



**Safer**  
North East Lincolnshire

# North East Lincolnshire Safeguarding Children Partnership

## Annual Report 2020/2021



**NHS**  
**North East Lincolnshire**  
Clinical Commissioning Group

**NORTH  
EAST  
LINCOLNSHIRE  
COUNCIL**  
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# 1) Introduction



**Darren Wildbore**  
Chief Superintendent  
Humberside Police  
NEL SCP Chair



**Lisa Arthey**  
Director of Children's Services  
North East Lincolnshire Council  
(Now left the Local Authority)



**Jan Haxby**  
Director of Quality & Nursing  
North East Lincolnshire Clinical  
Commissioning Group

Welcome to the second report of the new North East Lincolnshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (NEL SCP), it covers the period from 1st April 2020 to 31st March 2021.

Our Partnership's vision is to **“work together to ensure safeguarding arrangements within our place are proactive, robust, effective and clear and for help and support to be offered at the earliest point to enable children, young people and families to have positive outcomes, where they reach their full potential”**

From March 2020 there was severe pressure faced across our communities and across all services as a result of the Coronavirus Pandemic. This resulted in huge changes to the daily lives of children /families, adults with care and support needs which will present heightened levels of risk for some. It also led to some very innovative work by partner agencies working together to support during this difficult time including the development of the vulnerability hub.

The focus during the last year has been on embedding the core data set and scrutiny and assurance framework in meeting the two NEL SCP outcomes, safeguarding arrangements are effective and all children are and feel safe. Activity in meeting this has included:

- Performance reporting and monitoring across the child concern model and partner agencies.
- Oversight of practice through line-of-sight practice process.
- Building on the voice of the child work in order to evidence the child's lived experience.
- Oversight of Early Help, Children Looked After, Contextual Safeguarding and Domestic Abuse.
- Reviewing the safeguarding training offer.
- Reviewing the impact of local arrangements and the resources and capacity required to deliver the two outcomes

Going forward to 21/22, the areas of focus will be on assuring the effectiveness of key partnership arrangements including:

- Further developing systems for embedding learning and evidencing improved practice and outcomes for children.
- Reviewing and strengthening Governance arrangements including performance and assurance activity.
- Reviewing and strengthening the local response to neglect.
- Reviewing and strengthening the local understanding and response to familial sexual harm.
- Embedding the practice standards.
- Overseeing the impact of the local transition arrangements in supporting children to move to adulthood.

## 2) The Voice and Lived Experience of Children

The Voice and Influence Strategy has ensured that the child's voice and lived experience is at the forefront of practice. Its purpose is to assure the NEL SCP that services have a process for and are hearing the voice of the child, listening and making improvements to service delivery and practice as a result.

### Key Highlights and successes include

- A virtual Voice of the Child Task and Finish Group is responsible for the implementation of the strategy action plan and for submitting biannual Voice and Influence reports to the NEL SCP. Activity and impact includes:
  - Young Minds Matter, who provide Mental Health services in NE Lincolnshire, supported young people to create a wellbeing passport as they wanted a care plan that they owned and where they did not want to have to repeat their stories to different professionals.
  - Feedback to the School Nursing service by young people confirmed not all young people wanted virtual contacts with the school nurse as a result of Covid, this led to young people being given an option of virtual or face to face contacts prior to interventions.
  - As a result of children reporting to the Family Hubs they wished 'their families could come together more to 'solve problems'', more family network meetings were implemented and supported to develop family plans to build resilience, network and relationships to support children and ensure they feel listened too and contribute to the plan.
- NEL SCP Line of Sight practice audit events evidence agencies capture the voice of the child well. There is inconsistent practice across agencies in capturing the child's lived experience which has led to the development of practice guidance and continues to be an area of practice improvement
- The NEL SCP have worked with Youth Action to develop a Young Inspectors Programme where young people will actively be involved in undertaking inspection visits to agencies as aligned to the NEL SCP Scrutiny and Assurance Framework supported by the Professional Scrutiny Officers. The programme commenced in Autumn 2020 with the first inspection, which is ongoing, being in respect of Young Minds Matter based on mental health being identified as a top issue within the Make Your Mark consultation of young people for the second year.
- Wider Voice and Influence Annual Report - Children and young people have several opportunities to share their thoughts and influence action in the Borough. We will continue to strive to understand the world through the eyes of children and young people to inform our practice and the services we provide to support them too. This is essential in a child centred environment. A child who feels really heard by all services working with them will be more likely to share when they feel unsafe.

Young people said, "we want to be able to access a range of support and services for our mental health" as a result the Youth Action group have worked with NELC to develop a young person's area of the Live Well website so there is a space for young people to easily find a range of 'good' information in one place. They have also shared 1000's of pens with a pull out banner with services to access themselves and shared resources with young people as part of the Creative Connections competition.

Young people said "kids should feel safe on the streets" as a result we have created a range of opportunities for young people to inform the NEL SCP including young inspectors and are looking to promote spaces that are safe for children and young people and young people are involved now and will continue throughout the development of the OnSide Youth Zone in Grimsby.

Young people told us that "consistent caring and trusted relationships are key to keeping us safe" as a result the refreshed Corporate Parenting Promise has this as a promise at the centre of the overall design

to make it clear before even reading it that relationships are the key to other positive things happening in our lives. If these relationships are not there or change a lot the promises cannot be kept.

