

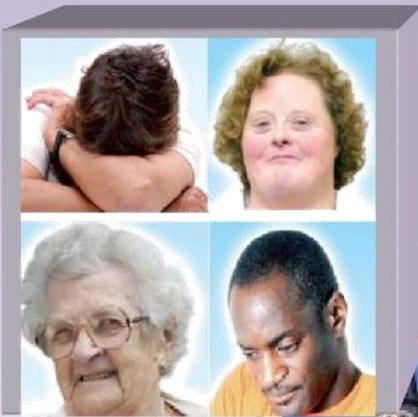
**Boards' Business Unit**



**DARLINGTON**  
Safeguarding Children Board



**Darlington**  
Safeguarding Adults  
Partnership Board



**Joint Communication and Engagement Strategy  
2016-2019**

<b>Index</b>	<b>Page</b>
<b>1. Introduction</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>2. Objectives</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>3. Communication Responsibilities</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>4. Principles</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>5. Our Audience</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>6. Communication channels and resources</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>7. Who is responsible for communication</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>8. How we will measure success</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>9. Dealing with media enquiries</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>10. Resources and Budget implications</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>11. Action</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>12. Review</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>13. Additional Information</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Appendix 1</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Appendix 2</b>	<b>10</b>

## **1. Introduction**

The Darlington Safeguarding Children Board (DSCB) and Darlington Safeguarding Adults Partnership Board (DSAPB) aim to promote the welfare of children and adults at risk and co-ordinate multi agency working to protect them from abuse and neglect and promote their welfare.

The Boards have developed a joint Communication and Engagement Strategy to embrace the 'think family' approach and ensure that the work of both Boards is effectively communicated to the relevant audiences such as children, young people, adults at risk, families, practitioners and the wider community in Darlington.

The challenge is to identify the most effective method to communicate messages and how we will 'capture the voice' of the child/adult at risk and have meaningful engagement with children, young people and adults at risk in a consistent and co-ordinated approach which will also inform the work of the Boards.

The Boards will seek evidence of a proactive approach to the communication of safeguarding messages and engagement with target audiences by all partner agencies.

## **2. Communication and Engagement Strategy Aims and Objectives**

The aim of this strategy is to actively engage people and raise awareness about safeguarding and to inspire people to take action to prevent abuse and neglect.

The objectives are to promote the welfare of children, young people and adults in Darlington, to prevent abuse and neglect and to ensure that the 'voice of the child' and the 'voice of the user' is heard and that their views are taken into consideration to inform multi agency policy and practice. We also seek to establish links with other strategic partnerships to develop a shared understanding of the needs of service users and encourage the sharing of good practice.

## **3. Communication Responsibilities**

The organisations in Darlington which have a role in Safeguarding have the following responsibilities:

- To be proactive in raising awareness of their role and work
- To promote the work of the Board with the service users across Children's and Adult's Services, practitioners and the wider community
- To proactively engage with service users, practitioners and the wider community to inform multi-agency policy and practice
- To proactively engage with practitioners to promote an understanding of the work of the Boards and to inform of changes to policy and procedure, identify best practice and communicate the findings of Safeguarding reviews and 'lessons learned'

- To support the development of all practitioners involved in safeguarding
- To support all partners to understand their contribution
- To keep partners up to date with developments in the organisation including changes to policies and procedure
- To share good practice, ideas, good news and learning from quality assurance work including case reviews
- To ensure that partners understand their responsibilities in respect of proactive communication and engagement
- To define and implement clear lines of communication and to ensure consistency and transparency wherever possible.

#### **4. Principles**

The communications strategy reflects a number of core communication principles.

- Openness and honesty
- Transparency
- Timeliness
- Accessibility
- Accuracy
- Support of Safeguarding agencies' priorities
- Compliance with the Data Protection Act

This therefore means:

- Speaking and writing accessibly - use language that the target audience understands. When talking to children, young people, parents and carers we avoid using jargon or we will explain the medical, technical or management language we are using.
- Not speaking in acronyms or initials or explaining them first
- Giving people the opportunity to ask questions there and then or on another occasion if they need to
- Where necessary information is offered in alternative languages

#### **5. Our Audience**

The DSCB and DSAPB need to communicate with a diverse community and a range of groups, organisations that care for, educate, provide services for and protect children and young people and adults at risk.

In addition to service users and the wider community, the Boards also have a responsibility to proactively engage with practitioners involved in the care of young people and adults at risk across a broad spectrum including social care, education settings, healthcare settings, the voluntary sector and faith settings and elected members.

