

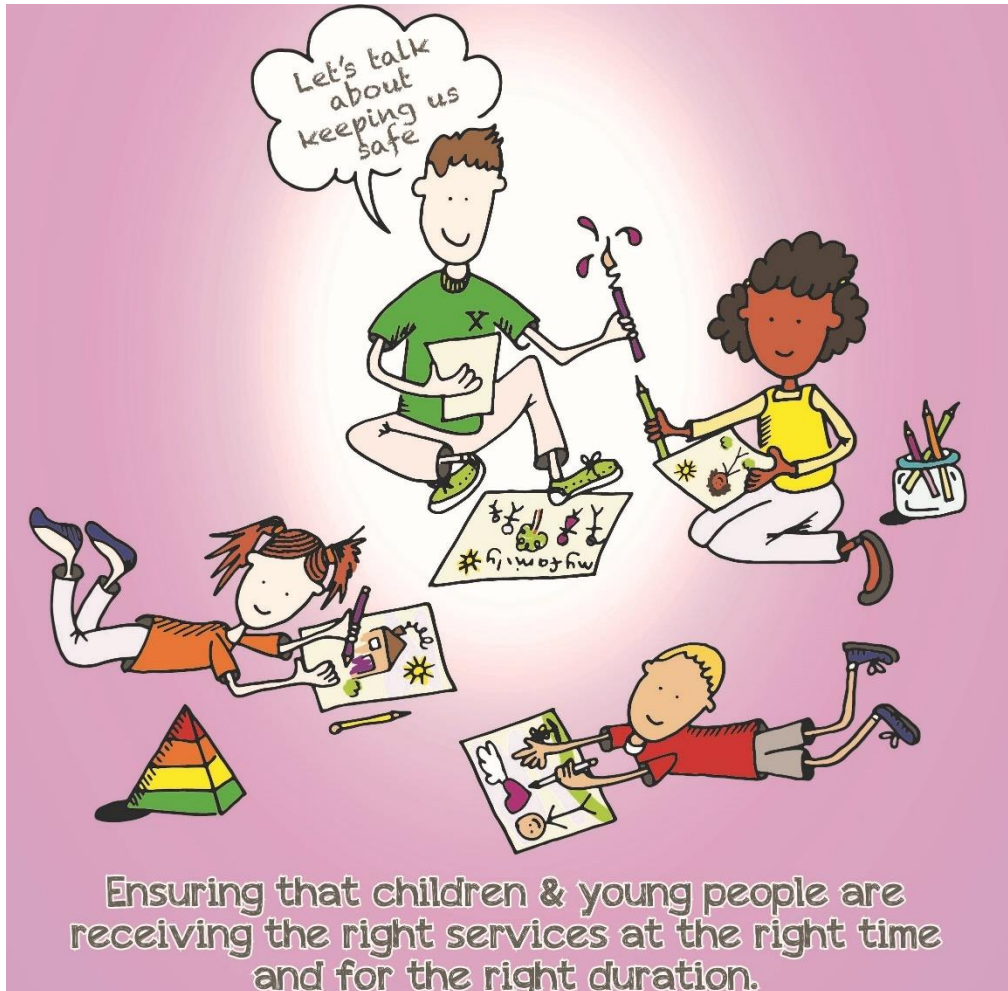


Norfolk Safeguarding Children Partnership

Local Safeguarding Children Groups

Annual Report

April 2020 to March 2021



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1. Introduction

Nothing is more important than children's welfare. Children who need help and protection deserve high quality and effective support as soon as a need is identified. We want a system that responds to the needs and interests of children and families and not the other way around. In such a system, practitioners will be clear about what is required of them individually, and how they need to work together in partnership with others.

(Working Together to Safeguard Children, 2018)

Safeguarding is effective when we work effectively in partnership and Local Safeguarding Childrens Groups (LSCGs) provide us with the opportunity to build and strengthen our partnership approach within the six Norfolk localities. Over the last year the partnership has been tested as never before and one of the strengths that has been highly evident has been the collaborative approach taken by agencies and the support that we have offered to each other. This has enabled us to continue to offer the highest level of support possible to the children and families of Norfolk during the pandemic. Operating LSCGs virtually has brought many challenges but has also promoted innovation and creative approaches to working in partnership.

In March 2020 the Safeguarding Intelligence and Performance Co-ordinator as part of the Norfolk Safeguarding children Partnership (NSCP) Business Unit started to provide support for the work and development of the LSCGs. In the previous year LSCG chairs managed the meetings with support from the NSCP Business Manager and with admin support but without dedicated resource to steer and coordinate the work of these groups. The provision of dedicated resource afforded the opportunity to refresh the strategic approach to these meetings.

