

**OLDHAM SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN PARTNERSHIP
PROGRESS REPORT**

1 October 2019 – 31 March 2020



This report is a public document.

It can be accessed on the website of Oldham Safeguarding Children Partnership: <https://www.olscb.org/about/publications/>

Approved by Oldham Safeguarding Children Partners on 8 March 2021

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Date of publication: 12 March 2021

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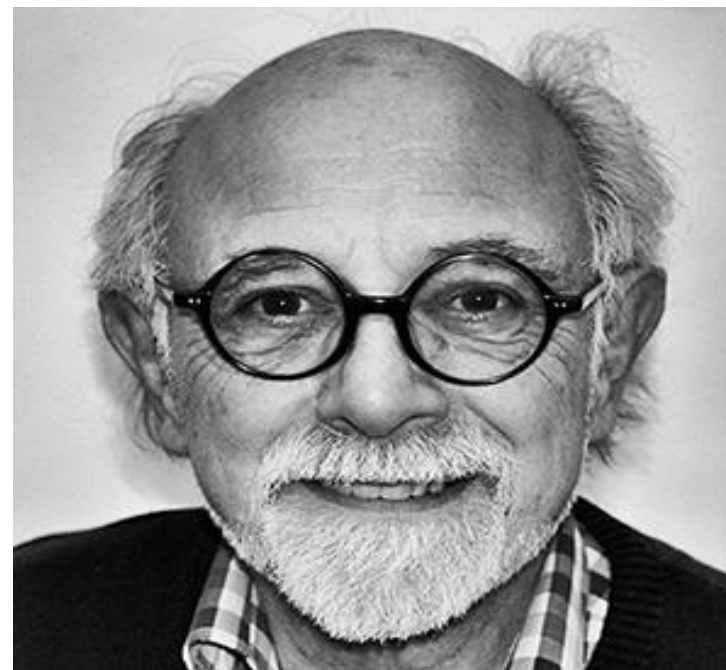
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Foreword

This document reports on the first period of operation of the new Oldham Safeguarding Children Partnership, between October 2019 and March 2020. These arrangements supersede the previous Local Safeguarding Children Board as required by the Children and Social Work Act 2017. The new Partnership has enabled us to review and refresh our strategic aims for safeguarding, revise our leadership and accountability structures and introduce more effective contributions from young people via a restructured safeguarding forum.

The new Partnership has embraced the need for more effective learning and improvement on safeguarding issues. In particular, a number of initiatives have been taken to improve our response to complex safeguarding, distil and implement the learning from child safeguarding practice reviews and enhance our programme for developing a knowledgeable and skilled workforce. While undoubtedly there remains the need for continuous improvement, the initial phase of implementation of the new arrangements has been positive.

The conclusion of this reporting period coincided with the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic. This has proved challenging for the Oldham Partnership, but safeguarding has been effectively sustained throughout. The Partnership has exercised active oversight of a range of safeguarding issues, maintained continuity of service and support and undertaken deep dives to assure Partners of the quality of practice.



A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read 'H. Giller'.

