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North Wales Adult Safeguarding Integration and/or Collaboration: The way forward

Context

The Social Services and Well-Being (Wales) Bill and Sustainable Social Services: A Framework for Action brings a different context to adult safeguarding. The current arrangements is a network arrangement for sharing information and peer support. The emerging view is that there is a need to move the adult safeguarding agenda into a robust regional framework.

Purpose of the report

This report

- 1) Presents the options
- 2) Is a vehicle for decision making
- 3) Explores the appetite for seeking closer synergy across adult and children safeguarding

These were initial discussions in December which paved the way to a regional North Wales Workshop which was held on 25th January 2013 with a range of stakeholders from statutory organisations. The discussions at that workshop have influenced the formulation of the options within this report.

Background

The Social Services and Well-Being (Wales) Bill and Sustainable Social Services: A Framework for Action places a requirement upon partners to develop the current adult protection arrangements into an adult safeguarding agenda both locally, regionally and nationally. A

statement letter from Gwenda Thomas, Deputy Minister for Children and Social Services dated 19th October 2012 communicated some clear messages around Welsh Government's direction of travel in light of its recent consultation on the Bill. Furthermore, part 7 of the Bill relating to safeguarding clearly states the requirements for Safeguarding Adults Boards and clearly sets out the objectives of the Safeguarding Adults Board as:

(a) To protect adults within its area who:

- Have needs for care and support (whether or not a local authority is meeting any of those needs, and
- Are experiencing, or are at risk of, abuse or neglect, and
- To prevent those adults within its area from becoming at risk of abuse and neglect

The Bill also prescribes that Safeguarding Boards must produce an 'annual plan' at the beginning of each financial year setting out its proposals for achieving its objectives within that year and a report must be published by 31st July of each year on how it has exercised its functions in the preceding financial year, and the extent to which it implemented the proposals in its annual plan for the preceding financial year.

The WG agenda therefore, is firmly set around the requirement to develop Adult Safeguarding Boards as a means of strengthening adult safeguarding across Wales.

Statutory regulation on Adult Safeguarding Boards will set out the areas in Wales for safeguarding boards (to be referred to as safeguarding board areas). In reflecting upon discussions during consultation it is anticipated that the North Wales footprint will remain one region.

Joint working with Children Safeguarding Board

Notwithstanding the fact that it is fully acknowledged that the complexities and possible risks and practice concerns associated with integrating safeguarding frameworks across both children and adult services need to be carefully considered, this is however, something that should be pursued. This would place North Wales as a region in a position of strength as the national direction of travel evolves and is clarified.

Engagement of Elected Members in Adult Safeguarding

Consideration needs to be given to the active engagement of elected members within adult safeguarding. There is acknowledgement that this has been in need of some strengthening and is inconsistent. This will provide a framework of ensuring political accountability for safeguarding.

Current Landscape – Adult Safeguarding

Currently the Local Authorities of Wrexham, Flintshire, Denbighshire and Conwy undertake adult safeguarding activities on an individual basis. Gwynedd and Anglesey Council's however are working collaboratively to develop a joint Safeguarding Adults Board. Although this development is currently in its infancy a shadow joint board has now been established and has met once.

The 3 sub-regional Local Safeguarding Children's Board (LSCB) in North Wales has already taken steps ahead of recent communications from Welsh Government to develop a shadow LSCB.

Summary of Options to be considered

- 1 Maintain the status quo – 4 North Wales Adult Safeguarding Board and 1 Sub-regional Adult Safeguarding Board (Gwynedd and Anglesey)
- 2 Three North Wales Adult Safeguarding Boards
- 3 Single North Wales Adult Safeguarding Board
- 4 Two-tier North Wales Adult Safeguarding Board

The feedback from the workshop held on 25th January 2013 can be found in Appendix 1.

Options

- 1 Maintain the status quo – 4 North Wales Safeguarding Boards and 1 Sub-regional Adult Safeguarding Board (Gwynedd and Anglesey)**

Given the clear direction provided within the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Bill, the option of maintaining the status quo in 4 of the North Wales Local Authority areas is unlikely

to be commended by the Welsh Government. A North Wales Adult Protection forum exists in North Wales however, this is a network arrangement for information sharing and peer support.

