

DEVON
Safeguarding Adults Board

Procedures and Guidance for
Serious Case Reviews

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To be reviewed – April 2011

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1 Introduction

- 1.1 These Procedures and Guidance are based on national Guidance and regional and national best practice. The document 'No Secrets' (March 2000) issued by DoH and Home Office under section 7 of the Local Authority Social Services Act 1970, gives guidance on developing and implementing multi-agency policies and procedures to protect vulnerable adults from abuse. We have also made particular use of the recent lessons learned in Cornwall on conducting serious case reviews.
- 1.2 The national Guidance suggests that local agencies should collaborate to achieve effective inter-agency working, through the formation of multi-agency management committees known as Adult Protection Committees.
- 1.3 The document Safeguarding Adults published by the Association of Directors of Social Services (ADSS) October 2005, provides a National Framework of Standards for good practice and outcomes in adult protection work. One of the standards in this document states that, as good practice APC's should have in place a serious case review protocol.
- 1.4 *It is recommended that:*
- *There is a 'Safeguarding Adults' serious case review protocol. This is agreed, on a multi-agency basis and endorsed by the Coroner's Office, and details the circumstances in which a serious case review will be undertaken. For example: when an adult experiencing abuse or neglect dies, or when there has been a serious incident, or in circumstances involving the abuse or neglect of one or more adults. The links between this protocol and a domestic violence homicide review should be clear. (Paragraph 1.22 Safeguarding Adults)*
 - *There is a clear process for commissioning and carrying out of a serious case review by the partnership. (Paragraph 9.10.15 Safeguarding Adults)*

2 Purpose

- 2.1 The purpose of having a serious case review is not to reinvestigate nor to apportion blame, it is:
- to establish whether there are lessons to be learnt from the circumstances of the case about the way in which local professionals and agencies work together to safeguard vulnerable adults

- to review the effectiveness of procedures (Both multi-agency and those of individual organisations)
- to inform and improve local inter-agency practice
- to improve practice by acting on learning (developing best practice)
- to prepare or commission an overview report which brings together and analyses the findings of the various reports from agencies in order to make recommendations for future action

2.2 It is acknowledged that all agencies will have their own internal/statutory review procedures to investigate serious incidents; e.g. a significant event review or root cause analysis. This protocol is not intended to duplicate or replace these. Agencies may also have their own mechanisms for reflective practice.

2.3 Where there are possible grounds for both a Serious Case Review and a Domestic Homicide Review then a decision should be made at the outset by the two decision makers as to which process is to lead and who is to chair with a final joint report being taken to both commissioning bodies.

3 Criteria for Serious Case Review

3.1 The SAB has the lead responsibility for conducting a serious case review.

3.2 A serious case review should be considered when:

- A vulnerable adult dies (including death by suicide) and abuse or neglect is known or suspected to be a factor in their death **or**
- A vulnerable adult has sustained a potentially life-threatening injury through abuse or neglect, serious sexual abuse, or sustained serious and permanent impairment of health or development through abuse or neglect **or**
- Serious abuse takes place in an institution or when multiple abusers are involved, the same principles of review apply. Such reviews are, however, likely to be more complex, on a larger scale, and may require more time. Terms of reference need to be carefully constructed to explore the issues relevant to each specific case

And

- The case gives rise to concerns about the way in which local professionals and services work together to safeguard vulnerable adults.
- 3.3 The SAB can also consider conducting a serious case review into any incident(s) or case(s) involving vulnerable adult(s) where it is believed to be in the public interest to conduct such a review.
- 3.4 Any agency or professional body, also councillors, MP's and the coroner, may refer such a case to the SAB seeking a serious case review to establish if there are important lessons for inter-agency work to be learnt from a case.
- 3.5 The Secretary of State also has authority under the Local Authority Social Services Act 1970 to cause an enquiry to be held where she/he considers it advisable.

4 Initiating the Process

- 4.1 Any agency or professional may refer a case to the Serious Case Review Group (SCRG) through the Chair of the SCRG. Referrals must be in writing (see Appendix A). To ensure the efficient identification of appropriate cases for SCR consideration, then relevant operational and more senior managers of agencies represented on the SAB need to be aware of the criteria for implementing a SCR. The SAB should ensure that this takes place.
- 4.2 Once a decision has been made to instigate a Serious Case Review, the Care Quality Commission (CQC) will be notified of the decision. This task will be the responsibility of the Devon Safeguarding Adults Team Manager.

5 Decision Making

- 5.1 The SCRG is a sub-group of the SAB and is responsible to that Board.
- 5.2 When a case is referred, the group will meet within a maximum of one month to make a recommendation to the Chair of SAB who has ultimate responsibility for deciding whether or not to conduct a review. The decision making process by the SCRG will need to be supported by the consideration of as much available information about the case as possible at the time, including notes of Safeguarding Adults Strategy Meetings and Case Conference. In the event that a SCR is likely will be recommended, the SCRG can further utilise this information to help provisionally scope the

SCR. If there is sufficient information at this stage, some initial draft Terms of Reference for the SCR will be drawn up.

