



# West of Berkshire Local Safeguarding Children Boards

## Draft Learning Review Practice Guidance and Tool Kit

This Document is  
currently out for  
consultation

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## Introduction

The West of Berkshire Local Safeguarding Children Boards (LSCB) sub groups are a tri-borough partnership consisting of three LSCBs: Reading, West Berkshire and Wokingham, which are under the governance and leadership of one Independent Chair.

The overarching aim of the West of Berkshire LSCB sub-groups is to gain wider learning across the West of Berkshire partnership informing practice to improve outcomes for children and families.

The West of Berkshire LSCB group has the following sub groups: West of Berkshire Section 11, Case Review, FGM and Training and Development.

## Purpose

The purpose of a West of Berkshire Case Review Group is to:

- Establish whether there are lessons to be learned from the case about the way in which local professionals and agencies work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of children
- Identify clearly what those lessons are, how they will be acted on, and what is expected to change as a result
- As a consequence, improve inter-agency working and better safeguard and promote the welfare of children

Some cases may meet the statutory criteria to be reviewed as a Serious Case Review (SCR), whilst other cases that may be below this threshold will benefit from being reviewed as a Multi-agency or single agency partnership review. All these reviews give insight into how agencies work together to safeguard children, and are a focus for driving improvements and providing transparency about the issues that may arise.

Alongside these criteria is a framework to audit trail the decision to, or not to, undertake a review. This audit trail will provide evidence to the each Board as to how and why review decisions are made. It will also provide evidence to the National Panel of Independent Experts on Serious Case Reviews as outlined in Working Together 2015.

## Legislation

Regulation 5 of the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) Regulations 2006 sets out the functions of LSCBs to undertake Serious Case Reviews, in accordance with the statutory guidance laid out in 'Working Together to safeguard Children 2006 and updated 2015.

Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015 provides clear criteria in Chapter 4 about when LSCBs should conduct a Serious Case Review (SCR).

West of Berkshire Case Review Group should consider whether to conduct a SCR where

- (a) abuse of neglect of a child is known or suspected; and

- (b) either
- (i) the child has died and there is cause for concern as to the way in which the authority, their Board partners or other relevant persons have worked together to safeguard the child
  - (ii) the child has been seriously harmed and there is cause for concern as to the way in which the authority, their Board partners or other relevant persons have worked together to safeguard the child.

Chapter 4 of Working Together 2015 also recommends:

- “there should be a culture of continuous **learning and improvement** across the organisations that work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, identifying opportunities to draw on what works and promote good practice;
- the approach taken to reviews should be **proportionate** according to the scale and level of complexity of the issues being examined;

## **1 How to notify the West of Berkshire Case Review Group**

The West of Berkshire Case Review Sub Group (WofB CRG) considers cases to decide whether or not a recommendation should be made to the West of Berkshire Independent Chair for a learning review to be undertaken..

### **How to refer to the West of Berkshire Case Review Sub Group (WofB CRG)**

Any agency can refer a case to the WofB CRG, requesting that consideration be given to holding a learning review. Cases will also be referred via the Rapid Response Team and the Coroner, where they feel the case may meet the requirements for a learning review. The Child Death Overview Panel may also make a referral to the WofB CRG for a case to be considered. The person making the referral is encouraged to discuss the case with their designated Officer for Safeguarding within their agency before making it.

Referrals should be sent to the WofB CRG coordinator using the West of Berkshire Case Review Form (Appendix 1). Once a referral is received, it will be allocated a reference number to that referral and ensure that all subsequent documentation around that case will have the same reference number. The reference number will be used to password protect all the documents relevant to that referral.

### **Criteria for Notifying Cases for review by West of Berkshire Case Review Group (WofB CRG)**

#### **Incidents and circumstances that MUST be notified to (WofB CRG):**

- abuse or neglect of a child is known or suspected; and either
  - the child has died of suspicious circumstances
  - the child has been seriously harmed and there is cause for concern as to the way in which the authority, their Board partners or other relevant persons have worked together to safeguard the child
- when a child dies in custody,
  - in police custody,
  - on remand or following sentencing,
  - in a Young Offender Institution,

- in a secure training centre or a secure children's home, or
  - where the child was detained under the Mental Health Act 2005.
- This includes cases where a child died by suspected suicide.
- A child sustains a potentially life threatening injury or serious and permanent impairment of health (physical and or mental) or development through abuse or neglect
  - A child has been subjected to serious sexual abuse and where there has been active multi-agency involvement with the child and family during or prior to the abuse occurring.
  - A parent has been murdered and a domestic homicide review is being initiated
  - A child has perpetrated a particularly serious offence, either against another child or an adult.

