Quality Assurance Framework

April 2022

The Care Act 2014 and Children Social Work Act 2017 requires Safeguarding Boards to co-ordinate and ensure the effectiveness of what each of its members does in helping and protecting individuals from abuse and neglect and delivering the outcomes that enhance their wellbeing.

The Quality Assurance Framework (QAF) will be used by the Board's Quality Assurance Subgroup to:

- Evidence and gain assurance that safeguarding arrangements in Bracknell Forest are effective.

- Hold local agencies to account for their safeguarding work and arrangements and be open and transparent across the partnership about risk and things that require improvement.

- Identify priorities for the Board and individual agencies to feed into the Board's safeguarding strategy and individual agency action plans.

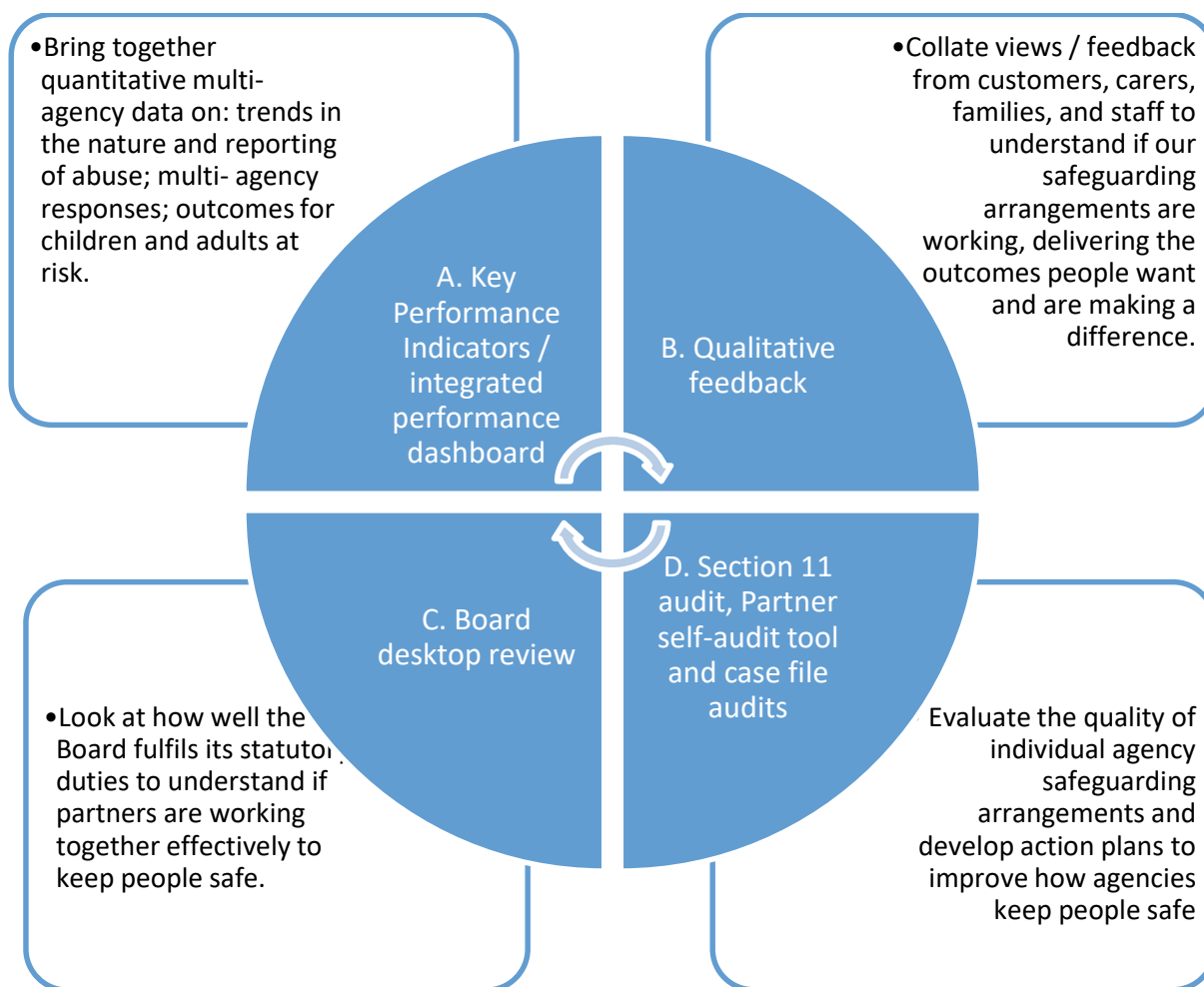- Achieve and evidence continuous improvement over time.

The QAF sits alongside the Board's Safeguarding Adults Review (SAR) process, the Child Safeguarding Practice Review (CSPR) and risk / challenge Logs as part of a wider approach to quality and performance. It utilises mechanisms for sharing lessons and learning such as practitioner forums, management meetings and training.

The Framework

The QAF is based on a quadrant model of evidence collation and analysis activities that bring together a variety of quantitative and qualitative data from a range of sources. Each quadrant aims to answer different aspects of the three key questions and together give a holistic picture as to the effectiveness of safeguarding services in Bracknell Forest.

The framework will help the Board answer:

- How safe are local children and adults at risk?

- Do safeguarding arrangements improve outcomes?

- Are people involved and empowered in safeguarding support? Does the person feel safer as a result?

- Are local agencies working and communicating effectively, internally and together, to safeguard?

- Are local agencies sharing relevant information?

- Bring together quantitative multi-agency data on: trends in the nature and reporting of abuse; multi- agency responses; outcomes for children and adults at risk.

- Collate views / feedback from customers, carers, families, and staff to understand if our safeguarding arrangements are working, delivering the outcomes people want and are making a difference.

