Adult Social Care Statement

Adult Social Care welcomes the findings of this Safeguarding Adult Review and recognises the importance of the learning identified. Since Raymond's death, a range of improvements have been implemented across Adult Social Care and Housing to address many of the issues highlighted in the review and strengthen our response to adults experiencing homelessness, multiple disadvantage and complex care and support needs.

A significant development has been the integration of Housing and Adult Social Care within a single directorate, creating stronger joint leadership, shared accountability and more coordinated responses to risk. This has been supported by implementation of the Somerset Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2025-2030, strengthened homelessness partnership governance arrangements, and the establishment of the Accommodation and Support Working Group to improve strategic planning, identify gaps in provision and support the development of accommodation pathways for people with multiple and intersecting needs. Adult Social Care has also introduced Rough Sleeping Specialist Social Worker posts within Housing to strengthen professional decision-making, safeguarding oversight, multi-agency working and access to care and support.

In response to learning regarding trauma, homelessness and multiple disadvantage, Adult Social Care commissioned Second Step to deliver trauma-informed support and workforce development across the system. This includes a multi-agency Community of Practice, expanded learning opportunities and a stronger focus on relationship-based, trauma-informed approaches when working with adults experiencing homelessness and social exclusion. These developments are helping to build shared understanding, strengthen partnership responses and improve consistency of practice across agencies.

Adult Social Care has also strengthened arrangements for professional challenge and escalation. The Somerset Safeguarding Adults Board Resolving Professional Differences Guidance has been actively promoted across Adult Social Care, including through a countywide event for managers and supervisors. Further work is underway to strengthen escalation pathways where significant risks remain unresolved, including a review of multi-agency complex case panel arrangements to ensure robust senior oversight where risks persist despite ongoing multi-agency involvement.

Within safeguarding practice, improvements have been made to strengthen person-centred practice, decision-making and quality assurance. This includes enhanced management oversight and quality assurance of completed safeguarding enquiries, greater emphasis on recording the adult's views, wishes and desired outcomes, and

clearer distinction between safeguarding enquiry activity and longer-term protection planning. Adult Social Care continues to strengthen its quality assurance arrangements to identify learning, improve practice quality and consistency, and support continuous improvement.

The review highlights important learning in relation to mental capacity, financial abuse and adults experiencing homelessness. In response, Adult Social Care is undertaking

further practice development and assurance activity to strengthen Mental Capacity Act practice, particularly where substance use, cognitive impairment, acquired brain injury, self-neglect or fluctuating capacity may be present. This includes strengthening professional curiosity, improving understanding of executive functioning, promoting the effective use of third-party information, and supporting practitioners to make robust, evidence-based decisions in complex situations.

Ongoing priorities include strengthening guidance and practice in relation to financial abuse and exploitation, embedding effective escalation where significant risks remain, further improving safeguarding and Mental Capacity Act assurance, mapping gaps in specialist accommodation provision, and developing more effective care and support options for adults experiencing homelessness and multiple disadvantage.

Collectively, these developments provide a stronger foundation for integrated working, shared ownership of risk and person-centred safeguarding. Adult Social Care recognises, however, that implementing change is only part of the improvement journey. Continued focus is required to evidence the impact of these developments on people's experiences and outcomes, ensuring that learning from Raymond's experience translates into sustainable improvements in practice and better outcomes for adults at risk.