**Wider cases where all agencies should consider notifying the case to (WofB CRG) (depending on the gravity of the case or the significance of the issues it raises) are those where:**

Anything where a child suffered significant harm, or was very likely to have suffered harm if there had not been an intervention by any agency, and:

- There was clear evidence of risk of significant harm to a child that was:
  - Not recognised by organisations or individuals in contact with the child or perpetrator, or,
  - Not shared with others, or,
  - Not acted on appropriately
- A child has been abused or neglected in an institutional setting (e.g. school, nursery, children ort family centre, Youth Offending Institutions, Secure Training Centre, children's home or Armed Services training establishment) and where the abuse is of significant severity and/or failings identified by the notifier ;
- A child was abused or neglected while being looked after by the local authority and where there is some indication that agencies have not done enough or had not taken the opportunity to prevent this. This will also include incidents involving those children placed in Berkshire by other LA's. The other Authority will take the lead after being notified by (WofB CRG)
- A child died while absent from or having run away from home or other care setting;
- One or more agency or professional considers that its concerns were not taken sufficiently seriously, or acted upon appropriately, by another and where there is a significant adverse outcome as a result of not being listened to;
- The case indicates that there may be failings in one or more aspects of the local operation of formal safeguarding procedures which go beyond the handling of the specific case;
- The child concerned was the subject of a child protection plan, or had previously been the subject of a plan;
- The case suggests that (WofB CRG) may need to change its local protocols or procedures, or that procedures are not being adequately promulgated, understood or acted on;
- There are implications that the circumstances of the case may have national implications for systems or processes or there are significant public interest or community issues.

In the above cases, agencies should give serious consideration to notifying WofB CRG of the circumstances. If in doubt, the matter should be discussed with the your LSCB Business manager, who will take advice from the Chair of the West of Berkshire Case Review Sub Group.

#### **Good Practice case review notifications:**

- Where an agency feels that there are examples of good multi-agency practice demonstrated in a particular case which would provide good learning opportunities and positive outcomes for children.

#### **Case Notification process**

- Agency completes the notification form (including sufficient detail for an assessment as to why a review should be considered) and submits to WofB CRG. The link for the form is on the websites on all of the West of Berkshire LSCB
- West of Berkshire Case Review Group Chair discuss if there is sufficient detail to make a decision as to the need for a review;
- If, yes, request brief multi-agency information. The request will include the reason why the information is being sought, (i.e. the concern raised and the criteria for which this has been put forward). It will also be very tight around parameters around the historic timescale of involvement and family history;
- If no, consider the need for more information to be obtained and re-submitted (either single or multi-agency);
- If completely out of the review process, inform the notifier of the decision and the rationale;
- Multi-agency information is collated by individual LSCB and prepared for the next Case Review Group meeting for discussion and review decision (in exceptionally urgent cases, this can be undertaken by the Chair of the Case Review Group outside of the meeting);
- A process map for the notification/referral process is attached at Appendix B.  
**Need to add**

#### **What review should be undertaken?**

In deciding the nature of the review to be undertaken, the final decision on whether to conduct an SCR rests with the West Independent Chair. If an SCR is not required because the criteria (in regulation 5(2) Local Safeguarding Children Boards Regulations 2006) are not met, the Independent Chair may still decide to commission an SCR or they may choose to commission an alternative form of case review.

If the criteria for an SCR are not met, the Case Review Sub Group can still commission a review. The style and method of that review will be appropriate and proportionate to the circumstances of that individual case.

