

## **Health and Wellbeing Board**

**12 February 2026**

### **Kent and Medway Safeguarding Adults Board Annual Report 2024-2025**

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#### **Summary**

This report introduces the Kent and Medway Safeguarding Adults Board's (KMSAB) Annual Report for April 2024–March 2025. The Annual Report sets out the responsibilities and structure of the Board and details how the multi-agency partnership delivered against its strategic priorities during the year. The report also provides information pertaining to safeguarding adults reviews and safeguarding activity.

#### **1. Recommendation**

1.1 The Health and Wellbeing Board is asked to note the KMSAB Annual Report 2024-2025.

#### **2. Budget and policy framework**

2.1 The Care Act 2014 made it a requirement for each local authority to establish a Safeguarding Adults Board (SAB). Medway Council's duty is met through a joint SAB with Kent County Council; the Kent and Medway Safeguarding Adults Board (KMSAB).

2.2 Under the Care Act 2014, the KMSAB has three core duties, it must:

- Publish a strategic plan to set out how it will meet its main objectives and what members will do to achieve this. The Board's 2022- 2025 strategic plan is available on the link below:  
[Annual Report and Strategic Plan](#)
- Publish an Annual Report to detail what the Board has done during the year to achieve its main objectives and implement its Strategic Plan,

and what each member has done to implement the strategy, as well as detailing the findings of any Safeguarding Adults Reviews and subsequent actions.

- Conduct any [Safeguarding Adults Reviews](#) (SAR) in accordance with Section 44 of the Care Act.

2.3 The Care Act 2014 states that, once the Annual Report is published, it must be submitted to:

- the Chief Executive (where one is in situ) and Leader of the Council;
- the local Police and Crime Commissioner and Chief Constable;
- the local Healthwatch; and
- the Chair of the Health and Wellbeing Board.

2.4 The supporting statutory guidance states that “it is expected that those organisations will fully consider the contents of the report and how they can improve their contributions to both safeguarding throughout their own organisation and to the joint work of the Board”. As such, this report presents the 2024 - 2025 Annual Report to the Medway Health and Wellbeing Board.

2.5 The KMSAB has a pooled budget made up of contributions from its key partners:

- Kent County Council
- Medway Council
- Kent and Medway Integrated Care Board (ICB) and Provider Trusts
- The Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner
- Kent Fire and Rescue Service.

### 3. Background

3.1 The KMSAB does not provide frontline services, it has a strategic role which is “greater than the sum of the operational duties of the core partners”<sup>1</sup>. The KMSAB sets the strategic direction for adult safeguarding in Kent and Medway and seeks assurance and provides challenge to ensure that adult safeguarding arrangements in Kent and Medway are in place, are effective and are person centred and outcome focused. The KMSAB membership works collaboratively to raise awareness of adult safeguarding and prevent abuse and neglect.

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<sup>1</sup> Care and Support Statutory Guidance. [Care and Support Statutory Guidance \(14.134\)](#)

3.2 The Annual Report details how the Board delivered against the following strategic priorities in 2024-2025:

- Promote Person Centred Safeguarding
- Strengthen System Assurance
- Embed Improvement and Shape Future Practice.

3.3 Some of the key achievements during the reporting period include:

- In response to learning from Safeguarding Adults Reviews (SARs), and having evaluated best practice in other areas, the Practice Policies and Procedures Working Group developed a Multi-agency Risk Management (MARM) Framework. The MARM framework is designed to support anyone working with an adult where there is a high level of risk of harm and the circumstances sit outside the statutory adult safeguarding framework, but where a multi-agency approach would be beneficial. It enables a proactive approach which helps to identify and respond to risks before crisis point is reached. It can be initiated by either statutory or non-statutory organisations. The MARM promotes a person-centred approach, by actively seeking the involvement of the individual/their advocates to establish the outcomes they wish to achieve and working collaboratively to develop strength-based action plans to support those outcomes.
- Practice, Policies and Procedures Working Group Members worked with housing teams and other relevant agencies, such as porchlight, to develop a Practitioner resource: *supporting persons who are homeless, at risk of homelessness or experiencing multiple exclusion homelessness*. Half day workshops have been planned to further raise awareness of the document.
- Members of the KMSAB and the Business Unit hosted a stand at the Kent Police Open Day on 30 June 2025, where over 7000 members of the public were in attendance. Engagement at the stand was high, with a continuous flow of visitors interested in learning more, sharing their experiences, seeking advice and collecting resources for future reference.
- In response to feedback from the public facing events, the KMSAB's leaflet, which explains how to recognise and respond to abuse, was translated into two additional languages - Yorùbá and Tamil. The leaflet is now available in 28 different languages. These are promoted widely at in person events and through social media. The leaflet is also available in easy read and British Sign Language (BSL) friendly formats. Appreciating different learning styles and accessibility preferences, the KMSAB also makes videos available, such as the ['tricky friends'](#) animation and Hampshire's [adult safeguarding](#) animation.
- Kent and Medway Safeguarding Adults Board members supported National Safeguarding Adults' Awareness Week, established by the Ann

Craft Trust. Members shared safeguarding information with their workforce and used the opportunity, and momentum, to share messages with the public on how to recognise and report abuse and neglect, and to highlight the support and services available for those at risk or experiencing abuse. The campaign led to a significant increase in visits to KMSAB webpages, with a total of 7181 visits to the KMSAB webpages during the week, this included 584 clicks to the 'safeguarding explained' page and 423 visits to the 'useful resources for the public' page.

