

Meeting Information

Title:	Notes of the BHR Safeguarding Partnership Meeting		
Date:	12 February 2021	Time:	10:00 – 12:00
Chair:	Robert South, Director of Children’s Services, LB Havering		
Secretariat:	Lesley Perry, Manager, Redbridge SCP & SAB		
Online Platform:	MS Teams		

Attendance

Name	Title	Agency
Attendees:		
Robert South (RS) (Chair)	Director of Children’s Services	LB Havering
Elaine Allegretti (EA) (from 11:00)	Director of People and Resilience	LB Barking & Dagenham
Adrian Loades (AL)	Corporate Director of People	LB Redbridge
Teresa DeVito (TDV)	Head of Service - Safeguarding & Quality Assurance	LB Barking & Dagenham
Gordon Henderson (GH)	DCI Public Protection	East Area, BCU, MPS
Eve McGrath (EMc)	Designated Nurse for Safeguarding Adults	BHR CCGs
Lesley Perry (LP) (Notes)	Partnerships Manager	Redbridge SCP & SAB
Eleanor Parkin (EP)	Partnerships and Programmes Manager	LB Barking & Dagenham
Martin Wallace (MW)	Partnerships and Learning Manager	LB Havering
Guests:		
Jane Corrigan (JC) (Item 10)	Detective Superintendent SO15	MPS
Hazel North-Stevens (HNS) (Item 11)	Lead Commissioner for Community Safety	LB Barking and Dagenham
Doug Tanner (DT) (Item 6)	Children, Young People, Maternity and CAMHS Commissioning Lead	BHR CCG
Apologies:		
John Carroll (JC)	Det. Sup. Public Protection	East Area, BCU, MPS
Mark Gilbey-Cross (MGC)	Deputy Nurse Director	BHR CCGs
Jemma Breslin (JB)	Business Manager	B&D Children’s MA Safeguarding Partnership

Notes

1 Welcome, Introductions and Apologies

RS welcomed all to the meeting. Apologies were received as above. All agencies were represented.

2 **Notes of Previous Meeting – 27 November 2020**

The draft notes of the previous meeting, held on 27 November 2020, were agreed. The meeting planned for January 2021 had been cancelled to allow for concentration on responding to the pandemic post-Christmas and New Year period.

3 **Action Log 2020 - 2021**

An updated version of the Action Log was reviewed:

- 2020/01 - Anticipated that following update to B&D SCP website pages, ToR for the BHR Safeguarding Partnership will be added within the next week. C/F.
- 2020/08 - Prevent Referral Form – now under formal pilot in one London Borough. Issues still being considered by the Working Group. C/F
- 2020/17 - Work with Care Homes LAC going missing – work has begun with one meeting taking place and another scheduled. C/F
- 2020/21 –Case Review documents for BHR – EP to complete branding, logos etc. and circulate for publication on local SCP websites. C/F
- 2020/22 – CDR referral route for CPSR and link to Rapid Reviews – delayed due to CDR Manager secondment. C/F
- 2020/29 – On the Agenda. Close.
- 2020/33 - League Table shared at a meeting. AL to follow up via e-mail. C/F.
- 2020/40 – Home Office letter. Response received from NHSE – see AOB. C/F.
- 2020/44 – D/Sup Jane Corrigan S015 attending today’s meeting (Item 10). Close.
- 2020/45 –DT attending today’s meeting (Item 6). Close.
- 2020/46 - Gangs and serious youth violence cross borough working - AL to take forward discussions locally.
- 2020/47 – Children and young people’s mental health on the Agenda. Close.
- 2020/48 – TDV provided an update to the meeting – see agenda item. Close.
- 2020/49 – work underway and update provided to the meeting by AL. Close.
- 2020/50 - presentation shared within Boroughs. Close.
- 2020/51 – response awaited from Paul Archer who is currently on secondment. LP to follow up again. C/F

4. **Letter from Vicky Ford MP, DfE – Annual Report**

RS summarised the content of the letter from Vicky Ford MP, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Children and Families, Department for Education (DfE), dated 26 November 2020, which had been sent to local safeguarding partners with an update on the safeguarding reform implementation.

