

# **Gateshead Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)**

Strategic and Operational  
Framework



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# I. Gateshead MASH Vision and Overview

I.1 The overarching vision of the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub is to:

*“provide a single gateway for all safeguarding, domestic abuse and vulnerable victim referrals; to expedite the sharing of information in an efficient and consistent manner and to protect and safeguard the most vulnerable within the Borough”.*

I.2 The Gateshead MASH provides a regular opportunity for partners to come together and discuss some of the most vulnerable residents in Gateshead with the purpose of ensuring appropriate, co-ordinated, proportionate and timely interventions. The MASH provides a platform for partners to devise appropriate referral pathways, mechanisms for sharing information and a shared understanding of partner roles and responsibilities.

I.3 The MASH does not aim to replace existing policies and procedures but seeks to complement these existing processes by bringing them together and ensuring that there are no gaps. Importantly, partners within the MASH aim to support those vulnerable individuals who previously may not be eligible for interventions or support services, and who are often termed ‘medium risk’ by partners. This preventative approach aims to prevent risk levels of those individuals from escalating.

## 2. Staffing and Partners within the MASH

- 2.1 The MASH has been established by co-locating a range of professional staff from agencies with responsibility for safeguarding vulnerable persons in one office environment. Co-location of staff is the most effective way of building relationships, trust and understanding between the agencies so that staff are confident about sharing information.
- 2.2 The Gateshead MASH is located within the Safer Communities Service which is part of Commissioning and Business Development under the Care, Wellbeing and Learning directorate in Gateshead Council.
- 2.3 Safer Communities has a unique working model, whereby the following teams are co-located to provide interventions or support to vulnerable residents:
  - Safeguarding Adults
  - Mental Capacity and Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards
  - Independent Domestic Violence Advisors (IDVA)
  - Community Safety (including hate crime, ASB and substance misuse)
  - Emergency Planning and Resilience.
- 2.4 The specialist knowledge and experience of officers within this service is diverse and includes a number of social workers (specialising in safeguarding and mental capacity issues), officers supporting; high risk victims of domestic abuse, sexual violence, supporting vulnerable people at risk of radicalisation and those subject to repeat victimisation. In addition, a qualified health specialist in the service provides a vital link with health colleagues throughout the authority.
- 2.5 Two seconded Police Officers are based full-time within the MASH to provide immediate support to the MASH and to co-ordinate the approach to Operation Encompass referrals.
- 2.6 In addition, partner organisations have 'hot desks' within Safer Communities to help facilitate an expedient exchange of up to date information and encourage a greater understanding of respective roles and responsibilities. These include:
  - **Victim Support** - one officer who provides direct support to the most vulnerable victims of crime and anti-social behaviour and co-ordinates a pool of volunteers
  - **Oasis Aquila Housing** - two officers who will provide support to families of domestic abuse who are currently not deemed as high risk
  - **Tyneside Womens Health** - one staff member, who in partnership with Oasis Aquila Housing will provide support to women in families affected by domestic abuse, who are currently not deemed as high risk
  - **Community Rehabilitation Company (CRC)** - one officer whose role will be to develop a range of interventions for non-statutory offenders
  - **Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service (TWFRS)** - the TWFRS have a computer terminal located within the Safer Communities team to assist with information sharing.

- 2.7 Staff have been provided with access to the appropriate IT databases and systems and training and development sessions are offered pertinent to roles and responsibilities.
- 2.8 A single management structure has been put in place to allow a more strategic overview/ management of the MASH. The Safeguarding Adults Business Manager is responsible for the management of the MASH, and the Community Safety Business Manager is responsible for the management of Operation Encompass. Both of these managers report to the Safer Communities Service Manager. A Project Assistant has been located on the team to support the co-ordination of the process, in particular the MASH Conference meetings and information sharing for each client.

## 3. MASH Clients

- 3.1 Partners can nominate any adult as a MASH client if they have concerns that an individual is vulnerable. In particular, the MASH encourages nominations of vulnerable individuals who:
- are not currently engaged with services as they do not currently meet eligibility criteria or historically have not provided consent
  - require multi-agency interventions
- 3.2 It is recognised that the term 'vulnerable' can be interpreted in many different ways. The Gateshead MASH however purposefully does not define the term to enable the MASH to consider all vulnerable individuals nominated by partners. Referral routes into the MASH include the following; however these are in constant development:
- **Northumbria Police and North East Ambulance Service Adult Concerns** - Both Northumbria Police and the North East Ambulance Service submit adult concerns when front line officers have concerns about the vulnerability of individuals
  - **Northumbria Police Gateshead Area Command Neighbourhood Police Team nominations** - These will be provided via the Neighbourhood Inspectors and will focus upon Medium Risk Domestic Violence victims and Violence against the Person offenders.
  - **Complex Safeguarding Adult Cases** - The Safeguarding Adults Coordination Team will nominate those Safeguarding Adult Cases that are particularly complex, or require multi-agency interventions broader than the Safeguarding Adults process
  - **Direct Referrals from Partner organisations**

## 4. MASH Conference

4.1 At the heart of the MASH is the twice weekly Conference meeting during which partners nominate potential MASH clients, share information, devise interventions and provide feedback. The MASH Conference meets on a Tuesday and Thursday morning in Gateshead Civic Centre at 10.30am within the Major Incident Room. Appendix I depicts how the MASH Conference is central to the broader MASH.

