

## **Safeguarding Overview and Scrutiny Committee - Thursday 05 January 2023**

### **Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Adult Safeguarding Partnership Board (SSASPB) Annual Report 2021/2022**

#### **Recommendations**

I recommend that the Committee:

- a. receives the SSASPB Annual Report in accordance with the requirements of the Care Act 2014 Statutory Guidance (02.09.2022): Chapter 14 Paragraph 160)
- b. provides feedback and challenge to the work of the SSASPB

**Local Member Interest:** N/A

#### **Report of Mr John Wood, Independent Chair of the Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Adult Safeguarding Partnership Board**

#### **Summary**

##### **What is the Overview and Scrutiny Committee being asked to do and why?**

1. What: to scrutinise the work of the Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent Adult Safeguarding Partnership Board (SSASPB), and to consider or comment on the progress that the Board has made since the last report.
2. Why: to comply with the requirements of the Care Act 2014 Statutory Guidance (Chapter 14, Paragraph 160) which states that the SSASPB must send its Annual Report to several bodies including the relevant overview and scrutiny committee meeting of the Local Authority.

#### **Report**

##### **Background**

3. Safeguarding Adult Boards (SABs) became statutory under the Care Act 2014 which states that the main objective of a SAB is to assure itself that local safeguarding arrangements and partners act to help and protect adults in its area who:
  - a. Have needs for care and support

- b. Are experiencing or at risk of abuse and neglect; and
  - c. As a result of those care and support needs are unable to protect themselves from either the risk of, or the experience of abuse and neglect.
4. The SAB has a strategic role to oversee and lead adult safeguarding and is interested in a range of matters that contribute to the prevention of abuse and neglect. These include the safety of patients in local health services, quality of local care and support services, effectiveness of prisons and approved premises in safeguarding offenders and awareness and responsiveness of further education services. SAB partners also have a role in challenging each other and other organisations where there is cause for concern that actions or inactions are increasing the risk of abuse or neglect.
5. The SAB has 3 core duties:
- a. To publish a strategic plan
  - b. To publish an Annual Report
  - c. To undertake Safeguarding Adult Reviews in accordance with criteria
6. This Annual Report of the Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Adult Safeguarding Partnership Board (SSASPB) covers the period 1<sup>st</sup> April 2020 to March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2021. Mr John Wood was the Independent Chair of the Board throughout the period. The report provides an overview of the work of the Board and its sub-groups and illustrated with case studies as to how the focus on Making Safeguarding Personal is making a positive difference to ensuring that adults with care and support needs are supported to make choices in how they will live their lives in a place where they feel safe, secure and free from abuse.
7. Adult Safeguarding Data: Staffordshire overview for the reporting period 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022:
8. The safeguarding partners have established and widely publicised the procedures for reporting concerns that an adult with care and support needs may be experiencing or is at risk of abuse or neglect and unable to protect themselves. Reported concerns can progress to a formal enquiry under Section 42 of the Care Act 2014, if the duty of enquiry requirements are met.

### **Concerns Reported**

9. There have been 13,227 occasions where concerns have been reported that adults with care and support needs may be experiencing or at risk of abuse and neglect. This number has increased by 1,051 from 2020/21

which was reported as 12,176. Following initial assessment it was determined that the duty of enquiry requirement was met in 21% of those reported concerns, a decrease of 4% from 2020/21.

10. In the context of rising numbers of reported concerns and the lower proportions of these meeting the duty of enquiry requirement the reasons for the fluctuations have been explored by safeguarding partners. Safeguarding concerns range from the very serious to the relatively trivial. A safeguarding concern is recorded as such on receipt of the information from the referrer.
11. From examination and assessment a proportion of concerns are found to be low level incidents which have led to no harm to the individual. Concerns such as these are triaged early and with no other actions being needed, they will be closed. Examples include concerns regarding medication errors, service user incidents, missed and late care calls. In other situations, appropriate actions have been taken by others to reduce the risk and therefore a Section 42 enquiry is not required.
12. Arising from the increasing number of reported concerns there are discussions currently amongst safeguarding partners to develop a mutual understanding of what constitutes a safeguarding concern with the aim of ensuring proportionate ongoing management to protect resources to deal with the more serious cases.

