Safeguarding Board for Northern Ireland

Business Plan

April 2023 – March 2024

Background

Our business plan sets out the Safeguarding Board for Northern Ireland's priorities and key deliverables for the year 2023-2024. Our business plan has three sections:

- The Role of the Safeguarding Board for Northern Ireland (SBNI)
- The SBNI mission, vision and values for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people in Northern Ireland
- The SBNI outcomes and priorities for 2023-2024

The Safeguarding Board for Northern Ireland (SBNI) is the key statutory mechanism for agreeing how relevant partners will co-operate and work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people in Northern Ireland, and for ensuring the effectiveness of what they do.

We use the term safeguarding[1] in its widest sense to encompass the full range of both child protection and prevention activities. Safeguarding children and young people is the process of preventing the impairment of children and young people's health and development, ensuring they grow up safely and securely and are provided with effective care, all of which collectively enable them to attain greater success in adulthood. Safeguarding also extends to protecting children and young people from abuse or neglect, when it occurs, including the promotion and protection of children and young people's rights.

The Safeguarding Board for Northern Ireland (SBNI) was established by the Safeguarding Board Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 (the Act). The principal functions stipulated in the Act are:

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[1] Definition of safeguarding can be found at Cooperating to Safeguard Children and Young People in Northern Ireland, Version 2 August 2017 p.g.12

- To co-ordinate and ensure the effectiveness of what is done by each person or body represented on the Board for the purpose of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children;
- To develop policies and procedures for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people;
- To promote an awareness of the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people;
- To keep under review the effectiveness of what is done by each person or body represented on the Board to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people;
- To undertake case management reviews;
- To provide advice in relation to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people;
- To promote communications between the Board and children and young people;
- To make arrangements for consultation and discussion in relation to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people.

Further detail of the membership, functions and procedures are provided for in the Safeguarding Board for Northern Ireland (Membership, Procedure, Functions and Committee) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2012 (the SBNI Regulations as amended). [The Safeguarding Board for Northern Ireland (Membership, Procedure, Functions and Committee) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2012 (legislation.gov.uk)](#).

The SBNI is chaired by an independent person appointed by the Health Minister through the public appointments process, who is independent of the member bodies. The membership of the SBNI is made up of representatives from all the Health and Social Care Trusts, the Strategic Planning and Performance Group (DoH), the Public Health Agency, the Probation Board for Northern Ireland, the Police Service of Northern Ireland, the Education Authority, District Councils, the Youth Justice Agency; the British Medical Association and the Children's Court Guardian Agency. There is also representation from the voluntary sector from Action for Children, Barnardo's NI, Children in Northern Ireland, the Children's Law Centre, Include Youth and the NSPCC. There is also

representation from the Faith Sector, two lay members and three Panel Chairs on the SBNI Board. Each of the 21-member bodies is represented on the SBNI by a senior member of staff. Their common purpose is to help safeguard and promote the welfare and rights of children and young people in Northern Ireland and help protect them from all forms of risk and harm.

The SBNI Independent Chair and the SBNI members are responsible for providing strategic leadership and direction to the child protection and safeguarding system across Northern Ireland and for ensuring the effective performance and discharge of its statutory objective, duties and functions as set out in the Act.

The Role of the Safeguarding Board for Northern Ireland

The Safeguarding Board for Northern Ireland (SBNI) was set up under the Safeguarding Board Act (NI) 2011 and is the statutory body responsible for coordinating and ensuring the effectiveness of its 21-member bodies for the purpose of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people in NI.

The SBNI is a partnership body consisting of the key statutory and voluntary agencies that operate and resource the safeguarding and child protection system in Northern Ireland. Senior representatives from these organisations are members of the Board of the SBNI. The Board is supported in its aims and priorities by a small SBNI Central Support Team. For more details about the SBNI see: www.safeguardingni.org

Our Mission

Our mission is to safeguard and promote the welfare and rights of children and young people by working together in partnership to prevent and protect them from risk and harm.

