

## **Adult Social Care and Health Select Committee**

A meeting of Adult Social Care and Health Select Committee was held on Tuesday, 17th January, 2023.

**Present:** Cllr Evaline Cunningham (Chair), Cllr Clare Gamble (Vice-Chair), Cllr Jacky Bright, Cllr Lynn Hall, Cllr Mohammed Javed, Cllr Steve Matthews

**Officers:** Emma Champley, Graham Lyons (A&H); Gary Woods (CS)

**Also in attendance:** Cllr Ann McCoy (SBC Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care); Darren Best (Teeswide Safeguarding Adults Board)

**Apologies:** Cllr Paul Weston

### **ASH 41/22 Evacuation Procedure**

The evacuation procedure was noted.

### **ASH 42/22 Declarations of Interest**

There were no interests declared.

### **ASH 43/22 Minutes- 20 December 2022**

Consideration was given to the minutes from the Committee meeting held on 20 December 2022.

AGREED that the minutes of the meeting on 20 December 2022 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

### **ASH 44/22 Monitoring the Impact of Previously Agreed Recommendations - Multi-Agency Support to Care Homes during the COVID-19 Pandemic (Task & Finish)**

Consideration was given to the assessment of progress on the implementation of the recommendations from the Scrutiny Review of Multi-Agency Support to Care Homes during the COVID-19 Pandemic (Task & Finish). This was the second update following the Committee's agreement of the Action Plan in December 2021, and the following comments / queries were raised in relation to the stated progress:

- Recommendation 1 (Further to existing arrangements already in place regarding engagement with service-users and their loved ones, any current and future multi-agency professional group that is convened to support care homes ensures that the voice of residents and their families / carers is clearly articulated (whether through direct representation or via another appropriate mechanism). This should continue to include:):

- o How the Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council (SBC) contracting team gains information and feedback from clients and their families / How the Care Home Protection Group gains information and feedback: The Social Care Protection Operational Group (formerly the Care Home Protection Group) was a

mechanism which SBC used to route a wide range of information through, thereby allowing an overarching group to have oversight of resident / family / carer views. A new Terms of Reference had been created which had broadened its scope to support the sector. In addition to the ways in which the Group continued to gather client and family feedback, it was noted that the Council had recently appointed a Lived Experience Co-ordinator (based within the SBC Adults and Health directorate) to work with relatives / carers across adult social care.

Whilst this particular element of the recommendation was now considered 'fully achieved', the exploration and evaluation of strategies to maximise engagement with, and feedback from, those accessing services (and their families / carers) was very much an ongoing process.

Members drew attention to the continued use of the term 'pandemic'. Whilst it was acknowledged that the emergence of COVID-19 had been the catalyst for this review, some felt the Council and its partners had become too cautious and risk-averse, and that this approach needed to change as society had, to a large extent, returned to pre-COVID ways.

The SBC Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care (also present at this meeting) highlighted the benefits of reflecting on the response to COVID by local health and care organisations, the experience of which could be embraced in the future should such a pandemic happen again. Commenting on the addition of a Lived Experience Co-ordinator, the benefits of having a fresh perspective on how services were provided was also emphasised.

Reflecting on the original concerns around death rates across the Borough's care homes during the initial stages of the pandemic (which had driven the initiation of this review), the Committee welcomed the developments outlined within this latest progress update, though also emphasised the need to continue building engagement with residents and their families / carers. As recognised in the Committee's recently completed Care at Home review, the importance of a well-functioning local care sector not only benefitted those accessing such services, but also had a positive impact on health partners in terms of facilitating timely discharge from hospital. Officers highlighted the joint-working between SBC and local NHS Trusts to foster closer links with care providers, as well as the involvement of those accessing services (and their relatives / carers) to determine the shape, and strengthen the quality, of the local care offer.

Ensuring sufficient service capacity was discussed, and whilst this was not seen as an issue within the Borough at present, Members were mindful of the ongoing costs of care (to both providers and the Council, as well as costs incurred by those requiring support). The SBC Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care felt that the Council continued to offer its residents value-for-money services despite the ongoing uncertainty over future national funding allocations for the health and care sectors.

**AGREED that:**

- 1) the progress update be noted and assessments for progress be confirmed;

2) the Action Plan in relation to the recommendations from the previously completed Multi-Agency Support to Care Homes during the COVID-19 Pandemic (Task & Finish) review be signed-off as fully achieved (no further updates required).

