



**BOURNEMOUTH AND POOLE
SAFEGUARDING ADULTS BOARD**

DORSET SAFEGUARDING ADULTS BOARD

COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY

October 2015

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Appendix one: Flow diagram – media enquiry

Appendix two: Format for press release

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1. BACKGROUND

The Bournemouth and Poole Safeguarding Adult Board and the Dorset Safeguarding Adult Board are multiagency groups committed to the effective safeguarding of adults in Bournemouth and Poole and Dorset.

Partner organisations have agreed to work together so that the public, service users, carers, employees, independent providers and the voluntary and community sector are aware of and well informed about safeguarding issues, guidance, policy and procedures. The Boards want people to know how to identify, refer and prevent actual and potential harm to adults.

2. INTRODUCTION: OBJECTIVES AND PURPOSE OF STRATEGY

The main objective of a Safeguarding Adults Board 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 in 2.1 above. (Ref: Department of Health Care and Support Statutory Guidance issued under the Care Act 2014).

The Boards are tasked then with making sure that:

- The public and employees know how to recognise and report harm to adults at risk
- Agencies work together to reduce risk, prevent harm and protect adults at risk
- Employees are properly trained in safeguarding work
- Safeguarding work is monitored to ensure it is effective
- Lessons are learnt when things go wrong

When communicating with and through the media, Boards will ensure that the key safeguarding message is always articulated.

Effective communication is a two-way process. It is not only about increasing knowledge and understanding of the work of the Safeguarding Adults Board policies, activities and achievements but about listening to staff, partners and service users to learn how we can continually improve our services and the way we communicate.

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This document then will be divided into two main sections:

Communication – messages we send:

- Proactive/planned messages
- Reactive

Communication – messages we receive:

- Feedback
- Research

Proactive communication is mainly concerned with promoting safeguarding and reactive communication where the Board needs to react to a specific enquiry concerning perhaps a local or national event.

3. OUR COMMUNICATION STANDARDS

The Principles of good communication are:

- Clear and precise plain English: Is it easy to read and easy to understand?
- Honest. Does it avoid misleading information? Does it withhold information that the reader has a right to know?
- Respectful. Does it show respect for the readers' feelings and beliefs?
- Cost effective. Has the budget been used wisely?

4. COMMUNICATION: MESSAGES WE SEND

4.1 All communication work to be carried out in partnership with the Dorset Communicators Group (a partnership between main public sector agencies in Dorset)

4.1.1 PRO-ACTIVE OR PLANNED COMMUNICATION

Pro-active or Planned messages are messages that we send purposely and with full knowledge.

Key audiences are detailed in the table below with examples of communication:

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Target Group	Message
General Public (including those who may not actually live in Bournemouth and Poole but work here)	What is safeguarding? it is a responsibility shared across the whole community. What is an adult at risk, what is meant by harm? What to do if they witness or suspect harm or abuse.
Adults at risk (key groups – disabilities, elderly, domestic violence)	How to stay safe, how to raise awareness of risk without increasing a level of fear, what to do if they suspect someone they know or know of is being harmed or exploited
Voluntary and Community organisations.	Good safeguarding practice, how and where to access safeguarding advice and help How to access adult protection procedures Understanding the requirements of recruiting staff and volunteers safely and how to deal with allegations made against them
People in contact with people e.g. banks/hairdressers	What is an adult at risk, what is meant by harm? What to do if they witness or suspect abuse or harm.
Stakeholders (inc staff) those who are more directly involved in Safeguarding	Training e.g basic understanding of Board and how it works. Raise visibility of Board.
Carers and Families	Sources of safeguarding advice for carers, what is adult safeguarding, what is meant by 'adult at risk', what is meant by 'harm', what to do if they witness, or suspect harm.
Board partners and statutory agencies/providers	Progress reports and new initiatives, ensuring they receive awareness training updates
Hard to reach groups (Black, ethnic minorities, travellers, gypsy , isolated people)	What is an adult at risk, what is meant by harm or abuse? What to do if they witness or suspect.
The Media	Communicating with relevant parties around serious safeguarding issues that may hit the media and after completion of SAR - Safeguarding Adults Review

The Action Plan in Appendix three gives a detailed plan of the proactive communication and methodology be implemented across Bournemouth and Poole and Dorset.

