

Report for approval OR information

Somerset Safeguarding Adults Board: Strategic Plan (2022/2023) Refresh and Annual Report (2021/22)

Lead Officer: Keith Perkin, Independent Chair, Somerset Safeguarding Adults Board

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<p>Summary:</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Somerset Safeguarding Adults Board (SSAB or the Board) operates as an independently chaired, multi-agency body under The Care Act 2014. It became statutory from April 2015. 2. The SSAB's role is to have an oversight of safeguarding arrangements within the County, not to deliver services or become involved in the day-to-day operations of individual organisations, including those of Somerset County Council. As such, any questions from Somerset Health and Wellbeing Board members regarding operational matters, including individual safeguarding enquiries, are best directed to the representative of the organisation that has the lead for this work. 3. The Board is required by The Care Act 2014 to produce and publish an Annual Plan and Report each year. 4. The purpose of this report is to present the SSAB's Annual Report for the 2021/22 financial year (Appendix A) to the Somerset Health and Wellbeing Board 		
<p>Recommendations:</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That the Somerset Health and Wellbeing Board receives and considers the 2021/22 SSAB Annual Report. 2. That the Somerset Health and Wellbeing Board continues to promote adult safeguarding across the County Council and in the services that are commissioned 		
<p>Reasons for recommendations:</p>	<p>Reason for recommendations: The purpose of this report is to present the Board's Annual Report for the 2021/22 financial year to the Somerset Health and Wellbeing Board.</p>		
<p>Links to The Improving Lives Strategy</p>	<p>Please tick the Improving Lives priorities influenced by the delivery of this work</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="544 1921 1455 2042"> <tr> <td data-bbox="544 1921 1289 2042"> <p>A County infrastructure that drives productivity, supports economic prosperity and sustainable public services</p> </td> <td data-bbox="1289 1921 1455 2042"></td> </tr> </table>	<p>A County infrastructure that drives productivity, supports economic prosperity and sustainable public services</p>	
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	<p>Safe, vibrant and well-balanced communities able to enjoy and benefit from the natural environment</p>	
	<p>Fairer life chances and opportunity for all</p>	
	<p>Improved health and wellbeing and more people living healthy and independent lives for longer</p>	
<p>Financial, Legal, HR, Social value and partnership Implications:</p>	<p>Financial implications: The majority of the SSAB’s funding is provided by Somerset County Council, with contributions from Avon & Somerset Constabulary and NHS Somerset. Safeguarding Adults Reviews (SARs) are resourced by the partnership as and when required and an agreement is now in place between the three statutory partners to resource all SARs from outside the SSAB’s core budget. The SSAB continues with its decision not to professionally print the Annual Plan or Report to save on costs and environment impact. All reports are publicly available on the website.</p> <p>Legal implications: The Care Act 2014 represented the most significant change to adult social care in more than 60 years, putting people and their carers in control of their care and support. For the first time the Act placed Safeguarding Adults, and the role and functions of a Safeguarding Adults Board, onto a statutory framework from 1st April 2015.</p> <p>In February 2021 the government announced an intention to develop a new assurance framework for adult social care; proposals included a new duty for the Care Quality Commission to assess local authorities’ delivery of their statutory adult social care duties from April 2023 onwards. The proposal was formalised in the Health and Care Bill, receiving Royal Assent in April 2022. Whilst the inspection framework and methodology has not yet been published, the emerging scope will very likely include a focus on ‘Ensuring Safety’ and will include consideration of SAB effectiveness in the local area.</p> <p>Partner organisations: Somerset Safeguarding Adults Board benefits from strong partnership commitment. Organisations represented on the Board had the opportunity to detail their achievements and contributions in 2021/22 and all Board members are encouraged to take the Annual Report through their own internal governance routes.</p>	
<p>Equalities Implications:</p>	<p>Equalities Implications: None. This report does not relate to a decision and has therefore not been impact assessed.</p>	
<p>Risk Assessment:</p>	<p>Risk Assessment: Safeguarding activity by its nature is an inherently risky area and has the potential to bring a Council’s reputation, and the wider safeguarding system, into question, when failings are identified. The Annual Plan and Report, both a legal requirement by the Care Act 2014, provide partner</p>	

	organisations and the public with assurances that adult safeguarding is being monitored and scrutinised in Somerset. The Board also has a robust risk register in place which identifies and tracks risk.
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1. Background

