

## **Cabinet**

**14 October 2020**

**Annual Report 2019/20 County Durham  
Safeguarding Adults Board**



## **Ordinary Decision**

---

### **Report of Corporate Management Team**

**Jane Robinson, Corporate Director of Adult and Health Services  
and Alan Patrickson, Corporate Director of Neighbourhoods and  
Climate Change**

**Councillor Lucy Hovvels, Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Adult and  
Health Services and Councillor Brian Stephens, Cabinet Portfolio  
Holder for Neighbourhoods and Local Partnerships**

### **Electoral divisions affected:**

Countywide.

### **Purpose of the Report**

- 1 To present to Cabinet the Annual Report of the County Durham Local Safeguarding Adults Board 2019/2020 (Appendix 2), which provides assurance on safeguarding adults across County Durham.
- 2 To present the accompanying Annual Report of the County Durham Local Safeguarding Adults Board (SAB) 2019/2020 on a Page (Appendix 3), and the Annual Report of the County Durham SAB 2019/2020 Easy Read produced in consultation with the Durham County Council Adult and Health Services (DCC AHS) Engagement Team (Appendix 4).

### **Executive summary**

- 3 The Care Act 2014 placed Safeguarding Adult Boards (SABs) upon a statutory footing with a requirement to produce and publicise an annual report.
- 4 This is the fifth SAB Annual Report, which provides information about achievements and challenges during the year 2019/20.

- 5 Provisional key data on safeguarding activity is included based upon 1st April 2019 to 31st March 2020 (To note, full end of year data is not published until November 2020).
- 6 The SAB agreed a 3-year plan in 2018 which includes four priorities and streamlined working groups of the SAB across four key themes:
  - Practice and Implementation Sub-Group  
(priority - Prevention and Early Implementation)
  - Engagement and Communication Sub-Group  
(priority - User/Carer Voice and Awareness Raising)
  - Performance and Governance Sub-Group  
(priority - Performance, Quality and Governance)
  - Learning and Improvement Sub-Group  
(priority - Safeguarding Adults Reviews (SARs) Learning and Training).
- 7 The SAB Annual Report outlines progress against the SAB strategic priorities, the peer review recommendations about the voices of adults and practitioners, and the early SAB response to the Covid-19 emergency.
- 8 In the light of Covid-19 the statutory partners have been meeting to discuss and formulate a 12 to 18-month Covid-19 Recovery Plan. The Recovery Plan was finalised prior to publication and is included within the SAB Annual Report.

### **Recommendation(s)**

- 9 Cabinet is recommended to:
  - (a) note the future work of the County Durham Safeguarding Adults Board;
  - (b) note the progress made by the Local Safeguarding Adults Board during 2019/20 and receive the Local Safeguarding Adults Board Annual Report 2019/20, the accompanying SAB Annual Report on a Page, and the SAB Annual Report Easy Read, for information.

## **Background**

- 10 The Care Act 2014 placed Safeguarding Adult Boards (SABs) upon a statutory footing with a requirement to produce and publicise an annual report. The supplementary Care and Support Statutory Guidance informs that the SAB Annual Report should have prominence on each core member's website and be made available to other agencies.
- 11 This is the fifth SAB Annual Report, which provides information about achievements and challenges during the year 2019/20.
- 12 The format of the report is in keeping with the Care and Support Statutory Guidance, and includes quantitative and qualitative evidence, key messages, and impact of activities that relate to:
  - (a) community awareness of adult abuse and neglect and how to respond;
  - (b) analysis of safeguarding data, to better understand the reasons that lie behind local data returns and use the information to improve the strategic plan and operational arrangements;
  - (c) what adults who have experienced the process say and the extent to which their wishes (outcomes) have been realised;
  - (d) what front line practitioners say about outcomes for adults and about their ability to work in a personalised way with those adults;
  - (e) better reporting of abuse and neglect;
  - (f) evidence of success of strategies to prevent abuse or neglect;
  - (g) feedback from local Healthwatch, adults who use care and support services, and carers, community groups, advocates, service providers and other partners;
  - (h) how successful adult safeguarding is at linking with other parts of the system, for example children's safeguarding, domestic violence services, community safety;
  - (i) the impact of training carried out and analysis of future need;
  - (j) and, how well agencies are co-operating and collaborating.

