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**Boomer, Linda**

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**From:** Lorraine Shields [Lorraine.Shields@ucht.n-i.nhs.uk]  
**Sent:** 06 February 2007 10:22  
**To:** Boomer, Linda  
**Subject:** CONSULTATION ON THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A REGIONAL STATUTORY SAFEGUARDING BOARD FOR NORTHERN IRELAND  
**Attachments:** Consultation Questionnaire.doc

Attached Consultation Questionnaire on behalf of UCHT TCPP. As we were unable to type on pdf document, this has been retyped as Word document.

*Irene McCready*  
*Trust Child Protection Panel Co-ordinator*

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ICT Department  
The Ulster Community & Hospitals Trust

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06/02/2007



## CONSULTATION DOCUMENT

### THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A REGIONAL SAFEGUARDING BOARD FOR NORTHERN IRELAND

QUESTIONNAIRE JANUARY 2007

I am responding  as an individual  
 on behalf of an organisation

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## **PROPOSED ROLE AND SCOPE OF THE SAFEGUARDING BOARD FOR NORTHERN IRELAND (SBNI)**

**Q1: Do you agree that there should be on region wide Safeguarding Board for Northern Ireland (SBNI)? If not, what alternative model would you suggest?**

One Regional Safeguarding Board would allow for a more robust body in Northern Ireland. In relation to safeguarding children it could ensure that all agencies are clear of their role in safeguarding children and that of others.

**Q2: Are there any other broad elements or interfaces which you think should be included in the scope of the SBNI's role in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children?**

Just to ensure that all agencies are informed about child protection requirements and recommendations and are given the opportunity to participate if possible in decision making and consultation.

**Q3: Do you agree that a single database should be created for at risk children? If not, what alternative would you suggest?**

There would be a definite need to ensure that all agencies fully completed their relevant information for the database and there would also need to be firm guidelines/protocols for ensuring the information is clear, concise, accurate and timely to prevent a child slipping through the loop.

**Q4: Are there any other objectives which you think should fall to the SBNI?**

An objective would be to ensure recommended training for child protection is clearly devised for the best outcome for children and the training strategy is widely delivered and adhered to ensure the best awareness of roles and responsibilities in child protection.

**Q5: Do you agree that statutory powers should be created to enable the Minister to require the setting up of similar databases as outlined in the Children's Act 2004? If not, what alternative would you suggest?**

If statutory powers are created there clearly needs to be good effective leadership in the Chairperson, with strong links to the DHSSPS.

## **APPOINTMENT AND ROLE OF CHAIRMAN AND LAY MEMBERS OF THE SBNI**

**Q6: Do you agree that the chairman and lay members should be public appointments? If not, what alternative would you suggest?**

As long as the Chairperson and lay members have been assessed by a certain criteria as to meeting the requirements to be selected.

**Q7: Do you agree that chairpersons and lay people should not serve for more than 2 terms, with each term lasting no more than 4 years? If not, what alternative would you suggest?**

It seems a reasonable time scale but there clearly needs also to be mechanisms in place to replace an ineffective member during this period.

**Q8: What kind of experience, knowledge and qualifications do you consider is important for the independent chairman to have?**

A clear background in understanding childrens needs and the legal system involved in child protection. An openness to be able to work with clarity, various agencies and an ability to deal with difficult situations. Effective decision making.

**Q9: What kind of experience, knowledge and qualifications, if any, do you consider is important for lay members to have?**

Sound knowledge of childrens needs and legislation pertinent to protecting and safeguarding children.

**Q10: Do you agree that the SBNI should have its own secretariat and budget? If not, what alternative would you suggest?**

For things to run smoothly and be effective this is essential if there are to be changes put into place throughout the province.

## **HOW THE SBNI WILL OPERATE**

**Q11: Do you agree that membership of the SBNI should be drawn from the statutory, voluntary and community sectors? If not, what alternative would you suggest?**

Statutory, voluntary and community representation is essential to have a broad representation

**Q12: Do you agree that membership of the SBNI should be a statutory obligation? If not, what alternative would you suggest?**

It is necessary to ensure it is a statutory obligation to ensure that child protection and safeguarding children is taken seriously and the agencies are accountable if appropriate action is not taken.

**Q13: Do you agree that membership of the SBNI should be drawn from senior members of relevant agencies? If not, what alternative would you suggest?**

Yes, if those senior members have the strategic role to safeguard and promote welfare of children and have a full understanding of their role and the role of the SBNI and the consequences of any actions in their part.

