

Somerset Health and Wellbeing Board

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Somerset Safeguarding Adults Board Annual Report

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Summary:	<p>The Somerset Safeguarding Adults Board (SSAB or the Board) operates as an independently-chaired, multi-agency body under The Care Act 2014. It became statutory from April 2015.</p> <p>The Board's role is to have an oversight of safeguarding arrangements within the County, not to deliver services or become involved in the day to day operations of individual organisations, including those of Somerset County Council.</p> <p>The Board is required by The Care Act 2014 to produce and publish an Annual Report each year. The report must set out what has been done to help and protect adults at risk of abuse and neglect in Somerset during that timeframe. It provides an opportunity to both reflect on achievements over the past year and to formally identify priorities for the year ahead. It also offers a chance to demonstrate the Board's fulfilment of its role and ongoing commitment to safeguard vulnerable adults in the county.</p>
Recommendations:	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. The Somerset Health and Wellbeing Board to review and consider the Somerset Safeguarding Adults Board's 2017/18 Annual Report (Appendix 1) and pay particular attention to the contained information regarding Safeguarding Adults Reviews (SARs) on page 44.2. The Somerset Health and Wellbeing Board to note progress highlights during 2018/19 to date3. The Somerset Health and Wellbeing Board to continue to promote adult safeguarding across the County Council and in the services that are commissioned

Reasons for recommendations:	The Somerset Safeguarding Adults Board is required by The Care Act 2014 to produce and publish an Annual Report for each financial year.
Links to Somerset Health and Wellbeing Strategy	<p>The work of the Safeguarding Adults Board is supportive of all three Health and Wellbeing Strategy (2013-2018) priorities:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. People, families and communities take responsibility for their own health and wellbeing 2. Families and communities are thriving and resilient 3. Somerset people are able to live independently
Financial, Legal and HR Implications:	<p>The majority of the Safeguarding Adults Board funding is provided by Somerset County Council, with contributions from Avon & Somerset Constabulary and Somerset Clinical Commissioning Group. Safeguarding Adults Reviews (SARs) are resourced by the partnership as and when required and an agreement is now in place between the three statutory partners to resource all SARs from outside the Boards core budget. The Board had an overspend of £7,880 during the 2017/18 financial year. This overspend was due to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A delay in the receipt of an invoice for £8,180 relating to a Safeguarding Adults Review undertaken in a previous year leading to these costs needing to be paid from the 2017/18 budget. This Review also predated the agreement to split the costs of Reviews outside of the core budget. • A small number of invoices issued close to end of the financial year remained unpaid at year end and this income will therefore be accounted for in 2018/19. <p>The SSAB continues with its decision not to professionally print the Annual Report to save on costs. All reports are publicly available on the website: www.ssab.safeguardingsomerset.org.uk.</p>
Equalities Implications:	The SSAB supports the rights of all adults to equality of opportunity, to retain their independence, wellbeing and choice and to be able to live their lives free from abuse, neglect and discrimination. It values diversity and will seek to promote equal access and equal opportunities irrespective of race, culture, sex, sexual orientation, disability, age, religion or belief, marriage/ civil partnership and pregnancy /maternity
Risk Assessment:	Safeguarding activity by its nature is an inherently risky area and has the potential to bring a Council's reputation and rating into discredit and the wider safeguarding system into question. The Annual Report, a legal requirement by the Care Act 2014, provides partner agencies and the public with assurances that adult safeguarding is being monitored and scrutinised in Somerset. The Board also has a robust risk register in place which identifies and tracks risk.

1. Background

1.1. The main objective of the SSAB is to seek assurance that local safeguarding

arrangements and partner organisations act to help and protect people aged 18 and over who:

- have needs for care and support; *and*
- are experiencing, or at risk of, abuse, neglect or exploitation; *and*
- are unable to protect themselves from the risk of, or experience of, abuse or neglect as a result of their care and support needs.

1.2. Safeguarding is everybody's business, and the Board has a strategic role that is greater than the sum of the operational duties of the core partners. It means protecting an adult's right to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect.

