



# Norfolk Safeguarding Children Partnership

## **JOB DESCRIPTION**

### **Independent Scrutineer and Chair of Norfolk's Safeguarding Practice Review Group**

#### **1. BACKGROUND**

Norfolk's plan for local multi-agency safeguarding arrangements for children is the responsibility of three statutory partners: the Local Authority (Norfolk County Council), the police (Norfolk Constabulary) and health (Norfolk & Waveney Integrated Care Board). The latest iteration of the plan was published in November 2024. Within the plan there is clear scope for independent scrutiny and the Independent Chairperson for the Safeguarding Practice Review Group (SPRG) is one of three posts dedicated to this task.

#### **2. THE PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF THE ROLE**

The overall purpose of the role is to contribute to continued learning as a result of reviews and scrutiny activity in order to evidence the quality of practice across the Safeguarding Children Partnership and improve outcomes for children and families.

##### **a: Independent Scrutiny**

As a member of the independent scrutiny team the post holder will work as part of a team of three on pieces of scrutiny commissioned by the NSCP leaders. This may involve leading or supporting the work. If leading, the scrutineer is responsible for developing the scope of the scrutiny and methodology.

All scrutineers take part in different scrutiny activities, including leading focus groups, observation of frontline practice and writing and presenting reports to the three statutory partners and the NSCP Partnership Group. This role specifically includes responsibility for leading on observations of frontline practice.

The independent scrutiny team meets regularly and is supported by the Head of NSCP Business Delivery, the Safeguarding Intelligence and Performance Co-ordinator and the Senior Data Analyst who works across the NSCP and CYPISA. Administrative support is provided by the NSCP Business Unit.

## **b: Chair of Safeguarding Practice Review Group**

Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews (CSPRs) are a statutory function of the NSCP as defined in Working Together 2023. The Norfolk Safeguarding Children Partnership (NSCP) is responsible for reviewing all referrals of cases that may be eligible for a CSPR and making recommendations to the Lead and Delegated Safeguarding Partners (LSPs and DSPs) whether or not to commission a review. The Safeguarding Practice Review Group (SPRG) is the sub-committee that has responsibility for this work.

The SPRG is also responsible for monitoring the outcomes of all CSPR activity, including all Serious Incident Notifications and Rapid Reviews.

In summary the SPRG is responsible for:

- Reviewing all referrals to SPRG and making recommendations to the Statutory Partners and the National Panel.
- Overseeing the progress of all CSPRs commissioned, including communication to the National Panel
- Reporting to the Partnership on outcomes, learning and emerging themes

Membership of the SPRG includes relevant statutory agencies, as well as co-opted members from education, Cafcass and legal services, who provide the skills and resources to address specific issues arising. Statutory membership includes Children's Services, the Police and Health. Legal advice is provided through Nplaw.

The SPRG Chair will chair a minimum of 10 meetings per annum, typically scheduled for the second Monday of each calendar month (although this can be reviewed against the successful applicant's availability). Time should also be allowed for approximately another half day per month to prepare for and follow up on the meetings.

## **c: Additional tasks**

In addition, the postholder may be required to undertake other relevant chairing or scrutiny work, such as the Section 11 steering group, or chairing Task & Finish Groups in response to learning.

## **3. ACCOUNTABILITY**

The SPRG Chair/Scrutineer will be accountable to the Norfolk Safeguarding Children Partnership's Lead and Delegated Safeguarding Partners.

The postholder will report regularly on:

- Findings from observations of frontline practice
- CSPR activity undertaken within the financial year

