



# Local Safeguarding Arrangements

Plan 2019-21



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## Summary

**There are many agencies in Northamptonshire supporting children and young people, and they all work together as a partnership to ensure they are keeping children safe.**

Some changes have already been made to the way these agencies work together to keep children safe, because of new government guidance set out in Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018.

The main changes are that:

1. There are now three organisations in Northamptonshire who are jointly responsible for the partnership arrangements for keeping children safe:
  - Northamptonshire County Council
  - Northamptonshire Police
  - Northamptonshire Clinical Commissioning Groups (Nene CCG and Corby CCG).
2. The Northamptonshire Safeguarding Children Board will change its name to the ***Northamptonshire Safeguarding Children Partnership***.
3. The Partnership will adopt a new structure which includes someone independent who will challenge its work and focus on learning.

This plan sets out the detail of how the Partnership will work, as well as why and how the changes were made.

At the heart of the arrangements is a commitment from all agencies to work together to keep children safe and to continuously improve working practices and to learn how to best do this.

## Foreword

**Welcome to Northamptonshire’s children’s multi-agency safeguarding arrangements and our plan of how we will adopt and implement these new arrangements across the partnership.**

The changes have given us the opportunity to review and change some of our ways of working, building on strengths within the good partnership relationships that already exist and focusing on how we can make a real difference to multi-agency frontline practice to improve outcomes for children, young people and their families.

We aim to achieve these improvements by developing and spreading good practice based on what we know works well and is evidenced based.

This plan of arrangements, sets out how we, as the safeguarding partners, will work together and with other agencies, to identify and respond to the needs of children in Northamptonshire.

Our ambition is to develop a fair and robust partnership and this plan outlines how this will be achieved through our new ways of working. This ensures a proactive and responsive approach to the needs of children, young people and families in the area and drives opportunities to shape and influence policy development leading to improved practice and outcomes.

“It is with great pleasure that Northamptonshire County Council supports this new partnership arrangement. Safeguarding children and young people is a complex issue, and success can only be achieved if all parties work closely together. This new arrangement will enable key agencies to work more closely in developing and delivering services, and in encouraging everyone to play their part in the protection of children.”

**Sally Hodges, Director of Children’s Services**

“Northamptonshire Police welcomes the forthcoming changes to local safeguarding arrangements within the county. A strengthened partnership supports our core mission statement of ‘fighting crime and protecting people from harm’ by making it clear that safeguarding is an equally shared responsibility across 3 organisations. We take this duty seriously and it is now incumbent upon us to work together for the benefit of children and young people within Northamptonshire.”

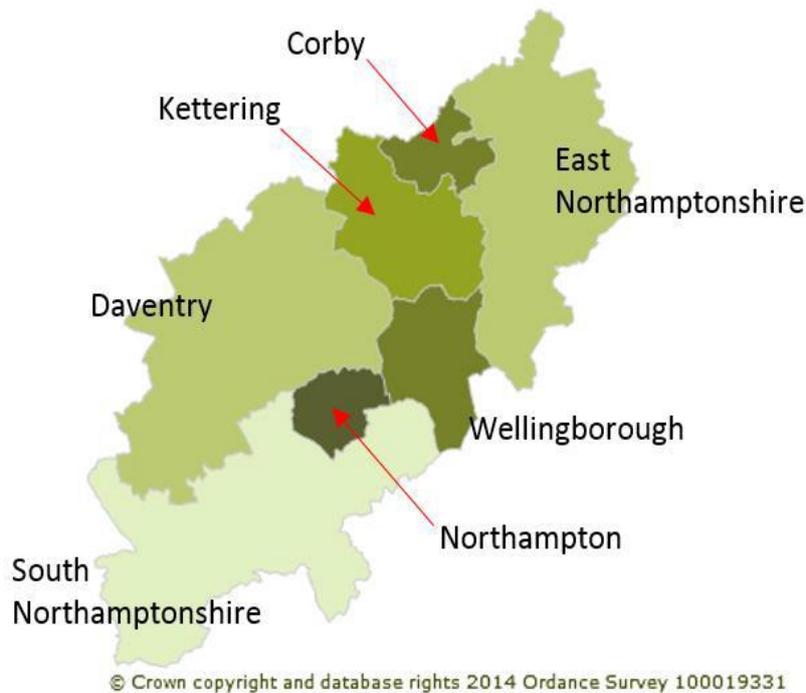
**Simon Blatchly, Assistant Chief Constable, Northamptonshire Police**

“Northamptonshire CCG’s believe that this is a unique opportunity for the newly formed Northamptonshire Safeguarding Partnership to work effectively together. Our shared duty is to ensure that the children and young people in Northamptonshire grow up in a safe and stable environment. We are committed to working with our colleagues to support families to lead healthy and happy lives.”

