

<b>CITY OF WOLVERHAMPTON COUNCIL</b>	<b>Cabinet</b> <b>9 December, 2020</b>
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<b>Report title</b>	Wolverhampton Safeguarding Together Partnership – 2019-2020 Annual Report	
<b>Decision designation</b>	AMBER	
<b>Cabinet member with lead responsibility</b>	Councillor Linda Leach (Adults), Councillor John Reynolds (Children and Young People) and Councillor Dr Michael Hardacre (Education and Skills)	
<b>Key decision</b>	Yes	
<b>In forward plan</b>	Yes	
<b>Wards affected</b>	All Wards	
<b>Accountable Director</b>	Emma Bennett Director of Children’s and Adult Services	
<b>Originating service</b>	Adults Services / Children’s Services	
<b>Accountable employee</b>	Andrew Wolverson	Head of Strategy and Partnerships
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<b>Report to be/has been considered by</b>	Adult’s Leadership Team	20 October 2020
	Children’s Leadership Team	22 October 2020
	Strategic Executive Board	5 November 2020
	Scrutiny Board	11 November 2020

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**Recommendations for decision:**

The Cabinet is recommended to:

1. Endorse the Wolverhampton Safeguarding Together (WST) 2019-2020 Annual Report.
2. Agree that the partnership has transitioned to its new arrangements effectively since September 2019.

**Recommendations for noting:**

The Cabinet is asked to note:

1. That WST will continue with its current partnership arrangements with City of Wolverhampton Council (CWC) as a statutory partner in line with The Social Work Act 2017 and subsequent Working Together 2018 Guidance and The Care Act 2014.
2. That an overview of the Scrutiny and Assurance Coordination Group is due to be included in the final version of the Annual Report as requested at Councillor Briefing on the 16 November 2020.

## **1.0 Purpose**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to present The Cabinet with the WST 2019-2020 Annual Report which covers our transition to a multi-agency partnership from a joint Adult's and Children's Safeguarding Board, key achievements and references the WST response to Coronavirus.
- 1.2 Under the Care Act 2014, Adult's Safeguarding Boards must publish an Annual Report. As Wolverhampton has operated a joint adult's and children's safeguarding board since 2017, both boards have remained integrated as part of the transition to the WST partnership. This Annual Report fulfils this Care Act requirement.

## **2.0 Background**

- 2.1 The Social Work Act, 2017 required all local areas to review their children's safeguarding arrangements in line with guidance set out in Working Together 2018. The guidance established the Council, the Clinical Commissioning Group and West Midlands Police as statutory equal partners in any new arrangements.
- 2.2 The publication of Working Together 2018 led to an independent review of the structure of Wolverhampton's joint adult's and children's safeguarding boards. Several recommendations were made with the most significant differences between a board and partnership arrangement being:
  - a. Reduction of the number of boards and committees to an executive group made up of the statutory safeguarding partners, with the main partnership board becoming the Scrutiny and Assurance Co-ordination Group (SACG). In addition, following learning from early adopters, education will become the 'fourth' partner on the Executive Group.
  - b. Replacement of the Independent Chair with a nominated chair from the statutory safeguarding partners whilst retaining an independent perspective by implementing a range of scrutiny arrangements. This includes a bi-annual event facilitated by an external expert who would also undertake an appraisal of the Executive Group.
  - c. Strengthened arrangements for engagement with the wider community and 'experts by experience' through the Community and Engagement Group. This would ensure the voice of children, families and vulnerable adults is at the forefront in the new arrangements.
  - d. Ensuring the work of WST is always focussed on answering the question "What difference have we made?" through the arrangements.

## **3.0 Progress**

- 3.1 WST officially transitioned from the board to the partnership in September 2019. To ensure this was done smoothly a Shadow Executive Group (to be the WST Executive

Group) operated for several months until the board structure and Independent Chair were formally stood down.