- Your Voice Your Vote - is the local version of an annual consultation run in previous years called Make Your Mark. There were **3676** votes cast. From the possible students who could have voted in these academies we saw a 25% turnout across the board. The two priority issues for North East Lincolnshire are the same as last year **Mental Health and Knife Crime**. Mental health continues to be the top issue and Knife crime second. This year Mental health received 19% of all votes from young people in our area. **Knife crime** and **Mental health** were the top two issues voted for by young people last year.
- Youth Action - are the Borough wide youth voice group for 11-25 year olds who plan campaigns and actions coming out of the Your Voice Your Vote consultation as well as the consultation itself. Youth Action group have a member who represents young people on the Children and Lifelong Learning Scrutiny panel and another member who delivers a speech at least twice per year to the Full Council meeting. Both roles, through their representation, share the views of young people and their priority issues through the results of the Your Voice Your Vote consultation and subsequent planning workshops that follow including the Youth Voice Matters events. In addition, they invite and engage with managers of service areas or organisations relevant to improving the issues raised.
- Our Voice Listen up Voice and Influence Group - for children in care in North East Lincolnshire. During the last year they decided they would like to continue to meet online and came up with several projects to do throughout. During the first lockdown the group decided we should reach out with activities to others, so we created a **Virtual voice newsletter** from the Our Voice Listen Up group which was sent to foster carers and residential homes carers. This resulted in new members joining the Our Voice Listen Up group and offered others an opportunity to join in some of the activities and share their views. Each time we include "you said we did" information; a challenge set by young people for young people and how to get involved in other opportunities.
- Independent Advocacy Service. The numbers of children requesting and accessing this service has significantly increased each year . With restrictions in place throughout the year all advocacy has moved to virtual methods and advocates have been offering to engage with children and young people as a video or telephone call and the review/conference meetings are. This has resulted in the spot purchasing of independent advocacy service from NYAS (National Youth Advocacy Service) which started in November 2020. There were 53 children and young people who accessed an independent advocate, which is an increase from 35 in the previous year. 100% of the young people that gave feedback said that they were happy with the service the advocate provided. Out of the 17 young people that gave feedback 15 said that they felt that their social worker listened to them and 2 said they were unsure.

### 3) Impact of Governance Arrangements

#### Safeguarding Children Partnership Board

The Safeguarding Children Partnership Board is the key decision-making body and consists of the executive leads of the three statutory partners, representatives from the three safeguarding partners, the Partnership Business Manager, Professional Scrutiny Officers, Chairs of the Safeguarding Assurance and Improvement Group, Safeguarding Review Group and key representatives from relevant agencies meeting four times per year.

Its function is to coordinate and assure the effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements. This is achieved through oversight of performance analysis, assurance activity, risk, challenge and the voice of the child in

delivering the two outcomes. The published arrangements can be found through the link below or on the website. [Safer NEL](#)

The NEL SCP governance structure supports the delivery of the NEL SCP Strategic Delivery plan and 2 outcomes (See appendix 2).

#### NEL SCP data set and use of intelligence

The NEL SCP core data set incorporates a wide range of performance measures and compliance data from a variety of agencies across the spectrum of need and levels of intervention and across the local threshold of need. The data set is aligned to the NEL SCP vision, the two outcome statements and the nine areas of focus. Performance data against the data set is provided on a quarterly basis and analysed by the three partner agency data analysts.

The NEL SCP data set was developed to provide a broad range of core data and information that helps the NEL SCP understand its population, understand how well its safeguarding arrangements are delivering and performing against national or locally agreed standards, how effective the partnership arrangements are, and will flag to the NEL SCP how a particular area of focus is performing.

#### **Analysis of impact of analysis of NEL SCP performance data**

Whilst the data set has provided the NEL SCP with the baseline data needed, further areas require adding in respect of early help and quality and impact of the child protection conference process. The data whilst across agencies has a particular focus on children's services which is important but data needs to better reflect the wider partners key safeguarding data. The review of capacity and the effectiveness of governance arrangements has identified that current arrangements for analysing the data into meaningful intelligence for the NEL SCP also require strengthening in order to provide sufficient oversight and assurance on how effective the arrangements are working and the impact on the outcomes and on improving Children's outcomes. This will inform the revision of the Scrutiny and Assurance Framework and the revision of the current governance structure.

#### **Key performance updates**

We know how our safeguarding pathway makes a difference to children and families from early help to children in need of help and protection, to children in care and care leavers. Children in North East Lincolnshire who are in need of help and protection make good progress and are supported to live safely within their family networks

- As a result of our sustained focus on achieving permanency for young people without delay, our **numbers of Children who are Looked After (CLA) (whilst still high) have started to gradually reduce in 20/21** compared to increases from 17/18 to 19/20 (CLA). This is through our new permanency processes and the introduction of a permanency team.
- **Through application of a robust legal gateway process, the number of children entering care has reduced** (31% drop from 263 starts in 2019-20 to 181 in 2020-21)
- **Less children are placed out of area in NEL than the England average** (32% of our children in care are placed out of area compared to the latest England average of 41%). This indicates that a higher number of children live in our in-house foster care, remaining close to their support networks.
- There is a high level of demand in North East Lincolnshire which meets the threshold for statutory involvement. **Both the rate of Referrals to children's services and the number of 'children in need' are two times higher than the national average** (Referrals 1,000 per 10,000 in 2021 compared to England of 494 per 10,000; CIN 643 per 10,000 children at the end of March 2021 compared with 321 across England) This signifies an opportunity for more community based work to take place to reduce the reliance on statutory services.

- **The number of cases re-referred to children's services was higher than the national average.** Re-referrals were 31% compared to the England average of 23%. This indicates that when cases are stepped down from Children's Social Care they have needed ongoing support which has not been available and therefore have required a step back up to Children's Social Care.
- **The number of children's assessments completed within 45 days is better than the national average** 86% of assessments completed in 2020-21 were completed within 45 days. This was an increase from 52% in 2019-20 which is above the statutory neighbour average of 83% and the England average of 84%. This demonstrates that more children's needs are fully assessed and understood within the statutory timeframe, with a resulting plan of action where necessary.
- **Through the implementation of risk management meetings and strengthening of child protection processes, there has been a large reduction in the number of children on a Child Protection Plan. Numbers remain higher than the national average (41 per 10,000) but have reduced from a rate of 118 per 10,000 in March 2020 to 78 per 10,000 children at the end of 2021.** This represents 137 fewer children subject to child protection procedures than the same time in the previous year.
- **The number of successful domestic abuse prosecutions has risen over the year.** This demonstrates how seriously domestic abuse is taken and that enquiries are leading to charging decisions.
- **There has been an increase in the number of cases of children open to and supported by the Harmful Sexualized Behavior Panel.** This indicates the process is embedded and understood by partner agencies which the local Harmful Sexualised Behavior training has supported.
- **The number of young people entering the criminal justice service for the first time remains low.** Levels of safety and wellbeing remain consistent as offending is reducing.
- **The performance in timeliness of initial health assessments for children becoming looked after has reduced during the year.** Plans have been put in place to address the issues and the potential for children to be waiting longer to have their health needs assessed.
- **There was a static but high level of children recorded as electively home educated in 2021.** This was believed to be related to parental concerns around Covid-19 and children returning to education. Additional resources were put in place to support children as a result.

