

# **SPECIFICATION FOR THE INDEPENDENT CHAIR OF SANDWELL SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN BOARD**

## **1. BACKGROUND**

- 1.1. The Sandwell Safeguarding Children's Boards require an independent Chair to provide challenge and independent scrutiny in ensuring that they operate effectively. They are well supported boards and are developing ambitious work programmes to ensure that children, young people, and their families are able to thrive, prosper and achieve.

## **2. PURPOSE**

- 2.1. To Chair the Sandwell Safeguarding Children Board (SSCB).

## **3. PRIMARY OBJECTIVES OF THIS ROLE**

- 3.1. To ensure that the boards have an independent, objective and authoritative identity.
- 3.2. To provide strategic direction and ensure both boards ability to independently fulfil their strategic objectives of coordinating and monitoring the effectiveness of partnership working to safeguard and promote the welfare of children who require safeguarding in Sandwell.
- 3.3. To ensure effective collective working between the boards partner agencies, providing challenge and assisting in resolving difficulties when necessary.
- 3.4. To provide effective scrutiny of safeguarding at all levels and across adult and children services agencies in the context of developments in personalisation and greater emphasis on independence and choice for people who use services.

#### **4. WORK INVOLVED / AVAILABILITY**

- 4.1. To Chair regular scheduled meetings of the SSCB and follow up on decisions as required including items for Chair's action.
- 4.2. To chair any extra- ordinary meetings associated with the strategic direction of the Board and chair meetings of sub-groups chairs as appropriate and maintain an overview of the work of the sub-groups.
- 4.3. To ensure that minutes accurately reflect SSCB discussions, agreements, actions and ensure timely distribution of these.
- 4.4. To support the development of the business plans, agree the work programme and agenda for SSCB with the respective boards.
- 4.5. To meet with and formally report to the Director of Children's Services at least six monthly to review the efficiency of the SSCB and ensure the effectiveness of the SSCB and its sub structure to meet any statutory responsibilities.
- 4.6. To uphold and develop the SSCB terms of reference and membership.
- 4.7. To maintain formal and informal dialogue as required to follow Board decisions, develop safeguarding activity and respond to complaints or concerns, relating to the conduct of safeguarding work in Sandwell
- 4.8. To carry out roles and responsibilities with respect to Serious Case Reviews as specified in Sandwell's Serious Case Review protocol.

- 4.9. Ensure the Board has jointly agreed policy and procedures for responding to Serious Case incidents, and that the procedures are implemented in a timely manner.
- 4.10. In conjunction with the appropriate Safeguarding Manager, ensure that key issues and national developments in safeguarding are brought to the attention of, and consideration by, SSCB, their sub groups and others.
- 4.11. To ensure that appropriate safeguarding case monitoring is carried out in line with the national reporting requirements and includes local quality indicators as appropriate.
- 4.12. Responding to public relations issues or interagency problems, including making public or media statements on any matter relevant to the objectives and functions of the Board, following consultation with Board members and legal services as appropriate.
- 4.13. To make presentations to the public and professionals in relation to safeguarding and the work of the boards.
- 4.14. To network nationally and regionally to ensure that the Board's activities are aligned with national policy expectations and other developing practice.
- 4.15. Commission and co-ordinate the completion and publication of the Sandwell annual safeguarding report, prepare the foreword to each report and undertake strategic analysis of agreed data sets.
- 4.16. To engage in active consultation and dialogue with people who use services, their carers, the community and other people with an interest in safeguarding and personalisation, so that the voice

of the user can inform the work of the Board and the review and evaluation of its' work programme.

- 4.17. To oversee the development of the Board and constituent sub-groups.
- 4.18. To liaise with the Safeguarding Managers to ensure the timely and effective management of Board business and that this is conducted within agreed resources.
- 4.19. To meet with and assist the induction of new members of the Board.
- 4.20. Through the Board, ensure that partner organisations are held accountable for the effective deployment of resources in relation to safeguarding activity.
- 4.21. To oversee the performance management of the Board's Business Plan and ensure that the Plan maintains a clear focus on outcomes.
- 4.22. To contribute to the delivery of the health and wellbeing priorities across the Council's agenda and to attend other strategic meetings as required.
- 4.23. To represent the Boards at National and Regional meetings as agreed by the SSCB.
- 4.24. Ensure that the SSCB and its' sub-groups comply with governance arrangements and standards.
- 4.25. To meet as required with the Council's lead members for Safeguarding Children.

- 4.26. To respond to correspondence sent to the Chair.
- 4.27. To ensure that the Business and Training Plans reflect and support the priorities of the Boards.
- 4.28. To ensure there are agreed local protocols in place which ensure that the SSCB are able to effectively challenge and scrutinise the work of the Health & Wellbeing Board and partners.
- 4.29. To work closely with the Police and Crime Commissioner to keep the welfare of children and adults in the local area high on the Commissioners agenda.
- 4.30. In addition to Chairing the Safeguarding Boards and other meetings as described in this Specification, the Consultant would need to be available to attend occasional other meetings as appropriate / on request, such as the Children Services Improvement Board.
- 4.31. The Consultant may on occasion be asked to Chair / attend other meetings, where their particular skills and presence are required.
- 4.32. To attend to administrative tasks such as scrutinising draft minutes and other reports produced for meetings.
- 4.33. To work closely with the Safeguarding Managers with time allocated to respond to telephone calls / faxes / correspondence, etc. The Consultant will also provide additional support and advice to the Safeguarding Managers, by mutual agreement, if needed to resolve critical issues.

4.34. Any other duties as may be jointly agreed from time to time as necessary and appropriate to the role.

## **5. SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE**

- 5.1. The Consultant must be able to demonstrate in depth knowledge of relevant legislation, government guidance and regulation.
- 5.2. In depth understanding of the issues involved in child care, child and understanding of the contributions of different agencies to the work of the Safeguarding Boards.
- 5.3. Ability to chair meetings with clarity and demonstrate good timekeeping, a focus on outcomes and actions and be inclusive of all participants.
- 5.4. Good communication and problem solving skills, especially in handling difficulties in inter-agency relations.
- 5.5. The ability to ensure rigorous performance monitoring and challenge others.
- 5.6. The ability to develop and maintain a positive public and professional profile, particularly in situations requiring public statements on behalf of the Safeguarding Boards.
- 5.7. The ability to foster and develop good working relationships within and between agencies.
- 5.8. Ability to act objectively and distinguish between the role of chair of the SSCB and any other roles held.
- 5.9. Considerable experience at operating at a senior level and a proven track record of effective leadership is required.

