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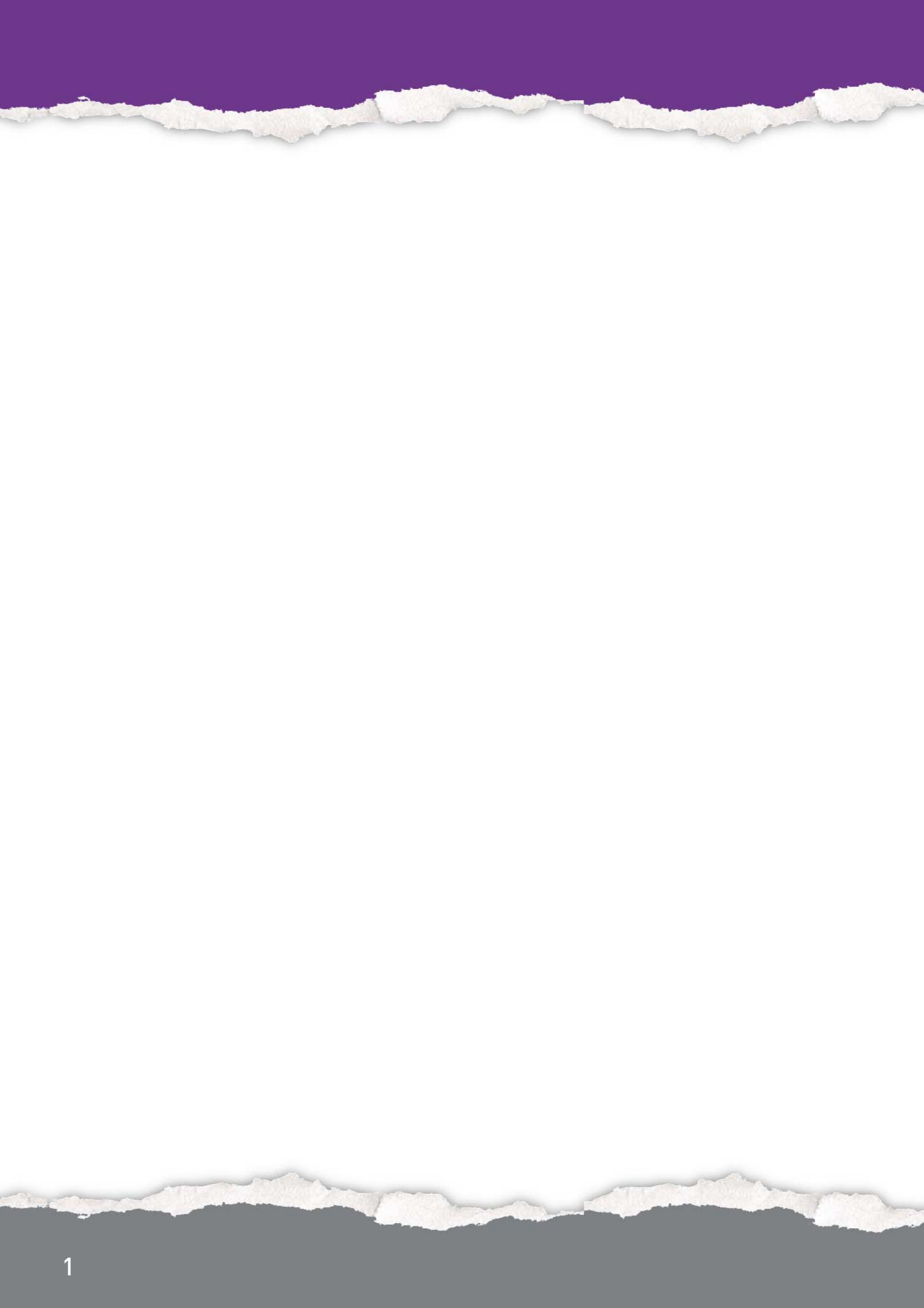
Sunderland **Safeguarding**
Adults Partnership



Safeguarding Adults

Policy Document

Working together to stop adult abuse



Foreword

The raising of standards must be seen as crucial if we are to keep safe from harm those individuals who may need to rely on health and social care support to maintain their independence and wellbeing.