Our Vision

Our vision is that all children and young people are seen, their voices are heard and that they are protected, respected, supported and have appropriate opportunities to grow up in safety, thrive and fulfil their potential.

Our Values

We listen to children and young people and respond to them about their wishes, feelings and experiences and place them at the heart of what we do.

We work in partnership to safeguard and promote the welfare and rights of children and young people.

We develop, respect and value those who work with us as we strive for excellence in what we do.

We are open, honest and transparent in our work with children and young people our members, partners and staff.

We respect diversity and promote equality and inclusion in all that we do.

We ensure that all of our work and relationships are undertaken from an awareness of adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) and a trauma informed perspective.

The SBNI has a key role in contributing to the overarching Programme for Government Draft Outcome – "Our children and young people have the best start in life" and specifically to the relevant Outcomes in the Children and Young People's Strategy:

- Children and young people are physically and mentally healthy

- Children and young people live in safety and with stability

- Children and young people live in a society which respects their rights.

Concepts and Terminology used in developing this Business Plan

The SBNI uses an Outcomes-Based Accountability (OBA) framework which is a system for organising our efforts and resources towards achieving desirable end results or outcomes, and measuring how well we're doing. The use of OBA is helping improve safeguarding and welfare outcomes for children and young people in Northern Ireland.

Within OBA concepts and terminology;

There are difference types of accountability;

Population Accountability – these relate to the SBNI's contribution to the   *(Population Outcomes/Results & Indicators)*
Strategic Priorities Programme for Government Draft Outcome – "Our
children and young people have the best start in life" and specifically to the
relevant Outcomes in the Children and Young People's Strategy as noted
above.

Performance Accountability – this relates to an individual client group which
of the SBNI is children and young people and are evidenced in the
business plan actions and the statutory and non-committee workplans that   *(Performance Measures)*
flow from the business plan

We ask ourselves questions from which to identify our desired outcomes and the actions we will need to undertake to achieve them - these relate to both population and performance accountability.

We base our performance measures on demonstrating;

How much did we do? – This is how much we did / delivered.

How well did we do it? - This relates to the quality of we did or what we delivered.

Is anyone better off? – This relates to the change / effect produced, e.g. skills / knowledge or attitudes/ opinions.

Introduction to the SBNI Business Plan 2023 - 2024

The work of the SBNI is informed by and draws on guidance and direction from various Treaties, legislations and Executive strategies, specifically those on; domestic violence and abuse, mental health and online safety[2]. They in turn inform the detail within our Outcomes Based Accountability Framework and the outcomes and associated measurements.

Performance reporting happens internally through the SBNI Governance Committee to the SBNI Board and externally via accountability and assurance meetings with the Department of Health, as the SBNI's sponsor branch and the production of an Annual Report to be laid before the Northern Ireland Assembly. The SBNI will monitor progress against its objectives and the effective running of the partnership body at each of its Governance Committee meetings and then at each of its Board meetings. The Board meetings are held in public and the minutes are published.

Our Business Objectives

The Business Objectives of the SBNI for 2023 – 2024 are divided into 4 parts in accordance with the strategic priorities and aims set out in the SBNI Strategic Plan for the years 2022 – 2026:

1) To provide leadership and set direction in the safeguarding, protection and welfare of children and young people
2) To hear and respond to the voices of children and young people affected by domestic violence[3] and abuse.
3) To support children and young people in exercising their rights to enjoy the benefits of the online world free from harm, fear and abuse

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[2] SBNI Strategic Plan 2022 - 2026 page 11
[3] Definition of DVA as per the Domestic and Sexual Violence Strategy 'Stopping Domestic and Sexual Violence and Abuse in Northern Ireland - A Seven Year Strategy, March 2017'.

4) To hear and respond to the voices of children and young people affected by mental health issues.