**Toby Sanders, Chief Executive, Northamptonshire Clinical Commissioning Groups**

## Background

### Northamptonshire Profile



The above map represents the 7 Districts and Boroughs that make up Northamptonshire.

Northamptonshire is a mixture of urban and rural communities with just over two thirds of the population living in urban areas and a just under a third in rural areas. 30% of the population live in the county town of Northampton. The county is middle ranking amongst the 152 county and unitary authorities in terms deprivation; however, there are pockets of high deprivation, primarily in Corby, Northampton and Wellingborough. Overall 16.2% of the county's population live in areas designated as deprived in the 2015 Index of Multiple Deprivation. These deprived areas contain higher proportions of children than the county's non-deprived areas.

The population of Northamptonshire grew by 7.1% between the 2011 Census and 2017. Over the same period the number of under 18's increased by 7.9% (higher than the national average increase of 4.7%) and in 2017 stood at 167,900 countywide. Overall these changes have resulted in 7,959 more pupils in the school system over the last six years.

At the time of the 2011 Census 14.3% of Northamptonshire's population came from an ethnic background other than White British. However, over recent years the county has experienced high levels of net long-term international migration per thousand population compared to other English and Metropolitan counties.

Many of Northamptonshire's children and young people experience poor outcomes. Just over 20,000 of children aged 0-15 year olds live in low income families, while 17,500 live in out of work benefit households and around 1,700 dependent children of all ages live in households affected by the benefit cap. Around 5 infants per 1000 live births countywide die before their first birthday. Levels of teenage pregnancy across the county are higher than the England average (20.9 per 1000 population aged 15-17 v 18.8 nationally). 17.0% of 11 year olds countywide are classified as obese, but this rises to 21.1% in Corby.

**At the end of December 2018, Northamptonshire had an approximate population of 165,400 children.**

The number of children receiving support from services was as follows:

At the end of December 2018, 2,193 children had been identified through assessment as being formally in need of a specialist child in need service.

*This is lower than the national average per 10,000 children*

At the end of December 2018, 712 children and young people were the subject of a child protection plan (a rate of 43.1 per 10,000 children).

*This is in line with the national average per 10,000 children*

At the end of December 2018, 1,118 children were being looked after by the local authority (a rate of 67.6 per 10,000 children).

- 307 (or 27%) live outside the local authority area.
- 115 live in residential children's homes, of whom 44% live outside the authority area.
- 5 live in residential secure units.
- 831 live with foster families, of whom 23% live outside the authority area.
- 29 live with parents, of whom 10% live outside the authority area.
- 99 are unaccompanied asylum-seeking children.

*This is higher than the national average per 10,000 children*

## Developing new child safeguarding arrangements in Northamptonshire

**Safeguarding children in Northamptonshire has previously been led by *Northamptonshire Safeguarding Children Board*.**

The Wood Review 2015 and the subsequent government guidance 'Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018' required all local areas to review their safeguarding arrangements.

Northamptonshire undertook a systematic review of the existing Board during Spring 2019.

The initial **principles and considerations** adopted when conducting the review were to:

- Involve all partner agencies, not just the three statutory partners;
- Learn from experience and evidence and what works well;
- Ensure workable strategic and operational arrangements – fit form to function;
- Aim to reduce duplication across partnerships;
- Champion the interests and rights of children and young people;
- Ensure accountable oversight and feedback on performance and outcomes;
- Scrutinise and improve practice; and
- Ensure partnerships are proportionate, efficient, effective and adequately resourced.

## New child safeguarding arrangements for Northamptonshire

**Safeguarding partners in Northamptonshire will work together in order to identify and respond to the needs of children through the new *Northamptonshire Safeguarding Children Partnership*.**

The Partnership will operate in line with the requirements of the statutory guidance 'Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018' and will cover the geographical area of Northamptonshire, as defined by the local authority boundaries.