### **(a) Attendees**

The MASH Conference includes core members and associate members. Core members have either committed to attending all the MASH conference meetings, or are commissioned providers who receive direct referrals from the conference and are committed to providing feedback to every conference. Associate members have expressed an interest in being part of the Gateshead MASH. This will include nominating MASH clients, sharing information and providing direct support where appropriate. Associate members will attend MASH conference meetings depending upon the MASH clients being discussed.

#### **Core Members**

- Gateshead Council
- Northumbria Police
- Northumbria Community Rehabilitation Company (CRC)
- Northumbria Victim Support
- Oasis Aquila Housing, in partnership with Tyneside Womens Health

#### **Associate Members**

- National Probation Service (NPS)
- Evolve (Integrated drug and alcohol recovery service provided by CRI)
- Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service (TWFRS)
- The Gateshead Housing Company (TGHC)
- North East Ambulance Service (NEAS)

### **(b) Chair and Support arrangements**

The MASH Conference will be chaired on a rotational basis between the Safeguarding Adults Business Manager and the Community Safety Business Manager. The meeting is facilitated by the MASH Project Assistant, who will ensure that the electronic recording systems are updated.

### **(c) Client Nominations and Research**

All nominations must be received by the MASH Project Assistant via the secure email [MASH@gateshead.gcsx.gov.uk](mailto:MASH@gateshead.gcsx.gov.uk) by midday the previous day. The Project Assistant will then circulate nominations to Core Members and those Associate Members due to attend that particular meeting to enable partners to undertake research prior to the meeting. Research information will include any previous or current involvement with the Client.

#### **(d) Client Discussion**

The MASH Conference is a vehicle by which information is collated and analysed at the point a referral is received. The MASH Conference meeting discusses new Clients and outstanding actions on previous Clients. Each Client has an individual Action Sheet (Appendix 2) which contains:

- initial referral information
- a summary of information shared by partner organisations
- actions required
- feedback on actions
- summary of case closure decision

Through accessing a range of IT databases and systems, and seeking information from partners, the MASH Conference will produce a 'package' of information in order to make a judgement about the most appropriate route to progress the referral.

This will include:

- Further investigation by a MASH Member if there are information gaps
- Direct intervention from a MASH Member – ie Police Officers attend address for reassurance or information gathering
- Referral to another process – ie Safeguarding Adults Alert, Adult Social Care Direct
- Referral to a support organisation
- Signposting to a partner agency,
- Multi-agency intervention

Client Action Sheets are updated electronically within the meeting on a large screen to ensure that all partners are satisfied that the actions reflect the discussions within the meeting and to reduce bureaucracy.

An overarching MASH Client spreadsheet provides an overview of all MASH Clients, referral pathways, outstanding actions and performance information. This is also updated during the meeting.

#### **(e) Case Closure**

MASH Client cases are only closed once all actions have been completed and no new interventions can be identified. The reason for closure is clearly recorded, and must be agreed by all members in attendance.

#### **(f) Partner Expectations**

It is expected that all partners who attend the MASH Conference have undertaken research prior to the meeting. If a partner cannot attend:

- apologies must be submitted to the MASH Project Assistant
- research on new MASH Clients must be submitted electronically
- feedback on actions must be submitted electronically

Partners are expected to update their own electronic case management recording systems.

#### **(g) Escalation**

If there is disagreement within the MASH about a particular Client then this can be escalated to the Domestic Abuse Executive Forum for further discussion. If however the matter is urgent, the incident must be raised with the relevant Service Manager(s) within the respective partner organisations involved for immediate decision making.



## 5. Information Sharing

- 5.1 The purpose of information sharing within the MASH is to ensure the early identification of risk and harm to facilitate timely, co-ordinated and proportionate interventions.
- 5.2 From a local perspective, both the Community Safety and Safeguarding Adults Boards have relevant Information Sharing Protocols that permit and underpin the sharing of relevant information pertinent to the MASH approach. The existing ISP protocols and agreements have previously been circulated and agreed by partner agencies – and relate to the following legal authorities (on which to base information exchange):
- Common Law
  - Crime & Disorder Act 1998
  - Data Protection Act 1998
  - Management of Police Information
  - Human Rights Act 1998
  - Care Act 2014
- 5.3 This can be summed up (but not be restricted) as the protection of life and the safeguarding of vulnerable adults – as well as to address crime, disorder and re-offending purposes. The principle guidance for classification of information should be the Government Protective Marking Scheme (GPMS).