#### **Decision for alternative learning review**

When a Case has been referred to the West of Berkshire Case Review Group for SCR consideration and it is the decision of the WofBCRG that it does not reach the criteria for SCR an alternative Learning review maybe be considered. The process of informing the West of Berkshire Independent Chair and of an alternative learning

review and informing the agencies of the outcome of that decision does not change. Alternative learning reviews include;

- Significant Incident Learning Process (SILP)
- Multi-agency review
- Single Agency review
- Audit single and multi-agency

**A Significant Incident Learning Process (SILP)** is a learning event where agencies come together with a facilitator to review the case together, identify learning and agree any actions arising from the SILP. The WofBCRG will determine the scope and establish the terms of reference and timescale for the SILP and appoint a facilitator.

The key agencies and professionals involved in an identified case will be invited to a half or full day event to examine the case together. Agencies will provide chronologies of events (rather than a detailed management report). One facilitator will chair the event and another will write up the learning including recommendations, actions, timescales and clear responsibilities. Where necessary the writer will be an independent person. The report of summary of learning must be agreed by the WofBCRG which will also monitor its implementation and report progress to the safeguarding children board.

This process will also involve agency managers who will take responsibility for implementing the actions and learning. Consideration for a second event to review how the agreed actions have been met and how the learning was disseminated within agencies will be given to each SLIP.

**Multi-Agency Review (MAR)** is a review that looks at the multi-agency working in an identified case when the case does not reach the criteria for a SCR but there are clearly some multi-agency learning needs identify.

The WofB CRG will identify a lead reviewer for this review who can be someone from within West of Berkshire LSCBs or an independent person. The SCRSG and the lead reviewer will determine the terms of reference, timescales and the methodology to be adopted.

The lead review will determine the format and /or content of information the agency must provide using the templates in the tool kit appended to this guidance or other formats/ recourses more fitting to the review determined by the facilitator.

**Single-Agency Review (SAR)** is a review of a case that is carried out by an individual agency. When a single agency review is recommended by the WforBCRG and West of Berkshire Independent Chair, the West of Berkshire Independent Chair will write to the Lead for safeguarding with the agency identified requesting for that review to be undertaken. Agencies can choose the method they use to conduct the single agency review. Examples of methods include Root Cause Analysis reports or Internal Management Reports. The agency must inform the WforBCRG and West of Berkshire Independent Chair of the method and timescales for the review. The findings and learning from a single agency review is shared with the WforB CRG and West of Berkshire Independent Chair.

## **Audit**

### Multi-agency

West of Berkshire individual LSCBs Quality Assurance (QA) sub-group will be asked by the West of Berkshire Independent Chair as recommended by the WforBCRG to

conduct an audit of practice in the agencies involved in a particular case. Audits will follow a signs of safety approach to identify what was working well with the case, what agencies were worried about, and what needs to happen now. Audits will include the voice of the child, and the voice of the practitioners involved in the case.

#### Single-agency

An agency will be asked to conduct an audit of a particular area of practice and report their findings to the West of Berkshire Case review Group and QA sub-group. Audits will include the voice of the child, and the voice of the practitioners involved in the case, where appropriate.

In all alternative case reviews all correspondence will be managed through the individual West of Berkshire LSCB team

### **Decision to Undertake a Serious Case Review or Learning Review**

The West of Berkshire Case Review Group will consider the referral following presentation to the West of Berkshire Case Review Group, the notifier will be informed of the decision regarding the undertaking of a case review by email from the West of Berkshire Independent Chair.

The WofBCRG will then make a recommendation to the West of Berkshire Independent Chair using the referral Form, clearly recording each subgroup member's decision; within one week of the referral being considered by the WofBCRG The details on the referral form are checked by the WofBCRG chair before LSCB office sends to the LSCB independent chair.

Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015 clearly states that the final decision to undertake a Serious Case Review rests with West of Berkshire independent Chair who may seek peer challenge from another LSCB Chair when considering this decision.

If the SCR criteria are not met, the recommendation from the WofBCRG to the chair may still be to commission an SCR or to commission an alternative learning review. It must be clearly documented on the referral that consideration for an alternative review has taken place and an explanation of the outcome of that consideration recorded. It is likely that Ofsted and the National Panel will ask West of Berkshire Chair to account for this decision. This information must be sent to Ofsted.

