

CABINET

25 MAY 2023

WORCESTERSHIRE SAFEGUARDING ADULTS BOARD

ANNUAL REPORT 2021-2022

Relevant Cabinet Member

Councillor Adrian Hardman

Relevant Chief Officer

Director for People

Local Member(s)

N/A

Recommendation

- 1. The Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Adult Social Care recommends that Cabinet receives and considers the Worcestershire Safeguarding Adults Board Annual Report 2021-2022 and any actions resulting from it.**

Background

2. The Worcestershire Safeguarding Adults Board (WSAB) 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, Herefordshire and Worcestershire Integrated Care Board, National Health Services and West Mercia Police.
3. Safeguarding in Worcestershire has a dedicated website: www.safeguardingworcestershire.org.uk which includes useful information, definitions, information about who does what, newsletters, leaflets, the Board structure and Board papers.
4. 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. Keith Brown, the Independent Chair of the Safeguarding Adults Board took up this role in April 2021 and has been invited to attend the Cabinet meeting.
5. 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.

6. The Adult Care and Wellbeing Overview and Scrutiny Panel considered the report at its meeting on 24 March 2023 and the points raised during discussion are in the minutes of the meeting [Extract from the minutes of the Adult Scrutiny Panel re Safeguarding Annual Report](#)

Worcestershire Safeguarding Adults Board Annual Report 2021/22

7. The WSAB Annual Report 2021/22 is available at Appendix 1 and on the Safeguarding Worcestershire website: [Link to WSAB Annual Report 2021/22](#)

8. The Annual Report provides an overview of the activity of the Board during the year. 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.

9. 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.

Safeguarding Adults Reviews

10. This year the WSAB introduced a 12-month pilot for a rapid review process. The concept of a rapid review was introduced for Local Safeguarding Children Partnerships and locally it was found to identify learning effectively and efficiently. As a result, it was possible to agree recommendations to improve systems and share learning more quickly and there has been a positive cost benefit with a saving of approximately 50% in comparison to following the current SAR protocol for all referrals.

11. During 2021/22 6 referrals were received by WSAB. A decision was made that the SAR criteria were met in relation to three referrals and it was agreed that the rapid review process was appropriate.

12. Two SARs were completed and signed off by the Board during the year. All the SARs which were published can be found by following this link. [Safeguarding Adults Reviews](#).

13. One joint Domestic Homicide review (DHR) and SAR is still awaiting Home Office sign-off before publication can take place (approx. 12-18 month back-log due to COVID19).

Board Objectives

14. Objectives for 2021/22 were carried over from the previous year due to the need for Health and Care Staff to prioritise their response to Covid 19. 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.

15. Key achievements include:

- a) an extensive review of the Self-Neglect Policy which was relaunched in May 2022. This was undertaken in consultation with a wide range of stakeholders from across all sectors and based on the approach of no wrong door, it clarifies the support pathway and introduces the concept of significant harm requiring a S42 enquiry. A copy of the policy can be found by following this link [WSAB Self-Neglect and Hoarding Policy](#)
- b) Appointment of an exploitation coordinator to take forward work on adult exploitation.
- c) Establishment of an Assurance Panel to provide oversight and assessment of the implementation of the recommendations of the Thematic Review into Rough Sleeping
- d) Development of a Complex Adult Risk Management (CARM) framework which sets out a clear approach for multi-agency meetings when working with people with complex needs, who are at risk of abuse or neglect but don't meet other social care or safeguarding criteria. Further details on this along with a copy of the CARM framework can be found by following this link [WSAB CARM Framework](#)

16. The Board also continued to develop its engagement of People with Lived Experience and wider stakeholders in developing all of the above work.

17. The board has continued to seek assurance on how organisations have managed the impact of Covid-19. This has been further exacerbated by the difficulties in recruiting and more recent industrial action, so continues to be a focus of the Board.

Activity Data

18. Whilst activity data saw an increase in the number of concerns reported compared to the previous year. (Table 4.1 page 18 of the Annual Report). A large proportion of concerns reported relate to people who have been the subject of concerns previously (Table 4.2 page 18 of the Annual Report)

In Conclusion

19. The Annual Report includes details of 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.

20. 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.

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

Overview and Scrutiny

22. The Adult Care and Wellbeing Panel considered the report at its meeting on 24 April. No specific recommendations have been made by the Panel.

Legal, Financial and HR Implications

23. The Adults Safeguarding Board operates in accordance with the requirements of the Care Act 2014. It reports to the Scrutiny Panel and Health and Wellbeing Board as required

Risk Implications

24. Risk to delivery and consequences

Joint Equality, Public Health, Data Protection and Sustainability Impact Assessments

Not required in relation to this report.

Supporting Information (available electronically)

- Appendix - [WSAB-Annual-Report-2021-22-Final.pdf](https://safeguardingworcestershire.org.uk/WSAB-Annual-Report-2021-22-Final.pdf)
(safeguardingworcestershire.org.uk)

Contact Points

Specific Contact Points for this report

Name, Mark Fitton, Interim Strategic Director for People

Tel: 07873615345

Email: MFitton@worcestershire.gov.uk

Background Papers

In the opinion of the proper officer (in this case the Strategic Director for People) there are no background papers relating to the subject matter of this report: