Leicester, Leicestershire & Rutland Safeguarding Children Partnership Performance and Quality Assurance Framework

Introduction

The Leicestershire and Rutland Safeguarding Children Partnership and the Leicester Safeguarding Children Partnership (SCPs) have been established to oversee the new multi-agency arrangements for safeguarding children, as required by the government guidance Working Together 2018. The Partnerships co-ordinate and ensure effectiveness of multi-agency working to safeguarding children, to support our vision is for children & young people in Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland to be safe, well and achieve their full potential.

The Performance and Quality Assurance Framework

This Performance and Quality Assurance framework has been developed taking into account good practice, legislation in the Children Act 2004 and Working Together 2018 statutory guidance. *(This forms part of the Partnerships' Learning and Improvement Framework).*

The diagram below shows the outline of the framework.

Performance and Quality Assurance Framework

The purpose of the assurance framework is for each Partnership to:

- be assured of continuous improvement in the safeguarding effectiveness of local arrangements for children
- promote and ensure effectiveness of multi-agency collaboration
- secure and evidence improvement in practice from multi-agency assurance reports, audits, local practice reviews and training and development

At the heart of this assurance framework are five simple questions:
- Are we improving our ability to keep children safe and how do we know?
- What did we do?
- How much did we do?
- How well did we do it? and
- What difference did it make?

For each Partnership to achieve a good understanding of the effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements it needs:

- a shared analysis of intelligence about practice which leads to action to improve standards of multi-disciplinary assessment, planning, intervention and review.
- to identify the 'key focus areas' that are a priority.
- to obtain data and information from an appropriately balanced range of sources, using a range of methods.

The process requires a systematic means of the partnership providing opportunities for their staff to:

- reflect on the quality and impact of their practice
- develop their curiosity and enhance clarity of thinking
- access the support to deal constructively with the emotional and psychological impact of the work.

Independent Scrutiny

Throughout all of the Partnership's assurance work it will be subject to independent scrutiny through the Partnerships Independent Advisor and the internal governance and scrutiny functions for each of the safeguarding partners.

The Independent Advisor will play a role in the assurance framework including participating in an annual safeguarding learning and development event for safeguarding partners and scrutinising the outcomes from the evaluation of the intelligence gathering to inform the refresh of focus areas. This will also assist with promoting transparency.

The Elements of the Safeguarding Framework

A variety of measures will be used for the evaluation of effectiveness.

Annually:
- Organisation safeguarding Self-Assessments
- Assurance reports from other partnerships (eg Domestic Abuse, Child Exploitation)
- Engagement and Voice of Young People
- Contextual data regarding safeguarding

Quarterly:
- Performance data
- Multi-agency Assurance reports (3 per year)
- Single agency Assurance returns
- Learning from reviews
- Business Plan priority progress
- Subgroup progress reports

These will be collated and analysed by the Planning and Delivery Group of the SCPs and are outlined further below.

The Audit and Assurance Group of the SCPs will first review quarterly performance data, multi-agency assurance reports and single agency assurance returns and summarise analysis and learning from these to the Planning and Delivery Group. The process for this can be found at Appendix 1.

Single Agency Assurance – Annual Self-Assessment and Quarterly Emerging Learning reports

Once per year each member of the Safeguarding Children Partnership will self-assess whether their organisation is being effective in keeping children safe. The self-audit will meet the requirements of the section 11 assurance process and will capture information on safeguarding practices among local organisations.

This will be based upon organisations own quality assurance reporting and will include information on how they have responded to safeguarding learning and improvement including specific themes from case reviews, how they have addressed the partnership priorities, and how the 'lived experience' of children has been considered. It will also cover safeguarding policies and procedures; information sharing; recording incidents of concern; recruitment of staff and volunteers, training and safer employment.

The Partnership will also seek assurance of safeguarding arrangements and practice from other relevant agencies identified in the multi-agency arrangements document. These include District Councils, Early years settings, Schools (including independent schools) and the Voluntary Sector. Appropriate approaches for assurance for each of these groups of agencies will be developed through the partnership.

Each quarter each member of the Safeguarding Children Partnership will complete an assurance return highlighting learning and emerging issues from organisations' own internal quality assurance processes, work to hear and respond to the voice and lived experience of children, and staff wellbeing and workforce feedback.