#### **4. PRINCIPAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

- As Independent Scrutineer, the post holder will work with the Independent Scrutiny Team and the Head of NSCP Business Delivery to complete all pieces of scrutiny commissioned by the statutory partners within agreed timescales.
- The post holder will take the lead in observation of practice, including: development of the observation framework and tools, co-ordinating the observation schedule; analysing and reporting on observations; triangulating and sharing findings with other aspects of scrutiny; reporting to the Delegated Safeguarding Partners.
- As SPRG Chair, the postholder will chair routine monthly SPRG meetings and any other meetings, including Rapid Review meetings arising to ensure statutory time scales are met.
- The SPRG Chair will work closely with the Head of NSCP Business Delivery and the Business Support Officer to set the agenda and ensure that all actions are followed through by partners.
- The SPRG Chair will regularly review any emerging learning coming out of national safeguarding practice reviews/review activity and/or child deaths to ensure that the SPRG is aligned to systems learning.
- The SPRG Chair will work with partners to identify strengths and weaknesses in both single agency and multi-agency responses to the CSPRs. Where appropriate this will be fed back into relevant partners and other arenas, including Section 11.
- The SPRG Chair will work with the Head of Business delivery to support the commissioning and management of SPRs and Quality Assurance.
- The SPRG Chair will meet regularly with key colleagues including the NSCP Workforce Development Group Chair and leads for Safeguarding Intelligence, Performance and Practice, in order to ensure a systemic approach to embedding the learning.
- The SPRG Chair will attend relevant partnership meetings – DSP meetings and Partnership Group meetings - when CSPRs are concluded for partnership sign off.
- The SPRG Chair will work with SPRG members to ensure that the Terms of Reference adhere to national guidance and accord with the governance structures of the NSCP.
- The SPRG Chair will be available to respond to any enquiries from the National Panel regarding the impact and effectiveness of the SPRG.

- The SPRG Chair will ensure that appropriate levels of confidentiality and data protection are applied in respect of sensitive information handled at the SPRG, supported as required by the Head of NSCP Business Delivery.
- The SPRG Chair will work with the other independent officers responsible for scrutinising safeguarding arrangements to ensure that the observation of practice framework, including schedule, is implemented effectively and findings are reported to the NSCP.

## **5. FLEXIBILITY CLAUSE**

Other duties and responsibilities which arise from the nature and character of the post are implied and will be agreed in advance where required to fulfil the terms of reference of the SPRG and Norfolk's plan for multi-agency safeguarding arrangements in relation to independent scrutiny.

## **6. TERMS AND CONDITIONS**

The post will be subject to a period of three years from April 2025.

It is anticipated that the above duties and responsibilities will be carried out over no more than 40 days over a 12-month period. Any additional days will be by agreement.

The post commands £500 per day. Invoices must be submitted by the end of each quarter as a minimum with a timesheet included for auditing purposes.

Any conflicts of interest arising must be declared in writing to the Delegated Safeguarding Partners.

## **7. APPLICATION PROCESS AND TIMELINES**

Please send a CV and supporting statement through to the Head of NSCP Business Delivery: [abigail.mcgarry@norfolk.gov.uk](mailto:abigail.mcgarry@norfolk.gov.uk)

**Closing date:** Monday 17 February 2025

**Interviews:** Tuesday 25 February 2025

## **PERSON SPECIFICATION: INDEPENDENT SCRUTINEER & SPRG CHAIR**

<b>Skills, Knowledge &amp; experience</b>	
1	Knowledge and experience of Safeguarding Practice Reviews and systems methodology.
2	Experience at a senior practitioner/manager level in a safeguarding context, with specific experience of chairing multi agency groups and panels.
3	An excellent understanding of the principles and practice of safeguarding children and ability to talk with confidence about all facets of the children's systems.
4	Experience of inter-agency safeguarding strategies and a commitment to working closely with any Child Safeguarding Practice Review forums, both regionally and nationally.
5	Broad knowledge of recent developments in health and social care, and of the legislation and relevant research.
6	Experience of efficiently chairing complex professional meetings at a senior level.
7	Organisational abilities sufficient to ensure the smooth operation of the SPRG and scrutiny planning, with appropriate delegation to the NSCP Business Support Unit
8	Good written and oral skills, and the ability to speak in public, sufficient to represent the NSCP/Norfolk County Council effectively to the media
9	Experience of developing frameworks and practice tools to assist in observation of practice, including a track record of seeking feedback from frontline staff and service users
<b>Equal Opportunity</b>	
10	Demonstrable and appropriate regard, respect and value for diversity in all its aspects and an understanding of the importance of this within a safeguarding setting.
11	Ability to recognise discrimination in its many forms and active in promoting equal opportunities policies within the operation of the NSCP and Norfolk County Council.
<b>Attitude and Motivation</b>	
12	Solid commitment to children's welfare demonstrable through previous, or current professional experience.

13	Commitment to maintaining public confidence in services for children.
14	Ability and commitment to ensuring high standards of confidentiality.
15	Assertive, clear thinking, able to negotiate effectively and manage disputes effectively.
16	Self motivating and able to operate outside of single agency hierarchy structures.
	<b>Other</b>
17	It may be necessary to travel outside Norfolk in order to attend conferences, etc.
18	An appropriate level of IT and literacy skills.

**This position is subject to a satisfactory DBS.**