- 5.3 As soon as SCRG has made a recommendation that a SCR should take place, and this has been confirmed by the Chair of the SAB (via Standard letter A), a letter from the SAB Chair (or the Chair of SCRG on his/her behalf) will be sent to the Chief Executive (and copied to their respective SAB representative) of each relevant agency, advising them that records relating to the vulnerable adult need to be secured, and requesting that the process be set underway to undertake their Individual Management Review (Standard Letter B – if there are draft Terms of Reference, these should be included in the letter). *This communication will also include the two templates for completing the Chronology and the Analysis components of the Individual Management Reviews as well as Appendix 7 of this document.)*

NB: If the Chair of SAB does not agree with the recommendation of the SCRG, a meeting should be convened with the Chair of SCRG to try to resolve the issue as a matter of urgency. If necessary, a special meeting of the full SAB should be convened to make a final decision

- 5.4 When a decision has been made to proceed with a SCR, the relevant regulatory bodies with oversight for Serious Case Reviews will be notified. This task will be the responsibility of the Devon Safeguarding Adults Manager.
- 5.5 If the recommendation of the SCRG is not to proceed to a SCR, the group may consider whether to request an individual management review or a smaller-scale audit of agency involvement. In such cases, arrangements should be made for the agency to share relevant findings with the SCRG.

6 Planning the Serious Case Review

- 6.1 As soon as the SAB Chair's decision is made to proceed with a SCR, he/she will need to commission the creation of a Serious Case Review Panel whose role it will be to undertake the review of the case in question. The following actions should therefore be taken, either by the convening of a SCRG meeting, or if this is not possible by the Chair of the SCRG in consultation with members of the SCRG. It may have been possible for much of this work to have already been initiated from the SCRG meeting held to recommend the need for the SCR.
- 6.2 The Chair of the SCRG, in consultation and with the active support of members of the SCRG, should create a SCR Panel, by identifying and communicating with potential members drawn from SAB member

organisations and other agencies/organisations as appropriate. Depending upon the circumstances of the case, it may be necessary to seek the involvement of a specialist professional, (e.g. adult psychiatry, substance misuse) and ask them to join the SCR Panel.

- 6.3 Agencies represented on SAB have been asked to provide a list of people who might be in a position to serve on such a review panel. The agency SCR Panel member should not be the same person who compiles the individual Agency management report, and if possible should be drawn from a different operational area or division of the Agency to that which has had the direct contact with the vulnerable adult.
- 6.4 Once agreed, the Chair of the SCRG should write (Letter C) to confirm the individual's role on the SCR Panel and (where relevant) provide them with a copy of the initial letter to their Chief Executive (Letter B). The SCR Panel member should be asked to monitor their agency's progress in respect of the instigation of their Individual Management Review.
- 6.5 The Chair of the SCRG, in consultation with members of the SCRG, should identify, approach and appoint an Independent Person, (drawn from a list of those previously approved) to act as the Chair of the Panel and as the Overview Report Writer. Alternatively the Independent chair of the SCR Panel and the Independent report writer could be two separate people. (Standard contracts need to be devised for this purpose). The Independent Chairs and Report Writers will be accountable in the first instance to the Chair of the SCRG for the quality of their work and the need to keep to timeframes for completion of the particular Review. If the Independent Person is to be the Overview Report Writer only, they will still maintain a key role in providing the independent perspective to the Panel, although a Chair will need to be appointed, potentially from the membership of the SCRG.
- 6.6 The SCGR should identify if the SCR will need to take account of any outstanding criminal proceedings or other legal circumstances, and make recommendations to the SCR Panel accordingly.
- 6.7 The date for the first SCR Panel meeting should be convened – it will need to take place approximately 10 working days after the deadline for the return of the Individual Management Reviews.

7 Completing the Serious Case Review

7.1 The First SCR Panel Meeting

- 7.1.1 At a minimum of 5 working days prior to the first meeting of the SCR Panel, the members and the Independent Author will need to have received copies of each of the completed Individual Management Reviews, as well as an Amalgamated Chronology.
- 7.1.2 This will provide the material for the first Panel meeting, whose main purpose will be to: -
- Collate and analyse the detailed information and findings from the Individual Management Reviews, and in the light of this to: -
 - Confirm/agree the Terms of Reference and time period for the SCR
 - Identify if any further information is needed or other reports need commissioning.

(A standard Agenda for the first SCR Panel meeting is attached as Appendix 6)

- 7.1.3 Different options may be employed in order to separately consider the Individual Management Reviews e.g. – The author of each report could be formally invited to attend the meeting (at appropriate intervals), to individually present their report, and for the SCR Panel to ask any questions for clarification.

Or alternatively,

Each member of the SCR Panel could take responsibility for summarising their Agency's respective Report in order to generate further analysis,

- 7.1.4 By the end of the first Panel meeting, there should have been sufficient examination, discussion, and analysis of the SCR information, for the Independent Report writer to be able to go away and complete the first draft of the Overview Report. A deadline will be given for its completion and a date agreed for when it will be forwarded to the Panel.

7.2 The Second SCR Panel Meeting

- 7.2.1 At a minimum of 5 working days prior to the second meeting of the SCR Panel, the members will need to have received a copy of the Draft Overview Report from the Independent Author.
- 7.2.2 The main purpose of the meeting will be to consider and examine the draft Overview Report in detail, in order to ensure that it reflects the factual

background, analysis and discussion from the previous meeting, taken from the material within the Individual Management Reviews. The draft report will also need to reflect any relevant independent perspectives regarding the management of the case, developed by the Independent Report writer, and agreed by the Panel.

