# Cheshire West and Chester
# Local Safeguarding Adults Board

**Strategic Plan 2026–2029**

***Reviewed October 2026***

**Our ambition** Building stronger, safer and more inclusive communities through prevention, partnership working, co-production, workforce resilience and continuous improvement, ensuring safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.

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**Updates made in this edition**

- Reformatted in the same visual style as the Board's revised policy and assurance documents.
- Corrected grammatical errors, inconsistent capitalisation and duplicated wording.
- Replaced the incomplete website address with reference to the official Council LSAB webpages.
- Clarified the statutory safeguarding threshold and the wider prevention role of the Board.
- Strengthened the link between each strategic objective, intended outcome, priorities and measurable indicators.
- Added delivery, accountability, review, evidence and risk-management arrangements.
- Added explicit commitments to consultation, accessibility, equality and annual refresh.

**Approval check** Before publication, complete the approval and publication dates; confirm officer details, subgroup names and governance arrangements; approve the baseline and target measures in the annual delivery plan; and produce accessible and Easy Read versions.

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## 1. Foreword and purpose

This three-year strategic plan sets out how Cheshire West and Chester Local Safeguarding Adults Board will work with partner organisations, communities and people with lived experience to prevent abuse and neglect, improve safeguarding responses and strengthen accountability. It provides the strategic direction for annual delivery plans and partner contributions from 2026 to 2029.

The plan is intended for local people, practitioners, Board members, partner organisations and elected members. It will be reviewed each year so that priorities remain responsive to evidence, lived experience, safeguarding learning and changes in the local and national context.

**Strategic success statement** By the end of the strategy period, partners, communities and people with lived experience will work together within a strong safeguarding culture that prioritises prevention, promotes learning, strengthens accountability and delivers measurable improvements in safety, wellbeing and quality of life for local people.

## 2. What safeguarding means

Safeguarding means protecting people's health, wellbeing and human rights and enabling them to live free from abuse and neglect. The Board's work is driven by a commitment to partnership working so that local people are supported to feel safe and to have choice and control over their lives.

### The statutory safeguarding threshold

Under section 42 of the Care Act 2014, the local authority must make, or cause to be made, enquiries where it has reasonable cause to suspect that an adult in its area:

- has needs for care and support, whether or not the local authority is meeting those needs;
- is experiencing, or is at risk of, abuse or neglect; and
- because of those needs, is unable to protect themselves from the risk of, or the experience of, abuse or neglect.

The Board also has a wider prevention role. Partners will work with communities and services to identify risks early, promote wellbeing and ensure that people who do not meet the statutory safeguarding threshold can access appropriate information, advice, prevention and support pathways.

## 3. Who we are and what we do

The Local Safeguarding Adults Board is a statutory multi-agency partnership established under the Care Act 2014. The Board leads adult safeguarding arrangements across the borough and oversees and coordinates the effectiveness of the safeguarding work of its member and partner agencies.

**Our overall purpose**

- assure ourselves that local safeguarding arrangements are effective;
- promote prevention and early intervention;
- ensure that safeguarding practice is person-centred and outcome-focused;
- support timely, proportionate and coordinated responses when abuse or neglect occurs;
- seek assurance that learning leads to sustained improvement; and
- publish a strategic plan, annual report and Safeguarding Adults Reviews in accordance with statutory requirements.

**Our aims for local people**

Working with adults who have care and support needs, their families, carers and communities, the Board aims to ensure that people are:

- safe and better able to protect themselves from abuse and neglect;
- treated fairly and with dignity and respect;
- protected and supported when needed;
- able to understand how to seek help and access appropriate services; and
- listened to, involved and supported to achieve the outcomes that matter to them.

## 4. Vision, mission and strategic ambition

**Vision** A culture in which safeguarding is everyone's responsibility, prevention is prioritised, and the voices of local people and lived experience shape how services are designed, delivered and improved.

**Mission** Working together to create safer, stronger and more inclusive communities by promoting prevention, listening to lived experience, learning continuously and ensuring safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.

**Strategic ambition**

The Board will build an integrated safeguarding system that:

- prevents harm before it occurs;
- places people, families and communities at the centre of decision-making;
- promotes co-production and lived experience;
- strengthens partnership working and accountability;

- develops a skilled and resilient workforce;
- uses evidence, learning and innovation to drive improvement; and
- responds proactively to emerging risks and future challenges.