#### The Impact of the NEL SCP Scrutiny and Assurance Framework

The NEL SCP Core data set and Scrutiny and Assurance Framework were developed and implemented in 2019 and have been further embedded during the last year. The NEL SCP identified the need for a review of capacity in delivering the two NEL SCP outcomes which was added to the NEL SCP risk register. This will lead to the revision of the Scrutiny and Assurance Framework and the strengthening of the core data set aligned to the current development of the "what good looks like" practice standard development. As part of the review the remit of the Safeguarding and Assurance and Improvement group was reviewed in providing the NEL SCP with sufficient assurance, oversight on the effectiveness of arrangements.

The NEL SCP Scrutiny and Assurance Framework and action plan is integral to the effective delivery of the NEL SCP Strategic Delivery Plan and the two outcome statements in assessing the effectiveness of the safeguarding system and evidencing improvements to practice and children's outcomes. Particular areas of focus for the NEL SCP have been on:

- Learning from practice through interagency line of sight reviews.
- Delivery of safeguarding training across partner agencies.
- Young inspectors' arrangements.

- Timeliness of initial health assessments.
- The increase in numbers of electively home educated children which has seen a rise locally and nationally.
- The steady decrease in children subject to CP plans.
- The increase in numbers of children looked after and corporate parenting board arrangements.
- The demand on the front door and the impact of Covid 19.
- Steady increase in the number of successful domestic abuse prosecutions related to the local strategy.

#### Analysis and Impact

The NEL SCP review of the effectiveness of the Scrutiny and Assurance framework found that it has provided a level of assurance to the NEL SCP on the effectiveness of local arrangements based on analysis of performance, line of sight practice activity, section 11 audit and the annual audit of Early years and educational establishments and the Young Inspectors Program. The review of the effectiveness of the framework established the assurance activity initially identified did not fully reflect what performance and practice learning was highlighting. In addition capacity issues were identified in respect of the role of the professional scrutiny officers in undertaking assurance activity. A review of the Safeguarding Assurance and Improvement group found the remit was too broad. This will inform the revision of the framework and the NEL SCP governance structure.

The NEL SCP were successful in a bid to secure monies as part of the Reform work in order to support innovative practice in January 2021. This has led to the current development of “what good looks like” practice standards on both a strategic and an operational level. This will support the achievement of the two NEL SCP outcomes. The project will enable specific practice improvement in respect of development of clear standards for practice/what good looks like statements, strengthening evidence of the impact of interventions on the child and in improving the quality and analysis of data and intelligence.

#### Wider Governance arrangements

- There are robust governance arrangements in place that enable the NEL SCP to identify and respond to emerging risks and challenges.
- These include the NEL SCP Forward Plan, Risk Register and Challenge Log
- Relationships are good and mutually supportive, including openness to challenge.
- The NEL SCP have overseen the review of the local Threshold of Need in August 2020 as part of the development of the integrated front door.

## **4) Work of the Safeguarding Children Partnership**

Key highlights in relation to the work of the NEL SCP aligned to the strategic delivery plan and two NEL SCP outcomes which indicate our system is making a difference to children and families include:

### **Key Highlights and successes**

#### **Partnership response to Covid 19**

- The NEL SCP acted quickly in convening fortnightly NEL SCP Executive meetings at the start of the pandemic.
- The NEL SCP worked with the Safeguarding Adult Board and Community Safety Partnership and undertook two baseline assessments of agency response to Covid 19 undertaken in April and June 2020 which provided assurance that agencies had adapted well to the challenges in ensuring they continued to meet their role and remit in respect of safeguarding children.



## Key Highlights and successes

### Early Help

- The new formed Prevention and Early Help Strategic Board has made good progress and has recently produced a new strategy document. This was created using local data, community insights work and undertaking numerous workshops with partners and stakeholders. The global pandemic has impacted upon children and families in many different ways. The utilisation data and increase in demand were a key consideration when creating the Strategy and priorities.
- Significant work has continued across the partnership to take a whole family approach in keeping with the newly defined Supporting Families programme with the upfront funding and payment by results model being closely aligned to the Family Hub model and wider partnership developments. New posts which support the wider Early Help system have been created which will aid the development of our Early Help system. The roles include an Advanced Practitioner, a Partnership Co-ordinator and Participation Officer.
- A focus on performance within the Locality Family Hub offer demonstrates a significant increase in the number and timeliness of Early Help Assessments and completion of plans. Reduced re-referral rates are also clear. The most significant change over the past 12 months is the reduction in the numbers of referrals to MASH which coincides with the increase in referrals to early help. This is an important change and demonstrates a change in the way the early help system is functioning and contributing to the management of support and intervention at lower thresholds. It will be crucial to monitor and maintain this improved performance whilst ensuring that thresholds and allocation remain consistent.

## Key Highlights and successes

### Contextual safeguarding

- Ensuring an effective multi-agency response to children and young people at risk of Child Exploitation has been a key focus for the local authority and for partner agencies. There has been a recent review of the singular strategies with these being revised with a singular adolescent strategy encompassing all areas of adolescent risk and exploitation. This strategy focuses on the local authority, moving forward, implementing a contextual safeguarding approach in our response to extra familial harm.
- There is a clear process in place around exploitation which has been rolled out to partners. This covers those children who are low risk and in need of preventative work through to those children who are at our highest risk of exploitation. This requires a close partnership with the early help localities to ensure that required work around vulnerabilities is available and actioned, when required, with the aim of reducing the prevalence of the concerns. The process includes the discussion of children at a weekly vulnerability screening, OVM (Operational Vulnerability Meeting) and MACE. MACE is co-chaired by strategic leads within Children's Social Care, Humberside Police and the CCG. Governance overarching MACE is the Adolescent Risk Strategic Group.
  - Risk reduction and impact has been sustained with 91% of those children who were discussed at OVM/MACE in this period and closed to the panels, did not require re-discussion into the next annual year. Risk reductions as discussed above are based on the completion of the CEVT (child exploitation vulnerability tracker).
  - Partnership working continues to strengthen the identification of those children who are at risk of or are currently being exploited. Not only is this resulting in better identification of children at risk, but the significance of this is reflective in our day to day approach in safeguarding children in a more timely and partnership led manner.