- The Communication and Engagement Working Group produced materials to support other targeted awareness campaigns, such as carers week and alcohol awareness week, as they aligned with common themes identified in safeguarding adults reviews. Between April and August 2024—during which many of the campaigns took place, alongside the Kent Police Open Day—the website received 79,070 visits, representing a 109% increase. Specific sections also saw significant rises in traffic: visits to the 'Information for Carers' page increased by 165%, 'What is Adult Safeguarding?' by 117%, and the 'Useful Links and Resources' section by 89%.
- Following successful appointment to the newly developed Learning and Development Manager post, the Board recommenced multi-agency training on 1 April 2024. The following core modules, predominantly for staff from the statutory sector, were offered throughout the year:
  - Adult Safeguarding Legal Literacy
  - Collaborative Working in Section 42 Enquiries
  - Domestic Abuse and Adult Safeguarding
  - Self-Neglect and Hoarding

Between April 2024 – March 2025, 42 workshops were held, with 614 delegates participating. Analysis of feedback presented a positive picture in relation to people's experiences of the course and the reported increase in their knowledge and skills.

- The Board continued to implement their quality assurance framework. This included a Self-Assessment Framework (SAF), a series of questions to measure progress against key safeguarding quality standards. The purpose of the SAF is to enable agencies to evaluate the effectiveness of their internal safeguarding arrangements and identify and prioritise areas needing further development.

3.4 Appendix 3 provides highlights of how partner agencies delivered the Board's three strategic priorities. At the request of Members, the returns for the statutory partners have been included in full (appendix 2). Medway Council's highlights include:

- During Safeguarding Adults Awareness Week in November 2024, Medway Adult Safeguarding Team hosted stands at Medway Council's offices at Gun Wharf, Hempstead Valley Shopping Centre and the Pentagon Shopping Centre where they were joined by Cllr Teresa Murray. The Safeguarding Team and Councillor Murray engaged with Medway residents, raising awareness of adult safeguarding by sharing key information and directing them to resources and services.
- Medway Council and Kent County Council collaborated to develop a [threshold tool](#), to support decision making prior to making a referral. This was endorsed by the Board and was widely promoted. The threshold tool has been well received.
- The Principal Social Worker introduced critical reflection meetings, with the purpose of enabling practitioners to reflect upon a specific case or piece of work, that may have identified learning opportunities, and to discuss this in detail and identify what support the practitioner requires to learn and develop their future practice.
- To support a culture of professional curiosity, non-engagement practice guidance was developed. The guidance outlines the practice expectations for staff who undertake statutory care and support planning duties in circumstances where an adult declines an assessment and where Section 11 of the Care Act 2014 applies. The guidance also addresses circumstances where there are safeguarding concerns, and the person is not engaging with the safeguarding enquiry process outlined in Section 42 of the Care Act.
- A restructure of Adult Social Care took place on 1 March 2025. Prior to the restructure, there were 3 safeguarding hubs that worked in a locality-based model. The restructuring has established a single safeguarding team, responsible for the entire demographic area of Medway. By transitioning to a team that serves all of Medway, it eliminates postcode-based response disparities and enhances equity for residents. In addition to the restructure, to enable the Safeguarding Team to meet demand effectively, the permanent staffing establishment has been increased by just over 100%.
- Adult Social Care recently established the Medway Intensive Support Team (MIST). The purpose of the Medway Intensive Support Team is to play a key part in transforming lives and promoting positive outcomes for individuals facing multi-faceted complexities, by providing proactive, assertive strengths-based outreach and support. Individuals supported by the team will be facing challenges associated with learning disabilities and/or autism, mental health decline, drug and alcohol dependency,

homelessness, self-neglect, hoarding, cuckooing and home invasion concerns.

3.5 Twelve safeguarding adults reviews (SARs) have been published since the last annual report. Further details of the reviews, learning from these, and actions taken by the Board, are set out in section three of the annual report.

#### 4. Risk management

4.1 While there are no specific risks identified, the KMSAB Annual Report 2024-25 presents an analysis of safeguarding adults activity, to raise awareness of abuse, prevent it occurring and ensure a timely and effective multi agency response when it occurs.

#### 5. Financial implications

5.1 The KMSAB Annual Report is funded by the KMSAB. There are no direct financial implications for the Council arising from this report.

#### 6. Legal implications

6.1 Section 43 (1) of The Care Act states that “Each Local Authority must establish a Safeguarding Adults Board (“SAB”) for its area”

6.2 The Care and Support Statutory Guidance, section 14.133, further states that “The main objective of a SAB is to assure itself that local safeguarding arrangements and partners act to help and protect adults in its area who meet the criteria set out at paragraph 14.2<sup>2</sup>)”

6.3 The production of the KMSAB Annual Report is in accordance with the duty outlined in the Care Act 2014. The report is within the remit of the Board to note and comment upon.

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- <sup>2</sup> has needs for care and support (whether or not the local authority is meeting any of those needs)
  - is experiencing, or at risk of, abuse or neglect
  - as a result of those care and support needs is unable to protect themselves from either the risk of, or the experience of abuse or neglect

## Lead officer contact

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## Appendices

Appendix A. Kent and Medway Safeguarding Adults Board Annual Report 2024 – 2025, which includes the following appendices:

Appendix 1 - Annual Report 2023-2024 Data

Appendix 2 – Strategic Partners' Highlights

Appendix 3 - Annual Report Partner Highlights

## Background papers

None