**Q14:Do you agree with the level of seniority of the posts which are being proposed to comprise the SBNI? If not, what alternative would you suggest?**

As above, but often there are members within organisations of lower ranking who have an indepth knowledge and role but may not have the ability to make full changes throughout the agency.

**Q15:Do you agree that individual Agencies should be held accountable for ensuring co-operation and promotion of the welfare of the child? If not, what alternative would you suggest?**

It is important that agencies are held accountable but it is also important that the agencies are kept fully informed by the DHSSPS of their role and responsibilities by ensuring clarity and clear communication. However it is also important that individual agencies are appropriately resourced in order to carry out their roles and responsibilities effectively and safely.

**Q16:Do you agree with the range of Agencies/Interests proposed to comprise the core membership of the SBNI? If not, what alternative would you suggest?**

Agency list appears satisfactory. Perhaps a representative from senior mental health management would be appropriate. Also, one lay member may feel ineffective with all the senior staff present.

**Q17:Do you agree with the proposal for rolling membership of the SBNI? If not, what alternative would you suggest?**

If the membership is for approximately a four year cycle there would have to be a very clear division throughout Northern Ireland to ensure full representation, especially HSS Trust, Councils and Education.

**Q18:Do you agree that rolling membership of the SBNI should be reviewed no later than every 4 years? If not, what alternative would you suggest?**

As per question 17.

**Q19:What other expertise do you consider appropriate for the SBNI To utilise in order to discharge its functions effectively?**

Clear communication strategy to ensure information is shared effectively throughout Northern Ireland in a manner to meet childrens needs.

## **YOUNG PERSON'S REFERENCE GROUP**

***Q20:Do you think that a Young Person's Reference Group should be established? If not, what alternative would you suggest?***

We definitely need a Young Person's Reference Group to ensure we know what young people understand about child protection/children in need and their views on what may be appropriate to change.

***Q21:Do you agree that the Young Person's Reference Group should be available to the SBNI through the chairman? If not, what alternative would you suggest?***

It would be most important that there needs to be a very open, responsive chairman who has young peoples interests at the forefront.

***Q22:What age group should the Young Person's Reference Group be drawn from?***

There may need to be a variety of ages from 12 – 21 to ensure we listen to younger children who have a strong voice or opinions.

***Q23:How many members of the Young Person's Reference Group should there be?***

Possibly two representing each new Trust area.

***Q24:How do you think that membership of the Young Person's Reference Group should be selected?***

By taking local opinion in each Trust Area of the best way to take this forward e.g. Consultation with Young Organisations, Adolescent Groups, LAC.

***Q25:How often do you think membership of the Young Person's Reference Group should be reviewed?***

Every two years as young people often move onto other stages in their lives and could not commit for longer.

## **SAFEGUARDING PANELS**

***Q26:Do you agree that there should be a Safeguarding Panel in each of the 5 new Trust areas? If not, what alternative would you suggest?***

There definitely needs to be local safeguarding panels to put the work of the SBNI into place and monitor local participation and commitment.

**Q27:What interests/disciplines/agencies/providers do you think should comprise membership of the Safeguarding Panels?**

Social Services F&CC and Residential  
Nursing  
PSNI  
Education  
Probation  
User Group Member  
CPNS  
Medical/Paediatrics  
Juvenile Justice  
Mental Health  
SSAFA  
Disability Services  
Ethnic Minority Representative

**Q28:What interests/disciplines/agencies/providers do you think should comprise membership of the sub-groups which will support the Safeguarding Panels?**

Members as above to take part in sub-groups with a few specific agencies brought in with specific skills/knowledge. Too much dilution of tasks/roles could lead to ineffective deployment of the tasks.

**Q29:What do you think the functions of the sub-groups should include?**

To enhance the work of the Safeguarding Committee in bench marking practice and taking the work/recommendations of SBNI forward in a constructive and timely manner and to ensure the business plan is adhered to in a formal manner.

**SERIOUS CASE REVIEWS**

**Q30:What do you consider the criteria to initiate a Serious Case Review should be?**

Refer to ACPC Chapter 13 Section 13.2.

**Q31:What do you consider to be a reasonable time frame for the completion of a Serious Case Review to be?**

Approximately four months. This would allow for the Serious Case Reviews Panels to pull all information together but also ensuring that recommendations/lessons can be initiated as quickly as possible.