## 6 Communication channels/resources

We will use a variety of communication methods to include the following:

**Website:** [www.darlingtonsafeguardingboards.co.uk](http://www.darlingtonsafeguardingboards.co.uk)

**The main communication vehicle is the Safeguarding Boards' website.** This will be the principle method of accessing information about agencies with sections for Children and Young People, Adults with Care and Support Needs, professionals, parents and carers.

There will also be access to training and development resources<sup>1</sup>, all safeguarding policies and procedures and a range of advice and guidance.

Partner agencies have their own respective websites which provide information about services, contact details and links to the joint Safeguarding Boards' website. Other methods of communication include:

- Newsletters and publications
- The Bulletin and e Bulletin
- Information leaflets and posters
- Event attendance
- Multi Agency Training
- Briefings and facilitated discussions
- Posters, leaflets and other branding and marketing
- Minutes
- Policies and Procedures
- Social Media
- Darlo Care Crew and Youth Forums
- Regional Safeguarding Adults Smooth Radio Campaign
- Provider Forums
- The Board's Annual Report and Business Plan
- Board publications
- Safeguarding Board Events
- Campaigns
- Press releases
- Business Manager Networking activity through agency Team Meeting briefings and Regional meetings
- 'One Darlington' publication
- Practitioner Forums

To ensure a consistent, coordinated approach all communication will use the DSCB and DSAPB Logos.

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<sup>1</sup> A cost be incurred refer to the Charging Policy on the [Safeguarding Boards website](#)

## **7. Who is responsible for communication?**

The primary responsibility for implementing this strategy sits with the DSCB and DSAPB. All members must ensure that they take responsibility for communicating all key information within their respective agencies and ensuring that any issues identified within their organisation are communicated back to the relevant Board.

Darlington Borough Councils media team will support with communication and enquiries from the media where required and appropriate.

More specific responsibilities for communication will be outlined in paragraph 10: communications plans for specific issues.

## **8. How will we measure success?**

The Boards are required to measure the effectiveness of the Communication and Engagement Strategy which will be evaluated as follows:

- Surveys of practitioners conducted by the Training, Communications and Voice of the User sub-group
- Number of hits on the Safeguarding Boards' website
- Feedback from annual events
- Auditing activity including MCA DoLs
- Practitioner workshops
- Increased Connection with the Safeguarding Boards Joint Business Unit
- Feedback from Training
- Feedback from children and adults involved in the safeguarding process
- Feedback from independent bodies ie Healthwatch Darlington

This will provide:

- Greater understanding of key messages for all audiences
- Improved awareness of safeguarding issues
- Enhanced knowledge and understanding of role and remit of the Boards
- Better outcomes for children, young people and adults involved in safeguarding
- Increase in positive media coverage

## **9. Dealing with Media Enquiries**

This section sets out the Boards' approach to working with the media such as part of the Boards general work or as part of the boards' statutory responsibilities to undertake Safeguarding Adult Reviews and/or Serious Case Reviews.

Working with the media in most situations should be planned and statements agreed with the lead statutory (in the instance of a Safeguarding Adult Review and/or Serious Case Review) and/or the relevant Independent Chair. This is to provide consistency including ensuring a coordinated multi-agency approach as appropriate.

There may be occasions when the media directly contacts the DSAPB or the DSCB. In this situation the Business Manager must be notified immediately on receipt of such an enquiry, along with Darlington Borough Council's communications team via the [communications@darlington.gov.uk](mailto:communications@darlington.gov.uk) email address. Depending on the issue it may also be appropriate to contact the relevant Independent Chair and/or statutory partner communications teams too. **It must be noted, no agency or member of the Boards' Business Unit is to make a comment during initial dialogue with the media this includes 'off the record' statements.**

## **10. Resources and Budget implications**

The Boards will use the respective website pages to ensure minimal expenditure.

Specific promotional activities/campaigns must receive approval from the respective Board after full consideration of budget implications.

As Safeguarding Case Reviews cannot be predicted and can be instigated at any time it is the responsibility of a Case Review Panel/Committee to consult with the relevant Independent Chair and Director to determine the specific communication strategy for each individual review. Support can be sought from any agency's Communication Team as appropriate.

## **11. Action**

In order to achieve the objectives outlined above specific Communications and Engagement Strategy Actions Plans have been developed to assist the planning and coordination of communications and events across the partnerships for both Boards.

