
Somerset Safeguarding Adults Board - Annual Report 2022/23

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Executive Lead Member: Cllr Dean Ruddle

Division / Local Member: All

1. Summary

1.1. Adult safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. Safeguarding means protecting people's right to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect. The Somerset Safeguarding Adults Board Annual Report (see attached appendices) outlines adult safeguarding activity and performance across the county between April 2022 and March

2023.[Click here and type summary - no more than 1 - 2 paragraph(s)]

1.2. The Annual Report is presented each year to the Scrutiny Committee in the interests of promotion, transparency and accountability, as well as being shared with the Chief Executive and Lead Member of the Local Authority, the Police and Crime Commissioner and Chief Constable, Healthwatch Somerset, and the Chair of the Health and Wellbeing Board (as is legislatively required). It is also shared with NHS Somerset leads."[Click here and type text linking item to Council Plan]"

2. Issues for consideration / Recommendations

2 Scrutiny Committee to receive and consider the 2022/23 SSAB Annual Report.[Click here and summarise key issues/questions that members need to address]

2 Scrutiny Committee to continue to encourage all elected councillors to actively support adult safeguarding across the Local Authority and Somerset's local communities, promoting awareness of the resources and support available via the SSAB website: [Somerset Safeguarding Adults Board – Somerset Safeguarding Adults Board \(safeguardingsomerset.org.uk\)](https://safeguardingsomerset.org.uk)

3. Background

3.1. 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:

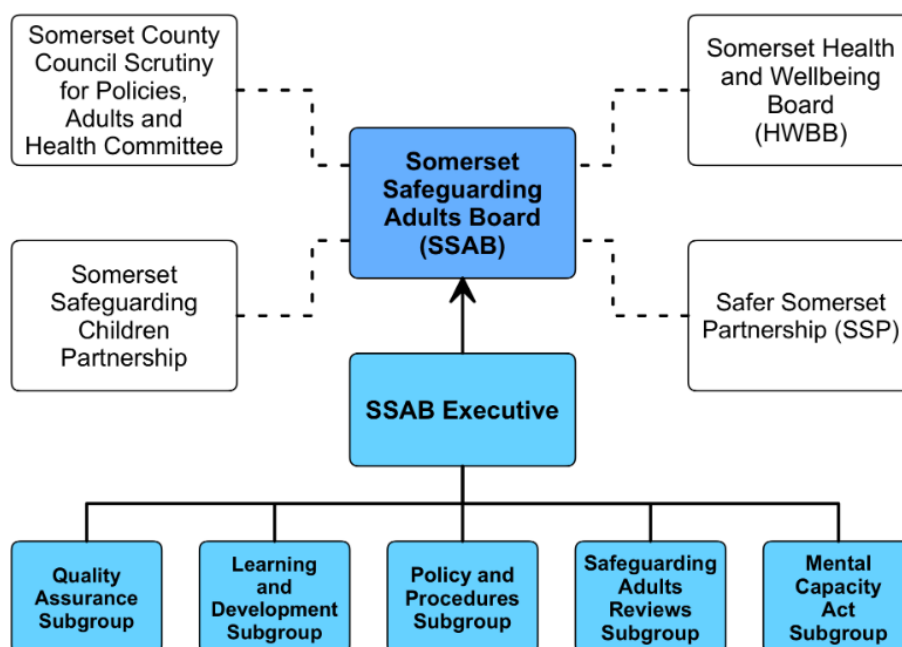
- have needs for care and support; *and*
- are experiencing, or at risk of, abuse, neglect or exploitation; *and*
- are unable to protect themselves from the risk of, or experience of abuse or neglect as a result of their care and support needs[Click here and type brief background]

3.2. 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.

3.3. Somerset’s SAB is independently Chaired by Michael Preston-Shoot, who took up post in January 2023. 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 safeguard, 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.

