

Meeting:	Adults and wellbeing scrutiny committee
Meeting date:	Thursday 21 September 2017
Title of report:	Herefordshire Safeguarding Adults Board Annual Report 2016/17
Report by:	Chairman, Herefordshire Safeguarding Adults Board

Classification

Open

Decision type

This is not an executive decision

Wards affected

(All Wards);

Purpose and summary

To report on the annual report of the Herefordshire Safeguarding Adults Board (HSAB), which addresses the work of multi-agency partners in Herefordshire in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of adults at risk within the county, including achievements and areas for improvement, and priorities identified for 2017/18.

The attached annual report and business plan allows the committee to undertake effective scrutiny of the council's statutory functions in relation to adult safeguarding. To enable the committee to fulfil its function to review and scrutinise the planning, provision and operation of the safeguarding board in Herefordshire, and to note the actions taken and provide recommendations on these matters.

Recommendation(s)

That:

- (a) the annual report and effectiveness of the safeguarding arrangements for adults at risk in Herefordshire, as assessed by the board, be reviewed;**

- (b) the committee determine any recommendations it wishes to make with a view to further strengthening adult safeguarding in Herefordshire; and**
- (c) the committee determine any areas for inclusion in its future workplan.**

Alternative options

1. There are no alternative options as this is an opportunity for scrutiny to review and challenge the performance of the adult's safeguarding board.

Key considerations

2. From an adults perspective, the introduction of the Care Act 2014 has necessitated a new approach to working with adults at risk, with professionals having to balance the need to protect vulnerable people with the recognition that individuals are entitled to make unwise choices. The Act has also placed domestic abuse firmly as a safeguarding matter. Financial abuse is an ongoing risk to our more vulnerable Herefordshire residents, particularly the elderly, and with an increasingly elderly population the challenges for partners involved in keeping residents safe from such abuse is likely to grow. In addition to these types of abuse, which we know take place within the county, emerging threats such as modern slavery require a co-ordinated and multi-agency response, and these threats are particularly prevalent in areas with significant numbers of migrant workers, such as Herefordshire.
3. The work of the HSAB is a critical element of the ongoing challenge to keep the most vulnerable members of our Herefordshire communities safe from harm. It is well known to the board and the various partner agencies involved in the safeguarding of adults at risk that a number do regrettably come to serious harm. As such, the importance of an effective board and the effective co-ordination of high quality services, as reflected in the annual report, should be recognised.

HSAB annual report 2016/17

4. The strategic priorities for the 2016/17 period remain unchanged from 2015/16. These priorities, together with examples of progress made against them and continuing areas for development, are detailed below.
5. Priority 1 - Partnership working
 - a. Assessment – Continued progress in this area during 2016/17, with future focus being on developing the effectiveness of performance management, particularly in relation to the partnership beyond the council.
6. There is good multi-agency involvement in the board, case studies are presented at every meeting, leading to discussion and debate about agencies and their roles in safeguarding both individually and collectively. Professionals are encouraged to consider the work of other organisations and invitations are issued to additional agencies or individuals to aid this and to improve knowledge and understanding.
7. A key element to effective performance management is the board's ability to collect the right multi-agency data. The council and health partners provide timely and accurate information, however some agencies and, notably the police as one of the principle

partners, are still unable to provide the right information to inform board discussion and decision making. This is a position which is reflected nationally. The Independent Chair is working with the national Police Lead on Adult Safeguarding to secure progress.

8. There is an increasing expectation for 'the community' to look out and care for its own and an increasing need for communities and families to be more involved in the support and delivery of care. The board fully recognises that within this there is potential for safeguarding risk. Added to this, one of the significant challenges is the need to balance the perception of risk with a need to respect and support individuals to live in circumstances, which may in themselves, appear to be risky. The board is working with partner agencies and particularly the voluntary sector to raise awareness and understanding of this balance.
9. Priority 2 - Prevention and protection
 - a. Assessment – Steady progress, with an ongoing need to find an effective means to gather the views of those who have been through the safeguarding process, and maximise the opportunity to engage through current partnership activity with those adults who may be at risk, for example fire safety visits by the fire service.
10. The board has decided that "good mental health", which had been identified as a key priority, would become embedded into all of the work that is undertaken on behalf of the board, rather than be an item in its own right. The board has ensured that reference to mental health is included in all strategies and programmes of work.
11. During the year, the board has been developing a prevention strategy, which supports the development of initiatives to improve prevention, identification and response to abuse and neglect. It draws together work from partner agencies and includes a range of activities aimed at promoting general wellbeing and maintaining independence as a means of reducing vulnerability to exploitation, abuse or neglect. Included in this, is a work plan which will be monitored throughout the year by the task and finish group that has been set up to deliver this piece of work.
12. During the year, the board has been working closely with Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service to develop an improved initiative that will mean that their technicians during a home visit will ask questions about health and wellbeing as well as fire safety. This will lead to individuals being signposted to additional support and services that will maintain their independence and help them to live more safely.
13. Priority 3 - Communications and engagement
 - a. Assessment – Steady progress, however communication will always remain a challenge as requirements, messages and workforce are continually changing.
14. During 2016/17, the board has engaged with a number of forums and events in order to promote its work. During the year, representatives attended the Engaging Communities event in Hereford that was hosted by Primecare and spoke to members of the public about safeguarding, mental capacity and deprivation of liberty. The board also contacted parish magazines and requested that they include safeguarding information within their publications (the majority kindly did).
15. The board is also exploring other innovative ways of sharing safeguarding information with practitioners, for example in conjunction with Herefordshire Clinical Commissioning

Group (CCG) the board has developed bookmarks for professionals that include a quick guide to both the Mental Capacity Act and deprivation of liberty safeguards.

