

Adults Safeguarding Board – Unitary Option

Purpose:

To provide an overview of the obligations for the two new Unitary Councils to establish a Safeguarding Adults Board under the 2014 Care Act and seek a formal decision about how the two new Unitary Councils wish to fulfil these obligations.

Recommendation

Members are asked to:

- Consider and agree the recommendation for the establishment of a single strategic Safeguarding Partnership to provide support to North & West Northamptonshire Unitary Authorities
- To support the review and revision of the existing Adult Safeguarding Board Constitution, Terms of Reference and roles and responsibilities of the Independent Chair and support officer/s

Note: This options paper is separate from and, in addition to, the determinations being developed relating to the shape and configuration of the Safeguarding Adults Team function within Adult Services which forms part of the Adults TOM transformation programme.

Background:

The Care Act (2014) sets out a clear legal framework for how local authorities and other parts of the system should protect adults at risk of abuse and neglect. This duty includes the creation and leadership of a multi-agency local adult safeguarding system that seeks to prevent abuse and neglect and to stop it quickly when it happens. The Safeguarding Board is there to provide assurance that safeguarding arrangements are in place as defined by the Care Act (2014) as part of the statutory guidance.

The existing Safeguarding Adults Board covers the whole of Northamptonshire County Council and key partners and is funded by three key partners:

- The County Council
- The Police
- The CCG

The current website <https://www.northamptonshiresab.org.uk> provides more detail on the scope, remit and aims of the current board. The Boards vision is to work together to keep people safe.

Work is underway to ensure that North & West Northampton Unitary Authorities will be allocated adequate and appropriate capacity to manage and co-ordinate their statutory

duties in response to safeguarding concerns, in line with national best practice models as set out in Making Safeguarding Personal (Local Government Association/ADASS 2013/14))

A Safeguarding Adults Board is required to oversee all partner activity and outcomes in response to safeguarding concerns, and the lead responsibility for this sits with the Local Authority.

There are a number of key advantages to retaining a single strategic Safeguarding Partnership across North & West Northampton Unitary Authorities:

- Other partners have recently consolidated with the two acute hospitals and two CCGs coming together as single County wide organisations
- To ensure senior level attendance from partner organisation, a single Board would not divert focus or create additional resourcing pressures
- A single board is seen as a best practice model as it will encompass safeguarding within each organisation and the ability to implement shared and cohesive policies that make it easier for residents and stakeholders
- Avoids duplication
- Economies of scale in terms of funding adequate and appropriate support to the Board with a focus on excellence
- Consistency of approach
- Consistent and sustainable accountability sector wide
- A single Board would not interfere with individual Unitary Authority arrangements for safeguarding Adults
- Alignment with a single Children's Trust & Children's Safeguarding Partnership

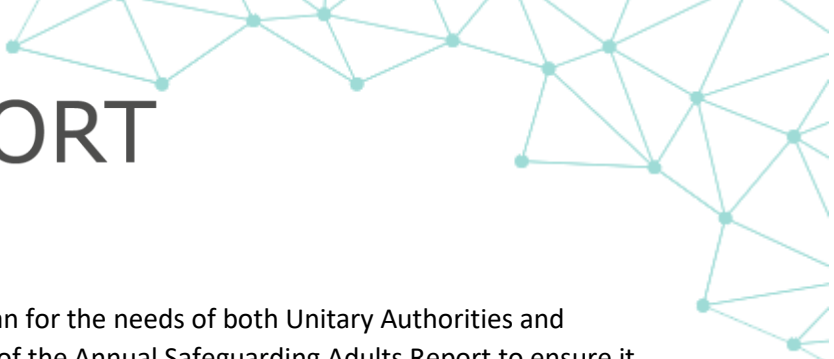
The recommendation

The recommendation is to establish one single Safeguarding Adults Board which would encompass North & West Northampton Unitary Authorities

This would ensure that there is a clear and single line of accountability with partners and providers and to have one independent chair to provide leadership & direction for the single Board

The recommendation includes the creation of one system wide Chief Officer post to support the Board and provide professional advice and guidance to the DASS in each Local Authority. This would help to create consistency and best practice sharing and shared learning. Funding for this post would include contributions from all key partners

The system wide Chief Officer role would work directly for and to the Board holding all partners to account, whilst providing ongoing support, advice & guidance. Due to the statutory nature of the Board, the system wide Chief Officer role would need to be employed by one of the Unitary Local Authorities



A single Board would need to recognise and plan for the needs of both Unitary Authorities and consideration given to the format and content of the Annual Safeguarding Adults Report to ensure it reflects the identity and concerns of each.