(A standard Agenda for the second SCR Panel Meeting is attached as Appendix 6)

- 7.2.4 By the end of this Panel meeting, there should have been sufficient examination, discussion, and analysis of the Draft Overview Report, for the Independent Report writer to consider and complete the final draft of the Overview Report, including the recommendations.
- 7.2.5 Unless there are incomplete pieces of work which may affect the detail of the final draft report (such as plans to seek views from family members, or some pertinent pieces of information have not been received), agreement will need to be reached for a deadline for the final draft report to be completed.
- 7.2.6 The final draft of the Overview Report will then be circulated to the members of the SCR Panel on the date agreed, for the members to ensure that it reflects the discussions from the recent meeting and includes changes which were proposed at the time. The SCR Panel members will be given approximately 10 working days to respond to the final draft report.
- 7.2.7 The Independent Report writer will then again revise the Overview Report in the light of the individual responses from the panel members and produce a Final Overview Report within an agreed time frame. If there is disparity among the panel members in respect of the content of the Report, there will need to be further circulation of the details of the discrepancies to try to achieve a consensus, and if necessary for the Independent Author, in conjunction with the SCRG Chair, to recommend the most appropriate conclusion. On rare occasions, a further meeting of the SCR Panel may be required.
- 7.2.8 Throughout the process the SCRG, via the Chair, should monitor the progress of the SCR via updates from the Independent Chair/Report Writer.
- 7.2.9 The final Overview Report and an Executive Summary will be presented to the SCRG Chair to enable the SCRG to formally accept the report, inform the SAB Chair accordingly, and to then arrange for the Executive Summary to be presented to the next SAB Meeting. The SAB Chair will need to make decisions in respect of who should receive copies of the

Overview Report, although as a minimum these should be forwarded to the Chief Executives of the agencies who compiled Individual Management Reviews.

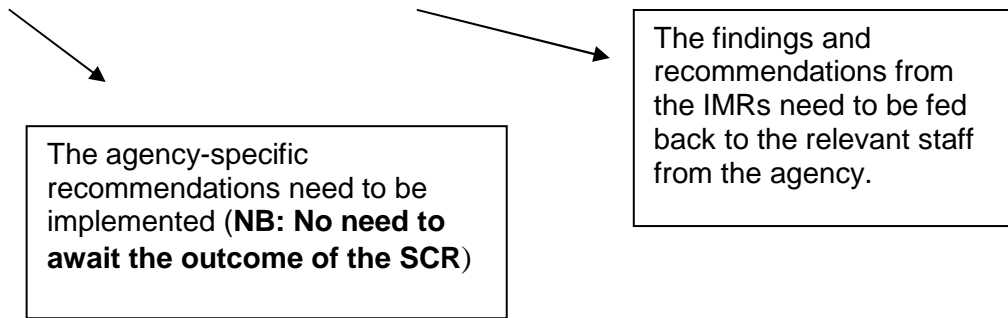
- 7.2.10 The SAB will need to formally accept the SCR via the Executive Summary and also potentially via a presentation at the SAB meeting by the SCRG Chair and/or the Independent Chair of the SCR Panel. Any recommended final revisions should be referred back to the SCRP for their action.
- 7.2.11 This work should be completed within 6 months of the initial decision to commission a SCR, unless an alternative time-scale is agreed at the outset. If at a later stage the complexity of a case means that this time-scale will have to be extended, this should be agreed with the Chair of the SCRG.

(A Flow Chart of the progress of a Serious Case Review is detailed in Appendix 2)

