



A Safer Sunderland

“Improve Safeguarding Practice to support people being, and feeling, safe in Sunderland. To promote the right of all vulnerable people to live a life free from abuse and neglect”

SUNDERLAND SAFEGUARDING ADULTS BOARD MULTI-AGENCY AGREEMENT & MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

WITH SUPPORTING ANNEXES:	
1	SSAB Terms of Reference
2	SSAB Members Role Specification
3	SSAB Members Responsibilities
4	SSAB Members Code of Conduct
5	SSAB Sub Committees
6	Good Governance
7	Nolan (Principles of Public Life)
8	General Principles of Partnership Working
9	Caldicott Principles

Document Control

Owner	Sunderland Safeguarding Adults Board
Version	8.1
Approval Body	Sunderland Safeguarding Adults Board
Issue Date	August 2025 (V8.1)
Review Frequency	<p>Every 3 years</p> <p>Also: Following legislation or service changes As agreed subject to the provisions of Section 8 of this document</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Refreshed July 2022 – scheduled 3-year content review.• Refreshed October 2023 – update of links, titles, etc.• Refreshed September 2024 – in line with changes to SSAB's governance & structure• Updated November 2024 – reference to Coroners' S.28 reports added• July 2025: scheduled 3-year content review
Next Review Date	July 2028 – scheduled 3-year content review
Author	Strategic Safeguarding Adults Team, Sunderland City Council

Sunderland Safeguarding Adults Board: Multi-Agency Agreement & Memorandum of Understanding

1. Purpose

This Multi-Agency Agreement & Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) provides the framework for identifying roles, responsibility, authority and accountability. It enables the Sunderland Safeguarding Adults Board (SSAB) to develop mechanisms for policies, strategies, procedures and guidance on the work of Safeguarding Adults in Sunderland.

The purpose of this MOU is to ensure that partner agencies of Sunderland Safeguarding Adults Board:

- Have a clear and shared understanding of its purpose and the expected outcomes of its remit
- Are empowered to carry out its remit of safeguarding adults at risk and safeguard the right of adults at risk to live free from abuse and neglect
- Deliver national and locally agreed priorities and secure expected outcomes
- Understand and ensure accountability and responsibility for adult safeguarding activity and outcomes for adults at risk
- Develop an agreed and shared vision for the delivery of the Board's objectives, supported by an annual Business Planning Process
- Assess and manage risk in relation to the agreed objectives and outcomes set out in the Strategic Delivery Plan
- Monitor delivery and performance against agreed plans, priorities and best practice standards
- Provide relevant information on performance and outcomes as required, in order to develop a basis for evaluation and scrutiny of progress and performance
- Monitor and quality assure safeguarding training and development to ensure high quality practice and learning
- Engage in shared learning within organisations and across organisations

2. Multi-Agency Working Arrangement

SSAB represents a multi-agency working arrangement and is the principal vehicle for leading and securing the following aims, where partners:

- Agree to work together to achieve common goals and outcomes for local people around safeguarding
- Establish organisational arrangements with agreed multi and single agency processes and procedures

- Share accountability, risk and resources appropriately
- Identify positive outcomes for adults at risk and communicate with and engage with communities, service users, their carers and families
- Demonstrate by their actions, their commitment to promoting and improving the work of Safeguarding in Sunderland.

The strategic and operational leadership role of the Board are underpinned by four general sets of principles to which all partner agencies on the Board are signed up to. These are:

- Good Governance (**Annex 6**)
- Nolan (Principles of Public Life) (**Annex 7**)
- Partnership Working (**Annex 8**)
- Caldicott (**Annex 9**)

3. Safeguarding Principles

The work of the SSAB is underpinned by the 6 Key Principles of Adult Safeguarding identified in the Care Act (2014):

- **Empowerment** – People being supported and encouraged to make their own decisions and informed consent.

“I am asked what I want as the outcomes from the safeguarding process and these directly inform what happens”.

- **Prevention** – It is better to take action before harm occurs.

“I receive clear and simple information about what abuse is, how to recognise the signs and what I can do to seek help”.

- **Proportionality** – The least intrusive response appropriate to the risk presented.

“I am sure that professionals will work in my interest, as I see them and they will only get involved as much as needed”.

- **Protection** – Support and representation for those in greatest need.

“I get help and support to report abuse and neglect. I get help so that I am able to take part in the safeguarding process to the extent to which I want”.

- **Partnership** – Local solutions through services working with their communities. Communities have a part to play in preventing, detecting and reporting neglect and abuse.

“I know that staff treat any personal and sensitive information in confidence, only sharing what is helpful and necessary. I am confident that professionals will work together and with me to get the best result for me”.

- **Accountability** – Accountability and transparency in delivering safeguarding.

“I understand the role of everyone involved in my life and so do they”.

