

Development of independent scrutiny

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Early adopters of new arrangements



Where are the opportunities?



What did we learn from implementation?

- Opportunities to innovate and improve, particularly in terms of involving children;
- Be focused in short-term, but have a longer term transformation plan;
- Engage leaders early and throughout;
- Take time to consider values and an ultimate vision;
- Embed scrutiny and a learning culture.

Principles of effective implementation

Principles covering:

- Leadership, engagement and relationships;
- Vision and design;
- Planning, individual accountability;
- Ongoing management; and learning, review and assurance

You can download the full report [here](#).



NATIONAL
CHILDREN'S
BUREAU

Independent Scrutiny



Working Together 2018

- Multi agency arrangements should be independently scrutinised :
- provide assurance in judging the effectiveness of multi-agency arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children
- scrutiny is objective , acts as a critical friend and promotes reflection
- consider how effectively the arrangements are working for children and families as well as for practitioners
- Independent scrutiny of the report the multi agency partners must publish at least once a year

Chairing arrangements



Independent chair

- 58% retained independent chair
- Some retained chair of former LSCB

Other Arrangements

- 42% other chairing arrangements
- Chair rotating between 3 statutory partners

Interim Arrangements

- Interim until end of the financial year
- Interim until review date of partnership plan

Independent scrutiny

65% INDEPENDENT SCRUTINEER ROLE

- Some externally recruited
- Former LSCB chairs
- Some for interim period
- Independent chairs to include scrutiny role

33% MIXED SCRUTINY ARRANGEMENTS

- External reviewers
- Peer review
- LGA
- Multi-agency audit
- Young scrutineers

2% Pool of Scrutineers



Developing the scrutiny role

Independent scrutiny to provide assurance, monitoring & challenge to the quality of agencies' work

- Provide assurance in judging the effectiveness of multi-agency arrangements to safeguard & promote the welfare of all children, including arrangements to identify & review serious child safeguarding cases
- Act as constructive critical friend & be a key driver to promoting reflection for continuous improvement
- Review effectiveness of how arrangements are working for children & families as well as for practitioners, & how well the safeguarding partners are providing leadership.

Cultural change

Children are best safeguarded when partners have a shared language & understanding, but continue to have different perspectives

Enrich our understanding of complex situations and lead to deeper learning

Partnership built on openness & honesty; strive to ensure a balance of respect & challenge.

Conflict will be resolved through conversations and restorative approaches

Culture that welcomes scrutiny and actively participates in it; trusting and learning from each other as well as taking accountability- normalise peer to peer challenge

Learning from what works rather than deficit model

System of scrutiny

System of rolling scrutiny with an Independent scrutineer who will

System of scrutiny

'Provide assurance in judging the effectiveness of services to protect children, assist when there is a disagreement between agencies & support the HSCP to be a learning organisation'.

To do this the scrutineer will:


- **Attend the Executive Group & Strategic Partnership group, as well as the Audit & Performance sub group.**
- **Review the Partnership's annual report**
- **Review audits and performance data, including s11 audits**
- **Ensure regular thematic peer reviews**
- **Determine the effectiveness of arrangements to identify & review serious child safeguarding cases**
- **Be involved in the escalation and conflict resolution process**


System of scrutiny continued

The Scrutineer will also contribute to:


- The Learning Hub
- Having a direct line of sight to frontline practice including conversations/feedback with frontline practitioners
- Ensuring the voice of the child and service users is at the heart of all aspects of scrutiny by talking with and receiving direct feedback from children, young people and families to test the interconnectedness between performance, practice and the voice of the child, young person and family
- Culture change throughout the Partnership to embed scrutiny as a positive process with learning as its outcome
- Ensuring informed challenge from Elected Members takes place


Next steps for scrutiny

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- Develop & define the scrutiny system, agreement of a consistent set of principles for scrutiny & an annual scrutiny plan.
 - A model of appreciative enquiry will be at the centre of developing the scrutiny framework.
 - 'Freedom to roam'



Direct line of sight to frontline practice including conversations/feedback with frontline practitioners by involving staff at all levels in practice & improvement through learning hubs & other mechanisms
Ensuring the voice of the child and service users is at the heart of all aspects of scrutiny . The scrutineer will work closely with existing forums but also seek opportunities through audits and deep dives to hear the voice of the child and family.

