

Policy Committee Decision Report

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| Title of Report: | Adult Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) and Sheffield Adult Safeguarding Partnership Board Annual Safeguarding Report. |
| Date of Decision: | 11 th December 2024 |
| Report To: | Adult Health and Social Care Committee |
| Report Of: | Andrew Drummond, Service Manager, Safeguarding Quality Assurance |
| Report Author: | Andrew Drummond, Service Manager, Safeguarding Quality Assurance. Jill Wetherall, Service Manager, Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH). |
| Executive Summary: | To update on the progress of the MASH since implementation and the Sheffield safeguarding board annual report. |



Council Plan outcomes:

People live in caring, engaged communities that value diversity and support wellbeing

Policy Committee remit:

This report is to be considered by the Adult Health and Social Care Policy Committee as its remit includes Adult Safeguarding

Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? No

Recommendations:

It is recommended that Adult Health and Social Care Policy Committee:

1. Note the progress made with implementing the Adult MASH.
2. Endorse the Sheffield Adult Safeguarding Board Annual Report.
3. Endorse the approach to Quality Assurance of Adult Safeguarding.

Financial Implications: Yes Approved by: Kay Simpson 26.11.24

Legal Implications: No Approved by: Patrick Chisholm 2.12.24

Equality and Inclusion Implications: Yes [Approved by: Ed Sexton]

Full Equalities Impact Assessment completed with EIA number: 2313

Climate Change Implications: None, no climate implications.

Background Papers: None

Appendices:

Appendix 1 – Sheffield Adult Safeguarding Partnership Board Annual Report

Appendix 2 – Adults Quality Assurance of Safeguarding

1. Background to the issue

1.1 This report provides information about the annual safeguarding report and an update regards the implementation of the Adult Multi-Agency Screening Hub (Adult MASH) and our quality assurance of safeguarding.

1.2 It follows on from the Safeguarding Delivery Plan report provided to Committee in September 2024.

2. Proposal

2.1 Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility.

2.2 Safeguarding means protecting people's right to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect. Statutory Safeguarding applies to adults with care and support needs who may not be able to protect themselves. It can also include neglect, domestic violence, modern slavery, organisational or discriminatory abuse.

2.3 The Sheffield Adult MASH responds to Adult Safeguarding concerns, where a person isn't known already to Adult Care and Wellbeing (with a care and support plan in place). MASH works to respond to these concerns, mitigate risk and enable the person to live the life they want to live.

2.4 As detailed in the September 2024 update to Committee over the next 6 months its planned to work with statutory partners using the 'Safeguarding Responsibilities Guidance' (approved at March Committee) and the safeguarding board to review efficacy of referrals and embed the guidance in respond to increased demand.

2.5 Partnerships

2.5.1 In particular, the MASH Team has developed a range of partnerships across the city. "MASH Huddles" have been very successful and these are now well established, with regular attendance from partners within South Yorkshire Police, Probation Service and Council Housing and information shared regularly with Sheffield Health and Social Care Trust.

2.5.2 Partnership working has also improved. 'Huddles', twice weekly meetings bring professionals together, have been extended to allow more time for valuable discussions. Information sharing regularly takes place outside of formal huddles. MASH Managers are strengthening relationships across all partners. One partner recently said: *"the MASH works really well for us, we're now able to get information within an hour"*.

- 2.5.3 Huddles were increased from 60 minutes twice weekly to 90 minutes twice weekly to allow more Safeguarding concerns/enquiries to be discussed with multi agency partners. Despite increasing the duration of the meeting, we still have a waiting list to access the Huddles. Whilst any Safeguarding case is waiting information sharing and collaboration, we ensure appropriate protection plans are in place proportionate to the information known. Through the Safeguarding Partnership Board, the options regarding increasing Huddle capacity will be considered following on from the learning.
- 2.5.4 Huddles are used as and when required, often at the early information gathering stage of Safeguarding (Section 42(1)). However, a Safeguarding situation can be taken to the Huddles at any stage. A significant impact if better partnership working has been on improved recognition of hoarding and cuckooing situations and more coordinated multi-agency responses.
- 2.5.5 Partnership involvement in the MASH has continued to grow, most recently with Snowdrop, Environmental Health and Framework Homelessness.