The year from April 2020 to March 2021 and the impact of the global pandemic brought significant challenges to the work of the LSCGs. At the beginning of this period a review was carried out including a survey of group members and there was a clear message that these meetings were considered highly valuable. There were also several key areas identified for improvement:

- The need for presentations from external speakers
- A consistent approach across the county
- Regular and consistent attendance at meetings
- Greater level of structure and focus in meetings
- Opportunities to take learning back to organisations

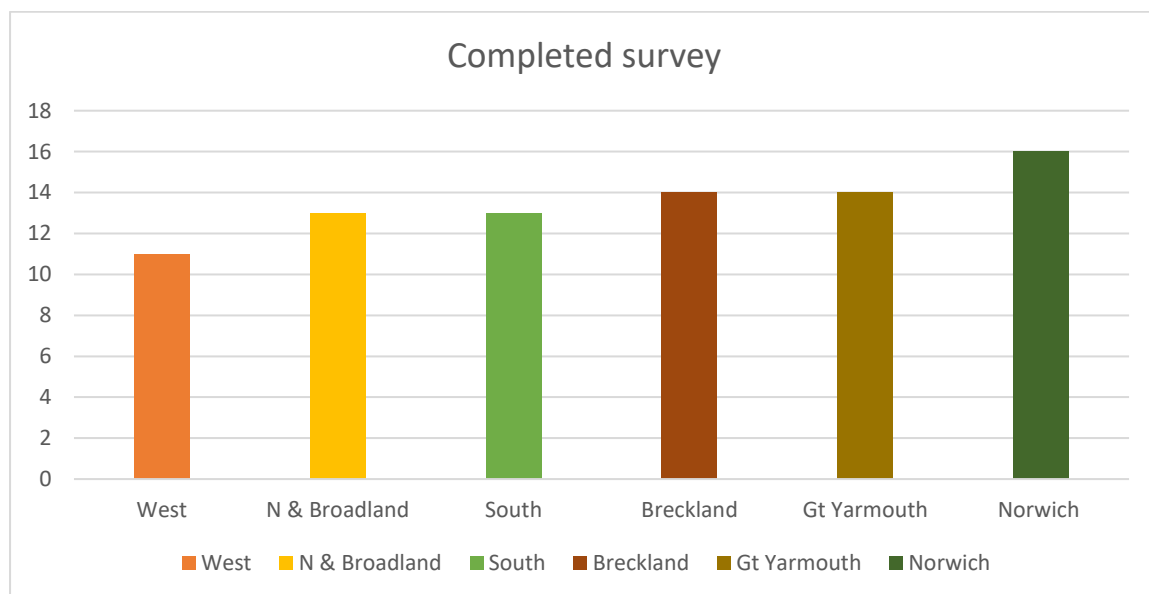
A consistent approach to the chairing of these groups was established with two co-chairs for each group including the Head of Communities and Partnerships from Children's Services and another colleague from either Health, Education or the Voluntary and Community Sector. Some of these chairs had previous experience of running these groups and other colleagues were new to the role. Regular and well attended Chairs meetings has facilitated a consistent approach across the county whilst enabling a local perspective to inform the work of each of these groups. The work of

the current and previous chairs has been instrumental in the value of the work of these groups

All six LSCGs have met six times since April 2020 and whilst at the start of the initial lockdown there was concern amongst the Chairs as to whether partners would manage to attend the meetings with all the additional pressures that the pandemic brought, attendance has increased over the period compared with the previous year.

LSCG survey

LSCG members were asked to complete a survey in March 2021 to provide their views and comment on how useful they considered the meetings. There were 66 completed responses from across the county with an even spread across the groups.



2. Content of meetings

There has been a consistent approach across all the LSCG meetings in the last year with a similar agenda being held for each set of meetings. Presentations have been a regular component of LSCG meeting this year with external speakers sharing their knowledge. The topics covered have included:

- Youth Advisory Board priorities
- NSCP leadership
- Findings from Covid 19 survey
- Thematic review AF and trauma informed practice
- Workforce development
- Adolescent neglect
- Contextual safeguarding and child exploitation
- Neglect strategy

Many thanks to those who gave their time to share their expertise with all these groups. The survey has evidenced that value has been placed on the input provided from external speakers:

I like the format of the meetings they are informative and cover up to date topics of relevance.

Great to see the direction these meetings are now going - defo far more effective and driven towards priorities.

I think the opportunities linked to development and training are excellent as is the relevance of topics covered

As voiced by another agency this morning I feel that the LSCG meetings are really informative and have grown in the last year.

As well as the presentations there have been opportunities within meetings to share learning, discuss SCRs and SPRs and other safeguarding concerns. Members were asked how useful the meetings were on a five-star rating and the mean figure was 4.3.

Below are some comments which are representative of the value that members place upon the LSCG meetings:

It is an important opportunity to share information and worries as well as talk about what is going well. I am very reassured that with LSCP changes driven by the national agenda that in Norfolk we still have our LSCGs. The challenges to keeping children and young people safe post pandemic are likely to increase, including because of the impact on young people's wellbeing and mental health as well as loneliness and the impact of family poverty possibly increasing vulnerability to CCE and CSE. Whole system understanding of place-based safeguarding issues and creative solution focussed discussions are critical to rise to these challenges

The group has developed a professional but welcoming and safe environment for all participants to feel safe to share and challenge. The requests for us to be accountable for actions within our organisation helps me to be focussed!

I find the LSCG meetings help keep me focused on Safeguarding. I go back to my own team meetings enthused and cascade info when I can

I find the LSCG meetings very beneficial and they are meetings I try to prioritise. The networking across agencies builds a strong foundation for multi-agency working. I appreciate the opportunity to discuss practice and how we can make improvements to safeguarding both within our own setting but to also be a part of improvements across the county

Great platform to discuss how things can improve and share ideas and good practice

Over the past 12 months the LSCGs have felt more productive, so keep it up. The opportunities to share experience and good practice have been welcomed in the most recent LSCGs.

The use of breakout rooms within meetings has developed over the year and these provide valued opportunities to drill down into some of the themes discussed with smaller groups allowing more time for participants to offer their own contribution and explore ideas in greater depth.

