

NORTH WEST LEICESTERSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET – TUESDAY, 12 JUNE 2018

Title of report	SAFEGUARDING UPDATE 2017-2018
Key Decision	a) Financial No b) Community Yes
Contacts	<p>Councillor Trevor Pendleton (Safer North West Partnership Chair and Portfolio Holder for Regeneration and Planning) trevor.pendleton@nwleicestershire.gov.uk</p> <p>Head of Community Services 01530 454832 paul.sanders@nwleicestershire.gov.uk</p> <p>Stronger and Safer Communities Manager 01530 454696 chris.brown@nwleicestershire.gov.uk</p>
Purpose of report	To ensure that cabinet has an overview of safeguarding systems and structures in NWLDC
Reason for decision	To comply with the council's constitution and statutory duty to safeguard children and vulnerable adults, as detailed in the Children Act 2004 and Working together 2013.
Council priorities	The Safeguarding Strategy informs the staff of their responsibilities to report concerns to the Safeguarding Team
Implications:	
Financial/Staff	The community safety team will co-ordinate the work
Link to relevant CAT	None
Risk Management	A risk assessment has been undertaken and is contained in the corporate risk register. Additional risk assessments are completed as appropriate
Equalities Impact Screening	An Equality Impact Screening has been undertaken and will continue to be reviewed.
Human Rights	The policy seeks to address any human rights matters raised via the reporting system

Transformational Government	This relates to the new ways in which councils are being asked to deliver their services.
Comments of Head of Paid Service	The report is satisfactory
Comments of Section 151 Officer	The report is satisfactory
Comments of Monitoring Officer	The report is satisfactory
Consultees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Leicestershire and Rutland Safeguarding Boards. - County Designated Officer Team - District DSO staff
Background papers	None
Recommendations	CABINET ARE REQUESTED TO NOTE THE WORK OF THE NORTH WEST LEICESTERSHIRE SAFEGUARDING TEAM DURING 2017/18.

1.0 CONTEXT

- 1.1 The council is required to have a safeguarding protocol that is able to respond to reported concerns or incidents. The current process is fit for purpose and is delivering an adequate service to the council as well as the community.

1.2 What is Safeguarding

'Safeguarding' is a range of activities aimed at upholding children, young people and adults' fundamental right to be safe, at the same time respecting people's rights to make choices. Safeguarding involves empowerment, protection and justice. This is to help people retain independence, wellbeing and choice, and to experience their right to a life free from abuse and neglect.

Concerns are reported to the council and recorded. All reports are reviewed and considered by a trained Dedicated Safeguarding Officer, (DSO) if it is considered a matter that requires action, then a referral is made to the relevant organisation, requesting their support to resolve the identified safeguarding issue(s).

The district council Designated Safeguarding Officers (DSO) do not provide a direct safeguarding service to the community, but they refer to care providers. A DSO assesses the risk of the referral by collecting readily available information and intelligence, before deciding what action to take or make an appropriate referral. If a referral is made it will be via the appropriate referral pathway for the specific organisation.

1.3 **Legislation**

The Children and Social Work Act 2017 required that changes were made to the current system. The relevant Leicester Leicestershire and Rutland (LLR) Safeguarding Boards are in the process of implementing the changes. The main points are:

- Construction of a new Safeguarding Board responding to the needs of children
- New duties for the police, health and local authorities
- Child death reviews
- Independent scrutiny

Other legislation has remained unchanged. The Practice Guidance and the Children's Act 2004 gives relevant information, enabling local authorities to act appropriately while delivering the service to their local community.

Legislation gives local authorities some responsibility to identify vulnerability in the community. A suitable response is then made by referring the case to appropriate organisations. There is no requirement for the authority to investigate a case, however referrals contain as much detail as possible, enabling sound decisions to be made.

2.0 **Procedures**

2.1 The Adult and Children and Young Person Policy and Procedures (reviewed December 2017) explains how staff report concerns.

2.2 **District process**

The number of cases reported to the district is increasing annually. The current process for reporting is via the online process or on paper forms provided.

When a report is completed online, an email is forwarded to the safeguarding inbox which cannot be monitored effectively, causing a delay in response. This delay has been investigated and will be resolved by a new system due to be introduced in Q2 2018.

Not all staff have access to the internet, therefore the paper form has been retained to ensure that all staff have the ability to report concerns. This process is slower as there is a delay in the internal postal system, it is however effective. The completed forms are forwarded to their line manager or directly to the Community Safety Team. On arrival the on-call DSO team respond effectively.

