



Sandwell Safeguarding Adults Board

MEMBERS' HANDBOOK

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Welcome from Sue Redmond, Independent Chair Sandwell Safeguarding Adults Board

Welcome to the Sandwell Safeguarding Adults Board (SSAB) and thank you for taking on this very important role. Members of the Board should familiarise themselves with the contents of this handbook, then sign a separate letter of acceptance as at Appendix 2. The Board is a key element of safeguarding adults at risk of harm in Sandwell. The Board consists of membership representing agencies from Sandwell. We share responsibility for ensuring that all efforts to keep adults with care and support needs safe and well are effective and well-co-ordinated. It is part of the Board's job to promote greater public awareness of every individual's rights to feel safe at home or in the community.

Safeguarding adults is everyone's business and agencies across Sandwell work together to ensure that people receive the best possible integrated support services for adults, their carers and their families.

We will work collectively to strengthen links with our local communities and in doing so will strive to help raise the profile of safeguarding adults. We will welcome the views of people who use our services, their carers and families about how we can do this better.

All agencies working with adults at risk have their own individual safeguarding responsibilities, but also need to work together in a co-ordinated way to keep adults at risk safe. Being a member of the SSAB gives you the chance to put these principles into practice. Board members will also be required, and should be suitably empowered, to speak with authority, make decisions on policy or practice, and commit resources from their individual organisations to support the work of the Board. They must also on occasions be able to hold their organisation to account. I encourage Board members to be passionate, committed and actively engaged in work that protects and promotes the wellbeing of some of the most vulnerable members of our community.

The combined nature of the SSAB requires that members are there to represent their organisation across the Borough of Sandwell and its six towns. Members must attend regularly at business meetings and be willing to participate in development meetings and training sessions.

I do hope you will find this induction/membership pack useful in helping you to become familiar with what is a demanding, difficult and high-profile agenda. Thank you again for joining the Board. I am sure we will benefit from your knowledge and experience.

I am confident that you will find the work of the Board stimulating, enjoyable and very worthwhile.



Sue Redmond



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1. Background

The SSAB satisfies the requirements of the Care Act 2014, which created a legal framework for adult safeguarding to enable key organisations and individuals to agree how they would work together to keep adults at risk safe. This legislation requires that a local authority establish a Safeguarding Adults Board in their area, whose main objective is to assure itself that local safeguarding arrangements and partners act to help and protect adults in its area who may be at risk, see below for who is deemed to be an adult at risk. The Act also created a duty for agencies to cooperate in making adults safe.

Most aspects of the Care Act, including safeguarding, took effect from 1 April 2015. To access the Safeguarding sections of the Care Act and the statutory guidance go to:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/care-act-statutory-guidance/care-and-support-statutoryguidance>

www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2014/23/part/1/crossheading/safeguarding-adults-at-risk-of-abuse-or-neglect/enacted

www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2014/23/schedule/2/enacted

In January 2018 the SSAB took part in a Peer Review which made a number of recommendations. Below are three recommendations that relate directly to the Board's composition, function and challenge;

- **The Safeguarding Adults Board should assure itself that there is clear line of sight in each organisation at Chief Executive and Board level**
- **The Board should further develop its challenge and scrutiny of each other's performance and accountability**
- **Develop a single view of priorities for Safeguarding Adults Board and ensure they reflect the emerging themes from local intelligence**

These nominated representatives met in June 2019 as agreed new membership of the SSAB.

1.1 Adult Safeguarding – what it is and why it matters

Safeguarding means protecting an adult's right to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect. It is about people and organisations working together to prevent and stop both the risks and experience of abuse or neglect, while at the same time making sure that the adult's wellbeing is promoted including, where appropriate, having regard to their views, wishes, feelings and beliefs in deciding on any action. This must recognise that adults sometimes have complex interpersonal relationships and may be ambivalent, unclear or unrealistic about their personal circumstances.

Organisations should always promote the adult's wellbeing in their safeguarding arrangements.

People have complex lives and being safe is only one of the things they want for themselves. Professionals should work with the adult to establish what being safe means to them and how that can be best achieved. Professionals and other staff should not be advocating 'safety' measures that do not take account of individual wellbeing, as defined in Section 1 of the Care Act.