**Core principles**

- Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.
- Safeguarding is a golden thread across partnership activity.
- Prevention and early intervention are as important as statutory responses.
- Co-production and lived experience influence decision-making.
- Partnership and collaboration are essential to better outcomes.
- Evidence, learning and continuous improvement drive practice.
- Communities are empowered, informed and included.
- Leadership is accountable, transparent and focused on outcomes.

## 5. How the plan was developed

The plan draws on local, regional and national evidence, including Safeguarding Adults Reviews, case audits, performance information, regulatory findings, partner intelligence and emerging risk. The final approved plan should also record how local Healthwatch, adults with care and support needs, carers, advocacy organisations, voluntary and community groups, under-represented communities and partner agencies were consulted and how their views changed the plan.

**Required before final approval** Add a concise consultation and engagement statement, including who was involved, the methods used, key messages received, any groups not reached and how feedback influenced the final priorities.

### Annual refresh

Each year the Board will review progress, refresh its evidence base and delivery plan, and consider whether objectives, priorities, indicators or risks need to change. Any material change will be approved through the Board's governance arrangements and communicated publicly.

## 6. How we work

The statutory partners are Cheshire West and Chester Council, NHS Cheshire and Merseyside Integrated Care Board and Cheshire Constabulary. Wider partner agencies contribute to the Board's membership, subgroups, assurance activity, learning and delivery.

The Board is supported by an Independent Chair, Board Manager, Administrator, Quality Assurance Officer and Training Officer. The Executive Group and Board subgroups meet according to their approved terms of reference and deliver work plans aligned with this strategic plan.

**Partnership interfaces**

The Board will maintain effective links with other strategic partnerships, including the Safeguarding Children Partnership, Community Safety Partnership, Domestic Abuse Board, Health and Wellbeing Board and relevant provider, commissioning, housing, criminal justice and community arrangements. Joint working will be used where risks, learning or priorities cross partnership boundaries.

## 7. Trauma-informed commitment

Everything the Board does will be informed by an understanding of trauma. Abuse, neglect, exploitation, discrimination and adversity can affect how people engage with services, make decisions, build relationships and respond to safeguarding interventions.

Partners will seek to create systems and services that recognise the impact of trauma, avoid re-traumatisation, build trust, promote choice and control, work collaboratively, recognise strengths and recovery, and understand the effects of inequality and discrimination.

**Six trauma-informed principles**

| Principle | Commitment |
|---|---|
| Safety | Create physical and psychological safety. |
| Trustworthiness and transparency | Be open, honest, dependable and consistent. |
| Peer support | Recognise and value lived experience and mutual support. |
| Collaboration and mutuality | Work alongside people rather than doing things to them. |
| Empowerment, voice and choice | Support people to influence decisions affecting their lives. |
| Cultural, historical and identity responsiveness | Recognise diversity, inequality, history and individual experience without stereotyping. |

## 8. Strategic objectives 2026–2029

The Board will focus on four equally important strategic objectives. Each objective will be supported by an annual delivery plan that identifies actions, responsible partners, timescales, baselines, targets and evidence of impact.

### Objective 1: Prevention and early intervention

To strengthen early identification, prevention and intervention through coordinated multi-agency working, helping to identify risks earlier and improve outcomes.

**Intended outcome** People receive the right support at the earliest opportunity, reducing risk and preventing escalation into crisis.

#### Priorities

- Embed a prevention-first safeguarding approach.
- Improve pathways that support early help and intervention.
- Promote safeguarding awareness across communities.
- Improve understanding of statutory thresholds and alternative support pathways.
- Strengthen integrated neighbourhood and place-based working.
- Use horizon scanning to identify emerging risks and opportunities.
- Evaluate prevention activity and its effect on demand and outcomes.
- Improve partnership coordination and timely referral.

#### Measures of progress and impact

- Trend in the proportion and number of concerns requiring crisis or urgent intervention.
- Evidence of earlier identification and timely access to proportionate support.
- Audit evidence that correct pathways and thresholds are understood and applied.
- Community awareness and confidence measures.
- Outcome evidence from selected prevention initiatives.
- Evidence that emerging risks are identified, owned and addressed through partnership action.

### Objective 2: Community voice and co-production

To embed co-production and lived experience across safeguarding activity, ensuring that communities, adults who use services, carers and under-represented groups influence planning, delivery and evaluation.

**Intended outcome** People with lived experience and communities actively shape safeguarding priorities, services and system improvements.

#### Priorities

- Embed co-production in planning, commissioning and service improvement.
- Actively seek, value and respond to lived experience.
- Increase community participation and engagement.
- Improve accessibility, inclusion and availability of alternative formats.
- Reduce stigma through respectful communication and language.
- Build community resilience, awareness and social connectedness.
- Strengthen awareness of advocacy and support services.