## **Safeguarding adults assurance in County Durham**

- 13 The attached report aims to outline progress against the agreed strategic plan of 2018 and provide assurance about the effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements in County Durham.

- 14 In May 2019, a BBC Panorama Programme exposed concerns for the safety of adults placed within an Independent Private Hospital in Barnard Castle. The Board was assured that the adults had been accommodated safely elsewhere. Since the programme, the SAB has sought assurance from agencies, and identified areas of work it will take forward in the years ahead, including any legislative requirements. It should be noted that work is ongoing with DCC and NHS commissioners in respect of addressing the requirements of the national programmes: Transforming Care, and Building the Right Support. It was agreed to hold a Safeguarding Adults Review (SAR) and a SAR chair, a SAR author, and an expert panel to facilitate the voice of the adults have been commissioned for a start in January 2020.
- 15 In mid-March the SAB responded to the Covid-19 emergency with a SAB business continuity plan, regular liaison with core partners, and provided new information to support organisations in safeguarding adults, as is outlined in the report.
- 16 The statutory partners have been meeting to discuss and formulate a 12 to 18-month Covid-19 Recovery Plan, building on the learning from the initial response and moving towards 'the new normal' way of working with the presence of Covid-19. The Recovery Plan was finalised prior to the SAB Annual Report publication and is included within it.
- 17 The SAB has continued its focus on the voice of adults who use services to inform good practice and a deeper understanding of abuse and neglect. My Story was published as a film in co-production with an adult to support a peer education approach. Working with Home Group and in co-production the SAB anticipates the publication of My Safeguarding Story as a booklet.
- 18 Adults are asked what they wish to happen throughout each safeguarding enquiry. The SAB was assured that the voice of adults is central in safeguarding as out of the 77.1 per cent of adults or their representatives who expressed a view, 97.5 per cent said their desired outcomes were met.
- 19 The Board will continue its focus on priorities of raising awareness and improving practice particularly in relation to self-neglect, financial abuse, domestic abuse, and modern slavery. The SAB was assured about practice as where risk to adults was identified and action taken, risk was reduced or removed for 87.3 per cent of safeguarding enquiries.
- 20 The SAB has continued to build on its work to embed the practitioner voice into all that it undertakes, carrying out a workforce practitioner survey with a steer towards how it feels for front-line staff in 2019, and a training needs survey in 2020. The SAB will through its Communication and Engagement Strategy continue to work with agencies, stakeholders and partnerships to hear the voice of adults and local communities.

- 21 The SAB monitors information shared in partner updates and is pleased to work with the DCC Adult and Health Services Commissioning on Supporting the Provider Market, taking part in an event for providers in 2019 and through the SAB Development Day in January. Joint work on Safeguarding Champions is on hold due to Covid-19
- 22 In 2019/20 the SAB audit activities included a single agency audit and a multi-agency audit, two peer challenge clinics, and the review of six organisation's assurance reports, identifying areas of work to take forward as part of the SAB cycle of improvement.
- 23 In County Durham 'Rethink' provide a range of advocacy services which includes advocacy provision for those adults who have experienced abuse or neglect and whom are currently open to, and involved in, safeguarding. During the year the SAB strengthened its links with Rethink and will draw upon their feedback to inform the SAB improvement cycle.
- 24 During 2019/20 a SAB briefing on self neglect and a Covid-19 fraud factsheet were published, with more planned for 2020/21 including a SAB briefing on domestic abuse and safeguarding adults, and on Making Safeguarding Personal.
- 25 The SAB will continue its focus on supporting practitioners to work with self-neglect with the completion of a tool kit and linking to the work on the review of deaths among homeless people.

