



## Report to Policy Committee

**Author/Lead Officer of Report:** Mark Storf,  
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**Report of:** Sally Williams (Director Childrens & Families)

**Report to:** Education Children & Families Committee

**Date of Decision:** 21<sup>st</sup> June 2023

**Subject:** Revision of Sheffield's Threshold of Need Guidance

Has an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) been undertaken?	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
If YES, what EIA reference number has it been given? 2131				
Has appropriate consultation taken place?	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
Has a Climate Impact Assessment (CIA) been undertaken?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information?	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If YES, give details as to whether the exemption applies to the full report / part of the report and/or appendices and complete below:-				
<p><i>"The (report/appendix) is not for publication because it contains exempt information under Paragraph (insert relevant paragraph number) of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended)."</i></p>				

### Purpose of Report:

Sheffield City Council is a key partner in Safeguarding the Children, Young People and Families of Sheffield. Safeguarding Children is everyone's responsibility. The Department for Education sets out Local Authorities' statutory duty to work with partners to produce a Threshold Document in its guidance 'Working Together to Safeguard Children, A guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children (2018)'. Sheffield's Threshold of Need Guidance is held by Sheffield Childrens Safeguarding Partnership and was last reviewed in 2017. Changes in practice, partnership working protocols and new challenges means it is time to refresh Sheffield's Threshold of Need Guidance. Revisions to the guidance will support professional, partners and individuals to make better decisions when identifying risk, identifying the appropriate level of interventions required and making more informed referrals.

**Recommendations:**

It is recommended that the Education Children and Families Committee approve the revised Threshold of Need Guidance for Sheffield City Council use and with a view to it also being adopted by partners across Sheffield.

**Background Papers:**

Appendix 1: Sheffield's revised Threshold of Need Guidance.

Lead Officer to complete:-	
1	I have consulted the relevant departments in respect of any relevant implications indicated on the Statutory and Council Policy Checklist, and comments have been incorporated / additional forms completed / EIA completed, where required.
	Finance: Kayleigh Inman (25/05/2023)
	Legal: Patrick Chisholm (02/06/2023)
	Equalities & Consultation: Bashir Khan (01/06/2023)
	Climate: Jessica Rick (16/01/2023)
	<i>Legal, financial/commercial and equalities implications must be included within the report and the name of the officer consulted must be included above.</i>
2	<b>SLB member who approved submission:</b> Andrew Jones
3	<b>Committee Chair consulted:</b> Cllr Dawn Dale
4	I confirm that all necessary approval has been obtained in respect of the implications indicated on the Statutory and Council Policy Checklist and that the report has been approved for submission to the Committee by the SLB member indicated at 2. In addition, any additional forms have been completed and signed off as required at 1.
	<b>Lead Officer Name:</b> Mark Storf
	<b>Job Title:</b> Assistant Director Children & Families
	<b>Date:</b> 02/06/2023

## 1. PROPOSAL

- 1.1 The Department for Education sets out Local Authorities' statutory duty to work with partners to produce a Threshold Document in its guidance 'Working Together to Safeguard Children, A guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children (2018)'. Sheffield's Threshold of Need Guidance is held by Sheffield Childrens Safeguarding Partnership and was last reviewed in 2017. Changes in practice, partnership working protocols and new challenges means it is time to refresh Sheffield's Threshold of Need Guidance.

The attached revised Threshold of Need Guidance (Appendix 1) has been developed by Sheffield City Council and its key partners. The revised guidance is being submitted to the Education, Children and Families Committee with a view to being approved by the Chair of the Committee and adopted by the City.

Sheffield Childrens Safeguarding Partnership Executive Board will also receive a copy of the proposed Guidance with a view to this being approved by Sheffield City Council's safeguarding partners.

The target date for publishing the updated Threshold of Need Guidance is 31<sup>st</sup> July 2023.

## 2. HOW DOES THIS DECISION CONTRIBUTE?

- 2.1 Sheffield City Council is a key partner in Safeguarding the Children, Young People and Families of Sheffield. Safeguarding Children is everyone's responsibility and revisions to the Threshold of Need Guidance will support professionals, partners and individuals to make better decisions when identifying risk, identifying the appropriate level of interventions required and making more informed referrals (*this supports improving the customer experience*).

Approval of Sheffield City Council's involvement in the publication of the updated Threshold of Need Guidance will reduce inequalities and contribute to Sheffield Safeguarding Children's Partnerships meeting its objectives. Namely,

- To strengthen local partnership working, which is dependent on safeguarding partners working collaboratively together.
- To achieve improvements by developing, disseminating, and embedding good practice based on what we know works well.
- To support a culture where everyone involved in safeguarding children and young people welcomes scrutiny and challenge.

### 3. HAS THERE BEEN ANY CONSULTATION?

- 3.1 Sheffield City Council does not have a statutory duty to consult on the Threshold of Need Guidance. It is however good practice to engage with key partners in the development of the guidance. Significant engagement has been undertaken with partners through the establishment of a multi-agency Threshold of Need Steering Group.

