

Report title: Corporate Safeguarding Update

Meeting	Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee (OSMC) – 14 November 2025
Key Decision Eligible for Call In	No – This is an update only.
<p>Purpose of Report</p> <p>This report provides an overview of the Council's 2025 Statutory Organisational Safeguarding Assessment (OSA) which is required to be submitted to the Kirklees Safeguarding Children Partnership (KSCP).</p> <p>This report also provides an overview of the Corporate Safeguarding Plan which has been shaped by the assessment, and subsequent progress of remaining and arising actions required, to the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee (OSMC) for the purpose of oversight and review.</p>	
<p>Recommendations</p> <p>OSMC to review the report contents and provide feedback on the progress to date and future plan.</p> <p>Following the meeting, the responsibility for the corporate safeguarding arrangements across the Council is to remain with the Corporate Safeguarding Oversight Group (CSOG) through 2025-2027, as previously delegated by the Council's Executive Team. This will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure the continued development of robust arrangements for safeguarding children, young people and adults across the Council. • Ensure there is effective corporate oversight of safeguarding across the range of services which the Council provides and commissions. • Ensure that both good practice and areas of learning are identified and shared to develop the Council's overall safeguarding response to successfully promote a whole family approach to practice. 	
<p>Resource Implication:</p> <p>Safeguarding is everyone's business, and therefore the Corporate Safeguarding Plan has a reach across all employee groups across the Council.</p> <p>Service Directors from across all areas of the Council contribute to the CSOG; a commitment which was made by the Executive Team in 2023 and continues to date, to demonstrate the Council's commitment to safeguarding children, young people and adults. The CSOG meet bi-annually, through which the Corporate Safeguarding Plan and all subsequent service/Council wide developments are identified, endorsed and progressed.</p>	
Date signed off by <u>Executive Director</u> & name	Executive Team Sponsor of the Corporate Safeguarding Oversight Group and Plan:

<p>David Shepard (Strategic Director of Growth and Regeneration)</p> <p>Is it also signed off by the Service Director for Finance?</p> <p>Yes</p> <p>Is it also signed off by the Service Director for Legal Governance and Commissioning (Monitoring Officer)?</p> <p>Yes</p>	<p>David Shepherd (Strategic Director of Growth and Regeneration)</p> <p>c/o Jill Greenfield (Service Director of Communities and Access Services).</p>
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Electoral wards affected: All wards.

Ward councillors consulted:

No specific Ward Councillors have been consulted; this is a whole Council matter.

Public or private:

This is a public report.

Has GDPR been considered?

The Data Protection Act 2018 and the UK GDPR have been considered when writing this report. The report meets all relevant regulations.

1. Executive Summary

The Organisational Safeguarding Assessment (OSA) has been designed to support organisations to measure their safeguarding arrangements against a set criterion outlined by the West Yorkshire Consortium.

The OSA is completed every two years. In 2023, the Council presented one combined assessment which represented the organisation, adopting a whole system approach to safeguarding. This single corporate response greatly assisted the development of the Corporate Safeguarding Plan which has since been progressed by the Corporate Safeguarding Oversight Group. The OSA 2025 has been compiled in the same way, comprising of submissions from each Service Director which represents their respective service areas, to inform the Corporate Safeguarding Action Plan for 2025/2027.

The overall rating for the Council is Amber. It is important to note that this is the overall Council's rating; statutory Children's and Adult's services have submitted Green ratings.

2. Information required to take a decision

Below offers a summary of the key findings of the OSA 2025, alongside recent developments which have contributed to planning for 2025/2027. This finding demonstrates how the Amber rating was reached.

Summary of Key Strengths/Improvements

- There is an extensive system in place which demonstrates **the Council's commitment to safeguarding** which takes learning from reviews, audits and initiatives forwards to enable improvements in practice. There is evidence of this beyond statutory services, strengthening the whole Council response to safeguarding.
- The **Corporate Safeguarding Policy** was produced and made available early in 2024. There is good awareness and appropriate utilisation of this across the Council. The Corporate Safeguarding Policy is now embedded within the Council's Induction checklist on My Learning, which also services as a quality assurance mechanism.
- Multi Agency working has continued to improve and there are numerous examples provided within the OSA submission. **Partnership working has continued to flourish** across the Council as a result of such activities.
- As partnerships are developing, this has enabled a more restorative, joined up approach to learning and development as a result of serious practice reviews.
- It is exceptional that services which traditionally are less aligned to safeguarding, such as Highways and Streetscene, are now developing their approach and workforce to contribute towards **prevention and early intervention** wherever possible, recognising themselves as the *eyes and ears* whilst being out in communities across Kirklees.
- There is excellent representation from across the Council at the **Safeguarding Champions** group. This has been a fantastic space to share information and progress joint learning opportunities to continue to strengthen each service area's safeguarding response. Examples include learning/awareness activities from Pennine Domestic Abuse Partnership, Adult Social Care, Families Together Gateway, West Yorkshire Fire Service, and the Children's Society regarding Child Exploitation.
- A **Recruitment and Selection Policy** was published in January 2024, alongside a supporting toolkit. Promoting safer recruitment, these documents support recruiting managers to ensure recruitment is safe and inclusive.
- As part of the OSA 2023, an agreement was reached to ensure that minimum standards are met across the Council in respect of **DBS checks**.
- A particular strength across Kirklees Council is the mechanisms in place which allow for the **views of children, young people, adults**, and their carers and families to be sought when new services or a piece of work is being developed. There are a number of good practice examples across a wide variety of service areas detailed within the OSA.
- A Tableau Dashboard is now in place to promote the use of Integrated Impact Assessments. The Strategy and Innovation team also have a QA group established which samples a number of assessments each quarter. Recent **positive feedback from IIAs** that have been completed include the use of comprehensive evidence sources and utilising support from subject matter experts