This option is least favourable as:

- It is not in line with the requirements of the Deputy Minister
- It is resource intensive
- It does not bring about efficiency
- The current arrangement is a network and not a decision making forum

2 Three Sub-regional North Wales Adult Safeguarding Boards (Wrexham and Flintshire, Denbighshire and Conwy, Gwynedd and Ynys Mon).

There are a number of strengths and weaknesses to this option; the most significant weakness is the requirement for appropriate resources and duplication of work in particular for the regionally structured organisations such as North Wales Police and Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board. This model is already being progressed by Gwynedd and Anglesey and therefore, there will be shared-learning available to develop this model. Local Authority members and officers may find a three board structure may initially be more palatable and more acceptable from a governance point of view.

This model would also mirror the established LSCB structure and again learning from this development would be shared.

This option is not favourable as:

- It is not within the spirit of the Welsh Government's footprint underpinning collaboration across boundaries.
- It does not bring about efficiency and sufficiently reduce duplication
- It continues to be resource intensive
- It is not conducive to innovative collaboration and forward thinking around governance and accountability frameworks across agency boundaries
- May be deemed as being overly cautious.

3 Single North Wales Adult Safeguarding Board

Given that 4 Local Authorities currently have individual safeguarding arrangements and Gwynedd and Anglesey sub-regional arrangements, it would be challenging to comfortably move from the current structure to a single board. Governance and accountability arrangements would need to be considered carefully and there would be potential dilution of links with local services and remoteness from practice. This model would also run the risk of becoming detached from frontline staff and the public. Given that safeguarding currently lies within individual or sub-regional arrangements Local Authority members and officers would need to be assured that this model would provide transparent and robust governance and accountability for adult safeguarding as the statutory duty for safeguarding lies with the Director of Social Services as clearly stated in the Roles and Responsibilities of that post.

The strengths of this option include the potential for greater efficiency, reduced duplication and effective shared learning. A single safeguarding board also brings the potential to bring a broader range of skills, knowledge and experience to the safeguarding agenda. This option would no doubt, be preferred by Welsh Government and organisations that work across North Wales.

This option is less favourable as:

- Whilst the aspiration of the Deputy Minister is to have regional adult safeguarding board, to move from a local arrangement straight to a regional arrangement would require great confidence in the new model and the North Wales footprint covers a very large geographical area
- It would be too remote from practice
- It would prove hard to hold a large number of representative agencies to account
- The agenda could become unmanageable which would impact on the effectiveness of the Board
- Governance issues and accountability would become remote and impact on statutory duty of the Director of Social Services.

4 Two tier- North Wales Adult Safeguarding Board

This option would enable 3 x 2 Local Authorities to work together to develop a Safeguarding Board and to develop using the learning from the current Gwynedd and Anglesey model. However, there are elements of adult safeguarding that could conceivably be carried out on a regional basis for example, training, performance and audit, policy, and serious case reviews.

This structure would provide a balance between regional working and being able to work effectively across boundaries whilst continuing to maintain local links.

With regard to weaknesses this option would present the most potential for confusion around accountability, securing representation at the right level for both sub-regional and regional elements and would require strong leadership at each level. This could impact on the capacity of senior managers of all agencies; some members would find that they have more meetings to attend than previously, for example however, this would have less capacity implications on pan North Wales organisations.

The most notable strengths for this options include the fact that this model is now being piloted in children safeguarding via the LSCB's and early indications would suggest its potential as a future model that could be fully integrated. Duplication would be lessened, and it allows for innovation, evolution and offers the potential to reduce demand on resources, both people and financial. The general broad direction of travel as outlined in the Bill is a National Board for Children and Adults. There is lots to learn from children safeguarding boards and this structure would allow us to achieve equity.

This is the favoured option as:

- This model is currently being piloted in children's safeguarding through the LSCB model and early indications are encouraging and positive
- Gwynedd and Anglesey have started on the journey of establishing a joint board and the learning from this is available
- It allows for the structures to be developed in ways which strike an acceptable and well-managed balance between local and regional agendas
- It maintains the ability to be responsive to local issues and practice

- The regional adult safeguarding elements could create a higher profile and increase the North Wales Board's influence regionally and nationally
- This model would be more manageable for the pan-North Wales organisations
- It strengthens the collaborative agenda in North Wales
- Having the same model for adults and children safeguarding boards will bring about equity for both adult and children safeguarding in readiness for any direction from Welsh Government
- Over time, this model will bring about the opportunity to merge some common areas of safeguarding practice across children and adults e.g. training, policies and procedures, performance and audit, serious case reviews.
- This model will also bring a real opportunity for integrated business support to underpin children and adult safeguarding across North Wales.

