

**EAST SUSSEX SAFEGUARDING CHILDREN PARTNERSHIP**

**(ESSCP)**

**LAY MEMBERS**

1. **ROLE OF LAY MEMBERS**

The role of Lay Members is to act as an ambassador and to build stronger ties between the East Sussex Safeguarding Children Partnership (ESSCP), and local community by making the work of the ESSCP more transparent.

Lay Members should support the work of the Board by:

* Encouraging people living in East Sussex to become involved in child safety issues
* Helping people living in East Sussex to understand the work of the ESSCP.
* Ensuring that plans and procedures put in place by the ESSCP are available to the public
* Assisting the development of links between the ESSCP and community groups in East Sussex

Lay Members will be expected to attend all Board meetings, and they may also attend other ESSCP meetings. They should ensure they read and understand documents, and contribute to the decisions and policies made by the Board.

1. **JOB DESCRIPTION**

The main duties will be to:

* + attend and contribute to ESSCP Board meetings, preparing for the meetings by reading the papers in advance; and participate in relevant sub groups if appropriate;
  + attend training arranged by the Board;
  + support stronger public engagement in local children’s safeguarding, and contribute to an improved understanding of the ESSCP’s child protection work in the wider community;
  + challenge the ESSCP on the accessibility by the public and children and young people, of its plans and procedures;
  + help to make links between the ESSCP and community groups
  + maintain independence and provide constructive challenge to the ESSCP on its work;
  + be willing and able to develop a good understanding of the role of the ESSCP in safeguarding children and young people as well as the needs of all children in East Sussex.

1. **RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION**

Lay Members will be appointed following an interview process and subject to statutory checks and references, including Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check, previously called CRB checks.

They will also be asked to sign a confidentiality agreement before taking up the position.

1. **PERSON SPECIFICATION**

Essential:

* Commitment to improving safeguarding outcomes for children and young people
* Able to maintain confidentiality appropriate to the circumstances and local protocols
* An ability to communicate effectively within meetings
* Confidence to ask questions and constructively challenge the views and assumptions of senior professionals
* An awareness of, and commitment to, equality and diversity
* To live within East Sussex

Desirable:

* An understanding of working with children or young people
* Experience or knowledge of child protection or safeguarding issues
* An interest in community and social issues, preferably with a track record of involvement locally

1. **INDEPENDENCE OF THE LAY MEMBER**

Lay Members should be independent of local agencies in order to be able to scrutinise and challenge practice.

They should not have been an employee of any agency represented on the Board for at least 2 years.

Lay Members should declare if they are related to an employee of any agency represented on the Board. For these purposes related means by marriage/civil partnership, or a member of the same household.

1. **INDUCTION, TRAINING, AND SUPPORT**

Information will be given to Lay Members about the role and responsibilities of other Board members, with written information provided.

There will be an opportunity to observe a Board meeting prior to becoming a member.

Lay members will be expected to attend basic interagency safeguarding children training within the first three months of appointment, with the identification of further learning and development needs.

A “Buddying” arrangement will be in place for each Lay Member, which will involve meeting with a member of the Board before and/or after each meeting to prepare and de-brief if necessary. Lay Members will also be supported by the ESSCP Business Manager.

1. **CONFIDENTIALITY**

All written and verbal information given to Lay Members in the course of their duties is strictly confidential. Lay Members are required to sign a written agreement, before taking up their appointment, to confirm that all information they receive will remain confidential. Lay Members are expected to keep all written information in a secure place.

1. **CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

Lay Members should consider any conflicts of interest in relation to the Board agenda items. A potential conflict arises if an interest may be seen to affect adversely a Lay Member’s capacity to act without prejudice or preference in a matter. There may be a personal interest or connection which would require the Lay Member to refrain from participation. In the case of a potential conflict of interest where advice is required, Lay Members should discuss this with the ESSCP Chair or Business Manager.

1. **DIVERSITY AND EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES**

We are anxious to address under-representation and would welcome applications from all sections of the community.

1. **TIME COMMITMENT**

Lay Members will be required to attend meetings every three months and read background material between meetings. However, non attendance at ESSCP Board meetings (currently held four times a year) without good reason may be grounds for terminating the appointment. Lay Members may also attend sub-groups and be involved in particular projects or initiatives as required.

Meetings take place within normal working hours and are generally held during school term time.

1. **TERM OF APPOINTMENT**

Lay Members will be appointed to the ESSCP for a term of two years, with an annual review. After this period, further work will be considered, subject to the review and the best interests of the ESSCP.

1. **EXPENSES**

The role is a voluntary one, with expenses such as travel costs and subsistence reimbursed if required.

1. **TERMINATION OF APPOINTMENT OF LAY MEMBERS**

If there are concerns about a Lay Member’s behaviour or ability which cannot be resolved through discussion and correspondence, the ESSCP Chair will decide whether to end the appointment of the Lay Member. The Lay Member will be informed in writing and given clear reasons for the termination of the appointment. The Lay Member will be given the opportunity to respond before a final decision is made by the ESSCP Chair.

1. **DUTY OF CARE**

If during the course of their appointment as a Lay Member to the Board the Lay Member becomes aware of information about a child, young person or family, or service, which causes them concern, they must discuss their concerns with the person with the ESSCP Business Manager or Chair.