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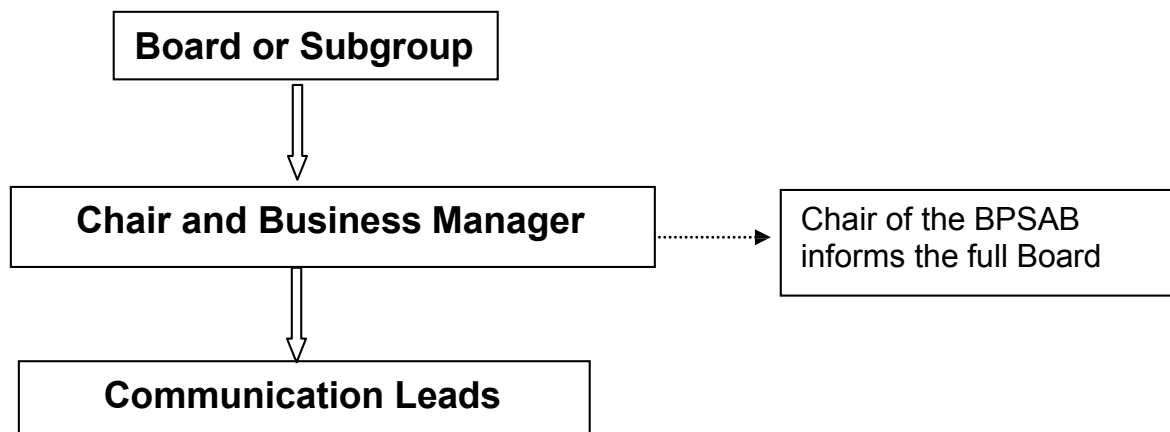
Proactive communication is to be owned jointly by the agencies of the Boards, it is to be co-ordinated and managed through the Bournemouth and Poole Safeguarding Adults Board Business Manager and the Business Manager in Dorset:

- To ensure the Board has a joint approach which strengthens the messages and improves awareness and prevention for all citizens and the communities of Bournemouth and Poole and Dorset.
- To inform people what they can do if they find out about or suspect abuse.
- To support agencies of the Boards to communicate safeguarding issues effectively with stakeholders for example service users, carers, employees, volunteers, independent providers and the voluntary and community sector.
- To publicise the work and aims of the Boards.
- To help the organisations represented on the Boards to communicate effectively with each other

A planned message is one which has been planned and prepared in order to meet one or more of the objectives of the Safeguarding Adults Boards Communication Strategy. All external planned messages about the Boards and safeguarding should progress as follows:

1. The relevant Board or a working subgroup agree and identify the message, objective and dissemination method they want to publicise (as detailed in Appendix 3 of the Communication Strategy).
2. The message is sent to the Chair of the relevant Board and the Business Managers, to ensure consistency in the message and agreed with communication leads at Bournemouth Borough or Borough of Poole or Dorset County who will disseminate the message or advise on dissemination.
3. The Communication Leads will advise and distribute the message (via press release if appropriate) to relevant stakeholder organisation communication leads, and the media and will then handle questions or interview requests.

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4.1.2 Good Practice

In order to ensure the Board work in a co-ordinated fashion with regards Communications the following good practice should be adhered to:

Referral of issues to the Chair as appropriate for example:

- Identify any potential conflict of interest
- any concerns about a partner agency
- Respond to requests for comments on published documents

Not commenting on the activities of other agencies.

Ensuring that agencies work together and that no agency criticises another agency (in relation to the work of the Boards).

That other members of each organisation should co-operate fully with the relevant Board to provide all necessary information.

All documents should have a reference of author/contact for more copies, date of issue, date of revision and, where appropriate, date of expiry will appear on all information

The Board will maintain clear relationships with local media organisations in order to enable the Board to communicate more directly with the general public following an SAR - Safeguarding Adults Review.

