

SLOUGH BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Scrutiny: People (Children and Adults)

DATE: 2nd December 2021

SUBJECT: *Slough Safeguarding Partnership Annual Report 2020-2021*

CHIEF OFFICER: Alan Sinclair, Executive Director, People (Adults) and Alan Adams(Children).

CONTACT OFFICER: Betty Lynch, Safeguarding Partnership Manager

WARD(S): All wards

PORTFOLIO: Councillor Hulme - Children's Services, Lifelong Learning & Skills
Councillor Pantelic - Social Care & Public Health

KEY DECISION: NO

EXEMPT: NO

APPENDICES: **Safeguarding Partnership annual report 2020-2021**

1 Summary and Recommendations

- 1.1 The Scrutiny panel is requested to note the report with particular reference to the safeguarding risks managed during the pandemic and the on-going challenges relating to the Council's financial situation. The Safeguarding Leaders' Group has an important role in providing strategic direction and monitoring the impact of the above and taking anticipatory or remedial action when necessary.

2 Report

Safeguarding Partnership annual report 2020/21 is attached and is in power point format. Links to more detailed reports are provided in the body of the report.

The report is an account of the key achievements and areas for development in relation to the work of the Safeguarding Partnership for 2020/21.

The partnership is led by the Slough Strategic Safeguarding Partnership Leaders' (SLG) group which is made up of Directors of Adults and Children's Services, the Borough Commander and Directors from East Berkshire Clinical Commissioning Group and the Chief Executive Officer of Slough Borough Council. This group provides leadership and direction to the safeguarding partnership arrangements via sub-groups and with the support of the Safeguarding Partnership team.

The SLG leads on the statutory safeguarding partnership in relation to children and adults and delivers on legislative requirements in the Children Act 2004 and the Care Act 2014.

In Slough, one combined annual report in relation safeguarding children and adults is provided to reflect the combined efforts of the partnership to address and prioritise both groups. The partnership commissions an independent scrutineer to ensure the business is subject to external scrutiny throughout the year and to provide consultancy and advice to SLG members. The Independent Scrutineer, David Peplow has completed this annual report following scrutiny of the work carried out in the reporting period. He is unable to attend this scrutiny meeting due to a long standing commitment.

In this reporting period, the SLG created a multi-agency group to identify and manage the safeguarding risks arising as a result of reduced visibility of vulnerable people in Slough during the pandemic. This group created a risk log which continues to be monitored by the SLG and sub-groups and is likely to continue for the foreseeable future. It will take a role in supporting partners to identify safeguarding risks post pandemic and those that may arise as a result of the council's financial challenges.

The report identifies considerable progress made since the previous reporting period (2019-2020), for example;

- A new threshold document rooted in the UN convention for the rights of the child.
- Child neglect strategy and practice tools.
- A tool to enable practitioners to approach parents/carers about parenting and child care, also rooted in the UN convention on the rights of the child.
- Comprehensive, multi-agency safeguarding training now all provided on line reaching similar numbers of professionals as before the pandemic, but provided in small bit size learning modules.
- Case review groups and increasing volume of rapid review work in relation to children.

2.1. **Options considered**

Not applicable for this report.

2.2 **Background**

The annual safeguarding report is a mandatory report. It has also be presented to the People Scrutiny Panel.

3. **Implications of the Recommendation**

3.1 Financial implications

There are no financial implications in this report for 2020/21. However the SLG is mindful of the potential impact of the council's financial position and risks to a range of interventions that support safeguarding.

3.2 Legal implications

The annual report is an account of the effectiveness of the safeguarding partnership in relation to children and adults.

In relation to children, this is a requirement of the children act 2004 and Working Together 2018 guidance.

In relation to adults, this is requirement of The Care Act 2014 legislation and Guidance.

Both statutory arrangements are led by the Safeguarding Leader's Group.

3.3 Risk management implications

Risks/Threats/ Opportunities	Current Controls	Using the Risk Management Matrix Score the risk	Future Controls
Safeguarding implications post pandemic/recovery Implications of the council's financial situation.	The Slough Safeguarding Leaders Group (SLG) manages a risk log to understand safeguarding risks and mitigate some of them as the implications of resource changes on safeguarding functions increase the likelihood of human error. Safeguarding remains a priority for the council.	Safeguarding Leaders' Group risk log available on request	The SLG will continue to monitor and adapt the risk log as risks develop and will establish impact measures

3.4 Environmental implications

There are no environmental implications.

3.5 Equality implications

The SLG commissioned an independent review to establish whether there are any demographic groups disproportionately affected by exploitation. (The Board will be informed about this as part of the item on the Localities model.) The report identified the Roma community as vulnerable to exploitation and the community safety partnership is carrying out further work with the Roma community on this. The report also identified the need for all partners to improve data in relation to personal characteristics, and learning and development to promote awareness of the importance of this in understanding risks at practice level.

3.7 Workforce implications

Safeguarding partners are concerned about the potential risks posed by high vacancy rates across the public sector in Slough. Partners agree that Council's financial situation is likely to lead to more pressure on retention and recruitment. Efforts are underway to establish and monitor the impact of this, agreeing agreed key performance indicators and new strategies to support retention and recruit of key staff.

4. Background Papers

None