

READING BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT BY EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF ADULT CARE AND HEALTH SERVICES

TO:	POLICY COMMITTEE		
DATE:	22 JUNE 2020		
TITLE:	SAFEGUARDING ADULTS READING & SAFEGUARDING ADULTS BOARD (SAB) ANNUAL REPORT 2018-19		
LEAD COUNCILLOR:	CLLR TONY JONES	PORTFOLIO:	ADULT SOCIAL CARE
SERVICE:	ADULT SOCIAL CARE	WARDS:	BOROUGHWIDE
LEAD OFFICER:	Jon Dickinson	TEL:	0118 9374586
JOB TITLE:	Deputy Director	E-MAIL:	jon.dickinson@reading.gov.uk

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 The Care Act 2014 stipulates that each local authority must have a Safeguarding Adults Board (SAB) which takes the lead on adult safeguarding arrangements across its locality and has oversight and co-ordination with regard to the effectiveness of the safeguarding work of its member and partner agencies.
- 1.2 The overarching purpose of a SAB is to help and safeguard adults with care and support needs. It does this by:
- 1.3 Ensuring that local safeguarding arrangements are in place, as defined by the Care Act 2014, and that:
 - Safeguarding practice is person-centred and outcome-focused;
 - Work is collaborative in order to prevent abuse and neglect where possible;
 - Agencies and individuals give timely and proportionate responses when abuse or neglect have occurred;
 - Safeguarding practice is continuously improving;
 - Quality of life for adults in its area are enhanced
- 1.4 The West of Berkshire Safeguarding Report which incorporates Safeguarding in Reading is presented here which reflect performance and priorities with regard to Safeguarding. The report highlights the work that has been carried out across the multi-agency partnership (Reading, West Berks & Wokingham) and includes information on Safeguarding in Reading Borough Council DACHS. The report provide a current picture and overview of Safeguarding in Reading and the wider local boundaries, analysis of performance with a further look at what can be enhanced and improved.

2. RECOMMENDED ACTION

- 2.1 That the West of Berkshire Safeguarding Adults Report be noted.
- 2.2 That the Strategic Plan be noted

3. POLICY CONTEXT

3.1 The SAB has a duty to develop and publish a strategic plan setting out how it will meet its objectives and how the partnership will contribute. The West of Berkshire annual report (attached) details how effectively these have been met.

3.2 A 2018-2021 Strategy was published by the SAB and is now into its second year. The document outlines what the Board hopes to achieve during this time period through a number of strategic priorities. These are:

- We will strengthen our communication and engagement across groups and communities in the West of Berkshire to ensure that our plans and actions are informed by the experience of the widest range of local people.
- We will extend our links with other partnerships to work together to break down barriers across agencies and to promote approaches that safeguard people with those that care about them, in their family and community.
- We will share learning and develop innovative ways to support both paid and unpaid organisations across the partnership to continually build confidence and the effectiveness of everyone's practice.
- We will understand how effective adult safeguarding is across the West of Berkshire to ensure that we identify emerging risks and take action accordingly.

4. THE PROPOSAL

4.1 Current Position:

The West of Berkshire Annual report notes that overall findings show that:

- There has been a 20% reduction in the number of safeguarding concerns compared with last year.
- When comparing 2018/19 concern figures with 2016/17 the decrease is 41%.
- The reduction goes against the national trend which saw an 8% increase when comparing 2016/17 data with 17/18 data. There was a further 5% increase nationally in 2018/19.
- The Local Authorities in the partnership were required to provide an explanation to the Board on the reasons for these reductions responses were as follows:

Reading Borough Council:

- Has seen a 37% reduction in the number of concerns in 2018/19 when compared with 2017/18.
- In 2018/19 50% of concerns led to an enquiry in Reading Borough Council Adult Social Care. Nationally this figure was 39% with the South East being 42%.
- There has been a change in practice which began in 2017/18 where safeguarding concerns raised that did not meet the safeguarding threshold are no longer counted.
- The number of safeguarding enquires has remained stable, indicating that risks are not being missed by this change in practice, and that recording of concerns has become more accurate as a reflection of safeguarding work required in Reading.
- Audits are to be undertaken in 2019/20 to ensure that safeguarding thresholds are consistently applied.
- From 2019/20 all logging of concerns will be completed by the Safeguarding Team rather than passing this onto Adult Social Care Teams, in order to ensure consistency and centralised oversight.
- Nationally, 89% of safeguarding enquiries see the risk to the individual being 'reduced or removed'. In Safeguarding Adults in Reading Borough Council this percentage is 91%.

