



THE ATHENA PROGRAMME

SAFEGUARDING WITH CARE AND CREATIVITY

Safeguarding Students, A Safer Culture and the Students Union

Case Study

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STUDENTS' UNION**



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Student Unions: Positive impact on fulfilling student life



CHARITY COMMISSION
FOR ENGLAND AND WALES

Safer CULTURE

It is a place where people have appropriate attitudes, beliefs & life styles. Where behaviours are appropriate & where the regime & cultural practices are safe.

WHOLE ORGANISATIONAL POLICY & PROCEDURES

Children , young people & adults at risk are valued & have a voice.
All people are treated with dignity & respect

CYP-AatR
Students
Feel Safe

Staff /
Volunteers
Feel Safe



SAFER PROCESSES

SAFER ENVIRONMENTS

SAFER STUDENTS

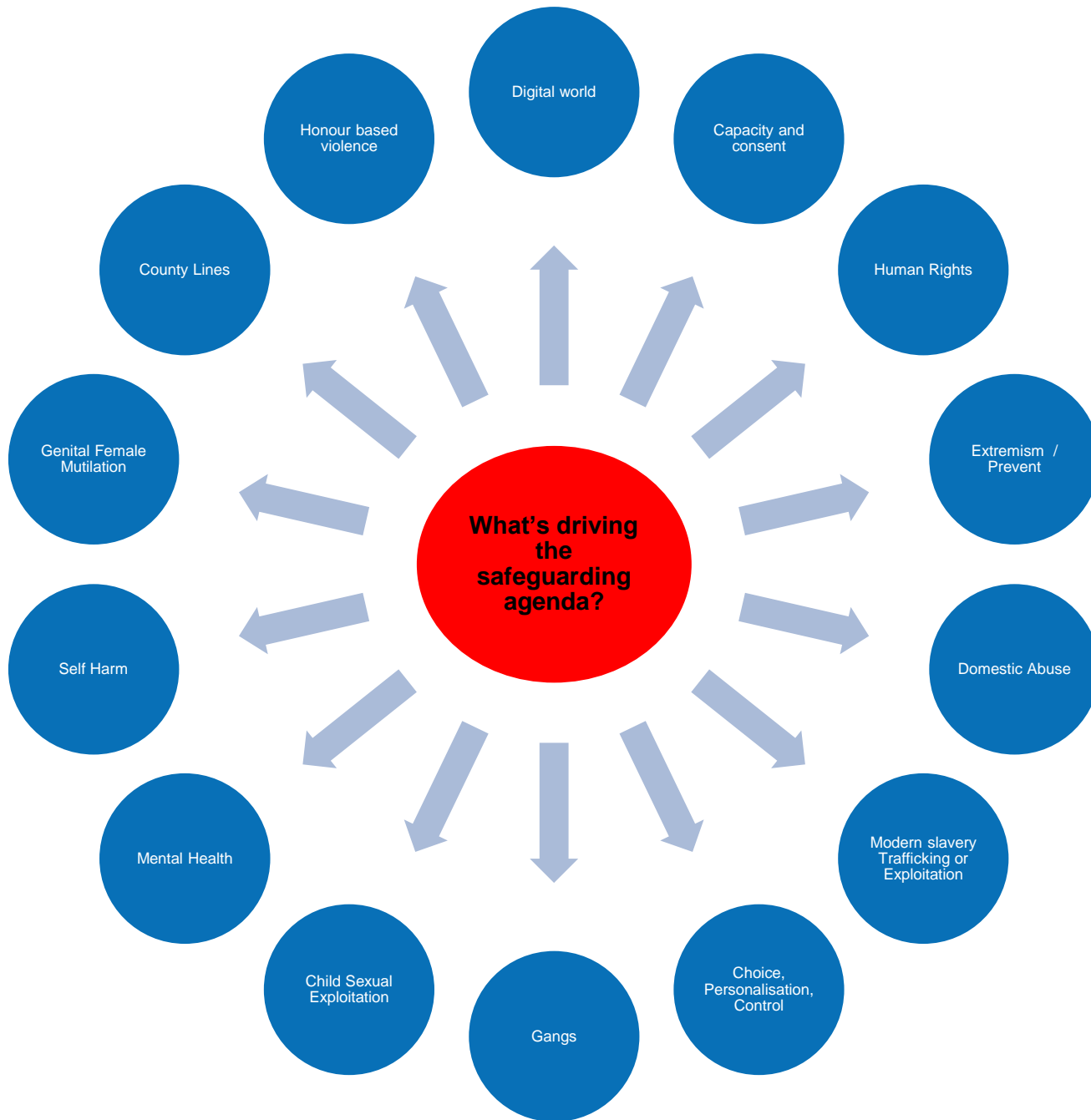
SAFER DELIVERY MODEL

SAFER PRACTICES

SAFER STAFF / VOLUNTEERS

SAFER INFORMATION

SAFER ETHOS



The Challenge

- A number of serious incidents
- Charity Commission National Safeguarding alert review compliance
- Guidance widening the definitions of safeguarding with greater emphasis on **the duty of care.**

Trustees' Charity Law Duties in Relation to Safeguarding

The Commission wants to see that Trustees have:

- **Assessed the safeguarding risks** that might arise from their charity's activities and operations;
- Created, developed and put in place suitable **policies and procedures to handle allegations and incidents**;
- Undertaken **on-going monitoring** to ensure effective implementation of those policies and procedures;
- Taken steps to ensure that both the board and people working within the charity **respond properly when allegations and incidents arise and report as necessary** to the police and other agencies; and
- **Review** policies and procedures both periodically and following serious incidents, using their experience of particular incidents to **manage and minimise the risk of something similar happening again** by making any necessary changes to the charity's policies and procedures.

