

Somerset Safeguarding Adults Board Draft Strategic Plan – 2019-22

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Division and Local Member: All

1. Summary

- 1.1. Strong synergies exist between the work of the Somerset Safeguarding Adults Board (SSAB) and the Scrutiny for Policies, Adults and Health Committee, which has a valuable role in the assurance and accountability of the SSAB.
- 1.2. The purpose of this report is to consult with the Scrutiny for Policies, Adults and Health Committee in relation to the SSAB's Strategic Plan for 2019/22.
- 1.3. 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.
- 1.4. This report is not intended to give an update on the work of the SSAB during 2018/19. A report detailing the SSAB's work over the last year will be presented to the Committee later in the year when it considers the SSAB Annual Report.

2. Issues for consideration / Recommendations

2.1. That the Scrutiny for Policies, Adults and Health Committee:

1. **Notes the contents of this paper alongside the draft 2019-22 Strategic Plan**
2. **Comments on and discusses the proposed strategic priorities for 2019-22**
3. **Continues to promote adult safeguarding across the County Council and in commissioned services**

3. Background

- 3.1. 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. 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.
- 3.2. The SSAB is required by The Care Act 2014 to produce and publish a strategic plan for each financial year. The plan must set out what the Board intends to do

over the next year to help and protect adults at risk of abuse and neglect in Somerset during that timeframe. In common with many other Safeguarding Adults Boards, the Board chose to develop a three-year plan in 2016 that was refreshed annually. We propose to take a similar approach for our next strategic plan that will cover the period from April 2019 to March 2022.

- 3.3.** By its very nature a strategic plan will be high-level and contain objectives that will be updated as work progresses. Our plan also does not reference specific groups of adults in recognition that, while the general level of risk may vary, safeguarding work is rarely group specific.
- 3.4.** 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.

3.5. The SSAB's Strategic Plan for 2019-22

The development of this strategy has been informed by broad consultation with an expanded Board membership that now includes representatives of people who use services, carers and the third sector. We also included an article about its development in our December newsletter inviting feedback from our readers, and promoted this opportunity through social media. It has been informed by the feedback we received, multi-agency professionals, the findings to emerge from audits, learning to emerge from Safeguarding Adults Reviews both locally and nationally, and the analysis of comparative performance data.

We recognise that we can achieve more by working collectively in partnership and commit ourselves to the objectives contained within the draft plan. Our proposed overarching priorities for 2019-22 are:

- a) Listening and learning:
- Safeguarding is person-led, outcome-focused, enhances involvement, choice and control, and improves quality of life, wellbeing and safety
 - We use learning to enhance practice across the system in Somerset
 - We learn from when things go wrong, both in Somerset and elsewhere, and take appropriate action to reduce risk
- b) Enabling people to keep themselves safe:
- People are aware of what abuse is and how to keep themselves and those that they care for safe
 - People know what to do if they think that they are experiencing abuse or neglect
- c) Working together to safeguard people who can't keep themselves safe:
- Organisations, including the third sector, work together to ensure that multi-agency arrangements are effective, and that people who are unable to keep themselves safe are supported in the least invasive way
 - Policy and guidance reflects best practice and takes a positive approach to risk
 - There is effective working across local, regional and national partnerships on areas of mutual interest
 - The number of inappropriate referrals is reduced through people raising other types of concern in an appropriate way
- d) Making sure we do what we said we would do:
- Somerset has an effective Safeguarding Adults Board which fulfils its statutory responsibilities, has strong leadership and governance

arrangements, and promotes a culture of collective accountability, respectful challenge and continuous learning

- The Board uses data appropriately to understand where risk exists within the system
- The Board can demonstrate progress through the regular monitoring of performance and a robust self-audit and peer challenge processes

3.6. Further information on the tasks that it is proposed will underpin these priorities can found in Appendix A. Some tasks, for example work emerging from the Mendip House Safeguarding Adults Review have been carried over from our existing plan where work remains ongoing. A small number of other tasks, for example those relating to the statutory processes of the Board, remain broadly similar to the 2018/19 Strategic Plan.

3.7. We propose to finalise and publish our strategic plan for 2019-22 following consideration by the Somerset Health and Wellbeing Board.

4. Consultations undertaken

4.1. As part of refreshing the Strategic Plan the SSAB has sought feedback from Healthwatch. In addition, it has sought feedback from the Board's expanded Board membership that now includes representatives of people who use services, carers and the third sector, and through inviting comment from readers of our newsletter and followers on social media.

5. Implications

5.1. Safeguarding activity by its nature is an inherently risky area and has the potential to bring a Council's reputation into discredit and the wider safeguarding system into question. The Strategic Plan, 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 and the SSAB welcomes this opportunity for the Scrutiny for Policies, Adults and Health Committee to comment on the draft 2019-22 plan.

6. Background papers

6.1. Appendix A – Draft SSAB Strategic Plan 2019-22

Note For sight of individual background papers please contact the report author