

**Appendix C: Luton Safeguarding Children Partnership Yearly Report 2023-24 – Partners Voice of the Child Snapshot**

**Bedfordshire Fire and Rescue Service**

**What have you done with the feedback from children, young people and their families who have received safeguarding interventions from your agency?**

(Case study: Anonymised as names and some minor details have been amended). The following case study is taken from our SAFE young fire setter intervention scheme, where our youth officer engaged with Child A following a referral made by Luton Youth Justice Service. Within this case, the positive interaction with TJ can be understood, and therefore this will hopefully continue to have a positive impact on the safety of both Child A and the wider community.

BFRS Youth Team were approached by Luton Youth Justice Service regarding a young male, Child A, who had been served a Youth Justice Order, which included the implementation of a curfew, a physical tag and the expectation that he engage with supportive services.

Child A had become involved in an incident with theft and fire, after taking someone's bike and setting fire to it on local wasteland. Although he remained adamant that he didn't carry out this act, he did confess that he was there and that the victim deserved it.

Child A responded well to the practitioner that met with him and appreciated the transparency and a non-judgemental approach. He was polite and open about his experiences whilst respecting professional boundaries.

The hope will be that for Child A this positive interaction with our Service will lead to an impact on his decision making later down the line and will therefore continue to improve the safety of himself and others in the community.

**Bedfordshire Hospitals Foundation Trust**

**What have you done with the feedback from children, young people and their families who have received safeguarding interventions from your agency?**

All information relating to a person's interactions, views and wishes are recorded within their existing medical records. This information is also shared with the professionals involved in a person's care to ensure robust risk assessments and care plans are created that allow the voice of the adult/ Child to be at the centre of our involvement.

Adults and Young People who have accessed hospital services have played an active role in the co-ordination of feedback and service improvement. In addition some have also represented their peers at meetings.

This includes adults, parents and young people whereby they would be able to give feedback independently. This information is then collated and used to improve services in the future as well as identifying good practice that could be replicated elsewhere.

### Bedfordshire Hospitals Foundation Trust

*Staff regularly engage patients in a conversation about how best to respond to their safeguarding situation in a way that enhances involvement, choice and control as well as improving quality of life, wellbeing and safety. At the earliest opportunity, the child/ parent guardian (as appropriate) at risk is asked what they want to happen alongside what their desired outcomes are. This is evidenced within the safeguarding referrals alongside hospital records within the trust.*

In addition to this, the Safeguarding Team remain operational and also support this when regularly reviewing patients within their care whilst supporting staff to achieve this outcome. Views and wishes is then evidenced via documentation within the medical records alongside the internal safeguarding records.

The Trust also work with the Neonatal Maternity Voice Partners (NMVPs) to coproduce and improve service delivery within Maternity services.

A member of the Safeguarding Team attends the voice of the child subgroups alongside other meetings whereby children & young people inform professionals of their views.

Co-production remains one of the Trusts key priorities and commitments for 2025/26.

Bedfordshire Hospitals are currently developing a Trust wide structure to deliver coproduction.

The Trust also have external services whereby they are commissioned to be based within the hospital. These services regularly support in the development of policies, procedures and pathways.

Some of these services include the following:

- Mental Health (ELFT)
- Learning Disability (ELFT)
- Victim Support
- St Giles Trust.
- Resolutions
- Path to Recovery

These organisations have supported the improvement of health outcomes in not only delivering services but also shaping their design and advocating for, representing and amplifying the voice of the patients they care for.

**Bedfordshire Hospitals Foundation Trust**

Finally, the Trust actively seeks feedback from all patients that have accessed hospital services. This includes parents and young people whereby they would be able to give feedback independently. This information is then collated and used to improve services in the future as well as identifying good practice that could be replicated elsewhere.

**Bedfordshire Luton Integrated Care Board**

**What have you done with the feedback from children, young people and their families who have received safeguarding interventions from your agency?**

The ICB has patient participation groups and encourage commissioned services to host patient participation groups.

The ICB has employed experts by experience to help deliver the Oliver McGowan programme with Autism Bedfordshire. In the last year this training was by attended by more than 5000 health staff across BLMK.

People and their families are fully supported to engage in the Continuing Health Care assessment process. Following an assessment people are asked for their views and feedback. In relation to commissioning care via continuing healthcare, there is a robust assessment framework to guide the multi-disciplinary team in decision making. The ICB has a quality monitoring process to ensure everyone is treated consistently and fairly. Where there are appeals there is a formalised process with NHSE escalation and oversight.

