

Report to	Partnerships Scrutiny Committee
Date of meeting	7th July 2022
Lead Member / Officer	Councillor Elen Heaton, Lead Member for Health & Social Care/ Alaw Pierce, Service Manager Special Services
Report author	Nerys Tompsett, Team Manager Safeguarding Adults Service
Title	Annual Report on Safeguarding Adults in Denbighshire 1st April 2021 – 31st March 2022

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' adult protection activity, with the continued 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 full implementation of the Wales Safeguarding Procedures including the reports relating to a Person in a Position of Trust (Section 5 referrals).

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.

Adult Protection Activity in Denbighshire 2019 – 2022

Year	Reports(referrals) received
2019 - 2020	597
2020 - 2021	354
2021 - 2022	324

4.4 Headlines from 2021 - 22 Statistics

- Overall there has been a slight reduction (8%) in numbers of Adult at Risks reports received in comparison to the same period last year. We continue to receive a large number of telephone calls into the Safeguarding team from provider services and professionals, who are seeking advice or guidance relating to safeguarding issues. These calls are monitored to support further analysis of any possible themes or trends that might be emerging, that may require an additional approach to support any wider safeguarding actions.
- We saw significant increase in Adult at Risks reports when the Social Services & Wellbeing Act came into force in April 2016. This incremental increase continued, peaking in 2018 and then started to show signs of decreasing as the 'duty to report' became clearer for professionals. During this period of increased numbers of Adult at Risks reports, it is important to note that this did not result in an increase in the number of cases that proceeded to a strategy meeting. However, during Covid there has been further changes in relation to the number of Adult at Risks reports being submitted to the Local Authority, which has been experienced across other Local Authorities in North Wales. With the obvious restrictions such as lockdowns, less contact with outside services and/or families, this may have contributed to this change, but we continue to monitor and work closely with partner agencies to ensure that safeguarding is high on the agenda.
- In late 2020 we saw the implementation of Section 5 process .i.e. *Allegations/Concerns about Practitioners and Those in a Position of Trust*. In 2021 to 2022 we are now able to capture a full year of data, to support further comparisons moving forward. All Section 5 referrals (25) were taken through to a strategy discussions 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. The conclusion for those cases that progressed to formal strategy meeting, a decision was made on the balance of probability whether the concerns were substantiated or not i.e. substantiated, unsubstantiated unfounded deliberate invented or malicious. Of the 28% (7) of the referrals that went forward, the outcomes in 12% (3) of these cases the concerns were substantiated, with the

remaining 16% (4) cases being still on going i.e. awaiting formal outcomes. Within these 28% (7) cases there has been 16% (4) cases where a criminal investigation has or is still ongoing. There is 1 case which has progressed to a successful prosecution and 10 month prison sentence.

- Physical abuse 33%(137) and neglect 32% (133) were the most common types of abuse reported, again similar to previous years and following national trends.

NB: More than one category of abuse can be reported within a safeguarding report.

(See Appendix 1 for safeguarding data 2021 – 22)

- As reported last year, 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*. And there continues to be a steady increase of reports considered under this section. A National Task and Finish Group is currently considering Section 5 focusing on providing clarity around some of the principles. The outcome of this group's work will inform any further development we may need to consider in terms of the Section 5 work.

4.5 Performance Indicators

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

We have continued to maintain our performance in relation to the performance indicator, with 99.7% of enquires completed within the 7 working day timescale for 2021/22. Whilst there has been a small reduction in the overall number of reports in this period, maintaining and improving on the previous performance indicator during this challenging year, continues to evidence the team's dedication and commitment to safeguarding those citizen of Denbighshire who are deemed to be Adults at Risk.

4.6 Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS) – activity 2021 - 22

- There has been an increase in the number of applications received: 423 (+26%) compared to 336 last year.
- 236 authorisations have been granted, an increase from 169 (+40%) last year. This increase can largely be attributed to new ways of working brought about by Covid19 and needing to protect those at risk .i.e. digital platforms for the completion of assessments. There has also been an increase in Best Interest Assessor (BIA) capacity, by temporary recruitment of 2 full time BIA's, in an attempt to reduce our waiting list as we prepare for the implementation of Liberty Protection Safeguards (LPS) in 2023.
- A further 13 applications have been submitted to Court in relation to Deprivation in Domiciliary Settings. This is ongoing work that's incorporated within routine casework in Complex Disability team, and will stand the team in good stead once

LPS have been implemented.

4.7 Key achievements 2021 -22

- In 2021 – 2022 we have completed 99.7% s126 enquiries within 7 working days, demonstrating that we have maintained and even improved on last year's data against the Welsh Government performance indicator.
- The completion of all 4 quarterly audits, by identifying a sample of safeguarding cases in order to review from a quality and consistency perspective of safeguarding work, with the focus on s126 process. These audits allow for regular intervals the opportunity to check and review that good practice has not been compromised by the success of the performance indicator.
- A further monitoring for quality assurance has been completed on the Section 5 process. The audit focused on quality of referrals, involvement of relevant professionals, and the safeguarding action taken in relation to the perceived risk and how these risks will be managed moving forward. Section 5 cases will now form a part of our yearly quality assurance auditing process during the next 12 months. We will aim to identify key areas of good practice and areas which require further improvements.
- We have maintained the new ways of working i.e. holding strategy meetings and Section 5 strategy discussion meetings via virtual platforms. We continue good representation to these meetings and will monitor closely as partner agency review their new ways of working to ensure this process is still fit for purpose as we move forward.
- Reviewing and developing a new Adult Protection and Support Order process, focusing on number of Authorised Officers (AOs), recruitment process and training needs. Developing a practice guide to support practitioners with the options and processes to consider when being presented with reasons to believe that an individual is at risk of harm.

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?

- The delegation of s126 enquiries to other agencies is still to be implemented across North Wales. The pilot planned between BCU, Anglesey and Wrexham local authorities, is still on going and its findings yet to be shared i.e. what worked well and what did not. Without a full understanding of outcomes from this pilot and possibility that this could be rolled out across the region, increases the risk in relation to our Performance Indicator.
- Liberty Protection Safeguards (LPS) implementation date has been deferred again to April 2023. There is a consultation period due to end June 2022 and its findings may have direct implications to the Codes of Practice for LPS. The content of the training required to implement LPS is yet to be formalised or agreed. These outcomes will then inform what actions are required to meet our statutory obligations for the implementation of LPS.

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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