Safeguarding is not a substitute for:

- providers' responsibilities to provide safe and high-quality care and support
- commissioners regularly assuring themselves of the safety and effectiveness of commissioned services
- the Care Quality Commission (CQC) ensuring that regulated providers comply with the fundamental standards of care or by taking enforcement action
- the core duties of the police to prevent and detect crime and protect life and property

1.2 Who is deemed to be an adult at risk?

"We all have the right to live our lives free from abuse. However, it is recognised that certain groups of people may be more likely to experience abuse and may be less able to protect themselves against significant harm or exploitation":

An adult at risk is someone over 18 who may be in need of help because they:

- have needs for care and support (whether or not the local authority is meeting any of those needs) and;
- are experiencing, or at risk of, abuse or neglect; and
- as a result of those care and support needs are unable to protect themselves from either the risk of, or the experience of abuse or neglect.

1.3 Definitions of Abuse

The Care Act 2014 defines abuse by type as follows:

- **Physical Abuse:** Including murder, assault, hitting, slapping, kicking, misuse of medication, restraint or inappropriate physical sanctions.
- **Domestic Abuse:** Including psychological, physical, sexual, financial, emotional abuse, so called 'honour' based violence.
- **Sexual Abuse:** Including rape, indecent assault, sexual harassment, inappropriate looking or touching, sexual teasing or innuendo, sexual photography, subjection to pornography or witnessing sexual acts, indecent exposure and sexual assault or sexual acts to which the adult at risk has not consented or was pressured into consenting.
- **Psychological Abuse:** Including emotional abuse, threats of harm or abandonment, deprivation of contact, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, coercion, harassment, verbal abuse, cyber bullying, isolation or unreasonable and unjustified withdrawal of services or supportive networks.
- **Financial or Material Abuse:** Including theft, fraud, internet scamming, coercion in relation to an adult's financial affairs or arrangements, including in connection with wills, property, inheritance or financial transactions, or the misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits.
- **Modern Slavery:** Including slavery, human trafficking, forced labour and domestic servitude.
- **Including Discriminatory Abuse:** Including forms of harassment, slurs or similar treatment.
- **Organisational Abuse:** Including neglect and poor care practice within an institution or specific care setting such as a hospital or care home, indications may include lack of individualised care, inappropriate confinement or restrictions, sensory deprivation, inappropriate use of rules, custom and practice, no flexibility of bedtimes or waking times, dirty clothing or bed linen, lack of personal possessions or clothing, deprived environment or lack of stimulation, misuse of medical procedures.
- **Neglect and acts of omission:** Including ignoring medical, emotional or physical care needs, failure to provide access to appropriate health, care and support or educational

services, the withholding of the necessities of life such as medication, adequate nutrition and heating.

- **Self-neglect:** This covers a wide range of behaviour neglecting to care for one's personal hygiene, health or surroundings and includes behaviours such as hoarding.

1.4 Six key principles underpinning all safeguarding work and Making Safeguarding Personal (MSP)

- **Empowerment** - People being supported and encouraged to make their own decisions and informed consent – “I am consulted about the outcomes I want from the safeguarding process and these directly inform what happens”
- **Prevention** - It is better to take action before harm occurs- “I am provided with easily understood 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 confident that the responses to risk will take into account my preferred outcomes or best interests”
- **Protection** - Support and representation for those in greatest need –“I am provided with help and support to report abuse. I am supported to take part in the safeguarding process to the extent to which I want and to which I am able”
- **Partnership** – Local solutions through services working with their communities. Communities have a part to play in preventing, detecting and reporting neglect and abuse- “I am confident that information will be appropriately shared in a way that takes into account its personal and sensitive nature. I am confident that agencies 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.” The six principles underpinning safeguarding work.

Making Safeguarding Personal (MSP)

In addition to these principles, the Making Safeguarding Personal (MSP) approach should be applied universally to adults who require safeguarding. MSP means it should be person-led and outcome focused. It engages the person 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.

2. Responsibilities of Safeguarding Adult Boards (Care Act 2014)

The SAB has a strategic role that is greater than the sum of the operational duties of the core partners. It oversees and leads adult safeguarding across the locality and will be interested in a range of matters that contribute to the prevention of abuse and neglect. These will include for example the safety of patients in its local health services, quality of local care and support services and awareness and responsiveness of any services that support adults with care and support needs. The SAB will need intelligence on safeguarding in all providers of health and social care in its locality (not just those with whom its members commission or contract). It is important that SAB partners feel able to challenge each other and other organisations where it believes that their actions or lack of action is increasing the risk of abuse or neglect. This will include commissioners, as well as providers of services.

The SAB is an important source of advice and assistance, for example in helping others improve their safeguarding mechanisms. It is important that the SAB has effective links with other key partnerships in the locality and share relevant information and work plans. They should consciously cooperate to reduce any duplication and maximise any efficiency, particularly as objectives and membership is likely to overlap, for example working and contributing to the 4Boards* working arrangements, meetings, workplans and protocol.

2.1 Safeguarding Adults Boards Chair

Although it is not a requirement, the local authority should consider appointing an independent

Chair to the SAB who is not an employee or a member of an agency that is a member of the SAB. The 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. An independent Chair can provide additional reassurance that the Board has some independence from the local authority and other partners. The Chair will be accountable to the chief executive of the local authority as the lead body responsible for establishing the SAB but should be appointed by the local authority in the name of the SAB having consulted all its statutory partners. 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.

2.2 Safeguarding Adults Boards Membership

The information about how the SAB works should be easily accessible to partner organisations and to the general public. The following organisations must be represented on the Board:

- the local authority which set it up
- the CCG in the local authority's area
- the Chief Superintendent of Police in the local authority area

SABs may also include such other organisations and individuals as the establishing local authority considers appropriate having consulted its SAB partners from the CCG and

police. The SAB may wish to invite additional partners to some meetings depending on the specific focus or to participate in its work more generally. Examples include:

- Ambulance and fire services
- Sandwell Council of Voluntary Organisations (SCVO)
- Representatives of providers of health and social care services, including Independent providers
- Department for Work and Pensions
- Public Health
- Representatives of housing providers, housing support providers,
- Probation and prison services
- General practitioners
- Representatives of further education colleges
- Members of user, advocacy and carer groups
- Local Healthwatch
- Care Quality Commission
- Representatives of children safeguarding boards
- Trading standards

Members who attend in a professional and managerial capacity should be:

- Able to present issues clearly in writing and in person
- Experienced in the work of their organisation
- Knowledgeable about the local area and population
- Able to explain their organisation's priorities

- Able to promote the aims of the SAB
- Able to commit their organisation to agreed actions
- Have a thorough understanding of abuse and neglect and its impact
- Understand the pressures facing front line practitioners

2.3 Safeguarding Adults Boards have three core duties

1. It must publish a strategic plan for each financial year that sets how it will meet its main objective and what the members will do to achieve this. The plan must be developed with local community involvement, and the SAB may consult the local Healthwatch organisation. The plan should be evidence based and make use of all available evidence and intelligence from partners to form and develop its plan. This could include reference to the local joint needs assessment undertaken by Public Health.
2. It must publish an annual report detailing what the SAB has done during the year to achieve its main objective and implement its strategic plan, and what each member has done to implement the strategy as well as detailing the findings of any safeguarding adult's reviews and subsequent action.
3. It must conduct any Safeguarding Adults Reviews in accordance with Section 44 of the Care Act.

Local authorities and their relevant partners must collaborate, and work together as set out in the cooperation duties in the Care Act and, in doing so, must, where appropriate, also consider the wishes and feelings of the adult on whose behalf they are working. Local authorities may cooperate with any other body they consider appropriate where it is relevant to their care and support functions. The lead agency with responsibility for coordinating adult safeguarding arrangements is the local authority, but all the members of the SAB should designate a lead officer. Other agencies should also consider the benefits of having a lead for adult safeguarding.

