

61st Meeting of the Safeguarding Board for Northern Ireland

Wednesday 17 April 2024

2.40pm – 4.30pm – Zoom Virtual Platform

Public Minutes

RECORD OF ATTENDANCE

Name	Title & Organisation	Present	Apology
Ms Bernie McNally	Independent Chair Safeguarding Board for Northern Ireland	✓	
Mr Tom Cassidy	Director of Children and Families, WHSCT	✓	
Dr Naoimh White	GP representative of N.I. General Practice Committee	✓	
Ms Bronagh Muldoon	NSPCC Head of Services NI	✓	
Ms Mary Aughey	Director of Woodlands JJC, YJA	✓	
T/D/Superintendent Jordan Piper	T/Detective Superintendent, Public Protection Branch, PSNI	✓	
Ms Paddy Kelly	Director, Children's Law Centre		✓
Ms Amanda Stewart	CEO, Probation Board NI	✓	
Ms Pauline Leeson	Chief Executive Children in N. Ireland		✓
Mr Dale Hanna	Director of Children and Young Peoples Services, EANI		✓
Ms Una Turbitt	Assistant Director of Pupil Wellbeing and Protection, EANI (deputising OBO Mr Dale Hanna)	✓	
Mr Brendan Whittle	Director of Hospital and Community Care and Social Services, SPPG		✓
Ms Catherine Cassidy	Deputy Director of Social Care, SPPG (deputising OBO Mr Brendan Whittle)	✓	
Ms Lyn Preece	Director of Children's Services & Executive Director of Social Work, SEHSCT	✓	
Mr Colm McCafferty	Director of Children & Young People's Services SHSCT		✓

Ms Donna Murphy	Assistant Director for Children and Young People Services, Family Support & Safeguarding, SHSCT (deputising OBO Mr Colm McCafferty)	✓	
Dr Joanne McClean	Director of Public Health, PHA		✓
Mr Maurice Meehan	Head of Health and Social Wellbeing Improvement, PHA (deputising OBO Dr Joanne McClean)	✓	
Ms Heather Reid	Interim Director of Nursing, Midwifery and Allied Health Professions, PHA		✓
Ms Emily Roberts	Designated Nurse for Safeguarding Children and Young People, PHA	✓	
Ms Lorna Ballard	Director NI, Action for Children	✓	
Ms Maura Dargan	Director of Women, Children & Families Division/Executive Director of Social Work, NHSCT	✓	
Ms Michele Janes	Director of Barnardo's NI	✓	
Ms Kerrylee Weatherall	Interim Director of Children's Community Services, BHSCT	✓	
Dr Jacqui Montgomery-Devlin	Head of Safeguarding, Council for Social Witness, Presbyterian Church in Ireland representing the SBNI Interfaith Committee		✓
Mr Philip O'Hara	Interim Director and DLP, Down & Connor Safeguarding Office representing the SBNI Interfaith Committee (deputising OBO Dr Jacqui Montgomery-Devlin)	✓	
Ms Dawn Shaw	Chief Executive Officer, Children's Court Guardian Agency for Northern Ireland	✓	
Mr Richard Harvey	Acting Director of Environmental Services, Lisburn & Castlereagh City Council	✓	
Ms Diane Hill	Chief Executive Officer, Include Youth		✓
Mr Andrew Thomson	Independent Chair of the CMR Panel	✓	

Ms Mary Rafferty	Independent Safeguarding Panel Chair, Western and Northern areas	✓	
Mr Simon Rogers	Non-Executive (Lay) Member	✓	
Mr Gerard Guckian	Non-Executive (Lay) Member	✓	
In Attendance			
Ms Alex McCoy	Board Secretary SBNI		
Ms Helen McKenzie	Director of Operations SBNI		
Ms Teresa McAllister	Professional Officer SBNI		
Ms Sheina Rigg	Professional Officer SBNI		
Ms Marie Roulston	Author of CMR Review		
Ms Jacqui Durkin	Chief Inspector, CJINI		
Dr Roisin Devlin	Inspector, CJINI		
Ms Shirley Jones	Reporting Inspector, ETI		
Ms Joanne Peake	Senior Inspector, RQIA		

Summary of Actions

Action No.	Action:	To be completed by:
1	In the absence of a CDOP, a meeting to be arranged to explore options available to members regarding notified child deaths that do not meet existing review criteria.	T/D/Supt Piper & Helen McKenzie
2	The SBNI CMR Process Review Report 2024 to be shared with the Department of Health.	SBNI CST
3	SBNI to write to the Department of Health, outlining its views of the CJINI Joint Inspection Pilot of Child Protection Arrangements in the Southern Health and Social Care Trust area.	SBNI Chair
4	The SBNI Section 12 Audit Report 2024 will be presented at the next meeting of the SBNI Board in June.	Ms Helen McKenzie
5	Update to be provided to Dr White regarding the Domestic Violence and Abuse Learning and Development Framework.	Ms Bronagh Muldoon & Dr Naoimh White
6	SBNI End of Year Assurance Statement March 2024 to be shared with the Department of Health.	SBNI CST
7	The SBNI Board Development Day scheduled for Wednesday 15 May 2024 is not proceeding. All Members may release this hold in their diaries.	All members

8	The SBNI Board Meeting in September 2024 will be held in person. A venue will be secured for this, and members will be advised.	SBNI CST
---	---	----------

Summary of Board Approval

The minutes from the Board Meeting on 14 February 2024 were approved as an accurate record of the meeting.
The SBNI CMR Process Review Report 2024 was approved.
The Trauma Informed Organisational Toolkit was approved.
The Domestic Violence and Abuse Learning and Development Framework was approved.
The Declaration of Assurance Year End Statement March 2024 was approved.
The SBNI Risk Register and Issue Log were approved.

Preliminaries: Apologies, Quorum, Conflict of Interest, Complaints

The chair welcomed SBNI members to the meeting. Apologies were noted from Ms Paddy Kelly, Ms Pauline Leeson, Mr Dale Hanna, Mr Brendan Whittle, Mr Colm McCafferty, Dr Joanne McClean, Ms Heather Reid, Dr Jacqui Montgomery-Devlin and Ms Diane Hill. The chair noted that Ms Una Turbitt is deputising on behalf of Mr Dale Hanna, Ms Catherine Cassidy is deputising on behalf of Mr Brendan Whittle, Ms Donna Murphy is deputising on behalf of Mr Colm McCafferty, Mr Maurice Meehan is deputising on behalf of Dr Joanne McClean and Mr Philip O'Hara is deputising on behalf of Dr Jacqui Montgomery Devlin.

Conflict of Interest

The chair requested that members declare any Conflicts of Interest as and when they arise throughout the meeting.

Complaints

The chair advised that no complaints have been received.

Chair's Business

The chair did not raise any additional business.

1 61/24P Previous Minutes

- 1.1 Members agreed the minutes from the last Board meeting on 14 February 2024 as a factual and accurate representation of the meeting.

2 61/24P Matters Arising

- 2.1 Complete
- 2.2 Complete
- 2.3 Complete
- 2.4 Complete

3 61/24P SBNI CMR Process Review Report (Please refer to Board Paper BM61-04.24P)

- 3.1 The chair welcomed Ms Marie Roulston to present on the SBNI CMR Process Review Report. Mr Thomson introduced Ms Roulston and thanked her for her professionalism and knowledge in undertaking the review in a very timely way.
- 3.2 Ms Roulston gave a comprehensive overview of the SBNI CMR Process Review Report which was circulated to members in advance of the meeting. Ms Roulston reported that in terms of her methodology for the review, she captured an overview of the process in England, Scotland and Wales and this is reflected in the report. She advised that as one part of the process she has undertaken a 'desk-top' review of data over the last few years. This has indicated that the number of CMRs has reduced, which she suggested should be monitored going forward. Ms Roulston reported that her overall finding is that the CMR process in Northern Ireland is not broken, but there are some improvements which could be made. Subsequently, members attention was drawn to recommendations made in the report.
- 3.3 On discussion of same, Ms Dargan referenced Recommendation 17, which states that "The SBNI Central Support Team and members of the CMR Panel should explore whether it would be beneficial to introduce Rapid Reviews into Northern Ireland." She commented that Briefing Reports which are submitted to the CMR Panel for consideration are robust and detailed, and she feels that in the main, these submissions may constitute a Rapid Review. Ms Roulston agreed that information presented at the CMR Panel is extremely robust, and this makes the process of decision making much more straightforward for Panel members. Ms Roulston further highlighted that although she feels this information could be seen to constitute a Rapid Review, it may be beneficial to consider how this could be reframed accordingly and how it could be presented to Board members. Ms Roulston commented that she feels the robustness of discussions at the CMR Panel may have played a role in the reduction in the number of CMRs.