The ICB has a 'working with people and communities' strategy. This strategy builds on the Working with People and Communities Guidance, published by NHS England in September 2022. The strategy responds to what we have heard from people and those with protected characteristics about their lived experiences, in accessing health and care. The strategy also responds to the findings of the Denny Review (BLMK ICB, 2023) and the co-designed recommendations. Our aim is to ensure resident's voices, including those of seldom asked or listened to communities, are at the very core of the work to shape health care and wellbeing in BLMK.

Designated professionals attend the Corporate Parenting Panel and engage with the Children in Care Council to understand the views and feelings of this group of Children and young people. The ICB supports co-production in reviewing and developing services.

The ICB hosts the Child Death Review arrangements across Pan Bedfordshire and has a well-established Child Death Overview Panel. The ICB is currently reviewing with providers how we ensure robust bereavement support for bereaved families.

**Bedfordshire Police**

**What have you done with the feedback from children, young people and their families who have received safeguarding interventions from your agency?**

Voice of the child- an area of focus and features heavily on our own delivery plan governed by the Force Victims Board.

- Survivors Voice programme to be commenced using local services to support. This will be run similar to the DA Survivors Voice. Local commissioned services are being approached to be part of this including ECP who currently provide our CHISVA service.
- Listening Circles to be established where the voice of young people can be used to contribute to policy and process changes. There are several schools interested to be involved. Analytical data to be used to prioritise areas where this would be most impactful.
- Collaboration with the Hope Collective project and the new VEPP (Violence Exploitation Prevention Partnership) to run a ‘Hope Hack’, a large conference with young people across Bedfordshire to gain their views and opinions on areas in policing, which will be used to promote change internally.

**Cambridgeshire Community Services**

**What have you done with the feedback from children, young people and their families who have received safeguarding interventions from your agency?**

**What have we done?**

Co-production is at the heart of service design and delivery. Bedfordshire and Luton Children’s services employ a co-production team that work with staff, partners and service users to ensure co-production and the voice of children, young people and families is heard and acted on.

Our trust ‘People Participation and Involvement Strategy’ demonstrates the approach we take, in ensuring service developments and improvements as well as strategic decision making are made collaboratively with the people who use our services. This can be evidenced via a variety of documentations including but not limited to our co-production tool-kit, which includes a co-production training package for staff, case studies on a number of co-produced initiatives we have undertaken with young people and families, as well as the trust co-production ladder which is used as a self-assessment tool to measure the level of engagement adopted within our programmes and projects as reviewed regularly by our programme board. Data monitoring of both patient feedback and patient participation is in place to review and ensure engagement activity is representative of the diverse communities that we service.

CCS has a committed team to support services with Quality Improvement (QI) in order to improve service delivery and care. The team use a consistent methodology to support continuous improvement. All staff have access to and support from the team with supporting any initiatives which will support understanding of the problem or improvement area, design ideas to address the problem and deliver on the change.

Recruitment processes include service user panel members. They contribute to the full recruitment process.

Cambridgeshire Community Services
<p>There was some learning identified regarding pet safety and the legal obligations to report dangerous dogs e.g. XL bully dog. Work was completed with service users to develop a trust wide Pet Safety awareness SOP.</p> <p>As part of the patient safety incident reporting framework there is involvement from service users (safety partners). They attend the monthly safety improvement group.</p> <p><b>Impact:</b> Getting support from services users means that we consider communication, wording used and processes that impact on the community. For example, in respect of the Pet Safety Awareness SOP the service users were asked what their expectations would be of a professional where pets are present. This information helped guide the SOP writing.</p>

ELFT
<p><b>What have you done with the feedback from children, young people and their families who have received safeguarding interventions from your agency?</b></p> <p><b>CAMHS Feedback</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CAMHS has a comprehensive People Participation strategy which is very well established and principles embedded throughout the service. – CAMHS have a dedicated People Participation workforce working in partnership with senior leads, parents / carers and young people</li> <li>• The team members are actively involved in a variety of service development opportunities / initiatives to ensure the voice of young people and families is considered at all stages of the planning and mobilisation.</li> <li>• The People Participation team work with a range of young people who access services to ensure all needs are considered when planning services. Children from a diverse range of ethnicities and backgrounds, children with special needs and vulnerable young children are represented within the People Participation.</li> <li>• Our People Participation team and members are involved in the local and Trust wide equalities networks and work stream and have shaped services based on suggestions (i.e.: LGBTQI training / record keeping on RiO)</li> <li>• All ELFT services are equipped to conduct a holistic risk assessment, which always includes the voice of the child, exploring the contextual, home environment, and online risks.</li> <li>• The Trust has clear expectations and guidance for staff to follow the NHS and local safeguarding board recording keeping policy and requirements.</li> </ul>

**ELFT**

Individual care plans are regularly reviewed and updated within the team, MDT, and multiagency network. When emerging specific issues and concerns arise, all practitioners know what to do, i.e., escalating concerns via the Local Authority. Depending on the individual case, staff could seek managerial and safeguarding support and guidance. If necessary, health would challenge other agency decisions in order to promote the best interest of the children and young people. It is sometimes difficult to work with a plan as some families are hard to engage and it depends on network groups to work together for better outcomes.