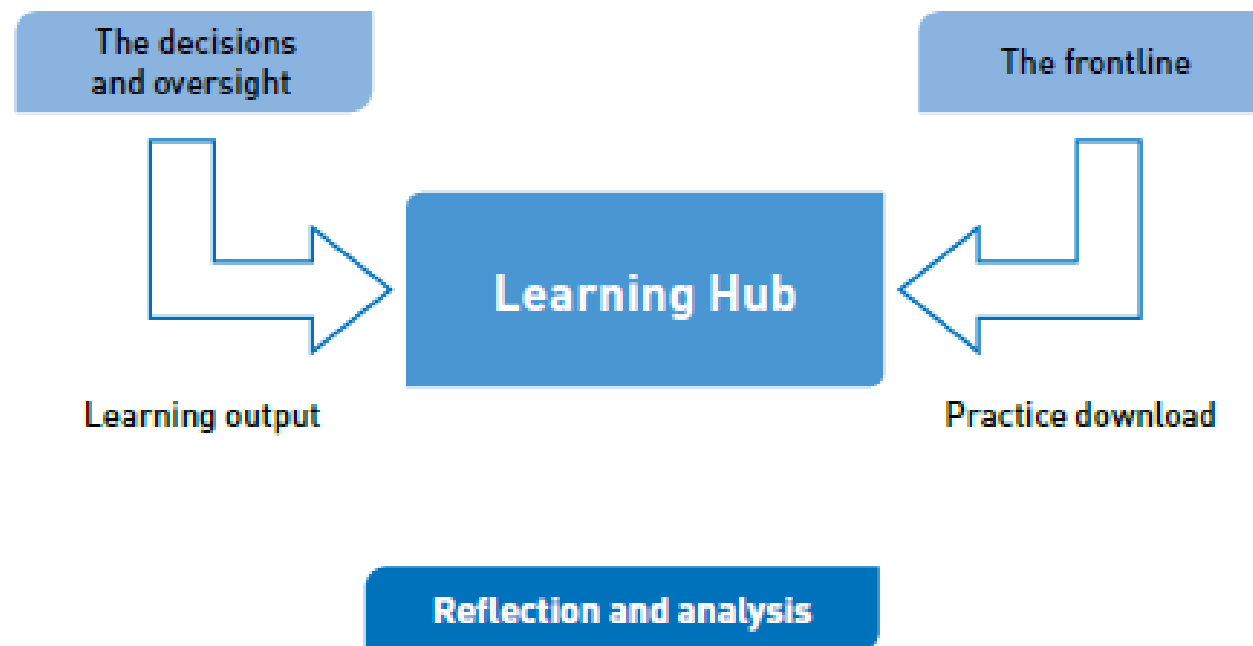
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- Develop an audit schedule of multiagency audits, including s11 & deep dives , focussed on learning from case reviews & priority areas identified by the partnership including evidence on what works well
 - Peer review – work closely with the Eastern region to develop peer review & challenge into the annual rolling system of scrutiny .