1.1. The Somerset Safeguarding Adults Board (SSAB) is a statutory body established by the Care Act 2014. It is made up of senior people from organisations who have a role in preventing the neglect and abuse of adults. The main objective of the Board is to seek assurance that local safeguarding arrangements and partner organisations act to help and protect people aged 18 and over who:

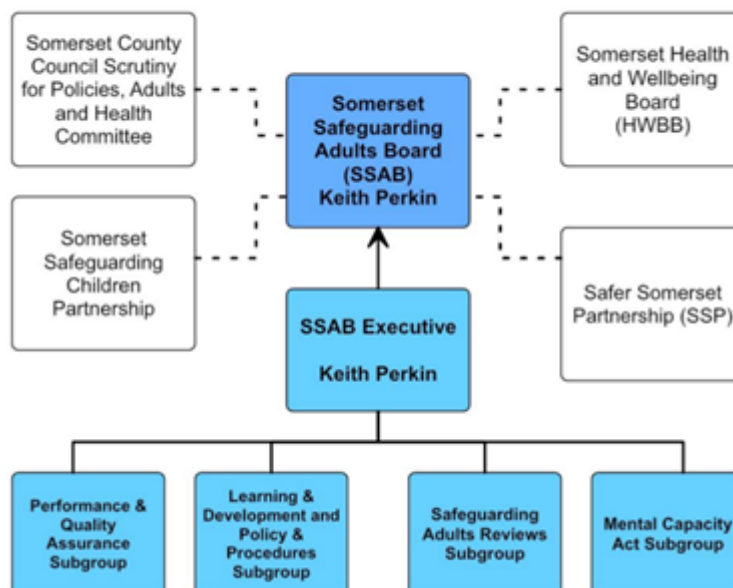
- have needs for care and support; and
- are experiencing, or at risk of, abuse, neglect or exploitation; and
- are unable to protect themselves from the risk of, or experience of, abuse or neglect as a result of their care and support needs.

1.2. SABs have 3 statutory functions:

- To develop and publish a strategic plan setting out how it will meet its objectives and how members will contribute to these;
- To publish an annual report detailing how effective its work has been;
- To commission Safeguarding Adults Reviews (SARs) for any cases meeting the criteria for these.

1.3. Somerset’s SAB is independently Chaired by Keith Perkin, who took up post in January 2020. His role is to support and challenge the commitment and vision of the Board and its partners with a main focus on how agencies effectively work together to safeguarding, prevent and reduce the risk of abuse and neglect. The Board also has a Business Manager and some administrative support available to it to help facilitate the effective work of the Board and its subgroups:

Board structure as at 31/03/2022



2. Improving Lives Priorities and Outcomes

2.1. The work of the Board during 2021/22 continued to be impacted by the need for member organisations (and our SSAB Manager) to prioritise their capacity and response to the pandemic and the associated health and care system pressures arising from it. Despite the demands and capacity challenges faced by the sector, our partner organisations have shown enormous commitment to continuing to help adults in need of safeguarding support and have supported progress activity across a range of priority areas. The Board is keen to highlight the following information for the awareness of the Health and Wellbeing Board:

- a) Somerset has seen a **declining rate of safeguarding concerns contrary to national trends, and fewer Safeguarding enquiries being undertaken as a result**. Analysis suggests this is as a direct result of the significant work undertaken over recent years to improve understanding of safeguarding criteria, and more effectively triage or re-direct the previously high number of 'inappropriate' safeguarding contacts to more suitable settings or teams. *The SSAB has recently convened a task and finish group to review this in more detail, working closely with Somerset Direct (the Council's front door/call centre) and colleagues from business intelligence teams to confirm that both reporting and recording, and practice and assurance, remains where we need it to be.*
- b) In common with national trends, the majority of individuals involved in a safeguarding enquiry are **over 65 and female**. The **most common risk type is 'neglect and acts of omission'**, followed by physical abuse, and financial or material abuse. The **most common location where people were identified as being at risk continues to be a person's own home**, followed by a residential care home
- c) Somerset is proud of its commitment to 'Making Safeguarding Personal' and continues to secure **valuable feedback direct from service users, carers and advocates via its safeguarding questionnaires developed in partnership with Healthwatch Somerset**. As of end of March 2022, satisfaction levels were highest from service users (100% satisfied with the outcome of the safeguarding work), followed by IMCAs/Advocates (88%); more could be explored to enhance the experience of friends/relatives/carers in safeguarding activity (50% satisfied with outcome), particularly where younger adults are involved. Direct quotes have included:

"My negativity, which was total, has been transformed to positivity which has never happened before in my life"

"An overwhelming sense of wanting to ensure my mother was in safe hands – nothing was beyond debate to achieve this goal"

"I have the full picture – one that allowed me to make an informed decision about how best to proceed. Nothing was forced on me".

"Sam and the team brought life into my life and made me feel better...I

am very happy with the friendliness and support that has been provided to me. They have listened and done everything they can, and now it is up to me to make my future life work”.

- d) The SSAB continues to **raise the profile of adult safeguarding and share best practice** via its website, social media channels and internal/external newsletters and briefings. The Board led a regional webinar on ‘Promoting Safer Cultures’ during National Safeguarding Adults Week in November 2021 and a webinar on ‘Professional Curiosity’ in March 2022. *Plans underway to deliver a regional webinar on ‘Elder Abuse’ this November and to host a Conference in the Spring of 2023.* New public facing materials on Mate Crime have been developed via the SSAB’s Policy and Procedures subgroup, alongside the adoption of a [short animation](#) to help people understand what good friendships are, when they might be harmful and what people can do to reduce their risk of exploitation.
- e) The SSAB coordinated an annual organisational self-audit of effective safeguarding activity and, more recently, conducted a repeat **SSAB Effectiveness Survey** of its members focused of the nationally-agreed characteristics of well-performing and ambitious safeguarding partnerships. The survey identified a range of strengths (*including Board culture and leadership, proactive and responsive safeguarding activity, and clear policies and protocols*) as well as some opportunities for future development and continued attention (*including improving service user/carer involvement and influence and seeking more opportunities to prevent abuse and neglect from occurring*).
- f) One **Safeguarding Adults Review** was published during 2021-22 ([‘Matthew’](#)). However, in common with the national and regional picture, Somerset has seen a rise in SAR referrals and is progressing a number of other reviews and debriefs.

2.2. Looking to the future

The SSAB published its 2022-2025 Strategic Plan in May 2022. The Plan is publicly available on its website and can be accessed via this link: [SSAB-Strategic-Plan-2022-25-Final-For-Publication.pdf](#) ([safeguardingsomerset.org.uk](#)). The most recent summary page of the SSAB’s Performance & Quality Report is shared (Appendix D) highlighting current performance against each Strategic Plan strand.

3. Consultations undertaken

- 3.1. As part of developing its Annual Report the SSAB sought feedback from all of its partners. This includes seeking feedback from representatives of people who use services, carers and the third sector, and Healthwatch. Partners were also invited to contribute content to the Annual Report, and this can be found in Appendix B.

4. Request of the Board and Board members

- 4.1.
1. That the Somerset Health and Wellbeing Board receives and considers the 2021/22 SSAB Annual Report.
 2. That the Somerset Health and Wellbeing Board continues to promote adult safeguarding across the County Council and in the services that are commissioned

5. Background papers

- 5.1.
- [Appendix A – SSAB Annual Report, 2021-22](#)
 - [Appendix B – SSAB Annual Report Appendix \(The Work of Our Members\)](#)
 - [Appendix C – SSAB Annual Report One Page Summary](#)

6. Report Sign-Off

	Seen by:	Name	Date
Report Sign off	Relevant Senior Manager / Lead Officer (Director Level)	Trudi Grant	
	Executive Member (if applicable)	Cllr Bill Revans	Click or tap to enter a date.
	Monitoring Officer (Somerset County Council)	Scott Wooldridge	Click or tap to enter a date.