The geographical footprint corresponds with that of the Nene and Corby CCG's footprint and the Northamptonshire Constabulary.

The safeguarding partners and other organisations and agencies included in these arrangements will fulfil their statutory duties to safeguard and promote the welfare of children from Northamptonshire.

### **The three local safeguarding partners jointly leading the Partnership are:**

- **Northamptonshire County Council** – represented by the Director for Children's Services.
- **Northamptonshire Constabulary** – represented by the Assistant Chief Constable for Local Policing.
- **Northamptonshire Clinical Commissioning Groups** – represented by the Chief Executive.

## Mission Statement and three key priorities

### Mission Statement

For the children and young people of Northamptonshire  
to be as safe as they can be  
from harm, exploitation and neglect.

### Key Priorities

1.	Taking positive action early enough to protect children
2.	To support children, young people and families who are at risk of exploitation
3.	To work effectively as a partnership and support our staff

**Partners will take the guiding principles and convert them into practice for the above priorities. In particular, there will need to be a strong focus on:**

- Really understanding what is happening through the use of data and information and via direct insights from practitioners and children and young people
- Being fully knowledgeable and briefed on the key safeguarding issues, both current and emerging, in particularly on exploitation of children and young people (including sexual, criminal exploitation and the changing gang culture in the County)
- Considering safeguarding in the context of all influences on children and young people to gather information from the statutory partners and relevant other partners in such a way as to establish patterns and key points of change
- Looking at the effective use of resources across and between partners to seek opportunities for the unified deployment of resources (staff, money, capital resources)
- Looking outward to the public in order to be sensitive to local needs and to create an effective dialogue with communities

## Other partners involved

The strength of local partnership working relies on safeguarding partners working collaboratively and robustly with relevant agencies to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

In addition to the three main statutory partners there are a number of other relevant agencies who will continue to work as part of the partnership. These working relationships have been built on over previous years and their membership of the Strategic Partnership Group and Sub Groups will continue.