**ASH  
45/22**

### **Teeswide Safeguarding Adults Board (TSAB) - Annual Report 2021-2022**

The Committee was presented with the latest TSAB Annual Report for 2021-2022 (full report and Strategic Business Plan for 2022-2025 was provided in advance) by the current TSAB Independent Chair. The following key elements were highlighted:

- It was not a statutory requirement to have an Independent Chair for a Safeguarding Adults Board, but this had been the agreed arrangement for Teesside. It was also not usual for multiple Local Authorities to be under the auspices of a single Board, though this had approach had proved beneficial.
- Whilst statutory responsibilities for safeguarding adults matters ultimately lie with the four Local Authorities (which work alongside other statutory organisations, Cleveland Police and NHS Tees Valley Clinical Commissioning Group), a host of other local / regional / national bodies were members of the Board as non-statutory contributors – this demonstrated the breadth of partnership-working. In terms of identifying and addressing domestic abuse (an issue discussed during the presentation of the previous year's TSAB Annual Report), the Board is particularly well represented.
- Each of the four Local Authorities played a lead role in the TSAB sub-groups which undertake key pieces of work to achieve the Board's aims and objectives. Regarding the Safeguarding Adult Review (SAR) sub-group, it was noted that a SAR Co-ordinator had been employed from 1 December 2022 to further strengthen this area of Board activity.
- Safeguarding data showed an 11% increase in safeguarding concerns received since the previous year (2020-2021), and a 9% increase in Section 42 enquiries. Locally, Stockton-on-Tees had, however, seen a 16% decrease in concerns being reported – the reasons for this were being discussed with the SBC Director of Adults and Health, though a suspected recording issue was the likely reason, something which would be corrected. Overall, the increase in the numbers of concerns and subsequent Section 42 enquiries was seen as a positive occurrence, reflecting better awareness of safeguarding issues (which the impact of the COVID pandemic also helped shine a light upon).
- Self-neglect had become a significant issue across Teesside, possibly linked to the cost-of-living pressures that had emerged at the start of 2022 which might have affected the ability of some individuals to look after themselves properly. 'Neglect and Acts of Omission' (which had seen a notable increase on 2020-2021 numbers) remained the most prolific type of adult abuse identified, though cases of 'psychological' abuse had also risen significantly.
- The Board achieved all five of its performance indicators for 2021-2022. It was noted that one of these indicators (the percentage of concerns leading to

Section 42 enquiry) would not be used in the future due to the potential for the data to give a misleading impression of performance (either positively or negatively).

- Moving forward, there was a continuous focus on trying to see a situation through the lens of the service-user, though this was a challenge given the range of backgrounds and experiences of those within the safeguarding arena. That said, financial constraints cannot be underestimated, with a limited resource available to deal with increasing case volume and complexity.

Concluding the presentation, the TSAB Independent Chair paid tribute to those working in the safeguarding domain, an environment which comes with inherent risk and can be extremely challenging.

The Committee began discussions by commending TSAB for another well-constructed Annual Report (though noted challenges with the clarity of some of the coloured font). The inclusion of a trauma informed practice event for professionals was particularly welcomed.

Regarding the 'Partnership' safeguarding principle, Members were encouraged by the Missing From Home (MFH) developments involving Cleveland Police. Further to a query around the outcomes of the Task and Finish Group work around support for homeless people to access health and support services, the Committee heard that each individual Local Authority takes responsibility for any subsequent actions that emerge.

Members were pleased to hear of the focus on the service-user, as well as the 'contextual safeguarding' approach (recognising influences and potential risks to an individual outside of the family environment). However, the high number of Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS) applications within the Borough compared to neighbouring Local Authorities continued to capture the eye. Like the increase of safeguarding concerns across Teesside, TSAB considered this a positive development as it enabled professionals to assess an individual's circumstances and determine the course of action that was in their best interests.

Attention was drawn to some of the issues raised during consideration of the previous year's TSAB Annual Report (2020-2021) in January 2022. The Committee was disappointed that one of the main discussion points – the strengthening of partnership-working between Adults and Children's Services – was not referenced within this latest edition, and reiterated the sense that these domains were not always in lockstep when managing certain safeguarding cases. The TSAB Independent Chair acknowledged the absence of this issue within the Annual Report, though also stated that progress around enhanced Adults and Children's joint-working was not for the want of trying. Professionals within these two services were often happy to talk about building better relationships, but little seemed to follow-on from the initial dialogue. Ultimately, there needed to be Executive buy-in / strategic direction if this was to improve, and it remained unclear as to when key areas such as Adult Services, Children's Services and Community Safety come together to address relevant cases. The SBC Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care noted some past work within the Council around transition and offered to raise these ongoing concerns with the SBC Director of Adults and Health.

