

28th May 2020

Dear Board Member,

Firstly, I hope you are all well and have kept safe during this challenging time.

As we now hopefully are moving into a time when there are still risks but these are becoming more manageable and we can start going back to some kind of normality I thought it important to update you on what the Board has been doing and our future plans based around safe working and social distancing.

Since the beginning of lockdown, the Adult Safeguarding Executive of the Board has been meeting via phone or video every two weeks to discuss status with respect to Adult Safeguarding of main agencies, major risks and what support could the Board give and also reviewing and implementing where appropriate national guidance.

We have tried to keep you informed via the web site with reports from these meetings we have also set up a COVID-19 page on our website with information and links that may help support our agencies during this period.

Our priority was and still is to make sure those who have care and support needs are protected via safeguarding and that despite the focus on the virus and the pressure on everyone's resources we did not allow this vital support to be lost. I am pleased to say that in the main this has happened and that all front-line staff have been vigilant in making sure they referred those relevant people. Of course, with less staff having face to face contact we expect that some of those triggers or situations were not visible and in the early stages we did see a dip in enquiries, but it would seem that we are now heading back to normal numbers of referrals.

With the easing measures now being put in place we believe that we can now start to get back to business through our subgroups though until it is safe to do so, this will be via phone or video. This will allow us to get back on track with our plan for this year understanding though that there will be some delays.

We have been discussing about how and when to have a main board meeting that would be safe for all members. Obviously, there are large numbers who attend and at this stage we can see no way of achieving this and safe social distancing. We have also looked at, and continue to do so, using virtual meetings but as there seems to be limitations as to finding one system that all can use effectively. We don't believe currently that we can recommence the Board Meetings, but we are testing a couple of options and will keep you updated.

In the meantime, we will keep you informed via the web site and circulating meeting notes where appropriate and we will do a monthly update of what has happened and what is coming up.

I know this is not ideal, but your safety is paramount, and you can be reassured we are focussed on continue to highlight and drive our safeguarding agenda and as soon as possible we will arrange a Board meeting.

Thank you all for your support during this challenging period and please keep highlighting and responding to safeguarding concerns and contact us should you have any questions.

Keep Safe.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S Turpitt', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Simon Turpitt
SSAB Independent Chair