

Strategic Planning and Performance Group (SPPG) Interim Adult Protection Board (IAPB) NI Meeting	
Location:	Microsoft Teams
Date:	Thursday 2 nd October 2025
Time:	2pm - 4pm

Members in Attendance:	
Ciara McKillop – Chair	David Petticrew - SPPG
Rebecca Slane – SPPG, Minute Taker	Karen Harvey- RQIA
Des Flannagan - NIAS	Deborah Hanlon - SHSCT
Heather Reid - PHA	Caroline Holloway - SPPG
Katherine McElroy - PCC	Rhoda McBride - BHSCT
Lynda Donaghy - PSNI	Stephanie Patterson - NHSCT
Helen McVicker - NISCC	Lyn Preece - SEHSCT
David Petticrew - SPPG	Stephen McLaughlin – WHSCT

Apologies	
Colm McCafferty - SHSCT	Maura Dargan - NHSCT
Petra Corr – NHSCT	Amanda Burgess – NHSCT
Leah Crothers – PSNI	Colin McMullan - BHSCT
Kerrylee Weatherall - BHSCT	Brian Beattie - SHSCT
Randal McHugh - SPPG	Karen O'Brien - WHSCT
Mary Emerson - AHP	David Robinson – SEHSCT
Tom Cassidy - WHSCT	Michelle Laverty - WHSCT
Tracy Magill - NHSCT	-

1.	Welcome and Apologies
	C McKillop welcomed all to the meeting and apologies were noted.
2.	Previous Minutes – 15/05/25
	No further amendments or issues were raised regarding the previous minutes.
3.	Matters Arising – Previous meeting (captured on agenda; Statutory Guidance; Prevention; IAPB Structure)

	C McKillop advised that the Matters Arising would be discussed as part of the Agenda items during the course of the meeting.
4.	<p>Chairs Update –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transformation Board meeting update 25th Sep 25
	<p>D Petticrew provided an insight into the last Transformation Board meeting. D Petticrew summarised a number of key messages from what was discussed:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Personnel Changes - Jill Duffie (PSNI) and Tracy Reid (BHSCT) have moved to other roles. Leah Crothers (PSNI) has replaced Jill, while Kerry-Lee Weatherall (BHSCT) has replaced Tracy. David acknowledged the contribution of both to the IAPB to date. 2) The Approval of the Adult Protection Bill (APB) – The APB is making its way through the Assembly at present and is currently at the committee stage. This has been extended to March 2026 to allow full scrutiny of the Bill. 3) The APB Business Case – The Business Case has been agreed in principle. However, funding has yet to be identified to support roll-out. The implementation of the Bill is likely to take place in a phased manner. 4) Statutory Guidance – Four chapters have been drafted and the expectation is that the guidance will be ready for Public Consultation by April/May 2026. 5) Claus 4 – Significant debate took place regarding Clause 4 relating to the statutory duty to report adult safeguarding concerns. Part of the discussion focused on addressing gaps in reporting responsibilities to ensure accountability i.e. the responsibility of students/ student nurses to report. 6) NI Prison Service (NIPS) as a named agency with a duty to report - Extensive communication has taken place and is ongoing as the NIPS has indicated that it does not wish to be named as an agency in the APB. This is an ongoing matter and NIPS is engaging with counterparts across the UK to establish a national position. 7) The definition of harm – A discussion was held on whether modern forms of abuse, including digital abuse, are adequately covered within the current definition of harm. Ensuring the APB reflects contemporary types of abuse is essential, and this issue will need to be further considered as the Bill progresses through the Assembly. 8) PCC Issues – Concerns were raised regarding the PCC's inclusion in the APB as a named member of the final Adult Protection Board. As an independent body, the PCC has expressed that being named may compromise its role/ independency as an advocate. To maintain its impartiality and strategic distance, the PCC prefers not to be formally listed but can then decide on the best means to be involved.

	<p>9) APB Membership, including individuals with lived experience, users and carers – The importance of a wide range of representation was discussed and agreed, but any final decision on this was deferred at this point.</p> <p>10) Advocacy in the APB – A discussion emerged around whether advocacy should specifically be referenced in the APB, given its connection to other advocacy-related requirements in legislation. It will not be included for this reason.</p> <p>11) Muckamore Inquiry – It was acknowledged that the Muckamore report is likely to be published in early March 2026. The Inquiry Chair, Tom Kark KC, has advised that, due to the volume of work and the level of detail involved, the report and its recommendations cannot be sufficiently finalised by the end of 2025 so a little more time is required.</p> <p>Action: The Adult Protection Board (APB) and updates to be made a standing Agenda item on IAPB.</p>
5.	Statutory Guidance Update
	<p>C Holloway reported that significant progress is underway, and an additional meeting has been scheduled. She also noted that she has received correspondence concerning the definition of harm, it is expected that APB for NI will align with the Scottish definition.</p> <p>The timeline for the guidance falls under the remit of the Policy and OSS departments. D Hanlon advised that it is anticipated the guidance will be ready by the end of March 2026. Following this, a public consultation will be held once the guidance progresses beyond the committee stage. Implementation of the Statutory Guidance is currently targeted for Autumn 2026.</p> <p>R McBride enquired about the drafts of the Statutory Guidance. In response, D Hanlon and C Holloway confirmed that the drafts have been circulated to both the working group and the sub-group.</p> <p>Action: C Holloway to distribute the Scottish definition of harm to all meeting attendees.</p>
6.	Update on Muckamore Inquiry and hospital closure
	<p>D. Petticrew provided an update on the Muckamore Inquiry, noting that the Chair has estimated the report will be published in March 2026 and will include a series of recommendations.</p> <p>He further reported that the number of patients at Muckamore Hospital has gradually decreased over the past two years, from 34 to 12. Currently, the hospital is prioritising a careful and collaborative approach with the remaining patients and their families to identify appropriate community support, ensuring that transitions are managed sensitively and effectively.</p>

	Action: D Petticrew to continue to provide updates on the Muckamore inquiry at future meetings.
7.	Sub-Group Updates
7.1	Engagement Platform
	<p>C Holloway provided an update on the Engagement Platform, noting that it has been actively used to disseminate information and gather feedback. However, she acknowledged that further refinement is needed to enhance its functionality and overall effectiveness.</p> <p>She went on to report that, at present, a small cohort of family advocates is highly engaged. Nonetheless, there remains a need for broader participation and more comprehensive representation across the wider Adult Safeguarding landscape.</p> <p>K McElroy reported that she met with Mark McGuickian and the Bill team to discuss matters relating to the development of the Bill. She advised that PCC have recently engaged in a meeting about the engagement platform and discussed submissions relating to the Bill. K McElroy emphasised that a significant number of individuals involved in the Engagement Platform had raised concerns regarding the use of CCTV. She noted that there was a strong desire to ensure that safeguards around consulting families during the Adult Safeguarding investigation are strengthened.</p>
7.2	Serious Case Reviews
	<p>C Holloway began by acknowledged the contribution of L Montgomery and D Hanlon in helping to develop this piece of work. C Holloway specifically recognised L Montgomery's contributions in securing access to the Pan-London model, which has been adopted as a reference framework for the development of a comparable model in Northern Ireland. The first draft of the Serious Case Review has been brought to subgroups and the PCC in August who have provided their feedback.</p> <p>C Holloway then advised that she is hoping to obtain further feedback from the 5 LASPs, IAPB sub-groups and eventually the Board. Therefore, it is expected that the final draft will be ready by Christmas so that it can be submitted to the Board early 2026.</p> <p>Action: This group to provide their feedback of the Serious Case Review document during the first IAPB meeting of 2026.</p>
7.3	Policies and Procedures – Draft Adult Joint Protocol Vacant Chair
	<p>C Holloway informed the group that significant work has been undertaken in relation to the Adult Joint Protocol. The document is now ready for distribution to board members and will be submitted to an implementation and oversight group to include Trusts and PSNI, for ongoing review.</p> <p>R McBride highlighted that the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust (BHSCT) had raised concerns regarding the content implementation of the draft protocol. In response, C Holloway clarified that all previously raised issues have been addressed and resolved. D Hanlon concurred, noting that there has been substantial engagement with all five Trusts, each of which has provided detailed feedback. She further stated that, following this feedback, minor amendments</p>