## **12. Review**

The Communications and Engagement Strategy will be reviewed at least annually and no less than every three years. Either the DSCB or the DSAPB may review the strategy as required or if there is a policy change which directly affects the strategy.

## **13. Additional Information:**

This document will be available on request in Braille, large print, audio, easy read, electronically and in other languages.

For further details contact the Joint Safeguarding Boards Business Unit on:

Telephone: 01325 406451

E mail: [safeguardingboards@darlington.gov.uk](mailto:safeguardingboards@darlington.gov.uk)

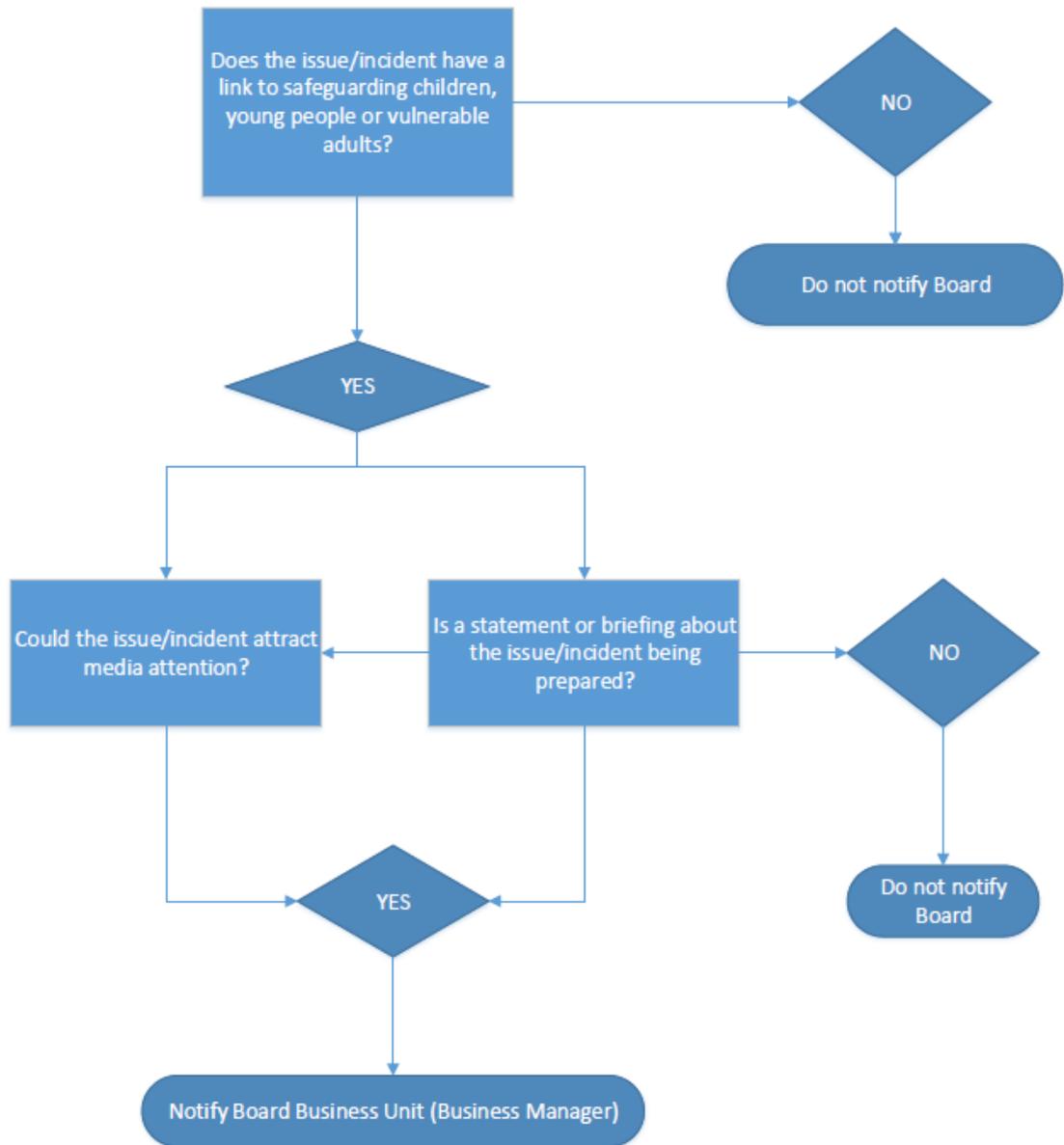
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## Appendix 1

### Decision Process for Incidents/Issues for notification to Board



## Appendix 2

