

READING BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT BY (EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR FOR SOCIAL CARE AND HEALTH)

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| TO: | ADULT SOCIAL CARE, CHILDREN'S SERVICES AND EDUCATION COMMITTEE | | |
| DATE: | 31 March 2022 | | |
| TITLE: | SAFEGUARDING ADULTS BOARD (SAB) ANNUAL REPORT 2020/21 UPDATE | | |
| LEAD COUNCILLOR: | CLLR ENNIS | PORTFOLIO: | ADULT SOCIAL CARE |
| SERVICE: | ADULT SOCIAL CARE | WARDS: | BOROUGH WIDE |
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1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1. The Safeguarding Adults Board (SAB) is responsible for leading adult safeguarding arrangements and overseeing and coordinating the effectiveness of the safeguarding work of member and partner agencies.

1.2. The overarching purpose of a SAB is to safeguard adults with care and support needs. It does this by assuring itself that local safeguarding arrangements are in place, as defined by the Care Act 2014. Local authorities must demonstrate that:

- Safeguarding practice is person-centred and outcome-focused;
- Partners 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 approach taken by Reading Borough Council to discharge its duty is twofold:

- RBC hosts the strategic partnership arrangement between Reading, West Berkshire and Wokingham and operates as the lead organisation, hosting the joint Safeguarding Adult Board across the 3 areas. The Board is chaired by an Independent Chair.

- RBC also has a dedicated operational Safeguarding Adults Team (SAT) who undertake the role of initial triage of concerns and referrals; decision making as to whether the Care Act 2014 duties are engaged; signposting where relevant and commencement of safeguarding enquiries where these are indicated. They do not hold cases long term and where service users are already known these are signposted to the relevant teams.

1.4. The Berkshire West Annual Report 2020/21 has now been published since approval by the Safeguarding Adult Board. The published report is an overarching partnership report, appended by individual organisational reports from participating partner agencies.

1.5. The full report and Reading Borough Council's submission to the Berkshire West Annual Report 2020/21 are attached for information.

2. RECOMMENDED ACTION

2.1 That Adult Social Care, Children's Services and Education Committee note the report as RBC's contribution to the Berkshire West Safeguarding Board Annual Report.

3. CONTEXT

As outlined in the report 2020/21 was a challenging year for safeguarding services in Reading, in line with the national picture. The impact of the Covid-19 pandemic is yet to be fully realised, with the potential for hidden harm.

However, all safeguarding services have been prioritised and maintained throughout the pandemic, with increased volumes in referrals being experienced.

An achievement to highlight for Adult Social Care this year has been to secure funding from the Social Impact Voluntary and Community Grant to develop a hoarding pathway. The reason for applying for the grant was based on activity data collected during the Covid-19 pandemic that identified that individuals who needed help to address their hoarding and self-neglect were reported when their situation had often become acute.

The funding for this project is being targeted at:

- Promoting independence and support for a group of people who often refuse support and are hard to engage.
- Increasing access to services to support mental wellbeing, reduce social isolation and stigma.
- Increased access to community and health services.
- Preventing crisis and hospital admissions through preventative work.
- Enabling people to stay healthy and active in their community and at home.

4. THE PROPOSAL

4.1 Current Position:

A summary of the RBC Safeguarding Performance Data is:

- In 2020/21 31% of safeguarding concerns (493) led to a section 42 enquiry – this has reduced compared with 2019/20 data. This data is comparable with our colleagues across West Berkshire.
- In 2020/21 56% (244) of section 42 enquiries reported relate to older people over 65 years – this has shown a slight decrease compared with 2019/20 data.
- More women were the subject of a safeguarding enquiry than males as in previous years; however, however the gap has narrowed to only 4%.
- 80% of section 42 enquires were for individuals whose ethnicity is White. There has been an increase to 20% 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.
- 84% 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 is similar to the previous year.

4.3 Improving the Future of Safeguarding Adults in Reading

The aspiration for 2021/2022 will be to:

- Continue to support partners with their understanding of the thresholds for safeguarding referrals to our dedicated team and the appropriate pathways and routes for addressing support needs of vulnerable adults, who may have care and support needs.
- This will enable us to seek assurance that all agencies are clear about their obligations to deliver adult safeguarding activity which prevents abuse, crime, neglect, self-neglect and exploitation.
- We will continue to seek assurance that agency obligations are supported by clear processes which directly support the West Berkshire Multi- Agency Adult Safeguarding Policy & Procedures, as a model of good practice.
- We will work with each other and collaborate, to maximise our multi-agency practice to reduce risk and improve lives.
- We will raise public awareness about and for adults at risk; what can be done to help; how communities can raise concerns and how the work of the Board is vital for planning; assurance, oversight, transparency and accountability.

- We will ensure that the voices of adults at risk are sought, heard, listened to and acted upon, and that we engage with local communities ensuring we are transparent about what we are saying we are going to do and how we will measure it.
- We will seek to manage safeguarding referrals through a single point of contact.
- We will progress the interface between quality assurance and safeguarding to provide a proactive response to quality concerns.
- Our approach to safeguarding personal will be developed and enhanced along with partners.
- We will revisit the safeguarding training pathway for staff employed by Reading Borough Council.
- Our intention is to develop lead roles around specialist areas.
- We will pay particular attention to understanding the context of risks for young people and introduce a transition protocol.
- We will ensure all staff are conversant with any new or emerging legislation and policy in relation to safeguarding, through the appointment of a Principal Social Worker.
- We will ensure SAB learning regarding self-neglect and other priority areas is fully embedded.

5. CONTRIBUTION TO STRATEGIC AIMS

- 5.1 The SAB has set priorities for 2021/2022 to ensure adults at risk of abuse or neglect are safeguarded.
- 5.2 RBC will support the SAB priorities fully and these will also be reflected in the Corporate and Service Plans where relevant.

6. ENVIRONMENTAL AND CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS

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

7. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND INFORMATION

- 7.1 A priority for the Board is to continue 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

- 8.1 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 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. The attached reports reflect this legal duty in the form of the Berkshire West Safeguarding Annual Report 2020/21 incorporating the Reading Borough Council submission.

10. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 The Care Act 2014 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 2020/2021 Reading Borough Council Annual Report 2020/2021