- 3.4 Ms Dargan further referenced Recommendation 10, which states “The Department of Health, in conjunction with the SBNI, should give consideration to reviewing whether it is necessary for all five assistant directors to be in attendance at every meeting to represent the HSCT’s.” Ms Dargan explained that although she accepts that perhaps the potential disproportionality of the voting of the HSCT’s should be considered, she feels that as significant organisations, it is important that the Assistant Director for Safeguarding in each of the five Trust areas attends CMR Panel meetings, to ensure that they are aware of learning across the region.
- 3.5 Mr Meehan thanked Ms Roulston for an excellent report. He commented on the recognition within the report that the culture of CMRs has changed in recent years and that the review process is very much focused on learning rather than blame. He highlighted what he feels is a delicate balance between nurturing a culture of learning and ensuring attributable accountability. The chair highlighted that from the perspective of the SBNI, the CMR process is a learning exercise. She reminded members that there are other mechanisms of ensuring accountability in individual agencies, including internal disciplinary and performance management processes. The chair emphasised that the purpose of the CMR process is not to attribute blame, and that it is designed to provide a safe environment to ensure reflective practice.
- 3.6 T/D/Superintendent Piper commented on the recommended introduction of Rapid Reviews to Northern Ireland. She agreed with Ms Dargan that the current process is robust and already may constitute a Rapid Review, but suggested that it could be adapted to further formalise and distinguish the process. Ms Roulston suggested that a Rapid Review meeting could encompass a multiagency discussion and could be chaired by the notifying agency. T/D/Superintendent Piper agreed and highlighted that a Child Death Overview Panel (CDOP) is not currently implemented in Northern Ireland. She suggested that in the interim, a Rapid Review could be used as a mechanism for review of child deaths.

ACTION 1 – In the absence of a CDOP a meeting to take place to explore options available to members regarding review of notified child deaths that do not meet existing review criteria.

- 3.7 Ms Stewart commented on the opportunity to streamline all processes, including Domestic Homicide Reviews (DHR), Serious Adverse Incidents (SAI), CMRs, Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) reviews etc. Ms Stewart referenced the system review that is currently being undertaken by the Department of Health (DoH) in relation to same. She enquired as to whether there was any learning in the CMR Review which could be helpful in relation to the review of other processes. Ms Roulston advised that this area was not thoroughly investigated, and was not covered within the Terms of Reference for the CMR review. Her recommendation focuses primarily on the clarification and management of interface issues between the CMR and DHR processes. The chair added that the SBNI will be engaging with the DoH in relation to the ongoing system review of the CMR and DHR processes.
- 3.8 Mr Rogers welcomed a comprehensive and beneficial report. He urged caution in expecting an early outcome in relation to Recommendation 1, which suggests that the DoH should consider revisiting the consultation exercise in respect of CMRs to arrive at a definitive outcome regarding amendments to legislation. He highlighted that this recommendation could take time to implement, in light of a backlog within the Assembly. Mr Rogers noted that it is reassuring that many of the recommendations can be achieved quickly, through some administrative work in the SBNI Central Support Team (CST).
- 3.9 Mr Guckian referenced Recommendation 5, which states that “The Department of Health should consider identifying alternative ways of sharing good practice” and enquired as to whether Ms Roulston has considered how this may work. Ms Roulston commented that the current CMR process in Northern Ireland will identify good practice as the review progresses. She noted that Regulation 17 (3) currently indicates that positive learning should be notified to the SBNI and suggested that the DoH should consider whether this regulation is best placed

within the notification process, given that positive learning notifications in relation to good practice are rarely submitted. The chair further commented that CMR Dissemination of Learning events will also highlight good practice. She suggested that it is important that the publishing of reviews on the SBNI website is considered, to ensure confidentiality whilst also highlighting identified learning and good practice.

3.10 Ms Roulston advised that in the Independent Review of Children's Social Care Services, Professor Jones had highlighted that the process of CMR was taking up to 16 months. However, it has been her finding that CMRs conclude in around 9 months, on average. It is her view that Professor Jones assessment was based on a single point in time when the CMR system was facing a post-COVID backlog and this had an impact on his findings.

