



PRESS RELEASE

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Adult Safeguarding Board Meeting

The newly reconstituted and restructured Adult Safeguarding Board, (ASB), met for the first time today. This board brings together key organisations such as the Care Agency, the Royal Gibraltar Police, the Housing Department and the Gibraltar Health Authority to ensure that local adult safeguarding arrangements and procedures are effective. The meeting was opened by the Minister for Health, Care and Justice, the Honorable Neil F. Costa MP.

The ASB will focus on issues relating to the safeguarding of vulnerable adults, by assuring itself that local safeguarding arrangements are in place, that safeguarding practice is person-centred and outcome-focused, and that organisations work collaboratively to prevent abuse and/or neglect. The ASB will work to ensure that agencies and individuals give timely and proportionate responses should abuse or neglect occur and to assure itself that safeguarding practice is continuously improving and enhancing the quality of life of vulnerable adults in the community.

Safeguarding is about protecting an adult's right to live in safety and free from abuse and neglect. Vulnerable adults exist in all areas of society, and it is vital that professionals and practitioners understand safeguarding procedures and their roles and responsibilities. This is important to promote the welfare of vulnerable adults and safeguard them from potential harm.

One of the essential areas of responsibility for this Board will be that of Safeguarding Training for practitioners working with vulnerable Adults. This training will provide the skills to identify risk and vulnerability to abuse and neglect. It will also cover the duties and responsibilities for professionals and their organisations, and will ensure that all staff working with adults are aware of the Safeguarding Adults at Risk policies and procedures.

CEO (Ag) for the Care Agency, Natalie Tavares, commented that safeguarding was central to the work of the Care Agency and that the reconstitution of the Adult Safeguarding Board took this a step further and ensured the further development of this area of work. She stated: "The formation of this Board will ensure that there is an over-arching body of senior managers who will work strategically in the development of services to ensure the safeguarding of vulnerable adults and advise on areas of concern and how to best meet these needs."



Minister Costa said: "It gives me great pleasure to have hosted and opened this meeting of the Adult Safeguarding Board. I am reassured to learn that the heads of the organisations who have safeguarding responsibilities will meet regularly, so as to ensure the appropriate systems are in place to guarantee the safety and well-being of vulnerable adults in Gibraltar. Safeguarding practise is about professionals and organisations working together to prevent the experience of abuse or neglect, whilst also promoting well-being and choice. The Board has set the agenda for its invaluable work. I look forward to receiving their advice to ensure that services continue to develop, so we do all that we can to safeguard, protect and empower the vulnerable members of our community."