The lead communication office will keep other relevant parties up to date with process should the media seek further comment from other Board members

It may in exceptional circumstances be necessary for agencies to release their own press release in addition to the Boards but under no circumstances should one agencies press release have a negative impact on another. Individual organisations should work together to ensure a consistent, coherent message goes out to the press. It is strongly recommended that a press release is sent from either the Board or one organisation given a situation where both bodies

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are concerned. This organisation is the 'lead' press office. The press do not welcome more than one message concerning the same event.

4.2 **REACTIVE COMMUNICATION**

Part of the Boards role (through the Safeguarding Adults Review subgroup) is to undertake Safeguarding Adults Reviews and disseminate subsequent learning.

Along with the work undertaken on 'Awareness and Prevention' (generally proactive communication), the media interest after a Safeguarding Adult Review has taken place may be one of the key areas where a communications strategy is required (generally reactive communication).

There is often a need to answer questions quickly. This means that answering as a partnership could be difficult due to logistics. All re-active communications for the Board will be managed by the Bournemouth and Poole Safeguarding Adults Board Chair and Business Manager for Bournemouth and Poole and the Chair and Business Manager of the Dorset Safeguarding Adults Board for Dorset.

In the event of a reactive press release being required the Board will respond in the following way:

- For all Board media requests the Business Managers will be contacted in the first instance and this will then be forwarded to the Chair or if unavailable Vice Chair
- In the event of a media request to the Board being made to an agency of the Board, that agency will forward this request to the Business Managers and Chair. No individual agency will respond to a media request in respect of the Board. However, this provision will not prevent Board Members speaking to the media, provided it is made clear that their comments are made on behalf of their agency and not the Board. The Good Practice section in the proactive communication section of this document should be adhered to.

Appendix 1 outlines the process with regards a media enquiry.

4.2.1 **Speaking to the Press**

- When an immediate media response is required this will be the responsibility of the Chair of the Board or whomever they designate this to.
- The Chair will have authority to talk to the media on all Board matters. In the absence of the Chair, this role will be taken on by the Vice-Chair.
- The Chair will undertake the role of 'talking head' for the Board. This will not be undertaken by any other person without prior agreement from the Chair.

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- Information will only be shared where all agencies are happy for that information to be broadcast or published.
- Board members will not make any 'off the record' comments to the media.

4.2.2 **Drafting and Publishing of Press Releases**

- Any press releases will be drafted by the Chair and Business Managers in collaboration with press officers from relevant agencies.
- The press release template at appendix 2 will be used for all statements.
- The Board will publish any press release made to the media on the relevant Safeguarding Adults website.

4.2.3 **Communicating following a Safeguarding Adults Review**

Once it has been agreed that an SAR - Safeguarding Adults Review will be conducted the 'lead' communications office for the organisation/s implicated should be made aware of the brief details of the case to assist them in identifying any early media enquiries or interest. A draft copy of the overview report should be supplied to the 'lead' press office as soon as possible so they are aware of the details of the case and any potential interest it may generate.

Communication following a Safeguarding Adults Review will follow the proactive process outlined in section 4 of this document. This process will be followed even if the Board are preparing a press release in a managed way rather than responding to requests re-actively.

The Board Chair should be the only representative who will speak to the media about a Safeguarding Adult Review and any actions following that review, on behalf of the Board.

It is important to note that any press release will only be made once the Safeguarding Adult Review has been completed and published. If a media request for a statement is received by the Board prior to the completion of a review, the Board will provide a holding statement on the case.

On completion of the Safeguarding Adult Review and sign off by the Board, the Board Chair will convene a meeting of the relevant agency representatives in order to draw up a media plan. This will include details of whether a press conference should be called, or a press release issued or held in readiness to respond to media enquiries. The timing and nature of the communications and the spokespeople put forward will be agreed at the meeting.

This initial dialogue will establish which matters if any will be handled collectively by the Board and which will be handled by individual Board

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members. It may be that the press office of another Board partner will take the lead in a particular case. The Board and Board partner/s should not issue press releases saying the same thing – it should be either one responsibility or the other.

There should be sign up to the agreed process from each Board agency and an instruction that other members of each organisation should co-operate fully with the Board to provide all necessary information.