2.4 Safeguarding Adults Boards should also:

- Identify the role, responsibility, authority and accountability with regard to the action each agency and professional group should take to ensure the protection of adults establish ways of analysing and interrogating data on safeguarding notifications that increase the SAB's understanding of prevalence of abuse and neglect locally that builds up a picture over time
- Establish how it will hold partners to account and gain assurance of the effectiveness of its arrangements
- Determine its arrangements for peer review and self-audit
- Establish mechanisms for developing policies and strategies for protecting adults which should be formulated, not only in collaboration and consultation with all relevant agencies but also take account of the views of adults who have needs for care and support, their families, advocates and carer representatives
- Develop preventative strategies that aim to reduce instances of abuse and neglect in its area
- Identify types of circumstances giving grounds for concern and when they should be considered as a referral to the local authority as an enquiry
- Formulate guidance about the arrangements for managing adult safeguarding, and dealing with complaints, grievances and professional and administrative malpractice in relation to safeguarding adults
- Develop strategies to deal with the impact of issues of race, ethnicity, religion,
- Gender and gender orientation, sexual orientation, age, disadvantage and disability abuse and neglect
- Balance the requirements of confidentiality with the consideration that, to protect adults, it may be necessary to share information on a 'need-to-know basis'
- Identify mechanisms for monitoring and reviewing the implementation and impact of policy and training
- Carry out safeguarding adult reviews and determine any publication arrangements; produce a strategic plan and an annual report
- Evidence how SAB members have challenged one another and held other Boards to account
- Promote multi-agency training and consider any specialist training that may be required. Consider any scope to jointly commission some training with other partnerships

Strategies for the prevention of abuse and neglect is a core responsibility of a SAB and it should have an overview of how this work is taking place. Existing local systems should ensure they inform assurance conversations, information and activity that SSAB may have oversight of and/or request details of.

The SAB will need to have effective links and communication across a number of networks in order to make this work effectively.

Within the context of the duties set out above, safeguarding partnerships can be a positive means of addressing issues of self-neglect. The SAB is a multi-agency system that can seek assurance on a range of issues to ensure a detailed understanding of the local picture, particularly with reference to the lived experience of adults with needs for care and support in Sandwell, any trends or recurring themes or barriers to effective delivery of safeguarding practice across the partnership. SSAB to facilitate effective conversations building on community strengths and engaging the local community in safeguarding activity.

3. Sandwell Safeguarding Adults Board Membership and Governance

Safeguarding Adult Boards are a statutory requirement of all local authority areas in England and sit within a dynamic framework of other statutory and non-statutory multi-agency structures.

The following statutory organisations are represented on the SSAB:

- **Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council**
- **West Midlands Police**
- **Black Country Partnership NHS Foundation Trust**
- **Sandwell & West Birmingham Clinical Commissioning Group**
- **Healthwatch**
- **Sandwell & West Birmingham Hospitals NHS Trust**
- **Sandwell Voluntary & Community Sector**

The non-statutory organisations could include:

- West Midlands Fire Service
- West Midlands Ambulance Service
- Domestic Abuse Safety Partnership
- NHS England
- Care Quality Commission

Elected members from constituent local authorities may sit on the board as observers.

3.1 Chairing Arrangements

- The Local Authority Director of Adult Services appoint, in conjunction with other members of the SSAB, an Independent Chair on terms agreed by the Director of Adult Services
- The Independent Chair is appointed for a fixed term basis, timescales to be agreed
- The Independent Chair is responsible for ensuring that the SSAB meets its obligations and reports on the discharge of its functions
- The SSAB appoints a Vice Chair from the membership of the SSAB, however, Director of Adult Social Services are excluded from taking on this role
- The job description for the position of SSAB Independent Chair is included at Appendix 2

3.2 SSAB representatives will:

- Attend all SSAB meetings and contribute to debate and decision-making
- Represent their own organisation and speak for the organisation with authority
- Commit their own organisation on agreed policy and practice matters
- Commit resources or directly contribute to decision-making processes within their own organisation about the commitment of resources as appropriate
- Hold their own organisation to account for the quality of safeguarding work
- Promote safeguarding work within their own organisation
- Contribute in person or nominate appropriate staff to serve on the Sub groups and task & finish groups as appropriate.
- Ensure the production of reports as required by the SSAB, including the provision of an Annual Report to the Board
- Act on any concerns raised through the Quality Assurance Framework/ self-audit process
- Nominate a deputy to attend meetings should they be unable to attend

3.3 Training and Personal Development:

All SSAB members must undertake Level 1 Safeguarding Training Adults within their own organisations and will also have access to Intermediate and Advanced level training on request

All SSAB members are expected to maintain up-to-date knowledge of all statutory, national and regional developments in Safeguarding Adults including examples of good practice.