## Key Highlights and successes

### Education and schools sub group and child protection coordinators forum

- The function and remit of the Child Protection Co-Ordinators meeting has been reviewed over the last year, and a refreshed format enables key messages, as well as practise development to take place where themes are highlighted through referrals received, changes to legislation, and requests from designated leads. A 30 minute 'meet the professional' slot held every other half term is enabling education settings to start meeting and understanding the broad range of professionals across Early Help and Children's Social Care. Following these meetings, a 90-minute workshop is offered to CP Co-Ordinators to expand on the information discussed in the meet the professionals meeting.
- 2020-21 saw the annual schools' safeguarding audit go out to settings in the spring term, rather than the usual autumn term, again due to disruption caused across personnel and schools from COVID 19. The audit included sections reflective of the current remote learning and COVID 19 requirements settings were expected to implement whilst closed. This work was initiated by the subgroup, with the results yet to be analysed however no settings reported that safeguarding standards were not met.
- North East Lincolnshire initially saw a large increase in children becoming electively home educated, particularly rising over the Covid 19 period. In response to the rise in numbers, the Elective Home Education team appointed an Information, Advice and Guidance Officer to support with early intervention with initial queries from schools, parents and supports officers with complex cases.

## Key Highlights and successes

### Domestic Abuse

- A review of the current Domestic Abuse Strategy 2018-21 began during early 2020 via the Tri-Board arrangements of the Community Safety Partnership, Safeguarding Children Partnership & Safeguarding Adults Board. This has resulted in the refreshed 3-year Domestic Abuse Strategy that aims to strengthen the current arrangements with a stronger emphasis on support for children and families. The strategy is being embedded through a comprehensive Delivery Plan that is overseen and monitored by the Delivery Group, which continues to co-ordinate an extensive range of partnership activity in ensuring full implementation of the strategic aims and objectives.
- Operation Encompass remained in place across all schools throughout the borough during the pandemic, with additional measures put in place to ensure wrap around support continued to be available to those children not attending school. A total of 1,723 Operation Encompass notifications were made to schools in 2020/21 which enabled appropriate support to be provided to children.
- Robust Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) arrangements continued to ensure all necessary safety measures around high-risk victims and their families (children) were in place through a structured multi-agency process. A total of 769 cases were heard at MARAC in 20/21.

## Key Highlights and successes

### Prevent

- The NEL Prevent & Protect Strategy builds on our previous work of engaging with communities and local stakeholders as we acknowledge that cohesive and empowered communities are better equipped to reject extremist ideologies. As the threat from extremists evolves, we must also evolve and ensure our approach locally mitigates potential risks and continues to support those most vulnerable to radicalisation.

- Local Agencies remained engaged in the agenda with high levels of awareness and training in place to ensure those vulnerable to radicalisation are identified early and offered support where appropriate. Social media communication results also indicate that campaigns and communications are developing wider awareness with people who access online applications which in turn increases the likelihood of them understanding the warning signs and reporting concerns.

**Key Highlights and successes**

**Modern Day Slavery**

- The NEL SCP were a key partner in the development of the NEL Modern Slavery Partnership alongside the Safeguarding Adult Board and Community Safety Partnership. The North East Lincolnshire Modern Slavery Partnership has been established to prevent and disrupt modern slavery and human trafficking, and engage with communities, other agencies and local businesses to raise awareness. Activity has included:
  - Developed a wide range of online communications and campaigns.
  - Community Consultation undertaken.
  - Training was provided to 340 practitioners.
  - Developed a Modern Slavery resources document.
  - Recruited and developed a network of over 50 Modern Slavery Champions.
  - Established a local National Referral Mechanism Panel (NRM) who can make conclusive grounds decisions in relation to children and young people
- It is evident that a wide range of activity has contributed to an increased awareness of Modern Slavery. Those victims identified can now be assured of an effective pathway of support into the NRM process. More people are aware of the signs of modern slavery and a greater number of practitioners are now trained to identify assess and refer potential victims

**5) Learning and Improvement**

Key highlights in relation to learning and improvement activity which is a core element of the NEL SCP Scrutiny and Assurance Framework.

Training

In 2020/21, the Safeguarding Children Partnership training programme was significantly affected by the Covid 19 Pandemic, resulting in 25 face to face courses being cancelled and no training delivery during the first 6 months to the end of September 2020. Our suite of safeguarding e-learning training at an awareness level was crucial in providing some safeguarding training when Covid 19 restrictions came into effect in March 2020, and we were not able to hold face to face training events. This is reflected in the level of e-learning activity below.

Total Number of Training Events Held	92
Total Number of People Attending NEL SCP Safeguarding Training either Online via Teams or face to face	1756
Number of Safeguarding E-Learning Courses Completed	1648
Total Trained from 1 April 2020 to 31 March 2021	<b>2375</b>

Delivery of safeguarding training became online via Teams from October 2020 onwards. A highlight of the year for training was the NEL SCP Practice Month held online in January and February 2021. These focussed on key areas of practice and were informed by learning from NEL SCP Line of Sight audits:

- Understanding Thresholds and Significant Harm.
- Strategy Discussions and Section 47 Enquiries.
- Child Protection Conferences.
- Roles and Responsibilities in Core Groups and Planning for Vulnerable Children.

The need to ensure that safeguarding training was sufficient to meet the identified needs of the Childrens workforce and was fully aligned to the two NEL SCP outcomes was identified by the board and added to the NEL SCP risk register in December 2020. A full partnership review of safeguarding training and workforce development was undertaken. The key findings were:

- Training equips practitioners to recognise and respond to safeguarding but needs to be practice focused (based on findings from local line of sight events and to reinforce Working Together 2018 expectations).
- The delivery of core safeguarding training virtually has continued throughout the pandemic.
- Long-standing resourcing issues, availability of trainers, insufficient business support, gaps in courses, courses not available.
- Need for greater oversight by the NEL SCP in respect of the commissioning, delivery and impact of inter-agency safeguarding training.