<table>
<tr><td colspan="4">Strategic Priority 1: To provide leadership and set direction in the safeguarding and protection of children and young people.</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="4">Objective 1.1: To ensure that the Case Management Review and Safeguarding Panels meet their statutory functions[4].</td></tr>
<tr><td>Actions: What we are going to do</td><td>How much did we do?</td><td>How well did we do it?</td><td>Action Owner</td></tr>
<tr><td>Undertake CMRs as per the SBNI legislation and guidance.</td><td>Number of CMRs undertaken</td><td>% of CMRs completed within timescale</td><td>CMR Panel Chair</td></tr>
<tr><td>Establish ways in which to disseminate the associated learning from CMRs across all member bodies</td><td>Number of ways in which CMR learning was dissemination</td><td>% of member agencies that reported a change in skills / knowledge or attitudes/ opinions in relation to CMR learning dissemination</td><td>CMR Panel Chair</td></tr>
<tr><td>The Safeguarding Panels (SGP) will:

• Promote an awareness of the need to safeguard and to promote the welfare of children and young people through awareness raising events;</td><td>Number of events led by the Safeguarding Panels</td><td>% of member agencies that attended
% of attendees who reported a change in skills /</td><td>Safeguarding Panel Chairs</td></tr>
</table>

[4] **The Child Death Overview Panel Review Report is currently under consideration by the Department of Health**

		knowledge or attitudes/ opinions.	
a) in relation to the SBNI Strategic and Business Priorities in conjunction with the SBNI non-statutory committees and			
b) in relation to new and emerging issues to the Board	Number of new and emerging issues identified	% of member agencies that reported a change in skills / knowledge or attitudes/ opinions in relation to the new and emerging issues	Safeguarding Panel Chairs
• Engage with children and young people, to ensure their views are heard and responded to in relation to the child protection/safeguarding system	Number of engagement activities with children, young people	% of panel activity / outputs which are based on the views of children and young people	Safeguarding Panel Chairs
• Implement the arrangement for sharing the findings of CMRs		% of member agencies that attended % of attendees who reported a change in skills / knowledge or attitudes/ opinions	Safeguarding Panel Chairs

Objective 1.2: To ensure that the non-statutory committees fulfil their delivery obligations within their terms of reference.

Actions: What we are going to do	How much did we do?	How well did we do it?	Action Owner
All Committees will meet regularly and provide assurance reports to the Board	Number of assurance reports provided	% of work plan deliverables achieved	All Committee Chairs
Attend bi-annual assurance and accountability meetings with the Department of Health	Number of meetings attended		SBNI Independent Chair
Application of an effective system for governance across all of the SBNI's activities; to include		-	Governance Committee
• Produce an Annual Report for 2022-2023	Annual Report completed	Annual Report accepted by the DoH	Director of Operations
• Produce an Annual Business Plan for 2023-2024, oversee the Business Plan Objectives, their progress and manage associated Risk	Business Plan produced & Number of Business Operations Meetings held	% of Business Plan activity achieved	Director of Operations
• Produce Annual ECNI Progress report 2022-2023	Number of plans submitted to ECNI	% of actions achieved	Director of Operations
• Actioning Annual Equality and Disability plans 2023-2028	New 5 year Action Plan	Approved by SBNI Board and Equality Commission	Director of Operations
• SBNI 5 Year Review of Equality Scheme 2018-2023	Review of Scheme produced	Approved by SBNI Board and Equality Commission	

Consult on a 5 Year Equality and Disability Action Plan 2023 – 2028	Consultation delivered	Consultation delivered	Director of Operations
Manage SBNI Finances 2023-2024	Number of SPPG / PHA finance meetings	% of profile spend to budget	Director of Operations