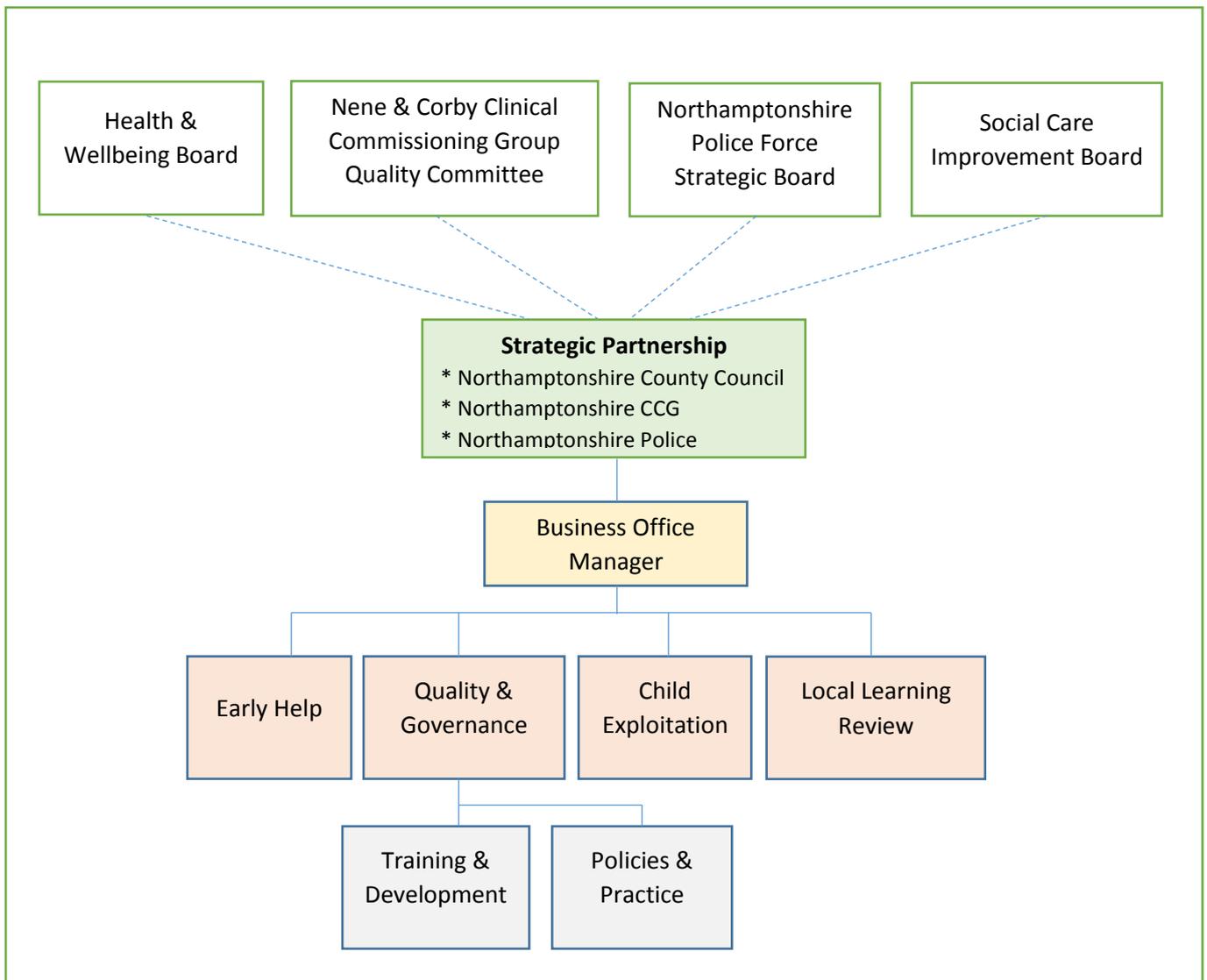
<p><b>Schools</b></p> <p>There are approximately 360 settings in Northamptonshire. Schools will remain engaged as part of the Strategic Partnership Group and Sub Groups to maintain joint working. There will be a focus on exploring how schools can contribute to safeguarding priorities and developments. Designated Safeguarding Lead forums will promote the key topics and learning and provide feedback in the work of the partnership.</p>
<p><b>Early Years settings</b></p> <p>There are approximately 1,500 settings in Northamptonshire including nurseries, child minders, pre-schools and children's centres.</p>
<p><b>Probation</b></p> <p>Will remain a key partner with the new arrangements and be invited to contribute to the Strategic Partnership Group.</p>
<p><b>Youth Offending Service</b></p> <p>Will continue to contribute under the new arrangements attending appropriate Sub Groups.</p>
<p><b>District Councils*</b></p> <p>There are seven districts and boroughs within Northamptonshire who will be invited to contribute to the Strategic Partnership Group.</p> <p><i>*Please note these arrangements are due to be re-structured in 2021 when Northamptonshire transforms into two unitary authorities.</i></p>
<p><b>CAFCASS</b></p> <p>Will remain a partner under the new arrangements and be invited to attend the Strategic Partnership Group.</p>
<p><b>NHS Trusts</b></p> <p>Northamptonshire Healthcare Foundation Trust, Northampton General Hospital and Kettering General Hospital remain key to delivering services to children and young people in Northamptonshire and will continue to attend the Strategic Partnership Group and Sub Groups.</p>
<p><b>Northamptonshire County Council Public Health</b></p> <p>Will remain a key partner under the new arrangements and contribute through the Strategic Partnership Group and Sub Groups.</p>
<p><b>Secure Settings</b></p> <p>Rainsbrook Secure Training Centre and St Andrews Healthcare will both remain key partners under the new arrangements and contribute through the Strategic Partnership Group and Sub Groups.</p>
<p><b>Other providers of commissioned services</b></p> <p>These services will be invited to provide regular updates and contribute Sub Groups where relevant.</p>

## Structure of the Partnership

The systemic review of the previous Board's structure sought to reduce duplication and improve integration with other local partnerships.

As a result of the review the number of Sub Groups forming the Partnership has changed to reflect and focus on key priorities to improve practice and learning.

### Structure:



## Role of each group:

### **Strategic Partnership**

The three safeguarding partners, chaired on an annual rolling basis from within the partnership, will come together monthly to drive forward the work of the Partnership, ensure effective scrutiny arrangements are in place across the partnership and make sure the vision and key objectives are upheld. This group will also develop, implement and monitor an annual plan and agree priority actions against core business; and will direct the Partnership's Sub Groups into delivery of the plan.

### **Quality and Governance Sub Group**

The Partnership will use data intelligence and audits to ensure the help and support being provided to children in Northamptonshire is effective.