2.6 Adult MASH Performance

- 2.6.1 Our ambition is to respond on a timely basis, reduce risk and improve outcomes in line with Making Safeguarding Personal. Since the commencement of the Adult MASH referrals have increased by 102%. Referrals mainly come from the Police, residential care homes, and health services including Yorkshire Ambulance Service, followed by families.
- 2.6.2 Despite increased referrals, through investment in the service and changes to systems, practices and processes, as well as the use of agency teams, has seen performance improvements as follows:
- 2.6.3 Whilst there has been a significant increase in demand, performance continues to improve. In October 2023 the median number of days to complete the screening process for safeguarding providing an immediate response was 8 days. In July and August 2024, it was 1 day, through September and October 2024 our data shows the screening takes less than 1 day. Evidencing that this improved performance is sustained. The MASH is now consistently screening risk more effectively from the moment concerns are received.
- 2.6.4 Comparing June 2023 to the most recent data from October 2024 (table 1 below) shows the number of concerns received has, as mentioned above, increased by 102.65%. In this time there has also been an increase of statutory Section 42(2) Enquiries of 80.56%

whilst screening and initial response times have improved markedly from 8 days to 1.

| Table 1: MASH performance over 2023-2024 | June 23 | October 24 |
|---|----------------|-------------------|
| Safeguarding episodes | 340 | 689 |
| Episodes closed quickly as a concern only | 212 | 397 |
| Number progressed to Section 42 (2) - Enquiries | 108 | 195 |
| Enquiries with no duty to act | 20 | 20 |
| Info being collected | | 77 |

2.7 Continuous Improvement

- 2.7.1 Over the last 6 months the MASH team have continued to improve with key highlights as below: -
- 2.7.2 Planning Meetings - The MASH is continuing to invest in Planning Meetings making them more frequent and effective. A planning meeting is not mandatory within safeguarding, though it is good practice to work actively alongside other professionals. The meetings ensure the protection plan in place is progressing across agencies to mitigate risk and ensures that progress is being made towards the achieving the person's outcomes.
- 2.7.3 Duty - MASH have developed a consistent duty worker post to work daily to create consistency and develop relationships with partner agencies. This has further developed consistency where we have 'walk in's' to Howden House. Where people come into Howden House for support and the response is often provided in a collaborative way with Housing.
- 2.7.4 Ways of Working - Review of the Section 42(2) Enquiry Form/Causation Form is also underway which will further improve joined up working arrangements. With this intended to make it clear to partner what element of the enquiry we are causing to them. This has been completed with collaboration with partners across SASP and MASH non statutory partners providing their feedback on the current process.

- 2.7.5 Safe and Well Checks - MASH staff use their professional judgement and professional curiosity at all stages of their work. MASH have implemented two officers who complete 'safe and well' checks. A safe and well check is where concerns about the person's wellbeing or their home environment are received. These require an urgent response to see the situation face-to-face. The officers completing the safe and well checks seek assurances as to what the true risks are and put in appropriate mitigations. Other officers, for example the Social Workers within MASH, will also complete home visits where appropriate dependent upon the nature of the situation and the person's communication needs.
- 2.7.6 Learning and Continuous Improvement - Where there are lessons to be learnt for example where there has been a Safeguarding Adult Review (SAR), MASH Management take the learning brief from the SAR and have a reflective discussion with the team. The MASH management have focused on specific emerging themes such as adult family violence giving officers opportunity to reflect on their practice and embed the learning into their work.

2.8 MASH Priorities and Forward Look 25/26

- 2.8.1 As we go into 2025/2026 the aim is to focus on responding to key challenges identified during continuous improvement. These are: -
- 2.8.2 Supporting people who live complex, chaotic and at times very risky lives – Operationally the team support people with complex, chaotic lives on a long term basis. This impacts on the team's ability to support new people with Safeguarding needs in a timely way and complete an enquiry within 28 days. As a priority for 25/26 the plan is to consider with partners the resource and supports needed as well as ensure clear pathways are in place to enable people to receive long term support.
- 2.8.3 Waiting Well - There is a waiting list currently for Enquiries to be allocated to Social Workers, screening has taken place with an initial protection plan in place and linked to other partners where appropriate. To ensure continued safety of the customers awaiting allocation they are contacted frequently to review their situation, subsequently where necessary changes to the protection plan and priority for allocation are made.
- 2.8.4 Hoarding – Through our learning, its been identified the increasing need related to supporting people who are hoarding. Its planned to raise this need through the Safeguarding Adults Partnership Board and at the same time

2.9 Sheffield Adult Safeguarding Partnership Board Annual Report

2.9.1 The Sheffield Adult Safeguarding Partnership Board (SASP) brings together statutory and non-statutory organisations to actively promote effective working relationships between different agencies and professionals to address the issue of abuse and harm. More can be found out at the SASP website - [Sheffield Adult Safeguarding Partnership \(sheffieldasp.org.uk\)](http://Sheffield Adult Safeguarding Partnership (sheffieldasp.org.uk)).