Dr Henri Giller
Independent Chair

1. Introduction

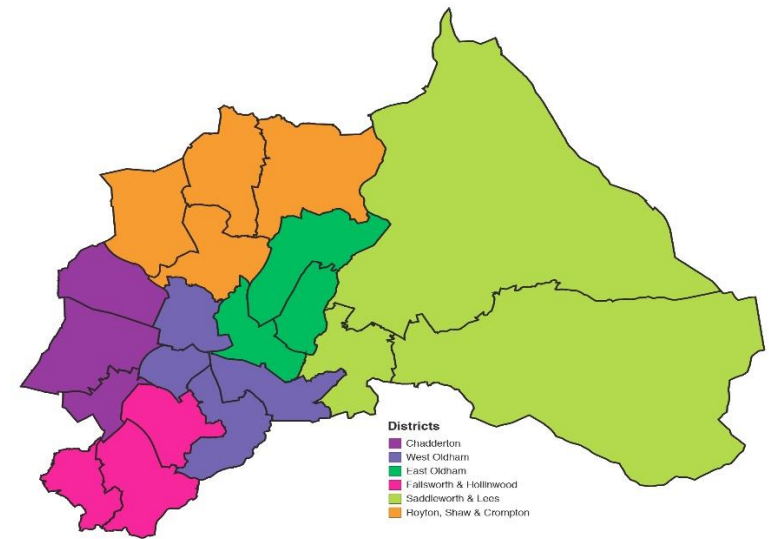
The Oldham Strategic Safeguarding Partnership has been developed by Oldham Council, Greater Manchester Police and the Oldham Clinical Commissioning Group to ensure that all children and young people in the area get the safeguarding and protection they need in order to help them to thrive. The partnership will provide leadership and accountability for the promotion of children and young peoples' well-being and the prevention and protection from harm. The partnership will promote a child-centred approach to safeguarding, listening to children, empowering families and, where needed, providing services that are professional, evidenced-based and effective. The partners will continuously strive to improve and challenge each other to learn the lessons from daily practice.

Safeguarding is everyone's business and the Oldham safeguarding partnership will provide lead responsibility in demonstrating what this means for all people and professionals living and working in the local community.

Our strategic aims include:

- Excellent practice is the norm across all practitioners in Oldham
- Partner agencies hold one another to account effectively
- There is early identification of new safeguarding issues
- Learning is promoted and embedded
- Information is shared effectively
- The public feel confident that children are protected

2. Oldham's Context



Oldham has a population of 233,759 people making it the 7th largest borough in Greater Manchester.

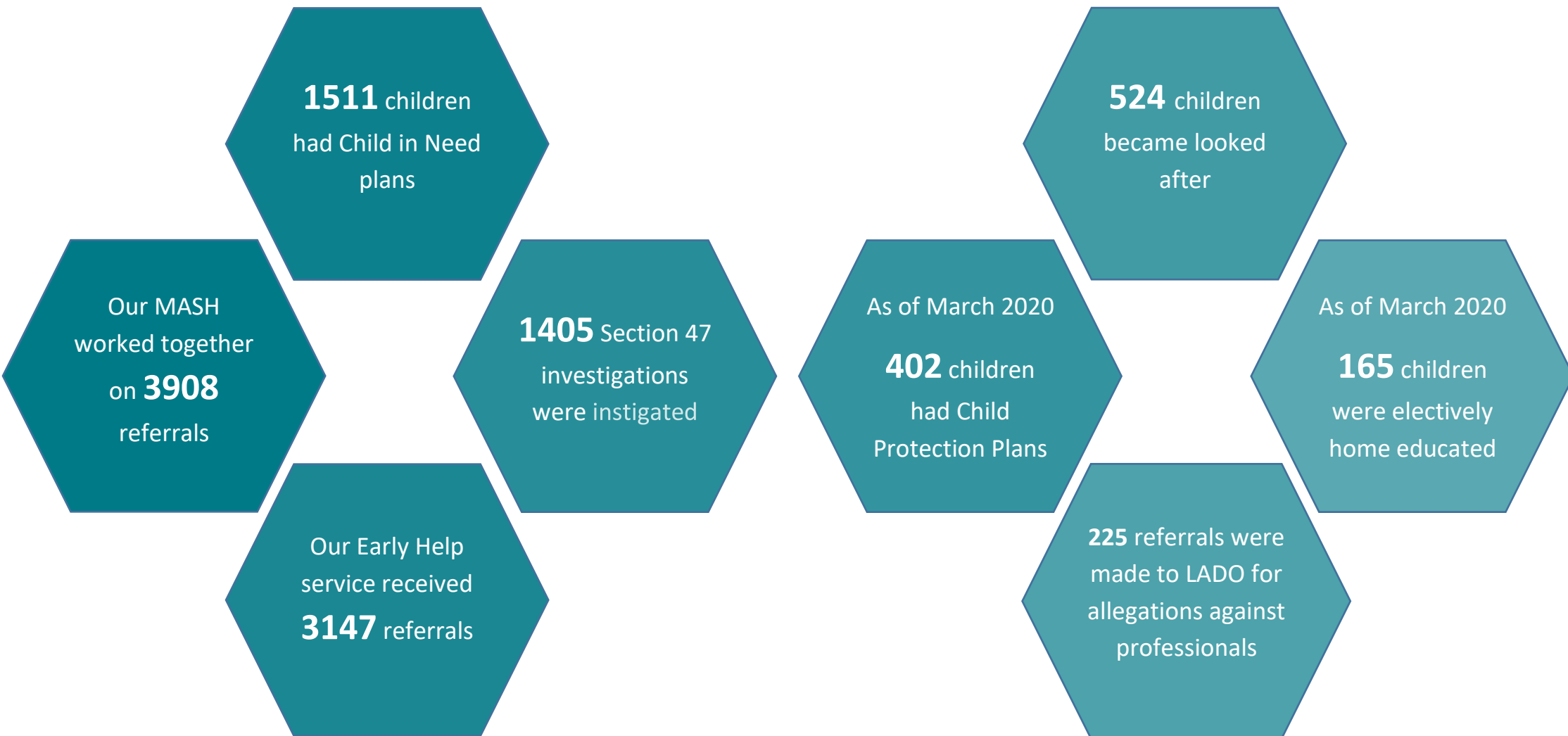
There is a high proportion of Oldham residents under the age of 16 years (22.5%) compared with 15.7% over the age of 65 years.