The review has led to the revised training offer and the consideration of required resources to enable the offer to be sustainable. The revised offer will be fully launched by April 2022.

#### Line of Sight to Practice

The annual Early Years safeguarding audit of Child Minders and Nurseries and the Safeguarding in Education audit of Primary, Secondary Schools and Colleges 20/21 was commenced in the spring term and will report to the NEL SCP in the autumn 2021.

A joint Section 11 audit was undertaken by the NEL SCP and the Safeguarding Adults Board and reported to the NEL SCP in February 2021. Overall the audit evidenced that all agencies have clear safeguarding processes in place for the group they are working with and providing services for. Most agencies were aware of and had clear processes in place for responding to allegations in respect of people who work with children and with adults with care and support needs. There were good examples across agencies of processes to capture the voice and influence of children and adults with care and support needs and good practice examples given.

A local Line of Sight process was developed and launched in November 2020, with the purpose of identifying specific safeguarding themes and potential practice issues and good practice. Cases were identified where there were specific themes and through referral by designated safeguarding agency leads where there were potential practice issues and interagency learning but where the serious harm criteria is not met. The process is now embedded and has identified areas that are working well including capturing the voice of the child and has identified areas for development and improvement as evidenced below. Action plans are developed for each case and a seven-minute briefing developed and shared with partner agencies in order to embed the wider learning and improve practice. Areas of identified practice improvement will inform the 21/22 NEL SCP Strategic Delivery plan. Four cases were reviewed in 20/21, the key learning is below:

Themes	Findings
Chronologies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use of a Health chronology could have identified the level of DNAs and injuries at an earlier stage.</li> <li>• Need for interagency chronologies at key points including strategy discussions</li> </ul>
Assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The assessment of the carers may not have been as robust as it should have been due to them being family members.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evidence the neglect tool is not being used consistently or effectively in enabling an assessment.</li> </ul>
Lack of professional curiosity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Agencies should gain the context of childhood injuries in assessing if the injury matches the explanation.</li> <li>• Where the voice of the child is in conflict with parents views this needs to be understood and explored.</li> </ul>
Contextual safeguarding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The child was not recorded as being in the home by the police and was not seen as a victim.</li> <li>• The risk to the child because of the organised crime/ drug activity was not initially recognised or understood by agencies.</li> </ul>
Childs voice, involvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The child's voice was heard but not acted upon, more weight was given to parent's views.</li> <li>• Practice guidance is required on listening to and acting on the voice of the child and understanding their lived experience.</li> </ul>
Practitioner experience of Line of Sight events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Good reflective process.</li> <li>• Open, frank conversation in a safe and non-judgmental environment to improve outcomes for children.</li> <li>• Open and honest although difficult at times as having to reflect on own agencies.</li> <li>• Everyone has been constructively challenging and presented clear and succinct recommendations for their own services</li> </ul>
Areas of good practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Examples of effective use of strategy meetings.</li> <li>• Child's voice captured well by agencies</li> <li>• Case appropriately stepped up when risks were assessed</li> <li>• Timely initial health assessment and health plan based on assessed needs</li> </ul>

### Rapid reviews/ Practice reviews

The process and procedure for undertaking rapid reviews and consideration of practice reviews following identification of cases meeting the serious harm criteria is embedded and effective.

There were two serious incident notifications to the NEL SCP Partners and to the National Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel during the year. Rapid Reviews were undertaken in respect of both cases, in the first the NEL SCP felt that sufficient learning had been identified in order to inform practice. In the second case the NEL SCP recommended that a local practice review be undertaken to identify further learning. The National Child Safeguarding Practice Reive Panel endorsed both decisions made by the NEL SCP. The practice review is near completion and will be published following any parallel processes, enquires.

The Safeguarding Review Group is responsible for undertaking rapid reviews where the serious incident criteria is met and for overseeing practice reviews on behalf of the NEL SCP and for the implementation and embedding of learning. Learning from all reviews undertaken is shared within the multi-agency arena to develop and inform working practices and improve services to children, young people and their families who need support. Key learning has included:

- Following referral to Children's Social Care, police where potential non accidental injuries, a strategy discussion needs to be reconvened after the medical examination and for the paediatrician who undertook the medical assessment/ to attend.
- The Transfer processes for Health Visiting services to ensure young people who are parents are identified and includes assessment of additional vulnerability and required support.
- Police and social workers developing the right knowledge and skills to identify and respond confidently to child sexual abuse and manage competing concerns.

- Incorporating direct work with the children into the enquiry and assessment processes.
- Escalation processes that all professionals understand and confidently know how to use to raise concerns effectively.

### Child Death Review process

The local arrangements for the Child Death Review process are based on the geographical footprint for North Lincolnshire and North East Lincolnshire local authority areas. This corresponds with that of North Lincolnshire and North East Lincolnshire Clinical Commissioning Groups' (CCG) footprint. A review of the effectiveness of the current Child Death Overview Panel arrangements has taken place which has established it is meeting its remit. The Keyworker offers a robust system for capturing feedback from bereaved families as to how they felt the child death review process has been delivered.

The NEL SCP received the 2022/21 CDOP Annual Report in September 2021. In addition the NEL SCP receive child death data as part of the quarterly performance report. The learning from the child death review panel will feed into the NEL Safeguarding Assurance and Improvement Group (SAIG).

### **Key Learning**

Seven CDOP's were completed during the period of 1st March 2020 to the 31 March 2021. A total of 18 cases were discussed at the CDOP's, 10 were from North East Lincolnshire and 8 from North Lincolnshire and all cases were signed off. This includes the 4 cases that had been deferred from the CDOP's in 2019/20.

The top two categories of death for all deaths reviewed across Northern Lincolnshire between 2012/13 and 2020/21 were: 1. Perinatal/neonatal event and 2. chromosomal, genetic and congenital abnormalities. None of the North East Lincolnshire cases reviewed in the year 2020/21 had current safeguarding concerns. One case was assessed as having a Modifiable factor related to unsafe sleeping.