Objective 1.2 continued: To ensure that the non-statutory committees fulfil their delivery obligations within their terms of reference			
Actions: What we are going to do	**How much did we do?**	**How well did we do it?**	**Action Owner**
Interfaith Committee Promote effective collaboration of stakeholders in ensuring children involved in the Faith sector are protected and safeguarded	Number of Faith based organisations attending the Interfaith Committee	% Interfaith Committee members who reported a change in skills / knowledge or attitudes/ opinions	Interfaith Committee
Child Protection Committee Review and analyse a range of child protection data to inform the child protection system and underpinning process	Number of data review meetings undertaken & Key data sets identified	% of changes made to systems and processes -	Child Protection Committee
Trauma Informed Practice Committee Continue the development and application to support member and partner agencies to			

embed a sustainable transformational model of trauma informed practice based on existing knowledge of adverse childhood experiences through:			TIP Committee/TIP Implementation Managers
• The development and promotion of an organisational implementation resource	Organisational implementation resource developed	% of member agencies that availed of the resource	
• The application of research to practice through knowledge transfer methodology	Number of mediums used to share research and transfer knowledge	% of member agencies that reported a change in knowledge, skills and/or behaviours	
• Pilot an implementation analytical tool to evaluate organisations' progress on becoming trauma informed	Number of member agencies that piloted the tool	% of member agencies that reported a change in knowledge, skills, behaviours and/or opinions	

Objective 1.2 continued: To ensure that the non-statutory committees fulfil their delivery obligations within their terms of reference			
Child Sexual Exploitation Committee Continue to deliver on the recommendations from the CSE Evaluation Report 2020 (Leonard) by: • Plan, promote and launch the animations relating to CSE and Boys and Young Men • Multi-agency CSE training package is cascaded and rolled out via the HYDRA • Plan, promote and hold continuing professional development days during 2023-2024	A minimum of three continuing professional development days are held Two launch events, one young people focussed are held Six courses are held	% of member agencies that attended the days % of member agencies that reported a change in skills / knowledge or attitudes/ opinions % of member agencies attending the events Report on evaluations of the events Analysis of social media data % of member agencies attending the events Report on evaluations of the events	CSE Committee
• Establish a task and finish group to design data collection for CSE	Task and finish group is established Agreed data collection model is produced	Model produced by the task and finish group is approved and signed off by the CSE committee	

Policies and Procedures Committee Review, update and disseminate the Regional Core Child Protection Policies and Procedures as necessary	Number of policies and procedures updated or developed	% of Member Agencies that provide assurance that they have disseminated and implemented revised / new policies or procedures	Policy and Procedure Committee

Objective 1.3: To participate in relevant child safeguarding and child protection fora			
Actions: What we are going to do	**How much did we do?**	**How well did we do it?**	**Action Owner**
Participate in relevant Departmental, research[5] and professional fora[6] in order to aid and improve understanding of child safeguarding and child protection issues in Northern Ireland by attending: • EPPOC Benefits Realisation Group[7] • Department of Communities Safeguarding Forum • Education Authority SEND Programme • Multi Agency Support Hub Steering Group • TEO SPG Asylum Seeker Families living in Contingency Accommodation • MASH Steering Group • Child Criminal Exploitation Implementation Group	Number and type of fora attended	% of SBNI Staff who reported a change in skills / knowledge or attitudes/ opinions % of fora that have reported a beneficial and positive impact of the SBNI	Director of Operations and Professional Officers

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[5] Additional research and professional fora are detailed in the Domestic Violence and Abuse, Online Safety and Trauma Informed Practice business activities

[6] This list is not exhaustive.

[7] The Executive Programme for Tackling Paramilitary Activity and Organised Crime – EPPOC BRG Chaired by SBNI

Strategic Priority 2: To hear and respond to the voices of children and young people affected by domestic violence[8] and abuse.			
Objective 2.1: Work with government departments and their agencies to prevent domestic violence and abuse (DVA) from occurring.			
Actions: What we are going to do	**How much did we do?**	**How well did we do it?**	**Action Owner**
Continue to participate in the regional Stakeholder Assurance Group (SAG), the Independent Advisory Group (IAG) and the Strategic Delivery Board (SDB) to ensure that the voice of children and young people is represented.	Number of DVA Committee meetings convened	% of member agencies attending DVA Committee	Professional Officer
Continue to participate in informing new and revised Executive Strategies to ensure the voice of children and young people is represented.	Number of Strategy Groups participation	Inclusion of the voice of children and young people in final Strategies	Domestic Violence & Abuse Committee
Objective 2.2: To work with member and partner agencies engaged in the DVA arena to raise awareness among parents/carers and professionals of the impact of DVA on children and young people.			
Actions: What we are going to do	**How much did we do?**	**How well did we do it?**	**Action Owner**
Coordinate the responses to and implementation of the DVA Training and			Domestic Violence & Abuse Committee and Safeguarding Panels