Responsibility for leading on communications work will depend on the level of responsibility in a SAR - Safeguarding Adults Review, but will generally rest with the local council involved. As a general rule, the Chair will be the lead spokesperson (or the vice chair if the chair is not available) however, a secondary spokesperson may also need to be identified if an agency has major responsibility or involvement in a SAR - Safeguarding Adults Review. Q&A or briefing notes should be prepared for the spokespeople to help deal with likely media questions

News releases about an SAR - Safeguarding Adults Review should be circulated among all partners ahead of release, for information.

Media enquiries/requests for interviews will go through the lead communications team for the SAR - Safeguarding Adults Review, which will act as liaison with the Business Managers and Chair to manage media interest and respond accordingly.

Any enquiries made before a SAR - Safeguarding Adults Review is completed will be given the same, consistent response - that an investigation is underway, and that the Board (or any of the agencies) cannot comment further until this is completed.

4.2.4 Families

It is important that the families of those who have suffered the death of a relative or whose relative has been the subject of a Safeguarding Adults Review should be kept informed about the SAR - Safeguarding Adults Review process. The health/social work professionals, who would have been involved with the family before and at the time of the incident/s that resulted in an SAR - Safeguarding Adults Review may be best placed to make informed and professional judgements about the frequency and method of communicating information to the relatives and passing information back to colleagues.

4.2.5 Audit trail

The Business Managers will be kept informed of all actions undertaken and will be sent a copy of all communication with the media for inclusion in the audit trail.

4.2.6 Monitoring

The local authority Media Relations Team will proactively monitor media

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sources for any media releases or other information which could conceivably elicit requests from the media and report findings to the Business Managers and Chair. Similarly Board members, who become aware of any related articles relating to a Safeguarding Adult Review in the press, media or professional publications which could spark local press interest, should inform the Business Managers and the Chair. The Board are then able to prepare for any event where the media may request a statement

5. COMMUNICATION: MESSAGES WE RECEIVE

Communication is a two-way process and in order to become more client-led and person-centred we need to recognise, understand and act on the messages we receive just as much as we expect our stakeholders and citizens to recognise, understand and act on the messages we disseminate to them.

Two of the key ways in which can learn from service user are Feedback and Research.

5.1 Feedback

Feedback from service users can take many forms including written compliments and complaints. Arguably the stronger feedback is the 'everyday' feedback one may get from a service user that is being cared for and it is these messages if ignored or misinterpreted that can be detrimental to quality of care.

5.2 Research

Research is a more objective, systemised process which seeks to determine answers to a specific research brief that can then influence service delivery and design.

Appendix 3 gives the action plan for capturing this communication in a more systemised way.

6. RISK MANAGEMENT

The Board anticipates the following communication risks:

- Not identifying safeguarding issues before they reach the media
- Inconsistent and unclear messages delivered from partner agencies
- Not sharing information which could result in mixed messages being presented by partners
- Communication leaks of confidential information

Risks are mitigated by Board members being aware of this strategy and working within the framework set out within it

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7. BUDGET

Communication resources will be funded jointly via the Board, or individual agencies responsible for single agency costs

8. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

This strategy for joint communication is the responsibility of the Boards where commitment to work together and provide consistency in information and advice has already been agreed. The Policy and Procedure group, a sub group of the Board will oversee implementation.

Each partner organisation on the Board have their own agreed protocols for communicating with the media, use of websites and corporate identity for single agency communication. Single agency communication about safeguarding should be shared with the Chair of the Safeguarding Adult Board.

The action plan will be monitored by the Policy and Procedures subgroup focusing on progress towards and meeting targets. Actions to be systemised so that a complete communication strategy is realised, rather than an ad hoc approach. The Policy and Procedure group will report to the Board annually.

9. REVIEW

The Strategy will be reviewed on an annual basis, with amendments/variation to the strategy presented to the Policy and Procedures Group and Board prior to implementation.

10. CONTACT

All general and media enquiries should go to the Bournemouth and Poole Safeguarding Adults Board Business Manager Tel: 01202 261029 or the Dorset Safeguarding Adults Board Business Manager Tel: 01929 557725

Review Date: June 2016

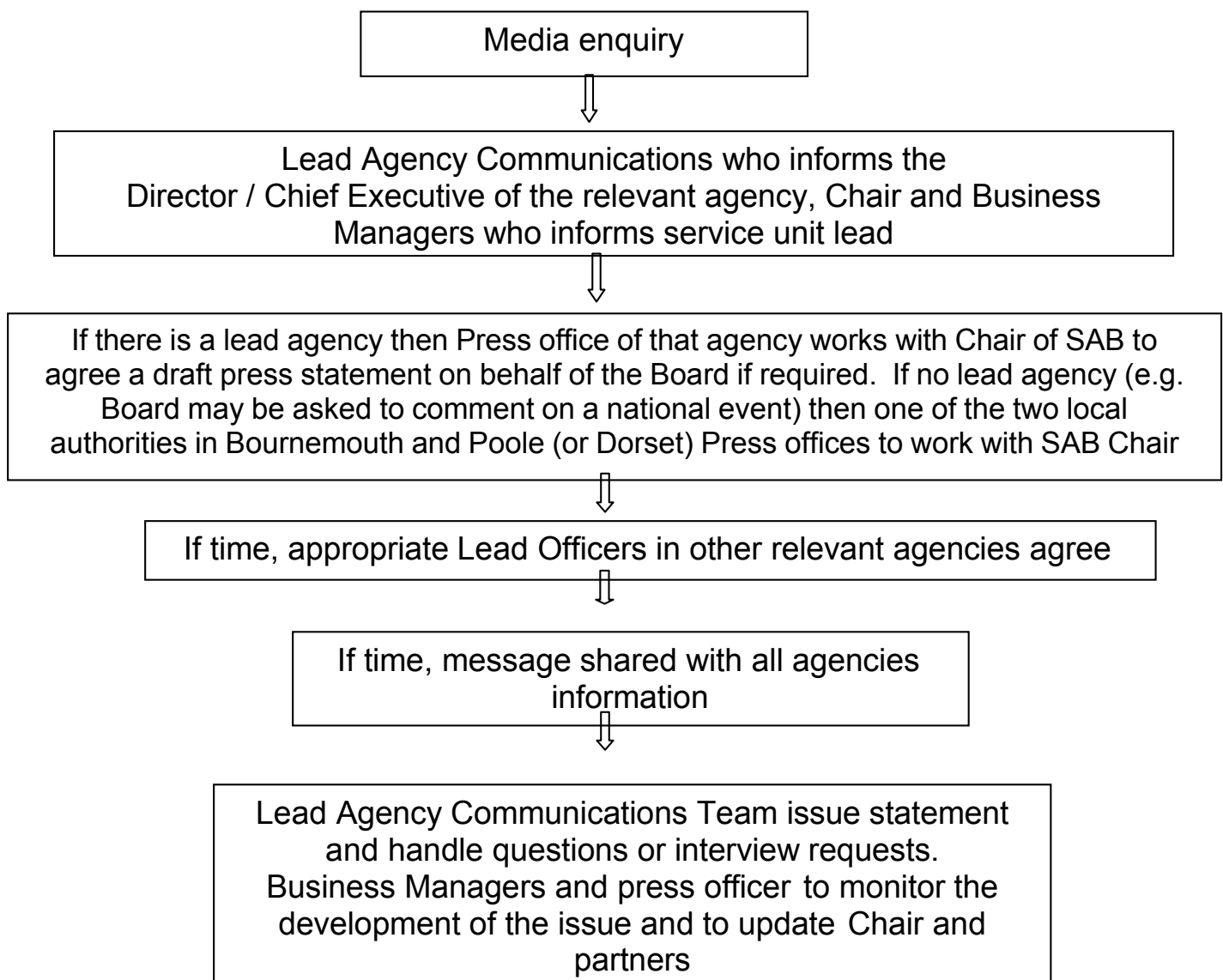
APPENDIX 1: FLOW DIAGRAM: MEDIA ENQUIRY

Reporters from the media sometimes ask questions about safeguarding. This is often when safeguarding hasn't seemed to go well and something worrying has happened. There is often a need to answer questions in a considered but prompt way. This means that answering as a Board is complex. However there are definite advantages in agreeing responses, such as

- Issues are rarely single agency
- Consistent key messages are given to media enquiries
- Safeguarding gets a higher public profile
- Public awareness increases.
- Preventative measures can be highlighted
- Abuse and harm will not be tolerated

The approach to these situations should be:

Board members are asked to respond to safeguarding stories through their own press or media offices. Wherever possible they should involve the Chair of SAB and other relevant organisations, as shown below. If this is not possible, be clear that it is a single agency response.



