

# Safeguarding and Education Overview and Scrutiny Committee - Thursday 09 January 2025

## Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Adults Safeguarding Partnership Board – Annual Report

### Recommendations

I recommend that the Committee:

- a. receives the SSASPB Annual Report in accordance with the requirements of the Care Act 2014 Statutory Guidance (02.09.2022): Chapter 14 Paragraph 160)
- b. provides feedback and challenge to the work of the SSASPB

### Local Member Interest:

N/A

**Report of:** Mr John Wood, Independent Chair of the Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Adult Safeguarding Partnership Board

## Summary

### What is the Overview and Scrutiny Committee being asked to do and why?

1. To fully consider the contents of the report and how Staffordshire County Council can improve its contributions to both safeguarding throughout the organisation and to the joint work of the Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent Adult Safeguarding Partnership Board (SSASPB). In addition, committee members are asked to consider or comment on the progress that the Board has made since the last report.
2. This is to ensure that we comply with the requirements of the Care Act 2014 Statutory Guidance which states that:

*"Every Safeguarding Adult Board must send a copy of its report to:*

- a. the chief executive and leader of the local authority
- b. the police and crime commissioner and the chief constable
- c. the local HealthWatch
- d. the chair of the health and wellbeing board. <sup>1</sup>

## Report

### Background

3. Safeguarding Adult Boards (SABs) became statutory under the Care Act 2014 which states that:

*"The main objective of a SAB is to assure itself that local safeguarding arrangements and partners act to help and protect adults in its area who meet the criteria set out at paragraph 14.2."*<sup>2</sup>

4. Paragraph 14.2 states that our safeguarding duties apply to an adult who:

- a. *"has needs for care and support*
- b. *is experiencing or at risk of abuse and neglect; and*
- c. *as a result of those care and support needs are unable to protect themselves from either the risk of, or the experience of abuse and neglect."*<sup>3</sup>

5. The SAB has a strategic role to oversee and lead adult safeguarding and is interested in a range of matters that contribute to the prevention of abuse and neglect. These include the safety of patients in local health services, quality of local care and support services, effectiveness of prisons and approved premises in safeguarding offenders and awareness and responsiveness of further education services.

6. SAB partners also have a role in challenging each other and other organisations where there is cause for concern that actions or inactions are increasing the risk of abuse or neglect.

7. The SAB has 3 core duties:
  - a. To publish a strategic plan
  - b. To publish an Annual Report
  - c. To undertake Safeguarding Adult Reviews in accordance with criteria.

8. This Annual Report of the Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Adult Safeguarding Partnership Board (SSASPB) covers the period 1st April

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<sup>1</sup> Paragraph 14.160 [Care and support statutory guidance - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)

<sup>2</sup> Paragraph 14.133 [Care and support statutory guidance - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)

<sup>3</sup> Paragraph 14.2 [Care and support statutory guidance - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](http://www.gov.uk)

2023 to March 31st, 2021. Mr John Wood was the Independent Chair of the Board throughout the period. The report provides an overview of the work of the Board and its sub-groups and illustrated with case studies as to how the focus on Making Safeguarding Personal is making a positive difference to ensuring that adults with care and support needs are supported to make choices in how they will live their lives in a place where they feel safe, secure and free from abuse.

## **Adult Safeguarding Data for the reporting period 01/04/23-31/03/24**

### 9. Concerns reported:

- a. Reported concerns have increased from 15,680 in 22/23 to **15,810** in 23/24. An increase of 130. In comparison to Nationally, this figure is slightly lower and is possibly due to monthly qualitative reports.
- b. The reasons for the percentage decrease in concerns meeting the duty of enquiry threshold have been explored. The information gathered from audits, indicates that this could be related to the type of concerns raised, for example, there are more concerns relevant to quality issues and or requests for assessments. Monitoring of those concerns that do not meet threshold will continue over the next year to better understand this.

### 10. Following initial assessment:

- a. it was determined that the duty of enquiry requirement was met in 15% of occasions when a concern was raised.
11. Safeguarding concerns range from the very serious to the relatively trivial. The information gathered from audits indicates that the variance could be related to the type of concerns raised, for example, there are a significant number of concerns arising through quality or assessment processes.
  12. Audits indicate that a proportion of concerns are found to be low level incidents which have led to no harm to the individual. Concerns such as these are triaged early and, when no other actions are needed, they will be closed. Examples include concerns regarding medication errors, service user incidents, missed and late care calls.
  13. In other situations, appropriate actions have been taken by others to reduce the risk and therefore a Section 42 enquiry is not required.

