

SUBJECT: Review of Adult Safeguarding Service, and the Wider Safeguarding Business Administration

DIRECTORATE: Social Care & Health

MEETING: DMT

Date: 13th November 2019

1. PURPOSE:

- To review the Adult Safeguarding Team role and function in light of Legislative changes and the statutory duty for Monmouthshire
- To present the pressures currently impacting performance and quality issues
- consider Safeguarding Business Support needs of the wider Authority and the Safeguarding Unit to ensure quality standards, collation of information and the facilitation of Corporate Safeguarding
- To present the evidence base and business cases to support the proposals.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Support Adult Services teams in resuming the responsibility of Designated Lead Manger's of the Adult Safeguarding process
- To increase the establishment of Adult Co-ordinator posts and introduce a Screening Officer post to manage increased capacity and develop quality assurance;
- To restructure Safeguarding Unit Business Administration to bring parity, increase quality standards and create contingency;
- To build on existing post to develop a Safeguarding Business Manager post to manage the facilitation of Whole Authority Safeguarding business, and to

develop and manage compliant business support processes across the Safeguarding Unit.

3. KEY ISSUES

3.1 Background

In October 2013 Directorate Management Team (DMT) considered a report, which identified some significant risks around the county's ability to deliver the Welsh Guidance for Protection of Vulnerable Adults (POVA). In 2012-2013 Monmouthshire received **145** adult protection referrals. The areas of concern identified in the report included, alongside others, the following:

- Increased demands on the POVA rota (undertaken within Service teams) leading to overload on an already fragile arrangement;
- Changes in the personnel providing the Designated Lead Manager (DLM) function has diluted expertise.

At that time, DMT agreed to:

- Immediate increase in staffing;
- Change to the way the flow of work into the authority was managed;
- Review the model in Monmouthshire to address areas of concern as above.

Subsequently, on 12th November 2014, a cabinet paper titled Adult Safeguarding Review and Restructure was presented. The purpose of this was to share a review of the Adult Safeguarding Service, the model required for moving forward and to outline the resource implications for decision. The paper recommended a funding proposal to stabilise and improve the Adult Safeguarding service which included establishing:

- a full time Team Manager post;
- 2 full time senior practitioners to act as Adult Protection Co-ordinators, (increase of 42 hours);
- 2 full time administrator posts (increase of 37 hours).

As a result of this:

- the functions of screening referrals and the Designated Lead Manager (DLM) role (taking forward the POVA referral) have been separated, removing the daily Screening Rota from the teams;
- The secure e-mail account designated Adult Protection was the access point for all referrals, which were then screened by using the All Wales Threshold Tool to decide whether to progress via POVA or via case management services, thus providing a consistent screening process;
- The expectation was that following screening the management of the Safeguarding process would mostly be undertaken at locality team level by a virtual team of DLM's. Referrals screened and agreed to be the responsibility of Health professionals would be managed by Health Board DLMs;

The role of the Adult Safeguarding Team was to support this function by:

- quality assurance of process and decision taking;
- offering expert knowledge and insight;
- undertaking a wider number of non-criminal investigations.

Current Staffing and Roles

Following consideration of resource implications, staffing was adjusted to:

- 1 x Full Time Manager;
- 2 x 30hr Co-ordinator;
- 2 x 30hr Administration support.

3.2 Widening of Safeguarding Profile in Monmouthshire

a) Statutory Wales Adult Protection Procedures: Following the SSWA 2014 Gwent Adult Safeguarding Board was established, with Subgroups to develop Safeguarding

Practice across Gwent and meet statutory requirements relating to Procedures and Protocols, Adult Practice Reviews, and Training and Development. The Adult Safeguarding manager is now a key part of the Local Safeguarding Network with Statutory and 3rd Sector partners, and the team have a primary role in Safeguarding training. There has always been a limited capacity for the involvement of the team manager within Regional work however there is an expectation that Monmouthshire will have an active involvement with these processes and contribute to the wider Safeguarding agenda in Gwent. In November 2019 the new Wales Adult Protection Procedures will be launched, with implementation in April 2020. This is also the timescale for the revised Wales Child Protection Procedures itself being a further pressure on the Safeguarding Unit, however the significant change within a Wales Protection Procedures will be to align current Adult Safeguarding Procedures with the more established Child Protection Procedures.

