

## **ADULT CARE AND WELL BEING OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL 28 JANUARY 2021**

### **SAFEGUARDING ADULTS**

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#### **Summary**

1. The Independent Chair and Board Manager of the Worcestershire Safeguarding Adults Board (WSAB) have been invited to discuss progress and developments in safeguarding vulnerable adults in Worcestershire. This will include the Board's Annual Report 2019-2020.
2. The Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Adult Social Care has also been invited.
3. Safeguarding vulnerable adults is an important and ongoing part of the work of the Adult Care and Well Being Overview and Scrutiny Panel and an annual update on the work of the Safeguarding Board is provided to the Panel. The minutes of the Panel's previous discussion on 6 November 2019 are available here: [agenda and minutes of previous discussion](#)

#### **Background**

4. The Safeguarding Adults Board is an independent board, which seeks to promote wellbeing and reduce the risk of harm for people with care and support needs. Statutory partners include the County Council, Clinical Commissioning Groups, National Health Services and West Mercia Police.
5. Safeguarding in Worcestershire has a dedicated website: [www.safeguardingworcestershire.org.uk](http://www.safeguardingworcestershire.org.uk) which includes useful information, definitions, information about who does what, newsletters, the Board structure, leaflets and WSAB Board papers.
6. The Care Act 2014 placed safeguarding adults on a statutory footing for the first time and made safeguarding boards a legal requirement, although Worcestershire's Board has been in place for several years. Derek Benson, the Independent Chair of the Safeguarding Adults Board is also the Chair of the Worcestershire Safeguarding Children Partnership.
7. The Care Act states that the main objective of a Safeguarding Adults Board is to assure itself that local safeguarding arrangements and partners act to help and protect adults in its area who:
  - have needs for care and support (whether or not the local authority is meeting any of those needs) and;
  - are experiencing, or at risk of, abuse or neglect; and

- as a result of those care and support needs are unable to protect themselves from either the risk of, or the experience of abuse or neglect.

8. Regular meetings have taken place between the Panel and the Safeguarding Board Chair since the Panel's more in-depth scrutiny review of safeguarding adults in 2011, which recommended regular dialogue between this Panel, the Worcestershire Safeguarding Adults Board Chair and the Director and Cabinet Member, as part of the Panel's monitoring role.

## **Worcestershire Safeguarding Adults Board Annual Report 2019-20**

9. Worcestershire Safeguarding Adults Board Annual Report 2019-20 is attached at Appendix 1, and is available on the Safeguarding Worcestershire website:

[Annual Report](#)

10. The Annual Report provides an overview of the activity of the Board during 2019-2020. This includes the safeguarding activity that took place to protect people in Worcestershire with care and support needs at risk of harm during this period.

11. The guidance provided by the Care Act clearly sets expectations for the minimum content for Safeguarding Adults Boards (SAB) and Annual Reports (Schedule 2.4 (1) a-g). Early in the COVID-19 pandemic the Department of Health and Social Care contacted all SABs in recognition of the impact that it might have in meeting its statutory duties, including Annual Reports. The letter stated, given that local challenges may vary each SAB should decide on whether to delay or reduce the coverage of the report. Whilst the WSAB produced an Annual Report to its normal timescale there has been a slight reduction in the level of data available for this report.

12. Overall good progress was made against the objectives for the year against a background where statutory partners have continued to face significant funding pressures and increased workloads.

13. Safeguarding Adults Reviews (SARs) have continued to be a significant area of work the Board. During 2019/20 there were 12 referrals requesting consideration for SAR to be undertaken. 5 of these resulted in the recommendation that a SAR should be commissioned. Of the remaining 7 referrals, 4 resulted in single agency actions being recommended, 2 referrals required no additional actions and 1 decision was left pending due to COVID-19.

14. Key achievements during the year included the launch of the joint website with the Children's Safeguarding Partnership; we also re-launched our quarterly newsletters; another successful annual learning event was held this time exploring the use of strength-based approaches in Safeguarding; the formal establishment of a safeguarding adults network with bi-annual meetings and the publication of a new countywide training strategy.

15. Cross cutting work continued to evolve, particularly around exploitation. A Task and Finish Group was established to take forward this agenda out of which two of projects have been established.

16. Section 4 of the Annual Report, on the Activity and Performance, is the only section which is not at the same level as previous reports. Whilst some data was received from Adult Social Care, it was not as comprehensive as previous years. This was in part due to the migration of information systems which took place mid-year (November 2019). With information for the full year being held on two systems, not all the data had been brought together at the point of completing the report. Unfortunately, the COVID-19 situation created additional challenges in capacity to manage this process which added to the delay.

17. Activity data saw an increase in the level of safeguarding concerns reported compared to the previous year, the measurement of safeguarding concerns is in part due to the way data from Framework I has been migrated to Liquid Logic, so it was not possible to make a direct comparison to previous years. The remaining data we were able to access shows a similar pattern to previous years.

18. The report includes contributions from each of the key partner agencies of the Board. These illustrate the work that is taking place across the County by the partner agencies to protect adults at risk from harm.

19. Discussion of the Annual Report provides the Panel with an opportunity to verify that systems across Worcestershire, including those of the County Council, are working well to safeguard Worcestershire's vulnerable adults. Discussions also enable the Panel to keep up to date with safeguarding statistics and trends, and to explore any issues identified through serious case reviews, and also through the Panel's own scrutiny work.

20. Worcestershire Safeguarding Adults Board Annual Report is also presented to the Health and Wellbeing Board.

## **Purpose of the Meeting**

21. The Panel has the opportunity to:

- learn about the role of the Safeguarding Adults Board
- understand and discuss key safeguarding statistics from this year's Worcestershire Safeguarding Adults Board's report
- identify any further information needs or potential areas for scrutiny.

## **Supporting Information**

Appendix 1 - Worcestershire Safeguarding Adults Board Annual Report 2019/20, also available on the website: [Annual Report](#)

## **Contact Points**

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## **Background Papers**

In the opinion of the proper officer (in this case the Assistant Director for Legal and Governance) the following are the background papers relating to the subject matter of this report:

- Agendas and minutes of the Adult Care and Well-being Overview and Scrutiny Panel on 6 November 2019, 12 September 2018, 27 September 2017, 21 November 2016, 22 January and 13 October 2015 and 5 September 2013  
All agendas and minutes are available here: [agendas and minutes](#)