

## READING BOROUGH COUNCIL

### REPORT BY DIRECTOR OF ADULT CARE AND HEALTH SERVICES

TO:	ADULT SOCIAL CARE, CHILDREN’S SERVICES AND EDUCATION COMMITTEE		
DATE:	20 JANUARY 2021	AGENDA ITEM:	
TITLE:	SAFEGUARDING ADULTS BOARD (SAB) ANNUAL REPORT 2019/20		
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#### 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 The Safeguarding Adults Board (SAB) must lead adult safeguarding arrangements across its authority and oversee and coordinate the effectiveness of the safeguarding work of its member and partner agencies.
- 1.2 The overarching purpose of a SAB is to safeguard adults with health and social care needs. It does this by: Assuring itself that local safeguarding arrangements are in place, as defined by the Care Act 2014, and statutory guidance; requiring that Local Authorities demonstrate that:
- Safeguarding practice is person-centred and outcome-focused;
  - They are working collaboratively 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;
  - The quality of life of adults in its area is enhanced.
- 1.3 The Annual Report 2019-20 presents what the SAB aimed to achieve on behalf of the residents of Reading, West Berkshire and Wokingham during 2019-20. This is both as a partnership, and through the work of its participating partners. It provides a picture of who is safeguarded across the area, in what circumstance and why. It outlines the role and values of the SAB, its ongoing work and future priorities.

#### 2. RECOMMENDED ACTION

- 2.1 That Adults Children and Education Committee to Note the Report

### 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 annual report (attached) details how effectively these have been met.

3.2 The priorities for 2019/20 were that:

- We have oversight of the quality of safeguarding performance.
- We listen to service users, raise awareness of safeguarding adults and help people engage.
- We learn from experience and have a skilled and knowledgeable workforce.
- We work together effectively to support people at risk.

3.3 The priorities for 2020/21 are that:

- 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 act accordingly.

### 4. THE PROPOSAL

#### 4.1 Current Position:

Reading Borough Council Safeguarding Performance Data:

- Reading Borough Council:
- Has seen a 13.4% reduction in the number of safeguarding concerns (960) in 2019/20 when compared with 2018/19 (1109).
- In 2019/20 57% of safeguarding concerns (543) led to a section 42 enquiry - this has remained stable compared with 2018/19 data.
- In 2019/20 58% (268) of section 42 enquiries reported relate to older people over 65 years - this has remained stable compared with 2018/19 data.
- More women were the subject of a safeguarding enquiry than males as in previous years; however, the difference has only reduced by 1%.
- 85.2% of section 42 enquires were for individuals whose ethnicity is White. There has been a slight decrease 2.5% in section 42 enquires for individuals whose ethnicity is Mixed, Asian, Black or Other. This continues to be the focus of work for all partners in view of the demographic makeup of Reading.
- When all section 42 enquiries concluded, the individual's ethnicity was known.
- As in previous years the most common type of abuse for concluded section 42 enquires were for Neglect and Acts of Omission. This was followed by Financial or Material abuse, Physical abuse and Psychological abuse
- For most section 42 enquiries the primary support reason was physical support.
- As in previous years, the most common locations where the alleged abuse took place were a person's own home and a care home.
- 86% of service users were asked about the outcomes they desired as part of the Making Safeguarding Personal agenda and engagement of the service user throughout the whole process. This has been maintained and slightly increased over the previous year.

## 4.2 Activity in Safeguarding Residents of Reading

In response to the SAB report 2019/20 Reading has:

- Considered the wider safeguarding agenda for the residents of Reading Borough Council and have supported the implementation of the following services which supports the statutory work of the Safeguarding Team.
- Implemented the Serious Concerns (SC) and Standards of Care (SOC) Provider framework in Reading Borough Council, undertaken by the Commissioning Service.

The serious concerns process exists to manage serious concerns within the provider organisation. These are severe concerns with high levels of risk. The process supplements but does not replace investigations such as those relating to safeguarding, fraud and health and safety. If the organisation is placed in a Serious Concerns framework, they are to participate in regular meetings with Reading Borough Council and all stakeholders are involved. These meetings are to track the progress of the providers against an improvement action plan. A red flag is placed against a provider that may prevent admissions to the service if the risks are considered of impact upon the safety of care delivered.

The SOC process sits beneath the Serious Concerns process and exists to monitor less severe concerns within the organisation. These are medium to low risk. If the organisation is placed in a SOC framework they are to participate in regular meetings with Reading Borough Council and all stakeholders involved and is viewed as a supportive and preventative measure of escalation if issues. These meetings track the progress of the providers against an improvement action plan. A red or amber flag is placed against a provider that may prevent admissions to the service if the risks are considered of impact to the care delivered.

- Delivered on the Conversation Counts Model that, (based on strengths of what individuals can do rather than what would support independence rather than what they cannot do) was implemented in 2018 which has been continually evaluated and developed as a result of the initial feedback from service users, staff and external professionals. In March 2019, Phase Two of the model, was enhanced and introduced and the focus of the work involves working with people whose circumstances mean they are in crisis and who may be at risk. Staff aim to understand what is causing the crisis, what needs to change urgently and then work with the person to make those changes happen and create stability in their life. The final phase of the Conversation Counts Model is to support people to “look at what good looks like”, what resources, support, connections a person needs to live the life they choose to live. This has created a greater emphasis on the broader safeguarding agenda and has enabled staff working alongside people to help them look at how they keep themselves safe.
- Increased the use of Direct Payments (DPs) as an alternative to traditional models of care and for DPs to be offered to service users for purchasing support packages. An area of concern had been supporting service users to make the right choices in respect of employing carers, the potential for an increase in safeguarding concerns and the general well-being and safety of the service user undertaking this process.