**TIMESCALE**

**Q32:Is the timescale proposed reasonable? If not, what alternative would you suggest?**

To recruit the most effective, efficient and knowledgeable members there needs to be thought and consideration given to who is best suited and this takes time. So April 2007 is somewhat unrealistic as there will be Trust areas etc. to consider.

**Q33:Where, or with which host organisation, do you think the SBNI should be located?**

Possibility within Social Services at the beginning as they are the lead organiser in child protection and assessment of children in need.

**TRANSFER OF FUNCTIONS**

**Q34:What difficulties, if any, do you foresee in the transfer of functions from ACPCs to the SBNI? What actions are needed to resolve these difficulties?**

There is a need to ensure the ACPC current business plan is brought on board to ensure existing work or work in progress is not disregarded and childrens issues are kept to the forefront.

**Q35:Is the time frame for transfer proposed reasonable? If not, what alternative would you suggest?**

If the current ACPC and TCPP members are consulted with and kept informed of the transition period and what is the necessary requirements to ensure the transition period can be met.

**COMMUNICATING AND RAISING AWARENESS**

**Q36:What do you consider to be the most effective ways to engage the range of stakeholders, including the wider community who can contribute to the effective safeguarding and promotion of the welfare of children?**

1. Public consultation meetings.
2. Medial attention.
3. Clear communications strategy
4. Constant updates.
5. Clear and concise, easily understood information.

**EQUALITY SCREENING**

**Q37:Is there any indication or evidence of higher or lower participation or update by different groups?**

Group	Yes	No	Not Known
Religious belief		✓	
Political opinion		✓	

<i>Racial group</i>	✓
<i>Age</i>	✓
<i>Marital status</i>	✓
<i>Sexual orientation</i>	✓
<i>Gender</i>	✓
<i>Disability</i>	✓
<i>Dependency</i>	✓

**Comments:** The consultation paper states that a full screening exercise was carried out and an EQIA was not required. The Trust is fully in agreement with this decision.

**Q38: Do different groups have different needs, experiences, issues and priorities in relation to this policy issue?**

<i>Group</i>	<i>Yes</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>Not Known</i>
<i>Religious belief</i>		✓	
<i>Political opinion</i>		✓	
<i>Racial group</i>		✓	
<i>Age</i>		✓	
<i>Marital status</i>		✓	
<i>Sexual orientation</i>		✓	
<i>Gender</i>		✓	
<i>Disability</i>		✓	
<i>Dependency</i>		✓	

**Comments:** The consultation paper states that a full screening exercise was carried out and an EQIA was not required. The Trust is fully in agreement with this decision.

**Q39: What consultations with relevant groups, organisations or individuals indicated that policies of this type create problems that are specific to them?**

<i>Group</i>	<i>Yes</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>Not Known</i>
<i>Religious belief</i>			✓
<i>Political opinion</i>			✓
<i>Racial group</i>			✓
<i>Age</i>			✓
<i>Marital status</i>			✓
<i>Sexual orientation</i>			✓
<i>Gender</i>			✓
<i>Disability</i>			✓
<i>Dependency</i>			✓

**Comments:** The document is currently being consulted on with a wide range of groups, organisations and individuals.

**Q40: In relation to implementing this policy, is there an opportunity to better promote equality of opportunity or good relations by altering the policy or by working with others in Government or in the larger community?**

Yes   No   Not Known

✓

**Please elaborate:** The document has been written specifically to meet the needs of all relevant parties.

**Q41: With reference to Questions set out please summarise how you believe the policy may impact on organisations' obligation to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity.**

This document has been designed to address interagency co-operation and multi-disciplinary working.

**Q42: Are there any relevant groups which you believe should be consulted at this time?**

**Please specify:** Parents, families, carers, users/clients.

**Q43: What data do you think will be required to ensure effective monitoring of the policy following implementation?**

- Monitoring of the Safeguarding Board and Panels business plan on an annual basis.
- Work of sub-groups in line with Safeguarding Board.
- Public expectation/consultation – annually.
- Staff supervision – monthly.
- Training to ensure parity with new legislation.
- Monitoring of implementation of regional policies and procedures. An audit currently being carried out.
- Compliments.
- Complaints.
- Training audits.
- Annual report indicating work completed and data collected.
- Family audit of case conference experience.
- Audit of staff understanding of their case conference role leading to guidance leaflet.

**Q44: Any other comments on the policy and/or screening exercise?**

- The Trust would welcome further public consultation eg road shows, public meetings, face-to-face consultation with parents and clients.