2.3 **County Group**

The county process is developing best practice across the county. A meeting is held with the operational leads for the districts and county. Not all districts are represented at each meeting, however the minutes of the meeting are communicated. New legislation or items of note are discussed and or communicated. The group also cooperates on training staff, which brings consistency and financial efficiencies. Districts do not have common safeguarding processes, in comparison the NWLDC system is considered by partners to have a thorough and robust process.

3.0 Risk

3.1 Current Risk

The current system was reviewed at the corporate risk meeting and recorded as a risk of 16, control measures were put in place reducing the likelihood of occurrence being missed reducing the risk to 8.

It was noted that the Safeguarding inbox could not be changed to notify the on call DSO a new case exists. This raised the risk of a slower response by a DSO that may have an impact on individual health and safety. As a result the Community Safety Team developed a safeguarding system with a software developer that addresses the identified risks. The new system will be implemented in Q2 2018/19 and will specifically ensure cases are actioned quickly and efficiently by automatically sending notifications and reminders.

3.2 Training

Training on the system will be required for the DSO's who will be using the system on a daily basis, this will be completed prior to implementation.

4.0 Training and Staff Workload

4.1

In the last 12 months we have invested in training new DSO staff to maintain the number of DSOs. Additional training has been identified to ensure staff understand their cases and improve their ability to refer to other organisations. Social Services and the police, who receive the majority of these referrals, are coming under increasing pressure to deliver more services with less funding. While this does not directly affect the authority, it is essential for a DSO to write referrals in a style that ensures it is accepted and actioned..

Nationally there are a number of high profile cases where staff have been in contact with vulnerable people and have not identified the need. This has resulted in death and serious injury. HR and the Safeguarding team have assessed the risk register and identified training needs which can be categorised as follows

4.2 General Awareness

All staff receive general training, and this forms part of the induction process for staff. It is completed online which is time effective. The online training should be completed every two years, currently records do not enable us to ensure the majority of staff have received the most up to date training. Refresher training will be conducted in 2018/19 and a system to ensure all staff have completed it will be implemented. Briefings will on offered to staff on an annual basis.

4.3 Manager Training

Training has been agreed for each post and divided into Bronze, Silver and Gold. HR will review this training during 2018/19.

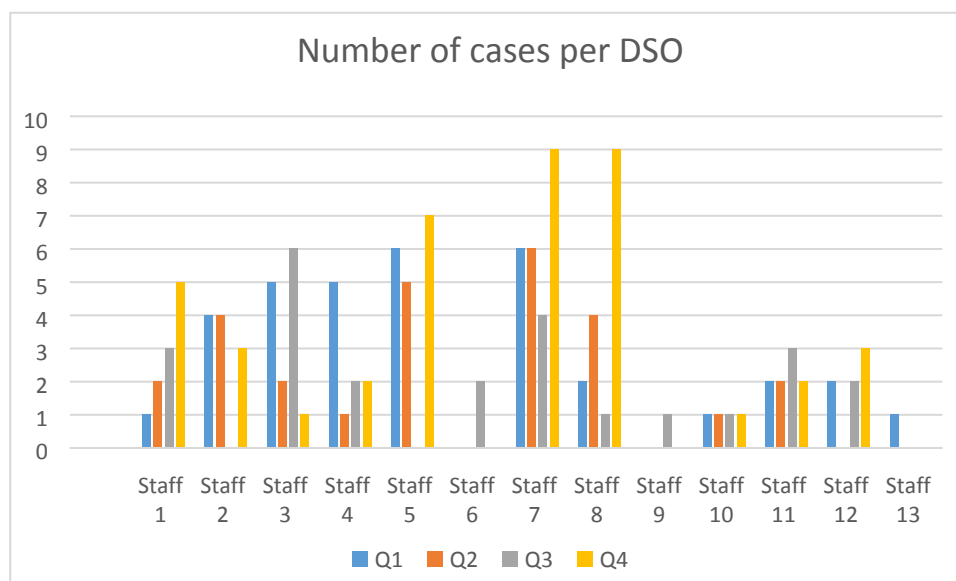
4.4 Decision Making Training

Safeguarding legislation indicates that the safeguarding process will be driven from the most senior members. Training of the Corporate Leadership Team or Cabinet Officers will be reviewed by HR and refresher training offered in 2018/19.