Performance data

Indicators of health and performance in multi-agency safeguarding have been identified by the Planning and Delivery Group to monitor effectiveness of the operation of the multi-agency safeguarding system. This data is reviewed on a quarterly basis by local authority safeguarding partner area. The current performance indicators can be found at Appendix 2, these will be reviewed on an annual basis in order to track impact of improvement and respond to emerging areas of priority focus. Data is reported by the lead agency with analysis, utilising existing reports where possible.

Multi-Agency Assurance processes

The Partnerships will carry out up three focussed multi-agency assurance processes each year. These will consider specific areas of focus based upon learning, and partnership priorities. The process will be based on a Joint-Targeted Area Inspection approach including case file audit and collating other information relevant to the area of focus including:

- Performance and contextual data
- Learning from case reviews

- Internal agency assurance and inspection learning
- Voice and lived experience of children and young people
- Practitioners views
- Learning from inspections and case reviews in other areas

These will be planned and carried out by the SCPs' Assurance and Audit Group.

These processes will also be used to test impact of action in response to learning and improvement work.

Learning from Reviews

Learning from Rapid Reviews, Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews and other case reviews will be reported into the Planning and Delivery Group by the SCPs' Case Review Groups. Learning will be reported as it becomes apparent within review processes, in order to feed into assurance planning and ensure the Planning and Delivery Group has a broad, up-to-date picture of learning and areas for focus.

Partnership Assurance Reports

The Partnerships will receive assurance reports from other partnerships that oversee specific areas of work linked to safeguarding, such as domestic abuse and child exploitation, on an annual basis.

Voice of Young People & Families

All assurance will include a focus on how agencies understand and respond to the voice and lived experience of children and young people. Single agency assurance will include information on complaints, and the partnership will look to gain information from parents and carers about their experience of the services they received.

In addition, young people will directly be involved in the assurance work of the SCPs through the Partnerships' Young Peoples Advisory Groups. These group will feed into the priority development of the Partnerships and be involved in scrutiny of areas of interest they have identified.

Staff Wellbeing and Workforce feedback

Workforce wellbeing, competency and views form the front line are all important areas of assurance with regard to safeguarding practice. Single agency assurance will include assurance and reporting relating to workforce wellbeing including change, supervision and caseloads, as well as workforce competence in line with the SCPs' competency framework.

The Partnerships will also engage with front line practitioners as part of assurance work in a variety of ways including focus groups and survey methods, such as utilising multi-agency training feedback and evaluation and single agency workforce engagement to follow up areas for assurance.

External Peer Review

The Partnerships will explore commissioning of an external peer review of the arrangements from outside of Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland on a thematic basis every three years.

Subgroup and Business Plan reporting

Each subgroup of the SCP will report to the Planning and Delivery Group on a quarterly basis via a highlight report on activity, actions and performance and information on the subgroup's work. Progress reports on the focus areas of the business plan will be reported to the Planning and Delivery Group on a quarterly basis.
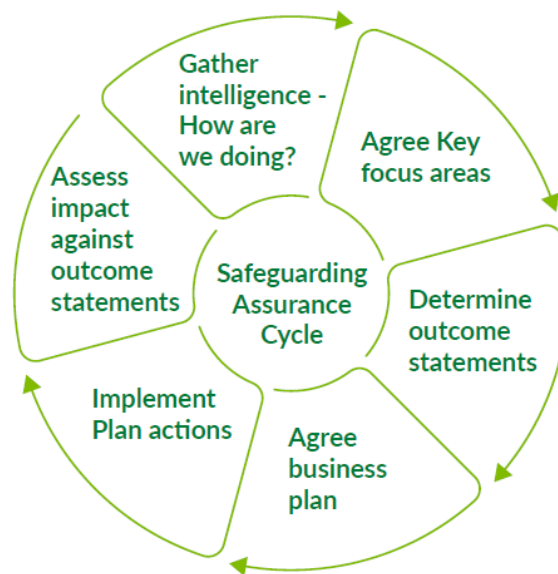
The Partnership and each sub-group will keep an action log which is reviewed and completion recorded. Actions and outcomes from all case audits and case reviews are reviewed and re-reviewed to ensure that they are embedded in practice.