APPENDIX 3

**BOURNEMOUTH AND POOLE AND DORSET ADULT SAFEGUARDING BOARDS
MESSAGES WE SEND: COMMUNICATION STRATEGY ACTION PLAN: 2015-16 (V071015)**

Method	OBJECTIVE: Audience (inc hard to reach grps)	OBJECTIVE: Message e.g. Awareness	Lead: Responsibility	Timescale	Setting Measurable Outcomes and baselines (inc how users/carers may be involved)
Written Communication (co-produce with service users where appropriate)		Awareness and action			
e.g. staff newsletter. Share e newsletter with Dorset and B&P Childrens Board. Provide articles ideas	practitioners	Specific messages	AH/DV/HN		Report back to QA in 12 months. Are they receiving newsletter do they read it, learn from it? Ask a question from the newsletter – to check understanding
e.g. posters – libraries, GP surgeries, bus stops, town halls, voluntary bodies, community groups, police stations, via public health, public toilets. Write to practice managers – can we get on the loop. Include safeguarding in existing organisational communication plan.	General public	awareness	Through Board/partners organisations	6 a year	Through councils research function Involve Parish Councils in distributing information.
e.g. Fact Sheets – keep updated and disseminated -web	No change to current practice				Given to service user in specific situations
e.g. newspapers (council and other local)	Awareness	General public	Communication teams LA's	As appropriate Aim for 3 a year	Proactive editorial In house communications teams to lead e.g. Older Peoples week first October – proactive press release?

APPENDIX 3

Face to face ('Championing')					
Liaison with other partnership Boards		Specific messages	Board members	Aim to address one a year	For example Learning Disabilities Partnership board, health and Well Being, Mental Health partnership Board, healthwatch
Induction courses					
Team briefings	staff	Specific messages	Board members	Quarterly	Check how message from Board is disseminated
Engaging with voluntary sector Through CVS, public engagement officers	Vol groups	Specific messages	Through training?		
Encourage 'workforce engagement' across all levels	staff	Specific messages	Board members	Quarterly	Check how message from Board is disseminated
Educational establishments – Social Care and health training (awareness to students)	students	Specific messages	VC	Quarterly	Check how message from Board is disseminated
Other verbal communication					
Local Radio	Awareness	General public	Borough of Bournemouth Communications team	As appropriate	Airplay
Electronic Communication					
Intranet (eg the LOOP in Poole)	Awareness	General public	Local Borough communications team	Launch in the first year	Number of contacts
Internet					
Email					
Facebook					
Twitter					

Brainstorm ideas – e.g. car park barrier, different organisations can bring different things e.g PACT meetings (Police) – Partnerships and Communities Together. Devon County Council are using 30 second police protection bulletins circulated across the Force Internet and posters – include issues relating to safeguarding. Dorset police to do the same

Map existing communication efforts (in Board member organisations) and piggy back where possible

APPENDIX 3

**BOURNEMOUTH AND POOLE AND DORSET ADULT SAFEGUARDING BOARDS
MESSAGES WE RECEIVE: COMMUNICATION STRATEGY ACTION PLAN: 2015-16**

Method	OBJECTIVE: Audience (inc hard to reach grps)	OBJECTIVE: Message e.g. Awareness	Lead: Responsibility	Timescale	Setting Measurable Outcomes and baselines (inc how users/carers may be involved)
Feedback					
Compliments	Through the Quality Assurance group: identify variables and monitor accordingly				
Complaints					
Website traffic/emails					
FOI requests					
Research					
Qualitative					
Quantitative					