

BRIEFING REPORT

Adults and Health Committee

Date of Meeting:	18 January 2022
Report Title:	Cheshire East Safeguarding Adults Board Annual Report (2020-2021)
Report of:	Helen Charlesworth-May, Executive Director Adults, Health and Integration

1. Purpose of the report

- 1.1** This report presents the Annual Report of the Cheshire East Safeguarding Adults Board to the Committee. This report provides an opportunity to evidence how the Safeguarding Board is fulfilling the council's priority to 'Protect and support our communities and safeguard children, adults at risk and families from abuse, neglect and exploitation' as stipulated in the council's Corporate Plan 2021-25.

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1.** This is the Annual Report of the Cheshire East Safeguarding Adults Board. The report provides a comprehensive overview of how strategic partners worked together during 2020/2021 to prevent and protect adults at risk of abuse during this time. It also describes the purpose, aims and priorities of the Safeguarding Adults Board and notes challenges and achievements during the early stages of the Covid pandemic. Finally, the report includes three 'stories of difference', describing how the strategic aims of the Safeguarding Board are implemented every day by frontline practitioners and the impact and safeguarding outcome for adults at risk who are residents of Cheshire East.
- 2.2.** The purpose of the report is to enable the Safeguarding Adults Board to fulfil its statutory duty to produce and publish an annual report. This report provides an opportunity to evidence how the Safeguarding Board is fulfilling the council's priority to 'Protect and support our communities and safeguard children, adults at risk and families from abuse, neglect and exploitation' as stipulated in the council's Corporate Plan 2021-25. Finally, the report acts

as a reminder that safeguarding is everyone's business and the importance of effective communication and partnership working.

3. Background

- 3.1.** The Safeguarding Adults Board consists of three statutory partners from the local authority, police and Clinical Commissioning Group, but also senior representation from Housing, Probation, Cheshire Fire and Rescue, mental health services, prison services, voluntary and faith sector groups. It has responsibility to lead adult safeguarding arrangements across the Cheshire East footprint and to oversee and coordinate the effectiveness of the safeguarding work of its member and partner agencies.
- 3.2.** The Care Act 2014 endorses the principles of making safeguarding personal and the Safeguarding Adults Board should ensure that all partners work in a 'person centred, outcome focussed' way. Moreover, assuring itself that safeguarding practice is continuously improving and enhancing the quality of life of adults in Cheshire East. The annual report is based on individual single agency reports submitted at the end of each financial year.
- 3.3.** In addition to producing an annual report, the Safeguarding Adults Board also has a duty to produce a three year strategic plan which sets out the objectives of the Board and how they are going to be achieved. It also has a statutory duty to commission Safeguarding Adults Reviews to enable learning where it is established that an adult at risk has died because of abuse or neglect AND agencies have not worked effectively together.
- 3.4.** The Safeguarding Adults Board meets on a quarterly basis. However, there are many activities and subgroups which meet regularly throughout the year to support the work of the Board. A vital function of the Safeguarding Adults Board is to connect with other partnership boards and there are strong connections with the Safer Cheshire East Partnership, the Domestic Abuse Partnership, the Children's Safeguarding Partnership, and the Early Help Together Board.

4. Briefing Information

- 4.1.** It should be noted that this Annual Report captures activity between April 2020 and March 2021, when the Covid pandemic was still prevalent, and all services had to adapt to national restrictions and guidelines. During this time our statutory adult safeguarding duties under the Care Act remained unchanged, and staff have worked tirelessly and creatively during this time to respond to safeguarding adult concerns. This briefing report would like to highlight key information contained in the Safeguarding Adults Board Annual Report.
- 4.2.** The Safeguarding Adults Board continued to meet and adapted to using Microsoft Teams. The Head of Adult Safeguarding has met with the Independent Chair of the Board every week to ensure effective communication. The Board has continued to adopt a themed approach to

Board meetings. This has enabled the golden thread of adult safeguarding to flow from top to bottom and vice versa, including case presentations to Board members by social workers and practitioners. Key themes during this year were Covid and adult safeguarding, PREVENT and radicalisation, and safeguarding and carers.