Once the West of Berkshire Independent Chair has considered the recommendation from the WofBCRG and has made a final decision, the chair will record the outcome on the referral form and return to the WofBCRG chair, business manager. The independent chair must make a final decision within two weeks of the referral being considered by the WofBCRG. This allows time for the chair to consider the recommendation made by the WofBCRG, all the additional information and to have time to peer review the decision if required.

The final decisions made by the West of Berkshire independent Chair is documented on the same referral form in the relevant section and sent back to the SCR subgroup chair, LSCB Business manager and Head of Safeguarding, LSCB LA Council. The SCR Chair will inform all the SCR members of the chairs decision. If the decision by the West of Berkshire independent chair is different from the SCR subgroup recommendation, the SCR Subgroup will consider holding an extraordinary SCR subgroup meeting to consider the decision and suggested ways forward, made by

the LSCB Independent chair. If appropriate the Independent Chair will be asked to attend to further explain their decision.

Once the SCR group have been informed of the final decision made by the West of Berkshire Independent chair, the LSCB business manager will coordinate a written response from the SCR chair to all the named officers with each LSCB member agency and the agencies that provided the additional information. The written response will detail the Chair's final decision. The referral form will not be to be circulated.

The West of Berkshire LSCB must inform Ofsted, Department of Education and the National Panel of independent experts of their decision within five working days of the West of Berkshire Independent Chairs decision.

It is the responsibility of the named officers and agency managers to ensure that once the written response has been received it is communicated to front line practitioners who have been involved in the case; to ensure support and supervision. In situations where an extraordinary meeting has been held this should not delay the communication of the West of Berkshire Independent Chairs decision, however it must be noted that further communication may follow if an alternative learning review is being considered

### **1.3 Timescales for SCR**

As soon as the Chair approves the recommendation for an SCR to take place (which must be within one month of the case being referred to the WofBCRG), the Serious Case Review should be completed within six months of initiating it.

The West of Berkshire individual LSCB Business Manager will support this process ensuring there is a clear timeline in place and agreed at the first Scoping meeting.

Sometimes the complexity of the case does not become apparent until the review is in progress. As soon as it emerges that a review cannot be completed for example, because of potential prejudice to related court proceedings, the West of Berkshire Independent chair of the review or the LSCB Business Manager on their behalf, should discuss this with the West of Berkshire Independent Chair and write to Ofsted and the National Panel outlining the progress made to date and the proposed new extension date. This letter must demonstrate that the extension is required to complete an effective SCR that ends in good outcomes for children. The request for extension is considered as part of the Evaluation by Ofsted. Every Effort must be made, while the SCR is in progress to capture points from the cases about improvements needed and take corrective action to implement improvements and disseminate learning.

### **Actions for the West of Berkshire Case Review Sub Group**

- The LSCB Business Manager who is a member of the WofB CRG is to take a lead role in the coordination and support of the SCR process.
- Develop the draft scope and terms of reference for the SCR as far as possible in light of the information known in the case at this stage .These will be revisited and finalised by the SCR panel Group on review of the merged chorology.

- To identify and appoint an appropriate individual to Chair the SCR Panel group (depending on the methodology used). This person should be an independent of the LSCB and the organisations involved in the case.
- Ensure the SCR Panel group membership is appropriate with the right organisations, level of seniority represented, including communications represented for media discussions and that the members have sufficient Knowledge and expertise.
- Inform the National Panel of the names and qualifications of the independent experts appointed.

## **2 Initiating the Serious Case /Learning Review**

### **Letter to agencies confirming decision**

Once a decision to undertake an SCR/learning review has been taken and the review chair and overview writer has been commissioned; the LSCB Business Manager sends a formal notification and request for completion of a chronology, to Designated Senior Managers of the identified agencies, to inform them that a Serious Case Review is to take place.

It is expected that organisations have robust systems and processes in place in order to fully co-operate with this request, taking all necessary steps to quality assure and govern contributions to the SCR.

This initial letter will provide timescales and templates, together with notes for completion for the provision of an agency chronology and individual management review report. The chronology will need to be returned first. This will enable the merged chronology to be created as soon as possible in the process.

Compliance with timescales for submission for the chronology and the Individual agency reports is important to ensure the review meets the National set timescales. Agencies failing to meet the agreed timescale may cause delays to the completion of the review; these delays will be included in the SCR Overview Report.

