

**REPORT TO:** Children Young People and Families  
Policy and Performance Board

**DATE:** 10 November 2025

**REPORTING OFFICER:** Executive Director of Children's Services

**PORTFOLIO:** Children Young People and Families

**SUBJECT:** Quarterly Report from the Halton Safeguarding  
Children Partnership

**WARD(S)** Boroughwide

## **1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to enable the Halton Safeguarding Children Partnership to provide an update to the Children, Young People and Families Policy and Performance Board of reassurance being achieved and includes how the Partnership is addressing areas for improvement identified in the Halton Safeguarding Children Partnership (HSCP) Business Plan, the inspection of Halton local authority children's services (May 2024), the most recent annual report and Working Together 2023.
- 1.2 The key priorities for development or improvement were agreed by strategic leaders and included in the HSCP Business Plan 2024-27.

## **2.0 RECOMMENDATION: that**

- 1) The Board acknowledge the report and current Executive position.**
- 2) The Board continues to receive updates on progress against the HSCP Business Plan objectives and the Annual Report's recommendations, and the ancillary work of the various sub-groups and task and finish groups.**

## **3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

- 3.1 During QTR 1, the HSCP has RAG rated itself against the Family First Partnership MASA requirements. The majority of standards were identified as green with no red. However, there are some standards in relation to independent scrutiny that need consolidating.

### 3.2 Key Achievements

- The start of weekly multi-agency contextual safeguarding sub-group meetings mean referrals are now scrutinised robustly and support instigated in a timelier manner. The revamp of CSOG also means that these monthly meetings focus on identifying themes and trends of concerns and planning multi-agency actions to mitigate any emerging patterns of concern.
- Learning recommendations from all CSPRs are now scrutinised and gaps in current safeguarding provision identified. The CSPR Triage Group consistently make cogent observations before circulating these to relevant subgroups and partner agencies for actioning.
- Procedures for all multi-agency strategy meetings and discussions have been enhanced with tighter timescales being applied and attendance consistently at 100% across the 4 core partners.
- Course attendance at multi-agency training events is over 85% for the last 6 months (from 56%) with total attendance also increasing. This reflects the rich training offer, led by a host of partner agencies.
- The HSCP continues to embed the Lundy Model principles across multi-agency practice. We have started to improve the way we collect the opinions of children (voice), the places where such views are sourced (space), the people that listen to these opinions (audience) and the impact of such dialogue (influence). Further work is needed in QTR 2 and 3 as we continue to ensure all partner agencies practice the key tenets of Lundy.

### 3.3 Areas Requiring Continued Focus

- Data/Scorecards: there needs to be more systematic analysis of the multiagency data/scorecards with a focus on what the data means for the child.
- Transitional Safeguarding: more work is needed to ensure there is a seamless transition as young people become adults.
- Threshold application: scrutiny work tells us that threshold application can be inconsistent across agencies, resulting in inconsistent responses to risk.
- Embedding learning: greater attention needs to be directed to embedding learning and revisiting areas where gaps were previously identified so the HSCP can confidently report on qualitative and quantitative impact and outcomes respectively.

### 3.4 Strategic Priorities for the HSCP

1. Improving the quality and timeliness of our practice in relation to neglect.
2. Safeguarding Children from Violence and Exploitation
3. Protecting Children as victims of Domestic Abuse

The HSCP Annual Report for 2025 provides a detailed account on each of the priority areas, including:

- why we chose it
- what we have done
- what was the impact for young people
- what we need to do to make more progress in the future.

[HSCP-Annual-Report-2024.25-final.pdf](#).

## **4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 The HSCP continues to collaborate with the Pan Cheshire partners in addressing shared issues. Some of the shared projects and policy reviews currently being undertaken include the following:

- ✦ Pre-Birth Protocol and Guidance: signed off during QTR 1.
- ✦ Private Fostering: a task and finish group is currently reviewing the Pan Cheshire protocol as all regions report very low numbers of reported cases, suggesting potential under-reporting.
- ✦ Missing from Home Protocol (latest iteration makes reference to Operation Philomena that was not referenced in earlier version). Sign off imminent.