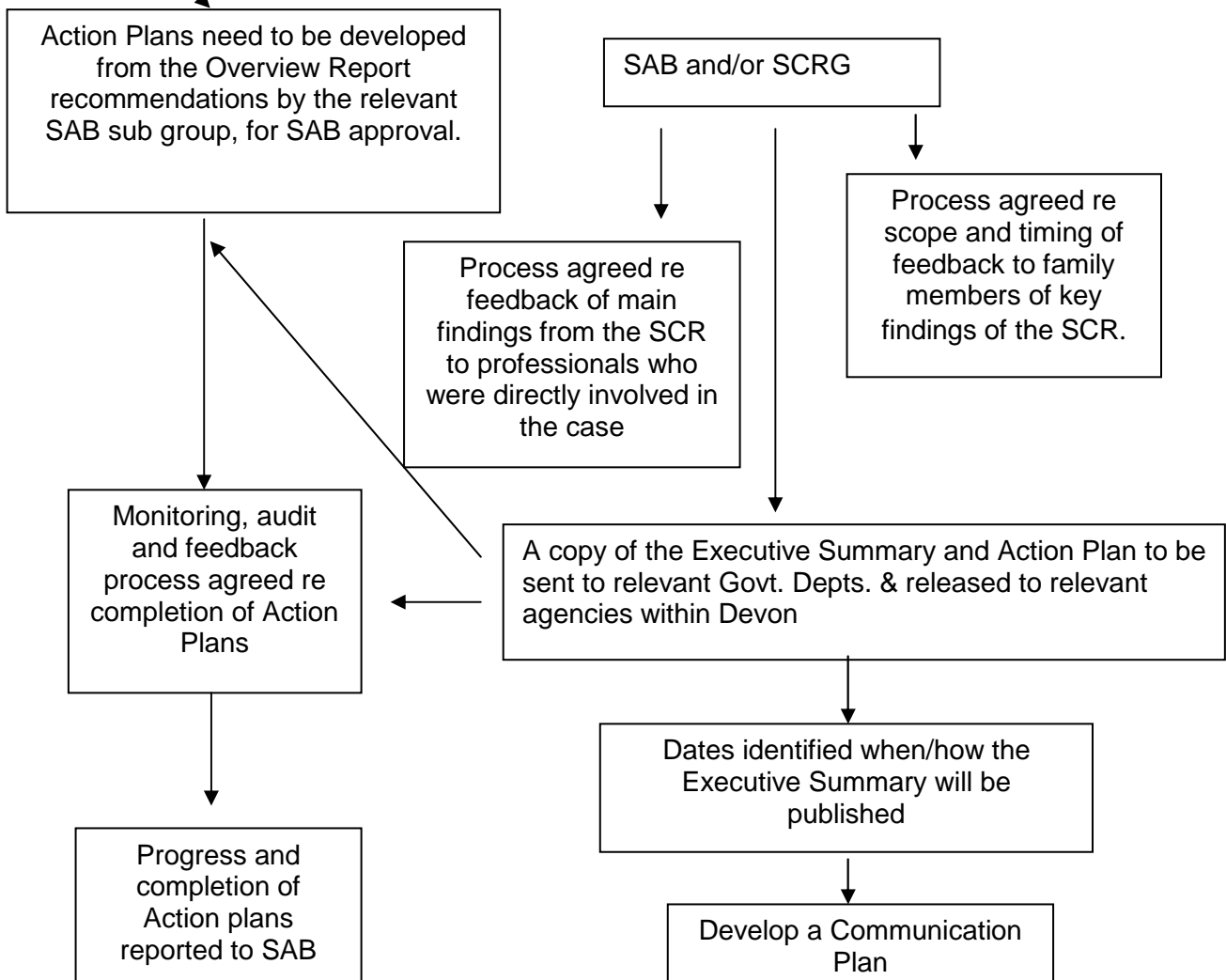
8. Dissemination and Learning

The only real value of the completion of a Serious Case Review is that relevant professional lessons are learnt and that local multi agency safeguarding practice is improved.

The Individual Management Reviews are stand alone documents and should lead to individual actions by the respective Agency: -



The Overview Report



Appendix 1 – SCR Referral Form

Referred to the Devon Safeguarding Adults Board Requesting a Serious Case Review

The format for requesting a serious case review **must** include a summary of information based on the criteria set-out below.

The completed request must be sent in the first instance, under **confidential cover** to the Chair of the SAB Serious Case Review Group.

Email to: Angela O'Reilly@devon.gov.uk

By Post to: Angela O'Reilly, Chair of the SAB Serious Case Review Group at The Annexe, County Hall, Topsham Road, Exeter EX2 4QD,

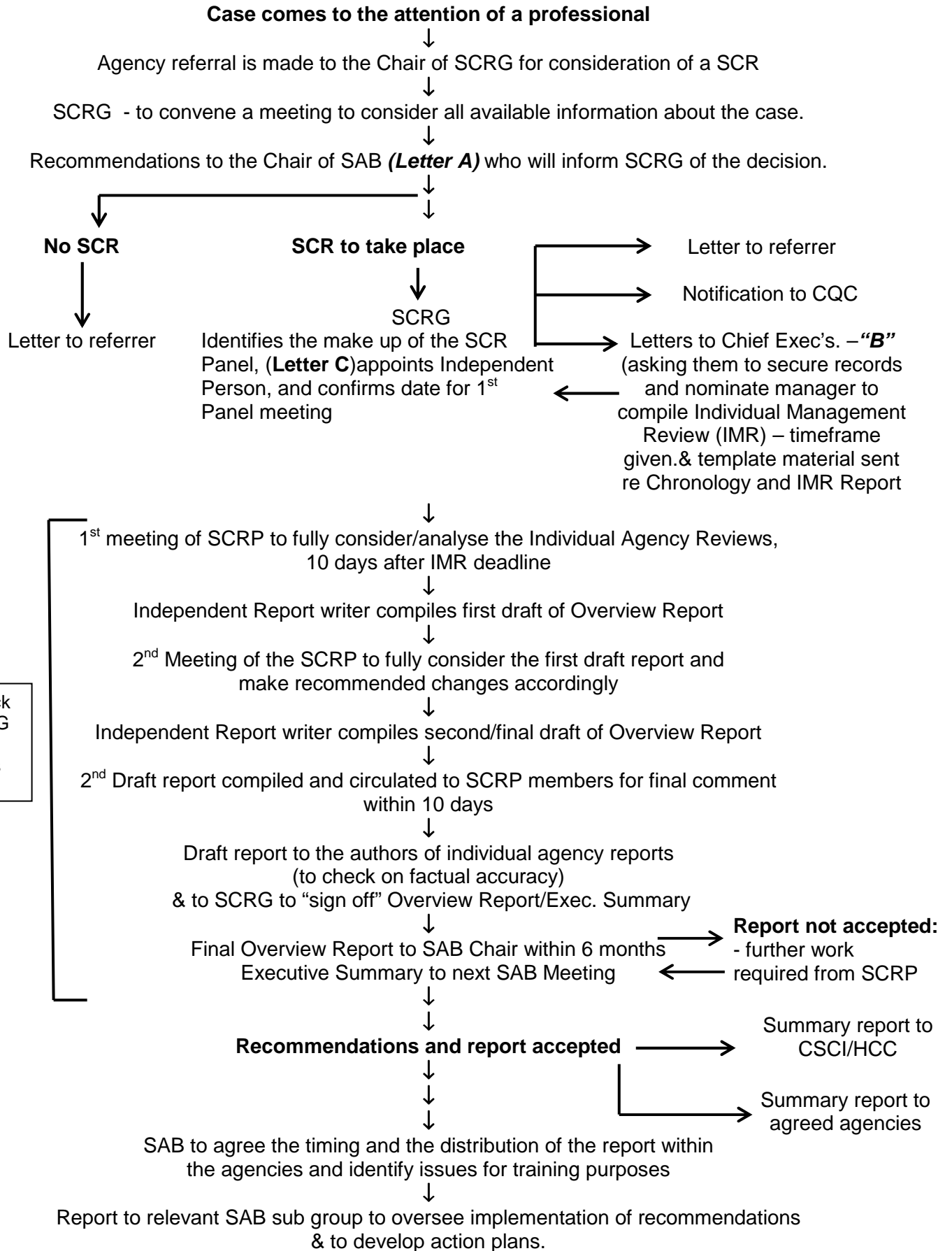
All requests will be assessed by the SAB Serious Case Review Group in accordance with the Devon SAB Guidance for conducting Serious Case Reviews.