#### Measures of progress and impact

- Diverse lived-experience representation in Board or delegated governance arrangements.
- Published examples showing how feedback changed priorities, policy, practice or services.
- Participation data examined for gaps and under-representation.
- Experience and accessibility feedback from adults, carers and communities.
- Evidence of engagement with seldom-heard communities.
- Improved awareness of safeguarding, advocacy and routes to support.

### Objective 3: Learning, culture and workforce effectiveness

To create and sustain a positive culture that supports learning, continuous improvement, collaboration and effective use of resources.

**Intended outcome** A skilled, confident and resilient workforce working within a culture of continuous learning, accountability and improvement.

#### Priorities

- Invest in workforce development and role-appropriate training.
- Strengthen recruitment, retention and succession planning.

- Support workforce wellbeing and resilience.
- Promote a partnership-wide learning culture.
- Capture and share learning from reviews, audits, data and practice.
- Ensure practitioners understand safeguarding roles, responsibilities and legal literacy.
- Build confidence in professional challenge and escalation.
- Improve documentation, knowledge management and access to learning.

**Measures of progress and impact**

- Training reach, evaluation and evidence of increased competence.
- Workforce confidence and safeguarding culture measures.
- Evidence that review and audit learning changes policy, supervision or practice.
- Timeliness and quality of multi-agency action-plan completion.
- Audit evidence of effective professional challenge, escalation and recording.
- Partner intelligence on workforce capacity, resilience and critical skill gaps.

**Objective 4: Partnership, assurance and system leadership**

To develop effective leadership, governance and accountability arrangements that support collaborative decision-making and shared ownership across partner organisations.

**Intended outcome** Partners work effectively together, provide strong leadership, deliver robust governance and demonstrate measurable impact.

**Priorities**

- Clarify purpose, roles and responsibilities.
- Strengthen relationships between Boards, organisations and practitioners.
- Ensure relevant partners and communities are represented.
- Improve lawful, timely and proportionate multi-agency information sharing.
- Review governance to reduce duplication and improve decision-making.
- Strengthen assurance and escalation arrangements.
- Focus reporting on outcomes and impact, not activity alone.
- Use data, intelligence and professional judgement in decision-making.
- Demonstrate effective system leadership across safeguarding arrangements.

**Measures of progress and impact**

- Partner attendance, contribution and completion of agreed actions.
- Evidence of effective information sharing and resolution of barriers.

- Clear terms of reference, responsibilities and escalation routes.
- Reduction in avoidable duplication across partnership structures.
- Quarterly assurance reporting against agreed objectives, risks and outcomes.
- Evidence that Board challenge leads to change and that actions improve safeguarding arrangements.

### 9. Cross-cutting priority: evidence, insight and continuous improvement

Quality assurance, performance and impact underpin all four strategic objectives. The Board will use quantitative and qualitative evidence together to understand effectiveness, variation, people's experience and outcomes.

**We will**

- use outcomes-based performance measures and explain what the evidence means;
- capture lived experience and practitioner insight;
- undertake regular single-agency and multi-agency audits and evaluations;
- promote and test learning across the partnership;
- use intelligence to inform strategic planning and prevention;
- monitor emerging local and national safeguarding risks;
- examine differences in access, experience and outcomes between communities; and
- review whether Board activity leads to sustained improvement.

**Key assurance products**

| Product | Purpose | Frequency |
|---|---|---|
| Strategic delivery dashboard | Track milestones, indicators, risks, variation and impact. | Quarterly |
| Subgroup assurance reports | Provide concise assurance, exception reporting and escalation. | Quarterly |
| Multi-agency audit programme | Test practice quality, partnership working and outcomes. | Annual programme |
| Lived-experience and community insight | Inform priorities, interpretation and service improvement. | Ongoing and annual summary |

| Product | Purpose | Frequency |
|---|---|---|
| Annual report | Demonstrate statutory accountability and progress against this plan. | Annual |
| Strategic plan refresh | Review evidence, delivery, consultation and future priorities. | Annual |

### 10. Delivery and accountability

The strategic plan will be translated into an annual delivery plan. The delivery plan will identify the intended outcome, actions, lead partner or subgroup, contributors, milestones, indicator, baseline, target, evidence source, risks and status for each priority.

#### Accountability expectations

- Each statutory and partner agency will identify how it contributes to the plan through its own governance arrangements.
- Subgroups will align work plans to the strategic objectives and report progress, evidence, risk and exception.
- Actions will have named owners and realistic completion dates.
- Actions will not be closed solely because an activity took place; evidence of implementation and impact will be considered.
- Material delay, dependency, capacity constraint or unmanaged risk will be escalated through the agreed governance route.
- The Board will publish progress through its annual report and accessible public communications.