- 3.2 Since September 2019, WST has made the below progress against the independent review recommendations:
- a. Reduced the size of the Executive Group to just the statutory partners with education also represented. This group meets monthly and will continue to do so to provide ongoing leadership to the partnership as it stabilises and recovers from temporary adjustments caused by the Coronavirus pandemic.
  - b. Replaced the Board with a Scrutiny and Assurance Coordination Group (SACG) who steer the work of WST priority groups and ensure the partnership remains focused on collaboration, learning and protecting the most vulnerable in our city. SACG also report directly to the Executive Group with two-way channels for both communication and escalation readily available.
  - c. Reduced the number of committees and standing groups from 10 to six priority groups and one provider group. Each priority group has a responsive work plan which aims to deliver the priorities set out in the WST Strategic plan. These include: Early Help and Prevention, Mental Health, Exploitation, Community and Engagement, Learning and Improvement and One Panel (who are responsible for statutory learning reviews). The provider group focuses on safeguarding in education and is represented by a variety of settings. See Appendix 1 – WST Structure.
  - d. Replaced its Independent Chair with the Chief Nursing Officer for the Black Country and West Birmingham's Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCG), one of the statutory partners. Chair responsibilities will be managed on an 18-month rota from within the Executive Group membership.
  - e. Commissioned an Independent Scrutineer to carry out a 360 appraisal of the new partnership arrangements, do an in-depth review of the Executive Group, write the Annual Report and plan and deliver the partnership's first Annual Event scheduled for January 2021. The first event will hold partners to account on their safeguarding responsibilities and will provide evidence on how positive changes in safeguarding practice following learning reviews has been implemented. Targeted independent scrutiny will be commissioned as required.
  - f. Written a mandate that sets out what is required by a Task and Finish effort to develop WST's 'experts by experience' approach building on the city's Co-production and Engagement Charter. This charter is currently used amongst services for children and young people and the group want to upscale this to include engagement with adults. The Exploitation priority group are also in the process of designing an expert by experience pilot as part of their workplan so that they can ascertain service user accounts on exploitation pathways and support.

- g. Introduced to the SACG agenda a standing on item for experts by experience feedback whereby the partnership can hear and learn from the views of those with lived experience of safeguarding services, this includes professionals who participate in WST multi-agency training.
  - h. Approved the appointment of an Integrated Assurance Lead who will drive forward the Outcomes and Quality Assurance Frameworks for WST which include gathering and analysing feedback from experts by experience with the aim of learning and improving from this.
  - i. Fulfilled its statutory duty of receiving and appropriately progressing safeguarding referrals through its One Panel function.
- 3.3 In addition to the above, WST has also delivered a multi-agency response the Coronavirus pandemic. It is important to note that this work has taken place in a different reporting year to the 2019-20 Annual Report however, WST felt it important to reference the partnership response as a strong example of joint working and commitment to safeguarding the most vulnerable in our city.
- 3.4 In April 2020 at the start of the National lockdown, WST quickly formed a Covid-19 Response Group with appropriate governance to provide assurance on:
- a. Modified multi-agency standard operating models
  - b. Commitment to progressing statutory learning reviews
  - c. Delivery of key safeguarding messages to the public and professionals.
- 3.5 The WST Covid-19 Response Group met weekly for four months and addressed health, education, social care and community safeguarding issues. The group analysed data and escalated several risks to the Executive Group that were mitigated and managed effectively. The group delivered against an action plan and communications plan and as lockdown restrictions were lifted, continued to meet under a Covid-19 Recovery title. The Recovery Group now meets monthly and focuses on a revised action plan, escalation and exception reporting and lessons learned - all in a multi-agency safeguarding context.
- 3.6 As well as the Covid-19 Response and Recovery Groups, WST has successfully transferred its core training offer online so that professionals and designated safeguarding leads can continue to be upskilled and up to date with mandatory training.
- 3.7 WST has in the last six months upgraded its Safeguarding Together website making information easier to navigate and puts priority on how a safeguarding concern can be reported.

See Appendix 2 – Wolverhampton Safeguarding Together DRAFT 2019-2020 Annual Report for more detail.

#### 4.0 Evaluation of alternative options

- 4.1 As part of the 2019 independent review, three options were considered at the time with the partnership arrangements as they are now under WST being the preferred option.
- 4.2 No further options are being considered at this point however, following independent scrutiny and further recommendations, changes and improvements to the current arrangements will be agreed and actioned accordingly. This will be done in line with legislation.

