



Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) Reference Group to the Leicestershire and Rutland (L&R) Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) and Leicester (L) Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB)

Terms of Reference

Our Values

We are led by our commitment to the principle that safeguarding for children and young people is a cross-sector, multi-agency responsibility, and so support the implementation of Section 11 of the Children Act 2004, which places a statutory duty on key people and bodies to make arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. (Please see Appendix 1.)

We are also committed to work within all LSCB multi-agency procedures and guidance.

1. Purpose

1.1 To ensure the work of the group contributes to achieving the strategic priorities of the Business Plans for both the Leicester City Safeguarding Board and the Leicestershire and Rutland LSCB

1.2 To act as a conduit for communication between the LSCBs and the VCS in Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland

1.3 To be proactive in engaging the VCS and developing the influence of the sector in the work of the LSCBs

2. Responsibilities and Remit of the Group

2.1 Where relevant and appropriate, to represent VCS perspectives and interests on the LSCBs and to influence the work of the LSCBs, having regard to such matters as safeguarding training, safer recruitment, the development of agency specific child protection policies and the management of allegations against staff/volunteers

2.2 To identify VCS representatives to attend LSCB Sub-committees, as appropriate

2.3 To seek the views of the VCS on issues of concern to the LSCBs and report back to the LSCBs via the relevant sub-group and/or any other agreed and appropriate channels

2.4 To raise awareness within the VCS and to disseminate information regarding the work of the LSCBs and the LSCB procedures and practice guidance

2.5 To raise awareness of the LSCBs in relation to the VCS and the work of the sector

2.6 To identify appropriate resources available to the VCS that may assist organisations in relation to the development of effective safeguarding

2.7 To create and maintain appropriate links with other VCS networks and with key partnerships such as the Children's Trust Board and the Health and Well Being Boards

3. Structures and Processes - The group will...

3.1 Appoint a Chair whose term of office will be for a period of three years, after which time re-appointment or the appointment of a new Chair will be facilitated. A Chair will be able to serve for a maximum period of two terms. In exceptional circumstances and with the agreement of the majority of the reference group, the period in office may be extended to a third term. The Chair (or Deputy Chair) will act as the main link person with the LSCBs, representing the interests of the VCS on the LSCBs and/or sub-groups

3.2 Appoint a Deputy Chair whose term of office will be for a period of three years, after which time re-appointment or the appointment of a new Deputy Chair will be facilitated. A Deputy Chair will be able to serve for a maximum period of two terms. In exceptional circumstances and with the agreement of the majority of the reference group, the period in office may be extended to a third term. The Deputy will chair any Reference Group meetings in the absence of the appointed Chair and will support the Chair in the planning of the Reference Group meetings. The Deputy may also act as a link person with the LSCBs, representing the interests of the VCS on the LSCBs and/or sub- groups

4. Membership - The group will aim for a membership of between 10 and 15 people. Members of the group will be expected to attend a minimum of 50% of meetings per year and will be expected to contribute to the work of the group including the undertaking of tasks between meetings.

4.1 Membership of the VCS Safeguarding Reference sub-group will include:

- Representatives from VCS organisations that have a particular interest in safeguarding issues
- VCS representatives that have a particular interest in safeguarding
- VCS representation in relation to preventative work
- Representation in relation to smaller VCS organisations/groups
- Representation in relation to VCS organisations/groups that work with particular disadvantaged and/or minority communities

Co-opted members are: LSCB Board Managers for both Leicester LSCB and Leicestershire and Rutland LSCB

5. Quorum

5.1 The Sub-group will be quorate when representatives from at least three organisations are in attendance at a meeting. Attendance will be monitored. If the meeting is inquorate then any urgent business may be conducted by the Chair of the group in consultation with the Independent Chair of the LSCB.

6. Administration

6.1 Arrangements for administration and taking minutes are a joint responsibility of the group.

7. Frequency of meetings

7.1 The group will meet once per quarter; an interim extraordinary meeting of the group may be called between planned meetings to address specific and/or urgent issues

8. Reporting arrangements

8.1 The group will report to the Executive Chairs Group, the LLR Joint Executive, the Leicestershire and Rutland LSCB and Leicester LSCB

8.2 The group will provide relevant reports as requested by the Boards/Groups identified in 8.1

9. Variation

9.1 This Terms of Reference document will be reviewed annually. (Review Date: April 2019)

Appendix 1 to LSCB VCS Reference Group Terms of Reference

“Section 11 of the Children Act 2004 places a statutory duty on key people and bodies to make arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children. The statutory guidance on the duty, which was first issued in 2005, has been updated. The current revised version was published in 2015.

Part one of the guidance sets out the arrangements that are likely to be common to all or most of the agencies concerned. Part two deals with implementation in each particular agency to which the section 11 duty applies.

These arrangements require all agencies to have:

- Senior management commitment to the importance of safeguarding and promoting children's welfare
- A clear statement of the agency's responsibilities towards children, available for all staff
- A clear line of accountability within the organisation for work on safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children
- Service development that takes account of the need to safeguard and promote welfare, and is informed, where appropriate, by the views of children and families
- Training on safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children for all staff working with, or in contact with, children and families
- Safe recruitment procedures in place
- Effective inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children
- Effective information sharing