

Cabinet

19th November 2014



Safeguarding Adults Board Annual Report

Report of Corporate Management Team.

**Rachael Shimmin Corporate Director Children & Adults Services
Councillor Morris Nicholls Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Adults Services**

Subject of Report

1. The County Durham Safeguarding Adults Board Annual Report for 2013/14 and Business Plan 2014/15.

Purpose of Report

2. To present the Annual Report and Business Plan and in doing so, to provide information about the current position of the County Durham Safeguarding Adults Board, what was achieved during the year 2013/14 and what is expected to be achieved within 2014/15.

Background

3. There are a number of specific areas covered by the Annual Report, which are as follows:-
 - Safeguarding in its current context.
 - Achievements during the year 2013/14 from the Board's sub groups.
 - Key actions for the coming year.

Safeguarding in its current context

4. Throughout the past year the Board and its multi-agency partners have continued to work together with the shared vision of making County Durham a place where adults at risk are protected from abuse, and the rights of people who are unable to make decisions for themselves are promoted and safeguarded.
5. The work described in this year's report has taken place against a backdrop of intensive change in all partner agencies, particularly in NHS bodies where the re-configured NHS has been presented with new challenges and opportunities. The local authority continues to implement further budgetary cuts in line with the medium term financial plan and Durham Constabulary has endured further reductions in their operational workforce. Our public services have risen to the challenge; all agencies have continued to prioritise safeguarding activity and, our achievements have been significant.

Key Achievements from the Annual Report 2013/14

6. Safeguarding referrals have remained stable at around the 2200 level for the last three years. This is a sizable increase from the 726 referrals that were received in 2008/09 and is testament to the awareness raising and training provided by the Board.
7. Attendance at SAB training events has exceeded the 5000 mark for the third successive year and university accredited training has been delivered to the first cohort of assistant social workers. Safeguarding training is now very much a multi-agency effort with a number of key partners delivering a substantial amount of training.
8. The County Durham Safeguarding Adults Board has again lead on a regional radio campaign, securing £18,000 from regional ADASS funds for radio advertisements, an update of its regional website and street events in each of the 12 local authority areas.
9. The SAB has now adopted new terms of reference in line with the Department of Health (DH) statement of government policy on adult safeguarding. The key principles of Empowerment, Protection, Prevention, Proportionality, Partnership and Accountability have therefore been embedded into the terms of reference. These principals have also now been introduced into the format of the SAB Business Plan.
10. The User Survey has been redesigned to bring it into line with the DH safeguarding principles identified above. There is now also an opportunity for a face to face interview if service users or carers so desire. This survey is being sent to all service users who have undergone a safeguarding investigation to obtain their feedback on the service we provide. General satisfaction levels are around 75% with respondents feeling safer, listened to and pleased with the outcome of the safeguarding investigative process.
11. There has been a change to Safeguarding procedures that allows up to five days to make the initial decision to invoke multi-agency safeguarding. This has had a significant positive impact resulting in referrals receiving a more proportionate response and freeing lead officers and team managers to focus more time on the more challenging incidents.

Key actions for the Business Plan 2014/15

12. There are a number of initiatives that will be taken forward by the Safeguarding Adults Board Business Plan in the coming year.
13. We will ensure that service users become even more central to safeguarding, that their views are sought to achieve their desired outcomes and enable investigations to be carried out in a timely manner. This will be supported by engaging with 'Making Safeguarding Personal', a national project to promote outcomes for vulnerable victims.
14. There will be increased training and awareness of safeguarding adults at risk in health related settings such as acute hospitals, clinical commissioning

groups, mental health hospitals and continued use of mass media campaigns in order that safeguarding adults is promoted within communities.

15. We will continue to ensure that there is a timely response to allegations of abuse and neglect in tune with the targets established by the SAB and monitor occasions of repeat referrals, to identify patterns of repeat abuse with a view to resolving these matters with permanent solutions. All partner policies and procedures will be reviewed to ensure that they are compliant with the Care Act 2014.
16. We will ensure that all partner agencies adopt common policies and procedures to provide seamless and consistent adult safeguarding practice across both County Durham and the region. We will develop regional training packages to provide consistent messages across the region regarding safeguarding adult practice and ensure that support is seamless across regional boundaries.
17. The newly appointed Independent Chair for the SAB, will promote independent challenge and accountability and we will also recruit a lay member to provide an independent and non-biased view of the way safeguarding is delivered. Partner agencies will be more accountable and will be required to produce an annual presentation that demonstrates the depth and breadth of safeguarding work undertaken by their individual organisations in consideration of the requirements of the Care Act 2014.

Recommendations

18. It is recommended that Cabinet:
 - a) Receive the Annual Report and Business Plan and note the ongoing developments achieved during 2013/14 and those sought to be achieved during 2014/15.

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Appendix 1: Implications

Finance – Ongoing pressure on public service finance will challenge all agencies to consider how best to respond to the safeguarding agenda.

Staffing – The sustaining of adult safeguarding activities requires continued priority to staffing to ensure adequate resources are maintained. The continued contribution to staffing from partner agencies determines the sustainability of dedicated safeguarding adults posts/functions.

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 damage to statutory and non-statutory agencies in County Durham.

The Safeguarding Adults Board (SAB) puts considerable effort into training and awareness raising to ensure that abuse and neglect are recognised and reported. All reports of concerns are screened and directed so they receive the most appropriate response.

Equality and Diversity – Adult safeguarding is intrinsically linked and this is covered in the Safeguarding Adults Board (SAB) Policy and Procedures. The focus of the SAB is to protect ‘Adults at Risk’ who are defined as being eighteen years and over who is or maybe eligible for community care services and whose independence and well-being would be at risk if they did not receive appropriate health and social care support. This definition includes people who have a learning disability, physical disability, mental ill health, sensory impairment, or those who are old, frail and could not look after themselves without the care and support of others, people who misuses substances and are in need of services may also be eligible.

Accommodation – N/A

Crime and disorder – Adult safeguarding is intrinsically linked and this is covered in the SAB Policy and Procedures.

Human rights – Adult safeguarding is intrinsically linked and this is covered in the SAB Policy and Procedures.

Consultation – Report available for all partner agencies.

Procurement – The adoption of safeguarding principles in the procurement of health and social care services is essential.

Disability issues – Safeguarding Adults procedures apply to ‘adults at risk’ who are adults that are deemed eligible for social care services.

Legal implications – While there is no legal requirement for an Annual Report at present, there will be a statutory requirement to produce an Annual Report from 2015 when the Care Act 2014 comes into force.