

Terms of Reference for the Safeguarding Leaders Network

The Safeguarding Leaders Network (now referred to as 'The Network' is an independent forum for those in Southwark's voluntary and community sector (VCS) that lead on child or adult safeguarding in their organisation. The Terms of Reference (TOR) provides the framework and guiding principles of how the Network functions.

1. Purpose

- 1.1 To offer Safeguarding Leads from across Southwark's VCS the opportunities to develop, enhance and assess their services through knowledge exchange and peer support
- 1.2 To ensure VCS representatives attending the Southwark Safeguarding Boards (and other relevant forums) on behalf of the sector are informed of the sector's views and experiences in relation to safeguarding, including in relation to new and emerging issues and best practice
- 1.3 To support a two-way dialogue between Safeguarding Leads within the VCS and the Southwark Safeguarding Partnership to:
 - Ensure that the sector is kept informed of developments and discussions held at the Southwark Safeguarding Boards and up to date on policies, procedures, safeguarding thresholds and any upcoming opportunities
 - Raise any problems or trends identified by the sector in local safeguarding practice (eg. how safeguarding issues raised by the sector are responded to, training, etc.)
 - Involve VCS service providers at a strategic level in the co-design, delivery and evaluation of statutory services relating to safeguarding

2. Responsibilities

- 2.1 In providing an arena for regular liaison between providers and commissioners, the Network will:
 - Be solution focused
 - Facilitate discussion and consultation on issues based on the needs of Southwark communities
 - Promote and develop partnership working within the sector and between commissioners and providers
 - Ensure effective communication between all providers and their stakeholders to raise awareness of issues and best practice regarding safeguarding
 - Promote the development of quality and equality standards in delivery
 - Promote the messaging 'Safeguarding is everybody's business'
 - Establish small 'task and finish' working groups to deal with specific issues, as and when required

3. Membership

- 3.1 Membership will be made up of individuals from VCS organisations in Southwark, members of Community Southwark, acting as: Safeguarding Lead, Designated Child Protection Lead, Trustee for Safeguarding etc.
- 3.2 To join the Network, members must complete an online form and indicate why they wish to join the Network
- 3.3 By joining the Network, members give permission for their email address to be shared with other members of the Network
- 3.4 Community Southwark is responsible for the administration of the network and any queries can therefore be directed to: vcssupport@communitysouthwark.org

4. Role and Responsibility of Chair

- 4.1 The Chair of the Network will be decided by the Network through election or another agreed process.
- 4.2 The role of the Chair is to lead the quarterly Network meetings
- 4.3 The Chair, in conjunction with the Network will be responsible for deciding which issues and matters need to be brought to the attention of Southwark Voice, the SSCP and SSAB via the elected VCS representatives.
- 4.4 The Chair will speak on behalf of the Network at the Southwark Voice meetings and to report back to the Network on any discussions and developments at those meetings.
- 4.5 Where circumstances do not allow the Chair to take direct instructions from the Network, they will use their knowledge and experience to the best of their ability to provide constructive input, but make clear on the basis on which this is done.

5 Meetings

- 5.1 The Network will meet quarterly, attendees can correspond electronically in-between meetings if needed and updates from the Southwark Safeguarding Partnership will be shared in a timely fashion - Community Southwark will provide the administrative support on this.
- 5.2 Papers will be circulated at least three working days before each meeting – Community Southwark will provide the administrative support.
- 5.3 Decisions will be made by consensus by those attending– i.e. members are satisfied with the decision even though it may not be their first choice. If not possible, the Network chair will make the final decision

6 Accountability and Reporting Arrangements

- 6.1 The Network will be independent and is not accountable to the Southwark Council or local CCG.
- 6.2 The agenda, decisions, follow-up activities and outcomes will be published on the Community Southwark website.
- 6.3 The Chair will represent the Network on Southwark Voice.

6.4 Representatives will be selected from the Network members to speak on behalf of the Network and the VCS at the Southwark Safeguarding Adults Board (SSAB) and the Southwark Safeguarding Children Partnership (SSCP) meetings and subgroups.

6.5 Community Southwark will deputise for the VCS Representatives should they be unable to attend a SSAB or SSCP meeting.

6.6 The Chair, VCS Representative for SSAB, VCS Representative for SSCP and Community Southwark will be involved in planning for Network meeting to make sure all messages are conveyed.

6.7 The Chair will remain in place for a period of 2 years and the VCS Representatives will remain in place for a period of 12 months.

7 Expectations of Members

7.1 All members are expected to agree to common and shared principles of being a member of the Network. In summary these include:

- being respectful of each other and of each other's views
- observing Chatham House rules where necessary
- acting in good faith and in the best interests of the Network
- attending all scheduled meetings or nominate a replacement
- playing an active and constructive role
- promoting the aims of the Network
- informing the Network of any conflicts of interest that exist or might arise during their membership

8 Amendment, Modification or Variation

This Terms of Reference may be amended, varied or modified in writing after consultation and agreement by Network members