When service users and carers are dissatisfied with any aspect of their care, including the response to safeguarding concerns, they are directed through the Trust complaints process. Such complaints are addressed initially within the service area but if families remain dissatisfied their complaint will be formally investigated by an appropriate member of staff from a different service area/locality.

All CAMHS referrals received into the service are screened on a daily basis for risk and then undergo a robust triage process to gather all elements of information ensuring contact and discussions with the young person are held. This is triangulated with all parts of the system where consent is shared. All referrals are discussed in a multi-agency (including early help colleagues in Luton / multi-disciplinary meeting to ensure consistent clinical decision making across the service. Cases are either signposted or accepted into treatment according to risk and need.

CAMHS have established relationships with key stakeholders, who together work creatively to help address some of this demand along with the Community Access Pathway services (such as MHSTs and GP based practitioners). Working under the IThrive framework the system explores ways of increasing access and engagement particularly for the vulnerable communities and groups of young people waiting for support to ensure they receive care appropriate to their level of need. CAMHS and MASH have developed a monthly co-consultation working slot where challenges and cases from both agencies are discussed.

CAMHS and LBC (Public Health and Educational Psychology) have developed a strong working partnership in supporting children and young people, schools and wider community when serious incidents have occurred i.e. traumatic death involving young people

A wide range of effective services for children and families is available through the Luton Borough and Strategic Partnership Boards, with information accessible via their respective websites. Practitioners are encouraged to signpost young people and families to these local services to support their needs.

Practitioners are advised to consult the Integrated Front Door (IFD) and/or the ELFT Safeguarding Team for professional advice prior to making a referral. This collaborative approach supports practitioners in formulating concerns and identifying appropriate actions. The Threshold Document, which outlines levels of need and available support services, is widely accessible on the website and provides clear guidance for practitioners.

<b>ELFT</b>
<p>ELFT offers both ad hoc and scheduled safeguarding supervision. During supervision, practitioners are supported to consider early intervention and early help approaches, aimed at improving outcomes for children, families, and vulnerable adults.</p> <p>The Trust is committed to promoting safe transitions from childhood to adulthood, ensuring individuals are protected from abuse, exploitation, and neglect. A new co-operation and escalation protocol, developed in partnership with Luton, Children’s and Adult Social Care, ELFT CAMHS, Community Mental Health Teams (CMHT), and the ELFT Safeguarding Teams, is currently in the final stages of approval. Once finalised, this protocol will be implemented across Luton and Pan Bedfordshire area to strengthen multi-agency working.</p> <p>Safeguarding supervision and training sessions also promote the use of voluntary sector early intervention services, such as Link to Change and FACES, to help prevent escalation of risk. Staff are advised to continue working closely with schools to build both individual and contextual resilience in children and young people.</p>

<b>Luton Borough Council – Children Families and Education</b>
<b>What have you done with the feedback from children, young people and their families who have received safeguarding interventions from your agency?</b>
<p>Our Luton Youth Council promotes the voices of children in the decisions of the council. Youth Councillors sit on some committees and are co-producing a Youth Leadership Programme. Some senior council officers mentor Youth Councillors. Our Youth Councillors have chosen three areas they feel are important: Poverty, Inclusive Sports Facilities, Opportunities for children and young people.</p> <p>Children and Young People have a seat at the Corporate Parenting Board. We have recently created a Care Leavers Council to represent young people, consulting them on key issues and creating opportunities. The first meeting took place in May.</p> <p>We undertake the extensive SHEU survey annually to seek insight from children and young people, Bright Spots survey and the YPS have regular youth consultation projects, including a large-scale initiative around knife crime and criminal exploitation which has driven co-produced strategies. This highlighted that children and young people wanted more awareness and focus within schools and the community around the issues of knife crime. Together with children, we have developed innovative projects to raise awareness of exploitation, such as the Tapp Out interactive app.</p> <p>We aim to capture the voice of the child and young person in all work we do, including assessments and plans, this is an area that there is further work to be done to strengthen</p>

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### Luton Borough Council – Children Families and Education

We have strengthened our participation offer to children and young people, with the recruitment of our participation lead. In the forthcoming year there is a focus on creating specific hubs for our carer leavers, where they can learn life skills.

