



North Tyneside Council

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# Briefing note

**To:** Adult Social  
Care Health  
and Wellbeing  
Sub-Committee

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**Title of Briefing:** Safeguarding Adults Board (SAB) Annual Report 2020-2021

## 1. Introduction and Background

I have pleasure in presenting the annual report of the joint Northumberland and North Tyneside Safeguarding Adults Board (SAB) for the period April 2020 – March 2021.

The Board has been a joint arrangement with Northumberland since 2016.

The period covered by this report has probably been the most challenging for Local Government and the partner agencies that make up the Board as everyone adapted to the pressures posed by the Covid-19 pandemic.

The pandemic has had a significant impact on safeguarding activity and the report rightly focusses on the work that the Board oversaw with partners to ensure that people were being safeguarded and protected through lockdowns and re-introduction of freedoms. The impact of the pandemic became a new and dynamic priority area for the SAB.

The pandemic also required partners to work at speed to develop safe systems of work to both share information and to ensure that the important work of the Board continued, and progress was made on the Board's priorities. The work of the Board was conducted virtually throughout the period of the report

## 2. Board Information

The SAB is a statutory multi-agency partnership mandated by the Care Act 2014 that leads the strategic development of safeguarding across Northumberland and North Tyneside Local Authority areas.

Its purpose is to ensure that people with care and support needs are safeguarded and to develop a culture of continuous improvement in local safeguarding arrangements to ensure that partners act to help and protect adults experiencing or at risk of abuse and neglect.

The report identifies the Board's membership which is wider than the 3 statutory partners of LA, CCG and Police.

The 3 core duties are to develop and publish an annual report, develop and publish a strategic plan and commission safeguarding adult reviews for any cases that meet the criteria.

### **3. Achievements**

Despite the impact of Covid-19, the Board has delivered on a number of its promises:

- Contribution to a national project about how to safeguard vulnerable drinkers with the development and delivery of multi-agency workshops
- Developed and monitored a comprehensive and robust SAB Risk Register to identify and monitor Covid related risks and themes.
- Completed and published a Safeguarding Adults Review – Leigh
- Launched virtual multi agency training across the partnership including criminal and sexual exploitation
- Shared information with the public to promote awareness about safeguarding and domestic abuse
- Worked in conjunction with the police on Operation Momentum
- Reviewed independently the joint SAB arrangements

### **4. Covid- 19**

Partners acted quickly and put new arrangements in place to manage new risks and demands. Whilst providers became reluctant to allow professionals to visit, a clear message has been maintained, that face to face contact will be required if there are safeguarding concerns.

As previously mentioned, a robust multi agency risk register was established and monitored, and each LA held fortnightly meetings with statutory partners to understand themes, trends and activity and to ensure a joined-up approach. We therefore understood from a multi-agency perspective that for some people risks were increased, through reduced contact with the outside world and being "locked down" with their abuser. There was also evidence of increased self-neglect, financial abuse, scams and domestic abuse. For domestic abuse, there was an increase in both volume and the severity of injury experienced by survivors.

High levels of support were put in place for care homes as this area experienced a huge impact in terms of infection rates, death rates, staff sickness, access to PPE, rapidly changing guidance and difficulty recruiting.

In North Tyneside we established a way of translating guidance for managers in care homes, provided visual aids for use of PPE, provided support accessing PPE and established the Prevent and Protect Team. A multi- agency team comprising commissioning officers, Public Health, safeguarding staff, 0-19 service nurses, CCG nurses and Northumbria Health Care Foundation Trust's Infection Prevention and Control team establishments were visited to provide support and assistance about practically implementing the guidance and helping to manage outbreaks.

### **5. Demand and Activity**

All partners saw an increase in safeguarding activity.

There was a 42% increase in statutory enquiries undertaken by safeguarding in relation to Domestic Abuse. In response information about domestic abuse, how to stay safe and how to access support was made publicly available on a regular basis including via social media. Specialist services offered telephone support and virtual programmes of support including Live Chat. However, where risk was deemed to be high, face to face support was offered by the specialist service.

Social Care staff also took a risk-based approach to work, with face-to-face assessments and visits conducted where necessary. Where staff were aware of DA risks, they made more regular virtual contact with people, agreeing safe words to reduce the sense of isolation. We worked with Police and Housing to ensure that emergency accommodation was available, and the police contacted previous medium risk victims by phone to ensure they were OK.

The number of concerns related to Safeguarding overall increased by 11.7% and we experienced a 32% increase in the number of referrals that needed a safeguarding enquiry of some type. Those being safeguarded were 40% male and 60% female with 43% aged 18-64 and 56% aged 65 and over

The most frequent types of abuse are neglect which accounts for 19% of all enquiries and has increased by 34%, physical abuse which accounts for 18.5% of all enquiries and has increased by 6% and financial abuse which accounts for 17% of enquiries and has increased by 9%.

In 65% of cases the source of risk was known to the individual, but this increased to 87% if service providers are included.

59% of abuse that was investigated occurred in the person's own home and 21% in a nursing or care home

Overall an increase in activity and demand

## **6. Strategic Priorities**

The report highlights the SAB's strategic priorities and the progress made against them. Progress has been made in all areas although there is work to do to ensure that improvement is continuous. The safeguarding team is currently working on audits and analysing performance in all areas to identify that learning has been embedded into practice.

## **7. Safeguarding Adult Review Leigh**

In March 2021, the SAB published the report of the safeguarding adult review into the death of Leigh (Name chosen by family). The full report can be accessed at:

[https://my.northtyneside.gov.uk/sites/default/files/web-page-related-files/NTSAB%20SAR-%20Leigh\\_0.pdf](https://my.northtyneside.gov.uk/sites/default/files/web-page-related-files/NTSAB%20SAR-%20Leigh_0.pdf) and the annual report provides a brief overview about the lessons learned.

## **8. Review of SAB arrangements**

Committee has been previously briefed about the outcome of the SAB Peer review that occurred in January -March 2021. The annual report gives an overview of the outcome.

## **9. Partner Spotlights**

The SAB is a real partnership with very close working links, and this was evidenced through the pandemic. The Annual Report provides a highlight of work undertaken

by our partners to demonstrate how work undertaken in one agency enhances the safeguarding work more generally in the Borough. Northumbria Police's missing adult protocol is highlighted as are some case studies to evidence areas of strong practice in the area.

## **10. Recommendation**

The SAB has ratified its Annual Report. Committee is asked to note the content of the report.

The report will be published on the Safeguarding Adults page of North Tyneside Council website

<https://my.northtyneside.gov.uk/category/1033/safeguarding-adults>