



North Lincolnshire Safeguarding Adults Board

Scrutiny and Assurance Framework

May 2025

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Overview

The North Lincolnshire Safeguarding Adults Board Scrutiny and Assurance Framework has been developed to create an environment that is conducive to robust scrutiny and constructive challenge. The arrangements include opportunities to work in partnership to learn and improve practice across the multi-agency adult safeguarding system.

There is an ongoing drive and commitment to ensure continuous improvement leading to better outcomes and experiences for adults at risk in North Lincolnshire. Through this Scrutiny and Assurance Framework (known hereafter as the Framework), a range of mechanisms are in place to ensure scrutiny and assurance, which are:

- Joint Safeguarding Self-Assessment (joint with the Children's Multi-Agency Resilience and Safeguarding (MARS) Board)
- Themed audits
- Case specific audits
- Agency 'call ins'
- Agency specific assurance events
- Thematic assurance events
- Line of sight to practice events
- Multi-agency case studies

These mechanisms provide opportunities for quality assurance, case tracking and deep dives into specific agencies, themes, cohorts, and areas of focus.

In the spirit of continuous learning and a responsive approach, we will adapt and review this Framework, ensuring the approach to scrutiny and assurance continues to be transparent and inclusive.

This Framework, which is developed in a contemporary context taking innovative approaches, enables safeguarding partners to:

- Talk with and receive direct feedback from adults at risk, adults with lived experience and their families
- Have assurance of whether all agencies are fulfilling their responsibilities to safeguarding adults who are at risk of abuse or neglect
- Have assurance of whether all agencies are joined up and working together to safeguard and promote the wellbeing of adults at risk across the safeguarding system
- Have a direct line of sight to frontline practice
- Have live conversations with frontline practitioners

This Framework provides clarity regarding our arrangements and outlines who will conduct the assurance function, how arrangements will be reviewed and how any recommendations will be taken forward. This includes the process and timescales for ongoing review of the arrangements to ensure they remain fit for purpose.

Partnership scrutiny and assurance functions

<p>Voice of adults with the lived experience</p>	<p>There are opportunities to utilise the skills and assets of individual adults who have a lived experience and groups and forums to give them the opportunity to scrutinise, challenge and influence the services they access. The process also enables agencies to reflect on and improve their provision to better meet the needs of adults who have care and support needs. This will also enable adults with the lived experience to reflect on their observations and experiences when accessing local services and will contribute to the Safeguarding Adults Board oversight.</p> <p>The voice of the adult will remain at the heart of the mechanisms identified below.</p>
<p>Joint Safeguarding Self-Assessment</p>	<p>The Joint Safeguarding Self-Assessment process is a means of collating information to ascertain whether agencies are fulfilling their functions to safeguard and protect the welfare of children (under the auspices of Section 11 of the Children Act 2004) and to ensure that adults with care and support needs are safeguarded in line with the Care Act 2014.</p> <p>This exercise is underpinned by a self-assessment tool which enables individual agencies to articulate if and how they discharge their safeguarding responsibilities and to identify areas of best practice as well as areas of risk and further development including associated actions.</p> <p>The self-assessment process is co-ordinated by the Safeguarding Adults Board and Children’s MARS Board business teams and a summary of the outcomes and composite of the individual agency action plans is made available to the Safeguarding Adults Board and Executive Leads. Progress against the identified actions is collated and presented to the Safeguarding Adults Board and Executive Leads a year thereafter.</p> <p>There are opportunities to further develop the self-assessment tool, including bespoke specific areas of focus as identified.</p> <p>We will make use of self-assessments as part of the preparations for our agency specific assurance events.</p> <p>The voice of the adult is taken into consideration throughout the assessment. Partners are required to specifically provide evidence within standard 6 that the wishes and feelings of adults who have care and support needs are considered at both at an operational level, and within the development of services and strategies.</p>
<p>Agency ‘Call Ins’</p>	<p>There are opportunities for safeguarding partners to ‘call in’ agency representatives to assure the Board of the agencies’ safeguarding adult responsibilities under the Care Act 2014 and Care & Support Statutory Guidance, their contribution to the local arrangements or in relation to a</p>

