

Committee: **Joint Education and Learning and Social Services (Safeguarding) Scrutiny Committee**

Date of meeting: **8th October 2020**

Report Subject: **Adult Safeguarding Report 1st April 2019 to 31st March 2020**

Portfolio Holder: **Cllr John Mason, Executive Member Social Services**

Report Submitted by: **Damien McCann, Director of Social Services**

Directorate Management Team	Corporate Leadership Team	Portfolio Holder / Chair	Audit Committee	Democratic Services Committee	Scrutiny Committee	Executive Committee	Council	Other (please state)
x	x	23.09.20			08.10.20	Info Item 14.10.20		

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide Scrutiny Members with Safeguarding Performance information relating to Adult Services from 1st January 2020 to the 31st March 2020 for the 4th quarter of the financial year and also the information of the financial year 1st April 2019 to 31st March 2020. The information provided will enable Members to identify Safeguarding areas within the Authority which require further development to improve Safeguarding practice and procedures for Adult Services.

2. Scope and Background

- 2.1 In April 2016 The Gwent-wide Adult Safeguarding Board (GWASB) became a statutory Board as set out in Part 7 of the Social Services and Well Being (Wales) Act 2014. The Board's purpose is twofold; to protect adults in Gwent becoming "adults at risk" and to protect adults who have been abused or neglected or are at risk of abuse or neglect. They are supported in their work by a number of sub groups that manage core business and other more specific pieces of work which deliver on the strategic priorities set by the Board each year.

3. Options for Recommendation

- 3.1 The report has been considered and agreed by the Social Services Leadership team and the Corporate Leadership Team. There were no recommendations identified from the previous report presented to Members.

3.2 Option 1

Members are asked to consider the detail contained in the Adult Safeguarding Report and contribute to the continuous assessment of effectiveness by making appropriate recommendations for amendment to the report before consideration at Executive Committee.

Option 2

Accept the report as provided.

4. Evidence of how does this topic supports the achievement of the Corporate Plan / Statutory Responsibilities / Blaenau Gwent Well-being Plan

4.1 The Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 places a statutory duty on all local authorities to produce an annual report on the discharge of its social services functions.

4.2 The Council's Corporate Plan sets out the Council's priorities for 2018-2022- This will help support the Corporate plan by implementing effective safeguarding arrangements to prevent adults becoming at risk by identifying and promoting preventative work.

5. Implications Against Each Option

Risk including Mitigating Actions

The Directorate Risk Register identifies safeguarding as high risk and is therefore monitored as part of the quarterly report of the Director of Social Services via the business planning process for each option. The Directorate Risk Register includes what actions have been taken to mitigate these risks and is reviewed on a regular basis.

5.1 *Impact on Budget*

Confirmation has been received from Welsh Government and the RPB that the Integrated Care Funding (ICF) has been approved for a further 12 months from the 1st April 2021 and it is hopeful this will continue to fund the support worker post put in place.

5.2 *Legal*

The Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act came into force on 6 April 2016. The Act provides the legal framework for improving the well-being of people who need care and support, and carers who need support, and for transforming social services in Wales.

5.3 *Human Resources*

There are no human resources implications attached to this report.

6. Supporting Evidence

6.1 *Performance Information and Data*

Performance and data is provided within the report.

6.2 The number of reports received of an 'adult suspected of being at risk' during the given period was 136. The total number of referrals for 2019/2020 was 540. This is a significant increase on the referrals from 2018/19 where there were 491. This could be related to a particular home where the medication process was changed to an electronic system and there were some difficulties within the system and the staff using it which resulted in a number of referrals for that care home. This was addressed accordingly and is described in more detail in point 6.4

Number of reports of an adult suspected of being at risk received during the fourth quarter of 2019/2020 1st January to 31 st March 2020	136
Number of reports of an adult suspected of being at risk received during 2019/2020 1 st April 2019 – 31 st March 2020	540

6.3 The number of referrals received within the different categories of abuse or neglect are shown below. It should be noted that concerns about more than one type of abuse can be reported within the same referral. As in previous years the most referrals are received for females over the age of 65. This is a national trend. The category of abuse most reported is one of neglect and the least reported is sexual which has been the situation for last three years.