Areas for development in 2022 include:

- The Designated Doctor and the Chair of CDOP need to consider effective partnership working arrangements with the implementation of the new Integrated Care Systems (ICS) coming into service for the Humber, Coast and Vale. Shared learning and Themed review meetings across the region will need to be established.
- Local data demonstrates a link with Deprivation and child mortality and this echoes information from the recent NCMD report that finds a clear link between the risk of child death and the level of deprivation. (The Northern Lincolnshire CDOP will continue to monitor data and themes of all deaths and social deprivation locally.

## **6) How well we delivered against the NEL SCP outcomes/ priority areas**

### **NEL SCP Outcomes**

The NEL SCP initially adopted the three LSCB priorities, Neglect, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Harm as part of the 2018/2019 NEL SCP Local Arrangement Plan. A full review of the NEL SCP statutory functions and requirements was undertaken which led to the development of the Scrutiny and Assurance Framework and identification of two outcomes in April 2020.

The NEL SCP two outcomes and focused outcome statements that it aimed to achieve during 2020/2021 are:

- **The safeguarding partnership is robust and effective**
  - We understand the needs of the population and act to deliver on unmet need.
  - Practitioners tell us they are confident in local processes and understand what is out there to support children and their families.

- Agencies and individuals understand their respective roles, thresholds and collective responsibilities.
- We learn when things go wrong and embed changes to improve practice across the system.
- There is a high level of support and challenge in the multi-agency system.
- **Children are and feel safe.**
  - Children in NEL receive services that are designed to ensure timely, safe and effective care and support.
  - The Children’s Safeguarding Partnership is apprised of significant events.
  - Children tell us they feel safe.

**Analysis and impact**

At present the two NEL SCP outcomes and focused outcome statements/ measures are not being fully achieved. Achievements against the outcomes include:

- Effective partnership arrangements for responding to contextual safeguarding.
- Effective arrangements for responding to prevent, modern-day slavery.
- Section 11 audit activity evidences partner agencies have robust safeguarding arrangements in place.
- Effective processes for learning when things go wrong and in identifying required practice improvement.
- Strengthened arrangements for hearing the voice of the child, however, work identified in respect of assessing and the child’s lived experience.
- Arrangements for learning from practice including where things go wrong are working well and have led to clear identification of learning and required practice improvement.
- There are robust governance arrangements in place that enable the NEL SCP to identify and respond to emerging risks and challenges. These include the NEL SCP Forward Plan, Risk Register and Challenge Log.
- Relationships are good and mutually supportive, including openness to challenge.

**Further work is required in fully embedding the outcomes which will inform the Strategic Delivery Plan for 2022.**

- Whilst the development of practice standards has commenced there is currently a gap in measures to assess what good looks like against the Scrutiny and Assurance Framework in setting a baseline and consistency of practice leading to clear practice improvement.
- A review of the NEL SCP effectiveness of the governance and Scrutiny and Assurance Framework has concluded that the Assurance Framework and Governance structure requires strengthening and in ensuring it has sufficient resources to enable its effective delivery.
- Need to further strengthen current arrangements for undertaking and evidencing the impact of practice improvement activity.
- Ensuring practitioners fully understand their roles and responsibilities in respect of Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 statutory guidance.
- Gaining assurance that local thresholds are fully understood, consistently applied and lead to the child’s need being met at the right level and the right time.

**Progress against identified areas for assurance and monitoring 20/21**

The following areas were identified through performance, analysis and assurance activity as the key areas where assurance was required during 2019/20.

Domestic Abuse

The NEL SCP has continued to oversee the impact of the Domestic Abuse Strategy through the One System Domestic Abuse Group and the NEL SCP performance reporting.

- Domestic Abuse service provision was delivered in full throughout the pandemic.

- Agencies adapted service delivery to meet the needs of victims of domestic abuse, their families (children) and perpetrators throughout the pandemic.
- Additional awareness raising was carried out to ensure those affected by domestic abuse knew services were available and how to access them during the pandemic.

### Transition

A joint practice learning audit commissioned by the NEL SCP and Safeguarding Adult Board in 2019 found that:

- The local transition protocol was not fully embedded or understood by all agencies resulting in the later involvement of adult services.
- All agencies did not work in partnership, coordinating timely planning, integrating effectively to ensure young people were prepared for adulthood and independence.
- There was not a single coordinated plan which set out the joint understanding/analysis of needs and risks together with a jointly developed and coordinated plan to meet the young person's needs and mitigate risks.

As a result:

- The multi-agency Preparing for Adulthood (PfA) Protocol has been updated with stakeholders to provide an agreed robust local framework. Key performance indicators have been agreed and it has been endorsed in principle by the SEND Executive Board, which will also provide governance and link to the Place Board. Alternative accessible versions are being developed.
- A PfA Workshop will be jointly delivered by children's and adults' services to raise awareness and launch the protocol in November 2021.
- A Communication Plan has been created and is underway to collectively raise awareness of PfA, roll out training and briefings with all stakeholders and ensure all involved are aware of it and can use it effectively to facilitate key expectations such as early notification, joint working, information sharing, signposting, support, and where necessary timely referrals to adults' services.
- Reference to the CC/SE Protocol has been incorporated to the PfA Protocol.
- The Transition Forecast/Tracker – which collates information regarding numbers and needs of young people in transition to adult services has been updated. The scope has been widened to identify young people that do not have EHCPs, that may be at risk and/or placed out of the local area, this will provide a shared understanding of their social, emotional, and mental health needs to support their independence and wellbeing in adulthood.
- The SEND and other key decision-making panels have been reviewed and membership updated to include representatives from adults' services.
- The completion of NHS Continuing Healthcare Checklists and consideration of MCA at the point of referral to adult social care for 16-year-olds has been highlighted, joint development is underway to ensure these are effectively applied to decision making.

### Child Exploitation

Child exploitation has continued to be a key area of focus for the NEL SCP, the board receiving quarterly reports in respect of the Adolescent Risk Strategy development and effectiveness of the multi-agency child exploitation arrangements. Partnership working continues to strengthen the identification of those children who are at risk of or are currently being exploited. Not only is this resulting in better identification of children at risk, but the significance of this is reflective in our day to day approach in safeguarding children in a timelier and partnership led manner.

## **7) Risks and Gaps**

The following areas have been identified as gaps and potential risks through data analysis and learning from practice locally.