	<p>specific issue.</p> <p>This can be done through the Protection & Accountability subgroup, or bespoke meetings or events.</p>
<p>Agency Specific Assurance Events</p>	<p>Over a two-year period, there is commitment to undertake an agency specific assurance event for agencies in partnership with the Children’s MARS Board.</p> <p>These events provide an opportunity for Board member representatives and relevant partners to visit specific agencies to meet and talk to practitioners. The events can be held either face to face or via online methods. It will provide an opportunity to meet / speak to adults who have a lived experience. Adults with a lived experience will also be encouraged and supported to contribute to these arrangements where appropriate.</p> <p>It is an opportunity for the agencies to showcase good practice, indicate how they listen to adults with care and support needs and to talk about further developments. This gives partners and adults with a lived experience a sense of a specific agency contribution to the safeguarding system. We will make use of the joint safeguarding self-assessments as part of the preparations for our agency specific assurance events, along with any other pertinent information i.e. inspection reports.</p> <p>The outcomes of these will help to shape the focus of the agency specific events, though the format for the events is flexible and exact arrangements will be agreed by the safeguarding partners, and any relevant agencies that may contribute to the assurance event and the identified agency.</p> <p>An indicative format for an agency specific assurance event is as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The specific agency identified for scrutiny is endorsed by the three Executive Leads in partnership with the Children’s MARS Board • A proposed date is identified to ensure availability of safeguarding partners, other contributing partners (if the agency identified is one of the safeguarding partners, a representative from that agency will not be involved in the agency specific event) • If the joint safeguarding self-assessment needs to be updated, it will be distributed to the identified agency (this should be no later than six weeks prior to the proposed date) and will be submitted to the SAB/Children’s MARS business teams (this should be no later than three weeks prior to the proposed date) • Taking account of the outcomes of the joint safeguarding self-assessment and any other relevant sources of information, preparatory work will be undertaken by members of the Protection & Accountability subgroup to provide opportunities for reflective observations and lines of questioning • The programme for the agency specific assurance event will be developed with the identified agency, representatives from the

	<p>Children’s MARS Board, SAB Executive Leads and then distributed to those involved</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agency specific event to take place – this can be either as a face-to-face event or online via other methods such as Microsoft Teams • Led by representatives from the Protection & Accountability subgroup, and the Children’s MARS Board, key highlights, findings and immediate areas for consideration and action will be fed back to the specific agency representatives at the end of the event • A letter will be collated to clarify the summary of findings including areas of positive practice and areas for improvement and further consideration • The letter will be sent to the specific SAB agency lead for their information and action. The letter will also be shared with any commissioners of the agency’s services • The letter will be presented to the next available SAB Executive Group and Children’s MARS Board • Any identified actions will be followed up by the Protection & Accountability subgroup, in collaboration with the Children’s MARS Board and specific SAB agency lead • The agency will have a responsibility to incorporate the findings and any action taken into their next annual joint safeguarding self-assessment <p>Specific arrangements for these events will be flexible to take account of learning and local need to ensure quality outcomes for adults with care and support needs.</p>
<p>Line of Sight to Practice Event</p>	<p>The Protection & Accountability subgroup will undertake Line of Sight to Practice events throughout the year. Each event will consider a number of safeguarding cases in relation to a specific theme, previously agreed by the Protection & Accountability Subgroup.</p> <p>The SAB business team will work with partners to identify the cases and following a process of single agency case audits, a Line of Sight to Practice panel will meet with practitioners (either online or face to face) to discuss the cases.</p> <p>The event is led and chaired by a nominated member of the Protection & Accountability subgroup who is independent to the case. Panel members should include safeguarding partner representatives and any other relevant senior representatives from other agencies who may have specific expertise in the chosen theme.</p> <p>The event enables partners to engage in active challenge and ensure they have interface with multi-agency practitioners from across the safeguarding system.</p>

	<p>The expected outcomes of the Line of Sight to Practice events are that it will identify areas of best practice, further improvement relating to multi agency practice and agree strategic action across the partnership pertaining specific themes.</p> <p>Following the Line of Sight to Practice event, the event overview and action plan will be formalised by the chair and panel, supported by the SAB business team. The outcomes will be considered at the next available Protection & Accountability subgroup and the action plan will be monitored until completion.</p> <p>Outcomes and progress against the action plan will be fed into the SAB Executive Group via the Protection & Accountability chair as appropriate.</p> <p>Key highlights and emerging themes will be published on the SAB website and distributed across the partnership.</p> <p>Case Specific Line of Sight to Practice Events</p> <p>SAB representatives from any of the safeguarding partner organisations can request a Line of Sight to Practice event in relation to specific cases as a means of identifying learning and areas for development across the partnership.</p> <p>Requests should be made to the Protection & Accountability Group via the SAB business team. Consideration should also be made as to whether the case would meet the criteria for a Safeguarding Adults Review (SAR), and if so if a referral for a SAR would be more appropriate.</p> <p>The decision to hold a Case Specific Line of Sight to Practice event will be made by the Protection & Accountability subgroup.</p> <p>The event will be held in the same way as the Thematic Line of Sight to Practice arrangements above.</p>
Themed Audits	<p>Any of the Safeguarding Adults Board subgroups may identify the need for specific audits relating to emerging themes or multi agency practice, which will be undertaken by members of that subgroup supported by the SAB business team. This should not replace individual safeguarding organisational audits.</p> <p>The indicative process for these Safeguarding Audits is as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The identifying subgroup to agree the rationale and scope of the audits • The identifying subgroup to allocate a lead to undertake the audit supported by other appropriate subgroup members and the SAB business team • Preparatory work to be undertaken which may include confirming the scope of the audit, initial research, identifying cases and initial