Summary of Key Areas for Consideration/Development

- As part of a review of all **compliance training**, basic safeguarding awareness has been agreed by the Council to become mandatory. This has recently been developed and is expected to be launched in coming weeks.

- ELT have recently endorsed My Learning as the system on which learning should be recorded. Investment has recently been made in system developments to support this and develop reporting. Developments will support recorded learning activities to be reported on across the workforce through one system.
- To ensure that all members of a recruitment panel have completed the **Recruitment and Selection E-Learning**, the attention of recruiting managers will continue to be drawn to the policy statement and toolkit at the point of recruitment. The policy statement is available to all on the intranet. Both will be refreshed annually to ensure any safer recruitment changes are reflected.
- The arrangements for DBS checks were reviewed as part of the OSA 2023 and this assured that arrangements remain in place which meet the required standards. Checks are made on appointment or as part of a change to a job that may change the workforce. The Council do not undertake automatic renewals. Renewals are undertaken where there is a statutory/regulatory reason to do so, including within Fostering and Children's Residential services.
- Safeguarding is not routinely discussed within all **supervisions** across service areas, beyond statutory services. However, this is highlighted within Appraisals in respect of training and development needs. Further development may be required to ensure there are more regular opportunities to discuss safeguarding to embed the responsibility across the workforce.
- Across services beyond Adult's and Children's Social Care, services need to be supported to develop their recognition and response to **internal safeguarding issues**. Reference to learning opportunities is linked only to those who use services. We need all staff to be able to recognise and respond to safeguarding concerns related to other colleagues, as well as though related to people who use Council services. For example, if a colleague is experiencing domestic abuse. This would ensure that people are safe at work.
- The Home Office states that **Prevent training** should be mandatory. Key relevant services already undertake Prevent training. Prevent training will be mandatory for all employees in Kirklees. The learning and development team are engaging with the Prevent team to develop an e-Learning resource which is reflective of Kirklees and proportionate for our workforce. This will be launched in coming weeks. Arrangements for quality assurance will also be developed utilising My Learning.
- Members of the CSOG agreed that whilst some work is ongoing to ensure that the importance of safeguarding is promoted to volunteers, there are further developments to be undertaken to ensure volunteers are adequately equipped to identify and respond accordingly to emerging safeguarding concerns. Consistency across the Council is to be developed.

The areas of development identified have formed the basis from which the Corporate Safeguarding Action Plan has since been developed, and work has been underway to ensure that all work areas within the Council have sufficient safeguarding arrangements in place. The plan includes:

- Mandatory basic safeguarding awareness training offer to be finalised. Once the draft is finalised, this is to be reviewed by the CSOG to ensure requirements are fulfilled. This is to include the development of quality assurance measures to ensure the workforce are

compliant with the minimum standard of training required; it is acknowledged this may differ by role and service.

- As part of the new vacancy management process, recruiting managers will continue to be made aware of the need to undertake suitable e-learning at the point the recruitment is requested, to ensure that recruitment panels consist of employees who have undertaken this.
- Development of guidance regarding safeguarding colleagues in the workplace to be considered. This is to build upon the commitment to being a Trauma Informed Workplace by 2030.
- Learning and Development service to continue to work in partnership with the Prevent team to finalise Prevent e-Learning as a mandatory learning offer.
- Children's and Adult Services are to progress developments to ensure available training includes reference to all ages.
- Contextual safeguarding is an area for development in relation to training opportunities, to ensure it extends to staff beyond Children's Services who are in public facing roles across Kirklees. This is to be reflected in service-specific plans, to build upon the guidance currently available.
- Investment continues to take place to further develop MyLearning Records to support all records to be in one place. Consideration to be given as to how attendance on KSCP/KSAB training courses or those outside of the Council offer form part of an employee's overall training record.
- Supervision policies are to be reviewed and developed to include reference to safeguarding. This is to be reflected in service-specific plans.
- Volunteer Policy. to be reviewed and updated. Volunteer Managers from across Services to be brought together to review/align whole Council approach to safeguarding.

