

Health and Wellbeing Board

22 January 2019

Annual Reports for Walsall Safeguarding Children and Adults Board

1. Purpose

1.1 This report provides an annual overview of the partnership performance in relation to safeguarding children, young people and adults and of their delivery of the statutory Safeguarding Board arrangements.

1.2 These reports have been submitted for consideration by the HWBB as the effective delivery of high quality services to protect children, young people and adults with care and support needs, from the risk of abuse or neglect has a direct impact on the welfare and well-being of residents in Walsall.

2. Recommendations

2.1 That the Board notes and supports the contents of the report and the current activity to protect Walsall residents from the risk of abuse and neglect.

2.2. The Board reflects on the outcomes for children and adults in Walsall in relation to preventing and protecting against abuse and neglect and how this aligns to its own priorities and work streams.

3. Report detail

Children:

What works well?

- Audits and case reviews show some examples of good work.
- A comprehensive programme of multi agency training is available. There has been a positive increase in the numbers of professionals attending from the voluntary and community sector and health settings.
- 'Pockets' of good practice mean some children receive a good or outstanding service.
- There is good partnership attendance at Serious Case Review subgroup and CMET (Children, Missing, Exploited and Trafficked) subgroup.

Difficulties or risks:

- ¼ of all the multi agency case files audited were 'inadequate'.

- The 'pockets' of good practice are not consistently applied across the safeguarding system, therefore the strength of the partnership only works for some children, not all.
- Roles and responsibilities in safeguarding are not understood by all practitioners and therefore they do not always deliver what is required e.g. Core Groups not always effective, failure to identify abuse or neglect.
- There needs to be a better understanding of thresholds across the partnership.
- Responding to neglect continues to be a challenge in Walsall.
- Lack of a clear training needs analysis and training data means it is difficult to understand coverage and impact.
- Partner contribution and engagement in the Board varies. Attendance at subgroups varies. Generally, the Police and Children's Services have not been well represented at Policies and Procedures, Learning and Development Subgroups. Probation attend very few meetings (other than the Board meetings). Partners can be slow to respond (or not respond at all) to meeting requests meaning they have to be postponed or are not quorate.

The lack of consistent engagement has also led to delays in progressing partnership work programmes, for example agreeing a Neglect Strategy and revising the Threshold guidance and training.

- The majority of multi agency training is attended by LA Children's Services and Education. Numbers from health and the voluntary and community sector remain low although are increasing.

Adults:

What works well?

- There are some examples of good, single agency, practice e.g.
 - Commencement of the IRIS project (training and support in primary care) for Domestic Abuse
 - 'Frequent flyers' meeting held by Walsall Healthcare Trust to address the vulnerabilities of regular A&E attenders
 - Fire Service introduction of Safe and Well visits
 - Walsall College – programme to raise awareness of substance misuse, Prevent, exploitation.
 - Walsall Healthcare Trust awareness days including Dementia, CSE and modern slavery
- Black Country Mental Capacity Act (MCA) group produced extensive resources for use across the partnership.
- Some further alignment this year of the adult and children's agenda's (where appropriate), for example planning a combined multi agency training

programme for 2018-19 and commencement of work on a transition protocol (children's disability services to adults and exploitation).

- For S42 (Safeguarding) enquires / investigations, where service users have been asked their desired outcomes, only 18 service users out of 336 did not have their outcome either fully or partially achieved

Difficulties or risks in the system

- Some agencies attend multi agency training but a lack of a clear training needs analysis and lack of robust data hampers the partnership understanding of reach and impact.
- There are issues in relation to the quality of care homes in the Borough. There are no 'Outstanding' Care Homes in Walsall.
- Safeguarding Adult Reviews and audits show a failure to recognise safeguarding concerns, or once identified, to analyse the risk.
- Making Safeguarding Personal (MSP): Ensuring service users have their voice heard or recorded in relation to safeguarding enquiries.
- There is further work to be done to raise the profile of adult safeguarding amongst both the public and professionals.
- Attendance at safeguarding board subgroups is mixed. CCG, WHT and DWMHT attend subgroups regularly, adult social care and West Midlands Fire Service are also well represented. West Midlands Police (vulnerable adults) and Probation do not attend Quality Assurance and Performance, Policies and Procedures or Learning and Development sub groups.
- As with many other areas of the region, Walsall has a high number of DoLS (Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards) applications outstanding and awaiting a decision (47%).

4. Implications for Joint Working arrangements:

Responding to children at risk of significant harm and adults with Care and Support Needs who are at risk of abuse is a statutory duty placed on local authority Chief Executives, Directors of Children's / Adult's Services, Safeguarding Board Chairs and senior managers within organisations who commission and provide services for children, adults and families, including social workers and professionals from health services, the police, Academy Trusts, education and the voluntary and community sector who have contact with children, adults and families.

The resources required to respond to this statutory requirement come from within the existing resources across the partnership of organisations working in Walsall to protect vulnerable children and those adults at risk of harm.

The Safeguarding Board Business Unit, which supports the delivery of the Board's statutory functions, is funded by the partnership and hosted by the LA.

5. Health and Wellbeing Priorities:

- These reports have been submitted for consideration by the HWBB as the effective delivery of high quality services to protect children, young people and adults with care and support needs, from the risk of abuse or neglect has a direct impact on the welfare and well-being of residents in Walsall. It directly links to the corporate priority to Improve Health and Wellbeing and the Children's Services objective that all children in Walsall are safe and supported.
- Both Safeguarding Board's are engaging with the Community and Voluntary sector to support the delivery of the safeguarding priorities. This is at a strategic level with One Walsall but also by delivering free safeguarding training to those working in the communities within Walsall.
- Safeguarding: Both reports highlight the strengths and challenges across the partnership in how services are delivered to vulnerable residents in the Borough.

6. Background papers

The Care Act 2014

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/care-act-2014-part-1-factsheets/care-act-factsheets>

Working Together to Safeguard Children 2018

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/729914/Working_Together_to_Safeguard_Children-2018.pdf

The publication of the statutory guidance Working Together 2018 outlines the requirements for local areas to develop Safeguarding Arrangements, removing the need for Safeguarding Boards. The partners are holding regular meetings and workshops to agree the new arrangements by summer 2019.

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