

## **SAFEGUARDING MINISTERIAL GROUP (SMG)**

### **1. Purpose**

To ensure Ministers are appraised of key developments within safeguarding of children and adults at risk, as part of an overall objective for islanders to live safely, minimising and preventing harm, abuse and neglect.

### **2. Background**

The Safeguarding Partnership Board (SPB) comprises an independent Chair and members representing key agencies which have responsibility for safeguarding children and adults in Jersey. It has responsibility for promoting understanding of safeguarding; helping agencies to work together to safeguard; and monitoring how effectively agencies are working together to keep adults and children safe in Jersey. This includes co-ordinating work by participating organisations which will safeguard children and adults, and monitoring and ensuring the effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements within and between organisations in Jersey.

In discharging its role, the SPB produces Serious Case Reviews which are briefed to the relevant Director General and Executive Leadership Team of the Government of Jersey; and individual Ministers and their officers are responsible for incorporating the learning from Serious Case Reviews.

In addition, the Safeguarding Ministerial Group (SMG) is to be established as a sub-group of the Council of Ministers, comprising Ministers whose services most interact with vulnerable Islanders, to provide a collective ministerial forum to hear from the Independent Chair, promote shared ministerial understanding and learning, political coordination, and cross government discussion and oversight.

Individual Ministers will continue to hold decision making powers in their areas of responsibility, but the Group will enable them to receive advice and consider with ministerial colleagues as they discharge those responsibilities.

### **3. Scope**

The Safeguarding Ministerial Group will provide a forum to discuss serious child and adult safeguarding concerns or significant risks in order to enhance effective multiagency working.

The Independent Chair will use this forum to:

1. Provide briefings on Serious Case Reviews including arrangements for publication
2. Raise concerns about governance/assurance for safeguarding across public services
3. Raise concerns about engagement of relevant agencies in multiagency safeguarding arrangements
4. Present the Annual Report of the Safeguarding Partnership Board

# Council of Ministers Ministerial Group

## TERMS OF REFERENCE



5. Present the Annual Business Plan of the Safeguarding Partnership Board including new strategies being developed.

The Ministers and Officers on the Group are expected to question and constructively challenge, seeking information and advice from the Independent Chair and senior officers.

#### **4. Membership**

- Chief Minister
- Minister for Home Affairs (Ministerial Chair) \*
- Minister for Health and Social Services
- Minister for Housing and Communities
- Minister for Social Security
- Minister for Children and Education
- Independent Chair of the Safeguarding Partnership Board

The Minister for Treasury and Resources and Social Security may also be invited where issues relate to resourcing, or the impact of household financial hardship on the wider objectives around safeguarding.

The role of the Ministerial Chair is not to take on responsibility for safeguarding for the Government of Jersey as a whole – their role is to manage the meeting and facilitate constructive discussion amongst Ministers.

Where a Minister cannot attend an Assistant Minister can attend in their place.

Directors General, or a delegated officer, will attend with each Minister to ensure that action points or recommendations are taken forward, and to contribute to discussions on behalf the services they lead. The Chairs of SPB Sub Groups may also be asked to attend for relevant matters.

#### **5. Meeting Frequency**

The Safeguarding Ministerial Group will meet as required based on volume of business, but would generally expect to meet quarterly; and either the Ministerial Chair or the Independent Chair of the SPB may call additional meetings as required.

#### **6. Administration, Record Keeping and Reporting**

The Independent Chair will be responsible for bringing forward the agenda, working with policy officers in the Strategic Policy, Performance and Planning Department.

The Ministerial Chair will have sight of the agenda in advance of the meeting, and may, in advance consultation with the Independent Chair and relevant Minister, decide that a proposed agenda item should, or should not be, considered at the meeting.

The Ministerial Office will provide administrative support.

The Independent Chair will pre-brief the Ministerial Chair in advance of the Safeguarding Partnership Board Ministerial Group meeting.

# Council of Ministers Ministerial Group

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Agendas and supporting papers will be circulated to Ministers no less than two working days in advance of the meeting and will have been approved by the Chair beforehand.

A short note after the meeting shall be circulated detailing any actions.

**DATE: 31<sup>st</sup> August 2022**