In addition, all agencies on the Board agree to the following principles:

- **Actively work together** as partners within the Sunderland Multi-Agency Safeguarding Adults Procedures and relevant best practice and Government guidance
- **Improve the safety of adults at risk** by integrating strategies, policies and services relevant to abuse within the framework of relevant legislation and promotion of Equality and Human Rights
- **Actively promote** the empowerment, independence and wellbeing of adults at risk
- **Act in a way which supports the right of the individual** to lead as independent a life as is possible/achievable, based on self-determination and personal choice, which is free from abuse and neglect
- **Recognise people who are unable to make their own decisions** and /or protect themselves, their assets and personal safety
- **Accept that the right to self-determination can involve risk** and ensure that such risk is recognised, assessed and understood by all concerned
- **Seek to minimise risks** through open discussion and assurance between the individual and agencies about the risks involved
- **Ensure that when the right to an independent lifestyle and choice is at risk the individual concerned receives appropriate help**, including advice, support and protection from the most appropriate/relevant agencies
- **Assure that the law and statutory requirements are known and used appropriately** so that adults at risk receive the protection of the law and access to judicial process

- **Work with other Boards & Partnerships on cross-cutting safeguarding issues** to ensure a consistency of approach across the life course and a consideration of 'Think Family'

Members of the SSAB also agree to the following:

- Individually and collectively committed to the work of Safeguarding Adults
- Seek out the views of adults at risk, families and carers in all aspects of safeguarding adults work
- Respecting everyone's contribution to keeping adults at risk safe
- Operating openly and honestly in the public interest and sharing appropriate responsibility
- Challenging and supporting all involved in safeguarding adults work in order to improve outcomes for adults at risk
- Accepting accountability for Sunderland Safeguarding Adults Board decisions and actions
- Ensuring that all safeguarding initiatives and services are available to all adults covered by the procedures regardless of their status in relation to race, ethnic origin, religion and belief, gender, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy & maternity, marriage & civil partnership, age, disability or illness
- Promoting the human rights principles of Fairness, Respect, Equality and Dignity, particularly in respect of those adults who need support or services to enable their wellbeing, independence and choice to be fully realised
- Evaluating policies, procedures and practice to guard against disadvantaging any group and to ensure that all adults have fair access to services and support

4. Sunderland Safeguarding Adults Board Remit

Sunderland Safeguarding Adults Board has been identified as the key mechanism for determining how relevant organisations in Sunderland will co-operate to safeguard and promote the welfare of Adults at Risk of abuse and neglect in Sunderland, and for ensuring the effectiveness of what they do.

5. Terms of Reference

The Terms of Reference of the Board (see **Annex 1**) reflect the principles as described above. The Terms of Reference will be regularly reviewed or updated by the Board as necessary.

The number and remit of Sub Committees is ~~also~~ a matter within the discretion of the Board. The Sub Committees will be reviewed each year, or as required, in terms of:

- Number
- Composition
- Remit

Such a review will be identified within the Board's Annual Planning Cycle.

SSAB TERMS OF REFERENCE

1. SSAB agrees to:

- Work together to achieve common goals and outcomes for local people around safeguarding
- Demonstrate by their actions, their commitment to promoting and improving the work of Safeguarding in Sunderland
- Identify positive outcomes for adults at risk and communicate with and engage with communities, service users, their carers and families
- Share accountability, risk and resources appropriately

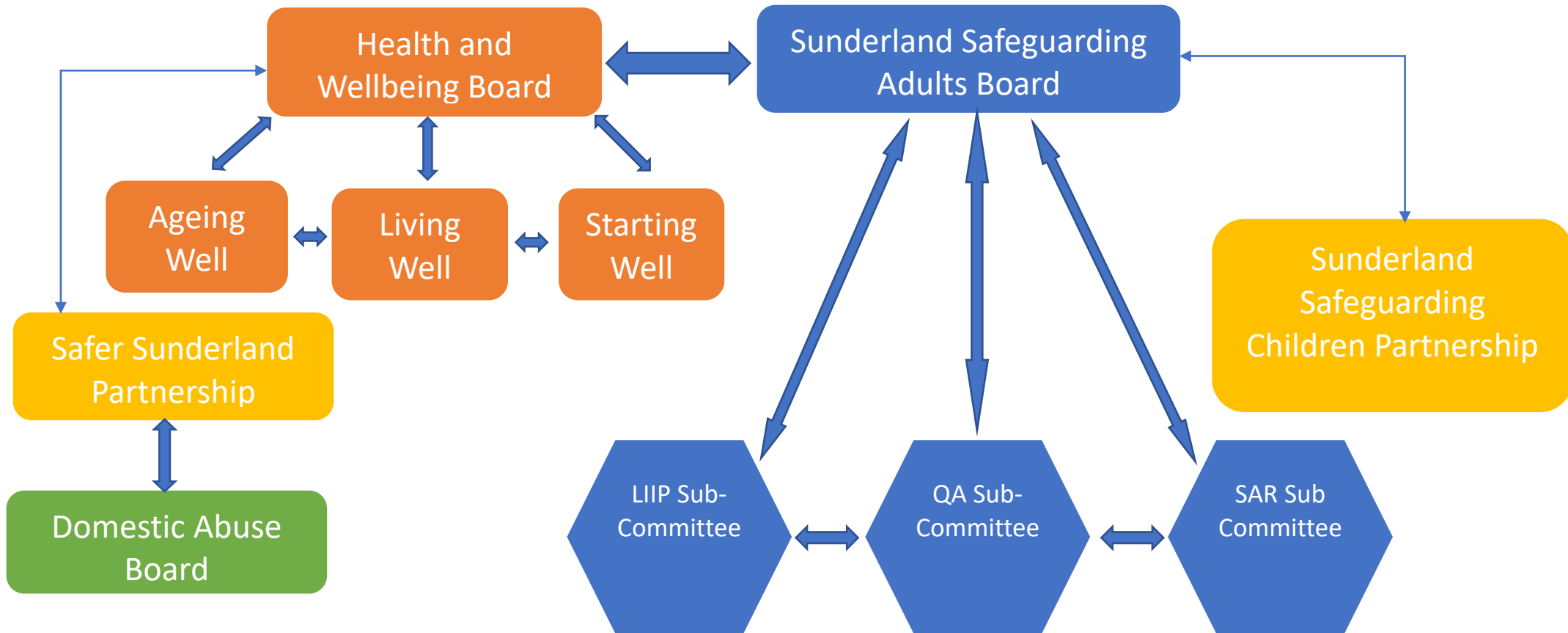
2. SSAB will:

- **Develop and deliver a 5-Year Strategic Delivery Plan which describes a shared vision for safeguarding adults** firmly rooted in the wider vision for Sunderland and promotion of individual human rights, dignity and respect. The effectiveness of the implementation of this plan will be monitored by SSAB and regularly reviewed and updated.
- **Establish and implement a Safeguarding Adults Work Programme** to deliver its Strategic Delivery Plan vision and responsibilities
- **Develop and maintain strong links with relevant partnerships** and ensure inclusion of safeguarding adults in relevant partnership strategies and business plans
- **Promote the active involvement of services users, their carers, their families and their advocates** and adopt an inclusive approach to secure wider community understanding, awareness and feedback on safeguarding adults arrangements through embedding the principles of Making Safeguarding Personal
- **Maintain Multi-Agency Safeguarding Adults Procedures** to safeguard and promote the safety and wellbeing of adults at risk that all agencies can access online (via SSAB website) as they need to, and which are reviewed and updated at intervals. In addition, where appropriate, to provide advice to partner agencies on safeguarding elements within single agency policies and procedures, using the SSAB's Individual Agency Guidance template
- **Oversee and monitor operational safeguarding adults activity and the effectiveness of the centralised model for Safeguarding Adults in Sunderland** and ensure the production of timely and accurate performance and safeguarding information

- **Secure citywide consistency in safeguarding** and ensure all staff and stakeholders know and use policies and procedures effectively
- **Commission projects/work from the Board Sub Committees**, consider proposals from the Sub Committees and monitor the work of the Sub Committees, holding them to account, ensuring they formally report to SSAB on progress or issues and are driving forward the SSAB's Strategic Priorities, as detailed in the SSAB Strategic Delivery Plan
- **Commission time-limited Task and Finish Groups** to address specific workstreams as and when required, to meet SSAB's objectives
- **Commission and receive reports and consider proposals** from other Boards, Partnerships and other work areas, as appropriate
- **Secure effective operational engagement and integration** of safeguarding adults work within the safeguarding of children, MOSOVO (formerly known as MAPPA), MARAC, MATAC, domestic violence and abuse (via Domestic Abuse Board), homelessness, complex cases (Complex Adults Risk Management), suicide prevention (via Public Health & the Suicide Prevention Strategic Group), self-neglect cases, consideration of mental capacity issues, Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), PREVENT, bullying, hate crime, and within the wider arena of community safety including crime and disorder reduction, forced marriage and honour based violence/murder and those who are in the category of PREM (Partnership Reduction of Exploited and Missing) (formerly known as Missing, Slavery, Exploited (sexual and criminal) & Trafficked (MSET)).
- **Promote a learning culture around safeguarding** through the dissemination of information, advice, feedback, reviews, research, best practice, learning through joint quality assurance processes and endorsing the principles of Making Safeguarding Personal
- **Support and participate in the undertaking of Safeguarding Adult Reviews (SARs)**, recognise the importance of the service user and their family or advocate being supported to be involved in the SAR, where they wish to/are able to, and also ensure that relevant learning points are identified, acted upon and shared
- **Ensure mechanisms are in place to** recognise, report and respond to incidents of abuse, including institutional abuse and discrimination
- **Ensure regular quality assurance audits take place** in respect of all agencies' safeguarding and training arrangements as identified and agreed by the Quality Assurance Sub Committee, the Learning and Improvement in Practice Sub Committee and the Safeguarding Adult Review (SAR) Sub Committee.

- **Support and promote the roles of Safeguarding Adults Lead and Responsible Person within organisations.** Descriptions of these roles can be found in the [Sunderland Multi-Agency Safeguarding Adults Procedures](#)
- **Contribute to and support the publishing and promotion of an Annual Report** that reviews progress and identifies areas for improvement as well as shares learning and best practice
- **Identify, develop and maintain relevant strategic links** with local, regional and national organisations
- **Promote best practice in prevention** by learning from and contributing to appropriate/relevant national research and policy development
- **Consider implications for policy of new legislation, guidance and reports** both national and local, relevant to the responsibilities of the Board
- **Coroners' Section 28 (Prevention of Future Deaths) Reports** Agencies who receive one of these reports, or are named within one, will share any safeguarding-related implications/recommendations with SSAB, and what actions they have taken to address these. This enables SSAB to gain assurance, and to share any good practice across the partnership.
- **Have in place data management systems** which ensure secure storage for all personal data
- **Identifying risks and maintaining the SSAB's Risk Plan**
- **Participate in regional and sub-regional fora** focused on Safeguarding Adults

2. Accountability and Board Structure



The local Health and Wellbeing Board will scrutinise SSAB at intervals.

SSAB will be accountable to Sunderland's Director of Adult Services, Sunderland City Council, in respect of its governance. However, SSAB will act as an independent voice in respect of monitoring the quality of adult safeguarding arrangements within the City of Sunderland. It is therefore within the remit of SSAB to monitor and scrutinise the safeguarding arrangements of all responsible organisations and bodies within the City of Sunderland.