2.9.2 The Board has a statutory responsibility to produce an annual report of its performance which reflects the views of people and communities of Sheffield.

2.9.3 The Annual Report is attached at Appendix 1 and demonstrates the significant progress made by the partnership in 2023/ 2024. Core to all of this has been co-production and engagement with individuals and partners across the City.

2.9.4 The report highlights our focus on the following themes across all partners: - Prevention and Early Help, Making Safeguarding Personal, Working in Partnerships, Empowering and engaging, Quality Assurance.

2.9.5 Key highlights include a focus on: -

- Relationships between safeguarding and rough sleeping.
- Our role as a City of Sanctuary
- Safeguarding and Care Homes
- Partnerships between organisations through the MASH.
- Trading Standards Campaign – Not Born Yesterday
- Sheffield Safe Places

2.10 Safeguarding Adults Assurance and Self Evaluation

2.10.1 Quality Assurance (QA) plays a vital role in ensuring the Adult Safeguarding meets the necessary standards. The Care Governance Strategy provides an overview of our approach to governance across Adult Care.

2.10.2 There are four methods of quality assurance. These are: -

- ✓ City Wide Assurance – Through the Sheffield Adults Safeguarding Partnership Board and including annual self-evaluation using s11 framework. This gives opportunity for agencies to provide assurance around several areas of practice which have been identified in SARs

- ✓ Directorate and Service Scrutiny – Scrutiny through Adults Health and Care Policy Committee and Directors Assurances.
- ✓ Directorate Performance Clinics – Use of clinics to enable and promote continuous improvement.
- ✓ Quality Matters – Ensuring quality of practice through audits and listening to our workforce.

2.10.3 An overview of Adults Quality Assurance methods are set out in Appendix 2 for endorsement by Committee.

3. How does this decision contribute to the Council Plan?

3.1 Council Plan outcome

3.1.1 People live in caring, engaged communities that value diversity and support their wellbeing. The work detailed in this plan sets out how we provide support to people living with abuse or neglect and support people holistically to meet their wellbeing outcomes. Our focus on high quality care and support within safeguarding supports achievement of this outcome.

3.1.2 A place where all children belong and all young people can build a successful future is supported through our focus on contextual safeguarding, preparation for adulthood and ensuring effective linkage between the adult MASH and Children MASH. In addition, effective joint working between the children and adult safeguarding boards.

3.1.3 Great neighbourhoods that people are happy to call home is supported through the Safeguarding Adults Partnership Board focus on rough sleeping, trading standards and building good links with communities. Housing are part of the Sheffield Adult Safeguarding Board.

3.2 People – Prosperity – Planet

3.2.1 Sheffield City Council has a duty to fulfil its Adult Safeguarding responsibilities in line with the Care Act 2014. In doing this our primary priority is to enable people to live safe free from abuse and neglect. The ways in which we fulfil these duties has reduced our environmental impact.

3.2.2 The work within the MASH regularly brings multi agency partners together virtually, eliminating the need for professionals to travel in their cars to an office location in the city to complete joint working.

3.3 City Goals

3.3.1 These proposals contribute towards the City Goals specifically '[Goal 18 We support everyone to live with dignity and to age well, with access to leisure activities and control over where and how they receive high-quality health & care services](#)'.

Living a life free from abuse or neglect is key in promoting dignity and ageing well. Part of Adult Safeguarding is empowerment, hearing the person's voice and is relevant to Goal 18 when we consider what high quality health and care services look like in an Adult Safeguarding context.

4. What community or partner engagement has been undertaken and how has it informed the proposal?

4.1 The Adult MASH is, daily, seeking feedback from other statutory and non-statutory partners through operational practices. This is through the Partnerships, Safeguarding Board and Safeguarding Adult Review's where appropriate. MASH continue to seek new ways in which they can engage with partners in their work. Examples being in reviewing the S42 Enquiry Causation Form statutory and non-statutory partners views have been sought and considered in the revised version. Partners from other statutory partners have worked together with MASH in other aspects, being part of an interview panel in recent recruitment to ensure across the sector are working with a shared vision.