	<p>were made by colleagues in OSS and PSNI. R McBride advised that the BHSCT have not seen any recent versions of the draft protocol and have continued to have concerns about its content. As a result, it was agreed that as the Trusts have not yet received the final version of the protocol that the final copy will be shared with Trusts following this meeting.</p> <p><u>Action:</u> C Holloway to distribute the final version of the Adult Joint Protocol.</p>
7.4	Data & Performance – Vacant Chair
	<p>C Holloway noted that the Chair within the group is currently unfilled.</p> <p>She then informed the group that the Data & Performance Group had convened recently to discuss current data sets and guidance that have been issued with them. During the discussion, concerns were raised regarding the reliability of Encompass in generating accurate data. However, C Holloway reassured the group that efforts are underway to enhance the system's performance, beginning with the implementation of small, rapid improvements aimed at increasing data reliability. The Data and Performance group will now dedicate future quarterly meetings to analysing trends and patterns within the data set on a quarterly basis. Therefore, a small Task and Finish group is being established which will report back to the main subgroup. It is anticipated that the T&FG will identify 3 - 5 key areas in need of improvement to support compliance and consistency across all five Trusts.</p> <p><u>Action:</u> This Adult Protection Data set will be Sub-Group Agenda item to be moved to the start of the future meeting Agenda.</p> <p>All meeting attendees then agreed that Rhoda McBride would be the new Chair of the Data and Performance group.</p> <p>C Holloway then proceeded to inform the group about the dashboard currently being produced by PSSID colleagues which was designed to review adult protection data</p> <p><u>Action:</u> The Dashboard is to be reviewed during the next meeting.</p>
7.4	Training and Development
	<p>C Holloway communicated that the Training and Development Group has convened twice recently and now has access to the Bill. As a result, several Chairs have been engaged, and three Task and Finish Groups have been established to examine the seven levels used in Adult Safeguarding training. The group will assess these levels in conjunction with the Bill to identify any gaps or areas for improvement within the current training framework.</p> <p>Levels 1 & 2 – Reviewing universal early recognition and responding reporting to identify what is missing.</p>

	<p>Levels 3 & 5 – The role of the Adult Safeguarding Champion and the DAPO points of decision making will be addressed.</p> <p>Levels 4, 6 & 7 – Members will review the role of the new APSW and the role of Statutory sectors in more depth.</p> <p>Once the Chairs have been appointed, they will be responsible for developing the Terms of Reference (ToR) for each group. Group membership will be determined based on individuals who have expressed interest in participating. Following the formation of the groups, it is intended that James Todd will meet with the user* group members to provide a detailed overview of the 7 Levels of training, ensuring they have sufficient understanding to make informed decisions.</p> <p>C Holloway then shared that work has also been ongoing with NISCC around developing a development framework for staff.</p>
8.	<p>‘Prevention’ Agenda and format of IAPB – LASP input.</p> <p>D Petticrew noted that Tracy Reid had initially introduced the discussion around the prevention agenda in 2024. To date, there has been consensus that the IAPB was not in a position to advance the prevention agenda directly and in any case its focus must align to its mandate in terms of focussing on the protection agenda. It had been agreed that LASPs were best placed to take the lead on this prevention work, providing updates to the interim board to ensure it maintains a central and supportive role in progressing the prevention agenda.</p> <p>D Hanlon shared her perspective as the SHSCT LASP Chair, noting that from the outset of the IAPB’s establishment, LASPs have consistently emphasised the need for strategic direction regarding the objectives and structure of the work plan, in order to effectively localise it within the Southern area. LASPs have proceeded by aligning with the strategic objectives outlined by NIASP in its final year and have subsequently developed their own approach.</p> <p>D Hanlon further noted that SHSCT is managing a substantial and demanding work plan. Despite its intensity, the plan benefits from strong engagement across various sectors in terms of delivery. She acknowledged that establishing a connection with the IAPB, specifically through C Holloway’s attendance at meetings, was welcomed and helped strengthen alignment and collaboration.</p> <p>D Hanlon noted that LASP Chairs had previously discussed the development of a strategic framework to support the alignment of prevention work across the five Trust areas, while enabling effective delivery at a local level.</p> <p>S McLaughlin and R McBride expressed agreement with D Hanlon’s comments, highlighting that C Holloway’s attendance at LASP meetings provides a valuable link that enhances overall connectivity with the group. S McLaughlin further emphasised that the LASP annual plan does not appear to have received formal ratification, contributing to uncertainty regarding its status and direction.</p>