Limitations on access to Primary Care and the potential impact this may have regarding the identification of vulnerable individuals was another issue raised back in January 2022. It was confirmed that TSAB had seen an increase in safeguarding reporting from health services in general during 2021-2022, though issues were raised through Integrated Care Board (ICB) structures, and drilling down to individual GP reporting would be difficult. Members also raised concerns about health professionals not conducting home visits for pre- and post-natal checks (instead requiring expectant / new mothers to go to Endurance House for appointments) which meant the identification of potential safeguarding issues may be being missed.

A further query from the previous 2020-2021 report involved a comment around an increase in safeguarding cases within the BAME community – this would be taken back to the TSAB Business Unit to confirm any data, though was not thought to be a particular area of concern.

Finally, reference was made to a recent press article on this latest TSAB Annual Report that included comments from the Independent Chair, many of which addressed questions that Members had intended to ask at this meeting. The TSAB Independent Chair confirmed that the Annual Report had been in the public domain for a number of months prior to this meeting, and that it was then presented to several groups / Committees which the media could then pick-up on (indeed, the local media approached the Independent Chair following the publication of the agenda for this meeting, before running a positive story). Whilst timings were not always ideal, any opportunity to promote safeguarding matters would be grasped.

AGREED that the TSAB Annual Report 2021-2022 be noted.

## **ASH 46/22**      **Regional Health Scrutiny Update**

Consideration was given to the latest Regional Health Scrutiny Update report summarising developments regarding the Tees Valley Joint Health Scrutiny Committee, the Sustainability and Transformation Plan (STP) / Integrated Care System (ICS) Joint Health Scrutiny Committee, and the North East Regional Health Scrutiny Committee. Attention was drawn to the following:

- Tees Valley Joint Health Scrutiny Committee: The last Committee meeting was held on 16 December 2022 where Members considered several North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board (NENC ICB) updates involving Winter Planning, Integrated Urgent Care Engagement, Vaccinations, and Primary Care Access. A North East Ambulance Service (NEAS) performance update was also provided, as were two Tees, Esk and Wear Valleys NHS Foundation Trust (TEWV) items, one of which was a response to published Care Quality Commission (CQC) inspection reports.

The next Committee meeting, and last of the current municipal year, was scheduled for 17 March 2023. SBC will assume the chair and support responsibilities for 2023-2024 as part of the previously agreed rotational arrangements between the five Tees Valley Local Authorities.

The TEWV Annual General Meeting (AGM) on 25 November 2022 (held virtually) was noted. During proceedings, the CQCs 'Out of sight – who cares?' report (October 2020) following a review of restraint, seclusion and segregation for autistic people, and people with a learning disability and / or mental health condition, was referenced – concerns around TEWVs volume of restraints have previously been raised by the Joint Committee.

The SBC Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care (and TEWV Lead Governor) highlighted a piece of Task and Finish work being undertaken by the Trust in relation to autism services. Following announcement of this work, contact was received by the family of a service-user who wanted to be involved – this had since been facilitated, with the family welcoming the opportunity to be heard.

- Sustainability and Transformation Plan (STP) / Integrated Care System (ICS) Joint Health Scrutiny Committee: No further developments regarding this Committee since the previous update in November 2022. In related matters, after a period of consultation at the end of 2022, the North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Partnership (NENC ICP) (a committee of the ICB and the thirteen Local Authorities from across the North East and North Cumbria) agreed its Integrated Care Strategy in December 2022. A summary of the Integrated Care Strategy, and an easier to read version, will be produced and launched in January 2023 – this will be circulated to Members once published.

AGREED that the information be noted.

**ASH  
47/22**

#### **Chair's Update and Select Committee Work Programme 2022-2023**

Consideration was given to the Committee's current Work Programme. The next meeting was scheduled for 21 February 2023 and would include the next update on progress of outstanding actions regarding the previously completed Care Homes for Older People review, as well as the latest CQC quarterly update (Q3 2022-2023). In addition, the Committee would also receive a presentation on the issue of chronic pain.

AGREED that the Adult Social Care and Health Select Committee Work Programme 2022-2023 be noted.