Content of the report:

1. Name of the person submitting the request for a serious case review.
2. Position/designation of person making the request.
3. Agency/Organisation of the person making request (if applicable).
4. Contact details, to include address, telephone number, fax and e-mail.
5. Brief details of the safeguarding adults issue to include:
 - The name(s) and date of birth of the victim(s) (if known)
 - Name of any service provider involved.
 - Local Authority involved in the safeguarding adults case
 - Name of the Safeguarding Adults Responsible Manager and or the chair of any Strategy meeting or safeguarding adults Case Conference (if known)
 - Details of why, in the person's opinion, the case meets the case review criteria and guidelines contained in paragraph 3 of the protocol.

Please note that the report should not exceed two sides of A4 paper. If any additional information is required you will be contacted.

Appendix 2 – Flow Chart re Completing a Serious Case Review



Appendix 3 - Functions of the Serious Case Review Group

1. Making the recommendation to initiate a Serious Case Review

This will be done via the collation of initial available information in respect of the background of the case and the circumstances that led to the adult death/serious injury, and sharing this with available members of the SCRG. Recommendations for a SCR will be in line with Section 3 and Paragraph 5.2 of the Devon SAB Guidance for Conducting Serious Case Reviews.

2. Determining the provisional scope of the SCR including the time period for the SCR and which agencies should contribute to the SCR.

There will be a need to identify all the agencies who have known or worked with the vulnerable adult. Based on information known about the circumstances of the case, then initial terms of reference and timeframes should be identified for the SCR, and the agencies informed accordingly via Letter B.

3. Establishing the SCR Panel, the Independent Chair/Overview Report Writer & commissioning the Individual Management Reviews & to set date for the first SCR Panel meeting.

Ensure that Letter B is sent by the SAB Chair to the respective Chief Executive/Officer of the agencies that have had involvement with the vulnerable adult. (Paragraph 5.3) There will be a need to identify the most appropriate agency representatives to form the SCR Panel and make contact to request their involvement – Letter C to be sent. (Paragraphs 6.2-6.4) Identify and seek the involvement of an appropriate Independent Chair/Report Writer. (6.5)

4. Monitoring the progress of Serious Case Reviews.

The Independent Chair/Report Writer will be responsible to the SCRG Chair for their work on the SCR. The Chair will need to seek/receive updates re the progress of the SCR and present these at respective SCRG meetings in order for the SCRG to monitor and if necessary comment on the progress of the SCR.

5. Following up on recommendations of previous SCRs

The SCRG is responsible for ensuring the implementation of the overview report recommendations and for ensuring that action plans are attached to

the recommendations and are monitored accordingly. The SCRG will feedback to the SAB on the implementation of the recommendations and action plan.

SCRG will formally 'close' the case 12 months after the publication of the final overview report and will write to SAB giving details of any recommendations still requiring action. Further action on the outstanding recommendations will then become the responsibility of SAB.

6. Making a quarterly report to SAB.

This will be in relation to the work undertaken by the SCRG, including SCRs conducted or in the process of being completed, and any issues associated with the work of the SCRG that require the attention of the SAB.

7. Ensuring that systems are in place for the effective completion of SCRs and to develop and alter templates and formats as necessary.

Based on the completion of SCRs, the SCRG should periodically review this Guidance and related processes to ensure that the most effective and efficient systems are in place to support the successful and timely completion of SCRs.

Appendix 4 - Function of the Serious Case Review Panel

1. Confirming the scope of the Serious Case Review

The SCR Panel should review the terms of reference, in the light of the facts available, in each case. Relevant issues include:

- Confirm the appropriateness of the time period to be reviewed - how far back should enquiries cover, and what is the cut-off point?
- Are there any additional agencies or professionals who should contribute to the SCR, who have not so far been commissioned to complete an Individual Management Review? and should any contribution be sought from parties not represented at SAB (e.g. housing provider)?
- How should family members be informed or involved, and who should make any initial approach to them? (bearing in mind that the family has been bereaved and may already be involved in criminal or coroners' enquiries.)
- Are there features of the case which indicate that the SCR should involve, or be conducted by, a party independent of the professionals/agencies who will be participating in the review, such as an outside expert?
- Is there a need to involve agencies/professionals in other SAB areas, and who should approach them with the request?
- Is there a need to liaise with the Coroner or the Crown Prosecution Service?
- Will there be any other parallel review of practice, such as a mental health, homicide or suicide enquiry, and if so, how can the reviews be co-ordinated to avoid duplication?
- How should any family, public or media interest be handled? – appropriate recommendations to be made to the SAB in respect of this.
- Does the SAB need to obtain independent legal advice about any aspect of the proposed SCR?

2. Analysis and examination of Individual Management Reviews.

Individual agency reports are provided for the purpose of producing SAB's Overview Report. The information should not be used for any other purpose or passed to any other person without the consent of the report provider (who may also have to seek the consent of the professionals who provided the information).

The full consideration of the factual and analysis components of the Individual Management Reviews is a key task of the SCR Panel, and if there are

concerns about insufficient information or the quality of analysis in these reports, then the matter should be urgently referred back to the respective Agency to ensure this is rectified. At the final draft stage of the Overview Report, the report should be shared with the authors involved in preparing the Individual Management Reviews, to check for factual accuracy.