Independent Review

- SU Board of Trustees and SMT Commission and independent external review



Key Findings:

- Athena identified an existing '**Safety Framework**' between the LUSU and the University that promoted the highest possible standards in safe practice by the University and demonstrated a positive commitment to the safety and wellbeing of all individuals coming into contact with the University.
- The **safeguarding policies were out of date** and did not connect to relevant supportive policies and documents.
- **Site visits** undertaken which included face to face interviews and focus groups (across all areas of activity) **to assess values, attitudes and behaviours.**
- Identified that the **safeguarding governance did not provide the Students' Union with a robust reporting mechanism** at senior management level, with clarity around the expectations of key individuals.
- **No formalised regular monitoring of safeguarding incidents** could be seen, both at Designated Safeguarding Officer level and within the Board structure.
- **Gaps in training** delivery and training recording.

Review Outcomes:

- Governance - Policy and Procedures (reviewed and bespoke new policies and procedures written)
- Whistle blowing
- Designated Safeguarding Lead(s) (identified and in place)
- Safer Recruitment
- Training and Development Programme
- Safeguarding Practices
- Culture of vigilance
- Record Keeping
- Website and Communications plans

Reporting Pathways

- Safeguarding Group – Terms of Reference
- Safeguarding Champion / Safeguarding Names Leads
- Recording system paper and IT audit trail
- Training

Evidence and accountability

Training Programme

- Level 1- 43 individuals trained – includes Lead Trustee, Staff, Student Leaders and Volunteers
- Level 2 – 12 Managers trained
- Level 3 - 6 Designated Safeguarding Officers and Deputies trained
- Train the Trainers – 16 Managers trained to deliver bespoke safeguarding level 1 course
- Briefing for Trustees
- Briefing note - Created for Student Leaders