Members are requested to review and endorse the Organisational Safeguarding Assessment 2025 and the Corporate Safeguarding Action Plan.

These actions will continue to develop the Council's corporate response to safeguarding. This work positively impacts upon:

- Compliance with Legislation
- Self-Assessment and Accountability
- Identification of good practice and areas for development to improve safeguarding arrangements.
- Support learning and development
- Improving consistency and standardisation
- Promoting a culture of safety

The plan will continue to be developed, progressed and assured throughout 2025/2027 by the Corporate Safeguarding Oversight Group; this is aligned to the OSA which is due to be updated again in 2027.

The continuation of the CSOG ensures that *whole Council approach* continues to be taken to safeguarding.

3. Implications for the Council

The developments achieved, and those which continue to be worked towards, within the Corporate Safeguarding Plan have been considered in respect of the Council Priorities within the Council Plan 2025-2026.

3.1 Council Plan

Priority One: Getting the basics right – a balanced budget and a modern organisation

Service Directors have continued to commit to attending the Corporate Safeguarding Oversight Group (CSOG) to contribute to and progress the Corporate Safeguarding Action Plan. In all areas, the established CSOG offers a space through which necessary service developments can continue to be identified and implemented efficiently to ensure the Council adopts legislative changes or best practice learning.

Safeguarding children, young people and adults who live and work in Kirklees has remained the upmost priority within the plan of work. The group has accountability for the Council's financial position and how best practice is achieved in the most cost-effective way, without compromising the safety and wellbeing of our staff and communities.

Priority Two: Protecting the vulnerable and achieving inclusion

The Corporate Safeguarding Policy is a key document in ensuring that all those who work in Kirklees are able to effectively contribute towards keeping people safe, emphasising that *safeguarding is everyone's business*.

The Recruitment and Selection Policy contribute towards a more sustainable future for the delivery of Council services by offering clear guidance to assist in the development of workforce plans that supports and promotes safer recruitment and selection to ensure the safety and wellbeing of staff and communities.

The CSOG continues to work together, and with their respective service areas, to promote inclusive practices. The continued use of Integrated Impact Assessments help services consider the impact of decision making on inclusion and equality, the environment, and access to services.

Priority Three: Thriving People and Communities – now and over the longer-term

The developments made within the Corporate Safeguarding Plan provides strong foundations to build on preventative services to ensure a whole family-whole community approach to safeguarding.

Priority Four: Local economic growth, working with regional and national partners.

All elements of the Corporate Safeguarding Plan and associated developments contributes significantly to ensuring staff have the appropriate skills and knowledge to work with partners and communities to improve outcomes, in particularly in respect of promoting early intervention.

Alongside the contribution towards the Council's priorities, the Corporate Safeguarding Plan continues to contribute towards the below Council's Shared Outcomes through the continued commitment to safeguarding those who live and work in Kirklees:

Efficient and Effective: Kirklees Council works smart and delivers efficiently and effectively.

The continued commitment of the CSOG group and wider services enables the clear Corporate Safeguarding Action plan to be reviewed, progressed and developed regularly to ensure actions are effectively achieved.

The continued development of the now thriving Safeguarding Champions Network ensures that staff at all levels can contribute to the overall plan.

Best Start: Children have the best start in life

The Policy, training and development opportunities will contribute towards achieving better outcomes for vulnerable children, through early identification of support needs, risk and harm to ensure the right services can support the whole family at the right time.

Aspire and Achieve: People in Kirklees have aspiration to achieve their ambitions through education, training employment and lifelong learning

With the right training available and opportunities for reflection, learning and development, Council staff will be confident in their practice and be supported to celebrate good practice whilst continuing to grow and develop.

Well: People in Kirklees are as well as possible for as long as possible

Through identification of need and risk, people will have access to opportunities to improve their health and wellbeing. Protection of the public's health through education, support and intervention will ensure people are well supported to live a healthy and safe life.

Independent: People in Kirklees live independently and have control over their lives

The Corporate Safeguarding Plan contributes towards the capacity of the workforce to recognise and support people to access the appropriate services to enable joined up and personalised support that enables independence to be coordinated effectively.

Safe and Cohesive: People in Kirklees live in cohesive communities, feel safe and are protected from harm

Through training and development opportunities, the workforce will be better equipped to contribute towards high quality, joined up and accessible services that safeguard children and adults from harm. The range of services across the Council can contribute to identifying needs and risk, to increase the amount of people who say they feel safe in Kirklees.

