

NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

16 February 2022

STATEMENT OF CHAIRMAN

CARE AND INDEPENDENCE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Safeguarding: Annual Report of the NY Safeguarding Adults Board

We met with Dr Sue Proctor, Independent Chair of the North Yorkshire Adults Safeguarding Board. All councillors share a responsibility in relation to safeguarding. Reviewing the Board's Annual Report is one way we meet our specific scrutiny responsibilities to ensure that vulnerable adults are safeguarded.

It will be no surprise that the majority of the Board's work, and that of its partner agencies over the 2020-21 period, has focused on the response to the Covid pandemic. Members recognised the pressures the pandemic has placed on all services, but were greatly reassured by Dr Proctor's unequivocal and forthright comment that all partners continue to demonstrate unbending commitment to safeguarding adults across North Yorkshire.

Members found it pleasing that partners within the North Yorkshire Safeguarding Children's Partnership (NYSCP) and the Community Safety Partnership (CSP) are working on themes that are relevant to all three Boards/Partnerships such as Modern Slavery & Human Trafficking, County Lines, Suicide Awareness and Domestic Abuse to have a joined up approach and message to raise awareness.

We support the focus on collaborative working with the NYSCP and CSP on a joint engagement and communication strategy to outline how we want to engage and communicate with people across North Yorkshire.

We are interested in the planned review looking specifically at the transition period from children's to adult services, mental health involvement as well as the impact of adverse childhood experiences, self-harm and substance misuse.

Our overriding conclusion was that that the council and its partners are discharging their statutory duties in relation to safeguarding effectively.

Members reflected upon how much they understand their responsibilities as councillors when it comes to safeguarding. On previous occasions such as this, I have listened to concerns about the level of awareness at a local elected member level. As we move toward the North Yorkshire Council, arguably it will be more important than ever for member training on safeguarding to focus in no small part not just on strategic and organisational aspects, but on practical, ground level community leadership expectations.

Workforce

Cllr Michael Harrison offered his perspective on the stresses on the workforce across the social care sector. The sector is running a high level of vacancies as providers face fierce competition in the recruitment of care staff. These are unparalleled problems with the supply

of labour and the availability of resources in the care market, making this winter probably the most challenging for social care in a generation.

The directorate is responding to these pressures, in part, by diverting resources to the areas of greatest need whilst recognising there is an impact to doing so.

Michael focussed on support for people discharged to social care from hospital settings, the volume of which has increased significantly. As an employer, we are already diverting resources to cover these gaps, to cover care package contracts - for example by redeploying staff from our services.

Instances of provider failure has also had an impact. We heard about our turnaround quality improvement schemes, equipped to step in to assist struggling providers.

This workforce crisis might seem a bleak picture – especially the reduction in reablement, day care services and respite capacity, but we were still reassured that the directorate has plans and a range of initiatives well in hand to deal with these problems.

Under consideration is evaluating care packages taking a strength based approach – for example, can we still meet people’s needs whilst reducing the package of care, thereby freeing up some resource to help more people? Clearly, as this thinking develops, this is something the committee would want to be kept properly informed about.

Members are encouraged to support recruitment into the sector by promoting the [make care matter website](#), a shared resource offering a wide range of jobs in adult social care and opportunities for career progression.

Looking Ahead

At our next full meeting in March, we will review:

- All Age Autism Strategy.
- The Local Account.
- The Director of Public Health Annual report.

The new council in May will take my statement covering the upcoming March committee meeting. Therefore, I want to take this opportunity to thank the committee members, supporting officers, service users, carers, providers and representatives from across the social care sector for everything they have done – especially of late in the very challenging circumstances of the pandemic - to enable effective scrutiny.

COUNTY COUNCILLOR KARIN SEDGWICK

7 February 2022