14. Age of the people subject to a Section 42 enquiry is broadly like last year's data with two demographics representing highest cohorts:
  - a. aged 75–84 (26%)
  - b. aged 85-94 (26%)
15. The proportion of over 75-year-olds in Staffordshire data is representative of the increased likelihood of those aged over 75 requiring interventions in their lives from care and support agencies. This also links to the highest proportion of safeguarding concerns being raised by care providers for people in receipt of care.
16. The average life expectancy for a man living in Staffordshire is 79.7 years and for a woman 83.5<sup>4</sup> which may explain why there are more enquiries for women than for men as there is an increased need as a population grows older for care and support. This seems consistent with the national picture over the last few years.
17. Gender of the people subject to a Section 42 enquiry:
  - a. Females represent the majority with 64% over the year. This is disproportionately above the population average for females in Staffordshire which is 50.3%.
  - b. Male statistics relating to enquiries are 36% from a general population figure of 49.7%.
  - c. No statistics relating to the 2021 status voluntary question "Is the gender you identify with the same as your sex registered at birth?" is evident in this year's adult safeguarding data.<sup>5</sup>
18. Ethnicity of the people subject to a Section 42 enquiry:
  - a. 'White British' 86.1%, a slight decrease from last year (91.9%)
  - b. 'Other White British' at (0.9%).
  - c. The Not Known category was 4.1% an increase from 2.2% last year.

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<sup>4</sup> all information from the 2021 Census [C OFFSEN \[unnumbered Act Paper\] Population and household estimates, England and Wales: Census 2021 \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/978123/c21-01-population-and-household-estimates-england-and-wales-census-2021)

<sup>5</sup>[Sexual-Orientation-and-Gender-Identity-Headline-Findings-Final.pdf \(staffordshire.gov.uk\)](https://www.staffordshire.gov.uk/media/1000000/sexual-orientation-and-gender-identity-headline-findings-final.pdf)

d. The Board has promoted the importance of accurate ethnicity recording in 2023/24 through its Practitioner Forum, learning events and Newsletter.

19. Primary Support Reason (PSR) of the people subject to a Section 42 enquiry:

a. Physical support continues to be the most common primary support reason in Staffordshire in 2023/24 (47%) a slight decrease from last year (48%).

b. The second most prevalent primary support reason is Memory and Cognition at 15% a 1% increase on last year.

c. Mental Health support was 10% of the total in 2023/24 whereas it was 20% in 2022/23. This 50% decrease has been noted by the Board and is being investigated.

20. Type of Abuse suffered by people subject to a Section 42 enquiry:

a. Neglect and Acts of Omission represented 30% of enquiries which is a decrease on the figure of 37% reported in 2022/23.

b. Financial abuse remains similar at 19% compared to 20% last year.

c. Physical abuse has reduced from 13% last year 12% this year.

d. Organisational abuse remains under-reported at 1%, this is possibly due to limited recording functionality in selection fields in Staffordshire's case management system.

e. There are no significant changes to the percentages reported in 2022/23.

21. Where the abuse of people subject to a Section 42 enquiry occurred:

a. Person's own home 67% compared to 70% in 2022/23.

b. Independent Residential Home 13% compared to 12% in 2022/23.

c. Independent nursing home 11% compared to 17% in 2022/23.

22. Repeat referrals for people who have had a previous Section 42 enquiry:

a. Repeat referrals are at 17% and have broadly remained the same for the past two years.

23. Responses from people who have had a Section 42 enquiry as to whether their Expressed Outcomes were met:
- a. 63% of people contacted provided a response to the question of whether their desired outcomes from their enquiry were either met in full, partially met or were not met.
  - b. A total of 91% of people who responded said that their desired outcomes were fully met or partially met. This is a decrease from 97% last year.

## **Performance against 2022 - 2025 Strategic Priorities**

24. The board has been continuing to focus on two Strategic Priorities of Effective Practice and Engagement.
25. Effective Practice is broken down into 5 themes as follows -
- a. Making Safeguarding Personal
  - b. The assessment and reviews of mental capacity and Deprivation of Liberties Safeguards
  - c. To improve our response to people who self-neglect
  - d. Ensuring safety during people's transition between services
  - e. That amongst connected partners professionals and leaders are alert to the sources of risk of abuse and neglect for adults with care and support need in communities and residential settings particularly the hidden voices and people 'falling between the eligibility gaps'.
26. Section 10 of the Annual Report provides a comprehensive overview of the collective activities of partners in relation to the strategic priorities.

## **Link to Strategic Plan**

27. The assurance role of the Board supports the following Staffordshire County Council strategic priorities:
- a. Encourage good health and wellbeing, resilience and independence.

## **Link to Other Overview and Scrutiny Activity**

28. Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards

29. Safeguarding updates

## Community Impact

30. There is no anticipated community impact

## List of Background Documents/Appendices:

Appendix 1 - Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Adult Safeguarding Partnership Board (SSASPB) Annual Report 2023/24

## Contact Details

**Assistant Director:** Jo Cowcher Assistant Director for Adult Social Work and Safeguarding

**Report Author:** The Author was John Wood, previous Independent Chair

**Job Title:** Adrian Green – new Independent Chair  
Independent Chair of the Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Adult Safeguarding Partnership Board.

**Telephone No.:** 0788 822003

**E-Mail Address:** [Adrian.Green@staffordshire.gov.uk](mailto:Adrian.Green@staffordshire.gov.uk)