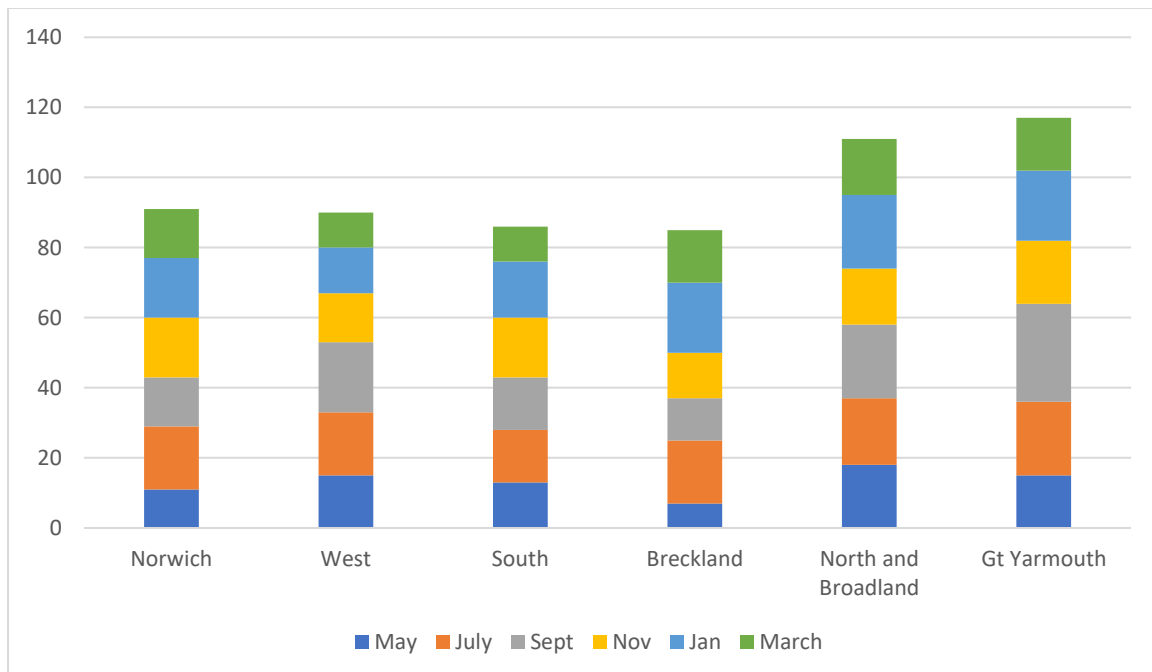
The breakout rooms are really good and encourages/gives everybody the chance to talk - so more of these.

The use of break out rooms was helpful to encourage discussion and provide a 'safe-space' to talk about practice.

I think we should develop the use of break out rooms where we get to discuss issues in groups as I feel this is beneficial for learning and interaction.

3. Attendance

Attendance at all of the LSCG has been on average 45% higher than the previous year with an average attendance of 16 members at each meeting.



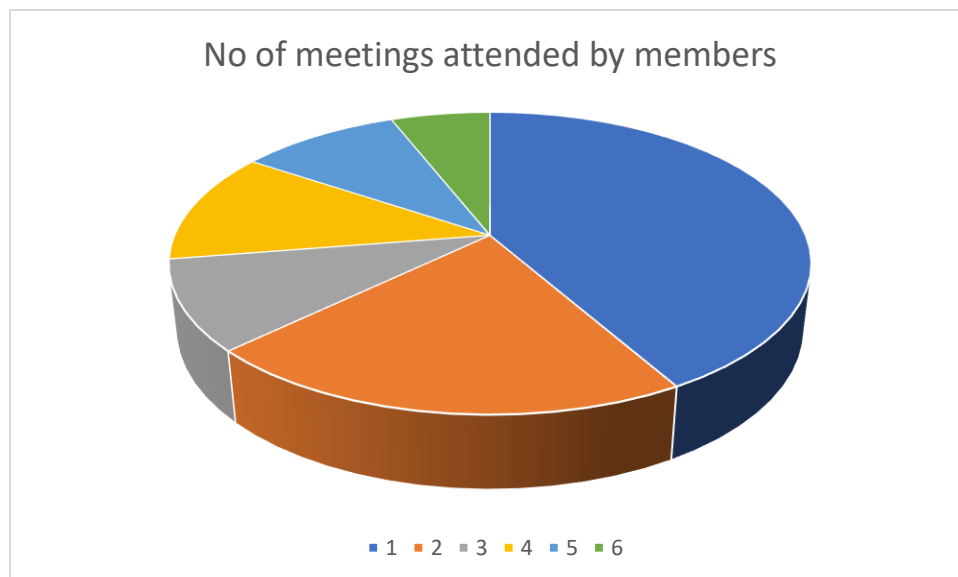
All of the LSCG meetings in this period have been virtual meetings on MS teams. Whilst there were concerns at the beginning of the initial lockdown on how well meetings would work virtually, the survey supplied only positive messages about

working this way and the need to continue this in some form in the future. Here are some representative responses:

I find the meeting easier to attend via teams/zoom due to travel time. I appreciate this may change over the coming year but having a mix of face to face and online meetings would be a great help in attending maybe not all but some future meetings

