

Minutes of the Safeguarding Overview & Scrutiny Committee Meeting held on 14 September 2021

Present: Bob Spencer (Chairman)

Attendance

Gill Burnett (Vice-Chairman (Overview))	Gillian Pardesi
Richard Ford (Vice-Chairman (Scrutiny))	Kath Perry, MBE
Peter Kruskonjic	Mike Wilcox

Also in attendance: Johnny McMahon

Apologies: Janet Eagland, Jason Jones and Jill Waring

PART ONE

26. Declarations of Interest

There were none at this meeting.

27. Minutes of the Safeguarding Overview and Scrutiny meeting held on 3 August 2021

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the Safeguarding Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 3 August 2021 be confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

28. Adult Safeguarding Transformation Project

Staffordshire County Council had seen a year on year increase in the number of safeguarding concerns received, equating to a 63% rise since 2017. The Transformation Project had been developed to help address the issues concerned with this increase. The Project started in February 2020 and aimed to ensure the correct processes and resource were in place to deliver the Council's statutory responsibilities for safeguarding.

This increase in demand had led to an increase in time taken to process referrals, however Members were pleased to note that the Staffordshire Adult Safeguarding Team (SAST) reviewed all initial concerns received and risk assessed each one, with priority give to those at most risk.

Members considered detail of the Transformation Project including its review of:

- processes and systems use;
- resource capacity; and,
- quality assurance and performance.

This included changes to the Care Director management system to enable recording of safeguarding concerns against a care provider and help early identification of repeat or frequent issues.

Members received a timeline of Transformation activity with all changes expected to be in place by December 2021, including the additional three full time senior practitioner posts being filled.

The Committee were informed that there had been 1500 safeguarding concerns reported since the beginning of the year and some concerns were shared over the anticipated impact of pandemic lockdown in preventing safeguarding concerns being identified. Comparative data was requested to highlight whether there had been less GP referrals throughout the pandemic than in previous years. Fostering excellent relationships with other organisations, including colleagues in the CCGs, was key to help support the early identification and appropriate referral of safeguarding concerns.

Members heard details of the new quality assurance framework and the regularity of reviews. They requested that quality performance data against the new Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) be shared with the Committee to help in their overview of this work. This will be included on the work programme.

RESOLVED : That:

- a) comparative data with regard to GP referrals during the pandemic compared to the previous year be forwarded to the Committee;
- b) the update on the Adult Safeguarding Transformation, including changes to the Care Director system and processes be welcomed;
- c) the required increase resource capacity within the Staffordshire Adults Safeguarding Team be noted and supported; and,
- d) scrutiny of quality performance data against the KPIs be included on the work programme.

29. Safeguarding Adults on the Cusp of Care

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee were aware that in some instances there were adults within the community who did not meet the requirement for a statutory safeguarding response but who came to the attention of partner agencies where there were high risks to them or the wider community. Currently there was no formal forum to help address such situations and agencies had reported feeling isolated in managing these risks.

A variety of different approaches were shared with Members, including the system used in Stoke-on-Trent which was led by a charitable organisation. Members heard that having a lead organisation other than the local council helped in fostering a more open forum with all organisations taking part feeling they are on a more even footing.

The Committee considered the virtue of creating a similar forum in Staffordshire, including looking at the work of partner organisation and specifically disruptive practice techniques and the disruptive practice toolkit developed by the Police.

RESOLVED: That:

- a) Staffordshire County Council's current position to safeguarding adults on the cusp of care be noted;
- b) the activities that occur within other Local Authorities regarding safeguarding adults be recognised; and
- c) consideration of similar activity being introduced within Staffordshire be included on the work programme.

30. Work Programme

The Committee received a copy of their work programme and noted the following amendments/additions:

- an item to further consider adults on the cusp of care and the possible development of a multi-agency forum be included on the work programme, with further discussion between the Chairman and Vice Chairmen around the most appropriate way to undertake this work;
- quality assurance data for safeguarding adults, considered against their KPIs, be included on the work programme; and
- the request for details of sexual abuse investigation outcomes be withdrawn and removed from the work programme.

Members also received an update of progress with the spotlight piece of work on sexual harassment in schools.

RESOLVED: That the changes to the work programme be agreed.

Chairman