3. Producing the Overview Report

The overview report should bring together the relevant information and analysis contained in the individual agency reports, together with any reports commissioned from other parties. The following format is suggested, although details may need to be changed depending on the nature of the case.

Introduction

- Summary of circumstances leading to the SCR.
- Terms of reference.
- List of contributors to the SCR, panel members and author(s) of the overview report.

The Facts

- Acknowledgement of and reference to any issues relating to disability or ethnic/religious diversity.
- Integrated chronology of involvement with the vulnerable adult by all relevant professionals, noting each occasion when the vulnerable adult was seen and the vulnerable adults views or wishes sought or expressed.
- Summary of the relevant information known to the agencies involved about the vulnerable adult and their circumstances.

Analysis

- A consideration of how and why events occurred, decisions were made and actions taken or not. There may be comment as to whether, in the panel's view, different decisions or actions may have led to an alternative course of events. The analysis section may also be able to highlight examples of good practice. The analysis should be structured so as to reflect the terms of reference of the SCR

Conclusions and Recommendations

- Summary of the lessons to be learned from the case, and the panel's recommendations for action.
- Recommendations should include, but not be limited to, the recommendations made in the individual agency reports. Recommendations should be few in number, focused and specific, and capable of being implemented.

4. The Executive Summary

The Executive Summary should contain a précis of the Case Review Process, the Case Details, Key findings, and the Recommendations from the Serious Case Review. Care should be taken to ensure that the details of the family cannot be identified from the Executive Summary. This document should be made available to the public via the communications strategy developed by the SAB.

5. Presenting the Overview Report/Executive Summary to SAB

As soon as possible after completion of the Overview Report, which will need to have been "signed off" by the SCRG, the Overview Report and Executive Summary should be forwarded to the Chair of SAB, who will need to make a decision regarding who will need to receive copies of the Overview Report.

The Report should then be presented to the next full meeting of the SAB. It is most likely that the Executive Summary will be sufficient for the purposes of the SAB meeting. The Author of the report and the Chair of the SCRG should attend this meeting in order to present the report and to respond to any queries from the Committee. After the SAB has approved the report, discussion should take place on circulation of the report, and on the mechanism for taking forward the Panel's recommendations. There should be feedback from SCRG to subsequent meetings of SAB on the implementation of the recommendations

SCRG will formally 'close' the case 12 months after the publication of the final Overview Report and will write to SAB giving details of any recommendations still requiring action. Further action on the outstanding recommendations will then become the responsibility of SAB.

Appendix 5 - The Role of Safeguarding Adults Board

The agenda for the meeting in which a Serious Case Review is to be tabled should be as follows:

- Introduction to the report by the Chair of the SCRG and Independent Chair of SCR Panel.
- Reading through the report in order to answer any questions from SAB members.
- Detailed consideration of the recommendations in order to enable the relevant sub group of the SAB to produce an action plan and timetable.
- Decision on distribution of Overview Report or Executive Summary as appropriate, to different bodies or individuals.
- Decision on arrangements for feedback to staff, family members or others closely involved in the case.
- Decision on handling any media interest.
- Agree a time-scale and method for review of implementation of the recommendations.

The SAB may wish to refer some of these items to SCRG for more detailed consideration.

The Chair of SAB will then ensure that a copy of the Executive Summary report and action plan, is sent to CQC.

The Overview report will be circulated to the Chief Officers of all the relevant agencies highlighting the recommendations for their individual agency and asking them to ensure implementation within their own agency.

If implementation of the recommendations cannot be resolved by SAB there may need to be discussion with the CQC about the reasons for this.

SAB will receive a regular report from SCRG (or other relevant SAB Sub Group) on progress with implementation of the recommendations, to include a final report 12 months after publication of the overview report. If there are any outstanding recommendations after 12 months, responsibility for ensuring action will revert to SAB.

Appendix 6

1st Meeting

Serious Case Review Panel On:

Date:

Time:

Venue:

Apologies:

Proposed Agenda

1. Introductions
2. Brief outline of case to be reviewed
3. Presentation/Analysis of the Individual Management Reviews
4. Review Terms of Reference and scope of review
5. Involvement of family / other parties
6. Consideration of any parallel investigations or proceedings in this case
7. Agree any further steps/actions
8. Agree date for circulation of 1st draft of the Overview Report
9. Date of next meeting (minimum of 5 working days following circulation of the Draft Report)

NB: Members should have available copies of local Safeguarding Adults procedures and SCR procedures including the flowchart.

Appendix 6

2nd Meeting

Serious Case Review Panel On:

Date:

Time:

Venue:

Apologies:

Proposed Agenda

1. Introductions/Apologies for absence
2. Minutes of previous meeting of Panel
3. Matters arising from meeting
4. Draft Overview Report
 - a. Introduction
 - b. The Facts
 - c. Analysis
5. Confirm/Develop Recommendations
6. Identify any outstanding actions/tasks
7. Agree timeframe for completion of Final Draft
8. Agree process for Panel approval of Final Draft
9. Date for presentation to SAB

Appendix 7

Serious Case Reviews

Guidance for the Completion of Individual Management Reviews

Once a decision has been made by the Chair of the SAB that a Serious Case Review is to be undertaken, if your organisation has had knowledge or contact with the vulnerable adult, there will be a formal request for all records pertaining to work with the vulnerable adult to be secured – a senior manager will need to ensure that this is undertaken.