A single Board would align to the planned model of a single Board for Safeguarding Children as part of the Children’s Trust development.

There are examples of combined Boards including models of Adult & Childrens Safeguarding Board working successfully in a number of areas and across London Boroughs and this has paid dividends in managing residents and safeguarding across areas. A dual authority Board retains the focus on Safeguarding Adults issues and priorities

It should be noted that there is a clear opportunity to consider the inclusion of the Community Safety Partnership within the Safeguarding Board arrangements creating a further opportunity to bring partners and intelligence together for the benefit of community and residents

The Creation of the Unitaries also offers the opportunity to review the current structure and remit of the existing Board and establish an improved and robust approach to the Constitution and Terms of Reference and a clear set of requirements and outcomes linked to the role of the Independent Chair and support role/s.

Rationale:

Two options have been considered in reaching this conclusion and set out below:

OPTION ONE: A SINGLE BAORD

Under this option there would remain a single Safeguarding Adults Board which would encompass North & West Northants Unitary Authorities. Under this model there would be a clear and single line of accountability with partners and providers and we would continue to have one independent chair to provide leadership & direction for the single Board.

The board would also be supported by one system wide Chief Officer post to support the Board and provide professional advice and guidance to the DASS in each Local Authority addressing some of the gaps in the current set up and gaps created by having a part time Chair. The posts would continue to be jointly funded by all key partners.

The system wide Chief Officer role would work directly for and to the Board holding all partners to account, whilst providing ongoing support, advice & guidance. Due to the statutory nature of the Board the system wide Chief Officer role would need to be employed by one of the Unitary Local Authorities.

A single Board would need to recognise and plan for the needs of both Unitary Authorities and consideration given to the format and content of the Annual Safeguarding Adults Report to reflect this.

A single Board would also align to the planned model of a single Board for Safeguarding Children as part of the Children’s Trust development. It should be noted that while there are examples of

combined Boards including models of Adult & Childrens Safeguarding Board, experience in the County previously was that this did not work and became unwieldy and therefore it is recommended that retain the focus on Safeguarding Adults issues and priorities through a dedicated board.

ADVANTAGES:

- Other partners have recently consolidated with the two acute hospitals and two CCGs coming together as single County wide organisations
- Having a shared single board will make senior level attendance from partners more likely and create system focus
- A single board is seen as a best practice model as it will encompass safeguarding within each organisation and the ability to implement shared and cohesive policies that make it easier for residents and stakeholders
- Avoids duplication
- Economies of scale in terms of funding adequate and appropriate support to the Board with a focus on excellence
- Consistency of approach
- Consistent and sustainable accountability sector wide
- A single Board would not interfere with individual Unitary Authority arrangements for safeguarding Adults and the investigations and actions that might follow a report of concern as this will remain with the Unitary Councils
- Alignment with a single Children's Trust & Children's Safeguarding Partnership

DISADVANTAGES:

- Each Unitary Authority would not have their own Safeguarding Adults Board/Partnership
- Both DASS's would need to attend the single Board or make appropriate arrangements for delegated authority
- Arrangements would need to be made to ensure that the Annual Safeguarding Adults Report provides an accurate reflection of the population needs for each Unitary Authority

OPTION TWO – INDIVIDUAL UNITARY COUNCIL BOARDS:

Under this option we would have two Safeguarding Adult Boards, one for North Northants and one for West Northants.

Under this model we would still recommend that each board has its own Chair although it may be possible to jointly contribute towards a single Chair to give some continuity and if a suitable candidate could be found to cover both.