SSAB is accountable for its work to the constituent agencies. Partners, as Board members, are accountable to their own organisation and to the Board within its remit and responsibilities.

All SSAB Sub Committees are accountable to SSAB and report to it.

3. Role of the Director of Adult Services

Sunderland City Council has the statutory responsibility for taking the lead role on Safeguarding Adults in the City of Sunderland. All agencies share responsibility for ensuring the development, ownership and effectiveness of local policies and procedures for Safeguarding Adults. This shared responsibility is reflected in the remit of Sunderland's Safeguarding Adults Board.

The Director of Adult Services, as the 'DASS' (*Director of Adult Social Services*) has specific responsibilities under statutory guidance issued by the Department of Health (DH 2006). This role description reflects that guidance. Consistent with wider responsibilities for promoting social inclusion, personalisation and wellbeing, the Director of Adult Services (as the DASS) has specific responsibilities for:

- Maintaining a clear organisational and operational focus on Safeguarding Adults
- Ensuring relevant statutory requirements and other national standards are met in respect of Safeguarding Adults
- Meeting Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) requirements
- Encouraging a culture of vigilance against potential adult abuse & neglect
- Ensuring all services within the DASS remit remain focused appropriately on safeguarding adults and children
- Ensuring the effective operation of the local Safeguarding Adults Board
- Promoting equality of opportunity and eliminating discrimination in respect of adult social care services

The Director of Adult Services will meet regularly with the Independent Chair of SSAB in that role to review progress, consider any strategic, or other, issues requiring the Chair's involvement and to give advice and support on the development and delivery of effective citywide policies and procedures in respect of Safeguarding Adults.

The Chair of the Board is directly accountable to the Director of Adult Services for the effective organisation and performance of the Board in its discharge of safeguarding responsibilities. The Director is also an ex officio member of the Board and in addition will nominate a further Board member. The Director has the right to attend and address the Board. The Director will receive and respond to the Board's Annual Report. The Director may give such advice and direction to the Board either directly or through the Board Chair as they see fit in the discharge of their responsibilities.

4. Funding/Resource Requirements

To enable the Board to achieve and fulfil its aims requires a significant input of time, commitment and financial resources.

The Board requires an annual budget that includes the cost of training and development on a multi-agency basis to enable it to carry out its agreed Strategic Delivery Plan objectives (which also includes the cost of Safeguarding Adult Reviews as appropriate) and any cost incurred in employing an Independent Chair of the Board.

The financial year commences on 1st April until 31st March each year.

Sunderland City Council administers the budget on behalf of Sunderland Safeguarding Adults Board.

The Council's Director of Adult Services has the authority to act as the Board's budget holder for the authorisation of payments in connection with training and any other miscellaneous expenditure but will be required to present a record of such expenditure to each Board meeting.

5. Annual Reports

SSAB will produce an Annual Report on the work of the Board and local safeguarding arrangements and its allied activity. Members from the individual agencies that make up SSAB are invited to contribute to the production of the Annual Report.

The Annual Report will be made readily available to the general public in a format that is easy to read. It will be presented on behalf of the Board to:

- The Chief Executive and Leader of Sunderland City Council
- The Police and Crime Commissioner and the Chief Constable
- The local Healthwatch
- The Chair of the Health and Wellbeing Board
- Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee
- Any other Boards or partnerships as agreed by the Chair, Board members and the Director of Adult Services.

6. Meeting Arrangements

The Board will meet a minimum of six times per year. The statutory partners' Chief Executives/Chief Officers will be formally involved by being written to a minimum of once a year, in order to comment on and ratify the SSAB Strategic Delivery Plan yearly objectives and the SSAB Annual Report for that year's publication. Development Sessions will be arranged as required. The Chair of the Board may call an emergency/extraordinary meeting at any time and will endeavour to give two weeks' notice to Board members, although such notice may not always be possible, and a meeting may need to be called sooner.

The Board will have a fixed core membership although guests may be invited to attend meetings on specific issues.

7. Quorum

The SSAB will be quorate with a minimum of 3 statutory partners plus one other agency. The Independent Chair does not count towards the quoracy of the Board.

Services from within the Local Authority are defined as individual agencies. If, after the commencement of any meeting the Chair, having counted the number of members present, declares that there is not a quorum present, the meeting shall stand adjourned until quorum can be satisfied; or may continue at the Chair's discretion.

8. Reporting Arrangements

From Sunderland Safeguarding Adults Board:

- Written reports to the Health and Wellbeing Board and any other Boards as agreed
- Annual Report giving an annual summary of activity and any SARs/learning reviews conducted - see point 5, SSAB Terms of Reference

To Sunderland Safeguarding Adults Board:

- Independent Chair reports to SSAB on the progress in relation to the Strategic Delivery Plan focusing on performance monitoring, outcomes, quality, best practice and shared learning
- Governance documents for agreement by SSAB
- Progress in relation to Safeguarding Adult Reviews (via SAR Sub Committee)
- Feedback and reports as required from the Sub Committees
- Exception reporting as required from Sub Committees
- Sub Committees to report progress in a summary format, to each meeting of SSAB, using the Sub Committees Activity Report Template. This template is designed to record the Sub Committees' progress on taking forward SSAB Strategic Delivery Plan actions, noting achievements made,

any issues/risks, and work priorities for the next quarter. The template will be supplied by the Strategic Safeguarding Adults Team.