### Familial Sexual Harm

There are low numbers of referrals to Childrens Services and low numbers of police recorded crime investigations in respect of familial sexual harm where the child is a victim. The need to strengthen the local arrangements in responding to familial sexual harm has been identified through performance data and learning from local Line of Sight practice events. In addition there is a current gap in respect of safeguarding training around familial sexual harm which is a key element of the review of the workforce development and safeguarding training. Sexual harm training will be commissioned as part of the revised NEL SCP safeguarding training offer in 2022. **It is recommended that there is a key focus on the effectiveness of local arrangements in responding to and safeguarding children in respect of familial sexual harm in 2022. It is recommended a Strategic Lead is identified to lead on this work, and a Task and Finish Group established**

### Neglect

Neglect continues to be a key feature in the reason for referrals to Childrens Services and the stated reason children are subject to child protection plans. Recent Line of Sight practice events have identified that neglect is a key factor in a number of cases and that practice is not consistent in responding to neglect. The NEL SCP Neglect Strategy and training programme is in need of revision. **It is recommended that there is a key focus on the effectiveness of local arrangements in responding to neglect in reducing the impact of children in 2022. It is recommended a Strategic Lead is identified to lead on this work, and a Task and Finish Group established**

### Independent Scrutiny

The NEL SCP commissioned an Independent Scrutineer, Stuart Smith, from March to May 2020. In addition the NEL SCP have developed and implemented the Scrutiny and Assurance Framework which includes the development of Professional Scrutiny Officers who have a level of independence. The Scrutiny and Assurance Framework has now been in place a year which has enabled an assessment by the NEL SCP of how it is working in practice. This has led a review of the the core data set, review of capacity of the PSO role and review of the remit and functioning of the Safeguarding Assurance and Improvement Group. **This has concluded that the level of assurance and independent scrutiny of the effectiveness of the board arrangements needs to be further strengthened. The NEL SCP are currently considering options for further strengthening local arrangements.**

### Operational and Strategic capacity

The Covid pandemic has created a number of threats and challenges which has impacted on agencies ability to deliver services. Agencies have adapted very well and have ensured that they continue to safeguard children and support children and families where vulnerabilities' have been assessed. The continued pandemic will have a further impact on agencies and will be assessed and safeguards put in place. In addition individual agencies have been impacted on by the level of need within NEL which is reflected in the number of referrals. This is an area that requires monitoring and oversight. The required capacity and resources required to deliver the two outcomes will inform the revision of the Scrutiny and Assurance Framework and NEL SCP in Governance structure in 2022.

## **8) Conclusion**

The NEL SCP Partnership have made progress in a number of areas, have undertaken developments, have identified areas which work well and areas for practice improvement and identification of current gaps. All of which has been evidenced throughout this report and in the summary below and which has informed the recommendations which will form the 2022 Strategic Delivery Plan.

### **Achievements**

- Effective partnership arrangements for responding to contextual safeguarding.
- Effective arrangements for responding to prevent, modern day slavery.
- Section 11 audit activity evidences partner agencies have robust safeguarding arrangements in place.

- Effective processes for learning when things go wrong and in identifying required practice improvement.
- Strengthened arrangements for hearing the voice of the child, however, work identified in respect of assessing and the child’s lived experience.
- Arrangements for learning from practice including where things go wrong are working well and have led to clear identification of learning and required practice improvement.
- There are robust governance arrangements in place that enable the NEL SCP to identify and respond to emerging risks and challenges. These include the NEL SCP Forward Plan, Risk Register and Challenge Log.
- Relationships are good and mutually supportive, including openness to challenge.

### Areas for improvement/ monitoring

- The need to review and revise the NEL SCP core data set and performance reporting in ensuring all key data is captured and the NEL SCP Board are fully sighted on risks, challenges, opportunities and practice improvement.
- The need to further revise the Scrutiny and Assurance Framework and Action Plan and assurance activity aligned to the “what good looks like” practice standards which are in development and assess its effectiveness in achieving the two NEL SCP outcomes.
- For the NEL SCP to be fully sighted on the embedding, application, understanding and effectiveness of local thresholds in ensuring children and families receive the right level of intervention at the earliest opportunity.
- The need to further strengthen current arrangements for undertaking and evidencing the impact of practice improvement activity.
- Ensuring practitioners fully understand their roles and responsibilities in respect of Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018 statutory guidance

### Risks and Gaps

- Insufficient levels of independent scrutiny.
- Need for key focus on the effectiveness of local arrangements in responding to and safeguarding children in respect of familial sexual abuse
- There needs to be a key focus on the effectiveness of local arrangements in responding to neglect in reducing the impact on children.
- The continued pandemic will have a further impact on agencies and will be assessed and safeguards put in place.

## 9) Priorities/ focus/ recommendations for 2022

Recommendations	
<b>2 SCP Outcomes</b>	The NEL SCP will review and revise the core data set and Scrutiny and Assurance Framework and agree and implement local “what good looks like” statements in supporting the embedding of the two strategic outcomes and associated focused outcome statements/measures across the partnership. This will lead to a greater understanding and interpretation of data and performance information to improve practice and to evidence the impact of practice improvement.
<b>Annual Development Day</b>	An annual development day to be held in order to analyse the impact of local arrangements and in agreeing the priorities for the next year and strategic delivery plan requirements
Areas for Priority focus	
<b>Governance arrangements</b>	Review the SCP governance arrangements informed by the review of the effectiveness of the Scrutiny and Assurance Framework and makes changes required to deliver the 2 SCP Outcomes