Oldham has a diverse population with 22.5% of residents from Black and Minority Ethnic (BAME) backgrounds.

Although levels of deprivation have improved in the borough, we are still ranked 47th highest out of 327 local authority areas. Four areas within Oldham are ranked amongst the top 1.1% of the nation's most deprived areas.

21.6% of children in Oldham are living in poverty

3. Oldham's Safeguarding Snapshot



4. New Safeguarding Arrangements

Our new logo



A key element to our new safeguarding arrangements was our branding. The Partnership were keen to have a logo that professionals, children and young people and communities would recognise as Oldham Safeguarding Partnership.

It was important to us that children and young people were involved in the design and development of our new logo and branding.

Building on our close working relationship with Oldham College the partnership developed a design brief and worked with a group of young people who were undertaking a graphic design course at the College to design our new logo. We are thrilled with the outcome and the Partnership would like to offer our thanks and appreciation to the young people from Oldham College for their hard work on the development of our branding.

We have continued to build the branding into all our communications. We are also working closely with our Safeguarding Adults colleagues to join the brand with the aim of having Safeguarding Oldham as the overall brand and logo for all safeguarding activity in Oldham.

Partnership Development day

The focus of the Partnership development day in March 2020 was an evaluation of the new arrangement thus far. The feedback from members of the Partnership suggested that the new arrangements

had made statutory partners more visible and communication was strong. However, there was still a feeling that our current model wasn't ambitious enough to support effective learning and that the high number of subgroups was a key factor in this.

With the support of Jane Shuttleworth and the learning from Bexley the Partnership agreed a move towards a "learning hub model" as a mechanism to improve and change partnership practice was something that should be explore further. The Partnership has committed to introducing a new structure with a learning hub at its centre by September 2020, followed by six months of evaluation.



What our children and young people told us

In June 2020 Oldham children and young people set out their expectations for our new safeguarding arrangements. Representatives of Oldham Youth Voice Family were involved in our development day in March 2020 and feedback on how well they felt we were doing.