- Performance Management Report (exception reporting) presented to the Board as applicable (via Quality Assurance Sub Committee)
- Other written or verbal reports as required and agreed with the Chair
- Reports/outcomes from any Task & Finish Groups commissioned by SSAB
- Board Partners' Annual Reports (as agreed)
- Safer Sunderland Partnership and Sunderland Safeguarding Children Partnership to report yearly to the SSAB (as agreed)
- Sunderland Safeguarding Adults Board can request a report from any agency/provider as required

9. Chairing Arrangements: Role of the Independent Chair

The Council, on behalf of SSAB, commissions an Independent Chair. The purpose of the Independent Chair is to ensure that the Board operates effectively and independently of its partner organisations to exercise its functions as set out in the Terms of Reference.

The SAB Chair *“has a critical role to lead collaboratively, give advice, support and encouragement but also to offer constructive challenge and hold main partner agencies to account and ensure that interfaces with other strategic functions are effective whilst also acting as a spokesperson for the SAB...There is a clear expectation that chairs will keep up to date with, and promote, good practice, developments in case law and research and any other relevant material”*. (Pg 14.150 Care and Support Guidance)

The document ‘A Rough Guide for Safeguarding Adult Board Chairs’ (2024) produced by the National Network for Chairs of Safeguarding Adult Boards states: *“Independent Chairs have personal responsibility to ensure they use learning and development on offer on the above roles through opportunities available from the LGA and ADASS, which support the National SAB Chair’s Network, providing opportunities for Chairs to share new learning from case law, research and case reviews. It is important that SAB Chairs actively participate in the National SAB Chairs network, and/or regional Networks as part of ongoing professional development, and for them to be supported to do so by their SAB through agreement that attendance at meetings is part of the Chair’s paid role”*.

The Independent Chair will lead the development of the Board and act on behalf of the Board to challenge individual partner agencies, as appropriate. The Independent Chair will:

- Agree the agenda for the SSAB
- Make recommendations on required actions and further work needed
- Keep the SSAB informed and updated on the work of the Sub Committees through their Summary Reports
- Ensure that the appropriate representatives from partner agencies are represented on the Board and co-opt members as required

The Independent Chair is also responsible for:

- Chairing all SSAB meetings and Development/Learning sessions with Board members as agreed
- Ensuring that all partners work effectively together to help safeguard all adults at risk in Sunderland
- Providing a sense of transparency in relation to the workings of the Board
- Establishing close collaboration with the Sunderland Safeguarding Children Partnership, the Safer Sunderland Partnership and any other Boards or Partnerships as required/agreed
- Ensuring that best practice and 'lessons learned' inform Safeguarding activity
- Receiving recommendations from the Safeguarding Adult Review (SAR) Sub Committee and making decisions on whether or not to instigate a Safeguarding Adult Review
- Determining what actions are required by the Board in relation to a SAR and holding partners to account in line with individual organisations' action plans.
- Demonstrating clear expectations that all partners will provide assurance that learning from SARs is embedded in their own organisations.
- Acting as the public facing leadership of the Board, contributing to seminars, conferences and training where appropriate and representing the Board at regional and national events
- Supporting the effective operation of the Board's Sub Committees
- Carrying out duties in line with the Safeguarding Adults Complaints Procedure – see point 18 of the SSAB Terms of Reference.

The Chair will be supported by the Strategic Safeguarding Adults Team.

Board members should nominate and appoint a Vice Chair. The role of the Vice Chair is to chair the Board in the absence of the Independent Chair. The Vice Chair will usually be the Director of Adult Services, as part of their DASS role in relation to the Board (see point 3, SSAB Terms of Reference).

If neither the Chair nor Vice Chair is able to be present at any meeting, a substitute chair may, with the consent of the majority of the voting members, be appointed to chair that meeting.

10. Membership of the Board

Membership of the Board will consist of the agencies listed below. Each member must comply with the Role Specification, Responsibilities and Code of Conduct for Board members, attached as **Annexes 2, 3 & 4**.

Board members will be representatives from partner agencies who hold a strategic role in relation to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of adults at risk within their organisation. They will be committed to developing and maintaining strong and effective interagency procedures to safeguard and promote the welfare of adults at risk and ensure that local services are adequately resourced. Members will be expected to:

- Speak for their organisation with authority

- Commit their organisation on policy, practice and resource matters
- Hold their agency to account
- Maintain 100% agency attendance at Board meetings. If the nominated representative cannot attend, an appropriate deputy must attend in their place.

10.1 Core Agency Membership (as of September 2024)

- Independent Chair, SSAB
- *Sunderland City Council (Safeguarding Adults Team, Adult Social Care, Strategic Safeguarding, Strategic Commissioning, Housing, Public Health, Performance, Legal Services (in an advisory capacity))
- *NHS North East & North Cumbria Integrated Care Board
- *Northumbria Police
- Cumbria Northumberland Tyne & Wear NHS Foundation Trust (CNTW)
- South Tyneside & Sunderland NHS Foundation Trust (STSFT)
- Probation Service
- Gentoo Housing
- Sunderland Care & Support
- Department for Work & Pensions
- Tyne & Wear Fire & Rescue Service
- Healthwatch Sunderland

(*Statutory partner on the Board, as set out in the Care Act 2014).