Since the publication of Sunderland's first adult protection procedures in 1998 much work has been done to ensure we stay at the forefront of good practice in this area. The procedures were re-written in 2002 to take account of the guidance within "No Secrets", and several additional protocols have been produced to reflect the valuable lessons learned from both national and local experience along the way. There is the need, however, to constantly consider change: not for its own sake but in our efforts to achieve the highest possible standards, for only through that process can we be assured of best meeting our set aims and objectives. This document has been produced to consolidate the achievements and experience to date, and to reflect the standards contained within the ADSS "Safeguarding Adults, National Framework of Standards for good practice and outcomes in adult protection work".

No single agency can hope to work unaided and ensure the safety of all adults. Working together, strengthening our already well-established adult protection partnership arrangements, is the only way to proceed. This Policy Document displays open and full commitment from all partner agencies to continue to work together.

The accompanying Procedural Framework gives clear guidance on the standards of practice expected from everyone working within the City of Sunderland, ensuring, through a consistent response to all concerns, that all adults, irrespective of the nature of the services they require, are equally safeguarded from abuse, exploitation and mistreatment.



John Fisher

Head of Service, Adult Services, City of Sunderland
Chair of the Safeguarding Adults Partnership Board





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Statement of **Commitment**

As agencies that have worked together in partnership to develop and adopt the multi-agency procedures relating to safeguarding adults in Sunderland, we agree to the following principles:

- All adults have the right to live lives that are free from violence, harassment, humiliation, degradation, abuse and neglect.
- All adults have the right to be safeguarded from harm and exploitation.
- All adults have the right to an independent lifestyle and the right to make choices, some of which may involve a degree of risk.

As a partnership, we are therefore committed to making sure the multi-agency procedures become operational by:

- Ensuring that there is a consistent and effective response to any concerns, allegations or disclosures of abuse.
- Supporting staff and volunteers in recognising abuse, reporting concerns and investigating incidents of abuse.
- Preventing or reducing the risk of abuse in our agencies.
- Ensuring that staff and volunteers have a knowledge and understanding of policy and procedures through appropriate training.
- Working in partnership with other agencies.
- Ensuring that the public, service users and carers have access to information about safeguarding adults, the policy and procedures.
- Contributing to Safeguarding Adults Strategy Discussion Meetings, Assessment/Investigation Meetings and contributing to Safeguarding Plans where necessary.
- Ensuring that sufficient resources are made available to meet an identified strategic/forward plan.

In addition, we are also committed to ensure that:

- Everyone's entitlement to Civil and Human Rights is supported. This will include ensuring carers receive appropriate advice and support services.
- Information is shared appropriately, within the identified legal and ethical constraints.
- Adults are empowered and involved in the safeguarding process as much as possible.
- Equal opportunities, anti-discriminatory practice and diversity issues are respected.
- Significant cases are reviewed as an opportunity to see what has worked well and whether there are any lessons to be learned and if so, how these can be put into practice.
- Agreed procedures and guidance are reviewed on an annual basis and updated to reflect best practice.

Introduction

Everyone has the right to lead their lives free from violence and abuse. This right is underpinned by the duty on public agencies under the Human Rights Act (1998) to intervene proportionately to protect the rights of citizens.

Any adult at risk of abuse should be able to access public organisations for appropriate interventions which enable them to live a life free from violence, fear and abuse. It is recognised that some adults who may be eligible to receive health and social care services may be, and often are, vulnerable to the violation of their rights and to abuse, exploitation or mistreatment. Some of these people may need additional support to access such services and support systems.

Adults who **'may be eligible for community care services'** are those whose independence and wellbeing would be at risk if they did not receive appropriate health and social care support. They include adults with physical disabilities, mental ill-health, learning disabilities or sensory impairments, howsoever those impairments have arisen e.g. either present from birth or due to advancing age, chronic illness or injury. Other people to consider include adults who misuse substances, adults whose behaviour/condition puts them at risk of abuse and some victims of domestic violence. It may also include carers: family and friends who provide personal care to adults on an unpaid basis. When an adult in this group is experiencing abuse, this will have a significant impact on their independence, health and wellbeing.

