**Terms of Reference**

**Responding to alerts**

**Introduction**

This Terms of Reference (TOR) is designed to support the response provided by the Social Work Standards Officers and to ensure our advice to the District Teams is consistent and reflective of Kent’s Practice Framework.

The alerts process is well established within Kent; guidance regarding the cases of concern and when to report is available to all staff and outlines the range of circumstances which should be reported to the Safeguarding Unit.

<https://kentchildcare.proceduresonline.com/chapters/p_alerts.html?zoom_highlight=alerts>

It is the responsibility of the Service Manager and AD in the district to review the information provided within the alert form and assure quality, accuracy, and all risk management processes and safety planning has been undertaken.

On receipt of an alert into the Safeguarding Unit, each alert is logged by a business support officer and forwarded to the agreed list of recipients (as per agreed Unit procedures) and the nominated SSO for review and response.

The purpose of our response is ensuring appropriate safeguarding actions taken, offer practice advice / guidance and to ensure information is shared with senior managers.

The SSO will review the information within the alert and consider what the Districts are requesting from the alert.

This may be one of the below:

[ ]  **To initiate other processes e.g. national CP alert / internal review / notification to National Panel**

[ ]  **To request practice/risk management support from the PDOs**

[ ]  **For organisational risk to be considered by senior managers**

[ ]  **To share information only – no action requested\***

Please note if a decision is needed regarding a notification to the Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel and/ or the KSCMP it will be made by the Corporate Director for CYPE, Director of Children’s Service in conjunction with the QA Assistant Director and Area Assistant Director.

**As the responding SSO you should consider**

1. Does the information presented meet the criteria for notification to the KSCMP for consideration of a local practice learning review, or notification to the National Child Safeguarding Practice Review? <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/779401/Working_Together_to_Safeguard-Children.pdf> (chapter 4 page 83 onwards)

In these circumstances the responding SSO should refer to the Principle Social Worker in the first instance for a discussion. In the absence of the PSW please contact the Service Managers for Safeguarding & Quality Assurance or Service Manager Safeguarding and Professional Standards who will liaise with the Assistant Director, Safeguarding, Quality Assurance & Professional Standards for further discussion & confirmation.

Where it is agreed the incident may need further notification to the KSCMP or the National Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel the response to the alert response should include notification to the District of completion of an Internal Review to support the above process.

2. SSO’s are asked to quality assure and identify use of the Practice Framework within the alert/ liberi file (if appropriate). You should consider contacting the practitioner to discuss how they have used the practice framework in their work with the child/ young person/ family to underpin and support your response in this part of the form.

All responses to alert must also consider and promote the Kent Practice Framework, including practice advice referencing, contextual safeguarding, trauma informed practice, restorative approaches. Responses should always use strengths-based language and model high support/ high challenge culture.

<https://kentcountycouncil.sharepoint.com/sites/KNet/cype/Pages/Practice-Page.aspx>

3. Appropriate toolkits should always be considered and recommended e.g. neglect toolkit, and specific consideration should be made to the Exploitation toolkit.

4. Consideration must always be given to exploration of social connections and responses (where appropriate) should include recommendations for Family Group Conferences, family network meetings.

5. Procedural guidance or advice must be in line with Kent children’s services procedures manual and responses should signpost to appropriate procedures and guidance <https://kentchildcare.proceduresonline.com/index.htm>

**Responses should be returned forwarded to the original recipients within 3 working days, unless criteria set out in 1. Apply in which case timeframe of 1 working day.**
 ***\* Internal Reviews relating to a notification to the National Panel will have a very quick timescale for completion (likely to be 5 working days) and will be completed by SSO’s ordinarily however on occasion it may be considered that where there is CP/ IRO involvement it may be more appropriate. However specific requirements will depend on the nature of the incident.***