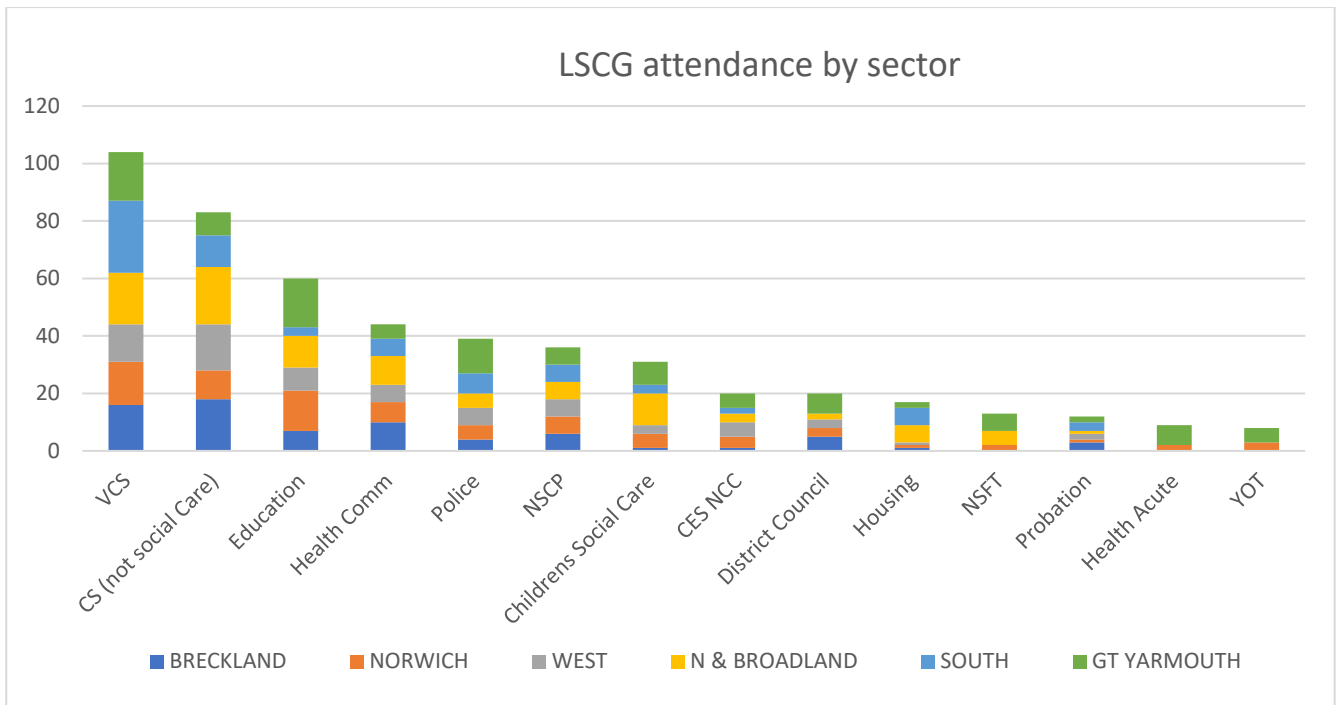
I think we should plan for continued use of virtual meetings - North and Broadland is a massive area and attendance at various venues historically has been poor. Virtual meetings see good attendance and are inclusive. I think people prepare better for an online meeting as there is nowhere to hide - they read the SPR, they check their emails. The breakout groups work well. There could be some "real" meetings, or just focus these as networking meetings if this survey shows that people want more of that.

Overall attendance has improved over the last year and the consistency of attendance i.e. the number of times an individual member attends has improved. In the previous year 65% of attendees only attended one LSCG meeting. In the last year this figure reduced to 42%. It is not possible to draw from the existing attendance data whether a nominated deputy attended in place of members. This remains a very high number of people who have attended only one meeting during the year and encouraging consistent attendance will be a challenge for the coming year.



The same information broken down by LSCG is illustrated in Appendix A.

There was a repeated message about the value that members get from meeting together with a range of partners to share learning and experiences: *“Greater emphasis across all organisations to prioritise this meeting. It can be so valuable”*. Membership was mentioned by survey respondents with several identifying perceived gaps across different sectors. Representation across the different sectors is shown below



4. Workplans

At the start of the year 2020/21 workplans were developed for the LSCGs with a focus on:

1. The voice of the child
2. Developing an active learning culture
3. NSCP priorities¹
 - a. Neglect
 - b. Child exploitation
4. Trauma informed practice

In order to support the development of each of these themes, external speakers attended to cover the subjects outlined above. Whilst these workplans have provided a framework for the year, created focus and structure for the work of the LSCGs and enabled planned programme of presentations and speakers across the year, there has not been a clear structure on capturing and measuring outcomes. There have been some clear and bounded outcomes achieved when the LSCG has acted as a body (as highlighted in the sections below), but there have also been outcomes achieved within individual organisations as a direct result of the work of the LSCG which have not been captured or measured in any systematic way. These organisational outcomes have been noted during discussions but not formally recognised. Achieving outcomes was highlighted several times in the survey as important to members:

I would like to see consistent membership and measurable outcomes

¹ At the time of creating the workplans, protecting babies had not been identified as a priority

Would be really good to see demonstrable outcomes from each meeting so you know that your time spent attending meetings is clearly improving outcomes for children and families.

Continue to make use of break out discussions and ensure we have follow up sessions and further workshops between LSCG to explore practice further and give space for reflection and capturing how people are applying what they get from LSCGs into their practice and that of their organisation.

