



## Penny's Welcoming Address

Penny introduced the session with an outline of partnership activity since the previous Safeguarding Leaders' Assembly; including the [Practitioners' Conference](#), Executive Board, [Practitioners' Forum](#), the [Spring newsletter](#), and BSCP Practice Week. Penny also announced she will be publishing her Independent Chair's Accountability Report in May.



[Working Together to Safeguard Children \(December 2023\)](#) guidance strengthens the key role of Lead Safeguarding Partners and Relevant Agencies. The new Governance arrangements need to be in place by December 2024. We are planning by October to appoint an Independent Scrutineer role and for James Thomas, CEO Birmingham Children's Trust and Richard North, Police Commander for Birmingham to Co-Chair the partnership Executive Board.

The Independent Chair role no longer exists in the new guidance, so this will sadly be Penny's last Safeguarding Leaders' Assembly.

## Councillor Nicky Brennan, Birmingham City Council

Councillor Brennan outlined the aims of the Domestic Abuse Local Strategic Partnership Board and the development of the Domestic Abuse Prevention Strategy. There will be an upcoming 10-week consultation period, and the strategy will be launched in Autumn 2024. Councillor Brennan also referenced the economic difficulties facing Birmingham City Council, which has unfortunately had an impact on certain service areas. However, she reassured delegates that domestic abuse remains a key priority and reinforced that the Partnership Strategy is focused on what can be achieved with the resources available.

## Jessica Privilege, The Domestic Abuse Commissioners' Office

Jessica Privilege highlighted the importance of recognising children as victims, as they see, hear, and experience the effects of domestic abuse. [The Commissioner's office](#) has identified the need to mend the 'patchwork of provision' of support across the country. Only 28% of people who wanted their children to receive support were able to get it in the West Midlands. The Commissioner is looking to publish a report on 'Children as Victims of Domestic Abuse' in Autumn 2024. Jessica also spoke about 'Tell Nicole': a series of focus groups to capture the experiences of professionals working directly with children and young people, to inform future practice.



We watched '[Timekeeper](#)', a short film depicting coercive control, informed by the lived experience of women affected by domestic abuse. It was a powerful reminder of what children and families affected by domestic abuse experience, and how practitioners spotting the signs that something isn't right can make a huge difference.

## Putting domestic abuse into the local context

Graham Tilby, Birmingham Children's Trust, focused on the values, principles and desired outcomes of the new Domestic Abuse Prevention Strategy. DCI Lucy Wilson and Regional MARAC Lead, Laura Rogers, highlighted the key challenges, performance, and developments in managing risk, MARAC and responding to increased demand over the past five years. This was followed by a talk from Nikki Plummer, Birmingham Children's Trust, on Operation Encompass and the sharing of vital information between the police and schools about child victims of domestic abuse. Delegates then participated in a facilitated group work examining how we embed the values and principles within our organisations and as partnership/whole system, and how we as system leaders work better together to support victims of domestic abuse in the context of reducing resources.



Thank you to all who attended the Assembly, and for the contributions made!

• • • • [Access the resources from the session](#) • • • •