#### 5.0 Reasons for decision

- 5.1 To remain compliant with statutory requirements
- 5.2 To maintain an integrated approach to children's and adult's safeguarding in a multi-agency context
- 5.3 To improve outcomes for vulnerable people of all ages.

#### 6.0 Financial implications

- 6.1 The WST 2019-2020 outturn is detailed below and shows a surplus against contributions of £6,000 which was transferred to reserves to be used in future years.

Classification	£ Budget	£ Outturn
<b><u>Expenditure:</u></b>		
Staffing	215,055	171,893
Staff Advertising	2,000	0
Independent Chair	48,000	48,404
Serious Case Reviews and Safeguarding Adult Reviews	18,000	18,873
B Safe Contribution	10,500	0
Staff Travel	1,660	963
Training	25,000	13,805
Room Hire and Catering	8,020	10,925
General Office Running Costs	4,780	1,682
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>333,015</b>	<b>266,546</b>
<b><u>Partner Contributions and Training Income:</u></b>		
CAFCAS	550	550
WM Police	30,547	30,852
SWM Community Rehabilitation Company Lts	1,500	1,500
CCG	78,000	68,000
LA Contribution	144,495	156,960
Training Fees Non-Attendance	503	11,765
Probation Service (18/19 & 19/20)		3,000
<b>Total Partner Contributions</b>	<b>255,595</b>	<b>272,627</b>
Net deficit/surplus to be transferred to/from WST Reserve	<b>-77,470</b>	<b>6,081</b>

[JB/21102020/A]

## **7.0 Legal implications**

- 7.1 The Council is one of three statutory partners named within the legislation for both children's and adults safeguarding arrangements. The other two partners are the Clinical Commissioning Group and West Midlands Police. For children's safeguarding, partners have equal responsibility for safeguarding arrangements, however, this is not the case for adults with responsibility sitting with the Council.
- 7.2 The partnership arrangements continue to remain compliant with the (Children's) Social Work Act 2017, (Adult's) Care Act 2014 respectively and Working Together 2018 Guidance  
[TC/19102020/B]

## **8.0 Equalities implications**

- 8.1 The work of WST is to ensure the systems within the city protect some of the most vulnerable people. The partnership will continue to seek to ascertain deeper engagements from a wide range of groups and residents on the safeguarding issues that matter to them. This will be driven through the community and engagement group and an agreed 'experts by experience' approach. Both will provide feedback on the current priorities and development of new ones.
- 8.2 WST is in the process of establishing a task and finish effort to address the theme of Inclusive Safeguarding on the back of the Black Lives Matter movement. The task and finish group will explore the question 'Which areas does your agency think could be developed further in the context of inclusive safeguarding?'
- 8.3 Standard equalities monitoring is also included for all partners within the Outcomes and Quality Assurance Frameworks.

## **9.0 Climate change and environmental implications**

- 9.1 There are no climate change and environmental implications arising from the recommendations in this report.

## **10.0 Human resources implications**

- 10.1 There are no human resources implications arising from the recommendations in this report.

## **11.0 Corporate landlord implications**

- 11.1 There are no Corporate Landlord implications arising from the recommendations in this report.

## **12.0 Health and Wellbeing Implications**

- 12.1 Whilst there are no health and wellbeing implications arising from the recommendations in this report, the work of WST aims to improve safeguarding outcomes and protect the

most vulnerable in our city. Doing this successfully is likely to have a positive impact on an individual's health and wellbeing.

### **13.0 Covid Implications**

13.1 Whilst there are no implications arising from the recommendations in this report, WST has operated a modified model during the pandemic. Partners have worked together to ensure that statutory safeguarding responsibilities have been upheld and efforts have been redeployed throughout the partnership to enable an appropriate collaborative response.

### **14.0 Schedule of background papers**

14.1 [Wolverhampton Multi-Agency Safeguarding Arrangements](#) – Cabinet 31 July 2019.

### **15.0 Appendices**

15.1 Appendix 1 – WST Structure

15.2 Appendix 2 – WST 2019-2020 Annual Report