3.11 The chair noted that it is reassuring that the SBNI CMR Process Review Report has highlighted the robust nature of the CMR process. The chair emphasised that it is important that we not lose sight of the need to undertake a robust and detailed CMRs. She emphasised her view that the public expect to be reassured that there is a multiagency mechanism of extensive review when a child dies or is seriously harmed. The chair further stated that robust CMRs continue to provide vital learning to the system which should not be underestimated in terms of prevention of future harm to children. The chair further advised that the SBNI CMR Process Review Report will now be shared with the DoH.

ACTION 2 – The SBNI CMR Process Review Report 2024 to be shared with the Department of Health.

3.12 The SBNI CMR Process Review Report was approved.

4 61/24P CJINI Joint Inspection Pilot of Child Protection Arrangements in the Southern Health and Social Care Trust (SHSCT) area

- **Lessons Learned from the Joint Inspection process (Please refer to Board Paper BM61-04.24P2)**

- 4.1 The chair welcomed Ms Jacqui Durkin, Dr Roisin Devlin, Ms Shirley Jones and Ms Joanne Peake to the meeting and thanked them for their update in respect of lessons learned from the CJINI Joint Inspection of Child Protection Arrangements in the SHSCT area.
- 4.2 Dr Devlin provided a detailed overview of the Joint Inspection and of the lessons learned from its undertaking, noting that consideration will now be given in relation to the merit or otherwise of introducing a joint inspection process of this nature in Northern Ireland. Dr Devlin reminded members that the pilot Joint Inspection process involved the SHSCT, the PSNI and the Education Authority. The pilot examined the multi-agency response to the identification of initial need and risk for children aged 12-17 in Northern Ireland, often referred to as the 'front door.' Dr Devlin noted that the Inspection Report was published in June 2023 and the findings of this inspection the 'Lessons Learned' Report has now been presented to the Child Protection Senior Officials Sub Group (CPSOG). Recommendations made within the Inspection Report include;
- The Trust, the PSNI and the EA (the agencies) should develop a multiagency action plan to address the identified areas for improvement
 - The agencies should propose an appropriate multi-agency mechanism to monitor and evaluate the implementation of the agreed actions
- 4.3 Ms Turbitt commented that the Education Authority (EA) welcomes the Joint Inspection approach and feels that it does provide a sense of reassurance that multiagency working by the EA is positive. However, Ms Turbitt expressed concern in relation to the scope of the inspection. She advised that although it was originally intended to encompass the initial referral and risk assessment of children, some of the learning points tackle larger issues, including children who are deregistered, missing in education and the Educational Welfare Service waiting lists. She is unsure whether the action plan for the inspection should include actions in relation to these specific, single agency areas. Ms Jones assured Ms Turbitt that these learning points are included as it is important to

keep the wider issues on the radar. However, Ms Jones noted that it should be indicated clearly on the Action Plan that this will require collaboration between the EA and Department of Education (DE) to progress, and cannot be progressed as part of the collective multiagency action plan.

- 4.4 Ms Murphy advised that this was a daunting type of inspection, as systems in the SHSCT are not set up in a multiagency arrangement in the same way as in England. If this framework was to be further implemented, Ms Murphy agreed that a number of aspects of the inspection required to be adapted and improved to ensure its suitability for use in Northern Ireland. Ms Murphy further advised that the three agencies involved in the pilot have now developed an action plan in respect of lessons learned from the review of the 'front door' and this is currently being progressed through respective governance frameworks in each of the individual agencies. This has been approved within the PSNI and Trusts, and approval is now awaited from EA.
- 4.5 The chair enquired as to the next steps in relation to the joint inspection framework, and who will be taking the lead in further developing it. Ms Durkin advised that it is anticipated that the Department of Health (DoH) , Department of Justice (DOJ) and the Department of Education (DE) would work in partnership with the Inspectorates to consider how this can be taken forward. Ms Durkin said the Inspectorates would welcome the opportunity to inform this joint framework, but it is her view that it is best placed to be led by the Departments. Ms Durkin reported that Ms Eilis McDaniel in the DoH has been very supportive of the framework and is keen to keep momentum and ensure it is progressed effectively. The Inspectorates would welcome the support of the SBNI in relation to the framework.
- 4.6 The chair highlighted that from discussion today, members of the Board are supportive of the framework. The SBNI work as a multiagency collaborative and would believe that an inspection which examines this multiagency collaborative can only be a positive development.