### ResoLUTIONs - CGL

#### What have you done with the feedback from children, young people and their families who have received safeguarding interventions from your agency?

CGL staff worked with a young person with complex contextual safeguarding issues and significant substance misuse concerns requiring opiate substitution treatment. The young person was CLA and neurodivergent with a large professional network also including mental health teams. CGL were able to assertively engage this young person, build rapport and establish a clinical and psychosocial treatment plan including access to naloxone and robust harm reduction interventions. CGL actively participated in various professional's meetings supporting this young person alongside partner agencies during a period of transition between children's social care, adult social care, CAMHS and CMHT as the young person was turning 18.

Collaborative work with multi agency network supporting a young person who is pregnant to engage in drug and alcohol support. Interventions completed around pre-natal impact of substance use.

Collaborative work with Luton Youth Partnership Service and CGL's YJS worker to support a vulnerable young person with contextual safeguarding concerns and significant substance misuse. Young person was CLA and neurodivergent. CGL and YPS worked together to ensure holistic care planning and access to clinical and psychosocial interventions through CGL.

CGL supported a young person who exited an emotionally abusive relationship of 6 years which triggered relapse into daily drinking. Young person also had a history of sexual assault and a recent unwanted pregnancy. CGL supported the young person to receive support through BPAS. The young person has been supported through our detox pathways and has recently commenced an inpatient detox programme a robust after care plan is in place.

### Youth Partnership Service

#### What have you done with the feedback from children, young people and their families who have received safeguarding interventions from your agency?

As a Service working with the most vulnerable cohorts of children in Luton, we are comprehensively invested in promoting the vision of a Child First youth justice service and delivering the vision to make Luton a child-friendly town.

### **Youth Partnership Service**

As a Service we prioritise gathering the thoughts, feelings and views of children entering the Service at the earliest opportunity. Whether this is at the point of sentence when we are assessing their initial concerns or at the point of allocation when we are considering whether a particular worker or Case Manager would be a good fit for supervising the children throughout their time with the Service.

Staff take an active role in producing assessments and intervention plans with the thoughts, feelings and views of the children taken into account. Therefore in terms of the 'child first' vision, it is essential that as a Service we do not create a hierarchical, overly consequential blame culture. We aim to create an environment of working together with children and their families with assessments and intervention plans based firmly around the factors for and against desistance, ensuring children feel empowered to achieve the aims that are being set for them. When children are actively involved in the creation of their plans, motivation and compliance with intervention are more likely to be successful.

### **My Journey**

A significant co-produced development this year saw the creation of our innovative child centred intervention plan 'My Journey' which was launched in April 2025. As with most of our innovation, this has been co-produced with our children.

Whilst it does not replace the high-level risk management plans that are sometimes necessary with managing the risks a child may present, My Journey provides a very visual direct interface between the professional and the child and what needs to be achieved in partnership to recued risk and create better outcomes.

### **Luton Youth Council**

The YPS co-ordinate the Luton Youth Council and this current group of Youth Councillors are currently enrolled on a Youth Leadership Programme which has seen senior elected members and senior council officers mentor youth councillors.

As part of their role, the youth councillors have chosen three areas they feel are important to children and young people and the environment in which they live. Within these areas, the youth councillors plan projects and events to benefit Luton and its community.

The Service regularly undertakes consultations with children in Luton and our Youth Councillors have participated in a number of round table community meetings to help alleviate concern and lower tension. A wide-reaching youth consultation was undertaken in Luton highlighting that children and young people wanted more awareness and focus within schools and the community around the issues of knife crime.

The highlight of this engagement was the Knife Angel visit in August 2024. To raise maximum awareness of the visit, we commissioned a creative competition for schools and children in May 2024 to become involved in any form of art, spoken word, poetry, song, rap etc. Titled 'Artful Voices: Empowering Luton's Youth to

**Youth Partnership Service**

Speak Out Against Knife Crime' the entries went on public display at the Hat Factory in July 2024 and the winning art was spoken by the Knife Angel that came 'alive' through augmented reality which were displayed on the big screen in St George's Square. We had close to 4000 children and young people enter this competition.

In May 2025, our Youth Councillors chaired an exploitation event in Luton aimed at parents organised by Bedfordshire Police. This was a fantastic achievement by the Youth Council and a solid endorsement of the positivity of involving the voice of children at every step of Service development.