In 2019 we said.....	In 2020 our thoughts are.....
“We want you to work hard to keep us safe”	“We know that this is core, the fact that you’re all here today is evidence that this is happening.”
“We expect a page on the website dedicated to children and young people”	“We know that the new website has dedicated pages for children and young people and is due to go live soon”
“We expect that adults working with children and young people have a basic knowledge and understanding of what the safeguarding arrangements are and how to deal with a safeguarding concern”	“We know that a series of briefings on the new arrangements have been delivered to professionals across the Partnership. We also know that a diverse training offer is available.”
“We expect training to be available and young people to be involved in co-delivering the training.”	There is a great training offer available but are young people meaningfully involved?”
“We expect you to provide a range of opportunities for young people to work with you directly”	“Lots is happening, but we need to embed this even more that challenge is over to you!”

Young People's Safeguarding Forum

In response to the challenge put to us by children and young people in Oldham we have worked together to develop the young people's safeguarding forum.



The aim of the workshops is to allow a wider cross section of children and young people to attend. Inclusion won't be based on young people having to be part of a pre-existing group and participants will include:

- ❖ Members of the Oldham Youth Voice Family
- ❖ Children and Young People from schools
- ❖ Children and Young People engaged with youth organisations across Oldham
- ❖ Young people known to Children's Social Care

The Youth Service will support the facilitation of thematic workshops every 2/3 months focussing upon areas such as mental health, trauma, bullying and wellbeing.

Once a year the young people and the Partnership will have a joint development day to review the year's activity and plan.

Cycle of consultation and feedback

1. The Partnership will identify a priority theme
2. Young People's Safeguarding Forum will explore the theme in a session facilitated by the Youth Service
3. Professional input will be included if the children and young people ask for it. This may be a representative of the Partnership or someone from an agency relevant to the theme.
4. The Young People Safeguarding Forum will develop a series of key questions and challenges for the Partnership
5. Representatives of the Young People's Safeguarding Forum will feedback to the partnership wither through direct attendance or via video.

5. Key successes

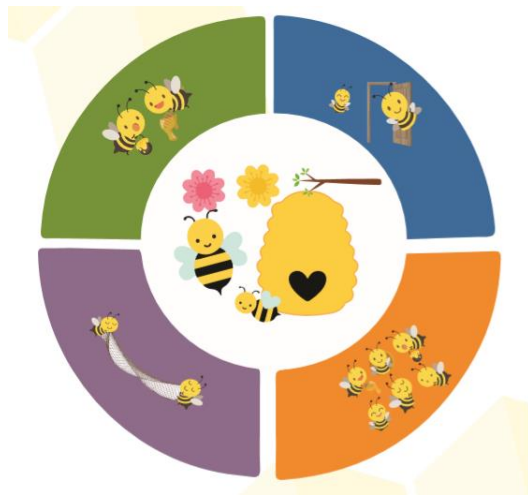
5.1 Complex Safeguarding Hub

Following a multi- agency workshop on 13 February 2020 plan were developed for the introduction of Oldham's Complex Safeguarding Hub. The Hub, which brings together a range of partner agencies will work with:

- any child up to the age of 18 years (or up to the age of 25 years for any young adult currently open to the After-Care Service for Oldham)
- who are open for assessment, intervention or planning to Children's Social Care,
- where there is an identified high risk of, or current experience of exploitation.

Despite the national Covid-19 pandemic Oldham's Complex Safeguarding Hub went live on 1 April 2020.

5.2 Oldham I-Thrive Bees



In August 2019 the Safeguarding Partnership's Training Consultant and Associate Directorate Manager from Healthy Young Minds embarked on a piece of work to make the I-Thrive model for children's mental health accessible to children. They approached Oldham Youth Voice Family and together they developed Oldham I-Thrive Bees in a variety of formats to support

children and young people to access mental health support. The model has been endorsed by the regional I-Thrive team and a launch event is planned for April 2020.

5.3 Communications

Through the work of the joint Communications subgroup for children and adult safeguarding the Partnership launched our new [website](#). Professionals, parents and carers and children and young people can access information on the work of the Partnership, our offer of safeguarding training, learning from case reviews, safeguarding policy and procedures and advice and guidance.