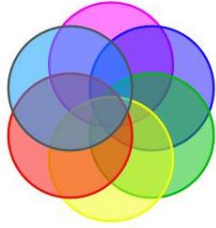
5 The favoured option – a two tier Adult Safeguarding Board

The potential structure for this option consists of:

- One Regional Adult Safeguarding Board
- Three Sub-regional Adult Safeguarding Boards (Gwynedd/Anglesey; Conwy/Denbighshire; Flintshire/Wrexham)
- To underpin the above, four regional sub-groups:
 - o Training
 - o Policies and procedures (linking to National work)
 - o Performance and Audit
 - o Serious case reviews

Next Steps:

- 1) The collaborative of NWSSIC, NWASH and safeguarding leads for the Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board, North Wales Police and North Wales Ambulance Service are invited to form a view around the preferred option.
- 2) Provide a clear steer to the current adult protection forum in relation to their existence and any forward work programme
- 3) Consider the resources needed to take forward



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APPENDIX 1

Regional Adult Safeguarding Workshop Friday 25th January 2013 Optic, St Asaph Business Park

A North Wales Adult Safeguarding Workshop was arranged via NWSSIC, led by Jenny Williams, Director of Social Services, CCBC who is the North Wales lead Director for Safeguarding. The event was attended by an excellent mix of colleagues from Local Authorities, BCUHB, North Wales Police and the North Wales Ambulance Service.

The following attached documents were available to attendees either through prior circulation or on the day:



The workshop was opened by Jenny Williams and introductions were made. The opening presentation is attached:

[attach Jenny's presentation]

A presentation was then given by Anwen Davies, Head of Adult Services, Anglesey Council and Ann Lloyd Jones, Senior Manager, Adult Services, Gwynedd as they have already started on a journey to transform their individual POVA forums into a joint Safeguarding Board.



During both these presentations there was recognition that in Gwent a number of Authorities are working together to develop a joint Safeguarding Board and attached is a presentation "Improving

Adults Safeguarding: Establishing the Gwent wide Adult Safeguarding Board” prepared by Stephen Gillingham of Blaenau Gwent Council. This will provide some insight into the work undertaken thus far in Gwen.



GWASB ADSS
Presentation Novemb

Workshop Session 1

Attendees were asked to think about Adult Safeguarding in the context of local, sub-regional and regional. The feedback from this session included:

General

Robust accountability is key

Moving from local straight into regional is a huge step

Need to have clear direction whichever model is agreed

Statutory responsibility for safeguarding sits at different levels within partner organisations e.g.

Director of Social Services in some

Opportunity to develop an equal structure to that of Children’s.

Local

Local Authority members may prefer and feel more confident in a local approach

Vast variation in the resources available per Local Authority area

Sub-regional

Sub-regional is more suitable for pan North Wales organisations

Already established joint working i.e. 3 x 2 LA’s

May be more acceptable to members

Would mirror the current LSCB arrangements

Current capacity in children’s sub-groups could be utilised

Prudent to move to a sub-regional model initially to replicate the Gwynedd/Anglesey work

Sub-regional children’s model seems ‘manageable’ at present

Regional

Challenging without a sub-regional framework

Pan North Wales organisations would benefit more than Local Authorities

Provides opportunity to pool resources and use more efficiently
Geography and demographics challenging
Difficult to 'sell' to members
Some elements need to become regional as quickly as possible e.g. data collection
Corporate agenda
Systems approach could be used from the start
Variation in the resources per Local Authority area
Initially introduce a shadow regional board

The afternoon workshop sessions provided the opportunity to consider 5 specific areas in more depth based on the areas within the SSIA toolkit:

- 1) Establishing the Board's Strategic direction and Improving Outcomes
- 2) Establishing effective governance
- 3) Building capacity
- 4) Operational Delivery
- 5) Commissioning, QA Performance and resource management

Feedback from this session included:

Establishing the Board's Strategic Direction and Improvement Outcomes

The Board needs to have a clear vision of the outcomes it wants to achieve:

- Board to agree the outcomes
- Appropriate people to be around the table
- Links and cascading of information to bridge the knowledge gaps
- Clearly defined strategic objectives
- Consider already established 10 priorities
- Identify most appropriate Chair (?Independent)
- Co-chair – ?service user or Carer
- Communication strategy
- Baseline measures – performance framework
- Map progress
- Common vision – what is it?
- Strategic priorities
- Advise on plan
- Service user involvement

- Feedback from family early on
- Adult Proactive review?
- Best Practice guidance
- Mechanism for feedback
- Safeguarding issues – solution might not be a POVA investigation – priority is to put measures in place to protect
- Prevention needs to be considered – balance between prevention and protection
- Sub-groups – need to include DOLS, and MH legislation
- Support carers and support abusers in addressing their behaviours.