4.5 Designated Officer

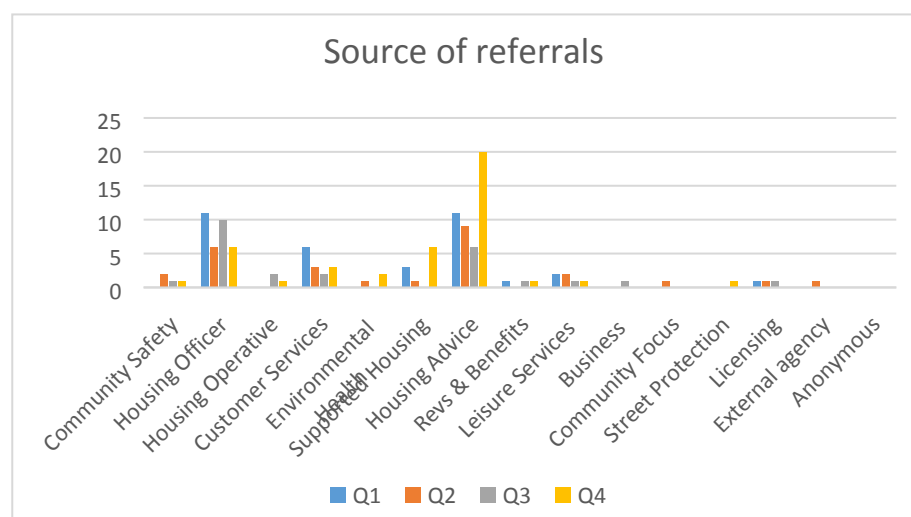
We will continue to provide support for DSO staff and help them to receive the training they need to ensure they understand the risks and make the appropriate referrals.

Since April 2017 three DSO teams have been created and are on duty every three weeks. Four DSO staff have left the team for various reasons, however five more have been recruited. The current workload of staff is as follows:



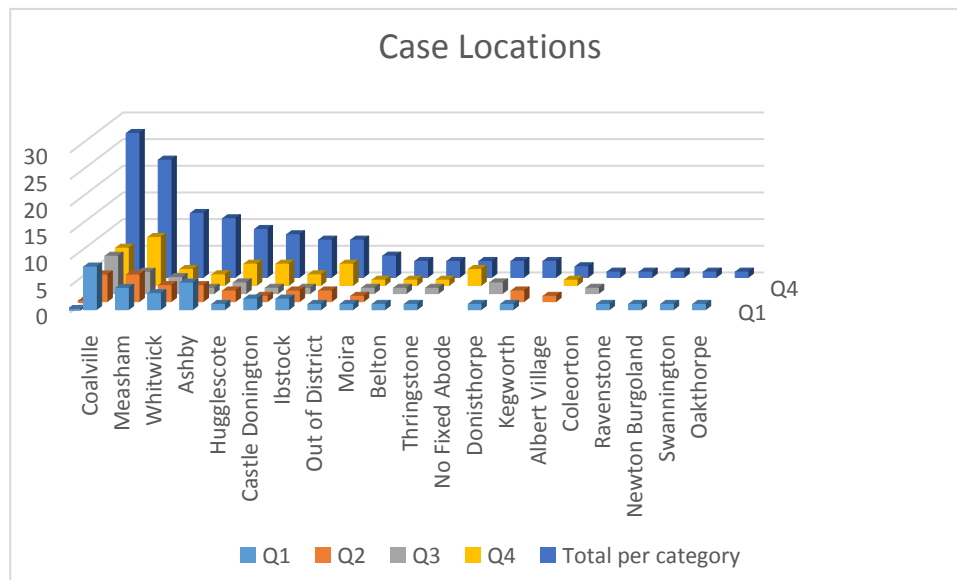
5.0 Successes

5.1 There have been 129 cases referred to the team for their consideration, these have been categorised in the following statistics.