A greater focus on outcomes achieved will be sought during the next year including how to capture this information from individual organisations, as well as group directed outcomes, without making this an onerous task. One of the changes that has happened in the last year is that partners provide a written update instead of an oral one at meetings. This received positive feedback in the survey:

It is good that the meetings are focussed and not just about sharing partner updates.

Sharing partner updates in written format is freeing up more time within the meeting. Would be good if these updates could focus more on the safeguarding aspects of each organisation as well as general updates.

There is the potential to include outcome updates from partners in the update document that is circulated to all partners.

a) The voice of the child

Young commissioners from each of the Youth Advisory Boards (YABs) were invited to the May 2020 meetings and presented on their priorities for the year.

Through discussion at the LSCG chairs meetings it was agreed that representatives from the LSCG should attend the YAB meetings to ensure that there is effective linkage where possible, rather than expecting young commissioners to make the time to attend LSCG meetings. These representatives are attending each of the YAB meetings but there is a need to create stronger links and a structured process to update on activity. There is potential to include a regular YAB section in the update document that is circulated to all partners.

Example outcomes from voice of the child activity

Following the YAB presentation at the LSCG meetings, young commissioners were asked to share their priorities at a number of single agency and multi-agency meetings.

Young commissioners contributed to the selection of new uniforms for Norfolk Community Health and Care NHS Trust.

b) Developing an active learning culture

Whilst all of the workplan objectives are important, developing an active learning culture through the work of the LSCG has been essential in the last year, as it creates the bedrock for future development. As well as the presentations and ensuing discussions, the increasing use of breakout rooms has helped to facilitate the development of this culture. In the January and March meetings 2021 breakout room discussion of Serious Case Reviews and Safeguarding Practice Reviews has been highly productive and well received by LSCG members. The learning that has occurred in these discussions was highlighted by a number of survey respondents:

Having a focus on SCR etc and how this informs practice within our service is invaluable.

I am glad we are finally getting around to discussing SCRs - they have been on the agenda for years and we have never got to them or had time to discuss them properly

[I would like to see] a commitment to continue to collaborate on learning from best practice and from Safeguarding Practice Reviews

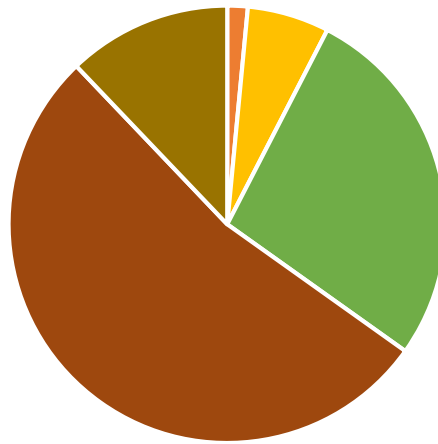
Opportunity to reflect on the learning from SCRs has been useful and this has been replicated in our team meetings.

The final point was reiterated in many of the LSCG meetings with a wide range of agencies identifying that they had either initiated or were planning to initiate further discussion of SCRs and SPRs within their organisations. Appendix B provides a list of some of the ways in which organisations are learning from these reviews.

In addition to the LSCG meetings themselves learning has taken place through additional training and networking sessions planned by the LSCGs.

LSCG members were asked how frequently they take learning from LSCG meetings and make use of it in their practice. The majority (53%) take the learning back “often”. One colleague identified that they *never* take the learning back to their practice but then qualified this to say that “I manage a range of services, I use what I learn in the group to support my team.” This respondent marked the usefulness of the LSCG meetings as five stars.

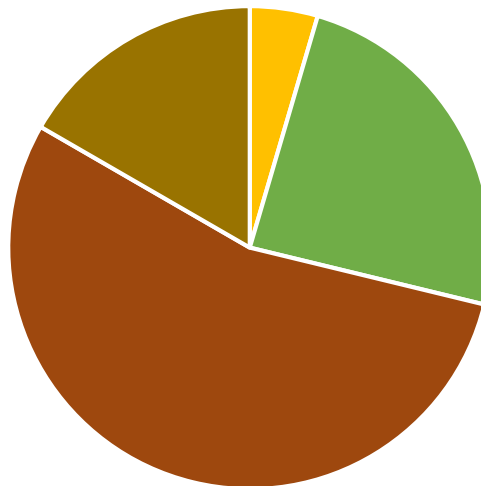
How frequently do you take learning from LSCG meetings and make use of it in your practice?



■ Never ■ Rarely ■ Occasionally ■ Often ■ Very frequently

In addition to making use of the learning in their own practice, survey respondents were asked how frequently they take learning from LSCG meetings and share it with their colleagues?

Sharing learning with colleagues



■ Never ■ Rarely ■ Occasionally ■ Often ■ Very frequently

One area highlighted for further development by the survey was the need for “opportunity to reflect on own practice with Multi Agency Learning reviews”. These have previously been conducted by each of the LSCG but over the last year only one has been completed in Gt Yarmouth.

c) NSCP Priorities

During the last year there have been presentations and discussions within the LSCG meetings on Adolescent Neglect, the Neglect strategy and Contextual safeguarding. Additional sessions were held by several LSCGs to continue discussion on these subjects; Great Yarmouth held a multi-agency review with a focus on adolescent neglect.