	<p>meetings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Audit process to be undertaken which may include further meetings with relevant leads, visits to teams, engagement with adults with care and support needs and desk top research • Findings from audit to be prepared by lead, supported by the SAB business team, and shared with the subgroup for consideration and action • It may also be appropriate to share findings from audit and agreed actions with the other subgroups to ensure that any necessary follow up action is completed <p>The relevant subgroup will monitor any actions and may undertake follow up audits if required.</p>
Case Studies	<p>Any of the SAB partners can request that case studies are shared and discussed within the Protection & Accountability Subgroup.</p> <p>Case studies are a form of problem-based learning, where a situation is presented. The situation can often be a good example of processes working well, or where there is a need for development or resolution. A typical case study is an account, or story, of what happened in a particular situation over a set period.</p> <p>The objective of a case study is to present information on specific cases that enable the listeners to consider the effectiveness of specific practice and to address any learning needs for the greater good of the wider partnerships. Case studies give people the ability to reflect on what happened in a given scenario. The use of case studies within subgroup meetings will enable reflective practice and learning from real life, local situations to be considered at a strategic level.</p>

Individual agency scrutiny and assurance functions

There are other mechanisms in place for scrutinising our SAB arrangements through individual safeguarding partners' organisational scrutiny functions as follows:

North Lincolnshire Council Democratic Scrutiny and Internal Audit Functions	<p>Scrutiny panels support the work of the executive and the council as a whole. They allow citizens to have a greater say by holding public enquiries into matters of local concern. The scope of scrutiny panels is wide reaching and covers the work of the council, local health services in accordance with the Health and Social Care Act legislation and crime and disorder in accordance with the Police and Justice Act 2006.</p> <p>The role of scrutiny panels is to scrutinise the effectiveness of council policies, strategies, and performance, along with executive recommendations and</p>
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	<p>decisions within their scope. They are also required to scrutinise the effectiveness of partnership working with organisations and the impact of policies adopted by organisations where the council has a legitimate interest.</p> <p>All statutory safeguarding partners selected relevant agencies and other named organisations and agencies would fall within this scope.</p> <p>The Safeguarding Adults Board Annual Report and Strategic Plan is presented to and discussed at Cabinet and any other relevant scrutiny panels.</p>
<p>North Lincolnshire Health and Care Partnership Governing Body</p>	<p>North Lincolnshire Health and Care Partnership has comprehensive arrangements in place for safeguarding scrutiny and assurance within the North Lincolnshire Health and Care Partnership and for commissioned services.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A comprehensive quarterly performance and assurance report and an annual report is provided to the Quality, Performance and Finance Committee, a sub-committee of the North Lincolnshire Health and Care Partnership Governing Body. The Governing Body also receives the annual report • The Safeguarding Adults Board Annual Report is presented to and discussed at the North Lincolnshire Health and Care Partnership Governing Body • Requirements for assurance regarding safeguarding in commissioned services are required to be set out in the individual contracts for commissioned services • Major NHS providers are required to provide an annual self-assessment of safeguarding compliance to the North Lincolnshire Health and Care Partnership, and quarterly safeguarding performance information. Non-NHS providers have been required to provide evidence of compliance on request. From 2019/20, all North Lincolnshire Health and Care Partnership commissioned providers will be required to provide an annual self-assessment of their safeguarding compliance to the North Lincolnshire Health and Care Partnership • The North Lincolnshire Health and Care Partnership undertakes a planned programme of visits to clinical services during which safeguarding arrangements are scrutinised as part of the wider quality agenda
<p>Humberside Police</p>	<p>Humberside Police has comprehensive arrangements in place for safeguarding scrutiny and assurance within the force and its partnership activity.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A comprehensive monthly performance and assurance report and monthly crime audits examine the quality, quantity, and performance position, which is then overviewed at a Force level • The Safeguarding Adults Board Annual Report is presented to and discussed at the local and force management meetings

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Daily scrutiny is applied through the local and force level pacesetter meetings to individual safeguarding and crime incidences that have concerns for safety. <p>The force also conducts force wide scrutiny to its crime recording practices and safeguarding processes through local and independent scrutiny teams, and peer reviews are common practice.</p>
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Learning and improvement

A key element of our scrutiny and assurance process is on learning and improvement.

Each of the SAB subgroups have an executive lead member to provide oversight and leadership to the group and to drive change, share learning and deliver on agreed actions leading to better outcomes.

All SAB subgroups will have representation across the three statutory executive lead organisations and other selected relevant agencies. The group will be responsible for co-ordinating the outcomes of multi-agency scrutiny and assurance activity as appropriate.

The outcomes of single agency scrutiny and assurance activity will be the responsibility of the SAB in partnership with the Children’s MARS Board and individual safeguarding partners, where appropriate.

The Protection & Accountability Subgroup will devise action plans, monitor, implement and review areas for development to ensure we positively impact on our commitment towards continuous improvements across frontline practice. The subgroup will continue to give oversight to any action plans until completion and the outcomes will be fed into the Board as appropriate.

There will be other opportunities to share learning, working with the Prevention & Proportionality Subgroup and the Partnership & Empowerment subgroup, as well as learning from regional and national reviews, events, and published reports in order to improve practice.

Overall, the learning will contribute to further strengthening the safeguarding system, multi-agency practice and the nuanced approaches that services can develop.