

# Cabinet

12 November 2020

## Warwickshire Safeguarding Annual Report 2019-2020

### Recommendations

That Cabinet:

1. Receive the Warwickshire Safeguarding Annual Report for 2019-2020 (Appendix) and note the progress that Warwickshire Safeguarding has made in its transition to its new partnership arrangements and the progress that has been made to strengthen assurance activities and learning and development opportunities,
2. Note the progress made against the strategic priorities and how partner agencies have collaborated to support vulnerable members of our communities to be supported to be independent and safe,
3. Asks the Strategic Director for People to implement arrangements for continuing to raise awareness, understanding and ownership of the safeguarding agenda across the Council.

### 1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 Warwickshire Safeguarding is required to produce and publish an annual report in accordance with the statutory requirements governing its establishment i.e. under the Care Act 2014 (Adults) and Working Together 2018 (Children). This is required to be shared with the Chief Executive and Leader of the Local Authority, as well as, the Chair of the local Health and Wellbeing Board, Police and Health leads and wider membership of the partnership.
- 1.2 The annual report provides a high-level overview of key performance data in relation to safeguarding children, young people and adults, details of work undertaken against each of the strategic priorities; and learning and improvement work conducted throughout the year.
- 1.3 The work of Warwickshire Safeguarding during 2019-2020 has primarily focused on the following four areas; further supporting information against each of these areas is provided in section 4 below:
  - **New ways of working** – Implementing new governance structures
  - **Quality Assurance** – Developing a robust assurance framework
  - **Learning & Improvement** – Developing a learning culture to support improvement in practice

- **Safeguarding Reviews** – Streamlining reviews processes to comply with the requirements of Working Together 2018 and the introduction of 15 Rapid Reviews

1.4 Warwickshire Safeguarding is responsible for seeking assurance on the effectiveness of safeguarding practices and compliance with safeguarding policy and procedures from across its partnership. This year's work has focused heavily on putting in place infrastructures that help deliver on this commitment. Information gathered from these assurance activities have helped inform the development of workplans and learning tools.

Moving forward, Warwickshire Safeguarding plans to:

1. Evidence the impact of the introduction of its new quality assurance framework, safeguarding briefings and learning from reviews and demonstrate how this has impacted on service delivery to safeguarding children and adults across the county.
2. Evidence the impact of learning and improved practice resulting from the 'Exploitation of Children and Adults' strategic thematic review.
3. Complete a second strategic thematic review designed to seek assurance around the delivery of core safeguarding practice from a selection of partner agencies.
4. Embed a structure to ensure that case review action plans are reviewed every quarter and reported to the Executive Board on a six monthly basis.

## **2. Financial Implications**

- 2.1 Warwickshire Safeguarding is funded through a pooled budget drawn from across its partner organisations and is reviewed annually by the Executive Board.
- 2.2 The funding largely supports the employment of the Business Team, Independent Chair & Scrutineer and recruitment of Independent Reviewers to conduct children and adults safeguarding reviews, as well as, funding costs associated with the maintenance of the website and the children's safeguarding policy and procedures platform.
- 2.3 Where possible the pooled budget covers the costs associated with completion of Child Safeguarding Practice Reviews and Safeguarding Adult Reviews. The Safeguarding Board Executive is responsible for meeting these costs if the pooled budget proves insufficient.

## **3. Environmental Implications**

- 3.1 None.

## **4. Supporting Information**

### **4.1 New ways of working**

Working Together to Safeguard Children statutory guidance issued in July 2018 required local safeguarding partnerships to review existing partnership arrangements to ensure more equitable and proportionate responsibility for safeguarding children across the three lead partner organisations i.e. Local Authority, Police and Health.

During 2019-2020 the partnership finalised its new governance structure and constitution to enable it to transition into Warwickshire Safeguarding. The new strategic partnership infrastructure to safeguard children, young people and adults came into effect 29 September 2020 with a newly agreed strategic plan setting out its priorities for 2019-2021 which centre around the following:

- Effective Safeguarding
- Prevention and Early Intervention
- Exploitation

The governance structure for the new safeguarding partnership is as follows:

- Executive Board
- Two Safeguarding Partnership Groups (one each for children and adults)
- Four Subgroups focusing on Safeguarding Reviews, Exploitation, Education and Prevention & Early Intervention.

Since September 2019 the Executive Board has continued to meet on a monthly basis to discharge its statutory duties by overseeing, reviewing and agreeing the coordination of local work to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and adults across Warwickshire.

The two Safeguarding Partnership Groups (children and adults) have contributed to the partnership's assurance work through thematic reviews and safeguarding reviews for children and adults.

The newly formed subgroups responsible for the management and oversight of safeguarding reviews and the exploitation of children and adults have put in place new terms of reference for each of their subgroups and continued to develop and execute their respective workplans.

The Education Subgroup meetings have continued to provide opportunities for wider engagement with schools and educational settings to improve understanding and awareness of the new ways of working introduced by Warwickshire Safeguarding; and engage them in the development and delivery of the partnership's strategic priorities.

### **4.2 Quality Assurance**

A new Quality Assurance Framework has been developed and implemented to support the partnership fulfil its statutory responsibility to seek assurance on the effectiveness of safeguarding practices from across its partner agencies.

The 'Exploitation of Children and Adults' was the focus of Warwickshire Safeguarding's new strategic thematic review which sought assurance from a selection of partner agencies on their compliance with Warwickshire's safeguarding policy and procedures, the delivery of safeguarding training; and effective engagement of service users in decision making (children, young people, adults and families). Evidence of the above was gathered through the completion of single agency self-evaluations, on-line surveys with staff, conversations with professionals and service users.

This information was used to formulate an overarching multi-agency action plan for the partnership which has now formed part of the Exploitation Subgroup's workplan. A comprehensive report detailing the findings of this strategic thematic review has been published to support wider understanding and awareness of exploitation across the county.

#### **4.3 Learning & Improvement**

Warwickshire Safeguarding has also introduced new and improved opportunities for sharing learning from Children's Safeguarding Practice Reviews (formerly known as Serious Case Reviews) and Safeguarding Adults Reviews.

The development of 7 Minute Briefings enables the partnership to place the spotlight on specific areas of safeguarding practice to promote awareness and understanding of policy, procedure and application. Lessons Learned Briefings provide a snapshot overview of case specific details with key points of learning for both professionals working with children and adults, and the community at large.

These new resources have been welcomed by the partnership and are actively being used to support single agency learning and development and service improvements.

#### **4.4 Safeguarding Reviews**

The partnership has seen a significant increase in the number of safeguarding referrals being submitted for review of cases where the child or adult has experienced/or is suspected to have suffered abuse or neglect.

Warwickshire Safeguarding has now streamlined its processes to provide a consistent approach for the scoping of safeguarding review referrals for both children and adults, in line with Working Together 2018. This enables the partnership to swiftly gather information from partner agencies to undertake a Rapid Review of the case of the child or adult, review the involvement and role of each partner agency; and identify any key learning which can be shared across the wider partnership to help prevent similar occurrences in future cases. Provided below are total numbers of referrals and rapid reviews conducted:

- No. of referrals received = 21 (11 Adult cases, 10 Children's cases)

- No. of Rapid Reviews conducted = 14 (8 Adult cases, 6 Children's cases)
- No. of referrals progressing to full review = 4 (1 Adult case, 2 Children's cases and 1 joint adult and child case)

## 5. Timescales associated with the decision and next steps

5.1 None

**APPENDIX** Warwickshire Safeguarding Annual Report 2019-2020.

### Background Papers

None.

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This report was considered previously by the Health and Wellbeing Board