This group will be responsible for analysing multi-agency safeguarding performance data to inform the Partnership of relevant trends and risk to performance, and conduct a series of multi-agency audits per year, informed by data intelligence, Partnership priorities and findings from case reviews.

The Quality Assurance Sub Group will undertake partner Section 11 audits on an annual basis, Schools Section 175 audits on a bi-annual basis and others as felt necessary.

Learning & Development and Policies & Practice will be working groups convened as and when required.

### **Local Learning Review Sub Group**

This group will undertake Rapid Reviews of Serious Incident Notifications (SINs) notified to Ofsted by the Local Authority and requests received from within the partnership as set out in Working Together 2018.

They will oversee the review of serious child safeguarding cases which raise issues of importance in relation to Northamptonshire and focus on learning as its main priority.

The purpose of undertaking child practice reviews will be to identify any improvements that should be made locally to safeguard children. The reviews will enable partners to identify and understand the reasons and causes of strengths and weaknesses in local practice and set out how lessons will be learnt and monitored for improvements. The arrangements will include sharing of good practice.

The Safeguarding Practice Review Panel will ensure clarity, high quality and consistency in practice in carrying out case reviews and ensure that the partnership learn lessons that can improve the response to children and families. All case reviews will be carried out to provide learning and development for individuals, teams and organisations involved in safeguarding.

### **Child Exploitation Sub Group**

This group will focus on the prevalence of child exploitation in Northamptonshire including sexual exploitation and criminal exploitation with a specific focus on gang related activities.

The Child Exploitation Sub Group will ensure there is a clear understanding of child exploitation across the partnership, supported by data and evidence to effectively monitor and progress multi-agency responses to the risk of exploitation for children and young people.

### **Early Help Sub Group**

This group will be a new Sub Group to focus on the number 1 key priority (*as set out on page 10*) and ensure there is a greater understanding and consistent application of thresholds across the partnership with an emphasis on tier 2 (targeted support) cases.

In addition, the group will support initiatives across the partnership to develop and strengthen early help services.

## Links to other Partnership Arrangements

**Safeguarding is everybody's business.**

**In order to work collaboratively and consistently with other partnership arrangements in Northamptonshire, links to promote effective communication and engagement with be made with:**

- Health and Wellbeing Board
- Office of Northamptonshire Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner
- Northamptonshire Police Strategic Board
- Northamptonshire Health and Care Partnership
- Northamptonshire Clinical Commissioning Group Quality
- Children's Social Care Improvement Board
- Community Safety Partnership Boards
- Northamptonshire Safeguarding Adults Board

## Local child safeguarding practice reviews and embedding learning

The responsibility for how the system learns lessons from serious child safeguarding incidents lies at a national level with the Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel and at a local level with the safeguarding partners.

**Serious child safeguarding cases are those in which:**

- abuse or neglect of a child is known or suspected and
- the child has died or been seriously injured

**The three safeguarding partners must make arrangements to:**

- Undertake Rapid Reviews of Serious Incident Notifications (SINs) notified to Ofsted by the Local Authority and requests received from within the partnership as set out in Working Together 2018.
- Identify serious child safeguarding cases which raise issues of importance in relation to Northamptonshire and its partners; and
- Commission and oversee the review of those cases, where they consider it appropriate for a review to be undertaken.

There is an ongoing commitment to continuous learning and improvement leading to enhanced practice and improved outcomes and experiences for children and young people.

Safeguarding partners will continue to act upon the findings from all local and national reviews with a view to considering how identified improvements can be implemented locally and promote joined up multi-agency working to safeguard the welfare of children and young people.

Findings and learning from local reviews undertaken in Northamptonshire will be shared across the partnership by means of de-briefs and disseminating 6 Step briefings for discussion within any team meetings.

The implementation of recommended improvements will continue to be regularly monitored for assurance of changes in practice and followed up for examples of change to provide evidence of a real impact on improving outcomes for children.

The sustainability of these improvements will be monitored regularly with updates and examples of relevant good practice to the three strategic leads and independent scrutineer.

## Independent scrutiny arrangements

**Independent scrutiny is key in providing assurance, monitoring and challenge of the quality of agencies work to enable the effective multi-agency arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people in Northamptonshire.**

The safeguarding partners recognise the importance of the role of independent scrutiny in reviewing the effectiveness of multi-agency arrangements and driving forward continuous improvement across the partnership.

