

Multi-Agency S42 (safeguarding) Strategy Discussion/Meeting Guidance

In working with people with care and support risks who may be at risk of abuse or neglect, early sharing of information is the key to providing an effective response.

Strategy discussions or meetings under S42 (safeguarding) are always chaired by the Local Authority. However, all agencies who work with or support adults experiencing, or who are at risk of, abuse and neglect may be called upon to contribute to a multi-agency strategy discussion or meeting and need to be prepared to do this.

Prior to the strategy discussion/meeting immediate actions may be required, this should be allocated to the agency that is in the best position to carry out as quickly as possible. Agreement should be reached on what action will be taken.

1. A strategy discussion or meeting?

A strategy discussion would normally take place instead of a meeting if:

- A meeting would involve a delay and place the adult at greater risk.
- Where the risk is assessed to be low and/or minimal number of agencies are required to be involved in the enquiry or put a protection plan in place.

A strategy discussion/meeting can take place in person, telephone or a virtual meeting, it will be for the Local Authority to decide on the most appropriate approach.

Follow up meetings maybe required this will be determined on a case-by-case basis by the Local Authority.

2. Standards for the multi-agency meeting/discussion

Safeguarding Principle	Agreed Standard
<p>Empowerment <i>We will support and encourage people to make their own decisions and know what they are making decisions about. We will ask people what outcome they want from the safeguarding process, and these will directly inform what happens.</i></p>	<p>Consideration will be made for the adult's wishes.</p> <p>The lead agency where appropriate should inform the adult and relevant others that a discussion/meeting is being held. They should be invited to the meeting/discussion and supported as necessary.</p> <p>If the adult is not invited to attend the discussion/meeting, the reasons for this should be recorded.</p>
<p>Prevention <i>We will try to act before harm happens. We will give people information about what abuse is, what to look out for and how to seek help.</i></p>	<p>Identify who is best placed to engage with the adult and support them to reduce the ongoing risk of abuse.</p>
<p>Proportionality <i>We will try to get involved only as much as people need us to, in their best interest, taking into account how much risk there is to their safety.</i></p>	<p>The lead agency should limit invitations to those that need to know and can contribute to the decision-making process and possible resources required to mitigate the risks.</p> <p>If the meeting/discussion is in regard to more than one person at risk the meeting agenda should be set in order for attendees to join/leave the meeting as appropriate.</p> <p>Agree a review discussion/meeting date and required attendees – this will not always be required.</p>
<p>Protection <i>We will provide people with help and support to report abuse. We will support people to take part in the safeguarding process to the extent to which they want to and able.</i></p>	<p>An assessment of risk should be undertaken.</p> <p>It is the collective responsibility of all those who contribute to the discussion/meeting to discuss the risks and consider the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the risk? • What is already in place to reduce the risk? • What are the barriers for removing risk? • What action needs to be taken?
<p>Partnership <i>Everyone, will work together to get the best outcome for the person.</i></p>	<p>Invitations to attend meetings/discussion will be timely as possible, timescales will be determined on a case-by-case basis, considering the level of risk.</p> <p>Any queries regarding participation should be explored with the lead agency, if this cannot be resolved this should be escalated to the practitioner's line manager.</p>
<p>Accountability <i>We will make sure that people know who is responsible for the enquiry, any actions being taken and how decisions are made. We will ensure that information will be appropriately shared in a way that takes into account its personal and sensitive nature.</i></p>	<p>Any agency requested to contribute to a multi-agency strategy discussion/meeting is to regard the request as a priority and ensure attendees are prepared with the relevant history.</p> <p>All agencies will Prioritise meetings/discussions. If attendance is not possible, agencies will provide a written update to the lead agency in advance of the discussion.</p> <p>Regard will be given to confidentiality and data protection issues.</p> <p>The lead agency will chair and clearly set out the purpose of the discussion/meeting.</p> <p>The discussion/meeting will be logged including agreed actions, with timescales and named leads. This will be shared with all attendees.</p> <p>Where concerned that risk(s) are not being adequately addressed raise this with the lead agency at the earliest opportunity. Use escalation processes if your concerns are not resolved.</p> <p>Where actions agreed cannot be achieved within the agreed deadline, the lead officer must be informed at the earliest opportunity so that risks can be re-assessed.</p> <p>Where there are concerns about engagement from agencies then this should be escalated via the following local escalation protocols. If the concern is in response to a safeguarding enquiry then the: Resolving Professional Disagreements In cases that meet the statutory criteria for Safeguarding Adults Escalation Policy should be used.</p>

The West of Berkshire Safeguarding Adults Partnership Board appreciate that the system is under pressure and capacity to contribute to multi-agency discussions/meetings is limited. However, it is clear from safeguarding adult reviews both locally and nationally that good multi-agency working provides better outcomes for individuals.

Any agency can call a multi-agency discussion/meeting, as long as they are clear on what legal framework the discussion sits within. In regard to strategy meetings/discussions for S42 concerns and enquiries these will be called by the host Local Authority.

Acknowledgements

- Guidance page has been created in response to the learning from Sandra Safeguarding Adult Review Full report on the [Case of Sandra](#) and [Practice Note](#) – *Published July 2023*
- [Slough Safeguarding Adults Partnership - \(sloughsafeguardingpartnership.org.uk\)](https://sloughsafeguardingpartnership.org.uk) – Supporting adults who self-neglect: Multi agency protocol and practice guidance.

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