Category of Abuse	Gender	Age 18-64	Age – 65 and over	Age 18-64	Age – 65 and over
		01/01/20 – 31/03/20	01/01/20 – 31/03/20	01/04/19 – 31/03/20	01/04/19 – 31/03/20
Physical	Male	9	5	30	22
	Female	13	13	47	61
	Transgender	1	0	0	0
Sexual	Male	0	0	2	2
	Female	4	3	16	5
Emotional /Psychological	Male	7	3	20	21
	Female	10	13	39	41
	Transgender	1	0	0	0
Financial	Male	7	5	29	13
	Female	8	7	24	33
Neglect	Male	5	17	32	68
	Female	6	29	35	115
	Transgender	1	0	0	0
Total	Male	18	28	89	109
	Female	31	59	115	226
	Transgender	0	0	1	0
	Total	49	87	205	335

6.4 Referrals of domestic abuse are captured as part of the data return for the Welsh Government.

		Age 18-64 01/01/20 – 31/03/20	Age – 65 and over 01/01/20 – 31/03/20	Age 18-64 01/04/19 – 31/03/20	Age – 65 and over 01/04/19 – 31/03/20
6.4.1 Domestic	Male	3	2	7	6
	Female	11	4	37	23

Each of the five local authorities have different structures in place to respond to concerns about domestic violence, however GWASB partner agencies are represented on local and regional domestic abuse forums. There are strong links between practitioners in safeguarding and domestic abuse fields of practice and domestic abuse training is available and is well attended by all agencies across Gwent in a variety of formats. As discussed in previous years Blaenau Gwent have secured a seconded post, funded through ICF, from Cyfannol and the support worker is based within safeguarding and IAA.

6.4.2

The place where the alleged abuse occurred can be seen in the table below. The majority of referrals were split between the alleged abuse taking place in the persons own home The alleged perpetrators in these cases could be paid carers going into the home or friends and family or within a care setting including a health environment - this could be residential, nursing or respite care and again the alleged perpetrators could be paid carers, family and/or other service users.

6.4.3

Place alleged abuse or neglect occurred	Total 01/01/20 – 31/03/20	Total 01/04/19 – 31/03/20
Own Home	64	242
Community	7	38
Care Home Setting	54	222
Health Setting	5	14
Other	6	24
Total	136	540

Safeguarding is an important part of the commissioning function and requires a substantial resource commitment from the Commissioning Team who provide crucial information in respect of commissioned services and providers which contributes to informed decision making in relation to safeguarding cases. A member of the Commissioning Team attends every strategy meeting held for commissioned services to offer advice, guidance and perspective. The Contracts and Commissioning Team Manager and the three Contract Monitoring Officers are all fully trained non-criminal investigators and undertake investigations independently or jointly with colleagues depending on the complexity and size of the investigation, or, with health colleagues if there are nursing issues involved. Whether referrals progress to strategy meetings and/or investigation, or are closed down as inappropriate

safeguarding referrals, there is very often some preliminary investigation work and/or recommendations / performance issues with providers to be acted upon and followed up by the Commissioning Team. During the 2nd quarter we received a high volume of Care home referrals (79 in total) with one nursing home submitting 31 in relation to system errors in the ordering and recording of medication for residents. As a result of this a systems audit was undertaken by health which led to improvements being implemented by the Care home around their current operating and IT systems. Following a joint investigation of the 31 referrals received there was no significant harm to the residents and they had all received their correct medication.

6.4.4

The persons alleged responsible for the abuse are broken down in the table below. Paid employees being alleged perpetrators for 30 in quarter 4 and a total of 172 in the year. 47 being a relative or friend in quarter 4 and a total of 154 in the year. The previous year showed similar figures with 171 referrals where the alleged perpetrator was a paid employee and 128 family/friend. To progress the referral consent is needed from the alleged victim, but that consent can be overridden when a paid employee is the alleged perpetrator. In the domestic abuse cases a high proportion of alleged victims do not consent to the referral progressing through safeguarding. These referrals are submitted to the Police for further action.

