for ratification. The Leader may also take emergency decisions without notice, in particular in relation to the COVID-19 pandemic, which will be ratified at a later Cabinet meeting.	Various		Cllr Ian Edwards - Leader of the Council	TBC	C - Democratic Services	TBC		Public / Private
SI	School Governing Bodies, Instruments of Government and Governors / Authorising Academy Appointments	To approve appointments, nominate appointments and make reappointments of local authority governors and to approve any changes to school governing body constitutions. To also authorise any Member to be a Governor or Director of an Academy.	N/A		Cllr Susan O'Brien - Children, Families & Education	Children, Families & Education	CS - Julie Kelly / CS - Democratic Services			Public
SI	Release of Capital Funds	The release of all capital monies requires formal Member approval, unless otherwise determined either by the Cabinet or the Leader. Batches of monthly reports (as well as occasional individual reports) to determine the release of capital for any schemes already agreed in the capital budget and previously approved by Cabinet or Cabinet Members	TBC		Cllr Martin Goddard - Finance (in conjunction with relevant Cabinet Member)	All - TBC by decision made	various	Corporate Finance		Public but some Private (1,2,3)
SI	Petitions about matters under the control of the Cabinet	Cabinet Members will consider a number of petitions received by local residents and organisations and decide on future action. These will be arranged as Petition Hearings.	TBC		All	TBC	C - Democratic Services			Public
SI	To approve compensation payments	To approve compensation payments in relation to any complaint to the Council in excess of £1000.	n/a		All	TBC	various			Private (1,2,3)

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Scheduled Upcoming Decisions

Ref

Further details

Ward(s)

				Final decision by Full Council	Cabinet Member(s) Responsible	Relevant Select Committee	Directorate / Lead Officer	Consultation related to the decision	NEW ITEM	Public or Private (with reason)
SI	Acceptance of Tenders	To accept quotations, tenders, contract extensions and contract variations valued between £50k and £500k in their Portfolio Area where funding is previously included in Council budgets.	n/a		Cllr Ian Edwards - Leader of the Council OR Cllr Martin Goddard - Finance / in conjunction with relevant Cabinet Member	TBC	various			Private (3)
SI	All Delegated Decisions by Cabinet to Cabinet Members, including tender and property decisions	Where previously delegated by Cabinet, to make any necessary decisions, accept tenders, bids and authorise property decisions / transactions in accordance with the Procurement and Contract Standing Orders.	TBC		All	TBC	various			Public / Private (1,2,3)
SI	School Redundancy Payments	To consider requests for School Redundancy Payments and decide whether to approve them on behalf of the Local Authority	TBC		Cllr Susan O'Brien - Children, Families & Education	Children, Families & Education	CS - Julie Kelly			Private (1,2,3)
SI	External funding bids	To authorise the making of bids for external funding where there is no requirement for a financial commitment from the Council.	n/a		All	TBC	various			Public
SI	Response to key consultations that may impact upon the Borough	A standard item to capture any emerging consultations from Government, the GLA or other public bodies and institutions that will impact upon the Borough. Where the deadline to respond cannot be met by the date of the Cabinet meeting, the Constitution allows the Cabinet Member to sign-off the response.	TBC		All	TBC	various			Public

SI = Standard Item each month/regularly Council Directorates: AS = Adult Services & Health P = Place C = Central Services R = Resources CS= Children's Services

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WORK PROGRAMME

Committee name	Children, Families and Education Select Committee
Officer reporting	Ryan Dell, Democratic Services
Papers with report	Appendix A – Work Programme
Ward	All

HEADLINES

To enable the Committee to note future meeting dates and to forward plan its work for the current municipal year.

RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Children, Families and Education Select Committee considers the report and agrees any amendments.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- The Committee's meetings will start at 7pm and the witnesses attending each of the meetings may include representatives from external organisations, some of whom travel from outside of the Borough. Forthcoming meeting dates are as follows:

Meeting Date	Room
10 October 2023	CR6
15 November 2023	CR5
09 January 2024	CR5
01 February 2024	CR5
14 March 2024	CR6
18 April 2024	CR5

Implications on related Council policies

The role of the Select Committees is to make recommendations on service changes and improvements to the Cabinet, who are responsible for the Council's policy and direction.

How this report benefits Hillingdon residents

Select Committees directly engage residents in shaping policy and recommendations and the Committees seek to improve the way the Council provides services to residents.

Financial Implications

None at this stage.

Legal Implications

None at this stage.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

NIL.

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