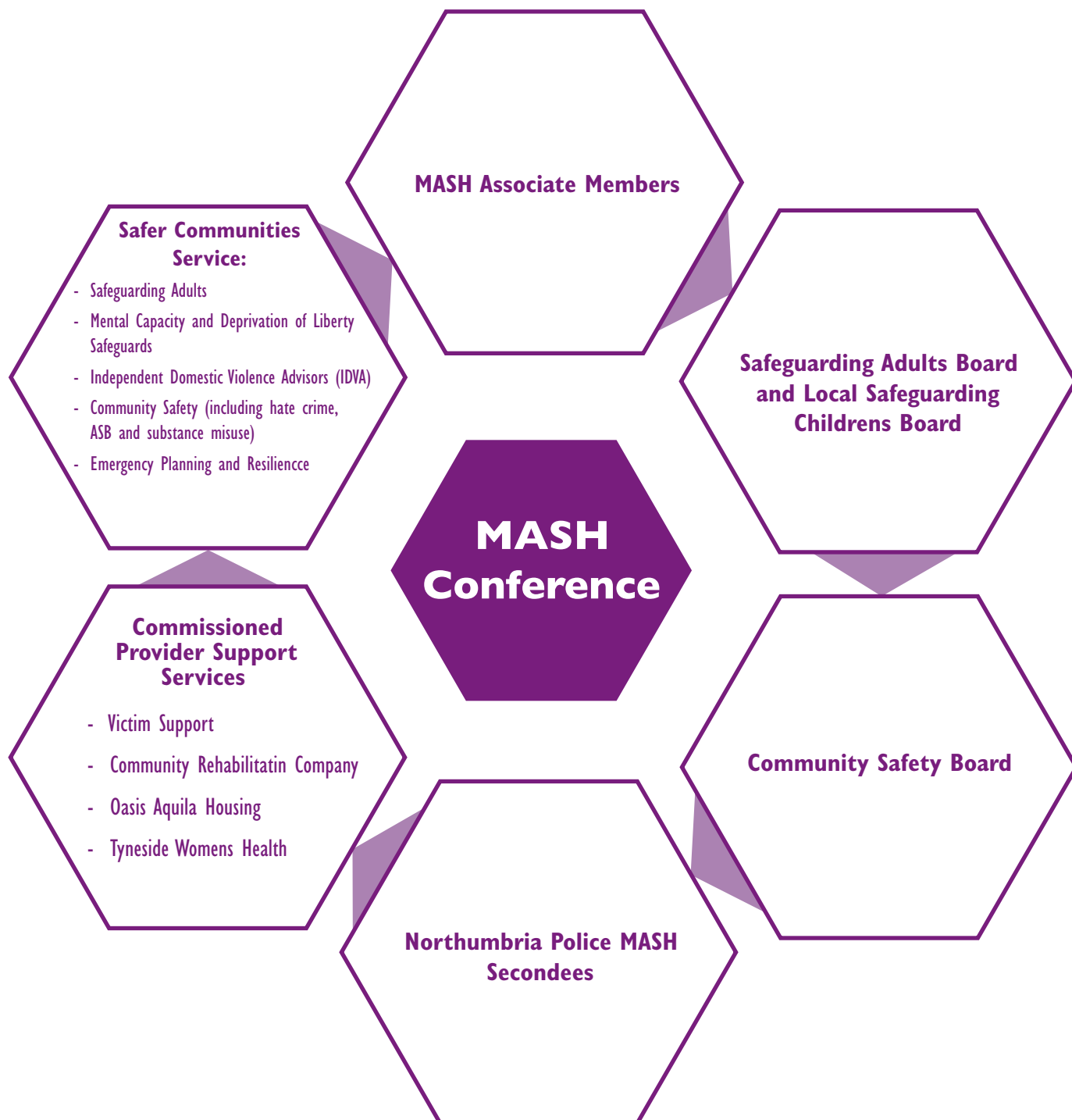


## 6. Governance and Accountability

- 6.1 At a strategic level the MASH reports directly to both the Community Safety Board and the Safeguarding Adults Board. Operation Encompass reports to the Local Safeguarding Board. This will be in the form of regular update reports, the frequency of which can be agreed by the individual Boards.
- 6.2 At an operational level, the MASH will report into the Domestic Abuse Executive Forum. This will include regular performance updates and changes to the delivery model as it evolves over time.

# Appendix I

## MASH Conference



# Appendix 2

## Gateshead MASH Client Action Sheet

### Client details

Client name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Client address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### Summary of information shared at Initial MASH Core Group on \*\*/\*\*/\*\*:

- Referre via \_\_\_\_\_
- MASH Repeat? \_\_\_\_\_
- No of Adult Concerns \_\_\_\_\_

### Initial referral details:

### Additional partner updates (including none):

- Council Involvement/Information Gathered:
- Police Involvement/Information Gathered:
- CRC / NPS Involvement/Information Gathered:
- Other:

Action Log	Action Owner	Timescales

**Case Closed on: \*\*/\*\*/\*\***

**MASH Core Group agreed that (include all that apply):**

- All Actions Completed
- Risk has been reduced
- No Further Actions can be identified

**Chair:** \_\_\_\_\_



If you would like any more information or to discuss this document, please contact the Safeguarding Adults Co-ordination Team on 0191 433 3361.

If you would like this information in a different format such as large print, Braille, on audio cassette/CD/MP3 or in a different language, please call 0191 433 3361.