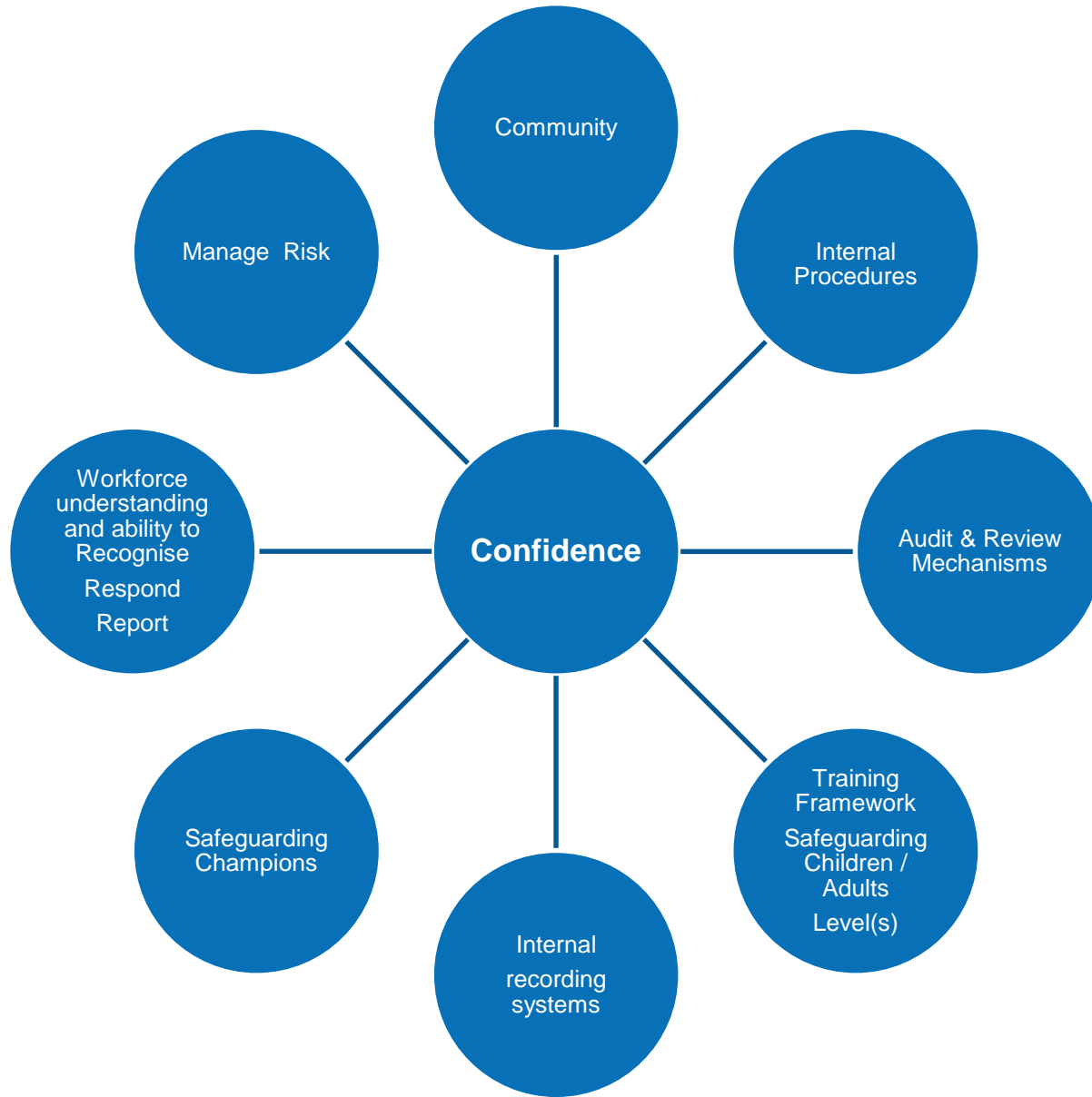
As with all Students' Union's members and student leaders are transient so it is recognised that this work will need to be an on-going priority and continually developed.

Culture changes

- Safeguarding as a 'standing agenda item' on all team meetings including Board meetings to encourage transparency and raise safeguarding as a priority within activity.
- Safeguarding responsibilities is being included in job roles and specifications and commitment to safeguarding is included on all future job advertisements alongside any requirement for DBS checks.
- **Safeguarding development at the Students' Union is that they wanted safeguarding to be about caring for everyone not just about harm thresholds.**
- **They were keen to ensure anyone who needed help or were flagged up as a concern got the help either under a 'duty of care' or as a safeguarding concern.**

Moving forward...

- Cultural: safer approach with the University and Students Union relationship
- Supportive, open, transparency
- Legal Compliance: minimise risk
- Embed policy and procedures, safer practice, audit, review and promote safeguarding as a golden thread approach



Chief Executive Officer, commented:

“Safeguarding is work in progress and we still have much to do, but our work with Athena has given us the competencies and confidence to get to grips with safeguarding and create solid framework.

We’ve developed a much clearer and definitive approach to the culture we believe most of our student members would want and expect from their Students’ Union and that has only been with the help of Sarah and her team.”