If **all** adults were able to effectively and independently access support to live safer lives at the time they needed it, there would be no need for policies and procedures such as this. However, the publication of 'No Secrets' (Department of Health 2000) was based on the premise that some groups of adults experience a higher prevalence of abuse than the general population and that they are also not easily able to access services to enable them to live safer lives. The work that has taken place since the publication of 'No Secrets' has confirmed this to be the case. This group of adults were defined as 'vulnerable adults' within 'No Secrets'.

Since 'No Secrets' was published, there have been some significant legal and policy changes relating to adult social and health care with a re-focusing of language and philosophy. Also the area of Child Protection has seen recent changes to structure and language, with an emphasis on 'Safeguarding Children' and the introduction of local Safeguarding Children's Boards.

Furthermore, the emphasis is now on supporting adults to access services of their own choosing, rather than intervening to provide protection. In this way, the adult remains at the centre of the process, rather than professionals 'taking over' and seeing protection as something that is 'done to someone'.

In recognition of the changing context, previous references to the 'protection of vulnerable adults' and to 'adult protection' work are now replaced by the new term: **Safeguarding Adults**. This phrase means all the work which enables an adult "who is or may be eligible for social care or health services" to retain independence, wellbeing and choice **and** to access their human right to live a life free from violence, fear or abuse.

In this context and with the recent introduction of several national initiatives, such as the POVA Scheme, The Mental Capacity Act, The House of Commons Committee on Elder Abuse and the recommendations of the Bichard Inquiry, this is an ideal time to revise Sunderland's Adult Protection Policy and Procedures. This edition will be entitled: **Safeguarding Adults: A Multi-Agency Policy and Procedural Framework**. Sunderland's Safeguarding Adults Procedures will refer to the local multi-agency response which is made to every adult, in the City of Sunderland, "who is or may be eligible for social care or health services" **and** whose independence and well-being is at risk due to abuse.

In the same context, all agencies that work together to safeguard adults will be known as the **Safeguarding Adults Partnership**. The Executive Committee (also known as the Multi-Agency Panel for the Protection of Vulnerable Adults or MAPPVA), which was originally set up to over-see the Adult Protection Procedures in Sunderland will now be known as the **Safeguarding Adults Partnership Board** and will over-see the Safeguarding Adults Policy and Procedures.

Finally, although recent years have brought change, and more of this will be reflected in the Procedures, particularly in relation to language, it does not mean that all of the work done previously has been in vain; quite the contrary.

The changes have come from the many years of experience, practice and increased understanding and knowledge of adult protection work, since the implementation of 'No Secrets'. Such change should be viewed as productive and as a positive step forward in this important area of work. It should also be seen as the next important stage in the development of Sunderland's well-established approach to safeguarding adults.

Principles

All adults are recognised as being entitled to the following:

- Self-determination - the individual's right to self-determination will be respected and supported.

It is recognised that with self-determination comes a degree of risk, which sometimes means the person may choose to remain in a situation that professionals perceive to be unsafe. The wishes and choices of the person who may be experiencing abuse will be respected, unless there is a responsibility to override them. This does not take away the professional's responsibility to work to minimise or manage the risk whilst supporting the individual's freedom of choice.

An individual's wishes cannot undermine an organisation's legal or statutory duty to act

- Rights - the maintenance of all entitlements and responsibilities associated with citizenship, including civic, legal and human rights.
- Independence - the opportunity to think and act without reference to another person.
- Privacy - the right to be alone or undisturbed and free from intrusion.
- Dignity - the right to be respected.
- Partnership - the right to be kept informed of and involved in all aspects of care and support.
- Minimum intervention - no intervention beyond the necessary or desired level as agreed within the context of a safeguarding plan or care plan.
- Equal opportunities - the safeguarding process should aim to take into account each person's unique individuality and to avoid discrimination because of race, religion, age, ethnicity, gender, disability, sexuality or language.

Specifically in relation to managing situations where there is a risk of abuse or where abuse is alleged or suspected, the following principles should be applied:

The alleged victim should have wherever possible:

- The right to be safeguarded from abuse.
- Their needs regarded as paramount.
- The right to be taken seriously.
- The right to be kept informed of processes and outcomes, as appropriate.
- The right of access to independent advocacy and/or support particularly where there is an issue about mental capacity.
- The right to appropriate information to raise their awareness of what constitutes abuse.
- The right to accessible information on the Safeguarding Adults process.
- The right to privacy and confidentiality throughout the safeguarding process, except where there is a requirement to override.
- The right for arrangements to be made with them to promote safety and welfare in both the short term and long term.
- The right to be involved in decisions regarding themselves, made as a result of the safeguarding process.