5.4 Our response to Covid-19

In response to the global Covid-19 pandemic the Safeguarding Partnership quickly established weekly assurance meetings with the three statutory safeguarding partners to ensure that children remained visible and that safeguarding concerns continue to be responded to quickly and effectively.

A Partnership risk register was developed and is monitored regularly with input from agencies across the Partnership.

Regular assurance reports are requested to ensure oversight of the impact of the pandemic on agency capacity, and any changes or trends in terms of safeguarding referrals and activity.

Covid-19 and Safeguarding guidance was developed and added to a dedicated section of the website.

Virtual training briefings have also been developed to ensure multi-agency workforce development can continue as much as possible.

6. Learning and Improvement

6.1 Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews

Oldham Safeguarding Children Partnership carried out two rapid reviews of child safeguarding cases during the period of the report.

Child KT:

The key area of learning arising from Child KT related to the impact of criminality on a child's lived experience. The review highlighted the layers of coercion and control that children living in households where parental violent offending may experience and how a parent being imprisoned does not automatically reduce the safeguarding concerns.

In response to the review, a Senior Probation Officer from the National Probation Service delivered a multi-agency practitioner event to share the learning from this case. A [7 minute briefing](#) has also been developed by the National Probation Service and Youth Justice Service.

Child ARM

The primary learning from Child ARM review related to mental health concerns which were exacerbated by cultural practices of Forced Marriage and differing approaches to female children in terms of access to education.

The review found that professionals were often uncomfortable and did not feel competent to challenge cultural practices from which safeguarding concerns were arising.

In response to the review cultural competency training is being commissioned as part of the multi-agency training offer to support professionals to effectively offer respectful challenge to families.

6.2 Multi-Agency Case Evaluation (MACE)

In November 2019 Oldham Safeguarding Children Partnership conducted a multi-agency case evaluation on the theme of **The Multi-Agency Response to Children's Mental Health**. Using the Joint Targeted Area Inspection (JTAI) evaluation criteria as the basis for the evaluation six cases were subject to in depth, Partnership scrutiny and challenge at a multi-agency panel. For the purposes of independent scrutiny, an independent reviewer was commissioned to evaluate the work of the Panel.

What's working well?

- Evidence of the Trauma Symptoms Checklist for Children being used
- Introduction of the Whole School Approach and Mental Wellbeing Team in schools
- Good use of the Mentally Vulnerable Offender Panel to divert young people from Criminal Justice outcomes.

What are we worried about?

- A Joint Strategic Needs Assessment is needed to provide an understanding of Children's Mental Health in Oldham
- The pathway for support is unclear, particularly when distinguishing between mental health and trauma
- Clarity is needed on the mental health support offer for children who have communication difficulties
- Training for support multi-agency professionals to feel comfortable in speaking to children and young people about mental health would be welcomed

A Children's Mental Health Transformation Assurance Board has been established to respond to the recommendations arising from this evaluation.

7. Multi-Agency Training



Safeguarding children effectively requires a knowledgeable and skilled workforce. By delivering multi-agency training Oldham Safeguarding Children's Partnership aims to provide staff with good quality training that enhances inter agency communication, cooperation and provides a place to reflect on practice.

During the period of this report there were 32 training opportunities on a variety of safeguarding topics including Neglect, Domestic Abuse, Complex Safeguarding, Engaging Marginalised Clients, Safer Recruitment and Trauma

Informed Practice. We continue to offer a variety of access points to training which includes briefings, half day events, one and two-day courses, targeted training linking into our strategic plans and quality assured e-learning modules where appropriate.

The training pool continues to be the core delivery system for training which enables us to be Oldham centric in our work. We have devised a comprehensive person specification for training pool members and offer a train the trainer course to all our members.

Attendance

Across a range of partner agencies, 896 professionals attended multi-agency training during the six-month period covered by this report. Education, Children's Social Care, Local Authority Early Help and Positive Steps had the largest proportion of staff accessing our training programme.