The letter included a reminder to statutory safeguarding partners of the need to prepare an annual scrutiny report and forward a copy to both the Child Safeguarding Review Panel (CSPR) and to What Works for Children’s Social Care. RS said that whilst this had been discussed previously, but a report hadn’t yet been developed and would give rise to a wider conversation on reviewing the Partnership, including taking account of feedback from Independent Scrutineers. He felt it was fair to say that COVID had impacted progress. AL said that he has been asked by the Independent Scrutineer in Redbridge about a report. RS proposed a meeting to look at the Partnership and potential options. This was agreed.

Action 2021/53: Lead from each agency to meet to review the Partnership achievements, dynamics with the local SCPs, reflections on any scrutiny and consider development of an annual report. LP/TDV/MW to arrange the meeting for week commencing 22 February 2021.

The letter also referred to Government concern regarding a national increase in the number of serious incidents relating to deaths and injuries of babies under the age of 1, which the Minister had raised consistently at the last few meetings. RS said that

whilst Havering were not seeing a particular rise, this had been discussed at the last Havering SCP. TDV advised that LBBD had established a Pre-Birth to respond to the number of referrals for unborn and babies up to the age of one year, which was fairly busy. She was not aware of any serious incidents, but this could be as a result of the preventative work of the new team. RS said that he had raised the issue of neglect and other forms of abuse of younger children this was an area of work to be taken forwarding in Havering. He advised that attendance at pre-schools had dropped off which could cause a rise in issues and also wondered whether the impact of COVID and re-deployment of Health Visitors had any impact.

Action 2021/54: Local Authorities to review data on the issues raised in the letter from the Minister relating to serious incidents for babies up to 1 year and LP/TD/MW to bring back to the next meeting.

5. **Update from Partners on Impact and Response to COVID-19 East Area BCU MPS**

GH identified that the focus in relation to safeguarding children has been on domestic abuse and missing incidents, mental health and suicide.

The increase in domestic abuse incidents had increased around August 2020, but had tapered off, with a slight spike in December, which was usual. There had been increased involvement on police in 136 mental health incidents and accompanying individuals to hospital. Increase in police involvement in [Section 136 \(Mental Health Act 1983\)](#) incidents and taking people to hospital. There is concern about the length of time officers are spending with individuals waiting in Emergency Departments (ED) or Goodmayes Hospital waiting for a bed. Whilst it is understood that there can be bed shortages, whilst officers are waiting, this means that there are less available to respond to issues on the street. He identified that there were two coinciding pressures of increase in mental health issues during COVID and also a general issue relating to access to mental health services.

There had been a reduction in missing episodes, presumably because during lockdown young people have less to draw them away.

RS said that as there is likely to be a phased return by year group of children to school from the second week in March. He asked what consideration had been given to planning for that given the recent high-profile incidents across London of youth violence, of which there had been some minor incidents across BHR following the previous lockdown, one potential cause of which was the decrease by Transport for London (TfL) on the number of buses causing groups of young people to gather at bus stops. GH said that after incidents in south west London a couple of weeks ago, there was increase focus on violence controls, high-harm offenders and tag breaches. Schools returning may potentially increase the opportunities for gatherings and street violence, but this was being planned for.

LB Redbridge

AL said that Redbridge had not seen the same level of drop off of referrals as it had in the first wave of COVID. One area of high concerns were the number of referrals relating to of children and young people mental health. There were also challenging complex and difficult judgements needing to be made between poverty and neglect, for example relating to cause and effect, similarly with Domestic Abuse. This wave has affected more staff personally in relation to COVID and there is a general feeling of tiredness.

LB Barking & Dagenham

TDV advised that the situation was similar in Barking and Dagenham. There was an increase domestic violence incidents reflecting GH's comments, an increase in school referrals and a decrease in the number of referrals from health. The Borough has the highest number of open cases in Children's Social Care for a number of years, with some social workers reporting exceptionally high caseloads. There has been an

increase in exploitation cases, an on-line example of which was a 15-year-old boy who had been groomed by a man aged approximately 60, asking for the child to meet him at a hotel. Fortunately, the hotel were sufficiently concerned to refer to the police. GH said that the adult was traced, house searched and arrested, and the young person returned home. Whilst concerning, GH reflected that positively the hotel had been observant and raised the alert. TDV said that was positive but there was concern about how many cases aren't identified. GH said that there hadn't been the sharp rise in on-line exploitation cases that had been anticipated at the start of the pandemic, but this might be due to time lag in reporting.

