



West Sussex Safeguarding Adults Board

Strategic Provider Concerns Group Protocol

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1. Role and function of the group

- 1.1 The purpose of this group is to provide strategic direction and support where there is evidence of significant provider concerns in relation to organisational abuse and neglect in a domiciliary or care home provider, or another provider organisation.
- 1.2 The group will usually be initiated by referral to it, either following or during a [Provider Concerns process](#). The referral may come either directly from the Provider Concerns Process, or via the Quality Assurance and Safeguarding Information subgroup.
- 1.3 The group can also provide strategic oversight and direction in relation to providers that are at risk from potential closure/failure. It is intended to support a senior level multi-agency approach to identified risks and to provide an open and transparent forum for strategic discussion and advice for this purpose.
- 1.4 The group can provide strategic direction, if required, for the provider of concern or Emergency Planning Group, tactically managing any joint agency response.

2. Responsibilities of members

2.1. The role of the group is to:

- Provide strategic oversight of the interface between individuals, organisational safeguarding and quality practice.
- Have oversight and ownership of significant risks in response to variable quality and market failure.
- Ensure Care Act responsibilities are met specifically regarding market sustainability and provider failure.
- Receive assurance from the West Sussex County Council safeguarding enquiries team and/or quality review group in relation to the provider in the form of an improvement plan.
- Agree multi-agency communications strategy.

3. Membership

3.1. The core membership of the group should include senior representation from the following:

- Director of Adult Social Care, West Sussex County Council
- Chief Nurse, Sussex Integrated Care Board
- Head of Safeguarding and Looked After Children, Sussex Integrated Care Board
- Assistant Director Safeguarding, Planning and Performance, West Sussex County Council
- Police
- Care Quality Commission

3.2. In addition, senior managers from involved agencies representing the following areas should be included as appropriate to the case:

- Safeguarding
- Quality and assurance
- Contracts and commissioning
- Communications

4. Quoracy

4.1. For the meeting to be recognised as an authorised meeting for resolutions and decisions to be valid, the quorum must have representation from: Sussex Integrated Care Board, West Sussex County Council Director Adult Social Services, or nominated representatives.

5. Frequency of meetings

- 5.1. The group will determine the frequency of meetings required for a particular strategic provider concern the first time that it meets for discussion. This decision will be recorded in the meeting minutes. The frequency of meetings can be reviewed at any point, particularly once improvement plans and assurance mechanisms are in place and form part of business as usual.

6. Governance and administration

- 6.1. Statutory partners should determine which agency is best placed to lead, coordinate and chair the group, and this should be confirmed before the initial meeting. As with all criminal matters, the police will be the lead for criminal proceedings and must be consulted about any additional proposed action.
- 6.2. The lead agency will provide administrative support to the Strategic Provider Concerns Group.
- 6.3. Meeting minutes will be circulated to the chair for agreement/amendment and then will be circulated to all members with any attachments no later than five working days following each meeting.
- 6.4. All meeting notes and any meeting papers with sensitive information should be marked 'OFFICIAL SENSITIVE' on each page and must be password protected before circulation (password to be issued separately).
- 6.5. Each organisation will be responsible for escalating any issues through their own risk monitoring processes and through their relevant leadership and governance arrangements.

7. Confidentiality statement

- 7.1. This meeting works in accordance with the [Sussex Information Sharing Protocol](#). Information shared during this meeting includes (but is not limited to):
 - Data that is in the public domain
 - Business data
 - Personal data, if applicable and anonymised where appropriate
 - Sensitive Personal Data, if applicable and anonymised where appropriate
- 7.2. Whether the information should be shared in the first instance needs to be determined by each organisation.

8. Freedom of Information requests

- 8.1. This group operates as a partnership, and as such is not subject to Freedom of Information (FOI) requests. It should be noted however that each public authority will still be subject to FOI requests. All FOI requests relating to the Strategic Concerns Group are be shared with the Chair.

Appendix i: Draft agenda

| No | Item | Lead |
|----|--|--------------------------|
| 1. | Introductions and declarations of interest | Chair |
| 2. | Minutes of last meeting | Chair |
| 3. | Action tracker | Chair/All |
| 4. | Discussion/updates | All |
| 5. | Feedback from Quality Assurance Safeguarding Information Group (QASIG) <i>(To be included if appropriate)</i> | Chair or designated lead |
| 6. | Strategic risk register | Chair or designated lead |
| 7. | Any other business | All |

Please note that the agenda should be flexible and responsive to the strategic provider concern being discussed. The Chair will confirm the agenda prior to each meeting.

Appendix ii: Draft action tracker

| Meeting date | Action no. | Action detail | Action owner | Organisation | Action update | Action completed/ date completed | If applicable relevant document filed? |
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