	<p>C McKillop stressed the importance of strengthening the connection between LASPs and IAPB, and underscored the need to reflect and support local priorities to ensure each area maintains its own identity.</p> <p>She proposed LASP chair attendance at a future IAPBs and a schedule for this to be agreed in the coming period. The development of a newssheet to provide an update on IAPB work was also discussed.</p> <p>C McKillop further suggested that C Holloway provide a summary of relevant data at a future IAPB meetings to support informed decision making and enhance transparency.</p> <p><u>Action:</u> C Holloway to engage with colleagues before the next meeting to explore the feasibility of developing an update report.</p> <p><u>Action:</u> C Holloway to summarise the data held that provides oversight of the ASG service area during future IAPB meetings.</p> <p><u>Action:</u> C Holloway to contact LASP chairs and co-ordinate attendance at future IAPB meetings to discuss their workplans.</p>
9.	<p>Update from Regional ASG Conference 30th September 2025</p> <p>C Holloway provided an overview of the recent Regional ASG Conference, highlighting the strong multi-agency representation at the event. Notably, a family member from an IAPB subgroup also attended, offering a valuable personal perspective that enriched the discussions.</p> <p>C Holloway reported that two significant pieces of research were presented during the conference:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Welfare Inequalities</i> – Dr. Lorna Montgomery (Queen’s University Belfast). 2. <i>Adult Safeguarding and Access to Justice</i> – James Todd (SHSCT). <p>Additionally, F Rowan delivered an overview of relevant legislation and associated clauses, while C. Holloway presented a summary of the IAPB workstreams</p> <p>D Hanlon drew attention to Lorna Montgomery’s feedback from research on public attitudes, noting a key finding that younger males are less likely than females to report safeguarding concerns. She emphasised the importance of considering this insight when developing the prevention strategy.</p> <p><u>Action:</u> C Holloway to request copies of the PowerPoint presentations shared at the conference for distribution to group members.</p>

10.	AOB
	<p>R McHugh sent through some update information to be shared with the group –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Five Nations Adult Safeguarding group – Currently seeking a representative from Northern Ireland. • ASG Domestic Abuse workshop - Being held on Tuesday 7th October at 10am in County Hall, Ballymena. It will be aligned to the prevention strategy for domestic abuse and adult safeguarding. Representatives from the PSNI and Trust teams are expected to attend. • NIPS Adult Protection in Prisons – Work is progressing to the next phase, focusing on the action plan that was shared with colleagues for feedback and updated. There was a suggestion that all Directors should be invited to the next meeting. As the workplan has been finalised and sub groups agreed DOH/SPPG are keen to progress. R McHugh will provide offline briefings for directors who wish to receive an update on the ongoing work.
11.	Date of Next Meeting: Thursday 6th November 2025 2 - 4pm