

Report to	Partnerships Scrutiny Committee
Date of meeting	8 July 2021
Lead Member / Officer	Lead Member for Well-being and Independence/Head of Community Support Services
Report author	Team Manager Safeguarding Operational Services
Title	Annual Report on Safeguarding Adults in Denbighshire 1st April 2020 – 31st March 2021

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 The implementation of the Wales Safeguarding Procedures since its launch in September 2020, having been delayed due to Covid19.

4.3 The continued changes in practice since Covid-19 to ensure that Denbighshire citizens are safeguarded and comparing the data from a similar period.

4.4 Adult Protection Activity in Denbighshire 2018 – 2021

Year	Reports(referrals) received
2018 - 2019	622
2019 - 2020	597
2020 - 2021	354

4.5 Headlines from 2020 - 21 Statistics

4.5.1 Overall there has been a significant reduction (40%) 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.

4.5.2 Although fewer reports have been received during this year, we have not seen an increase in cases needing to progress to strategy meeting, which appears to be following previous trends of recent years. Section 126 enquiries has become more embedded in safeguarding practice across all agencies and we continue to see only those more serious allegations of abuse or neglect progressing through to these meetings. The preventative actions towards reducing any further risk of harm continues to be at the forefront of the enquiry stage, with the emphasis on the individual's personal outcomes being centre of the safeguarding process.

4.5.3 Physical abuse 37%(167) and neglect 29% (127) were the most common types of abuse reported, again similar to previous years and following national trends. It is important to note that more than one category of abuse can be reported within a safeguarding report. (See Appendix 1 for safeguarding data 2020 – 21)

4.5.4 In September 2020 we saw the implementation of Section 5 of the Wales Safeguarding Procedures: *Safeguarding Allegations / Concerns about Practitioners and Those in a Position of Trust*. These cases have steadily increased over the months .i.e. Q2 there was one referral, Q3 a further seven and in Q4 a total of ten referrals were received. All referrals were taken through to a strategy discussion meeting, with representation

from multi-agencies to determine if the threshold had been met and those that were appropriate were taken to a formal strategy meeting under the Section 5 process.

4.6 Performance Indicators

We have continued to maintain our performance in relation to the performance indicator, with 99% of enquires completed within the 7 working day timescale for 2020/2021. Whilst there has been a reduction in the overall number of Reports in this period, maintaining and improving on this performance indicator at an unprecedented time, is a good indication of the team's dedication and commitment to safeguarding those citizen of Denbighshire who are deemed to be Adults at Risk.

4.7 Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS) activity 2020 - 21

4.7.1 There has been a slight increase in the number of applications received: 336 compared to 326 last year.

4.7.2 169 authorisations have been granted, an increase from 140 last year. However these overall figures fail to capture the extent of the progress that has been made during the final quarter of this year. Due to changes in practice as result of Covid19, we were having to grant shorter authorisations during the past 12 months, resulting in an increase in the overall DoLS waiting list. However in the final quarter of this year we have seen a 36% (Q3=273, Q4=174) reduction in the DoLS waiting list and 78% (Q3=37, Q4=66) increase in the number of assessments completed within this final quarter. It is hoped that this increase in authorisations and reduction in our waiting list will place Denbighshire in a better place to work towards our preparation for the implementation of Liberty Protection Safeguards (LPS) in April 2022.

4.7.3 A total of 27 applications have been submitted to Court in relation to Deprivation in Domiciliary Settings. This is ongoing work that's incorporated within routine casework in the Complex Disability team, and will stand the team in good stead once LPS have been implemented.

4.8 Key achievements 2020 -21

4.8.1 We have maintained the improvements against the Welsh Government performance indicator of completing section 126 enquiries within 7 working days.

4.8.2 The reintroduction of quarterly audits of a sample of safeguarding cases in order to review quality and consistency of work, ensuring 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. s126 enquiry stage during Covid19.

4.8.3 Adapting to new ways of working .i.e. holding strategy meetings and Section 5 strategy discussion meetings via virtual platforms. Maintaining good representation to these meetings has supported good practice and ensured that the process is person centred rather than being process led .i.e. Adult Protection Conferences.

4.8.4 An agenda and referral template for Section 5 *Safeguarding Allegations/Concerns about Practitioners and Those in a Position of Trust* have been developed and used, to allow for any additional information to be shared with the Local Authority, when information is minimal within the adult safeguarding report. Also the process on Paris for recording Section 5 work has been aligned with practice within Children's Services.

4.8.5 Reduction in the DoLS waiting list as a result of additional staff resources instigated to support the safeguarding duties within Denbighshire as part of business continuity.

4.8.6 Developing closer links within other teams such as Contracts & Monitoring and Single Point of Access (SPoA), has ensured that any safeguarding themes or trends are identified more quickly. Improving our communication and sharing of relevant information has supported good practice and further embedded the implementation of the Wales Safeguarding Procedures.

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?

- 10.1 The delegation of s126 enquiries to other agencies is still to be implemented and there is a risk this could have a direct impact on the 'Performance Indicator.' Work is ongoing on a regional basis, with a pilot planned between Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board (BCUHB), Anglesey and Wrexham Local Authorities to explore what support will be required to those who undertake duties on behalf of the Local Authority.
- 10.2 There continues to be some uncertainty in preparation for the Liberty Protection Safeguards (LPS). Whilst the date for implementation has been confirmed as April 2022, there has still been no consultation on the Codes of Practice or the content of the training required to implement. However, we continue to manage the volume of work and have systems in place prioritising the applications received. We have supported 5 Social Workers and 5 Occupational Therapists to access the remote Best Interest Assessor (BIA) module made available through Chester University. Staff have also accessed BIA Legal Updates through use of Webinar via Edge Training. These on-line options for learning have made these opportunities for updating knowledge and practice more accessible and easier to fit into busy work schedules. We hope to introduce Learning Groups over the next 12 months around specific topics.
- 10.3 With the easing of restrictions, Providers are looking to reintroducing access for families and paid Relevant Person's Representatives (RPRs) into care homes. The previous risk that was highlighted last year regarding an individual's right to challenge could be missed/compromised, should now be alleviated. There is still the possibility that during the winter months, we may well see Providers needing to review access again. It is therefore likely that we will need to grant shorter authorisations placing added pressure on the DoLS waiting list, which could further impact on our preparation for LPS in 2022.

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.

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