TDV said that staff were being more impacted by COVID, home schooling and general tiredness. Vaccines are now being offered to front line staff but there were some concerns about take up, particularly with BAME staff. A series of briefings had been delivered with Public Health to allow for the airing of concerns and for some staff they had been able to reflect and had changed their minds. RS said it is important that partners keep track of any issues about staff vaccinations

LB Havering

RS said the situation was similar in Havering. Planning was taking place for the re-opening of schools. Real concerns were being raised by teachers and trade unions around access to vaccinations. Generally the system was exhausted. However, it was important to balance the emergency response and also manage the ongoing change and develop our services accordingly.

BHR CCG

EM said that the other two Designated Nurses for Safeguarding Adults in the CCG had been re-deployed, as had two of those for Safeguarding Children. She was covering the three Boroughs and attending as many meetings as possible. The biggest concern currently for safeguarding adults is the numbers presenting in mental health crisis and significant rise in suicide rates across a whole range of ages. The other main concern is domestic violence.

6. Partnership Priority: Children and Young People's Mental Health

6.1 Update: Multi-Agency Audit – Adolescent Suicide Ideation

TDV feedback that a further meeting had taken place of the Working Group. Health partners had expressed concern around capacity to complete the audits during the pandemic with the number of non-clinical staff redeployed into clinical roles. An action from the meeting was to review in Boroughs the numbers of cases that met the criteria identified (14 – 18 years) and re-convene the Working Group in May. TDV said that she had thought it might be a struggle to identify many, but she had found 12 young people with open cases who had attempted suicide or had identified serious suicidal ideation.

AL advised that Redbridge is currently undertaking a Rapid Review on the case of a 12-year-old boy who died through suicide, who was on a CP Plan and subject to PLO. It is not clear whether this was identified or not. He said that it may result in a Child Safeguarding Practice Review (CSPR). AL said that whilst he completely recognised the pressure on the system, given the growing concerns in this area, he would be keen to get the audits underway at the earliest opportunity. TDV said that she would be able to arrange for the twelve cases in LBB to be audited by children's social care but one of the potential areas of work was a suicide prevention pathway which health would lead on.

Action 2021/55: EM/TDV to discuss capacity and bring back a timescale to the next meeting.

6.2 Update on LBBB case – MPS attendance at school for mental health issue

EA recapped on the situation that took place a few months ago when a 7-year-old child had a mental health crisis at school. Interact were contacted but were unable to attend and advised that the police should be called. The police attended and were involved in providing a containment response and accompanied the child to ED. EA said that there had been a couple of similar incidents and was concerned that this was the default position. Neither AL nor RS were aware of similar situations in their Borough. GH commented that for a child already distressed, police intervention could make the situation worse. EA said that there was some discussion taking place of extending the Interact model. RS suggested that this could be encompassed in the work that DT is leading on.

EA said that there had been some work in Barking and Dagenham on the use of restraints in schools, including quality assurance, as part of school improvement, and an escalation process had been developed. She said it would be helpful to know how many Section 136 attendances by the police took place. GH said he wasn't sure how easy it would be to obtain that data but could be picked up on MERLINS.

Action 2021/56: EA to speak to DT regarding capacity in Interact.

Action 2021/57: TDV/EA to share the escalation process for restraint.

Action 2021/58: GH review whether Section 136 data on schools is accessible and provide.