The Role of the **Serious Case Review Group** (SCRG) and that of the **Serious Case Review Panel** (SCRCP) is contained on pages 14 & 16 of the Devon document “Functions of the Serious Case Review Group”

The Individual Management Review (IMR)

Each Organisation that is required to complete an IMR will need to: -

- Appoint a senior manager from within your organisation (or an independent person) to undertake the task of completing your IMR and compiling the relevant report for the SCRCP. This manager should not have been directly concerned with the vulnerable adult, or be the immediate line manager of the practitioners involved.
- Ensure that all relevant files are secured and made available to the organisation IMR report writer.
- Ensure that IMR report writers are allocated adequate resources (time, admin support) to complete their report within the required timescales. It is imperative that timescales are adhered to in order that the role and actions of the agencies involved with the family can collectively be reviewed by the SCRCP.
- Make available to the IMR Report Writer, the Chronology template and the IMR template, (which would have already been forwarded to your organisation) which must be used for the compilation of the IMR. Further guidance is contained within these templates.
- Ensure that any staff involved with the vulnerable adult should be given the opportunity to discuss their understanding of what has happened. It is essential that support and counselling be offered, given the possible serious impact on the professionals involved. Staff should also be given a copy of

the leaflet on Serious Case Reviews. Support should be ongoing and reviewed regularly by the line manager.

- To consider whether there is any evidence at this stage for a disciplinary investigation (See below)

Role of Individual Management Review report writer

- The report writer, having reviewed the files, should then be aware of the members of staff who have been involved in the case. The staff members, through their line manager, should already be aware that a serious case review is being undertaken.
- Even if the report writer is satisfied that the files contain all the relevant information he/she should meet with the professionals from their organisation who have had recent or relevant involvement with the vulnerable adult. This should be arranged in consultation with their line manager. The report writer should ascertain, in consultation with the line manager, that the member of staff is receiving or has received the appropriate support in relation to that member's own welfare.
- This meeting should give the report writer the opportunity to check with the member of staff the factual accuracy of the details of the chronology. It will also be an opportunity for staff to identify any lessons they consider can be learnt from their own and their organisation's involvement. A written record of the interview should be made and should be shared with the interviewee.
- The purpose of the IMR is to look openly and critically at individual and organisational practice, to see whether the case indicates that changes could or should be made and, if so, to identify how those changes will be brought about.
- The IMR report writer should complete the Chronology and Report on the relevant template, and a copy should be sent to the Senior Manager in their organisation for their acceptance on behalf of the organisation, before it is forwarded to the Chair of the Serious Review Group by the deadline specified, who will arrange for it to be forwarded to the Chair of SCRP. The Senior Manager within the organisation will be responsible for ensuring that the recommendations contained within the IMR are acted on.

NB. If the report writer has any difficulty in carrying out the above tasks then he/she should contact either the Chair of the SCRG or of the SCRCP.

Criminal proceedings

There may be a criminal investigation running concurrently with the Serious Case Review. In situations where there may be conflict between the two processes, the criminal investigation takes precedence although this should not delay the work being undertaken in respect of the Serious Case Review. In such cases, management report writers will be advised by the SCRCP of any necessary changes to the above guidance.

Other review processes

Some cases may be subject to other forms of review, for example a critical incident review or a homicide review. In this situation organisation report writers are advised to contact the other reviewers to avoid duplication and to ensure a coherent approach to each review.

Disciplinary action

If an organisation decides at any stage of this process that disciplinary proceedings need to be initiated then the line manager will need to discuss with the report writer the appropriateness of proceeding with a discussion with the relevant staff members in relation to the review.

If the report writer comes across information which he/she considers is a matter which needs to be investigated under disciplinary procedures then this should be brought immediately to the attention of the individual's line manager/senior manager.

Appendix 8 – Standard Letter A

Chair
Devon Safeguarding Adults Board

Ref:
Date: 2008

Dear

Re: Serious Case Review Group – *name of vulnerable adult*

The Serious Case Review group has considered this case to see whether it meets the criteria to initiate a serious case review. Please see the attached paper. The group feels that this case does / does not meet the criteria to commence a serious case review.

We would be grateful for your decision.

Yours sincerely

**Chair
Serious Case Review Group**

Enc.

Appendix 8 – Standard Letter B

Strictly Confidential – requires urgent attention

Ref:

Date: 2008

Dear

Re: Serious Case Review *Vulnerable Adult Name, DOB and Address*

A decision has been made that the above named vulnerable adult is to be made subject to a Serious Case Review.

As Chair of the Devon Safeguarding Adults Board I am writing to formally request that you take action to ensure that your agency files in respect of the above named vulnerable adult are immediately secured to guard against potential loss or interference, and to enable the Serious Case Review process to commence. (*Insert may be needed here re detailing records that are affected – e.g. HV records, GP notes etc*)

Would you please identify a manager (or independent person) of sufficient seniority and experience to undertake your Internal Management Review as required under paragraphs 8.21 – 8.27 of “Working Together”. The manager appointed should have had no line management relationship with practitioners working with the vulnerable adult or any direct contact themselves with the vulnerable adult. I would be obliged if you forward me the name and contact details of this person as soon as possible.

The purpose of this Serious Case Review is to establish whether there are any issues in relation to interagency working under the local adult protection procedures and any lessons to be learned, and to achieve this, each agency that has had involvement with the family is required to look openly and critically at their professional practice with the vulnerable adult.

I have attached information and a template relating to the Individual Agency Management Reports and in relation to the Chronology which your agency is required to complete. I would be obliged if you would please ensure that this material is forwarded to your Review manager. I am also enclosing the relevant Appendix 7 from the Devon Guidance for Serious Case Reviews to further clarify the process required of your organisation in respect of the completion of Individual Management Reviews.