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[8] Definition of DVA as per the Domestic and Sexual Violence Strategy 'Stopping Domestic and Sexual Violence and Abuse in Northern Ireland - A Seven Year Strategy, March 2017'.

	Number of resources developed	% of member agencies that have engaged with children and young people to inform the development of resources	
Development Framework by member and partner agencies, to include: • Resources developed in partnership with CYP in relation to staff training and awareness of DVA • Transfer of knowledge derived from use of the training and development framework to be used by member and partner agencies to inform service provision	Number of services informed by the training and development framework	% of member agencies that have reported a change in knowledge and change following implementation of the framework	

Objective 2.3: To work with member and partner agencies to provide training resources and expertise in how to improve the recognition, assessment, and responses to children, young people and families experiencing domestic violence and abuse			
Actions: What we are going to do	**How much did we do?**	**How well did we do it?**	**Action Owner**
SBNI to finalise and implement a standardised training and development framework that recognises different levels of training required at varying points of support intervention, to assist agencies working with children and young people affected by domestic violence and abuse, for approval and adoption by the Stakeholders Assurance Group (SAG)	Framework completed and implemented	% of member and partner agencies that have implemented the Framework	Domestic Violence & Abuse Committee

Strategic Priority 3: To support children and young people in exercising their rights to enjoy the benefits of the online world free from harm, fear and abuse.

Objective 3.1: To work with government departments and their agencies to develop an online infrastructure and associated standards to prevent children and young people from experiencing harm and abuse online.

Actions: What we are going to do	How much did we do?	How well did we do it?	Action Owner
Coordinate the implementation of the NI Executive's Online Safety Strategy Action Plan. to include:	Number of actions achieved Number of fora attended Number of composite reports produced	% of deliverables implemented % of fora attended % of reports produced	Online Safety Committee/Online Safety Coordinator
• The creation, engagement, promotion and ongoing maintenance of a SBNI-branded Online Safety Hub	Hub created and promoted Number of stakeholders on content contributors whitelist Number of newsletters published	% of users providing feedback via user feedback survey	
• Strengthen links between NI and wider UK and global online safety structures	Number of meetings attended Number of updates disseminated	% of stakeholders who reported a change in skills / knowledge or attitudes/ opinions	

Objective 3.2: To work with member and partner agencies to educate children and young people, their parents and carers and those who work with them to navigate the online world safely and confidently and support them to stay safe and well online.			
Actions: What we are going to do	**How much did we do?**	**How well did we do it?**	**Action Owner**
Develop a consistent approach to online safety messages for children, young people, parents, carers and practitioners through the SBNI Online Safety Hub and SBNI App.	Online Safety Hub and App delivered and promoted Number of newsletters published	% of stakeholders on content contributors whitelist	Online Safety Committee/Online Safety Coordinator
Continue to collaborate and work with members and partners from across government and bodies on initiatives to improve online safety awareness, education and reporting arrangements	Number of agencies engaged with	% of online safety incidents reported to member agencies	
Continue the development of a 'reporting pathways' resource for children and young people, parents/carers and those who work with them to reinforce messaging on where to contact if help is needed	Directory produced and number of support pathways provided	% of online safety incidents reported to member agencies	
Work with government partners to promote the use of a good practice self-assessment tool for schools and further education colleges	Self-assessment tool promotion plan implemented	Number of opportunities to promote the tool	

Objective 3.3: To ensure the views of children and young people inform and influence online policy and practice development.			
Actions: What we are going to do	**How much did we do?**	**How well did we do it?**	**Action Owner**
Publish and promote an evidence report on children's online experiences in NI informed by self-reported survey findings and children and young people's focus groups	Evidence report produced and promoted	% of member agencies that reported a change in skills / knowledge or attitudes/ opinions	Online Safety Committee/Online Safety Coordinator