**SMART delivery requirement** The approved annual delivery plan should contain baselines and targets for priority indicators. Where a numerical target would be misleading, the plan should define the qualitative evidence required to demonstrate progress and impact.

### 11. Performance and impact

The Board will distinguish activity, quality and impact. Measures will be interpreted alongside audit findings, lived experience, practitioner insight, complaints, reviews, regulatory intelligence and local context. The Board will avoid drawing conclusions from small numbers or single indicators without appropriate qualification.

**Impact questions**

- How much activity took place and who was reached?
- How well did partners work together and how consistent was practice?
- What changed for adults, carers, communities and the safeguarding system?
- Were there differences in access, experience or outcomes between groups?
- What evidence gives confidence in the finding and what remains uncertain?
- What action, escalation or further enquiry is required?

## 12. Strategic risks

| Risk | Potential effect | Strategic response |
|---|---|---|
| Workforce capacity, capability and wellbeing | Reduced ability to deliver improvement, respond to demand or sustain specialist expertise. | Partner workforce intelligence, prioritisation, succession planning, training assurance and escalation. |
| Financial pressure and limited resources | Delay, reduced prevention activity or competing organisational priorities. | Risk-based prioritisation, shared resources, evaluation of impact and transparent escalation. |
| Information sharing and systems integration | Delayed or incomplete safeguarding responses and weak partnership intelligence. | Clear agreements, lawful practice, escalation routes, audit and system improvement. |
| Insufficient community engagement and co-production | Priorities or services do not reflect diverse experience and need. | Accessible engagement plan, representation, feedback loops and participation monitoring. |
| Increasing complexity and demand | Greater risk of crisis response, delay and workforce pressure. | Horizon scanning, prevention, integrated working, demand analysis and targeted assurance. |
| Emerging safeguarding risks | New forms of harm are not identified or addressed early. | Horizon scanning, partner intelligence, community insight and rapid assurance. |

| Risk | Potential effect | Strategic response |
|---|---|---|
| Failure to demonstrate impact | Activity is completed without evidence of improved practice or outcomes. | Outcome measures, audit, action follow-up and Board challenge. |

Detailed ownership, scoring, controls, assurance and review dates will be maintained in the Board's strategic risk register.

### 13. Review and accessibility

The Board will review this plan and its annual delivery plan at least once each year. The review will consider progress, changing needs, consultation, evidence, risks, legislative and policy developments, learning from reviews and audits, and findings from regulatory or external scrutiny.

### Accessible publication

The final plan will be written in plain language and made available on request in accessible formats. The Board will publish an Easy Read summary and consider translated, large-print, audio or other formats according to local need. Public communications will explain how people can raise safeguarding concerns and how communities can contribute to the Board's work.

### Appendix 1: Strategic objectives summary

| Objective | Strategic focus | Outcome |
|---|---|---|
| 1. Prevention and early intervention | Identify risk earlier and provide proportionate support before crisis. | People receive the right support at the earliest opportunity. |
| 2. Community voice and co-production | Ensure lived experience and communities influence priorities, design and evaluation. | People and communities actively shape safeguarding improvement. |
| 3. Learning, culture and workforce effectiveness | Build a skilled, resilient and learning-focused workforce and partnership culture. | Practice improves through competence, reflection and shared learning. |
| 4. Partnership, assurance and system leadership | Strengthen governance, collaboration, accountability, information sharing and impact. | Partners provide effective leadership and demonstrate measurable improvement. |

**Overarching strategic statement** Building stronger, safer and more inclusive communities through prevention, partnership working, co-production, workforce resilience and continuous improvement, ensuring safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.

### Appendix 2: Annual delivery plan template

| No. | Priority /action | Lead and contributors | Milestone/ date | Indicator and baseline | Target or success evidence | Status | Impact / next step |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | | | | | | | |
| 2 | | | | | | | |
| 3 | | | | | | | |
| 4 | | | | | | | |
| 5 | | | | | | | |
| 6 | | | | | | | |
| 7 | | | | | | | |
| 8 | | | | | | | |

### Quarterly review prompts

- What has been delivered since the previous review?
- What evidence demonstrates quality, reach or impact?
- What changed for people or the safeguarding system?
- Are there inequalities, unintended consequences or evidence gaps?

- What is delayed, at risk or dependent on another organisation?
- What decision, challenge or escalation is required from the Board?