Person alleged responsible	Total 01/01/20 – 31/03/20	Total 01/04/19 – 31/03/20
Paid Employee	30	172
Relative / Friend	47	154
Volunteer / Unpaid employee	0	1
Other service user	16	50
Other	1	8
Unknown – no specific individual identified on the duty to report due to the nature of the service settings i.e. unwitnessed fall by a service user	42	155
Total	136	540

6.5

The referrals received are from a variety of sources, as listed in the table below. The majority of the referrals were submitted from provider agencies. This is a trend every year.

Source of Referral	Total 01/01/20 – 31/03/20	Total 01/04/19 – 31/03/20
Self-reported	0	0
Relative / friend	0	2
Local authority	32	130
Police	3	11
Local health board	10	60
Independent hospital	0	0
Ambulance service	3	10
Care regulator	0	1
Provider agency	69	260
Probation	0	1
Third sector	15	46
Advocate	0	0
Other	4	19
Total	136	540

6.6 **Updates on the achievements and progress on the strategic development plans during 2019/2020 and beyond:**

- The All Wales New Safeguarding procedures were launched in November 2019
- Development of training resources and to revise the current documentation to support implementation of the new Safeguarding Procedures has commenced and an Independent Provider has been commissioned to deliver training in the New Year.
- In response to the follow up review of the corporate arrangements for safeguarding by Wales Audit Office (WAO) which was presented to Corporate Overview Scrutiny Committee on the 12th February 2020 a working group has been set up and an action plan developed to address the recommendations required.

Response to the Pandemic

- Gwent Safeguarding Board has produced a strategic response to ensure that safeguarding remains everybody's business whilst our partner agencies, citizens and services cope with the Covid-19 pandemic.
- Gwent Safeguarding Board continue to support partner agencies and practitioners, at this time, as they perform their safeguarding duties to ensure that the safeguarding of children, young people and adults at risk remains at the forefront of our work.
- Safeguarding has been critical through the pandemic with all safeguarding staff in Adults working from home to maintain an essential service.
- The new policy was implemented from April 6th 2020, however, due to the difficulties in these unprecedented times face to face training was put on hold until further notice, safeguarding training via eLearning is still available.

- There was no drop in referrals due to the pandemic and we haven't seen any increase in domestic abuse referrals through safeguarding.

6.7 ***Expected outcome for the public***

Quarterly reporting provides the public with the opportunity to view progress of the Directorate and ensure accountability.

6.8 ***Involvement (consultation, engagement, participation)***

The Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 looks to build and strengthen on existing arrangements by involving service users, carers and other key partners where possible in helping shape and influence future design of services.

6.9 ***Thinking for the Long term (forward planning)***

The Gwent wide Adult Safeguarding Board has developed a new partnership agreement between local authorities and agency partners including Gwent Police, Aneurin Bevan University Health Board, Wales Probation Trust, Gwent Association of Voluntary Organisations which sets out a clear and shared vision to ensure all adults in Gwent are safeguarded effectively through partnership working and community engagement.

6.10 ***Preventative focus***

Providing this report and the level of detailed safeguarding information to the Joint Safeguarding Committee enables Members to ensure risks are identified and acted on.

6.11 ***Collaboration / partnership working***

It is a very important that GwASB does not work in isolation and having strong working relationships with the South East Wales Safeguarding Children's Board (SEWSCB) and the Domestic Violence Board will be essential.

6.12 ***Integration (across service areas)***

The development of the Corporate Safeguarding Policy and the Departmental safeguarding leads meetings helps ensure all departments within the Authority are aware of their responsibilities for safeguarding and are kept updated with any issues trends within safeguarding.

6.13 ***EqlA (screening and identifying if full impact assessment is needed)***

Not applicable.

7. **Monitoring Arrangements**

7.1 The performance of the department is monitored throughout the financial year from April to March and reported to the Social Services Scrutiny Committee.

Background Documents /Electronic Links

The following hyperlink provides further details on the governance and structure arrangements: www.gwentsafeguarding.org.uk