

Report to: People Scrutiny Committee
Date: 27 September 2022
By: Director of Adult Social Care and Health
Title of report: East Sussex Safeguarding Adults Board (SAB) Annual Report 2021 - 2022
Purpose of report: To present the SAB Annual Report as required in the Care Act

RECOMMENDATIONS

The People Scrutiny Committee is recommended to consider and comment on the report.

1. Background

1.1 The Care Act 2014 requires each SAB to:

- develop and publish a strategic plan setting out how they will meet their objectives and how their member and partner agencies will contribute
- publish an annual report detailing how effective their work has been
- commission safeguarding adults reviews (SARs) for any cases which meet the criteria for these.

1.2 The SAB Annual Report (Appendix 1) outlines safeguarding activity and performance in East Sussex between April 2021 and March 2022.

2. Supporting Information

2.1 The format of the annual report is structured against the SAB priorities as set out in the [Strategic Plan 2021–24](#). The data section includes contributions from a number of partner agencies in addition to the core data from the local authority.

2.2 Deborah Stuart-Angus was appointed the new Independent Chair of the SAB following the resignation of Graham Bartlett in October 2021. Graham Bartlett had provided leadership, expertise and excellent support to the Board for six years. A number of staff changes have also taken place within the SAB business support area in 2021/22 including the addition of a safeguarding coordinator to support the increased safeguarding adult review (SAR) activity.

2.3 The coronavirus pandemic led to unprecedented challenges and put adult safeguarding in a position of greater importance than ever before. Over the past year the SAB has continued to seek assurance from our partner agencies about responses to COVID-19, and undertaken work to ensure services have been, and continue to be, supported to respond to emerging safeguarding themes.

2.4 Highlights in the report under the SAB five strategic themes are as follows:

Strategic Theme 1: Accountability and leadership

- The Multi-Agency Risk Management Protocol (MARM) was launched in January 2021 and is designed to provide guidance for practitioners on working with adults with multiple complex needs and managing cases in which there is a high level of

risk, but where the circumstances may sit outside the statutory safeguarding framework. The MARM group includes representation from East Sussex SAB partners and the voluntary and statutory sector. The group has the authority to use resources and make decisions to proactively support adults with multiple disadvantages and mitigate risks.

- To facilitate joint working across the partnerships a Partnership Protocol was developed and is intended to support effective joint working between the following strategic partnership boards ('the partnerships') in East Sussex:
 - East Sussex Safeguarding Adults Board
 - East Sussex Safeguarding Children Partnership
 - East Sussex Safer Communities Partnership Board
 - East Sussex Children and Young Peoples Trust

These partnerships are committed to ensuring that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and to working together at every level to keep people in East Sussex safe from harm and abuse, and to improve health and wellbeing.

- The East Sussex SAB developed the Financial Abuse Multi-Agency guidance and accompanying documents to support practitioners in achieving co-ordinated multi-agency responses to financial abuse and to improve engagement and achieve positive outcomes for adults who experience financial abuse.

Strategic Theme 2: Performance, Quality and Audit, and Organisational Learning

- Further to an audit undertaken in 2019 in relation to young people at risk of exploitation, a working group was established in 2021 to review transitions between children's and adults' services. The project identified gaps in information sharing, provision and services for those young adults who may not have specific care and support needs, but who experience continuing risks and needs regarding child criminal and sexual exploitation. The SAB worked on a proposal to strengthen pathways across services and this was shared with ASCH Operational Teams in 2021. This work will be progressed in 2022/23 in conjunction with the East Sussex Safeguarding Children's Partnership.
- Following the recommendations outlined in the Adult C SAR, published in December 2020, the action plan contained 16 recommendations with a number of associated actions and was completed in 2022. This included developing and publishing multi-agency domestic abuse guidance in December 2021. The guidance specifically covered a number of areas, including responsibilities of reporting which may breach client confidentiality; effective information sharing; case coordination including the role of the lead professional; and supporting agencies to effectively and routinely capture and record information that can support evidence-led prosecutions.

Strategic Theme 3: Policies and Procedures

- The three Sussex SABs (Brighton & Hove SAB, East Sussex SAB and West Sussex SAB) produced the Sussex Safeguarding Adults Thresholds Guidance to assist practitioners and providers across all agencies in considering risk relating to potential safeguarding concerns involving adults with care and support needs. The new guidance enables safeguarding concerns to be reported when it is appropriate to do so and in a consistent way. It provides a framework for multi-

agency partners to manage risk and to assist in identifying whether abuse and or neglect is taking place, and if a safeguarding concern needs to be referred to the local authority or whether alternative actions should be considered.

- In 2021/22 the Policies and Procedures review group agreed that some areas of the Sussex Safeguarding Adults Policy and Procedures needed review and revision following the last substantive update provided in 2019, when the self-neglect procedures were launched. It was agreed that different Local Authority areas (Brighton & Hove, East Sussex and West Sussex) would lead on completing certain updates and these would be added to the online procedures. This work continues into 2022/23.

Strategic Theme 4: Prevention, Engagement and Making Safeguarding Personal

- The SAB has continued to use social media to communicate to both professionals and the public, sharing posts, supporting partner and national campaigns and offering general guidance. We have significantly increased our Twitter followers over the past year and will strive to grow our followers in 2022/23.
- The SAB produced quarterly e-newsletters during 2021/22 to share news about the work of the Board, learning from SARs and audits, and adult safeguarding information. In 2022 we developed and now publish a SAB Monthly Digest which ensures information, consultations and events are promoted in a timelier manner to SAB members and their respective workforce.

Strategic Theme 5: Integration, and Training and workforce development

- With the outbreak of the coronavirus pandemic in March 2020 until 2022, all SAB multi-agency face-to-face training was put on hold. However, the Training and Workforce Development Subgroup has used creative ways to engage with the workforce to deliver training and reflective workshops, and over the past year has set up several working groups to review the options for delivering our multi-agency training programme remotely via webinars or MS Teams.
- The SAB training programme is linked to our priorities, and over this last year has included the following workshops:
 - Modern slavery and human trafficking.
 - Adopting a Whole Family Approach to Domestic Abuse and Promoting Safety.
 - Mental Capacity Act 2005: A multi-agency approach to complex cases.
 - Self-neglect.
 - Coercion and control.

3. Conclusions and recommendations

3.1 The key priority areas identified for the SAB in 2021–22 continue to be priority areas of development and require further embedding within safeguarding practice for 2022/23. Recommendations from recent reviews which concluded early in 2022: SAR Ben, SAR Anna and the Thematic SAR identified the same priority areas for further learning and assurance activity. These are:

- Embedding the Mental Capacity Act in practice
- Safeguarding transitions for young people at risk
- Supporting adults who face multiple disadvantage

3.2 The SAB will progress work in relation to the newly commissioned SARs in 2022/23 and seek assurance to ensure that the learning and recommendations from previous SARs continue to be embedded in practice. The People Scrutiny Committee is recommended to consider and comment on the report.

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