Cont../2

Cont..2

The chronology will apply for the period ____ to ____ in relation to the following: (Names and dob)

The findings from the individual management review should be agreed and accepted by yourself as the Senior Officer in the organisation who has responsibility for ensuring that the recommendations are acted upon.

It is most important that The Serious Case Review Panel receive your Agency's report by _____ in order for this Serious Case Review to be completed within government guidelines. I am sure you will appreciate that if there is delay by one of the Agencies within this process, this will seriously compromise the Panel's ability to provide a multidisciplinary Overview Report, and will therefore impact upon our ability to learn important professional practice issues locally. It is important that in undertaking this work, that the SAB can demonstrate a robust and timely process.

Thank you for your assistance in this important matter. I would be obliged if you would send your Individual Management Review to the Chair of the Serious Case Review Group whose contact details are given below.

Yours sincerely

**Chair
Safeguarding Adults Board**

Appendix 8 – Standard Letter C

Ref:
Date: 2008

Dear

Re: Serious Case Review – Details

I am writing to request/confirm that you will be able to serve as a member of the Serious Case Review Panel in respect of the above named adult.

The minimal expectation is that you are able to attend two meetings (probably 1 ½ day time commitment) and will be able to scrutinise SCR documents and reports before, in between, and after these meetings.

I am attaching a copy of the letter sent to the Chief Executive of your Agency informing him/her of the Serious Case Review and the need to commission the completion of an Individual Management Review. As part of your role on the SCR Panel, it would be helpful if you would help monitor the progress of this Individual Management Review and give advice and support where necessary to help ensure that the timeframes for completing the report are met.

Further details of other members of the Panel will be sent to you in due course along with the dates for the first meeting and the overall timeframe for the Serious Case Review.

Yours sincerely,

Chair
Serious Case Review Group

Appendix 10 – Template – Individual Management Review

Safeguarding Adults Serious Case Review Individual Management Review

Name of Agency: _____

Name of vulnerable adult(s) _____

DOB: _____

DOD (if applicable): _____

Name, agency and contact details of person completing chronology and management review:

1. Factual/Contextual Summary

Provide a brief factual and contextual summary of your Agency's involvement with the vulnerable adult for the time period identified for this Serious Case Review.

Factual Summary of Agency Involvement

2. Chronology of Agency Involvement

This will need to be completed on the Chronology Template provided

What was your Agency's involvement with this vulnerable adult and/or alleged perpetrator(s)?

Construct a comprehensive chronology of involvement by your agency and/or professional(s) in contact with the vulnerable adult and/or alleged perpetrator(s) over the period of time set out in the review's terms of reference.

Where abbreviations are used, please provide a glossary at the back of this document to explain them. Would you also please identify in Appendix A, the details of the professionals from within your agency who were involved with the vulnerable adult and/or alleged perpetrator(s), and whether they were interviewed or not for the purposes of this Internal Management Review.

3. Analysis of Involvement

Consider the events that occurred, the decisions made, and the actions taken or not. Where judgements were made, or actions taken, which indicate that practice or management could be

improved, try to get an understanding not only of what happened, but why. Please use the template provided, and if one section does not apply to your agency then identify that this is the case in the appropriate box. Otherwise try to respond to the questions as fully as possible, clarifying the evidence for your views where applicable. Consider specifically:

Were practitioners sensitive to the needs of the vulnerable adult in their work, knowledgeable about potential indicators of abuse or neglect, and about what to do if they had concerns about a vulnerable adult?

Did the agency have in place policies and procedures for Safeguarding Adults and acting on concerns about their welfare?

What were the key relevant points/ opportunities for assessment and decision making in this case in relation to the vulnerable adult and/or alleged perpetrator(s)? Do assessments and decisions appear to have been reached in an informed and professional way?

Did action accord with assessments and decisions made? Were appropriate services offered/provided, or relevant enquiries made, in the light of assessments?

Where relevant, were appropriate Safeguarding Adults or care plans in place, reviewing processes complied with?

When, and in what way, were the vulnerable adult's wishes and feelings ascertained and considered? Was this information recorded?

Was practice sensitive to the racial, cultural, linguistic and religious identity of the vulnerable adult?

Were more senior managers, or other agencies and professionals, involved at points where they should have been?

Was the work in this case consistent with agency and SAB policy and procedures for protecting vulnerable adults, and wider professional standards?

Additionally: -

Are there any particular features of this case, or issues surrounding the death or injury of the vulnerable adult, that you consider require further comment in respect of your Agency's involvement.

What do we learn from this case?

Are there lessons from this case for the way in which this agency works to protect vulnerable adults and promote their welfare?

Is there good practice to highlight, as well as ways in which practice can be improved?

Are there implications for ways of working; training (single and inter-agency); management and supervision; working in partnership with other agencies; resources?

Recommendations for action

What action should be taken by your Agency, by whom, and by when?

What outcomes should these actions bring about?

How will the agency review whether they have been achieved?

Finally:

Any other comments or information that you wish the Serious Case Review Panel to consider?

Appendix A – Individual Management Review**(Agency) Professionals Involved**

Name	Designation	Dates/Period Of Involvement	Type of Involvement	Interview Yes/No	Interview Date

Appendix B – Individual Management Review

Please list all source documents you have used in completing your Individual Management Review.

Serious Case Review Pathway

REQUEST FOR SERIOUS CASE REVIEW (SCR) TO SERIOUS CASE REVIEW GROUP FROM:

- SA investigation Chair*
- SA investigation participant*
- Any member of public or professional

*** Duty to request SCR if the criteria appears to be met - see SCR protocol for criteria**

