

**Manchester City Council  
Report for Information**

**Report to:** Ofsted Sub Group – 8 September 2015  
**Subject:** Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)  
**Report of:** Gladys Rhodes-White, Interim Director of Children’s Services

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**Summary**

This report provides an update on developments of the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub.

**Recommendations**

The recommendations from this report are for the Committee to note recent developments.

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**Wards Affected All**

<b>Community Strategy Spine</b>	<b>Summary of the contribution to the strategy</b>
Performance of the economy of the region and sub region	
Reaching full potential in education and employment	
Individual and collective self esteem – mutual respect	
Neighbourhoods of Choice	

**Environmental and Climate Change Impacts**

Consider, and describe if applicable, how the recommendations in the report will impact on the environment, on carbon reductions goals for the city, and on the Council’s climate change strategies.

**Full details are in the body of the report, along with any implications for**

- Equal Opportunities Policy
  - Risk Management
  - Legal Considerations
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**Financial Consequences – Revenue**  
**Financial Consequences – Capital**

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**Background documents (available for public inspection):**

The following documents disclose important facts on which the report is based and have been relied upon in preparing the report. Copies of the background documents are available up to 4 years after the date of the meeting. If you would like a copy please contact one of the contact officers above.

Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH), Young People and Children's Scrutiny Committee Paper, July 2015

## **1.0 Introduction**

- 1.1 The following paper provides an outline on recent developments made to strengthen Manchester's Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub and the planned next steps for the future improvement of the model.

## **2.0 Background**

- 2.1 Based on the challenges outlined in the previous MASH paper to Young People and Children's Scrutiny Committee in July 2015 and the review of the current MASH model there have been a number of changes to strengthen the service delivery both in the contact centre and MASH. Alongside the re-design of the new model these changes will better support the MASH. These include:

- (a) Appointment of a new Head of Service for MASH.
- (b) Robust governance arrangements through the MASH strategic board which has oversight of the current operation and the future proposals for the integrated front door.
- (c) Basing two Social Workers at the Contact Centre to aid the triage process and to provide immediate guidance on safeguarding referrals and advice on thresholds.
- (d) Introducing a consent policy that requires partners to ask for consent from a parent before making a referral, unless the referral relates to a child protection concern. This is to ensure that information sharing fits into the legal framework relating to data protection. If consent is gained, It also forms the basis of positive working relationships with families when a referral is made.
- (e) Working within the new Continuum of Need framework.

- 2.2 The focus on demand management has resulted in fewer contacts going onto the system and through to MASH. The team in MASH have had the capacity to focus on referrals and ensure that effective triage and signposting is carried out. This has led to a reduction in the numbers of referrals being progressed for assessment and a speedier response to referrals that have a safeguarding concern.

- 2.3 Effective multi agency work is being carried out in MASH which is ensuring accurate information is available on vulnerable children and young people. This is leading to improved decision making and earlier interventions.

- 2.4 A multi agency operational improvement plan is in place to drive improvements in practice and performance.

## **3.0 Future MASH/ Integrated Front Door Model**

- 3.1 A number of multi agency task and finish groups have been established, led by the newly appointed Head of Service for MASH, to draft proposals to move to a fully Integrated Front Door. The vision is to create a centre of excellence in a single gateway for safeguarding referrals, where multi agency professionals identify risks to children, have improved decision making, better planned interventions and improved outcomes. MASH enquiries will still be undertaken but the Integrated Front Door model facilitates a more operational multi agency response to the delivery of safeguarding.
- 3.2 There will be strong links to the Early Help Hubs which will ensure that professionals can be signposted at the earliest opportunity, which will reduce demand on the district teams.
- 3.3 To maintain the focus on children and young people who are at risk of CSE and are missing, an operational lead will remain based within the Integrated Front Door and will have oversight of both CSE and missing. A duty worker from the Protect Team will also be based alongside the operational lead.
- 3.4 To enhance the scrutiny of young people who have high numbers of missing episodes, fortnightly multi agency panels are being introduced to review and scrutinise plans and arrangements for this cohort of vulnerable young people.
- 3.5 The proposal also includes representation from the Integrated gang management unit. This will provide expertise relating to all organised crime and gang related issues.
- 3.6 The staffing arrangements will be enhanced so that strategy meetings can take place within the Integrated Front Door. This will ensure consistency of practice and application of thresholds, and will provide an immediate response to safeguarding concerns.
- 3.7 A performance framework is in place and will continue to be reviewed and developed. This will provide clear information relating to the performance of each agency who is involved in MASH enquiries.

#### **4.0 Next Steps**

- 4.1 The proposal has been presented to the Strategic Board and individual partners are consulting within their own agencies to agree the resource implications.
- 4.2 Once this is agreed, the practical requirements such as telephony and ICT will be gathered and a time line for implementation will be produced.
- 4.3 Further training will be provided in relation to strategy meetings to embed consistency of thresholds and decision making.