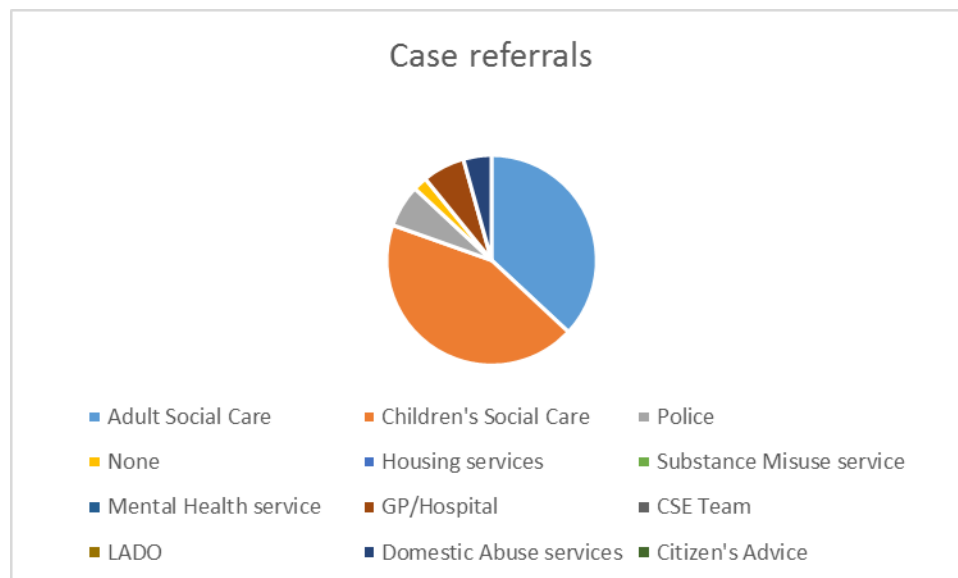
5.2 Case Locations

Number of cases, locations of referrals (Some cases are second referrals for the same person)



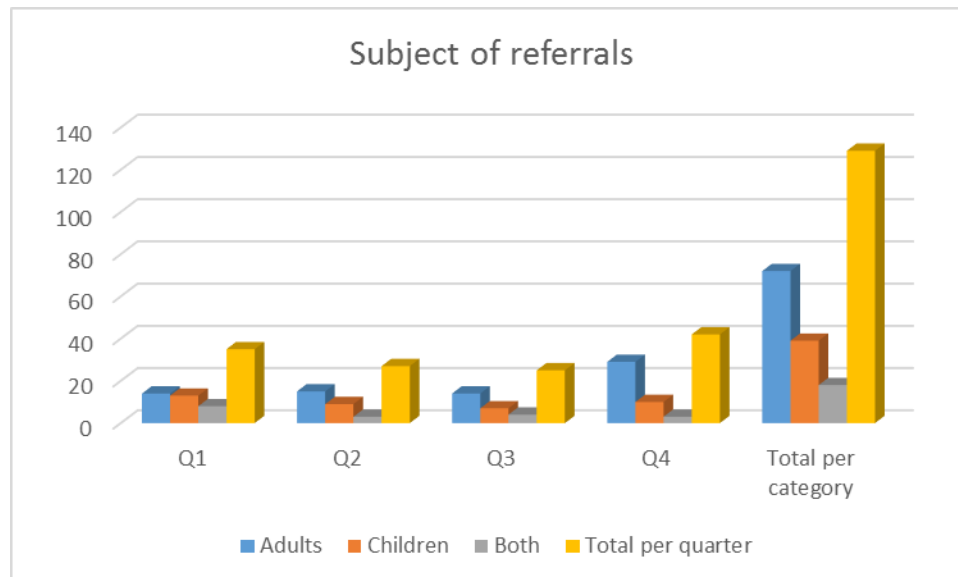
5.3 Statistics

Who the referrals were made to.



5.4 Subject of the referrals

Who were the referrals about?



5.5 Case Studies

The team have referred cases that have made a significant difference to the community, below is a sample of the cases.

- 5.5.1 A lady with four young children visited our housing advice team and disclosed that she was experiencing abuse from her partner. The DSO worked with housing advice to complete a referral to domestic abuse support services, and contacted children's social care in relation to the welfare of the children. The family was allocated a domestic abuse outreach worker and a support worker from the children's centre which has enabled them to move on from an abusive and damaging situation.
- 5.5.2 A participant in one of our disability sessions at the leisure centre was acting unusually. When asked if they were feeling alright they disclosed that they were hearing voices in their head which were telling them to kill themselves. A safeguarding referral was made and the DSO contacted adult social care. The person was allocated a worker who is supporting them through their mental health issues.
- 5.4.3 A referral was received from a housing officer about a property which was in a poor state where 5 children and one unborn baby lived. The DSO discovered the family had previously had a support worker and made a new referral to children's social care. The case was re-opened as a result of this information and a more intensive level of support was given to the family.
- 5.5.4 A person was continually phoning customer services to report that people were accessing his property and he could smell gas and chemicals. This was investigated by our repairs team and no issues were found. Customer services submitted a safeguarding referral. The DSO made a referral to adult social care and shared concerns with the person's GP. An assessment was carried out and the person was referred for some assistive technology to help them remember to take medication.