3.4. Board structure as at 31/03/2023:



3.5. 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 Council. *As such, any questions from committee members regarding operational matters, including individual safeguarding enquiries, are best directed to the representative of the organisation that has the lead for this work.*

4. Key SSAB Updates and Highlights

4.1. Like many areas across the Country, we have seen first-hand how health and social care systems have had to cope with unprecedented demand, increasing complexity and, at the same time, manage the repercussions of the COVID pandemic, and workforce recruitment and retention pressures. The SAB itself

maintained its focus on a virtual basis and continued to deliver the objectives of its 3-year strategic plan and improving the effectiveness of the Board. The Board is keen to highlight the following information for Scrutiny awareness:

- a) There was a **decrease of 81 (3.6%) safeguarding concerns compared to the previous year; a continued downward trend**. Of the 2,184 concerns, 4 were raised by the adult themselves, which was also the number in 2021/22.
- b) The majority of individuals involved in a safeguarding enquiry are **over 65 and male**. The **most common risk type was 'neglect and acts of omission'**, followed by financial or material abuse and physical 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 has continued its commitment to 'Making Safeguarding Personal' and as of end of March 2023, 100% of cases where desired outcomes were stated, were fully achieved.
- 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 'Elder Abuse' during National Safeguarding Adults Week in November 2022 and hosted its first Conference since the Pandemic in March 2023, which welcomed people from all organisations to a day of presentations and interactive sessions themed 'Making Safeguarding Personal'.
- e) To support the Board's continuous improvement, the SSAB conducted a **SSAB Effectiveness Survey** to assist the subgroup in benchmarking current Board performance and to determine any areas requiring further development. This work was especially beneficial given the Board has recently appointed a new Independent Chair and allowed the feedback to serve as a both a baseline at the start of his tenure as well as inform Board development plans. The survey identified a range of strengths (including multi-agency collaboration, engagement and commitment, knowledgeable and experienced Chair, efficient business unit, SSAB Comms and profile and activity and guidance for policy and procedures) as well as some opportunities for future development and continued attention (including focus on transitional safeguarding, developing further links, more engagement with partners in subgroups and combining resources for training).
- f) Two **Safeguarding Adults Review** were published during 2022-23 ('[Robert](#)' and '[Susan](#)'), we also published a practice briefing and a death review. Somerset has seen a significant rise in SAR referrals and is progressing a number of reviews.

[Click here and type details of consultation outcomes}

5. Looking to the Future

- 5.1. The SSAB published its 2023-2026 Strategic Plan in June 2023. The Plan is publicly available on its website and can be accessed via this link: [SSAB-Strategic-Plan-2023-26](https://safeguardingsomerset.org.uk)(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.
[Click here and insert relevant implications paragraphs]

6. Implications

- 6.1 **Financial Implications:** The majority of the SSAB's funding is provided by Somerset Council, with contributions from Avon & Somerset Constabulary and Somerset NHS ICB. Safeguarding Adults Reviews (SARs) are resourced by the partnership as and when required and an agreement is in place between the three statutory partners to resource all SARs equally from outside the SSAB's core budget. All reports are publicly available on the website.
- 6.2 **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.
- 6.3 The Health and Care Act 2022 gave the Care Quality Commission (CQC) new powers to provide a meaningful and independent assessment of care at a local authority (LA) level. These commenced from April 2023. Together with assessments of Integrated Care Systems, these are intended to support greater understanding of the quality of care in a local area/system and provide independent assurance to the public.
- 6.4 The CQC has commenced a limited number of pilot assessments within (volunteer) LAs from April 2023 (covering up to 5 nationally through to September 2023). They aim to commence formal assessments in September 2023, and to carry out up to 20 between September and December.
- 6.5 **Risk implications:** Safeguarding activity by its nature carries inherent risk and has the potential to bring a Council's reputation, and the wider safeguarding system, into question when failings occur/are identified. The Annual Plan and Report, both a legal requirement by the Care Act 2014, provide partner organisations and the public with assurances that adult safeguarding is being monitored and scrutinised in Somerset. The Board also maintains and monitors its own risk register.

Appendices

[Click here and list background papers used when preparing the report]

[**Appendix A – SSAB Annual Report, 2022-23**](#)

[**Appendix B – SSAB Annual Report Appendix \(The Work of Our Members\)**](#)

[**Appendix C – SSAB Annual Report One Page Summary**](#)