## **Conclusion**

- 26 The Covid-19 pandemic will continue to challenge health and social care services into the future. The SAB partners will provide assurance on business continuity and work to ensure that safeguarding adults remains a central focus of all health and social care activity, and in line with Annex D Safeguarding Guidance of the Coronavirus Act 2020.
- 27 The Board will continue its focus on priorities of raising awareness and improving practice, in relation to learning from SARs, use of the Mental Capacity Act, and addressing any Covid-19 related increase in abuse.
- 28 The Mental Capacity (Amendment) Act 2019 once implemented will bring in the Liberty Protection Standards with a new code of practice, and will be a key area of focus for partners.

## **Background papers**

- None

## **Other useful documents**

- None

**Author**

Gordon Elliott

Tel: 03000 263605

---

## **Appendix 1: Implications**

---

### **Legal Implications**

Statutory requirement to publicise Annual Reports and publication of an Annual Report from 1st April 2015 in line with the Care Act 2014 and the number of Safeguarding Adults Reviews, lessons learnt and any actions incomplete. The SAB assessed and addressed implications of the Coronavirus 2020 Act. Annex D safeguarding guidance, published on 1 April 2020, sets out that the Coronavirus Act does not remove the Care Act Section 42 safeguarding duty, nor the need for safeguarding training.

### **Finance**

Continuing financial pressures on public services remains a challenge for agencies of the SAB, particularly in relation to how responses to the safeguarding agenda are agreed. The SAB monitors risks and challenges through its governance arrangements; Durham County Council ensures it includes any such areas in those arrangements.

### **Consultation**

Report available for all partner agencies. The SAB shares the annual report with partner agencies and provides opportunity for each partner to submit an annual overview of their contributions to the work of the SAB.

### **Equality and Diversity / Public Sector Equality Duty**

Adult safeguarding is intrinsically linked and is covered in the SAB policies and procedures with equalities impact assessments undertaken when and where appropriate.

### **Climate Change**

The SAB Business Unit is mindful of its impact and aims to reduce the carbon footprint where possible. Emissions due to SAB activity are in line with other County Council activity. For this report they include vehicle use as partners attend meetings and training; power use due to online processing and storage; paper use and photocopying for formal meetings; and heating, lighting and other emissions by use of offices in County Hall and elsewhere. During the response to the Covid-19 emergency as staff worked from home with meetings held virtually, online processing and power use increased while vehicle and paper use decreased.

## **Human Rights**

Human rights are the core of the SAB and its work. The SAB and relevant partners within the context of safeguarding adults should ensure they are embedded within policy and practice.

## **Crime and Disorder**

Adult safeguarding is linked to and is covered within the SAB policies and procedures. There is a close working relationship with Safe Durham Partnership, and working arrangements across agencies and broader partnerships. Durham Constabulary is a statutory partner of the SAB.

## **Staffing**

The sustaining of adult safeguarding activities requires continued priority to staffing to ensure adequate resource is maintained. The continued contribution to staffing from partner agencies supports the sustainability of dedicated safeguarding adults' posts/ functions and there is continued pressure for capacity within the unit when unforeseen situations arise.

## **Accommodation**

Not applicable

## **Risk**

The risks associated with not appropriately managing responses to safeguarding are extremely high and include risks of ongoing abuse and neglect and the risk of serious organisational and/or reputational damage to statutory and non-statutory organisations in County Durham.

The SAB puts considerable effort into training and awareness raising to ensure that abuse and neglect is recognised and reported. Screening of all reported concerns takes place and they are directed appropriately to ensure the most appropriate response is taken.

Any risks identified under the umbrella of the SAB is updated within a risk and challenge log which is reviewed quarterly. The impact of training is regularly explored and is reported annually.

## **Procurement**

The adoption of safeguarding principles in the procurement of health and social care services is essential. An example is SAB support for Durham County Council checking supply chains for modern slavery.

---

**Appendix 2: County Durham Safeguarding Adults Board Annual Report 2019/2020**

---

See attached.

---

**Appendix 3: County Durham Safeguarding Adults Board Annual Report 2019/2020 on a Page**

---

See attached.

---

**Appendix 4: County Durham Safeguarding Adults Board Annual Report 2019/2020 Easy read**

---

See attached.