Attendance from the third sector organisations continues to be low but Safeguarding training is available via Action Together for voluntary and community organisations. During this period 34 organisations accessed Action Together's training.

Training during Covid-19

Following the announcement of lockdown on 23 March 2020 face to face multi-agency training was postponed.

A virtual training offer has been established to ensure continued workforce development across the Partnership. A range of courses have been re-written to enable effective delivery online and we have introduced a series of written and virtual briefing sessions to enable the delivery of short bursts of information and training for professionals.

E-learning

A bespoke Oldham Safeguarding Children Partnership [E-learning module](#) has been written and devised to form part of the multi-agency training offer. From 1 October 2019 to 31 March 2020 712 people completed the online training module.

8.Independent scrutiny – Dr Henri Giller, Independent Chair



Independent scrutiny Report
Dr Henri Giller, Independent Chair
Date: November 2020

The new safeguarding arrangements, introduced by the Children and Social Work Act 2017 and Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018, require that they include provision for the scrutiny by an independent person of the effectiveness of the arrangements. This section of

the report provides the scrutiny of the Independent Chair of the Oldham Partnership of the first working year of the new partnership arrangements. Because this is the first operational period of the partnership, it was decided that the criteria for scrutiny should be that proposed by Sir Alan Wood in his report proposing new safeguarding arrangements (para. 69 Wood report: review of the role and functions of local safeguarding children boards (2016)). These criteria are said to reflect the key strategic issues that need to authorise and underpin effective multi-agency practice.

A full report of Dr Giller’s findings can be found here. (add link once approved)

Criteria	RAG rating
Determining the physical area of operation covered by the multi-agency arrangements	Green
The authorising vision for multi-agency arrangements, the partnership commitment	Green
The resource framework, e.g. the cost of the multi-agency strategic decision- making body, the cost of agreed initiatives, e.g. joint training, agreed local research, innovation in service design	Amber
The method to assess outcomes of multi-agency practice, including how intervention happens if performance falters, and how “independent” external assurance/scrutiny will be utilised.	Amber
The strategy for information and data sharing, including to allow for identification of vulnerable children in need of early help.	Amber
High level oversight of workforce planning, e.g. gaps in skilled areas.	Amber
A multi-agency communication strategy on protecting children	Amber
Risk strategy, identifying and adapting to challenges including new events, and establishing a core intelligence capacity.	Amber
The model of local inquiry into incidents	Amber

8.1 Response from the Statutory Safeguarding Partners

Whilst I have only been in Oldham a short time, I am already impressed with the commitment of our Partners to work together to keep children and young people in Oldham safe. Huge strides have been made in terms of our some of key priority areas but as the assessment of the Independent Chair reflects, there still work to do to strengthen our multi-agency practice across all areas.

The impact of the Covid Pandemic in Oldham has been intense, with children missing education, and the increased demand placed on safeguarding services across the borough. The Partnership has had to adapt quickly and accordingly, and I am proud of our response. The Safeguarding Partnership is as important as ever, if not more so, and I look forward to further developing our Multi Agency Safeguarding response with you over the coming years.

Gerard Jones

**Managing Director of Children's
Services – Local Authority**

The development of the new partnership arrangements for Oldham have given us the opportunity to refresh and revitalise the approach to safeguarding children across the borough. The Independent Chair's assessment against the criteria above is a fair reflection on the first 6 months of the arrangements. The work to embed and follow a culture of continuous improvement of our safeguarding practice continues and has the clear commitment of all partners. The Covid pandemic has had a significant impact but has also strengthened relationships further and allowed us to think more creatively in terms of our approach to protect our most vulnerable children and young people. There is much to do to achieve the standards we set for ourselves but also much to be proud of and a clear desire to improve as we continue our development journey as a partnership together.