Performance and Quality Assurance Reporting

A quarterly 'How are we doing?' assurance report will be produced by the Planning and Delivery Group, drawing upon the above information. This will assess impact against agreed outcome statements, draw together analysis of available evidence and be a composite report to the Partnerships highlighting what we are doing well, areas for further exploration and actions for the next period.

Safeguarding Assurance Cycle Process

The diagram below outlines the safeguarding assurance cycle for the Partnerships. An annual plan for this cycle is attached at Appendix 3.

Gather intelligence - How are we doing?

This phase will bring together all of the assurance work of the Partnerships, as outlined above.

Further evidence may be gathered through questionnaires or focus groups to gather the views of professionals on specific gap or focus areas.

This will be analysed by the Planning and Delivery Group and the main messages will be shared at an annual quality assurance and development event to support review and forward planning.

Agree focus areas

The Safeguarding Partners have agreed there should be a focus on a small number of defined areas which the organisation/partnership concludes are the most important. From the evaluation of the intelligence the partnership will review the existing focus areas and agree those for the next period as part of its annual quality assurance and development event.

Determining Outcome Statements

For each of the focus areas the Partnership will determine outcome statements to clarify objectives and what good looks like. Work to review and agree partnership outcome statements will be undertaken each year as part of the assurance process.

Agree, implement and review impact of the Business Plan

The SCP will develop a Business Plan outlining its priorities for development and assurance. The annual business plan reflects the actions needed to address the key focus areas and have measurable outcome statements. This will also include a plan to disseminate learning. The Business plan will be reviewed each year, and progress on outcomes and actions within the plan will be reviewed during the year.

Forward planning

The Partnership will work to a rolling three-year 'quality assurance timetable' which will be updated annually in the business plan.

There will be an annual evaluation of what practice improvements have been delivered through learning and development activities. The partnership will carry out a Training Needs Analysis each year to identify what training is required locally. This will be informed by partnership priorities, the evaluation of learning and development from the previous year, outcome of reviews and audits, and other local/national issues.

Annual Report

The Safeguarding Partners will publish an Annual Report setting out what has been done by the Partnership, and the partners, to safeguard children and young people during the previous year and how effective the partnership arrangements have been.

This report will include information about:

- Agreed priorities
- Analysis of progress (or lack of progress) against priorities
- Decisions and actions taken by partners
- Feedback from children and young people and how this has been utilised to inform work and influence service provision
- Information on the delivery and impact of multi-agency safeguarding training
- Information on the learning and impact of any Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews.
- Any changes to the safeguarding arrangements and reasons for these

The Annual Report will independently scrutinised and be endorsed by the SCP members.

It will be distributed across all relevant partners for dissemination throughout their organisations.

The SCP Annual Report will be published on the Partnership website and copies will be sent to the *Child Safeguarding Practice Review Panel* and the *What Works Centre* for Children's Social Care within seven days of being published.

<u>Review</u>

This framework will be reviewed by the SCP at least every two years.

Appendix 1 -

The table below identifies how the data required for the PQA framework will be provided by partners and other partnership groups.

Agreed Performance/ Quality Assurance Element	Summary of content of this	How this is provided
Performance Data	Regular Quarterly data. See Appendix 2.	• Agencies send data / existing reports including agency analysis. (Potentially to be put into 1-3 dashboards)
Multi-Agency Assurance – from learning and assurance processes	• Emerging learning from reviews (Rapid Reviews and completed reviews). • Findings from testing impact of action in response to learning from reviews and multi-agency safeguarding development. Include approaches such as Multi-agency audit approach and JTAI approach.	• Report on emerging learning from reviews (from Case Review Groups) • Report on MA JTAI-based assurance (from Audit & Assurance Group) • Testing of impact would need to be included in planning JTAI approaches / Annual Self assessment.
Assurance – Staff wellbeing	• Survey / focus group – twice per year • Single agency reporting relating to workforce wellbeing– eg caseloads • Surveys from learning events with focussed questions (eg training needs, wellbeing, supervision, competence)	• Agency assurance included in Annual self-assessment, and MA JTAI-based assurance approach. • Quarterly single-agency assurance returns include key emerging issues regarding staff wellbeing • Report on practitioner survey / focus group twice per year, unless this is linked into MA assurance approach. (from Board office) • Report on training feedback (from training group)
Single Agency Assurance – QA activity and risk	• Quarterly agency reports *(from internal reporting)* on risks regarding safeguarding children and that may impact quality of practice, and actions underway based upon internal QA activity/audits	• Agency assurance included in annual self-assessment and Quarterly MA JTAI approach. • Quarterly single-agency assurance returns include emerging learning/issues where there is something to raise - provide existing report including their own agency analysis.
Engagement and Co-production with Children and Families	• Single agency information - Complaints data and Information on children and young people involvement and advocacy relating to safeguarding • Feedback from families at CP conferences – twice or four times per year ensure asking how agencies work together.	• Agency assurance included in annual self-assessment and Quarterly MA JTAI approach. • Quarterly single-agency assurance returns include emerging learning/issues/developments where there is something to raise - provide existing report including their own agency analysis. • Possibly reports on specific engagement / co-production carried out (Board Office).