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- Areas of scrutiny – Exploited children ; Children help in Custody ; Child Protection medicals.
 - Areas of future work – children stepped down from CP plan to CiN, Child sexual abuse

Exploitation

- Identified Top 10 missing children – met SWs and reviewed cases
- Met Locate /Missing teams/ Halo /Gangs – Herts police
- Key individuals/managers in CSC including missing co-ordinator
- Missing people charity (RHI)
- Attended SEARCH panel
- Presented findings and recommendations to Executive

Background to the Learning Hub



The Learning Hub was designed as an important two way feedback loop between front line practitioners and the Strategic Boards, ensuring learning on priority local safeguarding issues is shared and acted on at all levels in a timely way

How the Learning Hub Works

Learning

- Newsletter produced and circulated on the key theme
- 5 local forums held with presentations on the theme
- Children and families asked for their views

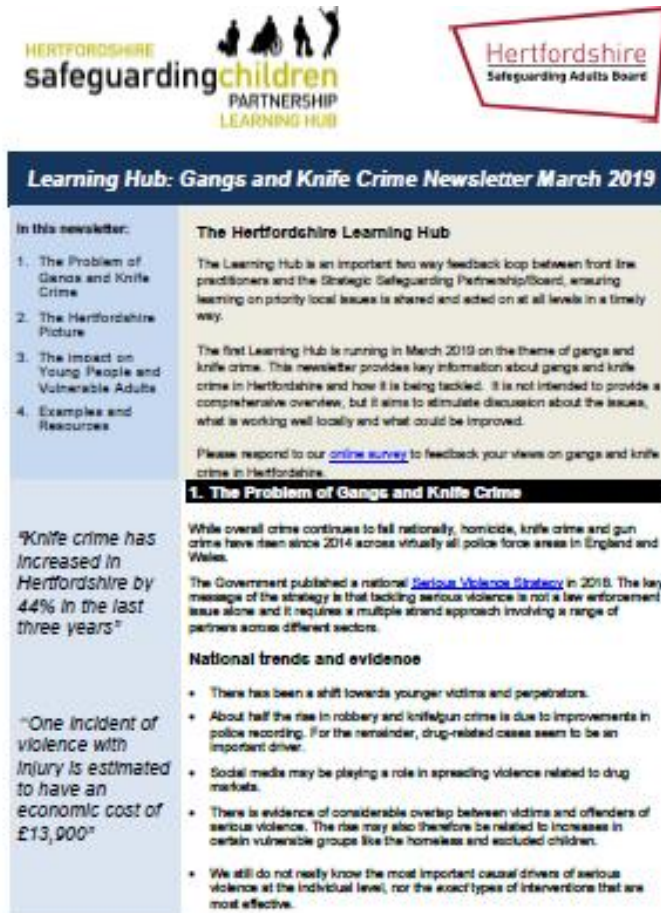
Frontline feedback

- Feedback from frontline practitioners sought during the forums
- Online survey circulated for those who cannot attend

Strategic feedback

- Feedback from practitioners, children and families is presented to the HSCP Strategic Group
- Strategic Group feeds back to practitioners on actions taken

Review of Gangs and Knife Crime Newsletter



- 6 page newsletter produced
- Sections on:
 - The Problem of Gangs and Knife Crime
 - The Hertfordshire Picture
 - The Impact on Young People and Vulnerable Adults
 - Examples and Resources
- Included input from: Hertfordshire Constabulary, Targeted Youth Support, YC Herts, SSAG, young people, voluntary organisations, district and borough councils
- Distributed to all HSCP and HSAB mailing lists

Review of Gangs and Knife Crime Local Forums and Survey

5 local forums ran across the county:

- 225 front line practitioners attended overall
- Attendees were from a range of agencies supporting both children and adults
- All forums were oversubscribed with waiting lists in place

Each forum included:

- Local Chair and Keynote speaker from the Police
- Video of young people talking about their views (YC Herts)
- A range of different local speakers
- 40 minutes group discussion of key feedback questions

90% said they thought the forums met their objectives:

- 92% said the forums gave them a better understanding of gangs and knife crime
- 87% felt able to fully contribute to the forums
- 38% thought the forums were too short and wanted more time

An online Survey was distributed:

- This was sent to all HSCP and HSAB distribution lists (395 people) as well as those on the waiting lists for the local forums
- 33 responses were received