1.3. Assurance in relation to Adult Safeguarding Arrangements in Somerset

The SSAB undertook its annual multi-agency organisational self-audit process during the autumn of 2017. Key organisations (Avon and Somerset Constabulary, NHS Somerset Clinical Commissioning Group, Somerset County Council, Somerset Partnership NHS Foundation Trust, Yeovil District Hospital NHS Foundation Trust and Taunton and Somerset NHS Foundation Trust) assessed their confidence of compliance across 23 specific scope areas, providing evidence to support their rating and detailing any actions to be undertaken to ensure improvement and who would be responsible for it. The results were reviewed by the SSAB's Quality Assurance subgroup, with results indicating good levels of confidence of compliance were maintained in the majority of areas.

Areas of development identified through the audit centred on:

- Training, competence and confidence around application and understanding of the Mental Capacity Act
- Ensuring that staff supervision policies and practice support effective safeguarding
- Person-centred care / Making Safeguarding Personal
- Outcome-focused safeguarding
- Prevent (Prevent is the multi-agency set of arrangements aimed at preventing individuals and groups from engaging in violent extremism).

In addition, work has been undertaken with partner organisations with commissioning responsibilities following the publication of the Mendip House Safeguarding Adults Review in February 2018. This work is expected to take some time to be fully completed, but in summary:

- For services commissioned by or on behalf of commissioners based in Somerset there is confidence that issues are understood and work is underway, and being monitored, to move towards compliance.
- For services commissioned by commissioners external to Somerset there are low levels of confidence in compliance. While the Board does not have any direct influence over the practices of these commissioners it is continuing to pursue the implementation of the national recommendations made by the Review.

Overall the SSAB is able to report to the committee that:

- Overall confidence in compliance is improving, however safeguarding activity by its nature is an inherently risky area from which risk can rarely, if

- ever, be removed
- Those areas where development is required are understood and work is taking place; the exception is where services are commissioned by commissioners external to Somerset
- Acknowledging that, as noted by the Committee during 2017/18, there are inherent weaknesses in any self-audit process, we have strengthened the auditing process for 2018/19 through the incorporation of a peer challenge element and look forward to reporting the results of this in our 2018/19 report.

Please see Appendix 1, p40, for more information about the audit.

1.4. Key Achievements 2017/18

During 2017/18 the Somerset Safeguarding Adults Board concentrated its efforts on improving its overall effectiveness in order to better coordinate activity, learn from events, and raise its local profile and the value of what it offered through high quality communications with both professionals and the public. During this year it also went through a period of transition with a new Business manager being appointed. Particular highlights worth noting during the year are as follows:

- a) The Board created a new multi-agency subgroup (Mental Capacity Act) to enhance local understanding and application of the Act. This was in direct response to learning to emerge from recent case reviews and audits. Since being established the subgroup has been undertaking work to enhance local understanding and application of the Act and led a session at our annual conference.
- b) We have worked closely with the Somerset Safeguarding Children Board, Children's Trust and other agencies to support the development of a shared Think Family Strategy for Somerset, which was launched in May 2018, and strengthened links between both Safeguarding Boards on matters of shared interest, including transition and tackling sexual exploitation.
- c) We published the Mendip House Safeguarding Adults Review following the large-scale safeguarding enquiry into the abuse and neglect of the people who lived there. This was a significant report, written by Dr Margaret Flynn, which included nationally important recommendations as none of the people living at Mendip House, or the wider campus on which it was situated, were placed by Somerset commissioners.
- d) Practice guidance on 'Carrying out effective reviews and visits with providers' was produced following learning from the Mendip House Safeguarding Adults Review and was published in March 2018.
- e) The SSAB led the development of a new sub-regional Joint Safeguarding Adults Multi-Agency Policy in partnership with colleagues in Bristol, Bath & North East Somerset, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire to ensure standards are clarified and refreshed in light of more recent statutory developments or good practice.
- f) The SSAB participated in, published and promoted a regional review of Safeguarding Adults Reviews, is working collaboratively with other Boards in the region to take the recommendations forward and has proactively engaged with work to develop guidance across the region coordinated by

the Association of Directors of Adult Social services (ADASS).