16. Priority 4 - Operational effectiveness

- i. Assessment – Steady progress, with a particular area for future work being to embed the ‘Making Safeguarding Personal’ approach across Herefordshire to the extent it has been achieved by the council, supported by the development of multi-agency training for adult safeguarding.

17. In December 2016, the council presented its findings from an internal review of Making Safeguarding Personal (MSP). The board members agreed an action plan which will ensure leadership to develop and embed improvements across organisations. All partner agencies also committed to promoting MSP and agreed to undertake one activity which would begin to underpin MSP as a principle within their organisation. This activity will be monitored by the board throughout the year.

18. Following on from the 2015 launch of the HSAB workforce development strategy, that included the competency framework, work on a joint HSAB/HSCB (Herefordshire Safeguarding Children Board) workforce development strategy has been completed. This now includes the ability for organisations to have their training validated. The validation scheme requires organisations to show how their training is making a difference to the people who use their services and how the competency framework is used in the organisation to ensure a competent workforce.

19. In 2017/18, the HSAB will continue to prioritise the following areas:

- Develop relationships across agencies that deliver positive changes to safeguarding.
- Ensure Herefordshire residents can recognise safeguarding concerns and know what to do.
- Deliver the messages from the board and recognise the voice of those we safeguard.
- Ensure safeguarding knowledge, processes, systems and structures are embedded across all agencies.

20. The HSAB annual report sets out work plans to deliver on the priority areas.

Community impact

21. The partners represented on the board have statutory responsibilities for services in Herefordshire that safeguard and promote the wellbeing of adults at risk. The board has a statutory duty to scrutinise, challenge and support this work. The HSAB is a key part of the mechanism for challenge, supporting and promoting improvement of these services. The annual report and priorities going forward not only identify areas of safeguarding that require sustained focus and improvement, but also complement and support the work of the other partnerships in Herefordshire, such as the Children and Young People’s Partnership’s focus on early help, neglect and safeguarding, and the Community Safety Partnership’s focus on domestic abuse.

Equality duty

22. Under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, the ‘general duty’ on public authorities is set out as follows:

A public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to - eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

23. The public sector equality duty (specific duty) requires us to consider how we can positively contribute to the advancement of equality and good relations, and demonstrate that we are paying 'due regard' in our decision making in the design of policies and in the delivery of services. As this is a decision on back office functions, we do not believe that it will have an impact on our equality duty.

24. The HSAB pays due regard to The Equality Duty on public bodies and others carrying out public functions, specifically that public bodies consider the needs of all individuals in their day to day work. This is particularly evident for example through the work of HSAB in embedding the 'Making Safeguarding Personal' approach within Herefordshire, so tailoring the service delivered to the individual's particular wants and needs, and ensuring that the voice of the adult informs decisions.

Resource implications

25. The HSAB receives contributions from all partner agencies to fund the organisation and the work of the board. The available budget is identified and reviewed throughout the year and any risks identified; these risks are included within the annual report.

Legal implications

26. Under the Care Act 2014 each local council (authority) must establish a Safeguarding Adults Board. The board has three core duties:

- To develop and publish a strategic plan
- To provide an annual report of how effective the local services have been
- Commission safeguarding adult reviews (SARS)

27. Under statutory guidance the board has a duty to produce an annual report on the effectiveness of safeguarding adults in the area. The report should provide a rigorous and transparent assessment of the performance and effectiveness of local services. It should also identify weaknesses, causes of these and action to be taken to address them.

Risk management

28. There are a number of identifiable risks associated with a reduction in the effectiveness the board. The board has a statutory responsibility to ensure the effectiveness of safeguarding arrangements within Herefordshire. Ineffective safeguarding arrangements directly increase risk to the most vulnerable members of our community, this risk being both high in probability and impact on individuals, evident from previous high profile cases in other areas, which in turn carries legal, political, reputational and financial risks to the partner agencies involved.

29. The current identifiable risks to the effectiveness of the board continue to be financial, as the need for contributing partners to identify savings continues, and organisational as the uncertainty remains to the future board structure. The financial risk is currently mitigated by the board holding modest reserves, combined with recent efficiency savings being identified, and the organisational risk is an indirect one to the adults safeguarding board.
30. The changes to board structure are primarily focused upon children safeguarding boards with amended statutory guidance being expected towards the end of 2017. The safeguarding adult's board, needs to take into consideration the impact of any resulting changes to the children's board on its own area of responsibility. This will ensure continuity is retained, for example transition arrangements for young people at risk of abuse.
31. The HSAB runs a joint risk register with the HSCB and the Community Safety Partnership in order to monitor and manage these risks where appropriate, and this is subject to regular review.

Consultees

None

Appendices

Appendix 1 – HSAB Annual Report 2016/17 and Business Plan 2017/18

Background papers

- None identified.