The Threshold of Need Steering Group includes included membership from:

Sheffield Children Safeguarding Partnership  
Sheffield City Council – Children’s Social Care  
Sheffield City Council – Education  
Sheffield City Council – Communities  
Sheffield Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust  
South Yorkshire Integrated Care Board  
South Yorkshire Police  
Education – Headteacher Tapton Multi-Academy Trust  
Sheffield Childrens Hospital

The group met on 4 occasions in the second half of 2022 and will continue to meet throughout the first half of 2023. The Steering Group is supported by Structure & Content and Implementation Task & Finish Groups.

Two draft Threshold of Need Documents were produced and circulated for a period of Practitioner Testing. This ran from 13<sup>th</sup> January 2023 to 26<sup>th</sup> January 2023 and feedback from the practitioner testing was incorporated into the final draft. Partners involved in the practitioner testing included,

**Sheffield City Council**, MAST Practitioners, Hub Social Workers, Youth & Community Workers, Housing, colleagues working with Domestic Abuse, Substance Misuse, Strengthening Families and Missing Young People.

**Education**, Inclusion & Attendance colleagues, Designated Safeguarding Leads in a variety of schools, Community Early Years Practitioners, Early Years Triage & Screening Coordinators, Special Education Needs Coordinators, a Secondary Headteacher Representative and a Consultant.

**Health**, Health Safeguarding Named Professionals, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service representative, Midwifery Team representative, School Nurse and Health Visitors.

**Police**, Safeguarding Hub Police Officers

**Voluntary, Community & Faith Sector**, SayIT, Haven, Door 43, Sheffield Womens Aid, the Young Womens Housing Project.

**Other**, a representative from Workforce, Development & Training in SCC and the Probation Service.

#### **4. RISK ANALYSIS AND IMPLICATIONS OF THE DECISION**

##### 4.1 Equality Implications

4.1.1 Decisions need to take into account the requirements of the Public Sector Equality Duty contained in Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 which identifies the need to:

- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act
- advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it
- foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it

The Equality Act 2010 identifies the following groups as a protected characteristic: age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion and belief; sex and sexual orientation.

An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) has been developed and highlights that the Threshold of Need Guidance will enhance the City's approach to safeguarding. The EIA notes positive impacts on children and young people of all characteristics who are at risk of adverse outcomes. The enhanced approach to safeguarding will also positively impact on our partners and the Voluntary Community Sector across Sheffield.

##### 4.2 Financial and Commercial Implications

4.2.1 No direct financial or commercial implications arise from this report. Regular reviews of costs associated with safeguarding young people are undertaken between Children and Families, Business Strategy and Finance. Any changes in the funding requirements for services will be subject to a separate report which will need to go through the appropriate approval processes.

##### 4.3 Legal Implications

4.3.1 The Department for Education sets out Local Authorities' statutory duty to work with partners to produce a Threshold Document in its guidance 'Working Together to Safeguard Children, A guide to inter-agency working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children (2018)'. That guidance is issued pursuant to section 7 of the Local Authority Social Services Act 1970, which requires local authorities in their social services functions to act under the general guidance of the Secretary of State and means that the guidance should be complied with unless exceptional

circumstances arise. Sheffield's Threshold of Need Guidance is held by Sheffield Childrens Safeguarding Partnership and was last reviewed in 2017. Changes in practice, partnership working protocols and new challenges means it is time to refresh Sheffield's Threshold of Need Guidance.

Signing up to Sheffield's revised Threshold of Need Guidance reaffirms the Council's existing commitments to meeting the duty.

Sections 10 and 11 of the Children Act 2004 places a duty of co-operation on the Council (and a range of organisations and individuals) when making arrangements for ensuring that their functions, and any services that they contract out to others, are discharged with regard to the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

Signing up to Sheffield's revised Threshold of Need Guidance reaffirms the Council's existing commitment to promote co-operation between key stakeholders.

#### 4.4 Climate Implications

- 4.4.1 No direct climate implications arise from this report. The Sustainability and Climate Change Team has been consulted and are in agreement no further action is required on CIA.

### **5. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

- 5.1 Not to approve Sheffield City Council's involvement in the publication of updated Threshold of Need Guidance. This option was rejected. In Sheffield safeguarding children is everyone's responsibility and revisions to the Threshold of Need Guidance will support professional, partners and individuals to make better decisions when identifying risk, identifying the appropriate level of interventions required and making more informed referrals. The revision will also support Sheffield Safeguarding Children's Partnership realise it's objectives.

### **6. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 6.1 Sheffield City Council is a key partner in Safeguarding the Children, Young People and Families of Sheffield. Safeguarding Children is everyone's responsibility and revisions to the Threshold of Need Guidance will support professional, partners and individuals to make better decisions when identifying risk, identifying the appropriate level of interventions required and making more informed referrals.

Approval of Sheffield City Council's involvement in the publication of the updated Threshold of Need Guidance will reduce inequalities and contribute to Sheffield Safeguarding Children's Partnerships meeting its objectives.



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