In response to recommendation 1 from the 2020 Section 11 report which identified the need to ensure that strategic decision making is clearly disseminated widely for information and to key individuals, it will be valuable to ensure that LSCG members are regularly kept up to date with developments from the Vulnerable Adolescent Group, the Neglect Strategy Implementation Group and the Protecting Babies group.

d) Trauma informed practice

This has been an area which has generated much interest from the LSCGs. Following presentations at the meetings Shirley Green from Norwich Connect provided excellent training on trauma informed approaches in each of the areas. These were both well attended and well received.

2020 Trauma Informed Practice 4 hour sessions	Date	Attendance
LSCG South	16-Nov	29
LSCG Norwich	10-Nov	28
LSCG Breckland	20-Oct	22
LSCG West	23-Nov	31
LSCG Great Yarmouth	19-Oct	22
LSCG North & Broadland	11-Dec	26

Follow up sessions were requested and held to further the expertise in the application of this approach within all localities. These were solely for those who had attended the original course; had a smaller number attending, but with a greater focus on application in practice.

2021 TIP 2 hour sessions	Date	Attendance
LSCG South	24-Feb	11
LSCG Norwich	01-Mar	7
LSCG Breckland	08-Mar	5
LSCG West	10-Mar	8
LSCG Great Yarmouth	17-Mar	7
LSCG North & Broadland	25-Mar	6

There has not been an LSCG evaluation of the impact of the training, but colleagues reported back at LSCG meetings that practitioners have been upskilled and understand the language of trauma better and also that the training has helped to provide a shared understanding of the language so that we can work together more effectively.

5. Conclusions and future developments

Feedback from LSCG members has been very positive² about the value that they place on these meetings:

I find the LSCG learning crucial to my work.

Really enjoy the meetings, we have progressed and developed in the last year

There are a number of issues raised by a number of survey respondents that need to be considered for the groups moving into the next year.

1. Attendance and representation are considered important not just for the benefit of each organisation but to enhance the robust partnership working within localities that already exists.
2. More activity between meetings. Colleagues identified the value of additional opportunities to work together and network outwith the bimonthly meetings with only 6% not seeing value in additional meetings.
3. A number of respondents valued the challenge alongside support from the groups “Continue to ‘Name it and Own it’.”
4. A greater focus on capturing outcomes resulting from LSCG activity, both collectively and as individual organisations.
5. Stronger alliance with young people’s groups and evidence of the voice of the child

Finally, it is important to recognise that these groups are only as good as the people who contribute to them, so much thanks and appreciation to:

All the hard working LSCG members who contribute so much and create the working environment in which all this learning and activity takes place.

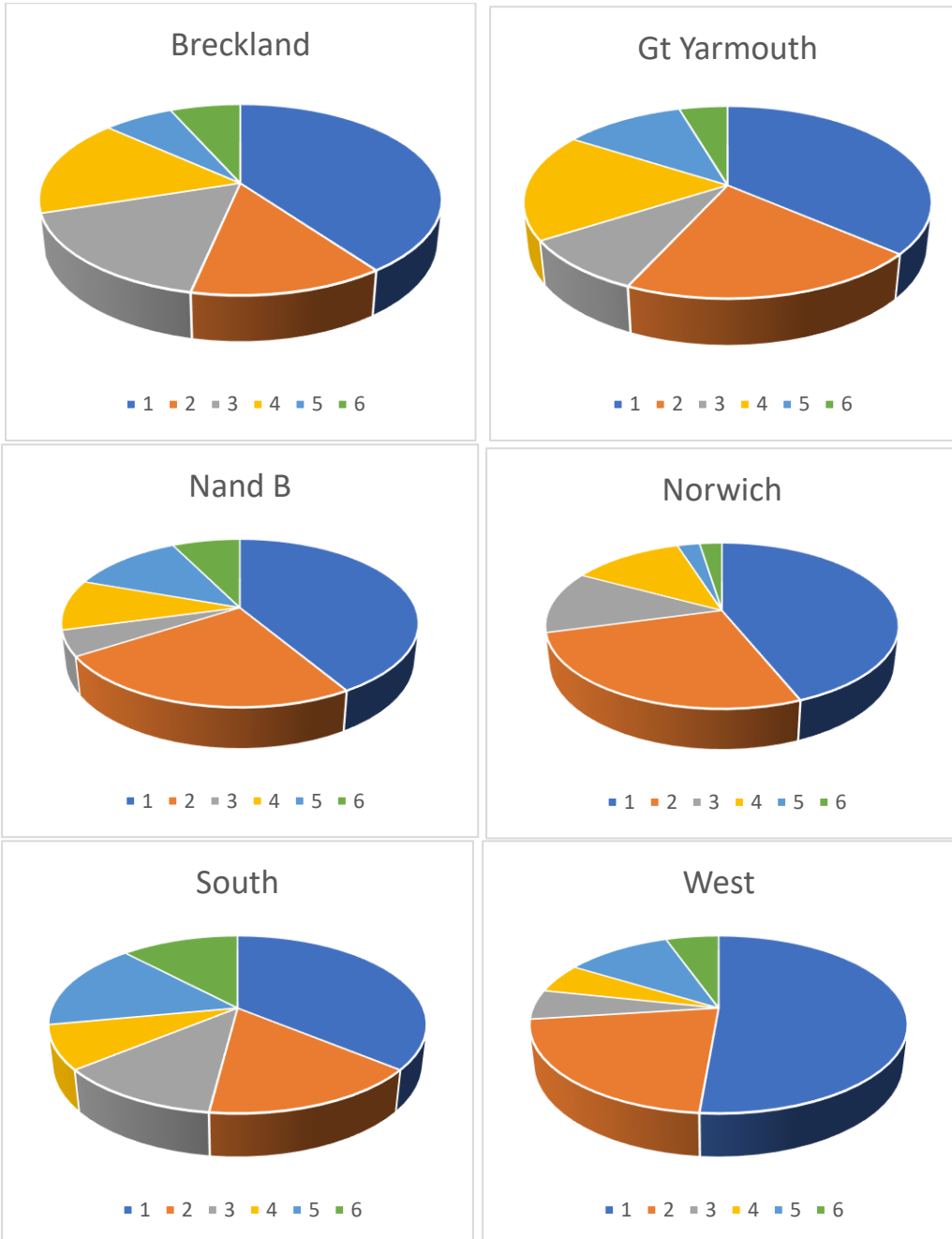
The Co-chairs and Business Support who work hard to facilitate these partnership forums and help to develop the learning environment in which appreciative inquiry thrives.