In addition, the following roles will be formally involved by being written to a minimum of once a year, in order to comment on and ratify the SSAB Strategic Delivery Plan yearly objectives and the SSAB Annual Report for that year's publication:

- Chief Executive, Local Authority
- Director of Adult Services, Local Authority
- Executive Director Health, Housing & Communities, Local Authority
- Chief Officer, Northumbria Police
- Chief Officer, NHS North East & North Cumbria Integrated Care Board (ICB) (supported by the ICB's Chief Nurse or Director of Nursing)
- Chief Executive, Cumbria, Northumberland, Tyne and Wear NHS Foundation Trust
- Chief Executive, South Tyneside & Sunderland NHS Foundation Trust
- Portfolio Holder for Healthy City
- Chair, Healthwatch

Further consideration will be given to involving other agencies/organisations, as appropriate.

Each agency should identify a Deputy to attend Board meetings when the nominated member is unable to attend. A Deputy is entitled to take part fully in meetings of the Board with the right to speak and vote on issues under discussion and therefore must have sufficient standing within their agency to allow them to do this.

The Board may co-opt such other persons as it considers necessary either in an advisory or in a full participatory capacity. Agencies that are not represented on the full Board will be invited to contribute as appropriate and where their input will be beneficial. Any co-opted member must be able to represent and have authority to act on behalf of and for their agency.

10.2 Advisors

The Board will appoint a Senior Solicitor to act as Legal Advisor to the Board.

The Board will appoint a Performance and Improvement Lead, to act as Performance Management Advisor to the Board.

The Performance Management Advisor and the Legal Advisor or their representatives shall attend meetings of the Board in an advisory capacity. They will attend the Sub Committees as advisers or members as appropriate.

Chairs of the SSAB Sub Committees will attend meetings of the Board in an advisory capacity.

The Board may appoint such other persons to advise the Board or any of its Sub Committees as it may from time to time decide and shall determine the responsibilities of any person so appointed.

10.3 Observers

The Elected Member with the Portfolio for Healthy City shall attend relevant meetings of the Board as a participating observer.

11. Board Decision Making and Voting

In advance of any discussion of Board business members should:

- Read the written report; and,
- Identify key lines of discussion/enquiry to be taken up at the meeting; and,
- Identify potential areas of good practice and shared learning; and,
- Establish the relevant position within their own agency as necessary

The Chair will ensure full consideration of all reports, including their specific consequences and highlight/identify any further action, outputs or outcomes as required.

The Chair will seek consensus on business matters under consideration at Board meetings, wherever this is practicable.

In the event that consensus cannot be achieved, it may be necessary to resort to a vote. All core members, or their nominated deputy if attending in place of the agency member, will be entitled to vote. In cases where there are an equal number of votes, the Chair will have a second or casting vote. Only core members may vote on matters relating to the allocation of safeguarding budgets and funding.

12. Declarations of Interest

All core Board members are required to declare any interest or potential conflict of interest that arises or may be perceived to arise in the course of conducting Board business. They should declare this at the start of Board meetings. Board members who have declared a personal interest will be able to participate in the meeting at the discretion of the Chair, but not be able to vote.

The arrangements for the conduct of Safeguarding Adult Reviews place particular emphasis on the declaration of interests.

13. Reports

The Strategic Safeguarding Adults Team should receive relevant Board items and reports for the Board meeting not later than **ten** working days before the date of the Board meeting. This is to enable papers to be distributed in a timely manner.

To ensure proper consideration and discussion of content, tabled reports will not normally be accepted at Board meetings. In exceptional circumstances, tabled reports or items may be presented at the discretion of the Chair (e.g. updates on information in reports with latest statistics, amplification of content already submitted but not raising new issues or proposals, or an identified urgent item such as issues arising from a Safeguarding Adult Review). Any responsible lead wishing to defer a report to a later agenda must obtain the agreement of the Chair or, in the Chair's absence, the Vice Chair prior to the circulation of the agenda for the meeting.

14. Agendas and Minutes of Meetings

The Strategic Safeguarding Adults Team will ensure circulation of agendas for meetings with supporting papers. Papers will be circulated **five** working days before each scheduled meeting and agreed with the Chair as necessary.

A note of the proceedings of the Board will be made by the Council's Business Support function and draft minutes will be agreed and signed off by the Chair and

then circulated to members for final comments and sign off. This will be done within **five** working days of the meeting.

15. Co-ordination and Support

The Strategic Safeguarding Adults Team will ensure provision of professional advice and support to the Board in consultation with the Director of Adult Services and the Chair as necessary.

Professional advisors from member or other agencies may be invited to meetings in a consultative capacity where this will assist the Board with its work.

Representatives of inspectorate bodies have the right to attend Board meetings to advise on forthcoming local inspections or investigations or to report or record their findings and recommendations, as appropriate.

16. SSAB Sub Committees

The SSAB governance arrangements described above enable SSAB to fulfil its strategic focus; however, there is a myriad of business and operational matters that require focus, attention and development. To address these, SSAB has Sub Committees to take forward specific work streams. The Sub Committees will meet 4 times per year and will drive forward the actions identified in the SSAB Strategic Delivery Plan. Information regarding chairing arrangements for each of the Sub Committees can be found in **Annex 5**.

17. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

SSAB will operate with and actively value the benefits of diversity and ensure fair treatment and equality of opportunity. Members of SSAB will have respect for the dignity and worth of each individual, regardless of race, colour, gender, sexual orientation, age, language, religion, opinions, origins, wealth, birth-status or any other respect of individual difference. Annual Reports and information on safeguarding adults will include appropriate information, subject to availability, on gender, age, disability, sexual orientation, faith or belief and ethnicity.