3.4 Meetings

The Care Act does not stipulate the frequency of Board meetings. Board members need to determine their own local arrangements to ensure;

- Assuring itself that local safeguarding arrangements are in place as defined by the Care Act 2014 and statutory guidance.
- Assuring itself that safeguarding practice is person-centred and outcome-focused.
- Working collaboratively to prevent abuse and neglect where possible.
- Ensuring agencies and individuals give timely and proportionate responses when abuse or neglect has occurred.
- Assuring itself that safeguarding practice is continuously improving and enhancing the quality of life of adults with needs for care and support in its area.

Commonly Safeguarding Adults Boards meet quarterly, including at least one development session per year.

Sandwell Safeguarding Adults Board Members have taken the decision to meet every six weeks as of May 2020 (as of this date all Board Meetings are undertaken on a virtual platform using Microsoft Teams)

- All statutory partners must be present for the SSAB to be quorate.
- Attendance at meetings is mandatory. In the event of persistent non-attendance, the Independent Chair will write to the senior manager within the organisation concerned to bring this to their attention.
- In the event a member can no longer represent their agency, reasonable notice and a replacement should be identified by the relevant agency and given to the Independent Chair and the SSAB Operations Manager.
- Wherever possible the Independent Chair shall encourage decision making by consensus but if this is not possible then the matter will be settled by a majority of those Members of the SSAB entitled to vote. The Independent Chair is entitled to vote as a full member of the SSAB.
- The agenda for the SSAB will be sent out five working days or sooner in advance of the meeting.
- The Independent Chair will ensure that the minutes from these meetings reflect accurately the discussions, agreements and actions, and will ensure timely distribution.

3.5 Sub Groups

SSAB is supported by Sub Groups that have Chairs selected from Board Members or partner organisations. Sub Groups and Task and Finish Groups drive the work of the Board and are supported by the SSAB Business Team including Lead Officers and Operations Manager.

3.6 Declaration of Interest

Board Members are required to declare any personal interest that arises in the course of conducting SSAB business and 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 Independent Chair.

3.7 Confidentiality

Board and sub-group members must treat all the information related to them in the course of their duties with the confidentiality required of them by law and the sensitivity demanded of their profession.

3.8 Review of the Board Operating Model

The Board Operating Model may be amended by resolution of the SSAB and will, in any event, be reviewed annually or sooner if deemed necessary.

3.9 SSAB Business Team

The Sandwell Safeguarding Adults Business Team will provide administrative support for the SSAB, all Sub-Groups, and any Task & Finish Groups. The Sandwell Safeguarding Adults Board Operations Manager will provide professional advice and support to the SSAB, Chair and Task & Finish groups where appropriate. A member of the SSAB Business Team will also support the Chairs of Sub-Groups and/or any Task & Finish Groups.

3.10 How Does A Board Get Work Done

Options for consideration could include;

- Sub-Groups to consider specific areas.
- Task and Finish Groups.
- Virtual Groups.
- Projects and Themes.
- Standing Panels

3.11 Accountability

The SSAB has a separate identity and is not to be subsumed within other strategic bodies. The Board will form a view of the quality of safeguarding locally, challenge organisations when necessary and have an independent voice. However, the Board will strive to develop useful relationships with other strategic bodies and open channels of communications.

The Board must publish an Annual Report detailing what it has done during the year to achieve its main objectives and implement the strategic plan. A copy of the Annual Report will be sent to the Chief Executive and all Board Members. It will be presented to the Health & Wellbeing Board, the 4Boards, Scrutiny and Cabinet.

The Board will be consulted on issues that affect safeguarding and promoting the welfare of adults experiencing or at risk of abuse and neglect.

4. Finances and Resources

The statutory member agencies of the SSAB listed above have agreed to contribute annually towards resourcing the Board. The financial year will run from 1 April to 31 March the following year. Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council will provide support and assistance to the SSAB Business Team and Operations Manager in the administration of the budget on behalf of the Board. The SSAB Operations Manager will have the authority to act as the Board's budget holder for the authorisation of payments up to the value of £10,000 per transaction (transactions exceeding this amount require approval via a senior Manager as per the Local Authorities financial process)

In addition, members may be required to contribute to the functioning of the Board by providing staff or accommodation on a temporary basis.

If you have any questions relating to your role within SSAB, please do not hesitate to contact the SSAB Business Team on 07388858414 or email:

safeguarding_ssab@sandwell.gov.uk

Appendix 1 Letter of acceptance



Please complete below and return the SSAB Operations Manager.

I (full name)

representing..... (organisation name)

can confirm that I have read the SSAB Members Handbook Version 6 and agree to be bound by its contents.

Signature Date

Appendix 2 Independent Chair Job Description

JOB DESCRIPTION

JOB DESCRIPTION	Independent Chair for Sandwell Safeguarding Adults Board
GRADE	Sessional Payment - £600 per day plus expenses
LOCATION	Sandwell
RESPONSIBLE TO	Local Authority Chief Executives

1. Purpose

- 1.1 The main role of the Chair of the Safeguarding Adults Board (SAB) is to ensure that the SAB operates effectively in discharging its responsibility to safeguard adults and exercise their functions and responsibilities set out in current and any future legislation and government guidance.
- 1.2 The Chair of SAB will be responsible for ensuring that organisations collaborate successfully and work in partnership to co-ordinate and promote the safeguarding agenda and ensure that SAB work together to further the objectives of the Board.

2. Duties and Responsibilities

- 2.1 Chair SAB meetings, and in conjunction with the SAB Business Team prepare for the meetings through planning the agenda and circulating any relevant papers.
- 2.2 Develop SAB's strategic plan each financial year with both short and longer-term actions.

- 2.3 Produce SAB's Annual Board Report outlining what both the SAB and its members have done to carry out and deliver the SAB's objectives.
- 2.4 Ensure that the SAB's business plans, learning and development plans and the SAB's sub group plans reflect and support the priorities of the SAB.
- 2.5 Provide progress reports on the SAB's activities to the Directors of Adult Services for the relevant Local Authority.
- 2.6 Decide when a Safeguarding Adults Review (SAR) is required or not and the criteria is met with clear evidence ensuring that the review is undertaken in a timely manner and in accordance with procedures.
- 2.7 Represent the SAB at a variety of conferences, key meetings for example, Health & Wellbeing Boards and events. This may include liaison with statutory, voluntary and independent groups, council officers and members.
- 2.8 Chair, where appropriate, any additional SAB meetings that may be convened as a response to specific and/or exceptional circumstances.
- 2.9 Oversee the effectiveness of the SAB's auditing and inspection functions.
- 2.10 Ensure performance by all agencies is rigorously reviewed, monitored and reported on to appropriate local and national bodies.
- 2.11 In conjunction with other SAB members ensure that key issues and national developments are brought to the attention of, and considered by the SAB, by keeping up to date with relevant literature, legislation and research.
- 2.12 Attend and lead annual business planning events, SAB development days and ensure the follow up of agreed work programmes of the published annual business plan.
- 2.13 To establish and review SAB budget with relevant organisations and ensure arrangements are made for maintaining Board income.
- 2.14 To oversee the allocation of the SAB's resources, financial and human, and to ensure they are utilised to meet the SAB's objectives.
- 2.15 Review and monitor the following:
 - The membership of the SAB ensuring that it is both representative and effective.
 - The attendance and conduct of the members
 - Promote the participation of feedback from adults, families and relevant others regarding the work of the Board
- 2.16 Confirm, by way of analysis, that Making Safeguarding Personal is embedded within all board member partner safeguarding processes

- 2.17 Respect confidentiality of sensitive information provided by the constituent agencies of the SAB.
- 2.18 Contribute to the continuous development of an effective SAB.
- 2.19 Investigate and attempt to resolve any disputes and complaints between SAB members. Where such complaints have reached the formal stage, to decide, in the light of available information, whether they are upheld. See Escalation Procedure Appendix 3
- 2.20 Agree any response to media enquiries with partner agencies as appropriate through the relevant Director.
- 2.21 Investigate and attempt to resolve any issues of non-compliance with the SAB.
- 2.22 Ensure that the SAB promotes equality of opportunity through its policies and practices.
- 2.23 Discharge fairly any power delegated to the Chair from the SAB.
- 2.24 Represent the SAB on occasions through correspondence/contacts as agreed by the Board members.
- 2.25 Where necessary, be accessible by phone, e-mail or in person between meetings or by prior arrangement.
- 2.26 Keep in contact with the work of the sub -groups through receipt of action plans and reports.
- 2.27 The Independent Chair will not take on other responsibilities which may compromise the work of the SAB.