- 4.7 Ms McKenzie noted that the DoH is anticipating a formal and collective response from the SBNI Board in relation to their views as to the merit of introducing a joint inspection process of this nature in Northern Ireland. Ms Murphy added that it had been agreed at the CPSOG that the action plan would also be presented to the SBNI Board for their views, and a formal response would be issued from the SBNI in relation to same. Ms Murphy highlighted that the action plan is not yet complete, as it has not yet been progressed through the governance frameworks in all agencies involved. She added that it is hoped the action plan can be presented at the next Board meeting in June. The chair expressed concern that an action plan has not yet been developed, given the time that has elapsed since the inspection was completed. On discussion of same, Ms Turbitt assured members that the EA will have completed the action plan in advance of the next Board meeting.

ACTION 3 – SBNI to write to the Department of Health, outlining its views of the CJINI Joint Inspection Pilot of Child Protection Arrangements in the Southern Health and Social Care Trust area.

5 61/24P SBNI Section 12 Audit Report

- 5.1 The chair noted that data in relation to the Section 12 Audit is currently being collated, and a report will be available for presentation at the Board meeting in June 2024. High level findings were presented at the Board meeting in December 2023. It was agreed the Audit Report will be presented to the June Board meeting.

ACTION 4 – The SBNI Section 12 Audit Report 2024 will be presented at the next meeting of the SBNI Board in June.

6 61/24P Independent Chief Inspector of Borders and Immigration ‘An inspection of contingency accommodation for families with children in Northern Ireland’ May – June 2023 (Please refer to Board Paper BM61-04.24P3A, BM61-04.24P3B & BM61-04.24P3C)

- 6.1 Ms McKenzie advised that the Chief Inspector carried out an inspection of contingency asylum accommodation for families with children in Northern Ireland between May and June 2023. The report was sent to the Home Secretary on 08 August 2023 and the Home Office made it publicly available on 01 March 2024, accompanied by its response to the report and the accompanying recommendations. Ms McKenzie drew members attention to the briefing paper which was circulated in advance of this meeting, noting that this is a direct lift from the Home Office policy paper of 01 March 2024 in 'Response to an inspection of asylum accommodation in Northern Ireland.' It was noted that the Chief Inspector has made five recommendations, of which 2 have been fully accepted from the Home Office. These include;

Recommendation 1: The clarification of responsibilities of all agencies involved in safeguarding

Recommendation 4: Strengthened assurance arrangements for safeguarding standards.

All other recommendations have been partially accepted and work is ongoing in relation to these. Ms McKenzie noted that the SBNI was a member of the TEO Strategic Planning Group Sub Group on Contingency Accommodation however this group has now been stood down. Ms McKenzie was not present at the meeting where the decision was taken for the group to stand down, but advised that minutes indicate that there has been assurance offered that safeguarding is a standing agenda item and will be considered by the Tactical Delivery Group that is chaired by the TEO. The SBNI has currently not received an invitation to join the Tactical Delivery Group and it is unclear as to how recommendations made in this report will be overseen. An Assembly Question has been submitted by Ms Kate Nicholl MLA to the Minister for Health in respect of the Report. The Minister's response to this question indicates that he welcomes the report and that although the recommendations are for the Home Office, his Department will work with the Health and Social Care Trusts to support Mears Group and the Home Office to ensure that Safeguarding Policies and Procedures in contingency accommodation are robust and in keeping with standards of safeguarding practice. Ms McKenzie highlighted that the number of children in contingency accommodation has now reduced and there has

been an increase in dispersal accommodation. She accepts that there are a number of outstanding issues and assured members that she will provide updates to the Board as and when these are received.

6.2 Ms Turbitt commented that the EA has heightened concern in relation to the retraumatising of children through repeated disruptions to their education when continually being forced to move accommodation as part of the Dispersal Scheme. Ms Turbitt accepts that there are pressures within the housing system, as well as challenges in relation to areas where school places are available for children. However, Ms Turbitt emphasised that the system needs to do better for our children and young people, and she is concerned that they are not at the centre of systemic planning. The chair assured members that the SBNI have been involved in deliberations with the Home Office in an attempt to influence the Home Office to ensure the wellbeing of children is considered as a central focus in the dispersal process.