Establish Effective Governance

- Determine membership at the appropriate level to regional/sub-regional
- Independent Chair for regional level
- Mechanism to determine multi-agency representation and service users
- Robust Terms of Reference for both groups
- Probably membership at different levels to each Board
- Effective links between Boards
- Element of shared governance and accountability between regional and national level
- Clearly agreed agendas to avoid duplication i.e. terms of reference for each group crucial
- Locally based organisations need governance structures to enhance assurance
- Regional Board may ask a sub-regional Board to lead on a particular issue or work stream
- Regional Board should provide strategic direction and develop work plan (strategic) taking sub-regional issues
- Taking the political (local) dimensions into account how to take 6 LA's and get appropriate reps
- WAF
- Minute taking and dissemination responsibilities
- Reporting mechanism
- How to involve service users – consider this carefully
- Identify key priorities
- Develop website to share information
- Links between adult protection and other e.g. CP, DV
- Community safety partnerships – how does communication happen?
- Development of training strategy

- What is the role of the regulator?
- Financial implications

Building Capacity

- Adult processes should reflect existing children's processes and aligned where appropriate to eliminate and reduce duplication and increase capacity
- MAPPA – where does this sit?
- DA for a – how are they linked?
- Collective regional intelligence should release operational capacity
- Creates opportunity for early intervention work
- Creating standardised reporting frameworks, practice and referral thresholds at the outset should ensure common practice and less 'purposeless' work
- Clear Terms of Reference and reporting responsibilities for all groups again to avoid duplication
- Opportunity to review 'what works' in children's LSCB/Safeguarding on local, regional and national level
- Identify whether there is duplication or gaps e.g. policy groups
- Avoid bureaucracy and being SMART about key members, agenda and being outcome focussed.

Operational Delivery

- Serious care reviews – need national guidance that talks to all – none feed into each other. No read across departments which causes confusion and delay.
- Effective delivery – must begin strategically to feed down and guide practice – accountability at board level and independent member
- Reporting framework for each organisation - also for each independent/individual forum, must feed up/down and be accountable to the Board
- Information sharing
- Where will adult protection sit in hierarchy
- Remit and purpose – pre-requisite to delivery
- Standardisation of data collection/reporting
- Standardisation of POVA Co-ordinator role and the strategy meeting
- Training for DLM should be clarified/standardised
- Issues in relation to data protection, MC, DOLS

- Guidance regarding when to become involved when service user does not consent
- Different thresholds – police very different
- 2 referrals at present to children and adults – duplication for staff – need one point of contact also – same referral also for MARAC
- For people who work across Authorities – referral practice different in each area = not best quality referrals as a result
- Escalating concerns dealt with differently across local authorities – absence from joined up governance lead
- Clarity regarding what is POVA and what is practice
- Regional training group with steer/direction that feeds into each agency – needs clarity of role and responsibility
- Need to link into LSCB agenda for training.

Commissioning, QA Performance and resource Management

- Information should be available for self- funders to inform them where they can go for support – regional approach to this information/material
- Quality assurance and service standards to be explicit within contracts and specifications
- Contract monitoring needs to be robust in the areas of safeguarding and dignity
- Reviews should be centred on the individual but look at a whole range of aspects
- Standardised application of the POVA/Escalating concerns guidance
- Collate an overview of what is happening in terms of individual providers
- Contract monitoring co-ordination and intelligence can be regional but local delivery is required
- Standard contract monitoring practices/procedures/framework across partner organisations not just LA's

Next Steps/Way Forward

Drawing on the views captured, an options paper to be developed following this workshop. First draft will be shared with the current POVA forum and following any amendments will be circulated to colleagues within partner organisations. These options will need to be considered so that the next stage can be agreed.

