

IMPROVING LIVES SELECT COMMISSION
Tuesday 5 October 2021

Present:- Councillor Pitchley (in the Chair); Councillors Cooksey, Aveyard, C Carter, Griffin, Haleem, Khan, Monk, Thompson and Wilson.

Apologies for absence:- Apologies were received from Councillors The Mayor (Councillor Jenny Andrews), Barley, Bacon, Browne, Collingham, R. Elliott and Singleton.

The webcast of the Council Meeting can be viewed at:-

<https://rotherham.public-i.tv/core/portal/home>

33. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

34. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

There were no items that required the exclusion of the public or press.

35. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC AND THE PRESS

There were no questions from members of the public or press.

36. SAFEGUARDING AND ADULT SOCIAL CARE

The Strategic Director - Adult Care, Housing and Public Health and the Assistant Director - Adult Care and Integration attended the meeting to provide a report and make a presentation on the provision of Adult Safeguarding activity in Rotherham.

In introducing the presentation, the Strategic Director - Adult Care, Housing and Public Health advised that the presentation would provide an overview on the role of Adult Care in delivering positive Adult Safeguarding protection and prevention activities.

The Assistant Director - Adult Care and Integration delivered a presentation that provided information on:

- the definition of Safeguarding and how this related to the Care Act 2014.
- the objectives of Adult Safeguarding activity.
- the duties and responsibilities placed on Local Authorities with regard to Adult Safeguarding by the Care Act 2014.
- the statutory criteria that needed to be met for a “section 42” enquiry to be made under the Care Act 2014.
- the provision of non-statutory safeguarding enquires where the requirements under section 42 of the Care Act 2014 had not been

met.

- how the Council worked with partners in the delivery of its adult safeguarding functions.
- the different types of Adult Abuse that may be part of safeguarding enquiry.
- how safeguarding activity was made personal to each individual's needs.
- the current Adult Safeguarding caseload being managed in Rotherham.
- other key pieces of legislation relevant to the delivery of effective Adult Safeguarding.
- the different pathways that a safeguarding enquiry could follow in the delivery of services and support.
- the role of the Rotherham Adult Safeguarding Board (RSAB).

Members asked for further information on how effective the services delivered at Rotherham were, how services delivered compared to those delivered by other local authorities and how services were inspected. The Assistant Director noted that all local authorities recorded information relating to Adult Safeguarding slightly differently, and as such benchmarking performance against other authorities was not always straightforward. The Assistant Director advised that the Association of Directors of Adult Social Services (ADASS) carried out benchmarking activity across the region and that this activity would highlight any areas of activity that required attention at Rotherham.

The Assistant Director advised that the most important measure of performance was in ensuring that each individual involved in a safeguarding enquiry reached an outcome that they felt was right for them. The Assistant Director noted that over 90% of individuals advised that they felt satisfied with the ultimate outcome of the safeguarding enquiry that had been carried out for them.

The Strategic Director noted that unlike Children's Services, Adult Care Services were not currently subject to formal inspections, but advised that more formal inspections were planned to be introduced in the future, with Adult Safeguarding provision being part of these inspections. The Strategic Director advised that ADASS did conduct sector led reviews that were similar in scope and approach to peer reviews, that provided opportunities for learning and reflection. The Strategic Director advised however that due to the subjectivity of what success was with regarding to an Adult Safeguarding enquiry, measuring the success of actions and comparing them against a set of criteria was particularly difficult given the differing approaches to Adult Safeguarding activity taken by different local authorities.

Members sought assurance regarding how the Council worked with partners and the Adult Safeguarding Board in order to ensure that the most effective safeguarding activity that was possible was delivered. The Strategic Director assured members that all partners involved in delivering

Adult Safeguarding activity were fully committed and worked well together. The Strategic Director advised that the Independent Chair of the Rotherham Safeguarding Adults Board was very knowledgeable and experienced with regard to Adult Safeguarding matters, and as such was able to effectively challenge the Strategic Director and other partners on how services were being delivered across Rotherham.

Members asked for further information regarding activity surrounding the raising of awareness of Adult Safeguarding issues in the Borough. The Assistant Director detailed the activities that had taken place to raise awareness including the promotion of the annual safeguarding week and regular social media activity. The Assistant Director noted that effective, accessible awareness raising, was an area where the RSAB and the Council did need to increase activity further. Members asked if awareness raising advertising was displayed in GP's surgeries and hospitals. The Assistant Director confirmed that these locations were used, but that due to the volume of other advertising materials in these locations it was very difficult to make advertising regarding Adult Safeguarding stand out. The Strategic Director advised that in response to members questions that she would raise issue of communication and awareness raising with the Independent Chair of RSAB.

Members sought further information on the number of referrals from sources such as GP's and dentists. The Assistant Director advised that whilst not as numerous as referrals from GP's, who played an important role in making referrals, Adult Safeguarding referrals had been received via dentists. The Strategic Director advised that all referral routes were monitored and reviewed by the RSAB as part of its performance monitoring role.

The Chair noted the significant number of Adult Safeguarding referrals that were submitted by the Police via their Safeguarding app that were not suitable for a safeguarding enquiry that were subsequently closed down as safeguarding enquires and transferred to the relevant Adult Care team for action. The Chair asked whether the recording of these referrals could be managed differently in order to show where the referral was ultimately dealt with rather than been shown as resulting in "no further action". The Assistant Director advised that the options around how to record these outcomes more clearly would be investigated. The Strategic Director assured members that all referrals submitted via the Police app were dealt with by the appropriate Adult Care pathway and reaffirmed that it was important that only appropriate referrals followed the Adult Safeguarding pathway.

Members sought further information around the processes involved in working with individuals who demonstrated self-neglect or who had personality disorders. Members sought assurance that the processes involved were able to gather a full picture of an individual's needs in circumstances where they may not be able to express and understand their own needs clearly. The Assistant Director advised that the

information given to social workers by individuals in these instances was never taken at face value, for example an individual may have stated that they were caring for themselves adequately, but the fact that a referral had been made, taken alongside other evidence about how they were living may suggest otherwise. The Assistant Director assured members social workers would always use their professional skills to gain a clear and accurate picture on an individual's needs.

Members asked how data gathered through the Adult Safeguarding referrals and procedures was used to gain further understanding of how well the service was performing. The Strategic Director assured members that data was analysed by management and the RSAB in order to monitor performance. The Assistant Director advised that underreporting of Adult Safeguarding cases was a concern, noting that many people did not recognise when a situation was an Adult Safeguarding issue, and as such the delivery of positive and proactive communication in all of Rotherham's communities regarding Adult Safeguarding needed to be developed further.

Members asked for further information on the approach taken of empowering individuals to take control of how services were provided to them and how this enabled them to move forward with their lives and achieve better outcomes. The Assistant Director stated that if an individual was in control of the actions that were being taken in response to their needs then they would gain increased confidence in themselves and that they would feel that their thoughts and wishes were valued. The Assistant Director advised that this approach of empowerment and confidence building was essential as it enabled individuals to take control of their lives and to move forward in a positive way. The Strategic Director advised that any intervention taken in delivering Adult Care services should always be based on an individual's strengths and delivering what was right for them, noting that this positive approach delivered the best possible outcomes for individuals. The Strategic Director assured members that while this approach was more challenging to deliver, staff had received training on focussing on each individual's strengths and what they wanted as an outcome from the services that were being delivered.

Members asked that case studies surrounding Adult Safeguarding be shared with members of the Improving Lives Select Commission to enable them to see how the processes surrounding Adult Safeguarding had worked to support individuals to move forwards with their lives. Members also requested that future reports received by the Improving Lives Select Commission should be focussed more specifically on how Adult Safeguarding services were delivered, and on the particular challenges faced with regard to Adult Safeguarding in Rotherham.

Members asked the Strategic Director and the Assistant Director what they believed to be the biggest challenges to be with regard to the delivery of Adult Safeguarding activity in Rotherham. The Assistant Director advised that the biggest challenge in delivering effective

safeguarding activity was in delivering on each individual's expectations and requirements. The Assistant Director advised that as each individual had different needs it was essential that the service delivery model and the available pathways were flexible and agile enough to respond to these varied needs.

The Strategic Director agreed that the biggest challenge faced was in ensuring that service provision delivered on the commitment to "make safeguarding personal". The Strategic Director noted that it was vital that each individual's specific needs always remained at the centre of any activity and decision making regarding the provision of services. The Strategic Director advised that it was always challenging, but essential when working with individuals to take the time to get to fully understand their situation and not to jump to conclusions about their needs or the services that should be provided. The Strategic Director emphasised that as it was not possible, unless in very specific circumstances via the courts, to compel an adult to take a specific course of action, and as such it was essential that the working practices that were in place enabled services, staff and those with safeguarding needs to work together constructively.

The Chair asked for further information regarding the upcoming Safeguarding Week that aimed to raise awareness of Safeguarding issues across the Borough and sought assurance that its activities would be accessible across all communities. The Strategic Director assured members that the activity planned for the week would be focussed on the specific issues in Rotherham and that it would be accessible to the different communities across the Borough.

Members sought assurance around the monitoring processes that were in place regarding medication not be given and missed care visits relating to the care that was provided to individuals in their homes by home care providers. The Strategic Director advised that incidents regarding an individual not receiving their medication as part of package of homecare would be investigated as an Adult Safeguarding enquiry as well as by the Care Quality Commission (CQC). The Strategic Director advised that missed visits would be recorded and monitored by the Commissioning Team. The Strategic Director assured members that while disciplinary issues relating to staff were the responsibility of the home care provider, Adult Care would become involved if there were multiple concerns regarding an individual member of a home care provider's staff.

The Chair thanked the Strategic Director - Adult Care, Housing and Public Health and the Assistant Director - Adult Care and Integration for attending the meeting and answering member's questions.

Resolved: -

- 1) That the report be noted.
- 2) That a further report regarding Adult Safeguarding, with a focus on the approach and activity being carried out in Rotherham, be brought to the April 2022 meeting of the Improving Lives Select Commission.
- 3) That an all-member seminar be delivered in order to share information and case studies on how Adult Safeguarding activity in Rotherham had impacted on the lives of individuals.
- 4) That the Strategic Director of Adult Care, Housing and Public Health, in consultation with relevant delivery partners, give consideration to how elected members can work to raise awareness of Adult Safeguarding issues within their communities.

37. URGENT BUSINESS

There was no urgent business.

38. DATE AND TIME OF THE NEXT MEETING

Resolved: - That the next meeting of the Improving Lives Select Commission take place on Tuesday 26 October 2021 at 10am at Rotherham Town Hall.