Therefore, from April 2019 to March 2020 a Direct Payments Development Officer was recruited to support the project. Guidance for service users and staff was updated and the number of DP users in Reading has increased by 2% over that period. This has continued to be successful and there has not been an increase in safeguarding concerns and offers assurances to those managing their own DP that they are not exposing themselves to risk or harm. We continue to monitor and spot check to ensure that funds are deployed as recorded in their Support Plan

Implementation of Reading's Personal Assistant (PA) market which would address the safeguarding agenda in general. One way of receiving DPs is via a PA who works directly with one or more service users, to support them with various aspects of their daily life. This could be in their own home, in the community, at leisure or at work. PAs are usually employed directly by a person who needs care and support and who manages and pays for this through their Personal Budget or with their own money. The individual employing a PA can choose exactly how they are supported to ensure their needs are met.

Employing PAs supports our aims for service users to:

- receive services that prevent their care needs from becoming more serious or delay the impact of their needs.
- get the information and advice they need to make good decisions about care and support.
- have a range of provision of high quality, appropriate services to choose from.

The future is for a sustainable, diverse and robust PA Market in Reading that will:

- deliver quality care through trained PAs and raising service users' awareness of safeguarding and quality standards.
  - increase choice and control for individuals over the care and support they receive.
- Initiated a project to understand how Technology Enabled Care (TEC) can promote wellbeing, support prevention, maximise independence and self-care, enhance quality of life and reduce the need for a safeguarding intervention. A new TEC Lead has been recruited and we will be monitoring service users' outcomes over the coming months to identify how TEC has impacted on their lives.

#### **4.3 Key findings in the data that have influenced our delivery priorities 2019/20**

Most notable in the data is the small drop in the number of safeguarding concerns recorded. It should be noted that the number of safeguarding concerns converted into section 42 enquires has remained stable and in line with the previous years safeguarding data. This would demonstrate that the number of safeguarding concerns that have been screened as part of the duty of the Safeguarding Team suggest an accurate recognition of those that meet the threshold to progress to an enquiry. The work that has been undertaken across the service over the past year is evidence that the recording function of entering safeguarding concerns into Reading Borough Council electronic file recording system by staff has demonstrated far better compliance. There is further work to be undertaken to ensure consistency and accountability and the pathway into the electronic file system is being updated and should ensure that all safeguarding contacts are inputted within an agreed timeframe to support the safeguarding key performance indicators.

It is noted that there remains some disparity across the West Berkshire Board in the recording of organisational abuse safeguarding concerns. Work continues to address this, and clarity is being sought from the Department of Health. The Safeguarding Team in Reading continue to take a proportionate approach to these concerns and will continue to do so until there is a clear recommendation on the approach to take.

Making Safeguarding Personal (MSP) was a nationally led initiative to improve the experiences and outcomes for adults involved in a safeguarding enquiry. Staff have continued to embrace the MSP agenda, and this has been evidenced in the safeguarding data. There is further work to be undertaken to enhance the process within the electronic file recording system, which

will offer better outcome recording and enable Reading Borough Council to implement any necessary changes across the service and the wider community to support the safety of all residents.

It is noted that there have been 10 Safeguarding Adult Reviews (SAR) commissioned by the West Berkshire Adult Safeguarding Board of which 4 were for Reading Borough Council to undertake. Due to the complexity of these cases not all of them have been concluded and published. Adult Social Care are committed to ensuring that ongoing improvements are made as a result of the findings from each SAR and there is a programme of ongoing work to address this.

#### **4.4 Improving the Future of Safeguarding Adults in Reading**

The aspiration for 2020/21 is to streamline the pathway process for all safeguarding concerns into Reading Borough Council through a single point of access which. This will support the work of the Safeguarding Team to ensure consistency of approach and offer better efficiency in meeting safeguarding targets.

There will be an updated implementation of the safeguarding electronic file recording system, the practice benefits will be:

- Making the safeguarding pathway more efficient for adult social care staff
- Consistent quality in safeguarding practice
- Daily management oversight of safeguarding data
- Effective use of safeguarding data
- Shared purpose, principles and procedures
- Evaluation of performance

A review of the way in which the safeguarding statutory function is delivered across Adult Social Care will be taking place in line with national work being undertaken. This is in respect of those individuals who are homelessness or have drug and alcohol problems, the outcome of which may increase the responsibilities of the Safeguarding Team which would see an increase in the levels of safeguarding concerns.

### **5. CONTRIBUTION TO STRATEGIC AIMS**

- 5.1 The SAB is a statutory function and has set priorities for 2020/2021 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 deemed as meeting the safeguarding threshold for a safeguarding intervention.

### **6. ENVIRONMENTAL AND CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 There is no impact noted as a result of this report.

### **7. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND INFORMATION**

- 7.1 A priority for the board for 2019/20 is to strengthen communication and engagement across groups and communities of West Berkshire, and to ensure that plans and actions are informed by the experience of the widest range of local people.

### **8. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

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.

## **9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

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

## **10. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 10.1 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.

## **11. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- 11.1 West of Berkshire Safeguarding Adult Report 2019/2020  
Care Act 2014