

HSCP Independent Chair & Scrutineer Transcript

Hello, I'm Scott McKechnie. I am the Independent Chair and Scrutineer for the Hampshire Safeguarding Children Partnership (HSCP).

This is the first full year I have performed the role as independent chair and a scrutineer. As a role it has a lot of responsibility that I take seriously. As part of this, I meet regularly with the safeguarding partners and chief executives of the statutory safeguarding partner agencies.

It has been a busy year for the partnership and throughout this yearly report you will hear more details of the work undertaken, whether that be through multi-agency auditing and assurance, learning from serious safeguarding cases, safeguarding practice development and responding to the 2023-24 strategic priorities of the HSCP.

The recommendations that arise from this work are underway and aim to share the knowledge of effective practice in a variety of ways. Learning from serious safeguarding cases is a key function of the partnership. And as important, is how the learning from this is embedded in practice, and of course, the impact that it's making. The partnership has continued to seek evidence of the completion of any recommendations and actions, both single and multi-agency and where learning is repeated, we respond by considering evidence provided and seeking further assurance as necessary.

Hampshire safeguarding partners continue to focus on their leadership of multi-agency safeguarding arrangements and the operation of the partnership reflects that the senior leaders representing the safeguarding partners and their colleagues from education across all groups and the work streams of the partnership. They all know they have the shared accountability for the outputs.

This year has seen the development of a number of resources and toolkits, some aimed at multi-agency practitioners, some at parents and carers. While it's not the intention to necessarily promote the partnership website to parents and carers, its intended that practitioners will confidently be able to use the resources with parents and carers, children and young people. Use of the website resources is monitored, although 2023-24 saw a brief interruption to the collation of the figures due to a change in analytical providers.

My role has provided support and challenge to the partnership. This is an important function, and one that I take very seriously. I've provided oversight to the review of physical intervention practices in secure establishments. My attendance at groups has been valued both as a participant and as an observer being able to shine a light on practice issues, generating discussion and debate.

I've provided oversight and challenge to the auditing work and rapid reviews undertaken by the partnership. This provides assurance to the safeguarding partners of an independent lens been applied to safeguarding practice, analysis and any resulting recommendations.

For 2024 into 2025, we'll see the partnership continue to develop the role of the independent scrutineer and I look forward to being part of those developments. Like the safeguarding partners, I will look forward to the role being further strengthened with an agreed plan for independent scrutiny.