Claire Smith

**Director of Nursing and Quality –
Oldham Clinical Commissioning Group**

COVID has certainly been a significant challenge for GMP and for the wider partnership. We've had to adapt quickly to the new challenges to ensure effective working together continues. The interim Ofsted report reflects the improvement and stability in partnership working and establishing the Complex Safeguarding Team has demonstrated our joint commitment to safeguarding by recognising previously unidentified vulnerabilities.

Richard Hunt

**Superintendent – Greater Manchester
Police**

Strategic Aims:

- Excellent practice is the norm across all practitioners in Oldham
- Partner agencies hold one another to account effectively
- There is early identification of new safeguarding issues
- Learning is promoted and embedded
- Information is shared effectively
- The public feel confident that children are protected

Key priorities for 2020-2021:

The Partnership has agreed three key areas to focus on during year three of the Strategic plan:

- Governance and Leadership
- Thematic priorities – Complex and Contextual Safeguarding, Transitional Safeguarding, and Neglect
- Communication

Areas

Governance and Leadership

Thematic Priorities

Communication

Priorities

Strengthening the governance arrangements for the Partnership

Complex and Contextual Safeguarding

Transitional Safeguarding

Neglect

Greater awareness of the Safeguarding Partnership

Voice of young people and lived experience

Actions

- Clarify the communication and accountability pathways with other Boards and Partnerships to ensure activity is better co-ordinated.
- Develop a partnership learning hub to support sustained improvements to practice.
- Review the function and effectiveness of existing subgroups ensuring they are focused on improving outcomes for children and young people.

- Develop a contextual approach to complex safeguarding strategy for Oldham
- Develop an integrated complex safeguarding offer across children and adult services

- Co-ordinate existing children's and adults social care working groups to develop focused activity, promote positive outcomes and ensure accountability across partnership organisation

- Develop a public health led neglect strategy
- Identify and support the use of appropriate tools by professionals to assess neglect

- Develop a communications strategy for Partnership
- Engage children and young people in our work

What difference will it make?

Children and young people will receive a more co-ordinated, high quality response from across the Partnership

Children, young people and adults at risk of, or experiencing all forms of exploitation will receive the right support at the right time in order to keep them safe.

Young people will have clear and robust transition plans across all areas of safeguarding need to ensure appropriate support as they move into adulthood.

Children, young people and families will receive support at the earliest opportunity to prevent children experiencing neglect.

Children and young people will have greater involvement in shaping and challenging our safeguarding response

Appendices

1. Governance and Accountability

1.1 Membership

Role	Agency
Independent Chair	
Director of Children’s Services (DCS)	Oldham Council
Director of Nursing and Quality	Oldham CCG
Superintendent	GMP
Designated Nurse/Head of Safeguarding	Oldham CCG
Director of Children’s Social Care and Early Help	Oldham Council
Assistant Director for Safeguarding	Oldham Council
Director of Public Health	Oldham Council
Headteacher	Primary school representative
Headteacher	Secondary school representative
Deputy CEO	Special school representative
Deputy Principle	Further Education representative
Director of Education, Early Years and Skills	Oldham Council
Lead member	Oldham Council
Designated Doctor	Oldham CCG
Strategic Locality Lead	Action Together (vcs)
Business Manager	Oldham Safeguarding Children Partnership

1.2 Budget 2019-2020

2019/20 Outturn	
Expenditure	
Description	Amount (£)
Employee Costs	307,917
Room Hire	140
Transport and Travel	1,048
Supplies and Services	50,687
Support Services	65,704
Total Expenditure	425,496

Income	
Description	Amount (£)
Cheshire & Greater Manchester CRC	2,019
Children & Family Court Advisory & Support Service	505
Community safety grant	22,000
DSG	110,000
Greater Manchester Police	12,900
NHS	51,294
Positive Steps	5,050
Probation Service	1,269
Traded service income	35,520
Oldham Council Contribution	184,738
Tameside MBC	200
Total Income	425,496