Feedback from Young People on the issue of gangs and knife crime in Hertfordshire

“What I hear in the news makes me worry”

“It depends where you hang out, it is more of an issue in certain areas”

“I know people in my area who have been stabbed”

(comments made during focus group with young people in Ware, February 2019)

Suggestions for addressing the issue:

- Parent sessions as ‘most parents don’t have a clue what’s going on’
 - Peer talks in schools from ex gang members
 - Harsher punishments for carrying knives
 - Safety sessions for what to do if someone is stabbed or has acid thrown on them
 - Early education from the age of 11 on gangs, weapons awareness, drugs and consequences
 - Getting young people involved in what they’re interested in i.e. sport, boxing, martial arts
 - Giving young people opportunities and achievable goals i.e. interests, education and career
- (views expressed by 4 young people affected by gangs and supported by TYS)

Feedback from Front Line Practitioners: Summary of Themes 1

Theme	Feedback
Information sharing	This needs to be more proactive to ensure risk is adequately managed and intelligence can be shared between agencies in a timely way. Young people and vulnerable adults should also be supported and encouraged to report issues anonymously.
Communication	There are lots of good services, but clearer pathways to them are needed as well as more information on the services available to refer to and awareness training on what the issues are.
Funding and service capacity	There are good interventions available in many areas but there is a need to ensure there is adequate funding for timely interventions and services for the different levels of risk, as well as diversionary activities.
Partnership working	This is seen as a strength by some, and many community safety partnership are being very active. Others feel improvement in multi-agency working is needed.

(N.B. This feedback is the perceptions of front line practitioners, gathered during the local forums and online survey)

Feedback from Front Line Practitioners: Summary of Themes 2

Theme	Feedback
Education	It is important to prevent young people from becoming involved through education and raising awareness at an early age.
Engagement	It can be challenging to engage parents and young people in interventions, particularly at the stage when they are voluntary.
Parents	Parenting is seen as a key contributing factor, with improving parental awareness suggested as an important area of focus.
Individual agencies	The role of the Police and Schools are seen as particularly vital.
Specific issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Families being moved to Herts from other areas of the country. • Awareness and approach to addressing cuckooing is variable. • Young people not attending school are very vulnerable. • Young people aged 8-13 can fall between the gaps in services. • There is potential for the private sector to play a greater role.

Learning from the Learning Hub Process

Successes

- Level of engagement by front line practitioners – all events had waiting lists and good attendance on the day.
- Contribution to multi-agency engagement more generally - 55 new contacts were added to the HSCP database during the Learning Hub.
- Having one strategic county level speaker and different local speakers at each forum worked well.
- 92% said the forums gave them a better understanding of gangs and knife crime.
- Focus on discussion and feedback and the use of *Slido* and the online survey to do this – lots of rich feedback collected.
- The opportunity to include young people's voices which is a commitment in the new Safeguarding Arrangements Plan.

Areas for development

- Branding of the forums as an HSCP/HSAB initiative could have been clearer, and Local Chairs should be briefed on this in future.
- Depending on the theme, it could be helpful to consider certain targeting front line practitioners to attend.
- More engagement from members of the HSAB could be achieved by clarifying upfront how the theme is relevant to both Boards.
- More time and consultation spent on selecting the right local speakers, to ensure they fully represent what is going on in each area.
- More time was needed at the events for local presentations and discussions.
- Only 17% of attendees completed the post evaluation survey.
- Only small number of young people could be engaged with the available resources.

Peer review

- Developed Eastern region peer review process
- Two days on site (virtual) representatives from key partners/ scrutineer role
- Team will conduct individual and joint interviews/ focus groups
- Focus on the Partnership not on areas of practice
- Present strengths and areas for further development
- Feedback will be measured, factual and backed up with evidence
- Identification of strengths needs to be balanced and will be focused on impact on safeguarding services.
- Recommendations for improvement

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