



Safeguarding Adults Board Meeting

10 March 2026 9:30-12:00

Present:

- Michael Preston-Shoot (MPS) Independent Chair, SSAB
- Alison Bell – Director, Public Health, Somerset Council
- Ashley Fussell - Head of Somerset Probation Delivery Unit
- Bethany Briers-Jones - Tenancy Sustainment Officer, ABRI Housing
- Carolyn Smith - Principal Social Worker, Strategic Lead for Safeguarding and DOLS
- Emily Fulbrook - Service Director, Adult Social Care Operational Services, Somerset Council
- George Headley – Avon and Somerset Police (Item 6)
- Heather Sparks -Strategic Lead & Named Professional Safeguarding Adults, Somerset NHS FT
- Hilary Robinson - CEO, RCPA Ltd
- Jodie Williams- representing, Discovery
- Julia Mason - Designated Nurse for Safeguarding Adults, NHS Somerset Integrated Care Board
- Katy Buckle – Manager, SWAN
- Kim Sadler - Manager, Healthwatch Somerset
- Kirsty Larkins - Service Director Housing, Somerset Council
- Lisa Simpson – Superintendent, Avon and Somerset Police
- Louise Curry - Public Health Consultant, Somerset Council
- Lucy Macready - Head of Service, Community Safety, Somerset Council
- Lerryn Uddy - Head of Safeguarding, SWAST
- Natalie Green - SSAB Business Manager
- Philip Boyce - Safeguarding & Closed Cultures, Care Quality Commission
- Sarah Hawker - Advanced Customer Support Senior Leader, Avon, Somerset and Gloucestershire, Department for Work and Pensions
- Simon Lewis - Head of Housing, Somerset Council
- Tom Blake – Performance Officer, ASC
- Tracey Pugh - Safeguarding Officer, Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue
- Trudy Craig - Head of Quality and Governance, Somerset Care Ltd
- Vicky Chipchase - Head of Service, Adults, Policy, Performance and Assurance

Apologies:

- Angela Kerr - VCSFE Representative
- Helen Orford – Managing Director, Discovery
- Rachel Donne-Davis - Health Psychologist, LeDeR, NHS Somerset Integrated Care Board
- Sarah Ashe - Associate Director of Quality and Nursing, NHS Somerset Integrated Care Board
- Sarah Wakefield - Lead Member for Adult Social Care, Somerset Council
- Shelagh Meldrum - Chief Nursing Officer, NHS Somerset Integrated Care Board
- Wendy Dootson - Director of Safeguarding, Somerset NHS FT

Circulation:

All SSAB Board Members

Retention of notes

The master set of these notes and background papers are held by SSAB Business Manager. Please destroy your copy when you have finished with it and use the master set for future reference.

Item		Action by
1.	Welcome, introductions, apologies:	
	The Chair opened the meeting and welcomed all members and attendees. Introductions were made for those present. The Chair advised members of a change to the published agenda. It was confirmed that SAR 'X' would not be presented as planned, as the report was not yet ready for Board consideration. The item would therefore be deferred to a future meeting, and the Board would consider two Safeguarding Adult Reviews at this session. The Chair also noted that this meeting marked Julia Mason's final attendance at the Somerset Safeguarding Adults Board, due to changes within the Integrated Care Board. On behalf of the Board, he recorded formal thanks to Julia for her contribution, professionalism and constructive challenge in relation to adult safeguarding in Somerset. Action: SAR 'X' to be deferred and scheduled for consideration at a future SSAB meeting. Natalie to manage this through the forward plan.	NG
2.	Early Intervention and the One Team	
	The Board received a presentation on the Early Intervention model and the development of the One Team approach, delivered by Lucy Macready, with a recorded contribution from Emmaline Kay. Members were informed that Early Intervention now sits within the Community Safety Team and operates as a locality-based model aligned to education localities. While the One Team "brand" may reduce over time, the principles underpinning it remain central to the approach. The model aims to ensure that the right agencies are involved at the right time to address concerns before they escalate to statutory thresholds, particularly where individuals do not meet criteria for adult social care intervention but remain vulnerable. The presentation outlined the structure of the Early Intervention offer, including the deployment of four Early Intervention Coordinators, each aligned to locality areas, and the intention to maintain local multi-agency meetings in identified hotspot areas. Emphasis was placed on partnership working, information sharing agreements, and the importance of community engagement. In discussion, Board members welcomed the focus on early intervention but raised a number of strategic considerations. These included the need for clearer alignment with Adult Social Care neighbourhood arrangements, Primary Care Network footprints and NHS structures, and the risk of duplication or fragmentation within an already complex system. Members also highlighted the	