## **Age**

11. Of the people subject of a S42 enquiry, those aged 85 to 94 yrs (25.2%) represent the largest cohort, very closely followed by 75 to 84yrs (24.9%). There has been very little change when compared to last year's figures. When drawing comparison with the population statistics of Staffordshire it is evident that adults in the 75yrs+ age groupings are disproportionately over-represented for Section 42 enquiries.

## **Gender**

12. The majority of Section 42 enquiries involve females – 64%. This is disproportionately above the population average for females in Staffordshire which is 50.3%. Females above the age of 75 years are consistently found to be most at risk of abuse or neglect.

## **Ethnicity**

13. The majority of adults involved in a Section 42 enquiry are white - 87.8%. The percentage of the population of Staffordshire who self-identified as white is 93.6%. In 6.2% of the Section 42 enquiries the

ethnicity is 'not known'. This may in part be due to the adult being unable to self-identify. Recording may also contribute to this figure. In future the recently updated version of the Information Management System used by SCC – 'Care Director' may assist in reducing the not knows.

### **Primary Support Reason (PSR)**

14. Physical support continues to be the most common PSR in Staffordshire at 48%. This is followed by mental health support at 14% and learning disability at 9%. It is difficult to accurately interpret these figures because 17% were recorded as 'not known'. This is a reduction when compared to 29% in the previous reporting year. The reasons for the 'not known' are not clear. In part this may be due to cases that are closed at an early stage when the PSR is not known.

### **Type of Abuse**

15. Neglect and Acts of Omission (37%), Financial Abuse (19%) and Physical Harm (17%) continue to be the most prevalent types of abuse and neglect in Staffordshire. This is broadly similar to the figures reported last year.

16. Pages 17 - 23 of the Annual Report contain case studies which exemplify some types of abuse and neglect and the multi-agency response.

### **Location of Abuse**

17. The most reported location of abuse in Staffordshire was the adults' own home at 62%. The next most prevalent locations were nursing home 16% an increase of 5% from 2020/21 and independent residential home 11% which is similar to last year. Put into context the adult may consider their care/residential or nursing home as their 'own home'.

### **Expressed Outcomes met**

18. In Staffordshire 67% of adults subject of a Section 42 enquiry provided a response to the question of whether their desired outcomes from the enquiry had been met in full, partially met or not met. A total of 97% adults of those responding stated that their desired outcomes were fully met or partially met. This is a slight reduction from 98% last year.

19. The reasons why the adults' desired outcomes have not been met have been explored. Amongst the reasons are situations where the outcomes set by the adult are not always achievable. By way of example, in financial abuse cases the adult may want their property/money returned but it cannot be recovered. In some instances, the adult may want staff

members disciplined or sacked etc. and again this is not possible. In some situations, it is because the adult wants to move away from or stay with family but the risks are too high and there is a need for appropriate proportionate action to reduce the risks.

### **The COVID-19 Pandemic**

20. This Annual Report covered the period 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022. At the beginning of the year care homes and adults with care and support needs who were not visible, or unable to receive their usual support, were of huge concern due to the stringent restrictions on social interaction.
21. Safeguarding partners adapted their approaches to become more supportive of front-line operations whilst at the same time remaining vigilant as to the implications for hidden adults arising from shielding; homeless adults and rough sleepers with care and support needs; and the experiences of those adults with care and support needs at increased risk of exploitation and domestic abuse.
22. The Board has adapted its approaches to seeking assurances as to the effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements using a range of methods to communicate and engage. The response to the necessary changes has demonstrated the strength of local partnership working which has become even more cohesive and visible over time.

### **Link to Strategic Plan**

23. The assurance role of the Board supports the following Staffordshire County Council strategic priorities:
24. Encourage good health and wellbeing, resilience and independence

### **Link to Other Overview and Scrutiny Activity**

25. Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards

### **Community Impact**

26. There is no anticipated community impact

### **List of Background Documents/Appendices:**

Appendix 1: Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Adult Safeguarding Partnership Board (SSASPB) Annual Report 2021/22

## Contact Details

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