

FN SAFEGUARDING PARTNERSHIP BOARD (*Safeguarding Adults Board*)

ROLE OF THE INDEPENDENT CHAIR

(Based on recommendations made by: ADASS/LGA/Skills for Care/National Network for Chairs Safeguarding Adults Boards)

Context:

The Care Act 2014 made all local authorities responsible for ensuring that any adult who needs care and support, who is at risk of or experiencing abuse or neglect, and as a result of their needs is unable to protect themselves, is protected by the local authority.

It also required them to set up a Safeguarding Adults Board to coordinate local work to safeguard adults who need care and support.

Each board has an independent chair who is accountable for the effective working of the board

Making Safeguarding Personal (MSP) is a sector led initiative which aims to develop an outcomes focus to safeguarding work, and a range of responses to support people to improve or resolve their circumstances. It's about engaging with people about the outcomes they want at the beginning and middle of working with them, and then ascertaining the extent to which those outcomes were realised at the end. It takes both a person and community-centred approach and is led by the Local Government Association and ADASS.

Accountability and the chair of the Safeguarding Adults Board:

The chair of the Safeguarding Adults Board is accountable to residents in the area covered by the board through; the statutory annual report and strategic plan, which is presented to council members and relevant partnership boards; through reporting to the chief executive of the local authority for that area; and to the partners of the Safeguarding Adults Board.

Functions of the chair

The Safeguarding Adults Board chair is required to:

- provide effective leadership to the board, ensuring that they complete all tasks and responsibilities to a high standard, in a timely and proportionate manner, and in accordance with the requirements of the Care Act (2014) and other relevant legislation
- lead the quarterly¹ board meetings including setting the agenda, approving and distributing minutes and following up on decisions taken by the board
- ensure sound governance and due diligence is in place at
- ensure sound governance and due diligence is in place at all times
- take the lead in producing and publicising the board's strategic plan and annual report, and monitoring and reviewing the effectiveness of the plan
- where individuals meet the criteria, instigate SARs, ensuring that current guidance and processes are followed and that all learning is appropriately shared
- promote collaborative work and a culture of learning, constructive criticism and support within the board
- provide advice, support and encouragement to board members and other colleagues

- work with any conflicts or concerns within the board, supporting members to reach a positive resolution
- contribute to developing a culture where the prevention of abuse and neglect is paramount, including sharing learning from SARs within the local area, regionally and nationally (where appropriate)
- ensure that the work of the board and the outcomes from SARs inform wider training plans and learning and development priorities
- develop and maintain constructive links and effective communication with partners across the local area, promoting the safeguarding agenda and working together to develop best practice
- champion and promote the prevention of abuse and neglect to adults across all relevant agencies, contributing to the broader safeguarding preventative agenda
- act as a spokesperson for the board with other agencies and the media as appropriate
- hold regular meetings to update the local authority chief executive and the director of adult social services about the board's activities
- ensure that the voices of people who need care and support and their families, are heard and acted upon within the board's work
- ensure that all partners to the board provide assurance, are accountable and challenge partners if required
- ensure that the principles of 'Making Safeguarding Personal' are embedded in all relevant policies, procedures, actions & plans
- act as the link between the board and all relevant local, regional or national groups, ensuring that learning and development is shared
- ensure that the board has clear policies, processes and appropriate protocols in place to support information sharing and that they are monitored
- keep themselves and the board up to date with good practice and act upon developments in national policy, case law and research

Knowledge and understanding requirements of the chair - Local contextual awareness

Safeguarding Adults Board chairs need to have knowledge of and understand:

- local networks
- the role of the different safeguarding leads (local authority, police and others)
- local political systems
- local resources and organisations that support or contribute to the safeguarding agenda

- relevant Safeguarding Adult Board policies, procedures, underpinning values and mission statement, including equality and diversity policies

Legal frameworks and statutory duties

Safeguarding Adults Board chairs need to have knowledge of and understand:

- The Care Act (2014), in particular: safeguarding standards and procedures including raising a safeguarding concern and clarity about when safeguarding concern meets the threshold for investigation and review
- Mental Capacity Act (2005), amendments (2009) and Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards
- Data Protection Act (1998), including an understanding of information sharing protocols and appropriate use of information sharing, and the General Data Protection Regulation (2018)
- Human Rights Act (1998)
- up to date knowledge of safeguarding developments, legislation and research underpinning safeguarding work

Understanding of abuse and neglect, risk management and safeguarding

Safeguarding Adults Board chairs need to have knowledge of and understand:

- different kinds of abuse and neglect and the ways in which it occurs
- thresholds for identifying and investigating abuse and neglect, including when a SAR should be triggered
- appropriate risk management and harm reduction strategies, including different approaches to working with adults who need care and support (such as strength-based approaches)
- How to do research and develop an understanding of abuse and neglect, good practice and legislation specific to any SAR being undertaken.

Management and organisational theory and practice

Safeguarding Adults Board chairs need to have knowledge of and understand:

- whole systems leadership
- change management
- organisational culture and behaviour
- participative leadership
- conflict resolution
- management styles, including approaches to chairing
- Group behaviours and culture.

Research methods, quality assurance, planning and evaluation

Safeguarding Adults Board chairs need to have knowledge and awareness of:

- qualitative and quantitative research methods, including participative approaches
- quality assurance systems, including outcomes-focused approaches, monitoring and evaluating
- different approaches to project and programme management

Learning and development

Safeguarding Adults Board chairs need to have knowledge of and understand:

- national developments and ongoing learning specific to Safeguarding Adults Boards
- Different learning opportunities, styles and where to find high quality learning providers

Skills requirements of the chair:

Organisational management skills

- Strong leadership skills evidenced through working in a senior role in a relevant organisation.
- Managing governance arrangements in a large organisation and across partnerships.
- Know how to hold organisations to account.

Interpersonal skills

- Able to develop and maintain good working relationships with people from different organisations and professional backgrounds, including local services
- Good team work skills with a range of different stakeholders, including people who need care and support and their families.
- Strong facilitating skills and able to work sensitively with complex group dynamics and manage and resolve disputes.
- Excellent written and verbal communication skills, including being able to communicate using plain English and use adapted communication systems when needed.
- Strong negotiation skills.
- Active listening skills.
- Ability to understand when confidentiality must be respected, and when and with whom information sharing is necessary.
- Good interviewing skills, including questioning, reflection and summarising.

Other skills to support the role

- Strong report writing skills to develop strategic reports and plans, with a good understanding of setting and monitoring outcomes.
- Understanding and reviewing appropriate data and information for sharing with others.
- Assessment and evaluation skills with experience of using evidence-based approaches.
- Decision making skills.
- Researching skills and the ability to understand complex information and legislation and how it applies in real life.
- Time management and able to manage competing priorities, with excellent organisational skills.
- Problem solving skills.
- Strong analytic and reflective skills, taking a solution-focused approach