6.3 Commissioning response to demand for children and young people's mental health

Doug Tanner (DT), Lead Commissioner Maternity, BHR CCG, joined the meeting. He advised that attendances at ED for physical conditions at ED had reduced, but there had been an increase in mental health presentations of children and young people. An audit had taken place on behalf of the CCG, but this hadn't provided the depth of information required. Further work was in train, with a rolling audit to gain robust empirical data, but unfortunately the lead on this had now been re-deployed. A high percentage of the children that were presenting were already known to children's social care and often related to a placement breakdown which the EDT was finding it difficult to resolve, which had contributed to some children being held in ED for long periods. Concerns had been raised via the safeguarding protocol escalation. A group of representatives from the children's social care, BHRUT and Whipps Cross Hospital (Bart's Health NHS Trust) had met. More recently it had been established that a provider collaborative including NELFT and ELT, and other now responsible for Tier 4 provision had put together bids for NHS London relating to winter pressures funding to support during the crisis. This included expansion of the Interact Service and the Clinical Decision Unit (CDU). The bid had been rejected the first time around but was being re-submitted. The aim was to develop an alternative place of safety, or 'crisis house' for children known to social care. The Discharge Oversight Group, which included representatives from each Borough, had now been extended to include this work. As well as this potential positive long-term solution, recently there had been no safeguarding escalations so agencies appeared to be working better together.

RS said that the feedback he receives regularly are concerns about how risk is not always managed or shared in a collaborative way. Sometimes there is a passing of the risk management and a keenness to discharge a child from a situation that is perceived to be high risk. If this is agreed, then it is important that agencies share that risk and manage the response together. When it doesn't work, one agency feels that they have been left on their own to manage the risk. AL said that he finds it reassuring to hear about a real and collective commitment to address this and find solutions as it can cause significant issues for children who should not be held in that environment.

7. Government projections for demographic change across BHR

RS said he hasn't had time to progress.

Action 2021/59: C/F to next agenda.

8. LAC and Care Leavers placed out of Borough into BHR - update on work

AL updated on conversations that had taken place in December where consideration was given to the three Boroughs receiving in high levels of placements of Looked After Children and Care Leavers from other local authorities due to the large numbers of children's homes and semi-independent providers in the area. This has implications on services, in particular the police, health and youth offending and potential issues for the children being placed here and those they are placed with. The work aims to ensure that children are safe in placements and not put at further risk. There are existing protocols in place, including Notifications. There was an agreement that there were three areas of work.

The first was to ensure that our Boroughs are making the necessary Notifications when we place outside of area. The second was to scope specific work with those local authorities that place the highest number of children with us, which includes at least two neighbouring London Boroughs, understandable for geographical reasons. This could include developing relationships and key contacts in order to raise any early indications of concerns, particularly for those young people where there was high risk of, for example, gang affiliation or exploitation. Finally, it was thought that there was potential for a form of multi-agency strategy meeting at the point of placement where there were high concerns. This would include the placement provider, the placing local authority and the receiving local authority. AL has already had some discussions locally about this and whilst the issue of capacity was raised, there was understanding of the rationale. Yesterday Ofsted had announced that they were actively looking at some form of oversight of semi-independent provision, which would be helpful. GH said that it would be helpful to understand numbers and pointed out that young people often migrate back to their home borough and it was easy to do this across London. RS said that as they do this, the risks escalate quickly. RS said that there may be potential to raise with work within the context of the [national independent review of children's social care](#) announced by the DfE, and also tap into any good practice via the LEAR or North East London residential innovation work. AL said that he had reached out to the VIU but not had any commitment from them to involvement. RS said that he felt there needed to be some more pro-active involvement from Local Authorities due to the high level of risk.

AL said that on occasion he challenged other DCSs on specific cases and that they had actually welcomed this as it raised the profile of the case and improved oversight. GH was concerned about the level of information sharing with the police when a gang nominal is placed in a different BCU area. He said that it is difficult to mitigate against risks if they are not made aware. He said work is underway within the MPS to look developing flowcharts etc. to send to accommodating boroughs.

Action 2021/60: AL to link to national independent review of children's social care on this work.

9. Outcomes, Feedback and Learning from Rapid Reviews and Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews – Learning from LBBN Neglect Case

Action 2021/61: C/F presentation to the next meeting.