Under this model each council would also need a NSAB Chief Officer post to support the Board and provide professional advice and guidance to the DASS in each Local Authority but this may not be full time.

Under this model each Authority would have its own Annual Safeguarding Adults Report albeit the focus, content and key areas of interest are likely to be common.



ADVANTAGES:

- Focus will be aligned to the specific local Authority and its population
- Single DASS attendance
- Each Board would link directly to the Safeguarding Adults configuration within each authority
- Each Board would produce its own data and intelligence
- Each Board would produce its own Annual Safeguarding Adults Report

DISADVANTAGES:

- Increased demand on Partners (unified organisations) and may lead to inconsistencies in attendance or seniority of representation
- Each Board would require an Independent Chair
- Each Board would require support staff
- Partners will be expected to contribute to funding of both the Chair and support staff in both Unitary Authorities
- Opportunities for whole population monitoring, tracking and planning will be reduced
- Risk of duplication
- As each Unitary Authority will be working with the same partners, there would need to be ongoing cross reference to partner and provider activity and outcomes to ensure consistency in terms of accountability and continuous improvements

Budget:

Based on the expenditure of £145,340 agreed at Strategic Board on 28th January, the suggested partner contributions are £38,974 per statutory agency (£116,922 combined).

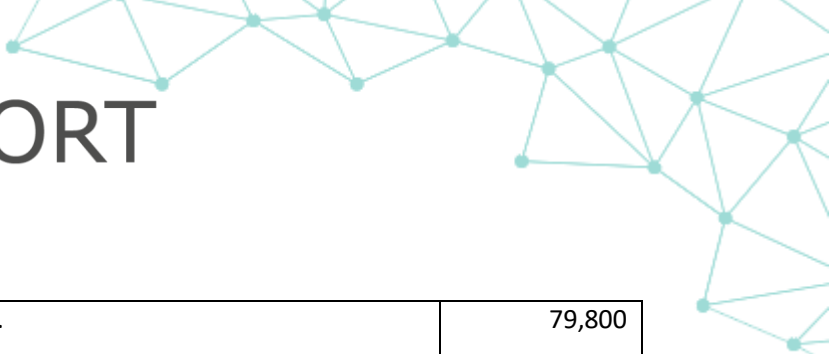
1. Revised Budget 2020/21

The current budget for the board is £145,340 and needs to cover a range of costs including the items shown below.

The commissioning of SARs (Safeguarding Adult Reviews) is a variable cost which will reflect the number and/or need for agreed joint reviews where an adult in its area dies as a result of abuse or neglect, whether known or suspected, and there is concern that partner agencies could have worked more effectively to protect the adult. These are independently led investigations required under Care and Support Statutory Guidance (October 2018).

Based on the recommendation set out these costs would be shared by the two new Unitary Authorities, but if the preference is to have two separate boards the majority of this cost would be incurred by each and need to be added to the disaggregation diseconomy of scale additional costs.

Expenditure	Budget 2020-21
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Salaries - Staffing 2 x FT posts including on costs.	79,800
Independent Chair	20,000
Safeguarding Adult Reviews (SARs) - Independent Authors	26,000
Service User Engagement & Awareness Raising	500
Marketing campaign(s)	5,000
Annual Conference(s)	4,000
Office costs (postage)	40
SAR training for SAR Sub Group members	2,000
e-Learning for VCS/providers and SAR learning	6,000
Estimated legal fees – SAR	2,000
Total Expenditure	145,340

Risk

The main risk is that the two new Unitary Councils do not meet their statutory requirements by agreeing the format for their Safeguarding Adults Boards and setting them up ready for vesting day.

Appendices

Appendix A – SAFEGUARDING PARTNERSHIP DRAFT TERMS OF REFERENCE

Appendix B – SAFEGUARDING PARTNERSHIP DRAFT CONSTITUTION

Appendix C – SAFEGUARDING PARTNERSHIP DRAFT ROLE OUTLINE: INDEPENDANT CHAIR

Appendix D – SAFEGUARDING PARTNERSHIP DRAFT ROLE OUTLINE: CHIEF OFFICER