- g) The SSAB held its second multi-agency annual conference for safeguarding leads in March 2018. Attendees represented a broad range of organisations from across the health and social care sector. The conference was well received, with feedback on the day indicating that participants felt that it would have a positive impact on their practice.

1.5. Key Progress, 2018/19

As we enter the third and final year of our current Strategic Plan, our priorities continue to centre on prevention, making safeguarding personal, adopting a Think Family approach, and enhancing the Board's effectiveness. Of particular note to date:

- a) The Quality Assurance Subgroup has reviewed the SSAB's self-audit tool and enhanced it to include the monitoring compliance with recommendations from local Safeguarding Adults Reviews. The audit was launched in August 2018 with a deadline of 5 October 2018. A peer challenge approach will then be used to verify and moderate the responses, and a summary of the findings included in the 2018/19 Annual Report. The Subgroup has also introduced a standing item to randomly audit safeguarding cases each time it meets checking for compliance against best practice and expected standards;
- b) The Board's Policy and Procedures subgroup has developed new-online Safeguarding Guidance (previously referred to as Local Safeguarding Procedures). These are available on the SSAB website and is being promoted on an on-going basis. They have been developed with a view to being able to be regularly updated to reflect emerging guidance, best practice and learning. The subgroup has also developed:
- A new information sharing agreement and supporting guidance in line with the new General Data Protection Regulations
 - A revised Adult Safeguarding Risk Assessment tool
 - A revised Service Monitoring Checklist
- c) The SSAB has again actively supported and contributed to "Stop Adult Abuse Week" during June 2018 with other Boards in the Avon & Somerset Constabulary area and supported the Trading Standards Rogue Traders week during October 2018.
- d) The Mental Capacity Subgroup is in the process of developing on-line guidance to support practice improvement in this area across the Somerset system that will be made available of the SSAB website during the autumn. It is in the process of developing an approach to audit compliance, in addition to routinely monitoring performance in relation to Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards and Independent Mental Capacity Advocates.
- e) The SSAB is continuing to pursue the implementation of recommendations from the Mendip House Safeguarding Adults review. This has included meeting with the families for people who lived there and representatives the Department of Health and Social Care. An area of significant concern remains commissioning and reviewing practices when people are placed in to services in Somerset by external commissioners. Attempts by local commissioners from partner organisations to obtain information from external commissioners have unfortunately yielded a low level of response.

The SSAB has therefore formally requested information from all regulated providers operating in Somerset regarding the number of people placed by external commissioners, and who these commissioners are, as at 08 October 2018.

- f) The SSAB's Learning and Development Subgroup Learning is routinely considering learning from Safeguarding Adult Reviews elsewhere and has actively contributed to a National Library of Reviews launched in June 2018.
- g) The Safeguarding Adults Review (SAR) subgroup continues to routinely consider new referrals. It is in the process of commissioning one new SAR and is also expanding the scope of a previous review in light of new evidence that has emerged following a Coroner's inquest.

2. Options Considered and reasons for rejecting them

- 2.1. No other options have been considered as it is a requirement under the Care Act 2014 for the SSAB to produce an Annual Report.

3. Consultations undertaken

- 3.1. Somerset Safeguarding Adults Board benefits from strong partnership commitment. Agencies represented on the Board had the opportunity to detail their achievements and contributions in 2017/18 and all Board members are encouraged to take the Annual Report through their own internal governance routes.

4. Implications

- 4.1. **Legal implications** The Care Act 2014 represented the most significant change to adult social care in more than 60 years, putting people and their carers in control of their care and support. For the first time the Act placed Safeguarding Adults, and the role and functions of a Safeguarding Adults Board, onto a statutory framework from 1st April 2015.

5. Background papers

- 5.1. Appendix A – Somerset Safeguarding Adults Board Annual Report, 2017/18
- 5.2. SSAB Strategy 2016-19 – updated 2018:
<https://ssab.safeguardingsomerset.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/20180726-SSAB-Plan-2018-19-v2.pdf>
- 5.3. Mendip House Safeguarding Adults Review
<https://ssab.safeguardingsomerset.org.uk/about-us/publications/learning-from-serious-cases/>