

<b>Report to</b>	<b>Partnerships Scrutiny Committee</b>
<b>Date of meeting</b>	<b>5 November 2020</b>
<b>Lead Member / Officer</b>	<b>Lead Member for Well-being and Independence/Service Manager – Specialist Services, Operational Services</b>
<b>Report author</b>	<b>Team Manager Safeguarding Operational Services</b>
<b>Title</b>	<b>Annual Report on Safeguarding Adults in Denbighshire 1<sup>st</sup> April 2019 – 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020</b>

## **1. What is the report about?**

This report constitutes the annual performance report for Safeguarding Adults in compliance with statutory guidance and provides an overview of the impact of local safeguarding arrangements and practice

## **2. What is the reason for making this report?**

To provide Members with an overview of the impact of Local Safeguarding arrangements and practice and to review progress in this key area of work over the last twelve months. To refer to data which reflects figures submitted by the Local Authority on an annual basis to the Welsh Government Data Unit.

## **3. What are the Recommendations?**

That members receive and comment on the report and acknowledge the importance of a corporate approach to the safeguarding of adults at risk and the responsibility of the Council to view this as a key priority area.

## **4. Report details**

4.1 The past 12 months has seen a focus on maintaining the improvement in the consistency and quality of safeguarding work, including performance against the

Welsh Government performance indicator of enquiries completed within 7 working days.

4.2 Focus on the changes in practice since Covid-19, to ensure that Denbighshire citizens are safeguarded and comparing the data from a similar period.

4.3 The Wales Safeguarding Procedures were launched in November 2019, with the implementation date of the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2020. However due to Covid19 the implementation date was delayed until 1<sup>st</sup> September 2020.

#### Adult Protection Activity in Denbighshire 2017 – 2019

Year	Reports(referrals) received
2017 - 2018	568
2018 - 2019	622
2019 - 2020	597

#### 4.4 Headlines from 2019 - 20 Statistics

- Number of safeguarding reports (referrals) has slightly decreased by 4%, which is in contrast with previous years, where there has been a gradual increase year on year following the implementation of the Social Services and Well-being Act (SSWBA). However perhaps it is not surprising to see report numbers starting to plateau, as confidence grows around the 'duty to report' allegations of abuse.
- 12% of cases progressed to Strategy Meetings, which is lower than last year (21%). As s126 enquiries become more embedded in safeguarding practice across agencies, only those more serious allegations of abuse or neglect are progressing through to these meetings. However it should be noted that the enquiry stage covers the actions undertaken to reduce any further risk of harm or abuse in all cases reported.
- Physical abuse (31%) and neglect (25%) were the most common types of abuse reported, again similar to previous years and following national trends.

(See Appendix 1 for safeguarding data 2019 – 20)

#### 4.5 Performance Indicators

There is only one national performance indicator currently relating to Adult Protection: the number of enquiries completed within 7 working days.

As outlined in last year's report, measures were implemented to improve our performance in relation to the performance indicator which resulted in significant improvements and 92% of enquires completed within the 7 working day timescale for 2019/2020. This standard continues to be maintained, with 99% reaching the target in the first quarter of 2020 / 21.

#### 4.6 Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS) – activity 2019 - 20

- There has been a slight decrease in the number of applications received: 325 compared to 342 last year.
- 138 authorisations have been granted, a significant increase from 72 last year. In terms of assessing individuals who are deprived of their liberty in domiciliary settings (DiDS) the Complex Disability team continue to prioritise those individuals who had new moves into alternative settings and nature/intensity of restrictions inherent within care and support plans. 10 new applications have been submitted to Court during this period along with a further 6 for renewal. The backlog of work in Court continues to be an issue.