Copies of this letter will be sent to the Head of Communications for the Council, who acts as the communication lead for the West of Berkshire and to the Legal Advisor to the West of Berkshire LSCB. Where the case involves criminal proceedings or death, a letter will also be sent to the Coroner.

### **Individual Agency reports**

These reports are required from every agency who has been involved with the child or their family. The purpose of the individual Agency report is to look openly and critically at individual organisational practice to see whether the case indicates that changes could and should be made, and if so, to identify how those changes will be brought about. As part of the process of writing the report the report writer is expected to meet with practitioners who were involved with the case to ensure all aspects of involvement are considered.

Once the Designated Senior Manager has received the letter and template for the Individual Agency report, s/he must ensure the following;

- That files are secured as soon as possible to guard against loss or interference.
- To identify an author for the individual agency report, who has no direct involvement with the case, and who is independent of services involved to undertake the individual Agency report and ensure that they have the capacity to carry it out within timescales.
- Arrange suitable supervision support for the report authors in undertaking the review.
- Monitor progress regularly and ensure that any predicted delays in completing phases of the work to the timescales requested are immediately reported to the Independent Chair of the SCR Panel Group.
- Attempt to resolve any difficulties in completing the work to timescales, e.g. through provision of additional help / workload relief
- Ensure that the report is written using the template and that the terms of reference are answered within the report.
- Quality assure the report against required standards and accept its contents on behalf of the agency, before its submission, ensuring that the report is appropriately thorough, analytical and challenging
- Identify any urgent action needed to address issues of concern arising as the Individual agency report progresses
- Provide feedback and debrief for any staff involved in the process

**Producing the chronology and individual agency report – role of the agency report author.**

Once informed by the Designated Senior Manager within the agency, the report author must produce a comprehensive and well-structured review of their agencies involvement with the child and their family.

Where Individual Agency Reports are deemed not to be of sufficient quality, the SCR Panel has the right to return these to the authors for revision.

**As outlined in OFSTED descriptors, the review must take full account of the individual needs of the child and family and be sensitive to their racial, cultural, linguistic and religious identity. Practice at individual and organisational levels must be openly and critically analysed against national and local statutory requirements, professional standards and current procedural guidance. Good practice must also be highlighted and areas for change in practice clearly identified and supported with measurable and specific recommendations for improvement.**

Other key points to note for the completion of the reports are;

- Designated Senior Managers and Authors must be aware of the timescales for completing and submitting the chronology and individual Agency report, noting the separate dates and allowing adequate time for these to be quality assured

and signed off by the Designated Senior Manager. Any difficulties in meeting timescales must be raised as early as possible with their Designated Senior Manager as delays in submission are critical to the overall process and will have an impact on Serious Case Review timescales, and ultimately the Ofsted judgement of the review. Each agency will be monitored on this and this will be reported on in the Overview Report.

- The chronology must be completed on the pro forma provided (Appendix 6 Need add). The chronology is not designed to be an accurate chronology of the family history, but of the agency knowledge and action (e.g. where a family moved house in April but the Health Visitor found out in June the chronology should record the date the Health Visitor was informed, not the date the family moved). Where there is no agency contact for periods during the timescale of the review, this should be made clear in the chronology and the narrative of the Individual Agency report. All those involved in and contributing to a review should be aware that the information contributed may be used during an inquest.
- Once the chronology is complete it will be necessary for the report author to decide which practitioners, who have been involvement in the case need to be contacted and a meeting to discuss the case arranged with them and the report author . This process is important to ensure that the author understands and gets a true reflection of what happened and to be able to clarify context where things were identified as not happening that may be should have. The discussion with the practitioners involved should be recorded and the records agreed by both the staff member and the report author.
- The analysis element of the individual Agency report is critical, Please refer to the West of Berkshire template of Individual Agency templates for more information. The analysis MUST link to the time period and terms of reference of the review. Key things to include in the report are:
  - This is what has happened
  - This is why
  - This is what we learned
  - This is what we need to change
  - This is how we are going to change it

Where staff are no longer in post, or are unable to be interviewed, this should also be recorded as part of the report, explaining the reasons for this. This information could also be used to inform the context for the report.

