

<b>Meeting:</b>	<b>Cabinet</b>
<b>Meeting date:</b>	<b>11 February 2016</b>
<b>Title of report:</b>	<b>Herefordshire Safeguarding Children Board (HSCB) annual report 2014/15 Herefordshire Safeguarding Adult Board (HSAB) annual reports 2013/14 and 2014/15</b>
<b>Report by:</b>	<b>Head of safeguarding and review</b>

## **Classification**

Open

## **Key Decision**

This is not a key decision.

## **Wards Affected**

Countywide

## **Purpose**

To inform Cabinet of progress made towards the implementation of the Children and Adults Safeguarding Boards Annual Reports

## **Recommendations**

**THAT:**

- (a) the content of the annual reports and the safeguarding arrangements for children, young people and adults in Herefordshire as assessed by the boards be noted;**
- (b) the strategic priorities identified by the board be used to inform future decision making by the council; and**
- (c) any further areas that the safeguarding boards should be focusing attention upon to provide challenge regarding the council's functions to safeguard**

**vulnerable groups be identified.**

## **Alternative options**

1. This report is to inform and enable cabinet to consider the HSCB and HSAB annual reports. Cabinet could therefore suggest alternative activities or priorities for consider by either Board.

## **Reasons for recommendations**

2. To advise cabinet of the HSCB and HSAB annual reports and priorities and review how these impact on council activity.

## **Key considerations:**

### HSCB

3. Cabinet previously received an annual report from HSCB on 9 October 2014. Cabinet accepted the report and noted the findings to enable making informed decisions with regard to providing and commissioning services for Herefordshire, which support the safeguarding children's agenda.
4. The HSCB annual report for 2014/15 (appendix 1 to this report) identifies:
  - Timescales for assessments of children in need and children at risk of harm has been closely monitored by the board. This has improved from previous years and is an indication of more timely decision making and clearer oversight. These factors continue to be monitored.
  - The report also covers the performance of the board's statutory partners in safeguarding children. Good practice is highlighted as well as areas identified for improvement, including findings of the various regulatory bodies. Details can be found in the annual report.
  - The report addresses the effectiveness of the HSCB itself, and in addition to the areas above, noted as having seen good progress; the issue of child sexual exploitation and children who go missing has also developed through a multi-agency strategy and operational oversight through the MASH.
  - The board uses performance information from all partner agencies, as well as case audits, to help inform the effectiveness of safeguarding services in Herefordshire. The board is continually looking to improve the quality of the information, in order to be better assured that children in Herefordshire are effectively safeguarded.
5. The report also identifies challenges for 2015/16, including:
  - Areas such as child sexual exploitation and children who go missing from home or care remains a priority and the pace in progressing these areas needs to continue.
  - Supporting children who are abused and neglected and the improvement of services to address these needs also remains a priority for the board.

- The board will be actively working to enhance the voice of the child in work with children and families to ensure that the child's views, wishes and understanding are listened to, understood and taken account of in planning and intervention for children.

### HSAB

6. The HSAB annual report for 2013/14 and 2014/15 (appendix 2 to this report) identifies:
7. The report identifies some of the achievements of the HSAB through 2013/14 in response to reports such as the Francis inquiry and Winterbourne View. The board led a campaign to support the ten dignity principles in care services across Herefordshire, as well as focusing on the "making safeguarding personal" agenda. The board also concentrated on improving partnership working, some of this work involved the support of victims of domestic abuse and rural crime. The board also worked to ensure that it was fully compliant with the Care Act 2014.
8. The report also details some of the ways that the partner agencies are working to keep people safe. Four strategic priorities have been identified for 2015/16:
  - To ensure that processes, systems and structures are in place to safeguard and promote the welfare of adults who may be at risk of being abused and/or neglected.
  - HSAB is a truly effective agent for change that has a real impact for adults at risk.
  - To improve the recognition and response to those in need of safeguarding including those who lack capacity to make decisions and drive a person-centred approach to safeguarding adults at risk.
  - To support increased resilience in individuals, families and communities with a focus on raising awareness and empowering people to better protect themselves.
9. The annual report outlines how the HSAB will deliver on these priorities.
10. There has been delay in the timetable for these reports which has been due to changes in the chairing and structure, particularly with the HSCB, and the need for sign off from all partners. The HSAB report covers a two year period. Priorities for 2016/17 are being developed based on the previous years' work, and continuing priorities. Refreshed strategic plans will be completed by the end of March 2016, and scoping is currently under way for the production of the safeguarding annual reports for 2015/16.

## **Community impact**

11. The work of the boards' partners have statutory responsibilities for services in Herefordshire that safeguards and promotes the wellbeing of children, young people and adults. This supports the council's corporate plan delivery objective to safeguard adults to ensure that people are free from physical and emotional abuse, harassment, neglect and self-harm and to protect children and give them a great start in life. The newly published children and young people's plan highlights the detailed actions being progressed in consultation with HSCB with respect to safeguarding of children across the county, and ensuring that the levels of need threshold guidance is effective in enabling the right help to be afforded according to vulnerability and risk.

---

Further information on the subject of this report is available from  
John Roughton, head of safeguarding and review on Tel (01432) 260804

12. The boards have a statutory duty to scrutinise and support this work. The HSCB and HSAB are key mechanisms for challenge, support and promoting improvement of these services within Herefordshire. The annual reports and priorities going forward identify areas of safeguarding that require sustained focus and improvement.

## **Equality and human rights**

13. The safeguarding boards pay due regard to equality and diversity. This is considered through audits and case reviews. Partner agencies responsibilities and commitment to equality, diversity and human rights is taken in to account, for example through statutory audits of agencies safeguarding responsibilities.

## **Financial implications**

14. The safeguarding boards receive contributions from partner agencies to fund the organisation and work of the boards. A budget is set and reviewed throughout the year and any risks identified. There will be a further review of the Boards business support unit that supports the work of the HSCB and HSAB as well as the Herefordshire Community Safety Partnership. The directors for adults and children's wellbeing are in the process of considering the future contributions of the council to the activities of the safeguarding boards, as well as discussing other multi-agency partner contributions.

## **Legal implications**

15. The Children Act 2004 the Care Act 2014, and associated statutory guidance, set out the roles and functions of the safeguarding boards.
16. The roles and functions of the HSCB are set out in Section 14 A of the Children Act 2004 and as such are to be complied with.
17. The statutory functions of the HSAB are set out in Section 43 of the Care Act 2014 and Schedule 2 and as such are to be complied with.
18. Under statutory guidance each of the safeguarding boards has a duty to produce annual reports on the effectiveness of safeguarding children and adults respectively in the area. The reports should cover achievements and activities, considering the effectiveness of safeguarding in Herefordshire, identify weaknesses, the causes of these and proposals for continued improvement.
19. The annual reports are provided as appendices to this report.

## **Risk management**

20. There are no risks contained within the recommendations. Risks would emerge if the safeguarding boards were unable to function properly due to issues such as lack of financial support or partnership engagement. Further risks may include the boards not carrying out their statutory functions properly and continued challenge and self / peer challenge will be necessary.

## **Consultees**

21. The annual reports are being considered by the Health and Wellbeing Board and Health and Social Care Overview Scrutiny Committee at their March meetings.

## **Appendices**

Appendix 1 – HSCB Annual Report

Appendix 2 – HSAB Annual Report

## **Background papers**

- None identified.