

**13 December 2021**

**Agenda Item: 7**

## **REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR FOR AGEING WELL COMMUNITY SERVICES**

### **ADULT SAFEGUARDING SERVICE REVIEW**

#### **Purpose of the Report**

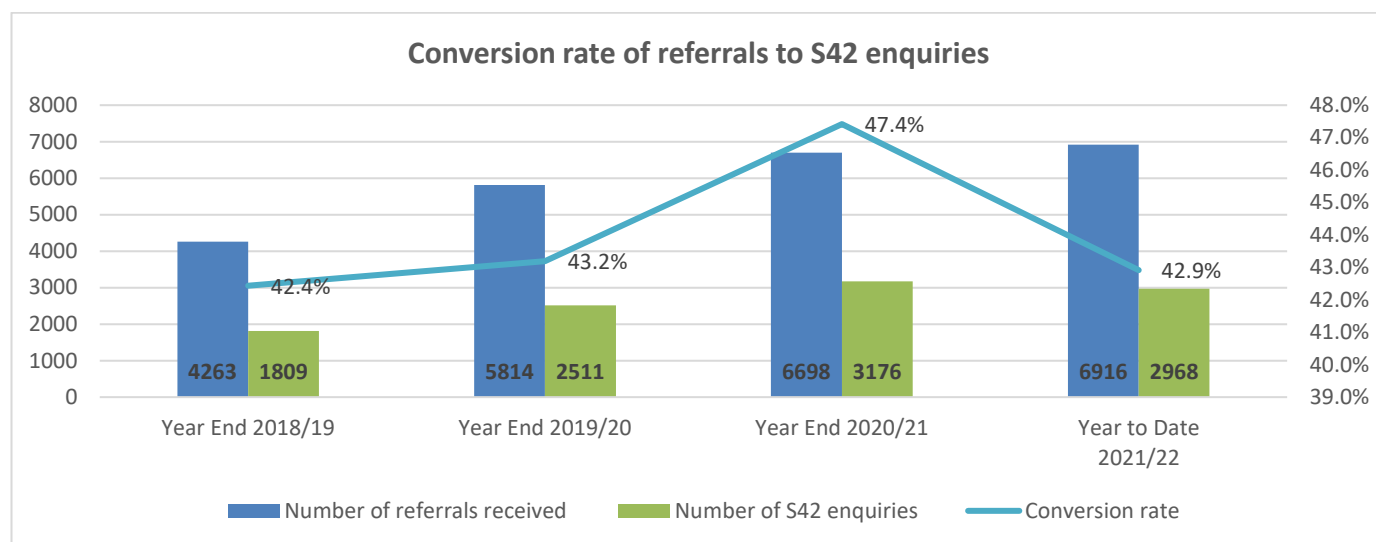
1. This report sets out progress and emerging key themes of the Departmental Adult Safeguarding Service Review and seeks approval to establish the following permanent posts:
  - 1 FTE (full-time equivalent) Head of Safeguarding, Group Manager (Band F/G – subject to job evaluation)
  - 3 FTE Social Workers (Band B)
  - 3 FTE Community Care Officers (Grade 5).

#### **Information**

2. In July 2021, as part of a Departmental Covid-19 Recovery Plan, Adult Social Care and Public Health Committee approved additional temporary resources up to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022 to meet sustained, significantly increased safeguarding demand. It also set out plans to undertake a review of adult safeguarding with independent specialist input.
3. The six temporary posts – 3 FTE Social Workers and 3 FTE Community Care Officers - approved for the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub have provided stability and are enabling engagement in the adult safeguarding review. Initial scoping of the improvement potential has identified that these six posts will be needed on an ongoing basis to meet national and local predictions that demand will continue to rise both in volume and complexity.
4. Establishing the six posts on a permanent basis will enable the team to have the ability to manage the extra demand, deliver the review actions and realise maximum benefits from it.
5. The trend in adult safeguarding work shows that numbers of safeguarding concerns and enquiries have been increasing over the last few years. The increase in both concerns received by the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub and the number converted to Section 42 safeguarding enquiries is higher than the increase seen nationally. Nottinghamshire has the

highest numbers of concerns and enquiries in the East Midlands. Nationally there was a 5% increase in safeguarding concerns received between 2019/20 and 2020/21. In Nottinghamshire the increase was 13%. Nationally the number of S42 enquiries reduced by 6% over the same period, however in Nottinghamshire the number increased by 21%.

## Trends in adult safeguarding referrals



6. Safeguarding referrals into the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub for adults increased by 36% between 2018/19 and 2020/21, with a further increase already evident in the current year to date. It is clear now that this is a continued trend and not just a short/medium term effect of Covid-19. The service is now receiving an average of 197 referrals per week, however, the current staffing capacity was established to manage an annual average of 126 cases per week.
7. Currently the highest volumes of referrals come from health partners at 29%, Nursing and Care Homes at 25%, and other statutory agencies (such as the Police, Probation etc.) at 13%. The quality of these referrals could often be improved and some of the work could be managed more effectively through different processes. Nottinghamshire's Safeguarding Adults Strategy for the coming year has picked up this theme and agreed work across partners to address it. These stakeholder agencies will therefore be closely supported in learning and development through a partnership of the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub, the Nottinghamshire's Safeguarding Adults Board and the Council's Quality and Market Management Team.
8. There are two key elements that it is predicted are likely to continue to drive increased safeguarding referrals well into the next year. One is the ongoing impact of Covid and delayed demand that is now being referred in as we move into recovery. The second is the prolonged impact of Covid on quality and finances for the wider social care market sector, especially care homes. The continued and significantly recently increased difficulties all providers are experiencing with attracting and retaining frontline care staff into the sector is a national issue that is highly likely to continue through 2022/23. This translates into difficulties maintaining the quality of provision, increased safeguarding work and higher levels of market failure which combine to put more people at greater risk.

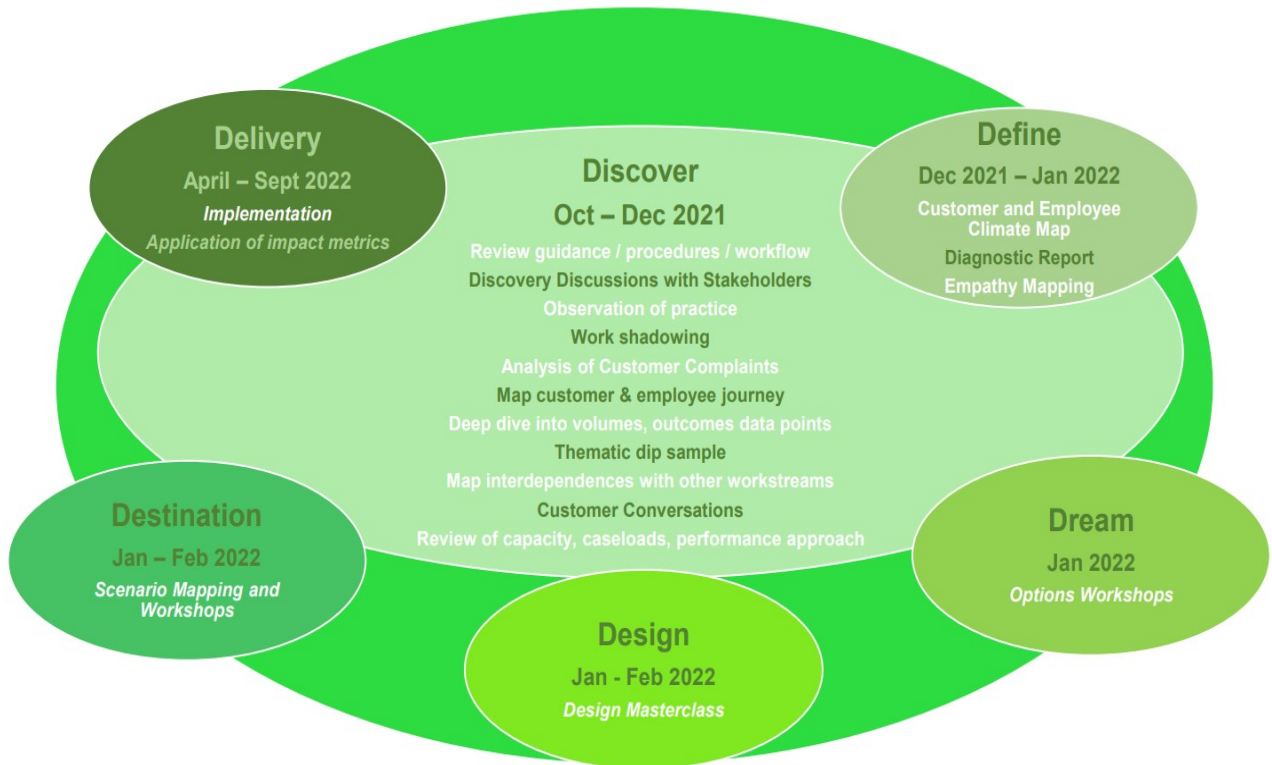
9. The impact of this is that the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub becomes unable to triage all the incoming work and then must pass it straight through to the Community Teams who also do not have capacity due to increased demand for their services. People are therefore having to wait longer for low priority safeguarding work and Care Act assessments to be completed. This makes it difficult to meet the objectives in the departmental strategy of providing pro-active, preventative interventions.
10. When staffing matches demand, the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub staff have a proven record of resolving approximately 53% of referrals themselves, thereby reducing the proportion of enquiries which are passed to the local Community Teams for further, more complex work. The additional resources mean that this is now mainly being achieved. There are still some occasions that the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub is unable to triage all the work, however, these are associated with further spikes and increases in numbers of referrals. As at September 2021 the number of referrals already exceeds the number received in 2020/21.
11. The reasons for this are multi-faceted, initial analysis indicates the rise is due to an increased level of need for safeguarding due to the impact of the pandemic, an increase in referrals that did not meet the criteria and duplicate referrals. The review will explore solutions to these.

### **Aims and emerging themes from the Safeguarding Review**

12. The intended impacts of the Safeguarding Review which commenced in October 2021 are that people:
  - are safer, access the appropriate adult social care service at the right time and are supported to live as independently as possible.
  - are in control of their lives and the support they receive
  - are supported to live meaningful lives and contribute to their families, networks and communities.
13. There are six emerging improvement themes from the Review that align to the six principles of safeguarding set out in the Care Act 2014:
  - Empowerment - people being supported and encouraged to make their own decisions and informed consent. Fully embedding Making Safeguarding Personal and putting people at the centre of the process, as well as empowering staff to be confident in their professional practice and decisions
  - Prevention - it is better to recognise and take action before harm occurs
  - Proportionality - utilise prevention measures and respond to the safeguarding issue in the most unobtrusive way possible appropriate to the risk presented
  - Protection - support and representation for those in greatest need, distinguishing need, vulnerability, and risk
  - Partnership - working together through Nottinghamshire Safeguarding Adults Board to scale good practice and deliver improvement. Building partnerships between services and their local communities to find solutions and supporting communities to play their part in preventing, detecting and reporting neglect and abuse.
  - Accountability - and transparency in safeguarding practice. Ensuring strategy focuses on what matters most.

14. The review will be undertaken using a bespoke methodology that combines Appreciative Enquiry with Innovation Modelling, that has six stages: Discover, Define, Dream, Design, Destination, Delivery. **Figure 1** below sets out the main tasks within each phase and the indicative timescales:

**Figure 1: Safeguarding Review Tasks and Timescales**



### Strengthening departmental capacity for leadership of safeguarding

15. Since the 2019/20 Departmental Workforce review was undertaken the complexity of senior managers' portfolios has significantly increased due to the ongoing impact of and recovery from Covid. Safeguarding now requires additional dedicated leadership and management capacity which it is not possible to provide within the current Group Manager structure.
16. The proposed Group Manager post will be responsible for developing and implementing safeguarding improvement strategy, practice and quality across the Department, as well as managing the adult team in the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub, the Strategic Safeguarding Team and the work of Nottinghamshire's Safeguarding Adults Board. The post will also manage the Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards Team (DoLS) and lead the departmental implementation and transition from DoLS to the new Liberty Protection Safeguards legislation when this comes into force.
17. The increasing work and implementation of the outcomes of the service review will also require additional senior leadership capacity to ensure that the work is managed, partnership working is matured and that the quality of practice across the Department is assured and sustained.

18. Approval is therefore also sought for an additional permanent Group Manager post (Grade F/G, subject to job evaluation) to be the Departmental Head of Safeguarding.

### Other Options Considered

19. Options have been considered to address these pressures from within existing resources, however the identified posts are critical to sustaining stability within the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub and positioning the business to reduce the volume of work passing through to district teams for whom incoming work is already a significant pressure.

### Reason/s for Recommendation/s

20. The resource is required to be able to safely manage the increase in safeguarding referrals, deliver an effective service and provide sustained leadership of partnership working and quality assurance.

### Statutory and Policy Implications

21. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of crime and disorder, data protection and information governance, finance, human resources, human rights, the NHS Constitution (public health services), the public sector equality duty, safeguarding of children and adults at risk, service users, smarter working, sustainability and the environment and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

### Financial Implications

22. The total costs of the permanent workforce resources are £355,143 excluding on-costs which can be met within the Department's existing resources.

#### Table of resources

Job Title	Band/Grade	Full Time Equivalent	Team	Annual Cost £
Social Workers	Band B	3	Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub	149,877
Community Care Officers	Grade 5	3	Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub	109,412
Head of Safeguarding, Group Manager	Band F/G (subject to job evaluation)	1	Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub	95,854
<b>Total</b>		<b>7</b>		<b>355,143</b>

## **Human Resources Implications**

23. Recruitment to these posts will be undertaken in line with the Council's recruitment procedures.

## **Smarter Working Implications**

24. Although the post holders would ordinarily be office based and undertake face to face visits, due to the current emergency response to the pandemic the expectation is that post holders will be home based. This will be kept under review as Government guidance changes.

## **RECOMMENDATION/S**

That Committee:

- 1) notes the progress with the Adult Safeguarding Service Review and considers whether there are any further actions it requires.
- 2) approves the permanent establishment of the following posts:
  - 1 FTE Head of Safeguarding, Group Manager (Band F/G – subject to job evaluation)
  - 3 FTE Social Workers (Band B)
  - 3 FTE Community Care Officers (Grade 5).

**Sue Batty**  
**Service Director, Ageing Well Community Services**

**For any enquiries about this report please contact:**

Nicola Peace  
Group Manager, Ageing Well Community Services  
T: 0115 9773458  
E: [Nicola.peace@nottscc.gov.uk](mailto:Nicola.peace@nottscc.gov.uk)

## **Constitutional Comments (ELP 25/11/21)**

25. The recommendations fall within the delegation to Adult Social Care and Public Health Committee by virtue of its frame of reference.

## **Financial Comments (MVJ 02/12/21)**

26. The total costs of the permanent workforce resources are £355,143. This will be met within the Department's existing resources through an increase in the Vacancy Level Turnover (%).

**HR Comments (SJJ 23/11/21)**

27. The Head of Safeguarding role will be subject to a full job evaluation process to determine the grade of the post, in line with the Authority's Grading Policy.
28. Recruitment to these posts will be undertaken in line with the Council's recruitment procedures.
29. The proposals have also been shared with the relevant recognised Trade Unions for information.

**Background Papers and Published Documents**

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

[Adults and Health recovery from Covid - report to Adult Social Care & Public Health Committee on 26th July 2021](#)

**Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected**

All.

ASCPH785 final