4.2 The Customer Forum of the Safeguarding Adults Partnership Board views inform and influenced the development of the Annual Report and Strategic Plan. Co-Production of the Strategic Plan and Annual Report have been undertaken core to the approach taken by the Board.

5. What alternative options did we consider?

5.1 Alternative Option 1: To not Deliver a MASH. This option would mean Adults would be in a position to meet the demand of the incoming volume of work and would not be able fulfil our statutory duties. Prior to MASH and where the MASH had less staff at the start of 2024 there was a need to seek agency resource. Having agency teams in place is more expensive and inefficient with training for staff required before they can perform their duties. Additionally, this would create further risk of people living with abuse or neglect and mitigations not in place.

5.2 Alternative Option 2: To not provide an Annual Report. An Annual report by the Safeguarding Adults Partnership Board is a statutory requirement.

6. How has equality, diversity and inclusion been actively considered?

6.1 An Equalities Impact Assessment has been completed and this is EIA 23. This is on-going area of improvement work as we continue to explore how and why people are impacted, there will be a full update in the next regular Safeguarding report to committee.

6.2 The Council as a public sector organisation is subject to the Public Sector Equality Duty (Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010). It also applies to

services and functions that we contract to who are carrying functions on our behalf.

6.3 The Equality Act 2010 does not give any one protected characteristic a greater weighting over another. The Equality Act 2010 identifies the following groups as protected characteristics: age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership (discrimination); pregnancy and maternity (employment only); race; religion or belief; sex and sexual orientation.

6.4 There are also other equality implications outside of the Equality Act protected characteristics that the Council commits to responding within our Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) process such as socio-economic disadvantage, armed forces, and carers.

6.5 As part of our ongoing improvement activity, we will take the learning from the EIA and work with the Safeguarding Adults Partnership Board to ensure we are mitigating disadvantages and improving our focus on equity.

7. Financial and Commercial Implications

7.1 For 24/25, the available budget for MASH is £516,000. At month 6, there is a forecast overspend of £729,000 as a result of additional staffing capacity to meet demand. A pressure has been submitted as part of Business Planning for 25/26, subject to approval. This is noted within the budget update to Committee.

8. Legal Implications

8.1 The current staff ratio within the MASH allows the team to respond within timeframes set out in Association of Directors for Adult Social Services (ADASS) guidance. Allowing us to effectively manage risk in line with our Care Act 2014 Duties.

8.2 Local Authorities have a legal accountability for Adult Safeguarding as set out in the Care Act. Other partners have a key role to play and we can set others actions as part of a Safeguarding Enquiry however we retain accountability and must assure ourselves any enquiries carried out by others are satisfactory and reduce/remove risk. [\(\(2\)The local authority must make \(or cause to be made\) whatever enquiries it thinks necessary to enable it to decide whether any action should be taken in the adult's case \(whether under this Part or otherwise\) and, if so, what and by whom\).](#)

8.3 Were we not to have sufficient expertise or resources in place we would fail to meet our statutory duties, could be at risk of legal challenge and importantly would be failing to keep people in Sheffield with care and support needs safe where there had been abuse or neglect.

8.4 The Safeguarding Adults Partnership Board is required under the Care Act 2014 to produce a Safeguarding Adults Annual Report each year. The

report should say what we have done during the last year to protect adults at risk of abuse and neglect in Sheffield and how the year's objectives have been achieved.

9. Climate and Environmental Implications

9.1 There is minimal impact on the Climate as a direct impact of actions set out in this Safeguarding Report.

9.2 Safeguarding is a statutory duty, as set out earlier in the report social care should work in a person-centred way and in partnership with other statutory and voluntary organisations. It is noted that people who are being supported through Safeguarding may be adversely impacted by the effects of Climate Change as set out in the Adults Climate Statement approved at Committee in January 2024.

9.3 A workshop is planned for 5th December 2024 with partners to consider implementation of the Climate Statement.

10. Other implications

10.1 None

11. Reasons for decision

11.1 Endorsing the Annual Report demonstrates Sheffield City Council support for all the activities undertaken by the Sheffield Adult Safeguarding Partnership Board during 2023 to 2024.

11.2 In endorsing the progress made by Adult MASH and ways of working, this recognises the good practice in place to manage risks and work towards outcomes for adults being abused or neglected with care and support needs in Sheffield.

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