4.2 Activity in Safeguarding Residents of Reading

Included in this report is the Reading Borough Council Safeguarding Review for 2018-19. This report covers all the performance activity within the area of Safeguarding Adults and sets out some case studies to showcase the work good practice carried out. It also looks to the future and reflects on how Safeguarding can be more effectively delivered over the coming year.

4.3 Some of the key findings in the data have influenced our delivery priorities for 2018/19

Most notable in the data there is the drop in number of concerns recorded, which continues a trajectory from the previous year. It was noted that robust information gathering and engagement prior to identifying a concern impacted positively on reducing concerns, and this practice has continued, supported by the proactive approach of the Conversation Counts model. The fact that the number of enquiries resulting from concerns has not fallen supports the interpretation of the figures as a positive trend towards more accurate recognition of safeguarding, rather than a lack of identification.

However, as part of the development of the Safeguarding Adults Team function in 2019/20, the recording of all concerns will be held centrally within the team. This will provide greater accountability and transparency in the data and ensure concerns are consistently captured. An audit of referrals coming into the service that are closed prior to enquiry will be conducted throughout the year to ensure quality and consistency, as well as identify any learning or practice needs that may emerge.

The recording of organisational abuse incidents has been raised as a point of difference in practice across the board, and the variation in incidents highlights a need to ensure that the process for identifying and responding to organisation abuse is transparent, robust and accountable, so that variances in recording are clearly understood in context.

In Reading we have begun the development of an effective partnership with commissioning teams to work proactively and jointly where concerns arise within provider organisations. This ensures that Providers can be supported to improve and maintain their support and delivery of services to vulnerable people.

4.3 Improving the Future of Safeguarding Adults in Reading

The aspiration for 19-20 in Reading Borough Council is to streamline access so that all Safeguarding activity comes through a ‘Single Point of Access’ to ensure consistency. This will see closer work and integration with the Advice and Wellbeing Hub, the departments ‘front door’ for all Social Care queries.

This bringing together of Safeguarding work will provide considerable customer and practice benefits such as

- The creation of a single point of contact and improved customer experience
- Achievement of proportionate responses and better outcomes using ‘Making Safeguarding Personal’ principles.
- Facilitation of improved partnership working with other professionals and the third sector.
- Ensuring a greater focus on prevention

5. CONTRIBUTION TO STRATEGIC AIMS

5.1 The SAB is a statutory function and has set priorities for 2018/2021 as detailed in section 3 of this report. The organisation has a legal duty under the Care Act 2014 to

safeguard adults and promote wellbeing and this has been evidenced within our Cooperate Plan 2016-2019; Service Priority 1 - Safeguarding and protecting those that are most vulnerable.

6. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 No impact noted as a result of this report

7. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND INFORMATION

- 7.1 A priority for the board for 2018-2021 is to strengthen communication and engagement across groups and communities in the West of Berkshire, and to ensure that plans and actions are informed by the experience of the widest range of local people.

7. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 7.1 The local authority, as a public body, is under a legal duty to comply with the public sector equality duties set out in Section 149 of the Equality Act (2010). In order to comply with this duty, the Council must positively seek to prevent discrimination, and protect and promote the interests of vulnerable groups. There is currently no change in the service to the residents is proposed hence an Equality Impact Assessment will not be completed at this stage.

8. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 The Safeguarding Adults Board has a duty under the Care Act 2014 to publish an Annual Report detailing how effective its work has been.

9. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 The Care Act provides a power for members of the SAB to contribute towards the expenditure incurred for the purposes of its work. The work undertaken by social care and health staff for delivering a safeguarding service is provided through their core responsibilities and incorporated into the day to day responsibilities of all staff.

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 10.1 West of Berkshire Safeguarding Adult Report 2018-19
Care Act 2014
More info to be found at <http://www.sabberkshirewest.co.uk/>