**Note:** *Discussions with staff as part of this process is as a means of clarifying the agency involvement, and reflecting on and learning from the case. While they should not be used as a disciplinary interview, they inevitably can be stressful for staff and staff may wish to bring someone to the interview with them for support.*

- The Individual Agency report should be written using the West of Berkshire Case Review template (see appendix 6) the details for the individual case will have been added by the LSCB Business Manager and emailed to each agency contributing to the review.

## 2.5 Informing and involving the Family

The Chair of the SCR Panel group and the LSCB Business Manager will ensure that a plan is agreed at the initial Scoping meeting. This will include how the family are informed that the review is taking place and why and inviting the family to contribute to the review. The SCR Panel Group needs to ensure that all significant family members have the opportunity to be involved in the SCR, especially those who have had a caring role or significant relationship with the child or young person.

This will be done by the LSCB Business Manger contacting the family first via telephone and then followed by a meeting with the family members to explain the process of the review and why it is being undertaken. Once initial contact have been made with the family a letter will be sent to family members confirming that a review is taking place and the reasons for that review and confirming the date ,time and who will visit the family.

Families should be clear that the SCR is a review of agency functioning through which staff are encouraged, as part of a learning process, to reflect critically on their practice. It is not its purpose to inquire into how the child died or who is culpable.

The family may need a worker to be identified to support them during the process, and will need further contact as appropriate. This will include informing them of the outcomes from the SCR and sharing the Executive Summary and possibly the Overview Report (to ensure no surprises if the Coroner is making use of the Overview Report at inquest).

## **2.6 Establishing the Serious Case Review Panel**

The purpose of the SCR Panel is to offer professional expertise and independence rather than representation of the agency. Its task is to give an independent overview of how agencies work together and aid the analysis and learning from the Individual Agency Report. Suitably experienced individual(s) representing these agencies should be identified by their Designated Senior Manager following a request to this effect from the LSCB Business Manager. Membership of this panel Group needs to reflect the issues raised in the terms of reference for each SCR. It is also important for different professional disciplines to be represented to ensure that the relevant advice and perspective is available to the Panel Group (e.g. both a designated nurse and doctor). Where a small number of agencies are involved in the case, other agencies will be asked to provide a representative to ensure challenge. Minimum panel size is six.

## **3 The Serious Case Review Group**

### **3.1 Role of the Serious Case Review Panel Group**

The draft Terms of reference are completed by WofBCRG at the initial Scoping meeting and approved by the West of Berkshire Independent Chair and the overview author on behalf of the Panel and are only changed in exceptional circumstances.

The structure of the panel group will depend on the model used to undertake the SCR.

If a SCR is being conducted using the SLIP model the panel group will meet at the start of the review for an initial scoping meeting to determine the Terms of Reference, it is expected that for this initial scoping meeting all Theagencies will have completed a Chronology using the template (Appendix 4 Need to add) and that a merged Chronology will be available for all Panel /reference members.

The Panel Group will then meeting again to consider the first draft of the overview report to offer that expert professional knowledge and advice on local practices and procedures to ensure that the recommendations are appropriate to local ways to working. They will also then attend the Recall event once the overview report is in its final draft.

The Chair and overview writer with the support from the LSCB Business manager will ensure that an Authors briefing, practitioner event and recall event takes place.

In a review where a traditional/blended method is used the panel is expected to meet more regularly and the process is more structured. The first panel meeting will consider the draft Terms of Reference from the WofBCRG and agree a clear time line for the review.

At subsequent meetings the panel should:

- Review the merged chronology, identifying key issues, decision points, inconsistencies between agencies and good practice
- Review each agency individual Agency report, and invite the report writers and their managers to attend the Panel to discuss the report, ensuring practice issues and recommendations have been identified. The panel must also identify any further work needed from any agency to provide clarification to the SCR Panel/Reference group.
- Identify lessons and recommendations emerging from the SCR process either for individual agencies (additional to those identified in their own report), or for the West of Berkshire to improve the multi-agency process. Whilst agencies may have identified single agency recommendations themselves, the SCR Panel Group should consider whether they wish to adopt them as formal recommendations to form part of the Overview report. Only recommendations agreed on by the SCR Panel group as a whole will be included in the Overview report. Additional recommendations or actions will be the responsibility of the single agency and will not form part of the West of Berkshire SCR monitoring process.