- 4.3.** Adult safeguarding is not only about protection but prevention. During this year Cheshire East Safeguarding Adults Board joined with colleagues at the Ann Craft Trust as part of the national campaign to raise awareness during National Safeguarding Adults Week in November 2020. The Board's dedicated Safeguarding Trainer, although initially redeployed to the council's People Helping People Programme, resumed basic Adult Safeguarding Training to non-statutory and voluntary organisations in October 2020, delivering 114 online sessions to 724 learners.
- 4.4.** The Board has retained a supportive and encouraging role to organisations, providers, and practitioners during the pandemic. The Board was able to join with the Children's Safeguarding Partnership to host the biannual Safeguarding and Dignity Awards in February 2021. This was facilitated online, but paid tribute to individuals, teams and volunteers who have gone above and beyond to work with adults and children affected by abuse. It is hoped that the next safeguarding awards event will be in person in 2023.
- 4.5.** The annual report evidences the number of safeguarding concerns received during 2020/2021. Cheshire East, like many local authorities, saw an initial fall in adult safeguarding referrals following the first national lockdown. However, numbers of referrals have continued to rise significantly ever since. Weekly statistics are submitted to CEMART and we are now seeing a mean average of 350 safeguarding referrals per month. During Covid we have noted an increase in neglect/acts of omission. But we also noted the impact of Covid on informal carers and the potential for carer breakdown to result in safeguarding issues. Officers have been working with commissioners who are managing the Carers and Dementia Strategies. It should also be noted that safeguarding enquiries are much more complex, with key issues of substance misuse, trauma, self-neglect, and engagement being common themes.
- 4.6.** Finally, the Safeguarding Adults Board Annual Report references its development day which was held in March 2020. This was facilitated by Professor Michael Preston Shoot. The Board were provided with key learning from Safeguarding Adults Reviews (SARs) which occurred in the UK between 2017-2019. During 2020/21 the Board facilitated two discretionary SARs and commissioned a statutory SAR which commenced in May 2021 and will be included in next year's annual report.
- 4.7.** The report ends with personal case studies of Heidi, Lucy and Wilf, highlighting the impact of physical, financial and self-neglect on individuals, but more importantly how social workers turned making safeguarding

personal into a reality and worked with each person to achieve their own outcomes.

5. Implications

5.1. Legal

- 5.1.1.** The Safeguarding Adults Board Annual Report demonstrates compliance with the statutory duties under the Care Act 2014.

5.2. Finance

- 5.2.1.** There are no financial implications or changes required to the MTFS because of this briefing paper.
- 5.2.2.** The Safeguarding Adults Board is funded by a mixture of funding sources. The Better Care Fund contributes £52k per year and £10k per annum is received from Cheshire Police, and there is a Cheshire East Council base budget contribution of £23k per annum.
- 5.2.3.** The funding supports the Independent Chair, the Safeguarding Board Manager and Administrator. The Board is responsible for commissioning Safeguarding Adults Reviews (SAR) as they occur. The number of SAR requests continue to increase. The Safeguarding Trainer is funded externally each year.
- 5.2.4.** The Safeguarding Adults Board would like to be able to undertake more proactive preventative work and to also offer multi-agency training. This can only be achieved by additional funding if it is made available in the future.

5.3. Human Resources

- 5.3.1.** There are no Human Resources Implications. The Report will be published on the Safeguarding Board Website: www.stopadultabuse.org

Access to Information	
Contact Officer:	Sandra Murphy – Head of Adult Safeguarding Sandra.murphy@cheshireeast.gov.uk 07825 145 464
Appendices:	Cheshire East Safeguarding Adults Board Annual Report 2020-2021
Background Papers:	None