Much of the assurance will be captured through the annual self-assessment, quarterly assurance returns from each partner and quarterly focussed multi-agency assurance approaches (JTAI-based). Quarterly assurance returns will include emerging learning and

areas for improvement from their internal quality assurance and improvement approaches, including complaints, staff wellbeing and engagement work as these arise.

This process would require each agency to provide up to two reports each quarter: Data plus analysis; Assurance Return.

In addition each agency would need to contribute to the thematic multi-agency assurance (JTAI) approach (3 per year). Ideally all of these reports apart from some elements of the MA assurance report would be existing internal reports, though the current existence of such reports needs to be checked with partners.

The Board offices would need to produce or support up to seven reports per quarter: Data Dashboards; MA Assurance (Audit/Testing); Learning from reviews (CRG); Training feedback (Training Group); Business Plan priority progress updates; Focus Group feedback; PDG Report for SCP.

An LLR multi-agency Assurance and Audit Group (AAG) would oversee the planning and implementation of the JTAI-based multi-agency assurance processes and analyse the following to report to the PDG:
- Performance data and analysis, and
- Single agency assurance returns

The PDG would analyse:

Quarterly:
- Performance & Assurance information analysed by AAG
- Multi-agency Assurance reports
- Learning from reviews
- Business Plan priority progress
- Subgroup progress reports
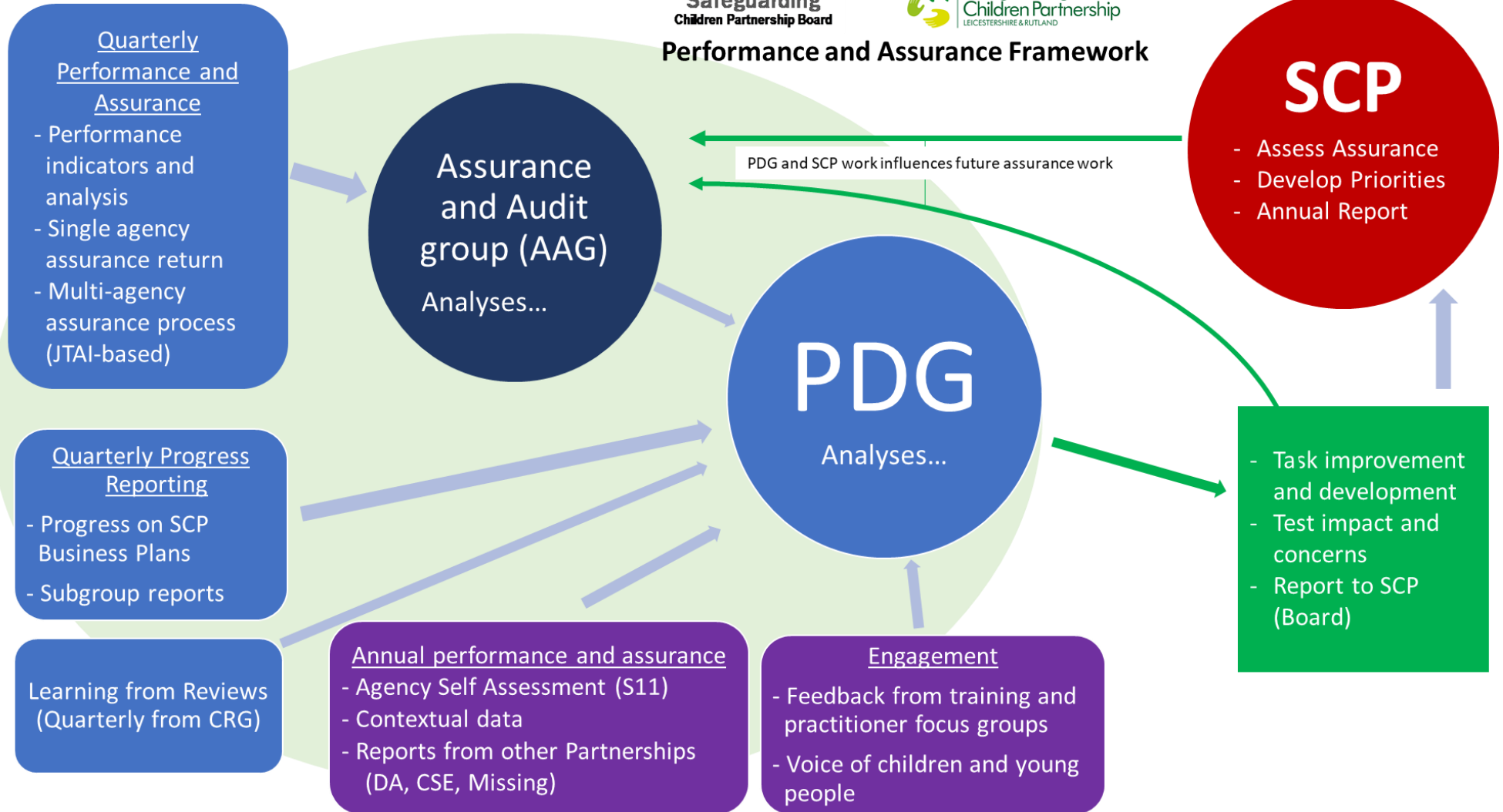- Workforce and Engagement reports (possibly)