18. Complaints and Conflict Resolution

Decisions will be reached by consensus. In the event of a dispute arising between agencies, which cannot be resolved, the Independent Chair will consider the matter and determine an appropriate course of action.

The role of the Independent Chair is confined to resolving disputes and complaints regarding SAB functions only. If a complaint relates to a service or function provided by a partner agency, in line with their statutory obligations, this

is for the relevant agency to address through their own complaints process and thereafter to the relevant ombudsman or independent regulatory body.

(Note: The Local Government Ombudsman has confirmed that, as the Local Authority ultimately has lead responsibility for ensuring a SAB meets its statutory obligations, any complaints regarding SAB functions should be processed in accordance with the Local Authority Social Services and National Health Services Complaint (England) Regulations 2009).

19. Confidentiality and Information Sharing

Members of the SSAB will ensure that strict confidentiality is maintained in relation to information relating to individual adults at risk of abuse and neglect. Minutes of meetings and associated papers containing personal information will be defined as confidential and restricted to SSAB members only.

20. Commencement and Review

The original commencement date for this Memorandum of Understanding was **1st April 2015**. The review date is at three yearly intervals or as agreed subject to the provisions of Section 8 below.

21. Termination and Variation

Any non-statutory organisation may terminate their membership of the SSAB at any time by writing to the Independent Chair of the Board. The SSAB will review membership and co-options each year. Any proposed changes may only be made in consultation with the Chair except in the case of the following, which are the responsibility of the Chairs of the Sub Committees:

- Membership of Sub Committees and Task & Finish or Working Groups
- Sub Committees or Task & Finish / Working Groups action plans
- Sub Committees' remits

Although the above changes are the responsibility of the relevant Chair of the Sub Committee, any changes in Sub Committees will be notified in a timely manner to the Board.

Amendments to this Memorandum of Understanding may be proposed by the Board at any time subject to the Independent Chair endorsing discussion of the proposed amendment, and approval being received from two thirds of all the members on the Board.

SUNDERLAND SAFEGUARDING ADULTS BOARD: ROLE SPECIFICATION FOR BOARD MEMBERS

Organisational

- Members must be able to represent their whole agency (and not just the part they may have direct managerial control over or for which they have clinical responsibility)
- Members should be of appropriate seniority to ensure that the required appropriate resources are provided for safeguarding adults work in their agencies
- Members must be in a position to ensure implementation within their own agencies of policies and priorities agreed by the Board
- Members must have the ability to influence the priority and policy setting of their own agencies
- Members must be able to commit their time and appropriate agency resources to the work of the Board
- Statutory Board members will be expected to maintain 100% attendance at Board meetings. If they cannot attend, an appropriate deputy must attend.
- Non-Statutory Board members will be expected to endeavour to maintain a 100% attendance at Board meetings. If they cannot attend, they must endeavour to arrange for an appropriate deputy to attend.

Professional

- Members should possess the appropriate knowledge and experience of safeguarding adults issues within their agency
- Members should have sufficient knowledge of the work of other partner agencies
- Members should have sufficient knowledge of appropriate legislation

- Members must possess a clear understanding about the role they fulfil as Board members

Organisations should only nominate individuals who can meet the above requirements. Representation and changes to representation from partners must be agreed by the Independent Chair.

Members should possess the following personal qualities:

- Credibility
- The ability to be a “team player”
- Good communicators
- Good negotiators
- Leadership qualities
- A commitment to service development
- Challenging of oppression and discrimination and a respect for diversity
- A commitment to and understanding of partnership working

SUNDERLAND SAFEGUARDING ADULTS BOARD: RESPONSIBILITIES OF BOARD MEMBERS

Responsibilities for members of the Board reflect the Board's remit and responsibilities. This is a leadership and strategic role and requires all Board members to:

- Steer the strategic direction of the Board and to act as the principle link between their agency and the Board with the appropriate links to other safeguarding mechanisms as appropriate
- Focus agency activity on delivering improved outcomes for safeguarding adults
- Feedback to both their own agency and to SSAB on safeguarding adult issues
- Ensure that their organisation has trained staff in Safeguarding, to the level appropriate for their role, and to ensure all staff are aware of their responsibilities in relation to a safeguarding adults concern or issue.
- Have responsibility for dissemination of safeguarding adults information to own and related agencies
- Consider the findings of any Care Quality Commission (CQC) inspections on Safeguarding Adults and seek to identify and agree any necessary actions to be taken by the Board in relation to these
- Take collective responsibility for ensuring that all agencies working with adults at risk in the local area undertake their safeguarding duties and responsibilities and to evaluate the effectiveness of these arrangements
- Identify a nominated deputy to represent their agency at Board meetings in the event the Board member is unable to attend. It is the responsibility of the Board member to ensure that the deputy is briefed, and any papers are passed to the deputy when they do attend meetings
- Be of sufficient seniority to speak on their agency's behalf and to provide statutory inter-agency leadership at a strategic and operational level and to ensure that the work of the Board is communicated to all relevant staff in their agency