#### 4.7 Key achievements 2019 -20

- Maintaining the improvements against the Welsh Government performance indicator of enquiries to be completed with 7 working days.
- Continuation of the quarterly audits of a sample of safeguarding cases in order to review quality and consistency of work, whilst assuring this has not been compromised by the success of the performance indicator. With a further focus on identifying new areas of practice/quality .i.e. the use of advocacy.
- Reviewing arrangement of safeguarding practise in preparation for the Wales Safeguarding Procedure, by developing an approach based on co- production i.e. personal outcomes.
- A CIW Inspection follow up in January 2020 reported – *‘Overall, there are signs of significant improvements in hearing people’s voices, timeliness, recording, professional analysis and decision making. A much more balanced approach that reflects an improved focus on people, and using process to support professional judgement.’*

#### 4.8 Covid19 data/practice March to June 2020

- Overall for the first four months of the Covid-19 lockdown period (March, April, May, and June) there was a 23% reduction in numbers of safeguarding reports received in comparison to the same period last year. However there has been an increase in the number of telephone calls to the Safeguarding team to discuss safeguarding issues, which provided some reassurance that it remained very much in focus for providers and other agencies despite the reduction in the number of reports. The reduction in number of reports during this period was consistent with the experience of other Welsh Local Authorities.
- Sources of reports for these four months has been consistent with previous months and the comparable with last year. Whilst the category of Domestic Abuse is not specifically named within the safeguarding reports, it is identifiable within other reported categories and there was some evidence to support that we were seeing more reports relating to Domestic Abuse, which echoed national trend and Government response to Domestic Abuse.
- Practice has had to adapt to the challenges of lockdown, both in adult safeguarding work and the implementation of DoLS. Practitioners are now working from home, DoLS assessments are conducted via video calls/telephone contact and strategy meetings held virtually via conference calls or WebEx. Additional staff resources has been instigated to support the safeguarding duties within Denbighshire as part of business continuity.
- Covid19 has presented new challenges in accessing relevant staff within the Residential/Nursing home to support the completion of these assessments and has caused some delays. Supporting the engagement with the citizen continues to be difficult especially with individuals who have profound communication and/or cognitive issues.
- Where Managing Authorities are imposing levels of restrictions on contact between residents in care homes and their families, they are being advised that they need to consider how these citizens can be supported to maintain a level of contact with family to minimize the impact of interference with their Acritical 8 rights. As the Supervisory Body, we are granting short authorisations periods, where individuals have not been seen face to face due to the risk of Covid transmission.

## **5. How does the decision contribute to the Corporate Priorities?**

The Safeguarding Adults arrangements contribute directly to the corporate priority Resilient Communities: the Council works with people and communities to build independence and resilience.

## **6. What will it cost and how will it affect other services?**

This service is already featured within existing budgets

## **7. What are the main conclusions of the Well-being Impact Assessment?**

A Well-being Impact Assessment is not required as this report makes no changes to policy.

## **8. What consultations have been carried out with Scrutiny and others?**

Not applicable.

## **9. Chief Finance Officer Statement**

There are no financial implications arising directly from this report

## **10 What risks are there and is there anything we can do to reduce them?**

- With the full implementation of the Wales Safeguarding Procedures and the possible delegation of s126 enquiries to other agencies, there is a risk this could have a direct impact on the 'Performance Indicator.' Work will be undertaken on a regional basis to support those who undertake duties on behalf of the Local Authority, to ensure that they have a full understanding of the task/ timeframe.
- Further delay on legislative/guidance changes for Liberty Protection Safeguards (LPS) and the necessary training required for its implementation. However we continued to manage the volume of work and have systems in place prioritising the applications received. BIA training has been placed on hold pending LPS, which means that increasing capacity with new practitioners is not an option and covering this increase in work will need to be from existing resources.

- As Providers continue to impose restriction regarding access by family and Paid RPR's into care homes, there is the potential that an individual's right to challenge could be missed/compromised. We are granting short authorisation periods, where individuals have not been seen face to face due to the risk of Covid transmission and Managing Authorities are being advised to review these level of restrictions at regular intervals and explore other ways of keeping contact by using other means of assisted technology .i.e. IPads issued to all homes within Denbighshire.
- Increasing costs of DoLS work i.e. medical assessments, IMCA, Court applications. We are limited in our ability to be able to reduce these costs, however discussions instigated with the provider of the RPR role (Relevant Person's Representative) to agree standards that may eventually lead to some reduction in costs. The implementation of the LPS may also lead to cost reductions.

## **11. Power to make the decision**

Scrutiny's powers with respect to this matter are set out in Section 21 of the Local Government Act 2000 and Section 7.4.2(b) of the Council's Constitution.

**Contact Officer:**

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