The external speakers and trainers who have input their expertise and enthusiasm.

² See Appendix C with the additional comments from the survey

Appendix A

No of meetings attended by members per LSCG



Appendix B Ways in which organisations learn from SCRs and SPRs.

Below are some of the examples of how partners are making use of the learning from Serious Case Reviews and Safeguarding Practice Reviews to improve practice and achieve better outcomes for children and families. This is not an exhaustive list and was made possible by the contributions from LSCG representatives. If you have additional ways in which you are using the learning please contact mark.osborn@norfolk.gov.uk to share this practice. Organisations are structured in many different ways and staff have different levels of activity in relation to safeguarding children and there is not a one size fits all approach to learning from the review recommendations; what is important is that active learning is taking place within the organisation to effect change.

Case study

Great resource provided by Education safeguarding team helping to make sense of the SCRs for schools. This leads to real consideration of what needs to be done differently as a result of the SCR. Regular Management Information sheets and twitter are used to disseminate recommendations with links and brief summary. Education have run 90 minute webinars (offered to all of their designated safeguarding leads). Over 100 DSL attended. Discussed four SCRs and highlighted four themes that were discussed in breakout rooms. Designated Safeguarding Leads who are required to read SCR in advance of the meeting. . The training offer is adapted to include case studies which have factors relevant to recommendations. Part of the training sessions includes participants' active consideration of what the recommendations mean for their practice, how this impacts on their safeguarding action plan, what they are going to do differently, and how it will be disseminated to all staff. Schools and DSLs talk to colleagues from other schools about learning and how it is dealt with in other schools. They are discussed by DSL teams within schools and with all staff as appropriate.

Management

- SCRs are shared with senior leadership, but it is not always shared with all staff. It is challenging for officers to look at them all due to how busy they are with a wide range of duties. Appropriate messages are shared with all staff
- Address and discuss in a senior management meeting.
- Safeguarding leads receive them (there are four leads) – they discuss and then send key messages out.
- Newsletter or via other methods to regularly informing colleagues of SCRs.

Team meetings

- Team meetings – existing cases are looked at and discussed in the light of recommendations and how the issues apply to these cases – this creates active application of learning and makes the SCR recommendations more real.
- SCRS are discussed in team meetings e.g. half-termly sessions on a topic e.g. SCR; safeguarding review group.
- Individuals are asked to take away one recommendation and come back to team meetings to discuss the implications for practice. This creates ownership (see accountability ladder) and helps us to cover more ground i.e. reduce duplication.

- Asking a team member to read the SCR and consider how a particular recommendation relates to their practice. They are then asked to share or present this with their wider team about what they have reflected on, learned and may do differently in their own practice and checking or asking what they and other colleagues may need regarding further support, training, guidance.
- Before team meeting, send out SCR in advance so that people attend meeting prepared and not just expecting to hear what the SCR says. This leads to people attending with an understanding of what this means for our service. With this preparation people also bring a case along for which the recommendation has implications so that we can look at the application of learning not just the theory e.g. impact on siblings/ cultural dimensions for the parents.
- Discuss SCRs within team meetings and consider how this develops into changes in practice.
- Making use of the SCR summaries with the suggested learning activities for use with the team.
- In a team meeting using exercises to incorporate learning and work through how you would cope with certain scenarios.

Additional meetings

- Have a good practice forum half termly.
- Created monthly /bimonthly workshops for practitioners to address points raised.
- We have two social workers and when they hold complex case management meetings with staff, they are now including SCR recommendations in these meetings.
- Have a CPD awayday in which team members are asked to present on a SCR this increases familiarity and understanding of the issues. Groups identify what the takeaway needs to be from these sessions.
- Include SCR findings in briefings to all staff as a quarterly process and in CPD monthly events.
- There are practice meetings, team huddles, group supervision which all make use of the recommendations
- Findings are included in FSP core training and common themes used to develop FSP approach.

Supervision

- Discussions about SCR built into supervision – encouraging professional curiosity.
- In supervision, checking out level of awareness of front line practitioners/officers regarding their understanding and how they might apply a key recommendation from the SCR to their work e.g. the conversations they have with a family member or partner agency to understand what is happening (linked to shared chronologies) linked to whole family work.
- Managers have open discussions about SCR findings, and these are then woven into supervision.