Note:

The SSAB reserves the right to add, amend, or otherwise alter the responsibilities shown in the job description providing that the changes are commensurate with the status and grade of the post. This includes any future systems changes that may require the function and purpose of the Board to be reviewed.

Please see 4Boards Protocol

<https://www.sandwellsab.org.uk/sandwells-boards-develop-a-partnership-protocol/>

*The 4Boards are a partnership between SSAB, Health & Wellbeing Board, Safer Sandwell Partnership, Sandwell Children's Safeguarding Partnership and the 4Boards Protocol document sets out partners working arrangements and governance.

Appendix 3



1. Introduction

1.1 Multi-agency working is the bedrock of effective adult safeguarding. Partner agencies have their own roles to play in the safeguarding process as set out in the Care Act (2014), Care Act Statutory Guidance and in the West Midlands Multi-agency policy and procedures for the protection of adults with care and support needs (www.sandwellsab.org.uk).

It is important that all partner agencies are accountable for delivering their part of the safeguarding process to the highest possible standard.

1.2 There will be occasions where staff of one partner agency have concerns about the way in which staff of another partner agency is/are delivering their part of the safeguarding process.

Disagreements could arise in a number of areas, but are most likely to arise around thresholds, roles and responsibilities, the need for action and communication. Examples include:

- A poorly framed or constructed safeguarding concern
- Disagreement about a decision not to make Section 42 enquiries about the concern
- A failure to refer a concern in a timely way
- A failure to share all the relevant information needed by the Team coordinating the safeguarding case to make an adequate judgement on the appropriate response to the concern

1.3 The Sandwell Safeguarding Adults Board (SSAB) is committed to the principle that appropriate challenge and escalation is an essential part of being a learning partnership, achieving high standards and challenging poor practice. Appropriate challenge and escalation are vital to delivering continuous improvement and obtaining good outcomes for adults with care and support needs.

1.4 The principle of the escalation policy is that concerns relating to individual cases should be taken up promptly and openly through the appropriate agency line management structures and resolved at the lowest possible level. If the concern cannot be resolved within the appropriate agency management structure it will be taken to the organisations Safeguarding Leads for resolution. In the event of

unresolved disputes final decisions will be taken by the Chair of the Quality and Excellence Sub Group who may consult with the Independent SSAB Chair.

Should the matter involve an organisation with which the Sub Group Chair may have a conflict of interest the SSAB Independent Chair will mediate.

1.5 At no point should disputes place adults at greater risk, obscure the focus on the adult, or delay decision making.

2. Escalation Policy

2.1 Effective working together depends on an open approach and honest relationships between agencies.

2.2 Effective working together depends on resolving disagreements to the satisfaction of workers and agencies; and a belief in a genuine partnership.

2.3 Professional disputes are reduced by clarity about roles and responsibilities and airing and sharing problems in networking forums.

2.4 The process of resolution should be as simple as possible.

2.5 The aim should be to resolve difficulties at practitioner / fieldworker level between agencies.

2.6 The following stages are likely to be involved:

recognition that there is a disagreement over a significant issue, which impacts on the safety and welfare of an adult identification of the problem, and clarity about the disagreement and what you aim to achieve.

These two stages could involve consulting a colleague to clarify thinking.

2.7 Initial attempts should be made to resolve the problem. This should normally be between the people who disagree, unless the adult is at immediate risk.

2.8 It should be recognised that differences in status and/or experience may affect the confidence of some workers to pursue this unsupported.

2.9 If unresolved, the problem should be referred to the worker's own line manager or Adult Safeguarding Lead, who will discuss with their opposite number in the other agency.