- Provide the Board with management information as required relating to safeguarding criteria as specified for each agency
- Ensure own personal development and participate in Board learning and developmental activity
- Contribute to the Annual Report by providing information from their agency as required
- Support and contribute to the undertaking of Safeguarding Adult Reviews, where appropriate
- Ensure training and learning audits are carried out regularly (schedule of audits agreed by the Board) within their agency
- Promote the role of Sunderland Safeguarding Adults Board in the community
- Plan for the future and set direction to improve safeguarding
- Constructively challenge and contribute to the development of strategy and action to ensure safeguarding is fit for purpose
- Bring confidence in scrutinising performance and progress against agreed goals and plans
- Demonstrate understanding and commitment to:
 - Safeguarding Principles
 - Good Governance Principles
 - Nolan Principles
 - Partnership Principles
 - Caldicott Principles

SUNDERLAND SAFEGUARDING ADULTS BOARD: CODE OF CONDUCT FOR BOARD MEMBERS

Code of Conduct:

Board members agree to:

- Uphold the law and act responsibly on behalf of their organisations and/or the people they represent
- Cascade information about the work of the Board to their organisations/people they represent

Conflicts of Interest

Board members should disclose any interest in items arising at a meeting and if the Chair decides, withdraw from the meeting while it is being discussed. This will be recorded in the Minutes of the meeting.

Conduct of meetings

All meetings will follow an agenda agreed with the Chair and circulated at least **five** working days in advance. Meetings will be conducted by the Chair, with remarks being directed through the Chair and in line with the principles of good conduct outlined below.

Good conduct at meetings

All Board members agree to respect each other by:

- Giving people space to think or express opinions
- Actively listening to each other
- Actively exploring each other's ideas
- Contributing our ideas
- Challenging issues, not people
- Taking confidentiality seriously
- Respecting timetables
- Being supportive of each other
- Using inclusive language and refraining from discriminatory behaviour or remarks which would offend anyone present or not present
- Ensuring attendance at meetings, send a deputy or put in apologies
- Being well prepared for meetings
- Using plain English

SSAB SUB COMMITTEES

All Sub Committees will have an identified Chair and Vice Chair, each will have a two-year term of office (which is flexible and can be renewed with agreement of SSAB Independent Chair). Each Sub Committee Vice Chair will increase their responsibilities, with support from the Chair, from the 18 month point in order to prepare for taking over the role of Sub Committee Chair, where identified that the Chair will not renew their role.

When appointing a Chair and/or Vice Chair it is recommended that they do not already undertake either of these roles for another Board Sub Committee.

GOOD GOVERNANCE

The Independent Commission for Good Governance in Public Services published its report in 2006. This Report set out six core principles of good governance, each with its own supporting principles.

Good governance ensures that organisations and partnerships, whether statutory or voluntary, are fit for purpose, are well led and managed, take appropriate risks and are sustainable operationally, learning from experience and through systematic review and assurance.

Those organisations and partnerships subscribing to the standard are encouraged to test, each year, how far they live up to the Standard and to consider and develop action plans for making any desired improvements.

Under the Standard, good governance means Sunderland Safeguarding Adults Board will:

- Focus on the Board's purpose and on outcomes for adults at risk of abuse, citizens and service users
- Perform effectively in clearly defined functions and roles
- Promote safeguarding principles and demonstrate the values of good governance through behaviour
- Take informed, transparent decisions and manage risk
- Develop the capacity and capability of the governing body to be effective
- Engage with stakeholders and make accountability real

NOLAN (PRINCIPLES OF PUBLIC LIFE)

The Nolan Committee on Standards in Public Life (1996) identified seven principles to guide those in public positions. They were:

Selflessness

Holders of public office should take decisions solely in terms of the public interest. They should not do so in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family or their friends

Integrity

Holders of the public office should not place themselves under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might influence them in the performance of their official duties

Objectivity

In carrying out public business, including making public appointments, awarding contracts, or recommending individuals for rewards and benefits, holders of the public office should make choices on merit

Accountability

Holders of the public office are accountable for their decisions and actions to the public and must submit themselves to whatever scrutiny is appropriate to their office

Openness

Holders of the public office should be as open as possible about all the decisions and actions that they take. They should give reasons for their decisions and restrict information only when the wider public interest clearly demands

Honesty

Holders of the public office have a duty to declare any private interests relating to their public duties and to take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interest

Leadership

Holders of the public office should promote and support these principles by leadership and example

GENERAL PRINCIPLES OF PARTNERSHIP WORKING

Successful and effective partnership working depends on a number of factors. By adopting this memorandum, all members of the Sunderland Safeguarding Adults Board will commit to work in such a way as to:

- Focus on clear and agreed outcomes for adults at risk of abuse
- Promote mutual trust and respect for each other's roles
- Offer clear purpose, priorities and deliverables
- Ensure effective decision making and realism on delivery
- Demonstrate shared commitment and ownership
- Secure effective communication and accountability
- Use combined expertise to deliver added value
- Manage and share appropriate risks
- Ensure inclusion, involvement and linking with others, as appropriate
- Pursue mutual learning, challenge and benchmarking with 'the best'
- Identify mechanisms for monitoring and reviewing performance, progress and success and for policy and service audit and assurance
- Agree appropriate use of sharing resources
- Promote consistency in membership and attendance

THE CALDICOTT PRINCIPLES

In applying safeguarding principles agencies may need to balance the requirements of confidentiality with the consideration that, to safeguard vulnerable adults, it may be necessary to share information. This should be done consistent with the framework provided by the Data Protection Act and the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) 2018 and in relation to confidential personal information consistent with the Caldicott principles outlined below:

- Formal justification for purpose
- Information transferred only when absolutely necessary
- Only the minimum required
- Need to know access controls
- All to understand their responsibilities
- Comply with and understand legislation around the work of Safeguarding Adults