6.3 Ms Weatherall advised that the BHSCCT is also deeply concerned about the dispersal process, particularly as the Trust is not being notified as to where children on the Child Protection Register are being moved to. In addition, the Housing Executive has not agreed to sign up to the Information Sharing Agreement between the Trusts and Home Office, and this is a challenge. Ms McKenzie added that it is unclear as to how Information Sharing Agreements operate in practice once signed by relevant bodies, and there are limitations in relation to the information that can be shared with commissioned services

7 61/24P Trauma Informed Organisational Toolkit (Please refer to Board Paper BM61-04.24P4)

7.1 Mr Rogers advised that as chair of the SBNI Trauma Informed Practice (TIP) Committee he is seeking members' approval to of a Trauma Informed Organisational Toolkit. The Toolkit is to support member agencies to develop a trauma-informed approach to policy development and service delivery within their respective organisations. The resource has been designed in consultation with those with lived experience and it takes account of the recent SBNI commissioned research undertaken by Queen's University. The toolkit will be

online and interactive. It sets out background and principles and then focuses on the main areas which should be considered when developing a trauma informed approach. These areas include leadership, collaboration and workforce development. Another significant element is a self-assessment process which will enable organisations to gauge their progress and identify areas for development. With approval from the Board, the TIP Committee will circulate the draft to a sample of individuals for testing by the end of April 2024. After the testing period, the toolkit will be rolled out to all members and any other interested agencies who have been engaged in the process. It will also be published on the SBNI website. Mr Rogers noted that the toolkit itself is not a training tool, and those agencies who are using it will have already undertaken training and will have a good knowledge of trauma informed approaches.

- 7.2 Ms McKenzie showcased a demonstration of the Trauma Informed Organisational Toolkit, and noted that it is to act as a “one stop shop” which can be maintained and updated with current and best practice, as well as with new and emerging research, both regionally and internationally. The team were keen that the Toolkit was inclusive and Ms McKenzie advised that it is fully compliant with accessibility requirements. In addition, Ms McKenzie thanked members who participated in the pilot and who provided examples to be used within the toolkit.
- 7.3 The chair thanked Ms McKenzie for a comprehensive overview of the toolkit and noted that it is excellent that the toolkit takes the approach of a “one stop shop” that agencies can utilise at any point in their trauma informed journey. Ms McKenzie added that a huge amount of work has been undertaken to develop the toolkit, and the attention to detail has been exemplary. Ms McKenzie thanked Ms Rigg and her team, Ms Orla Connolly and Ms Aileen McGuinness for their development of such a high-quality product.
- 7.4 Mr Meehan congratulated the TIP team on developing such an excellent product which can be used to navigate the complex trauma informed journey. He feels that the toolkit is a key resource for all agencies.

- 7.5 Ms Stewart commented that the Probation Board for Northern Ireland (PBNI) acted as a pilot agency in the development of the toolkit and the support that has been received from the SBNI has been superb. Ms Stewart highlighted that the PBNI would welcome involvement in any conversations that were ongoing to emphasise the importance of the toolkit for use across government bodies.
- 7.6 Ms McKenzie advised that the toolkit has been supported by the funding from the Executive Programme on Paramilitarism and Organised Crime (EPPOC). In addition, Dr Jayne Brady (head of the NI Civil Service) has been instrumental in recommending that the SBNI work with the Programme for Government (PfG) team to encourage implementation of a trauma informed approach across the system. The SBNI has met with the PfG team and Ms McKenzie reported that there has been acceptance that a Trauma informed approach could be integrated into the programme for government and draft wording has been agreed. It is hoped that a longer-term plan of action can be developed for Programme for Government in the future. In addition, the SBNI presented the benefits of such an approach to the Political Advisory Group (PAG) to EPPOC, and all of the political parties have now asked for the SBNI to meet with them separately to explore how they could adopt a trauma informed approach. At the launch of the research conducted by Queen's University, there was a cross-party statement released indicating their support of a trauma informed approach across all aspects of government.
- 7.7 The Trauma Informed Approach Organisational Toolkit was approved.

8 61/24P Domestic Violence and Abuse Learning and Development Framework **(Please refer to Board Paper BM61-04.24P5A & BM61-04.24P5B)**

- 8.1 Ms Muldoon provided an outline of the Domestic Violence and Abuse Learning and Development Framework. She noted that the framework has been developed by the Domestic Violence and Abuse Committee for practitioners working with children who experience Domestic Abuse, as per the recommendation in the SBNI "Equally Safeguarded 2020" report. The framework is a guidance document and provides suggested learning outcomes and methods of delivery etc, to equip staff and volunteers from SBNI member

and partner agencies with the skills, knowledge and competence to promote the safety and well-being of children and young people who experience domestic abuse.