A. Key Performance Indicators / integrated performance dashboard

B. Qualitative feedback

C. Board desktop review

D. Section 11 audit, Partner self-audit tool and case file audits

- Look at how well the Board fulfils its statutory duties to understand if partners are working together effectively to keep people safe.

Evaluate the quality of individual agency safeguarding arrangements and develop action plans to improve how agencies keep people safe

A.   Key Performance Indicators

The aim of the quarterly key performance indicators quadrant is to enable the Board to understand the prevalence of abuse / neglect, highlight themes and trends in safeguarding activity, and identify issues that need addressing in safeguarding arrangements.

B.   Qualitative feedback

The aim of the qualitative feedback quadrant is to understand if safeguarding work is having any impact, using the views of customers, carers and staff; and our case audit findings. It will also use trends and themes identified from inspections, reviews, complaints, whistle-blowing, assurance and consultations from across the partnership (see list in appendix 1).

C.   Safeguarding Board desktop review

The aim of the desktop review is to understand if the partnership is fulfilling its statutory duties and working effectively. The desktop review will be undertaken annually towards the end of each financial year. The review will include assessment of performance against a specific set of criteria included in appendix 1.

D.   Partner self-audit tool and case file audits

The aim of the self-audit tool and case file audits is to evaluate the quality of individual agency safeguarding arrangements from case audits (single and multi-agency), action plans, self-assessments (including S11, S175, and voluntary sector agencies). See more in appendix 1.

Multi-Agency Thematic Audits

The QA Subgroup will undertake a programme of multi-agency thematic audits. This will target specific areas of concern and /or priority areas highlighted by SARs, CSPRs and other case reviews, performance monitoring information and Board priorities. These audits will focus on the quality of provision, and on multi-agency working. Audit findings will be presented for action and consideration to the Board.

Learning and Taking Action

The overall findings of the QAF will be set out in an annual / six monthly QAF report from the Quality Assurance Subgroup to the Board including results from each of the quadrants.

The learning will primarily be set out in the QAF report. Action will be taken through the identified areas for development being included in the Board's development work for the following year. Findings will also inform the Board's Annual Report.

Governance

The QAF will fall under the remit of the Quality Assurance Subgroup with implementation of individual quadrants as follows:

A. Key Performance Indicators – co-ordinate the development and quarterly compiling / reporting of the performance indicator set.

B. Qualitative feedback – commission / produce a report with input from: safeguarding leads; forums and feedback groups; focus groups, case auditing and joint work with the Case Review Subgroup to evaluate impact of learning from case reviews. Also check the impact of multi-agency strategies and frameworks. *See appendix 1 for list*

C. Board desktop review – the Board's Business Managers will implement the annual review. *See appendix 1 for questions*

D. Partner self-audit tool – arrange for all partners to complete the annual partner safeguarding self-audit tool and undertake Section 11 audit activity and section 175 activity. *See appendix 1 for list*

On behalf of the Board, the QA Subgroup will keep this framework under review and may change it to reflect changes in legislation, best practice and to ensure the continuous improvement of safeguarding children and adults at risk in Bracknell Forest. The QA Subgroup will formally review the QAF every two years.

B. Qualitative Feedback

The QA Subgroup should review the following:

- **Feedback from people who have been through the safeguarding process and / or their carers**
- Information from **complaints, grievances and whistleblowing**
- Trends and themes from any **inspections or peer reviews** across the partnership
- Trends and themes identified and reported back through **training delivery**
- Trends and themes from **Safeguarding Adults Reviews and Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews**
- Trends and themes from **Prevention of Future Deaths reports**
- Trends and themes from **Domestic Homicide Reviews**
- Trends and themes from **reflective discussions**
- Trends and themes from **assurance reports**
- Views of children and their families about services
- Feedback from Frontline Staff and Managers
- Surveys and consultations

This list is not exhaustive.

C. Safeguarding Board Desktop Review

The review will include assessment of performance against a specific set of criteria, such as:

- Gap analysis against statutory requirements and guidance and best practice.
- Fulfilment of the Board's Terms of Reference.
- Board operations:
  - Regularity of meetings.
  - Percentage attendance at each meeting and over the year.
  - Spread of agencies attending and any long-standing gaps.
  - Timeliness of publication of a safeguarding strategy and high quality of annual report.
- Progress against safeguarding strategy key priorities – percentage of priorities in the Strategic Plan being RAG rated green / blue.
- Board links with other strategic partnerships, such as the Health and Wellbeing Board, the Community Safety Partnership, measured by whether relevant issues have been highlighted at relevant boards.
- Success in raising public awareness: numbers of events, posters, leaflets distributed, and numbers of referrals from self/ family/ friend.

- Health of the Board budget and multi-agency nature of contributions financially and in-kind.

- Any inspections/ peer reviews undertaken, and progress in implementing actions required.

- Option of a short annual survey of Board members on views of Board effectiveness.

- Feedback from individual agency meetings with independent chair and at the annual development day.

D. Partner self-audit tool, case reviews and case file audits

The aim of the partner self-audit tool and case file audits is to evaluate the quality of individual agency safeguarding arrangements and develop action plans, by:

- Findings from the case audit programme both single and multi-agency.
- Section 11 audit activity and section 175 activity.
- Using the safeguarding adult self-assessment audit tool annually.
- Option for voluntary sector agencies and provider organisations to use the audit tool, e.g. via provider forums and/ or commissioners.
- Completed audit tools and action plans submitted to the Board for analysis and identification of key themes by the Board Manager.
- Individual agency's action plans (through peer/ buddy system) and identification of key areas for development.
- Monitoring progress on action plans during the year.
- Agreement on actions to include in development plan for the coming year.