## **5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 No immediate financial implications. Financial report for HSCP to be included in next report to Children, Young People and Families Policy and Performance Board

## **6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES**

- 6.1 **Improving Health, Promoting Wellbeing and Supporting Greater Independence**

The Integrated care board provides assurance that children who are not brought to health appointments are responded to in a timely manner. Since QTR 1, all health providers have provided the HSCP significant assurance that they have robust policies in place. Furthermore, these are monitored quarterly against key performance indicators. Thus, Health members confidently report that effective

systems and processes are in place. (Sept 2025)

## 6.2 **Building a Strong, Sustainable Local Economy**

A review of the Halton Neglect Strategy and the accompanying Practice Standards and Guidance has placed a greater focus on Educational Neglect and boosting school attendance. This is seen as key in enhancing the future employment opportunities of children in Halton. Thus, a multi-agency training event took place on 17<sup>th</sup> September titled 'School Attendance is Everyone's Business' which was attended by nearly 100 multi-agency practitioners. In addition, the Vulnerable Learners Board is now scrutinising on a quarterly basis the attendance of our most vulnerable learners to help ensure partners are robust and responsive in ensuring children engage in learning.

## 6.3 **Supporting Children, Young People and Families**

The HSCP is collaborating with the Centre for Expertise and the NW Multi-Agency Safeguarding Learning and Support Hub by completing a mock JTAI questionnaire focusing on Child Sexual Abuse (True for Us: Self-Assessment).

The responses from partners will help the SCP to identify areas where further training, resources, support etc are needed. The completion date for this piece of work was 3/10/25 with a findings report to be presented to the Quality and Impact Group on 21/10/25. A new North West CSA Strategy has also been recently shared. The Business Unit is currently shaping an implementation plan to disseminate across the partnership.

[Self-Assessment "True to Us" – Focus on Child Sexual Abuse \(Page 1 of 6\)](#)

## 6.4 **Tackling Inequality and Helping Those Who Are Most In Need**

During QTR 1, the HSCP has worked closely with the Safer Halton Partnership and the Halton Safeguarding Adults Board in revisiting the Pan Cheshire All Age Exploitation Strategy. Together we have produced a baseline assessment of where we feel Halton is in relation to the 4 P approach

(Prosecution/Prevention/Protection/Partnership). The baselines of the other Pan Cheshire Partnerships are currently being distilled so a Cheshire wide approach can be adopted for areas where gaps have been identified by each of the four Cheshire regions.

Tackling the widespread increase in ketamine use amongst our young people continues to be a key multi-agency objective. As a result of the PCC funding in 2024/25, multi-agency partners now

have a sound awareness of the damaging health impacts caused by ketamine-nearly 300 practitioners have attended ketamine awareness raising events. Further grant funding for 2025/26 has been secured via the PCC enabling the HSCP to continue its awareness raising activities. It is expected that some of the new grant funding will be directed towards funding workshops with young people and awareness raising activities in respect of parents/carers.

## **6.5 Working Towards a Greener Future**

None.

## **6.6 Valuing and Appreciating Halton and Our Community**

None.

## **7.0 Risk Analysis**

- 7.1 Since the start of QTR 1 (2025/26) the only change to the HSCP Risk Register was to remove one risk as it is no longer proving a barrier for partnership. This recognises the increase in trainers and organisations contributing to the HSCP Training Offer, as evidenced in the extensive training offer below:

[2025-2026-Training-Calendar-05-25.pdf](#)

In addition, the digital offer is also expanding which is giving greater flexibility as to when organisations choose to deliver their training with a multi-agency content.

[Digital Learning - Halton Safeguarding Children Partnership](#)

## **8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

- 8.1 One of the themes explored in the Learning Circle for Group R (9/10/25) was ethnicity. However, professionals at the multi-agency learning event were satisfied that this incident was not motivated by ethnicity.

## **9.0 CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS**

- 9.1 Not applicable.

## **10.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972**

- 10.1 'None under the meaning of the Act.'