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| <b>Document Type</b>  | <b>Decision paper</b>                                     |
| <b>Programme</b>  | <b>Future Northants</b>                                   |
| <b>Title</b>  | <b>Northamptonshire Safeguarding Children Partnership</b> |
| <b>Audience for this document</b>   |   |
| Programme Implementation Board, Joint Implementation Executive and Shadow Executives (West and North)   |   |
| <b>Purpose of this document</b>   |   |
| The purpose of this report is to set out recommendations for the future of the Northamptonshire Safeguarding Children's Partnership (NSCP) following consultation with partners and key stakeholders. |   |

## Document Control

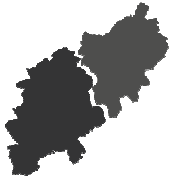
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## 1. Introduction

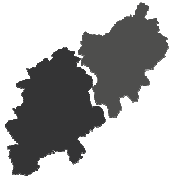


Following consultation with partners and key stakeholders, this paper sets out recommendations to:

- 1.1 Continue with a single Northamptonshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (NSCP) from 1 April 2021
- 1.2 Agree a hosted model for the NSCP business support office to be located with the Joint Director of Children's Services in North Northamptonshire.

## 2. Background

- 2.1 Northamptonshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (NSCP) replaced the Northamptonshire Safeguarding Children Board (NSCB) on 1 July 2019 in accordance with Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 and strives to improve local arrangements to ensure the children and young people of Northamptonshire can be as safe as possible from risk of harm, exploitation and neglect.
- 2.2 The work of the NSCP is led by representatives of the three Statutory Safeguarding Partners, who have equal accountability in terms of leadership for safeguarding children in the county:
  - Northamptonshire County Council
  - Northamptonshire Police
  - Northamptonshire Clinical Commissioning Groups
- 2.3 The NSCP is jointly funded by the agencies that make up the partnership and a small team (the Business Office) employed to manage the work of the partnership, and is currently hosted by Northamptonshire County Council within the Safeguarding Quality and Assurance Service.
- 2.4 The NSCP acknowledges the need to develop a strong working relationship with The Children's Trust and receives regular updates from the Director of Children's Services in order to consider how robust links can be developed.
- 2.5 The Northamptonshire Safeguarding Children Board discussed the proposal for two unitary authorities when the first consultation into the new Multi-Agency Safeguarding Arrangements was released for comment in 2018. At that time, the Independent Chair of the NSCB formally responded to the consultation on behalf of the NSCB and was emphatic on behalf of the partners that there should be one safeguarding partnership, supporting both unitary authorities.
- 2.6 Benefits of a single safeguarding partnership to cover both unitary authorities:



- A single safeguarding children partnership would allow a continued, consistent, effective and joined up approach that is equitable and safe for all children.
- Current arrangements already cover the whole county and are effective, robust and continually strengthening and improving.
- There will be a mechanism to share learning across both unitary authorities and share good practice.
- Safeguarding policies and procedures will remain the same with regular updates and revisions.
- The current sub groups and members will remain the same which will allow members to continue to strengthen, challenge and improve the work of the partnership.
- There will be one point of contact in terms of undertaking Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews, identifying improvements and taking forward learning.
- There will be one point of scrutiny and challenge of individual partner safeguarding arrangements.
- Duplicating arrangements for each unitary would involve additional cost.
- Different arrangements could be challenging for those partner agencies working across both councils. This includes two of the Statutory Safeguarding Partners in the Police and the CCG.

## 2.7 Potential concerns to having a single partnership across both unitary authorities:

- Each unitary council may have differing priorities and levels of need.
- It could be argued that the smaller scale of the unitaries could give greater opportunities to drive improvements in safeguarding practice.

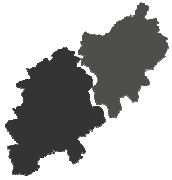
## 2.8 Consultation:

Consultation has been undertaken with key partners and stakeholders on the future of the NSCP. All partners are supportive of maintaining a single safeguarding partnership for Northamptonshire. Partners did not feel they would have the capacity to support two separate boards due to capacity and felt a single partnership would be stronger for both councils, improving outcomes for children and young people.

Shadow Leaders & Deputies and Lead for the Children's Programme have been consulted and all support the Board sitting under the DCS along with the Business Team, with it remaining as a single service.

## 2.9 National best practice

There are examples from across the country about how Local Safeguarding Children Boards have taken the opportunity, through the revised guidance of Working Together to Safeguard Children



2018, to bring together Boards into single pan-partnerships to provide a coherent approach to wider local safeguarding systems. Examples include:

- Pan-Cheshire has amalgamated Cheshire West and Chester.
- Pan-Berkshire has amalgamated Reading, Wokingham and West Berkshire.
- Pan-Sussex has amalgamated East Sussex, West Sussex and Brighton and Hove.
- Pan-Hampshire has amalgamated Hampshire and the Isle of Wight.
- Bi-Borough has amalgamated Westminster and Kensington & Chelsea.
- Richmond and Kingston share their Safeguarding Partnership.

## **3 Conclusion**

3.1 There is consensus amongst key partners and stakeholders that a single Northamptonshire Safeguarding Children Partnership provides the best opportunity to continue to improve outcomes for children and young people in Northamptonshire.

3.2 Locating the NSCP Business Office alongside the Joint Director of Children's Services will help to ensure strong relationships and the effective operation of the partnership for both unitary authorities.