- 8.2 On discussion of same, Dr White suggested that the recommended tools be listed as examples as she currently feels they are very prescriptive. These recommended tools include Spousal Assault Risk Assessment (SARA), Domestic Abuse, Stalking, Harassment and Honour Based Violence Assessment (DASH), MARAC, Domestic Abuse Risk Assessment for Children (DARAC) and the Storyboard Framework. In addition, Dr White also advised that in order for agencies to implement these frameworks, there needs to be access to training and resources. She advised that she would be interested in further information in relation to work being conducted by the DoH to source resources for this training.

ACTION 5 – Update to be provided to Dr White regarding the Domestic Violence and Abuse Learning and Development Framework.

- 8.3 The Domestic Violence and Abuse Learning and Development Framework was approved.

9 61/24P Declaration of Assurance Year End Statement March 2024 (Please refer to Board Paper BM61-04.24P6)

- 9.1 The chair advised that at the end of every year, the SBNI submit a Declaration of Assurance Statement to the PHA to attest to the effectiveness of the system of internal controls by the SBNI. The chair further noted that a number of meetings have been undertaken with the PHA in relation to the corporate hosting arrangements of the SBNI and a final outcome in relation to this is currently awaited. In the interim, the SBNI is working closely with the PHA and DoH on the review of the Memorandum of Understanding.
- 9.2 There were no further comments or queries in relation to the Declaration of Assurance Year End Statement.

- 9.3 The Declaration of Assurance Year End Statement March 2024 was approved.

ACTION 6 – SBNI End of Year Assurance Statement March 2024 to be shared with the Department of Health.

10 61/24P SBNI Risk Register and Issue Log (Please refer to Board Paper BM61-04.24P7A & BM61-04.24P7B)

- 10.1 Mr Guckian advised that the SBNI Risk Register has been reviewed and updated by the Governance Committee. In addition to the Risk Register, Mr Guckian reported that an Issue Log has been added, as a means of recording activity that has been moved into issue management. The Issue Log includes those risks which have already occurred and cannot strictly be considered a risk, and this will continue to be reviewed, monitored and managed by the Governance Committee. There are currently 4 issues listed within the Issue Log and the SBNI currently manages 4 open risks on its Risk Register, two of which have been rated as 'high', and a further two which have been rated as 'medium.' Mr Guckian assured members that the Governance Committee are mindful that 4 open risks may be deemed to be quite lean, and this will be examined by the Committee going forward. If any members feel that there are additional risks which should be listed, they are welcome to raise these with himself or Ms McKenzie.

- 10.2 There were no further questions or comments in relation to the SBNI Risk Register and Issue Log.

- 10.3 The SBNI Risk Register and Issue Log were approved.

11 61/24P AOB

- 11.1 Ms McKenzie advised that the Online Safety Hub was launched by the Minister of Health on 16 April 2024. Members were thanked for their input into this Hub, and for their acknowledgement of the launch through retweeting etc. A plan will now be developed as to how the Hub can be used, and Ms McKenzie highlighted that it has been a tremendous piece of work to assist the SBNI with

delivering on its obligations under the Executive Online Safety Strategy and Action Plan. She asked that members share the hub widely within their respective organisations.

- 11.2 The chair noted that the SBNI Board Development Day which had been scheduled for 15 May 2024 is not proceeding. Members may now release this hold from their diaries.

ACTION 7 – The SBNI Board Development Day scheduled for Wednesday 15 May 2024 is not proceeding. All Members may release this hold in their diaries.

- 11.3 The chair advised that Ms Yvonne Adair has now retired from her role as Safeguarding Panel Chair for the South Eastern, Southern and Belfast Local Area Safeguarding Panels. Ms Mary Rafferty has very kindly agreed to cover Ms Adair's Safeguarding Panels pending the conclusion of the recruitment process for a replacement for Ms Adair.

- 11.4 The chair advised that the Board meeting in September will be held in person. This will likely be held in Lisburn Civic Centre, but the venue will be confirmed in due course.

ACTION 8 – The SBNI Board Meeting in September 2024 will be held in person. A venue will be secured for this, and members will be advised.

- 11.5 The next SBNI Board meeting will be held on Wednesday 12 June 2024. This will be held on a virtual basis and joining details will be confirmed and circulated.
- 11.6 The chair closed the Public section of the meeting at 4.30pm and thanked members for their attendance.

Bernie McNally
Independent Chair SBNI