Implementation will be through the GWASB Subgroups and the Adult Safeguarding Manager will be a key figure in ensuring Monmouthshire is a full party to the development and completion of the new Regional protocols and processes, as well as the need to develop and embed internal processes, and the internal training period required.

b). Corporate Safeguarding and the Welsh Audit Office

In 2017 the Adult Safeguarding Team was moved into the Safeguarding Unit, under Children's Services in order to co-ordinate and develop Safeguarding activity across the authority. Within Monmouthshire Council there has been an extended understanding of the Councils' wider Corporate Safeguarding responsibility. The development of the SAFE Audits and action plans are key to measuring compliance to the Corporate Safeguarding Policy. The Adult Safeguarding Manager and team have had a significant role in supporting this process, ensuring the understanding of staff and managers, and the development of action plans within Adult Statutory and 3rd Sector services directly commissioned. The Safeguarding Unit are the developers and providers of all integrated Safeguarding training at a corporate level, as well as supporting the understanding and dissemination of statutory requirements and to consider emerging issues such as Domestic Abuse, Practice Learning Reviews and Modern Day Slavery/Exploitation procedures.

3.3 Culture and Demand

In 2014 the nominated Adult Safeguarding model was predicated on the safeguarding process being undertaken primarily by locality team based Designated Lead Managers (DLM's) and Health based DLMs. Within the ABUHB this is still the working model. Within Adult Services, there has been an erosion of this role and understanding. Initially it

appears to relate to issues of training, support, confidence and experience, and the willingness of the Adult Safeguarding Team to hold and manage cases. This was evidenced historically in that teams who had management with a strong safeguarding background have always been willing to accept the DLM role.

In the last 12 months, there has been continued quarterly DLM support meetings, DLM training and refresher training, and shadowing opportunities. However current reluctance by managers and senior practitioners to undertake the DLM role is reported to relate to capacity within teams. The increased need for the Adult Protection Co-ordinators to fulfil the role of the DLM means that the development of this role to be a robust manager of the safeguarding process is unlikely to occur.

3.4 Demand on the Service

Until 2015, the adult protection practice was based on policy, procedure and guidance which operated without a Statutory basis. Under Welsh Assembly Guidance (In Safe Hands 2000) there was a clear definition of a *vulnerable adult* being in need of community care services due to impairments, and unable to protect themselves against a threshold of *significant harm or serious exploitation*.

The Social Services and Well-Being Act (Wales) 2014 has introduced new measures for to adult safeguarding;

- the term 'vulnerable adult' is replaced by 'adult at risk';
- the term 'adult protection' is replaced by 'adult safeguarding';
- there is a definition of an adult at risk, eliminating the 'significant harm' threshold;
- a statutory duty to report, a very low 'threshold' for reporting concerns, which can be based on 'suspicion' only;
- a new type of order (APSO);
- the establishment of adult safeguarding boards.

If anyone suspects that someone is an "Adult at Risk", they have a duty to report this to the Local Authority. It is not necessary for someone to be sure that abuse or neglect has occurred, if they have a reasonable cause to suspect, that it has or someone is at risk of, they must report it.

An "adult at risk", is an adult who:

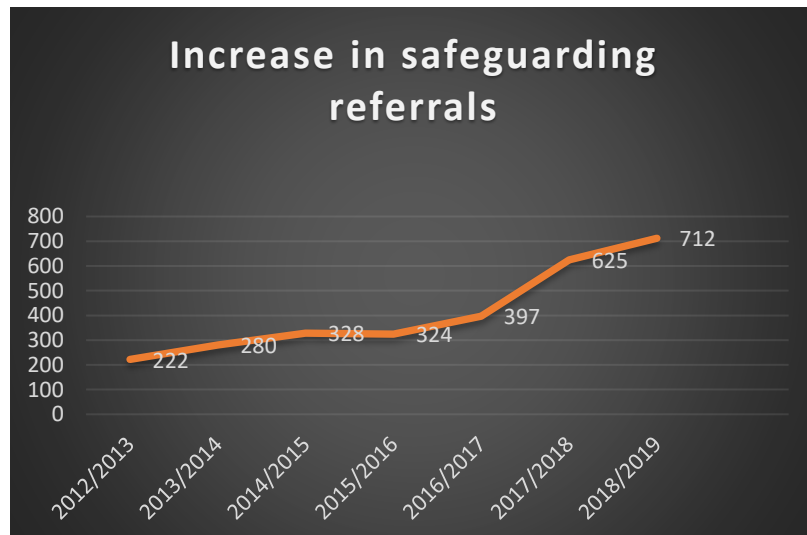
(a) is experiencing or is at risk of abuse or neglect,

(b) has needs for care and support (whether or not the authority is meeting any of those needs); and