Annually
- Agency Self Assessments
- Assurance/Performance reports from other partnerships (eg Domestic Abuse, Missing, Child Exploitation)

From its analysis the PDG would:
- Test concerns or expected improvement
- Task improvement work to relevant subgroups
- Develop forward priorities for action for the Partnership

This is outlined in the diagram overleaf.

Performance and Assurance Framework

Quarterly Performance and Assurance
- Performance indicators and analysis
- Single agency assurance return
- Multi-agency assurance process (JTAI-based)

Quarterly Progress Reporting
- Progress on SCP Business Plans
- Subgroup reports

Learning from Reviews (Quarterly from CRG)

Annual performance and assurance
- Agency Self Assessment (S11)
- Contextual data
- Reports from other Partnerships (DA, CSE, Missing)

Engagement
- Feedback from training and practitioner focus groups
- Voice of children and young people

Assurance and Audit group (AAG)
Analyses…

PDG
Analyses…

PDG and SCP work influences future assurance work

SCP
- Assess Assurance
- Develop Priorities
- Annual Report

- Task improvement and development
- Test impact and concerns
- Report to SCP (Board)

Appendix 2 - Key performance data collated and reported on a quarterly basis

	Indicator	Notes / Detail	Rationale	Number of indicators per LA area
LA1 (a-i)	Multi-agency attendance at strategy meetings, conferences and core groups.	For the following agencies: Police/GP/School (tbc) Note – LAs do not currently collect all of this.	Identifies agency involvement in key multi-agency safeguarding meetings.	9 (tbc)
LA2 (a-f)	Proportion of contacts by agency that do not meet thresholds for Social Care.	For the following agencies: Police/GP/School/UHL/LPT/Vol Sector (tbc) Note - Not certain whether LAs have data down to agency level.	Test understanding of thresholds	6 (tbc)
LA3	Early Help Assessments (broken down by lead agency)	Not yet applicable to Leicestershire.	Indicator of multi-agency understanding of & engagement in Early Help approaches	1 (with breakdown by agency)
LA4	Re-referrals to Children's Social Care		Indicator of impact of safeguarding work	1
LA5	Repeat Child Protection plans		Indicator of impact of safeguarding work	1
Pol1 (a-b)	Child Referral Team – Strategy meetings held	Total Strat meetings held each month (broken down by department) and outcome (Local Qualifier i.e. Single, JA, Sec 17, Sec 47 etc.)	Outlines Police engagement in key multi-agency meetings	2 (tbc)
Pol2 (a-b)	Police generated referrals	By agency referred to and including DA numbers.	Outlines police activity as part of multi-agency safeguarding	2 (with breakdown by agency)
Pol3	Number of Case Conferences	Invited to, attended, declined, broken down by LA, No of reports written etc.	Outlines Police engagement in key multi-agency meetings	1 with breakdown by response
CCG1	To be confirmed			
CCG2	To be confirmed			