Carers who are family or friends should have wherever possible:

- Support when suspected abuse is reported.
- Their views and opinions taken into consideration.
- The right to be kept informed of processes and outcomes where it does not conflict with the best interests of the alleged victim.

Staff or volunteers should have wherever possible:

- Training, support and guidance on the safeguarding adults process.
- Training to raise awareness of issues of abuse.
- Support when they report suspected/alleged abuse.
- The right to be kept informed of processes and outcomes, subsequent to their reporting of suspected/alleged abuse, where it does not conflict with the best interests of the alleged victim.

The perpetrator, where they may also be seen to be vulnerable, should have wherever possible:

- The right of access to independent advocacy or support.
- The right to be kept informed of processes and outcomes where it does not conflict with the best interests of the alleged victim.
- Appropriate support, treatment or provision as identified through the safeguarding process and implemented within the context of care planning.

Throughout all safeguarding adults work, information will be shared, based on the following principles of confidentiality:

- Confidentiality will not be confused with secrecy.
- Informed consent should be obtained but if this is not possible, and other adults are at risk, it may be necessary to override the requirement.
- It is inappropriate for agencies to give absolute confidentiality in cases where there are concerns about abuse, particularly when other people may be at risk.
- Any exchange of information will be in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998, the Human Right Act 1998, and Caldicott Guidance.

Policy Statement

This Policy Document sets out the agreement and principles embodied in the accompanying Multi-Agency Procedural Framework. It is intended to set the context in relation to Safeguarding Adults and should be read in conjunction with the Framework.

Within the principles of this agreement, partnership agencies have agreed to develop or re-develop their own internal guidance, to be incorporated into, and compatible with, the Procedural Framework. Each agency will ensure that all appropriate staff become familiar with the Framework and their own particular agency guidance.

The aims of the Policy and accompanying Procedural Framework are:

- **Raising Awareness**

To raise awareness amongst staff, volunteers, carers and other members of the community that adults are abused, that this should be acknowledged and appropriate safeguarding measures should be implemented.

- **Prevention**

To ensure agencies have appropriate and effective preventative measures in place to minimise the risk of abuse.

- **Responding to Abuse**

When abuse is reported, or suspected, to ensure that individuals receive a consistent, supportive and effective response from all agencies within the City of Sunderland.

Partnership Agreement

From the three overarching aims of the Policy and Procedural Framework come a number of specific objectives to which each partner agency is committed.

Raising Awareness

Each partner agency agrees to:

- Ensure service users, their families and members of the wider community, receive information about how to raise concerns if they suspect or experience abuse.
- Enable staff to recognise poor practice or abuse and respond appropriately, by ensuring they receive the necessary Safeguarding Adults training.
- Raise the profile of safeguarding adults in all relevant internal and multi-agency communications.
- Ensure that those who commission, contract or monitor services for adults are aware of, and adhere to, the Multi- Agency Policy and Procedural Framework.

Collectively, the Safeguarding Adults Partnership will:

- Implement a multi-agency training strategy and ensure that it is appropriately resourced.
- Disseminate public information in a variety of formats.
- Publish an Annual Report.
- Develop strategic links with relevant Partnerships in Sunderland e.g. Domestic Violence Forum, Strategic Safeguarding Board (Childrens).

Prevention

Each partner agency agrees to:

- Ensure rigorous recruitment and selection practice and adherence to pre-employment checks eg: references will always be taken up, CRB and POVA List checks undertaken where applicable.
- Ensure that all relevant staff and volunteers receive Safeguarding Adults training at the level appropriate to their role.