10. Development of work between BHR Safeguarding Partnership and Violence Reduction Unit to reduce youth violence and gang affiliation

Det. Super. Jane Corrigan (JC) S015 joined the meeting. She showed a short film which illustrated Counter Terrorism work and commented on four further terrorist attacks that had taken place since the film was made. JC is Prevent Lead for the MPS in London, sitting on the London Prevent Board and working across the 32

Boroughs to embed the Prevent Programme to safeguard those at risk from terrorism. She is also the lead for safeguarding in Counter Terrorism and runs the Strategic Engagement Team that work with communities to understand how they are feeling and undertake assessments of tensions across London e.g. rise in hate crime or impact of attacks in one borough on another. She is also the lead for the Vulnerability Support Hub which is formed of a group of highly experienced health professionals and manages the Team that cover the south of England. The Hub has expanded its focus from just prevent to pursue in order to meet needs more effectively.

JC highlighted the [Act Early website](#) and the linked advice line which is aimed at friends and families who are likely to spot the signs of vulnerability first, but from where there are low numbers of referrals (2%). Since 2015, 5% of all terrorism arrests involved children under the age of 18. 58% of all Prevent referrals are for those under 20 and half of those under the age of 15.

The [Counter Terrorism Advisory Network \(CTAN\)](#) supports community engagement and acted as a critical friend. It was broken down regionally to support local understanding, particularly important in London which is a complicated and multi-faceted city. The Advisory Group in London is already posing challenging questions about reporting of terrorist incidents and the impact on individuals.

Information on TACT (terrorist and extremist) offenders is already available at Borough level.

Following the HMIC inspection, a fourteenth safeguarding strand was now in place – vulnerable to being radicalised.

AL said that it would be interesting to understand the impact of COVID on terrorist activities and radicalisation and the response to that. EM said that individuals with ASD and Asperger's were overrepresented amongst young people involved in terrorism. JC agreed and said that some specific work was undertaken in Wales in the Support Hub in relation to schizophrenia.

Action 2021/62: JC to be invited to return again for a longer agenda item and a list of topics/questions for focused discussion to be sent in advance.

11. **Proposal Report – Domestic Violence Flag**

Hazel North-Stephens (HNS), Lead Commissioner, Community Safety, LBBB, joined the meeting and presented key points from her report which outlined a local project stated in LBBB in 2019, which supported those experiencing domestic violence but falling through the gaps in relation to legal aid, perhaps were they had assets but not available money. The project, led and funded by the LBBB Legal Service, was a partnership initiative with Citizens Advice Bureau and currently five local family law firms. The solicitors, where are from charitable organisations, run a duty rota. The project had a successful first year picking up 260 referrals, with a particularly high uptake during the initial lockdown in February/March 2020, and from an equalities perspective a high number of referrals from Eastern European women. The project hasn't been evaluated yet, particularly because it has grown organically. 25% of the referrals received were out of borough, predominantly from Redbridge and Havering, which resulted in signposting. The proposal is to extend the project, which could no longer be funded within LBBB alone, to cover the BHR 'footprint'. This would provide a unified service, helpful to those agencies such as the BCU. The request is for the five partners to share the cost which would be approximately £8,000 each to keep the service going for a further year. AL said that in principle he was supportive. However, he would need to consult locally about work that had been commissioned out to SAFE Lives and also the fit with the Redbridge Reach Out Service, which he thought would work. RS echoed this and said he would need to discuss with the VAWG Manager. GH also agreed in principle as it sounded very supportive of victims but he wanted to be assured that it would not cause too much confusion for offices who had already

experienced this in relation to IDVAs. A clear pathway would be required, which ensured that Victim Support wasn't bi-passed.

Action 2021/63: HNS to e-mail to all with details and identifying who she has spoken to in each Borough and AL/RS/EM/GH to follow up regarding participation and funding.

12. BHR Case Review Tracker

The Case Review Tracker had been updated prior to circulation.

Action: 2021/64: Case Review Tracker to be added to the additional meeting of leads taking place to review the Partnership.

13. Agenda Forward Plan

Not reviewed.

14. Any Other Business (AOB)

Redbridge SCP Baby 'T' SCR – Response from NHSE

A response had been received from NHSE in relation to the recommendations from the Redbridge SCP Baby 'T' SCR which was circulated.

15. Date of Next Meeting

- 26 March 2021 @ 14:00