2.10 If the problem remains unresolved, the line manager will refer 'up the line' (see Appendix 1 flow chart).

2.11 If the matter is still unresolved, consideration will be given to referring the matter to SSAB

Quality and Excellence Sub Group Chair to offer mediation as soon as possible. The Chair of the Quality and Excellence Sub Group may decide to involve the SSAB Vice Chair if necessary. Should the matter involve an organisation with which the Sub Group Chair may have a conflict of interest the SSAB Vice Chair will mediate.

2.12 A clear record should be kept at all stages, by all parties. In particular this must include written confirmation between the parties about an agreed outcome of the disagreement and how any outstanding issues will be pursued. All records should be retained on the adult's case file and agency database.

2.13 At each stage it is important that the person who originally raised the concern is given feedback on what action has been taken in response.

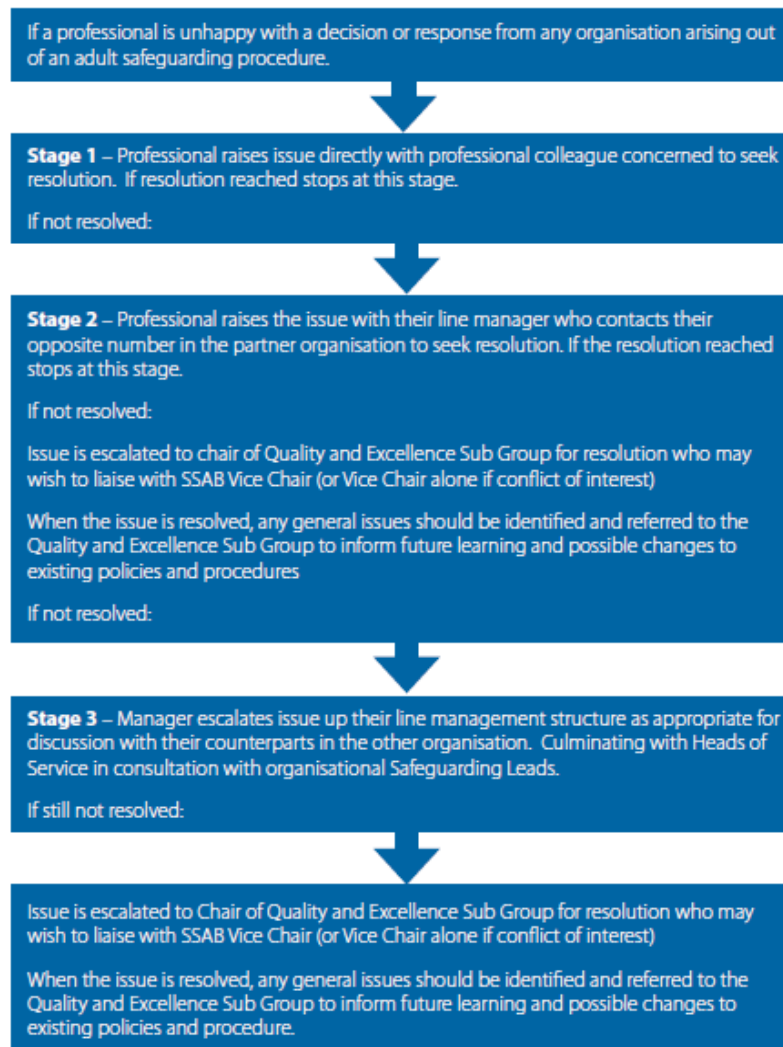
2.14 When the issue is resolved, any general issues should be identified and referred to the agency's representative on the Quality and Excellence Sub Group to inform future learning and possible changes to existing policies and procedures.

2.15 It may also be useful for individuals to debrief following some disputes in order to promote continuing good working relationships and identify possible training needs.

Please note that this Policy does not apply to cases where there may be concerns about the behaviour or conduct of another professional that may impact on an adult's safety and well-being. In such cases, reference should be made to the SSAB Position of Trust Policy.

Escalation Procedure Flow Chart

Key principle: It is every professional's responsibility to problem solve. The aim must be to resolve concerns at the earliest stage and lowest level and to ensure the adult concerned is safeguarded whilst the dispute is resolved.



SSAB acknowledges the work undertaken by Coventry Safeguarding Adults Board in developing this framework.