

# SOCIAL CARE & HEALTH SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Monday, 29 November 2021

**PRESENT:** Councillor I.W. Davies (Chair)

**Councillors:**

S.M. Allen, K.V. Broom, K. Davies, R.E. Evans, W.T. Evans, M.J.A. Lewis, K. Lloyd, K. Madge, E.M.J.G. Schiavone, B. Thomas, G. Thomas and D.T. Williams

**The following Officers were in attendance:**

A. Bracey, Head of Social Care  
A. Williams, Head of Integrated Services  
C. Richards, Senior Safeguarding Manager  
M.S. Davies, Democratic Services Officer  
R. Morris, Members Support Officer  
E. Bryer, Democratic Services Officer

**Virtual Meeting - 2.00 pm - 3.50 pm**

**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors B.A.L. Roberts and J. Tremlett (Cabinet Member for Social Care and Health).

On behalf of the Committee the Chair extended condolences to Cllr. J. Tremlett on the passing of her son and husband.

**2. DECLARATIONS OF PERSONAL INTERESTS INCLUDING ANY PARTY WHIPS ISSUED IN RELATION TO ANY AGENDA ITEM.**

Councillor	Minute No (s)	Nature of Interest
Kevin Madge	4. Annual Report on Adult Safeguarding and Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS) (2020/21)	Daughter works in Social Care.

There were no declarations of any prohibited party whips.

**3. PUBLIC QUESTIONS**

The Chair advised that no public questions had been received.

**4. ANNUAL REPORT ON ADULT SAFEGUARDING AND DEPRIVATION OF LIBERTY SAFEGUARDS (DoLS) (2020/21)**

The Committee considered the Authority's Annual Report on Adult Safeguarding and Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS), which provided information on the role, functions and activities undertaken by the Authority with regard to Adult Safeguarding and Deprivation of Liberty Safeguarding.

As the statutory organisation responsible for adult safeguarding, the Authority was required to have effective arrangements in place to ensure vulnerable adults were protected from harm. The Authority undertakes its role in close partnership with Dyfed Powys Police, the Hywel Dda University Health Board and other statutory and non-statutory organisations. The Authority was also the supervisory body for Deprivation of Liberty Safeguard. The report detailed some of the key performance activities, processes and practices.

As the supervisory body for Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards, the Local Authority ensured some of the most vulnerable citizens were properly safeguarded. The report detailed the current DoLS arrangements and the forthcoming changes.

The report related to 2020/21 financial year and summarised the national, regional and local context of Adult Safeguarding and provided a variety of information including:-

- National and regional strategic position
- Local operational arrangements
- Audits and Inspections
- Performance and Activity Information

A number of questions were raised to which the officers responded. The main matters were as follows:

- Clarification was sought regarding the awareness raising sessions that had been delivered by the team.  
The Senior Manager Safeguarding / DoLS advised that the team had delivered regular safeguarding awareness raising / training sessions and that these were themed sessions for practitioners. It was stated that the session had been successful and had given the team opportunities to ask burning questions around safeguarding.
- It was asked what impact the new Enquiries (Duty) Officer Role had had on the core team.  
The Senior Manager Safeguarding / DoLS advised that objective of this role was to assist with ensuring that cases were resolved within 7 days and to prevent cases being escalated. It was felt that this role had reduced the number of case escalations.
- Reference was made to the Audit Wales report that mentioned Denbighshire being co-located with partner agencies. It was asked if Carmarthenshire was considering implementing this model of working. Officers advised that research had shown that there was no ideal solution and that being co-located did not necessarily result in better outcomes. It was stated that the key to achieving positive outcomes was by ensuring that infrastructures were in place to facilitate good communications and responses.
- Officers were asked why the ADULT Protection Support Order which had been available since 2014 had rarely been used.  
The Committee was advised that under certain circumstances, cases could be resolved under the Mental Health Act legislation or via the Court of Protection meaning that support orders weren't required.
- Reference was made to the five recommendations made by National

Independent Safeguarding Board.

Officers advised that the recommendations were to inform Welsh Government when developing strategies and guidance.

- It was asked if the ability to gain access to care homes had improved. The Senior Manager Safeguarding / DoLS advised that access to care homes had been challenging during lockdown but the situation had now improved. It was stated that guidance had also been changed and the Authority now insisted on face-to-face assessments.
- It was asked how easy it was to access and share data between the various agencies.

Officers advised that while IT systems weren't integrated there were data sharing protocols that meant that agencies shared relevant and proportionate information that allowed informed decisions and risk assessments to be undertaken.

- Reference was made to the reduction of the number of enquiries undertaken within 7 days in quarter 4. It was asked if this was a concern and what were the reasons for the reduction. The Committee was advised that safeguarding enquiries should normally be undertaken within 7 days; however, they should not be rushed. Several factors have contributed to this downward trend including the complexity of situations and the lack of availability of staff in partner agencies during the pandemic. It was stated that the position had already improved this year.
- Concern was expressed regarding the number of care home enquiries. Officers advised that care homes were good at self-reporting although in many instances these were low level and not serious concerns. It was also stated that Carmarthenshire had a high number of care homes which would have a bearing on the statistics.
- It was asked why the number of applications received but not allocated assessors for quarter 4 was still high. The Committee was advised that the Cheshire West judgement in 2014 had resulted in an overnight backlog of cases but assurance was given that the Authority had a rigorous process of screening to ensure that the most vulnerable were being prioritised. It was hoped that with additional funding from Welsh Government the assessments would be completed within 3 months.
- It was asked how much pressure the new Liberty Protection Safeguard will have on the service now that it will apply to 16 and 17 year olds. Officers advised that it was anticipated that the numbers would increase however the Liberty Protection Safeguards framework would also simplify assessment. In preparation for the implementation of Liberty Protection Safeguards the region had agreed to undertake a scoping exercise which aims to inform how many people would be entitled to the safeguards. It was hoped that this exercise would help predict demand and any associated training/resource implications.
- It was asked how we could be certain that the outcomes achieved were robust. Officers stated the importance of a person-centred approach in establishing the appropriate level of support and that each case had an investigation recommendation and action plan.

**RESOLVED that the report be received.**

**5. EXPLANATION FOR NON-SUBMISSION OF SCRUTINY REPORT**

The Committee received an explanation for the non-submission of the following scrutiny reports.

- Dementia Action Plan
- Residential Care Update

**RESOLVED that the explanation for the non-submission be noted.**

**6. FORTHCOMING ITEMS**

**RESOLVED that the list of forthcoming items to be considered at the next scheduled meeting on the 20th December, 2021 be noted.**

**7. SOCIAL CARE & HEALTH SCRUTINY COMMITTEE ACTIONS AND REFERRALS UPDATE**

The Committee considered the update report detailing progress in relation to actions, requests and referrals emerging from previous meetings.

**UNANAMOUSLY RESOLVED that the report be received.**

**8. TO SIGN AS A CORRECT RECORD THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON THE 5TH OCTOBER, 2021**

**UNANAMOUSLY RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on the 5th October, 2021 be signed as a correct record.**

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**CHAIR**

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**DATE**