<b>Neglect</b>	Neglect continues to be the highest stated issue and needs to be recognised and responded to at the earliest opportunity. <b>A review of the effectiveness and impact of the local approach to neglect will be undertaken. It is recommended a Strategic Lead is identified to lead on this work, and a Task and Finish Group established</b>
<b>Familial Sexual Abuse</b>	Historically there have been low figures in respect of referrals and children subject to familial sexual harm. <b>A review of the local response to familial sexual harm, including pathways, process and practice will be undertaken in order to identify any gaps and to strengthen current arrangements including work force development. It is recommended a Strategic Lead is identified to lead on this work, and a Task and Finish Group established</b>
<b>Areas for Assurance</b>	
<b>Domestic abuse</b>	Reducing the harm for children who live in households where there is domestic abuse remains a priority area of focus for the NEL SCP due to its impact and potential to cause lasting harm for children and families across the community. The NEL SCP will continue to work with the Safeguarding Adult Board and Community Safety Partnership to oversee the impact of the Domestic Abuse Strategy and One System Domestic Abuse group in delivering this.
<b>Child Exploitation</b>	Tackling child exploitation and ensuring multi-agency arrangements are effective in recognising children and young people at risk will continue to be a key area of focus the NEL SCP. This will include overseeing the impact of the Adolescent Risk Strategy.
<b>Training</b>	We will oversee the implementation and effectiveness of the NEL SCP safeguarding training aligned to the two NEL SCP outcomes in ensuring it equips practitioners with the necessary knowledge and skills to recognise and respond to risk and need.
<b>Working Together</b>	As part of its work plan the NEL SCP will assess partnership agencies understanding and application of their roles and responsibilities and expectations of practice within Working Together 2018. This will include thresholds, strategy discussion, core groups, information sharing etc and will be informed by the learning from local line of sight and rapid reviews.
<b>Transition</b>	Oversee the embedding and impact of the revised local transition protocol in supporting and preparing young people for adulthood and independence.

## 10) Appendices

### Appendix 1: The Annual Income and Expenditure of the Board (Financial Year 2020/21)

#### **CORE INCOME**

Made up of contributions from	
Humberside Police	£15,000
Clinical Commissioning Group	£31,400
NEL Council	£94,300
CRC/Probation Service	£2,200
NEL SCP Ear Marked Reserve Drawdown	£7,200
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>£ 150,100</b>

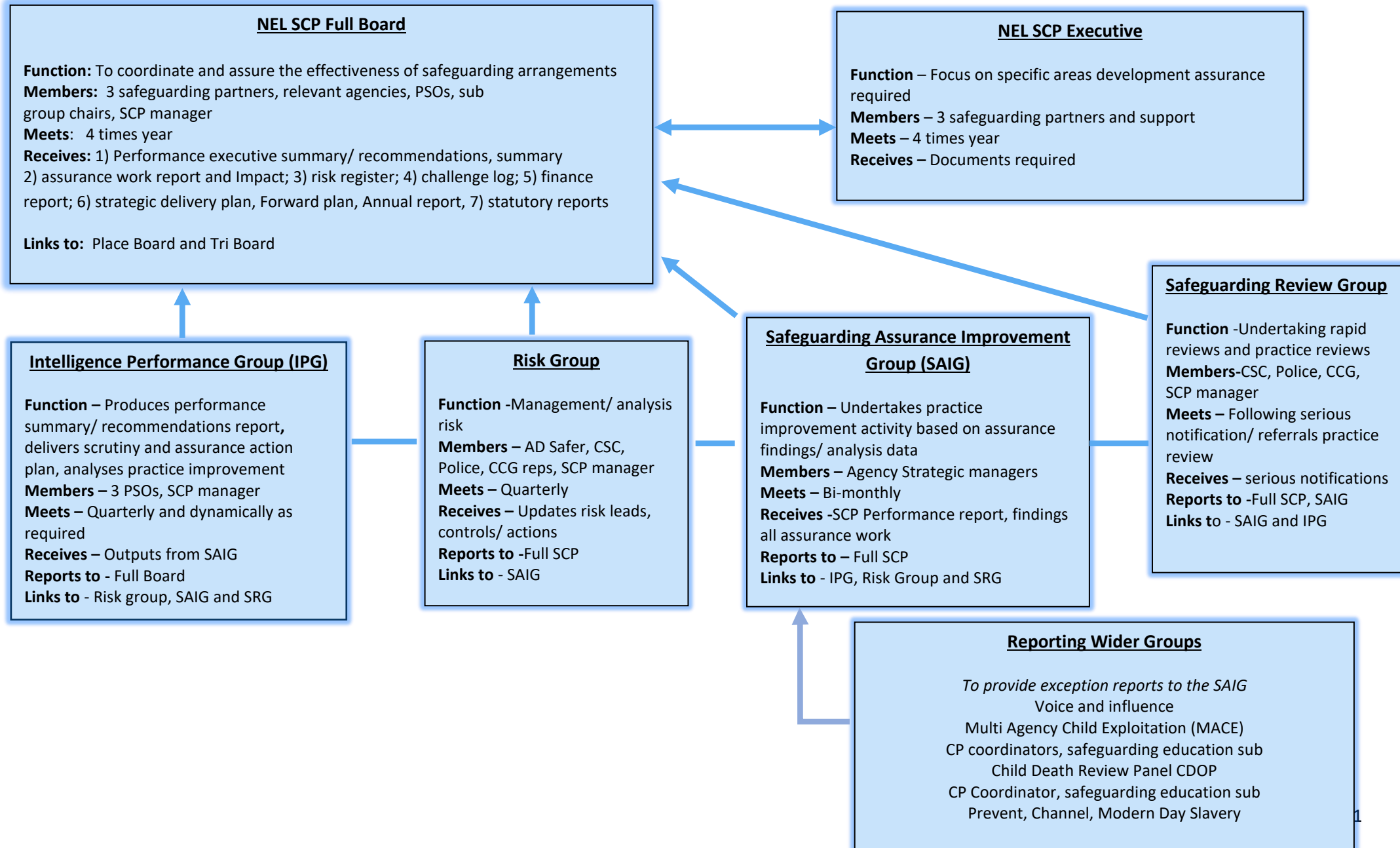
#### **STAFFING**

NEL SCP Board Manager	
NEL SCP Administrator	
50% Strategic Safeguarding Manager, Children's and Adults	
<b>TOTAL STAFFING</b>	<b>£99, 100</b>

#### **OVERHEADS AND MANAGEMENT ON-COSTS:**

Accommodation, IT, Running Costs	£45,300
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>£144,400</b>

## Appendix 2: Governance Structure





**NHS**  
North East Lincolnshire  
Clinical Commissioning Group



[www.safernel.co.uk/nelsafeguarding-children-partnership](http://www.safernel.co.uk/nelsafeguarding-children-partnership)