In all SCRs irrespective of the method used consideration must be given to commissioning multi-agency reviews separate to the SCR where there are wider issues apparent that may relate to the case that fall outside the terms of reference for the SCR.

### **3.2 Role of Local Safeguarding Children Board**

The LSCB Manager who is a member of the WofBCRG is to take a lead role in the coordination and support of the SCR process. The Business manager will arrange the commissioning of the Independent author and Chair once agreed by the SCR Subgroup.

LSCB members need to ensure that their agencies plan for the tight timescales, to include quality assurance of IMR's, and signing off by a senior manager. LSCB members need to understand that they are responsible for ensuring that the recommendations they have made are put into place and that evidence for this is provided to the West of Berkshire SCR subgroup as this happens.

There is an opportunity for LSCB members to champion SCR's within their agencies, ensure that IMR writers have sufficient workload capacity to complete the task, and to feedback lessons learned for the agency.

Serious Case Reviews will receive full administrative support from the LSCB Administrator who will coordinate meetings, and take detailed minutes including action points and ensure these are circulated. The Administrator will also produce the integrated agency chronology, and it is vitally important the West of Berkshire CRG template is used to assist this process. Any future changes to the chronology by agencies should be kept to a minimum, but if there needs to be additions, these need to be highlighted to the administrator for insertion.

Consideration to how the child and family members are to be referred to throughout the review must be given at the start of the review and the Terms of Reference must be explicit on this.

All agencies involved with the SCR must ensure that confidentiality is of up most importance through the review process.

### **3.3 Producing the Overview Report**

This will be written by an Independent Author commissioned by the LSCB. The Overview Report will reflect a rigorous examination of the facts, providing convincing explanations for how and why events occurred and actions or decisions taken by agencies were or were not taken. The report will;

- be written in plain English and in a way that can be easily understood by professionals and the public alike.
- be child focused
- be suitable for publication without the needing to be amended or redacted
- Include a good overview and introduction of the case using the terms of reference.
- Provide a sound analysis of what happened in the case using a comprehensive chronology, why and what needs to happen in order to reduce the risk of recurrence.
- bring together the findings of all individual identify agency reviews and other relevant investigations, reviews or enquiries, considering all aspects of service provision over the course of the review period, identifying missed opportunities by individual agencies and identify areas where practice needs to be improved by identifying key themes.
- ensure evidence of good practice is shared so that a growing understanding of what worked well can inform agency's learning through recommendations.
- Clearly evidence that consideration has been given to the ethnicity, religion and culture of the child and family.
- Be clear about what information was known to the agencies and professionals concerned about the parents , child and significant others, the

family history and the home circumstances of the child, making it clear which agencies were involved in the process

- Using the benefit of hindsight or evidence from research to consider whether different actions or decision by agencies may have led to an alternative course of events.
- Include lessons to be learned nationally and locally brought together in a summary, supported by clear, logical, specific and achievable recommendations for improvement and a comprehensive action plan for implementation. These action plans will be fully completed on the agreed pro forma and agreed by the Serious Case Review Panel Group before the Review is completed. This report should also include details of how the implementation of recommendations will be monitored and evidenced.
- Clearly explain the involvement or non-involvement of parents and other significant carers in the process
- Make reference to any parallel procedures that took place in relation to the case and explain how any learning from these were taken into account

It is the responsibility of each SCR Panel group member to ensure that their Designated Senior Manager is fully informed of the progress of the Serious Case Review. The member must ensure that the Designated Senior Office has sight of the Overview Report, Executive Summary, single and multi-agency recommendations and completed action plans.

### **3.4 Producing the Executive Summary**

An Executive Summary must also be extracted from the Overview report by the Independent Author once this has been agreed by the SCR Panel Group. This report needs to be completed at the same time as the Overview Report. It should be suitably anonymised so that the child and family cannot be identified and must be appropriately brief, giving a clear and comprehensive overview of events leading up to the SCR, key issues arising from the case and recommendations which have been made. It should also include information about the SCR process and the composition of the SCR Panel. The purpose of the Executive Summary is to put information into the public domain that gives people confidence that we have looked into what happened and are doing something about it. The executive summary should include all multi-agency recommendations.