Strategic Priority 4: To provide a voice for children and young people affected by mental health issues

Objective 4.1: To work with government departments and agencies to help reduce the incidence of children and young people affected by mental health issues

Actions: What we are going to do	How much did we do?	How well did we do it?	Action Owner
Continue to support implementation of: • the Mental Health Strategy and Action Plan, • the Children and Young Peoples Emotional Health and Well-being Services Framework • the Children's Emotional Health and Well-being Framework in Education	Number of actions undertaken in relation to these strategies and frameworks	% of member agencies that reported a change in skills / knowledge or attitudes/ opinions	Mental Health Committee
Continue to support the dissemination of learning from CMRs regarding the impact of poor mental health on children and young people	Number of dissemination events undertaken	% of member agencies that acknowledged learning from the events	Mental Health Committee

Objective 4.2: To work with member and partner agencies to raise awareness among parents, carers and professionals of the impact of poor mental health and any associated stigma, on children and young people.

Actions: What we are going to do	How much did we do?	How well did we do it?	Action Owner
We will continue to co design with children and young people awareness raising material / events to highlight the impact of poor mental health on children and young	Number of events/supports provided to support raising awareness	% of participants who report a change of knowledge, attitudes and/or opinions	Mental Health Committee

people and how to remove any associated stigma			

Objective 4.3: To work with member and partner agencies to promote awareness for children and young people, their parents and carers in how to recognise, respond and seek help in relation to mental health.

Actions: What we are going to do	How much did we do?	How well did we do it?	Action Owner
Finalise the development of a 'reporting pathways' resource for children and young people, parents/carers and those who work with them to reinforce messaging on where to contact if help is needed and promote this with member and partner agencies	Resource finalised completed and number and variety of promotion mediums used	% of member and partner agencies that have availed of the resource and report a change of knowledge, attitudes and/or opinions	Mental Health Committee

Outcome 4.4: To work with partners to promote training in how to improve the recognition, assessment, and responses to children, young people and families experiencing the impact of mental health issues.

Actions: What we are going to do	How much did we do?	How well did we do it?	Action Owner
Develop a Mental Health Minimum Standards Training and Awareness Framework: • To include a set of minimum standards and levels of training which are informed by the voices of children and young people affected by mental health issues	Learning and development framework completed and produced	% of member agencies that adopt the Framework	Mental Health Committee

• Identify opportunities for the framework to be included in relevant strategies across all sectors	Number of strategies adopting the Framework for inclusion	% of member and partner agencies that have availed of the resource and report a change of knowledge, attitudes and/or opinions	

SBNI Financial Profile 2023 – 2024[9]		
Department of Health Allocation to the SBNI		**£681,324**
Case Management Review Allocation (SPPG [DoH])		**£75,638**
Full Year DoH & SPPG (CMR) budget allocation 2023 – 2024	**Total**	**£756,962**
SBNI Running Costs (K9SB01) (excluding salaries)		**£86,726**
Safeguarding Panels Allocation		**£5,000**
Committee Budget		**£84,863**
SBNI Business Plan (excluding salaries)	**Total**	**£176,589**
SBNI Business Plan (excluding salaries)		**£176,589**
Salaries		**£580,373**
SBNI Business Plan – all costs	**Total**	**£756,962**
Activity to be funded external to SBNI Allocation in addition to DoH Budget allocation		
Trauma Informed Practice provision funded by the Executive Programme on Tackling Paramilitarism and Organised Crime - allocation confirmed		**£173,081**
Executive's Online Safety Strategy & Action Plan coordination - allocation confirmed		**£83,494**
	Non-Recurrent Total	**£256,575**
Budget Allocation Required to deliver SBNI Business Plan 2023 – 2024	**Total**	**£1013,537**

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[9] All figures subject to clarification by PHA Finance