

The CHSCP's arrangements and the partnership chair role

What is a partnership chair?

- The revised statutory guidance (Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023) introduced the role of a partnership chair. Selected by Lead Safeguarding Partners (LSPs), the partnership chair is meant to be held by a Delegated Safeguarding Partner (DSP).
- The purpose of this role is to provide greater continuity across local areas and act as the conduit between the DSPs and LSPs, providing feedback and escalating collective risk and issues to LSPs as necessary. It allows for a single point of contact for the partnership and has the following defined functions:
 - To develop strategic links, support and hold to account all LSPs in fulfilling their safeguarding duties for children.
 - Ensure that local arrangements are designed to work collaboratively and effectively by encouraging and supporting the development of partnership working between the LSPs, DSPs, independent scrutiny role and CHSCP sub- groups.
 - Chair the meetings of the DSPs, including any additional meetings convened as a response to specific and exceptional circumstances, with the help of the business manager and independent scrutiny role.
 - Offer appropriate challenge to ensure that the partners are accountable, and that the local arrangements operate effectively.

Why Hackney and the City of London Are Different

- The CHSCP's footprint, covers both Hackney and the City of London and has a unique setup that doesn't fit the national model for a partnership chair.
- We have multiple key safeguarding partners (five), and their responsibilities don't always align with our combined area. Specifically:
 - One partner (NHS North East London) covers both Hackney and the City of London, but also other areas.
 - Other partners only operate in one of the two areas. (Hackney Council, the City of London Corporation, the Metropolitan Police Service and the City of London Police)
 - This makes it impossible for any one person to act as the '*single point of contact*' for the whole partnership, as required by the statutory guidance.
- Therefore, we've decided to keep our existing leadership structure, with the Independent Safeguarding Children Commissioner (ISCC) continuing to facilitate and coordinate the meetings of DSPs and deliver independent leadership, scrutiny and advocacy.
- This decision was made because the partnership chair role wouldn't work effectively in our complex, dual-area situation. The CHSCP has defined this as an exceptional circumstance that justifies the divergence from statutory guidance.
- This decision does not weaken the partnership and allows all partners to continue to fulfil their duties.