Appendix 3 – Annual Timeline for performance & quality assurance process

	Annual planning and reporting	Quarterly reporting and analysis	MA Assurance processes
April	Annual Report written based on reports to PDG and SCP	Quarterly reports provided for PDG: • Q4 data and analysis (to AAG first) • Assurance return – all agencies (to AAG first) • Subgroup updates • Business plan updates Thematic MA assurance report/info provided from MA Assurance 3.	
May – **PDG meet** *AAG meet?*	Annual Report written based on reports to PDG and SCP PDG consider draft Annual Report Finalise 'Gather intelligence' Agency Self-audit	AAG analysis for report to PDG Analyse MA Assurance 3. PDG analyse and identify themes for 'How are we doing?' report. Plan MA assurance (JTAI process) 2 (Oct start)	MA Assurance (JTAI process) 1 commences
June	Annual Report written based on reports to PDG and SCP	PDG Q4 'How are we doing?' report for SCP finalised	MA Assurance (JTAI process) 1 concludes
July – **SCP Board**	Annual Report agreed at SCP 'Gather intelligence' Annual partner self-audit commences	Quarterly reports provided for PDG: • Q1 data and analysis (to AAG first) • Assurance return – all agencies (to AAG first) • Subgroup updates • Business plan updates Thematic MA assurance report/info provided from MA Assurance 1. *Engagement and Co-production feedback (from CP conferences / other)*	
August – *AAG meet?* **PDG meet**	Annual Report published 'Gather intelligence' Annual partner self-audit returned	AAG analysis for report to PDG Analyse MA Assurance 1. PDG analyse and identify themes for 'How are we doing?' report. Confirm plans for MA Assurance 2 (Oct)	
September	Analyse partner self-audit	PDG Q1 'How are we doing?' report for SCP finalised	

October – **SCP Board**	Prepare for 'Safeguarding Development Day' SCP event from PDG report and other intelligence Partner self-audit report for PDG prepared *Practitioner Focus group?*	Quarterly reports provided for PDG: • Q2 data and analysis (to AAG first) • Assurance return – all agencies (to AAG first) • Subgroup updates • Business plan updates *Workforce feedback (from agencies, focus group and MA training)?*	MA Assurance (JTAI process) 2 commences
November – ***AAG meet?*** **PDG meet**	Prepare for 'Safeguarding Development Day' SCP event from PDG report and other intelligence	AAG analysis for report to PDG PDG analyse partner self-audit report PDG analyse and identify themes for 'How are we doing?' report. PDG analyse and identify themes for 'Safeguarding Development Day' Plan MA assurance (JTAI) 3 (Jan start)	MA Assurance (JTAI process) 2 concludes
December	Prepare for 'Safeguarding Development Day' SCP event from PDG / SCP report and other intelligence	PDG Q2 'How are we doing?' report for SCP finalised	
January – **SCP Board** **&/OR** **Development** **Day**	'Safeguarding Development Day' SCP review and planning event: - reviews 'how are we doing' - agrees key focus areas - determine outcome statements	Quarterly reports provided for PDG: • Q3 data and analysis (to AAG first) • Assurance return – all agencies (to AAG first) • Subgroup updates • Business plan updates *Engagement and Co-production feedback (from CP conferences / other)?*	MA Assurance (JTAI process) 3 commences
February – ***AAG meet?*** **PDG meet**	Update business plan *YPAG residential?* Update quality assurance timetable	AAG analysis for report to PDG Analyse MA Assurance 2. PDG analyse and identify themes for 'How are we doing?' report. Plan MA assurance (JTAI) 1 (May start)	MA Assurance (JTAI process) 3 concludes
March – **SCP Board**	Agree business plan and set up any new mechanisms Agree quality assurance timetable *Practitioner focus group?*	PDG Q3 'How are we doing?' report for SCP finalised	