- Ensure that all Safeguarding Adults training to staff in their agency is either delivered through the Safeguarding Adults Unit or, if delivered in-house or by an external provider, is endorsed by the Safeguarding Adults Unit.
- Ensure clear service standards are maintained and, where appropriate, staff receive clear operational guidance and training in such areas as managing challenging behaviour, physical interventions, personal and intimate care, safer handling, risk assessment and management, control and administration of medicines, involvement in service user property and finance, approaches to sexuality and relationships. Such guidance will set out responsibilities, and define the limits, of staff and volunteers within the agency.
- Publish and promote a procedure (Whistleblowing) to be used when staff raise concerns about the conduct of their colleagues or managers, ensuring that those who raise genuine concerns are protected and supported.
- Publish a clear, accessible and well-publicised complaints procedure. This will include information about how to complain to external bodies such as regulators and service commissioners.
- Ensure there are clear policies in place against discrimination and harassment towards any person (staff, volunteers, service users, carers) on any grounds including disability, age, race, faith, gender or sexuality.
- Ensure purchasers and service providers use contract monitoring and review arrangements to discuss good practice and address any difficulties in implementing Safeguarding Adults procedures.
- Ensure that the quantity and quality of their safeguarding adults work is monitored appropriately and effectively, and bring any issues, areas of concern or examples of good practice to the attention of the Safeguarding Adults Partnership Board.

Collectively, the Safeguarding Adults Partnership will:

- Promote within all agencies, the perspectives of adults who require support and ensure they are considered for inclusion in all relevant strategies and policies.
- Act as a source of advice and information on safeguarding adults matters to staff within all agencies.
- Establish a multi-agency system for reviewing serious cases to ensure that the necessary lessons are learned to improve our response to adult abuse.
- Collate and analyse safeguarding adults data and recommend appropriate responses to risk themes and safeguarding issues as they arise.

Responding to Abuse

Each partner agency agrees to:

- Designate a Lead Person for the implementation of work in this area, who will also act as a source of information and advice for staff within their agency.
- Follow the Multi-Agency Procedural Framework that guides staff through the process of recognition of abuse, how to report it, through investigation to case review.
- Ensure that relevant documentation is promptly submitted to the Safeguarding Adults Team.
- Be a source of information to signpost any adult who is being abused to appropriate sources of advice and support.
- Develop internal guidance to be incorporated into, and compatible with, the Policy and Procedural Framework. This guidance should identify and clarify roles and responsibilities of staff and guide them on how to report concerns.

Collectively, the Safeguarding Adults Partnership will:

- Ensure appropriate representation on the Safeguarding Adults Partnership Board, at senior level.
- Ensure that all partner agencies take responsibility for working actively in partnership to implement safeguarding adults work.
- Make recommendations for improved practice where necessary.
- Ensure any lessons learned are incorporated into the relevant policies and procedures.
- Ensure that the Policy Document and Multi-Agency Procedural Framework are reviewed annually.
- Ensure that sufficient resources are made available to meet the aims and objectives as stated and agreed within this Policy Document.

Partnership **Agreement**

The following Partnership Agencies, agree to accept and own the principles and undertake to carry out the responsibilities as set out in this Policy Document:

Sunderland City Council

Sunderland Teaching
Primary Care Trust

City Hospitals Sunderland

Northumberland Tyne and Wear
NHS Trust

Northumbria Police (Sunderland)

National Probation Service

Commission for Social Care
Inspection

Sunderland Housing Group

Sunderland Centre for
Voluntary Services

Sunderland Advocacy for
Empowerment

Sunderland Carers Centre

All Independent Providers of care
(including residential and nursing
care and domicillary care providers)

All providers of supported living
schemes/sheltered accomodation in the
City of Sunderland

All voluntary agencies and advocacy
services in Sunderland that support or
care for adults who may be vulnerable.

Acknowledgements

The development of this Policy Document and Multi-Agency Procedural Framework has been the result of cooperation and collaboration between all partner agencies within the City of Sunderland.

We acknowledge the valuable contributions of all the individuals involved, and in particular the work of the Safeguarding Adults Team, in researching, developing and writing these documents.

Much of the content of the Policy Document and Procedural Framework is based on academic research (in particular 'No Secrets, Department of Health 2000 and Safeguarding Adults: A National Framework of Standards for good practice and outcomes in adult protection work, ADSS 2005) and the adult protection/safeguarding adults procedures of local authorities across the country. Being able to access work previously done in relation to adult protection has enabled us to adopt the best practice to inform these documents.

This work has been made possible through the joint contributions of Sunderland City Council and Sunderland Teaching Primary Care Trust.