	importance of explicitly linking the Early Intervention model to learning from Safeguarding Adult Reviews, particularly thematic learning on self-neglect and escalation. The Chair sought assurance regarding governance and system oversight, noting the Board's responsibility to ensure that emerging models of practice are fully connected to the wider safeguarding system. It was agreed that while the model had much merit, further assurance was required as it continues to develop. Actions: Lucy Macready to provide the locality map showing Early Intervention Coordinators and their aligned areas for inclusion with the minutes. Lucy Macready and Emmaline Kay to bring a further update to the Board focusing on alignment with Adult Social Care, PCNs and NHS structures, and on how SAR learning is being embedded within the model.	LM NG
3.	SAR 'Z'	
	The Board received the SAR 'Z' report, presented via a recorded presentation by the independent reviewer, Nicky Brownjohn. The Chair summarised the key findings for members. The review had been commissioned as a discretionary Safeguarding Adult Review under Section 44 of the Care Act and identified significant learning in relation to multi-agency working with adults who have complex needs. Key issues included weaknesses in Think Family practice across adult and children's services, challenges in managing self-neglect and mental capacity, inconsistent information sharing, and difficulties in escalation. The review also highlighted concerns regarding access to mental health support for individuals with trauma, and risks associated with home oxygen therapy and long-term opioid prescribing. Board members discussed the findings in detail. Concerns were expressed that known risks, particularly in relation to oxygen use, had not been escalated more effectively, and that learning around trauma-informed practice continued to emerge across multiple reviews. During discussion of SAR 'Z', members noted that the circumstances of the case raised significant issues in relation to substance use, including long-term opioid prescribing and the absence of a coordinated response to potential dependency. It was acknowledged that while this was not a primary focus of the SAR recommendations, the learning was highly relevant to the Board's wider understanding of substance use, prescribing practices and escalation across the system. The Chair and members agreed that this aspect of the case should be explicitly captured and considered as part of the Board's planned Substance Use Thematic Review, to ensure that learning from SAR 'Z' informs system-wide analysis and improvement. The Board agreed to accept SAR 'Z'. However, given the involvement of a child, the Board agreed that publication should be paused pending advice from Children's Social Care regarding any potential risks or contra-indications. It was	

	also agreed that learning relating to substance use should be fed into the planned Substance Use Thematic Review. Actions: Natalie to seek advice from Children's Social Care regarding publication of SAR 'Z'. Natalie to ensure learning from SAR 'Z' is incorporated into the Substance Use Thematic Review.	NG NG
4.	Right Care, Right Person	
	The Board received an update from Superintendent George Handley on the implementation of Right Care, Right Person (RCRP) in Somerset. Members were informed that RCRP had been in place since June 2024 and had resulted in a reduction in police attendance at concern for welfare incidents, largely due to improved routing of demand at first point of contact. Strong partnership working with South Western Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust was highlighted, including the operation of a Memorandum of Understanding and the introduction of a Mental Health Link Officer within ambulance control. He also reported a reduction in the use of Section 136, although Somerset remains a comparatively high user nationally. In discussion, Board members raised concerns regarding the adequacy of community mental health provision and the potential impact of RCRP on partner agencies, including Fire and Rescue Services. Members emphasised the importance of scrutiny where Police attendance is reduced and welcomed plans to develop a multi-agency scrutiny panel. Actions: Superintendent George Handley to progress the development of a multi-agency scrutiny panel. Vicky Chipchase to seek further assurance regarding community mental health provision through the Performance and Quality Subgroup.	GH VC
	SAR 'Y'	
	The Board considered SAR 'Y', which had been undertaken as a tabletop review and chaired by Professor Michael Preston-Shoot due to the limited timescale and the nature of the case. The Chair summarised the review, explaining that it highlighted a number of recurring themes previously identified through other Safeguarding Adult Reviews in Somerset. These included nonengagement and missed appointments, mental capacity assessment, self-discharge from hospital, escalation of concerns, and the recording of decision making. The review also identified positive practice, particularly the role played by the RSPCA as a nontraditional safeguarding partner.	

	Members were invited to comment; no objections were raised to the findings or recommendations. The Board agreed that the themes were consistent with known system issues and that the recommendations were appropriate. The Board formally approved SAR 'Y' and agreed that it should be published. Given the circumstances of the case, it was agreed that a pseudonym should be used rather than a generic label. Members also requested that a close friend who had raised concerns be contacted prior to publication, to ensure appropriate communication and transparency. Actions Natalie and Michael to contact the friend involved in SAR 'Y' prior to publication. Natalie to arrange publication of SAR 'Y' using a pseudonym.	NG/MPS NG
5.	Notes of previous meeting and matters arising (December 2025)	
	The minutes of the previous meeting were approved as an accurate record. The Board reviewed matters arising, including actions relating to suicide prevention, hate crime, and the publication of safeguarding pathway guidance. Some actions remained outstanding, and updates were requested. Actions: Natalie Green to follow up outstanding actions relating to suicide prevention and hate crime. Progress publication of the updated Safeguarding Pathways guidance on the SSAB website.	NG NG
6.	Performance and Assurance	
	The Board received a focused performance and assurance update presented by Vicky Chipchase, Carolyn Smith and Tom Blake. The presentation outlined Somerset's position as a statistical outlier with regard to the number of recorded safeguarding concerns and explained the role of the customer contact centre in screening contacts before they reach safeguarding triage. Members were advised of a proposal to include all safeguarding related contacts within performance reporting, including those screened at first contact, which would significantly alter Somerset's reported data and bring it closer to regional comparators. Improvements in the timeliness of Section 42(1) decisions were noted, as was advocacy as an area requiring continued focus. In discussion, the Chair emphasised that decisions regarding recording practices and operational processes sit with the local authority. The Board's role is to seek assurance regarding the effectiveness, safety and quality of those processes. Concerns were raised regarding reliance on non-qualified staff at the initial screening stage, and the importance of robust professional oversight was stressed.	

	The Board noted the proposals and requested continued assurance as changes are implemented. Action: Adult Social Care to provide ongoing assurance to the Board regarding the effectiveness and oversight of safeguarding screening and triage arrangements.	CS
7.	Regional and National Updates	
	A written regional and national update paper was provided to members and taken as read.	
8.	Any Other Business	
	No additional items of business were raised. The Chair formally thanked Lisa Simpson for her contribution to the Board, noting that this was her final meeting.	
CLOSE		
Future Board Meeting dates: 30/06/2026 09:30-12:30 08/09/2026 13:30-16:30 16/12/2026 09:30-12:30 17/03/2027 13:30-16:30		