The three strategic leads agreed that a new Independent Scrutineer will be recruited immediately to carry out the roles detailed below.

### **Culture of scrutiny**

Scrutiny in Northamptonshire will be focussed on learning as its outcome and will be positive in its approach. The Partnership will aim to build a culture where everyone involved in safeguarding children from the front line up to the Strategic Board, welcomes scrutiny and actively participates in it; trusting and learning from each other as well as taking accountability. We aim to achieve improvement by developing and spreading good practice based on what we know works well and is evidenced based. In practice this will involve using audits, training data, peer to peer challenge, and ensuring that the work of the Partnership is strengths based, consistently asking about how partners can learn from positive practice and the experiences of children and families, as well as when things do not go so well.

### **The role of the Independent Scrutineer will include:**

- Attend the Strategic Lead Group and Strategic Partnership Group.
- Review the Partnership's annual report.
- Review audits and performance data, including Section 11 and Section 175 audits.
- Determine the effectiveness of arrangements to identify and review local child safeguarding reviews.
- Involvement in the escalation and conflict resolution process.
- Have regular direct contact with frontline practitioners to receive frontline practice feedback.
- Ensure the voice of the child is at the heart of all aspects of safeguarding and receive direct feedback from children, young people and their families to monitor the effectiveness of their voice and experiences with performance and practice.
- Embed scrutiny as a positive process and measure throughout the partnership with learning as the outcome.
- Ensure informed challenge from elected Members takes place.

## Voice of children and their families

**The voice of the child is at the heart of the partnership.**

**It is important to involve children and their families when considering safeguarding in Northamptonshire and hearing their voices to contribute to the Partnership's vision.**

The Partnership will work with existing arrangements within Northamptonshire to involve children and families in its work and listen to their voices.

These will include:

- Children in Care Council
- Healthwatch including Young Healthwatch
- Northamptonshire OPFCC Youth Commission

The Partnership will ensure children and families are involved regularly and that their views are included particularly on the following elements of its work:

- Conducting scrutiny exercises and peer reviews
- When setting annual priorities

## Transition

**The new partnership arrangements will commence on 1<sup>st</sup> July 2019, with a transition period in July and August, with full arrangements in operation by 1<sup>st</sup> September 2019.**

A transition plan will be developed to ensure an action plan is in place to monitor the priorities set out in the 2019-21 Business Plan and ongoing case reviews are completed in line with the original statutory transition guidance.

## Funding and business support

The work of the Partnership will be supported a by the Business Office hosted by Northamptonshire County Council.

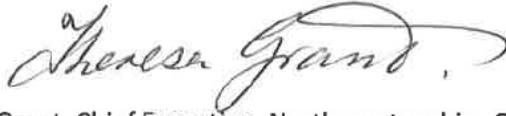
This continues the same arrangements used for the previous Safeguarding Children Board.

Proportionate funding, based on previous formula's, has been agreed and is sufficient to cover all elements of the arrangements, including the cost of two local child safeguarding practice reviews. Any further reviews will be considered at the time.

Northamptonshire County Council	48,949
The Police & Crime Commissioner for Northamptonshire	23,931
Northamptonshire Clinical Commissioning Groups (Nene CCG and Corby CCG)	65,949
Total for the 7 District and Borough Councils	6,586
Other	19,793
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>167,323</b>

## Strategic Partnership signatures

### Signature of Chief Executive, Northamptonshire County Council



(Theresa Grant, Chief Executive, Northamptonshire County Council)

### Signature of Director of Children's Services, Local Authority



(Sally Hodges, Director of Children's Services, Northamptonshire County Council)

### Signature of Chief Executive Officer, Northamptonshire Clinical Commissioning Group



(Toby Sanders, Chief Executive Officer, Northamptonshire Clinical Commissioning Group)

### Signature of Head of Safeguarding, Northamptonshire Clinical Commissioning Group



(Tina Swain, Head of Nursing and Safeguarding, Northamptonshire Clinical Commissioning Group)

### Signature of Chief Constable, Northamptonshire Police



(Nick Adderley, Chief Constable, Northamptonshire Police)

### Signature of Assistant Chief Constable, Northamptonshire Police



(Simon Blatchly, Assistant Chief Constable, Northamptonshire Police)

**Date: 1<sup>st</sup> June 2019**