Shaped by People: We make our places what they are.

AND

Sustainable Economy: Kirklees has sustainable economic growth and provides good employment for and with communities and businesses.

Clear Recruitment procedures will help ensure that employees are safe and feel happy in their job, contributing to reduced absence rates and improving retention.

3.2 Financial Implications

Whilst there is currently no explicit financial request in relation to the current plan of work, the considerations have been given which include;

The training and development of employees specifically in relation to safeguarding does not incur an additional cost as such needs are met by internal arrangements provided by My Learning and through relevant boards including the Kirklees Safeguarding Children Partnership (KSCP) and the Kirklees Safeguarding Adult Board (KSAB).

There are no cost implications for people living or working in Kirklees.

3.3 Legal Implications

The Corporate Safeguarding Oversight Group and associated action plan provides assurances that the Council's legal responsibilities are met, particularly in relation to the completion of the Organisational Safeguarding Assessment and associated tasks.

3.4 Climate Change and Air Quality

Not applicable

3.5 Other (e.g. Risk, Integrated Impact Assessment or Human Resources)

Developments made and assurances brought about through the coordination of the Corporate Safeguarding Plan contributes towards the sustained reduction of risks on the Corporate Risk Register in relation to ensuring the Council fulfils its safeguarding responsibilities.

4 Consultation

David Shepherd, Executive Director of Place, Growth and Regeneration has a sponsorship role across the Corporate Safeguarding plan and progress. This offers further oversight and assurances.

The Council's overall Corporate Safeguarding response has been reviewed by the Kirklees Safeguarding Children Partnership through the Organisational Safeguarding Assessment (OSA) which was completed in March 2023, which meets the requirements of Section 11 of the Children Act 2004. An OSA is required to be completed every two years, to form part of the wider West Yorkshire Consortium's overall assessment.

As part of this work, the OSA 2025 will also be submitted to the KSCP to be considered alongside submissions from across the Partnership to inform future learning events etc.

5 Engagement

In the completion of the OSA, each Service Director has, and continues to, actively work with teams across their respective service areas to form a reflective assessment which has informed their own service-specific plan and in turn, contributed to the wider Corporate Safeguarding Plan

Service Directors from across all areas of the Council continue to contribute to the CSOG. The CSOG meets bi-annually, which has formed the basis for the Corporate Safeguarding Plan and all subsequent service/Council wide developments which have been endorsed and progressed by the Service Director group.

6 Options

The Organisational Safeguarding Assessment has been submitted to the KSCP for 2025. An assessment must be submitted on behalf of the Council to meet statutory requirements.

The Corporate Safeguarding Oversight Group will continue to be attended by Service Directors who meet on a bi-annual basis to progress the Corporate Safeguarding Plan. It is important that Service-Director level attendance is maintained to ensure people of sufficient seniority to make decisions and be influential service-wide.

Consideration is to be given as to how the OSA is prepared and submitted in 2027, once KSCP guidance has been produced.

7 Next steps and timelines

Organisational Safeguarding Assessment

Analysis will take place by the Kirklees Safeguarding Children's Partnership (KSCP) in respect of the OSA submissions from the wider Partnership for trends, gaps, areas of concern and what's working well will take place late in 2025.

A report detailing the above will be shared with the KSCP Executive Group and a decision sought on next steps and actions for example Peer Challenge, Learning events etc.

Kirklees Corporate Safeguarding Action Plan

The responsibility for the corporate safeguarding arrangements across the Council is to remain with the Corporate Safeguarding Oversight Group (CSOG) through 2025/2026, as previously delegated by the Council's Executive Team. The CSOG will continue to meet on a bi-annual basis to review the Corporate Safeguarding Action plan to identify, agree and progress any service-wide development matters required to continuously improve safeguarding practice across the Council.

The following matters will continue to be progressed as part of the plan, alongside any other future issues that are identified;

- Compulsory basic safeguarding awareness training to be made available to all staff. This also includes Prevent awareness training.
- Further Awareness of the Recruitment and Selection Policy and Toolkit Children's and Adult Services are to progress developments to ensure available training includes reference to all ages.
- Contextual safeguarding is an area for development in relation to training opportunities, to ensure it extends to staff beyond Children's Services who are in public facing roles across Kirklees. This is to be reflected in service-specific plans.
- Guidance to support safeguarding colleagues to be considered and developed.
- My Learning to be developed and utilised as a mechanism to record all staff training recorded.
- Supervision policies are to be reviewed and developed to include reference to safeguarding.

- Volunteer Policy to be reviewed to inform the plan required to align the whole Council approach to safeguarding.

8 Contact officer

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9 Background Papers and History of Decisions

Organisational Safeguarding Assessment 2023 Report and Decisions

10 Appendices

Organisational Safeguarding Assessment 2025

11 Service Director responsible

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