Moving forward

- Adapt audits to ensure that findings from recommendations are explored and practice reviewed in light of this.
- Make changes made to paperwork and referral forms so that we are capturing all the information that we need.
- We are able to see opportunities for development and see the gaps in service provision.
- Now we have really useful group discussions but we now need to consider how these getting embedded and do not just happen when someone initiates it.
- Next stage is to embed this commitment into the culture of the organisation. This will lead to saving time so that we are not looking at these as additional tasks but that they fit into our normal practice. Doing this will become time saving and more efficient.
- SCR findings could be usefully brought into group supervision

Appendix C survey comments

8. Any other comments or thoughts to share?

37 Responses

ID	Responses
1	thanks
2	I think the opportunities linked to development and training are excellent as is the relevance of topics covered. I find the meetings really useful but attending both the North & East meetings, sometimes means there is a repeat so I am working on another colleague attending in my place. Thank you.
3	Need to look at the time we need to focus on voice of the child and young person, including opportunities to share practice ideas and disseminate and encourage beyond the LSCG membership. (Always work in progress)
4	I think we should plan for continued use of virtual meetings - North and Broadland is a massive area and attendance at various venues historically has been poor. Virtual meetings see good attendance and are inclusive. I think people prepare better for an online meeting as there is nowhere to hide - they read the SPR, they check their emails. The breakout groups work well. There could be some "real" meetings, or just focus these as networking meetings if this survey shows that people want more of that.
5	There is a constant change over of staff in the organisations and I think that it would be good for all partners to have a session where we explain what we do within our Organisations; how we work, our roles in safeguarding and what we can offer to other partners- to understand how we can improve better links and inter-agency working.
6	Great platform to discuss how things can improve and share ideas and good practice
7	No thank you
8	No other thoughts - only had 4 minutes to think????? If I do I will contact you
9	A big thank you to Jacqui for always smiling and keeping people engaged :)
10	n/a
11	Multi agency working is so key for me as schools are isolated places.
12	It is good that the meetings are focussed and not just about sharing partner updates.

ID Responses

13	The groups are very useful. They are mainly geared toward educational/child safeguarding so aren't always directly relevant to us as a social landlord, but any safeguarding groups are always a useful resource.
14	I find the meeting easier to attend via teams/zoom due to travel time. I appreciate this may change over the coming year but having a mix of face to face and online meetings would be a great help in attending maybe not all but some future meetings.
15	Continue to "Name it and Own it".
16	The meetings are always interesting to attend but are not always so relevant to our day to day work specifically when talking about individual cases. However for us to be aware of issues within the borough and wider area is useful when planning activities, staff training and supporting local partners. It is always good to know that we are supporting communities that are struggling and are looking at a more targeted approach to some activities in libraries, to maximise benefits for young people and families. Something we have not always done.
17	Not at the moment.
18	Would be really good to see demonstrable outcomes from each meeting so you know that your time spent attending meetings is clearly improving outcomes for children and families.
19	very informative. Good to hear other agencies views.
20	I will not have an ongoing role in attendance at all LSCGs once we have schools' actively linked in
21	Microsoft Teams is a great way to host these meetings in terms of travel etc. The 'break out' rooms also help to keep the meeting interactive.
22	While I like networking opportunities, pressure of work means that it is often hard to take advantage of them. My diary books up a term in advance so need dates at least 3 months before the appointment in order to be able to make the time.
23	I think the meetings are positive however it would be useful to maybe have a 15 min break out where we can meet with other members (different each week to all promote our services) As we are not meeting in a room anymore we miss the "coffee break" aspect.
24	I find the LSCG learning crucial to my work

ID Responses

25	I find the LSCG meetings very beneficial and they are meetings I try to prioritise. The networking across agencies builds a strong foundation for multi agency working. I appreciate the opportunity to discuss practice and how we can make improvements to safeguarding both within our own setting but to also be a part of improvements across the county.
26	I have completed the application form to be part of the Reflective Practice Group
27	Just wanted to add that the Thematic Review AH was very powerful - there should be some consideration as to using this method for future neglect SCR's
28	With reference to Q4 I am not a practitioner, I manage a range of services, I use what I learn in the group to support my team. In terms of question 5, we have a central SG group for our NHS trust and I feedback to the central group.
29	Networking opportunities that have meaning and/or a purpose are always welcomed.
30	I would suggest that everyone has a nominated deputy who attends if they are unavailable
31	I find the LSCG meetings help keep me focused on Safeguarding. I go back to my own team meetings enthused and cascade info when I can
32	I'm not sure that people really understand what the LSCG is, and how it benefits them, so more work needs to be done around that. I like these meetings as they are useful and have a direct impact on my practice and my role as a team manager.
33	As voiced by another agency this morning I feel that the LSCG meetings are really informative and have grown in the last year. It has been nice to get to know each agency and what their roles are and also what they can offer to safeguard children
34	The group has developed a professional but welcoming and safe environment for all participants to feel safe to share and challenge . The requests for us to be accountable for actions within our organisation helps me to be focussed !
35	Really enjoy the meetings, we have progressed and developed in the last year
36	It is an important opportunity to share information and worries as well as talk about what is going well. I am very reassured that with LSCP changes driven by the national agenda that in Norfolk we still have our LSCGs. The challenges to keeping children and young people safe post pandemic are likely to increase, including because of the impact on young peoples wellbeing and

ID Responses

	mental health as well as loneliness and the impact of family poverty possibly increasing vulnerability to CCE and CSE. Whole system understanding of place based safeguarding issues and creative solution focussed discussions are critical to rise to these challenges.
37	Meetings are useful. Currently taking it back to colleagues to implement feedback to staff in a better way.