It is not primarily aimed at the professionals involved in the case, who should have access to single and multi-agency debriefs, practitioner events and, possibly, the overview report in order to inform learning. The Executive summary should be checked by Data Protection colleagues to ensure it is fit for publication before this happens.

### **3.5 West of Berkshire approval of the Overview report and associated documents**

The LSCB will approve the SCR Overview Report including agreed recommendations, Executive Summary and completed action plans once these have been signed off by the Overview Report author and SCR Panel Group.

### **The LSCB will then ensure the following:**

- That the Overview report, individual Agency reports, executive summary and completed action plans are submitted to Ofsted and the National Panel.
- That the Executive Summary, and, in some circumstances, the Overview Report is shared with the child and/or their family in advance of this information being placed in the public domain. The LSCB need to ensure that this is done by the most appropriate method, a staff member with continuing involvement with the family, for example.
- That there is discussion and agreement as to who should be the key recipients (other than LSCB members who will receive this automatically) of a copy of the Overview report.
- That the executive summary, once cleared as appropriate for publication is placed on the LSCB website. This does not need to take place until the Ofsted evaluation has been received. Consideration also needs to be given about the timing of publication where there are ongoing criminal or other procedures.
- That any media or public relations issues arising from the case have been identified and a clear way forward agreed. This is particularly important where there is an ongoing criminal case.
- That the Independent author of the Overview Report holds a multi-agency debrief or recall event, supported by the Panel/Reference group. This is specifically aimed at staff who worked with the family during the period covered by the review.

### **3.6 Dissemination of learning**

Once the SCR has been completed and received by the LSCB, all members will receive a copy of the Overview Report. LSCB representatives will be directly accountable for the dissemination of learning from each Serious Case Review within their own agency, and as such will be responsible for deciding how widely to disseminate the overview report and other documentation within their own agency as part of this process.

It is important to note that the overview report remains the property of the West of Berkshire Local Safeguarding Children Board and contains highly sensitive and confidential information. Any sharing of this report must be done so within the framework of confidentiality and information sharing.

The LSCB Business Manager will ensure that the LSCB Interagency Training Manager receives a copy of the overview report in order to ensure that any lessons learnt and recommendations are incorporated into LSCB training where appropriate.

The team will also place the Executive summary on the LSCB website following receipt of the Ofsted evaluation of the Serious Case Review. The LSCB through the SCR Subgroup are responsible for monitoring the evidenced implementation of both single and multi-agency action plans.

## **4. Action Planning and Review**

All action plans will be passed to the LSCB Business Manager for the coordination of monitoring and implementation through the West of Berkshire Case Review subgroup. The LSCB Business Office will expect to receive regular feedback from single agencies and leads for multi-agency recommendation evidencing progress against agreed actions. This will then be monitored and signed off through the West of Berkshire Case Review subgroup.

LSCB member representative are accountable for the implementation of single agency recommendations relating to their own agency and multi-agency recommendations.

Progress against agreed Multi Agency actions will be reported on at every LSCB meeting using a RAG rating system.

## **5. Contributing to SCRs Out of Area**

Requests for information from other LSCBs where a SCR has been commissioned and has identified that the child involved was resident in Berkshire during the period of the scope for the review must be coordinated through the LSCBbusiness office.

Requests for individual agency reviews will be sent to agencies identified from LSCB business office. Agencies must complete the report and ensure it is signed off by their agency before submitting it to the West of Berkshire Case Review subgroup for final quality assurance check before LSCB business office sends on to the LSCB who has commissioned the review.

Progress of SCR from other areas will be monitored through the West of Berkshire Case Review subgroup. The LSCB Business manager will take a lead role in liaising with the requesting LSCB to ensure that any recommendations specific for Berkshire Agencies, LSCB are informed of and robust monitoring of the implementation of those recommendations is in place.

## Appendix Tool Kit Templates

1. West of Berkshire Case Review Referral Form
2. Additional Information Request Form
3. Draft Outcome letter to Agencies
4. Chronology Template
5. Agency Report Template
6. Recommendation and Action plan
7. Process Flow Chart Appendix

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