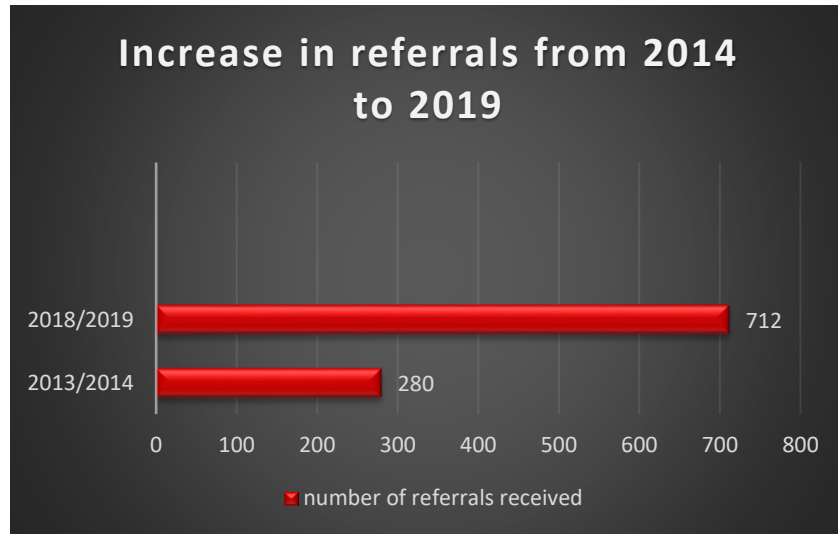
(c) as a result of those needs is unable to protect himself or herself against the abuse or neglect or the risk of it.

3.5 Increase in Referrals for Safeguarding Service

The introduction of the statutory duty to report under the Act, as well as the low threshold for reporting concerns (which can be based on reasonable cause to suspect) have led to a significant increase in the number of safeguarding concerns reported via safeguarding referrals.



In comparison with 2013/2014 when Monmouthshire had 280 referrals, in 2018/2019 there were 712, this is an increase of 256% in referrals.



During 2016/17 (prior to the implementation of FLO) the team had continued to collect data on *closed* DTRs and therefore it was acknowledged we had under-reported reality, although the feeling was there was a genuine increase in DTRs between 2016/17 and 2017/18.

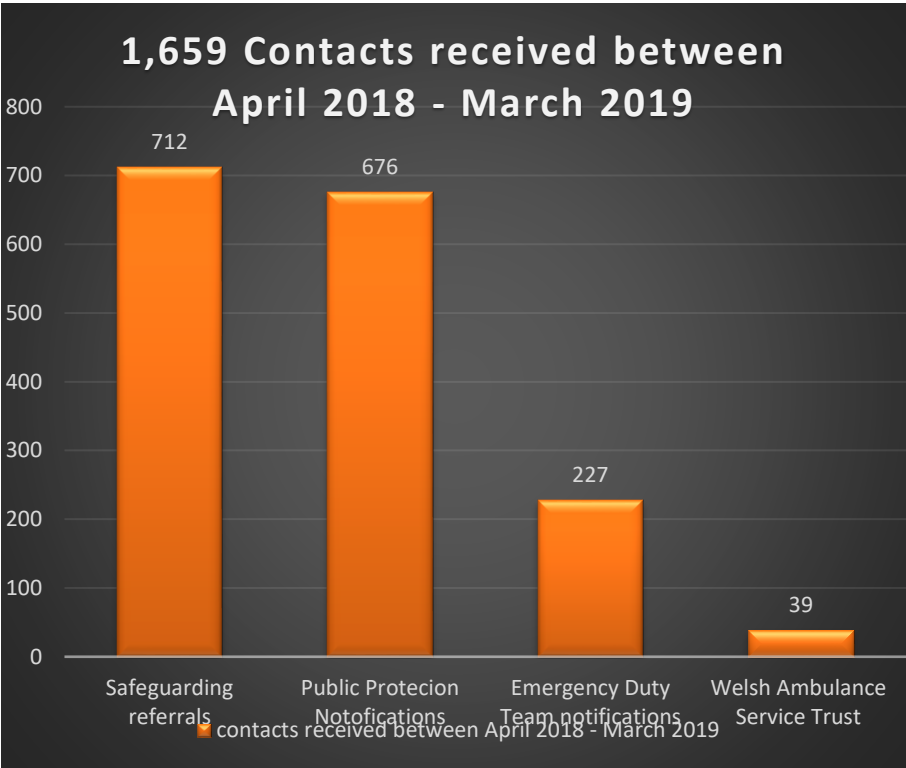
3.6 Increase in Safeguarding Contacts

Since this time the Adult Safeguarding team is the portal for all Duty to Report forms (Referrals), but also notifications from the Police, Welsh Ambulance Service and EDT. These, in line with DTR forms, have also seen a significant increase. It is recognised that these notifications may be Safeguarding Referrals but may also be repeat notifications or issues relating to other teams, therefore forwarded. However, all must be screened for action.

	Referrals/ DTR's	PPN/WAST/EDT notifications	Total no A/S Contacts
2013/2014	280	n/k	280
2014/2015	328	n/k	328
2015/2016	324	n/k	324
2016/2017	397	583	980

2017/18	625	942	1567
2018/19	712	942	1654
Projections based on numbers of contacts up to Sept 19 following screening officer pilot (see below)	550	1164	1714

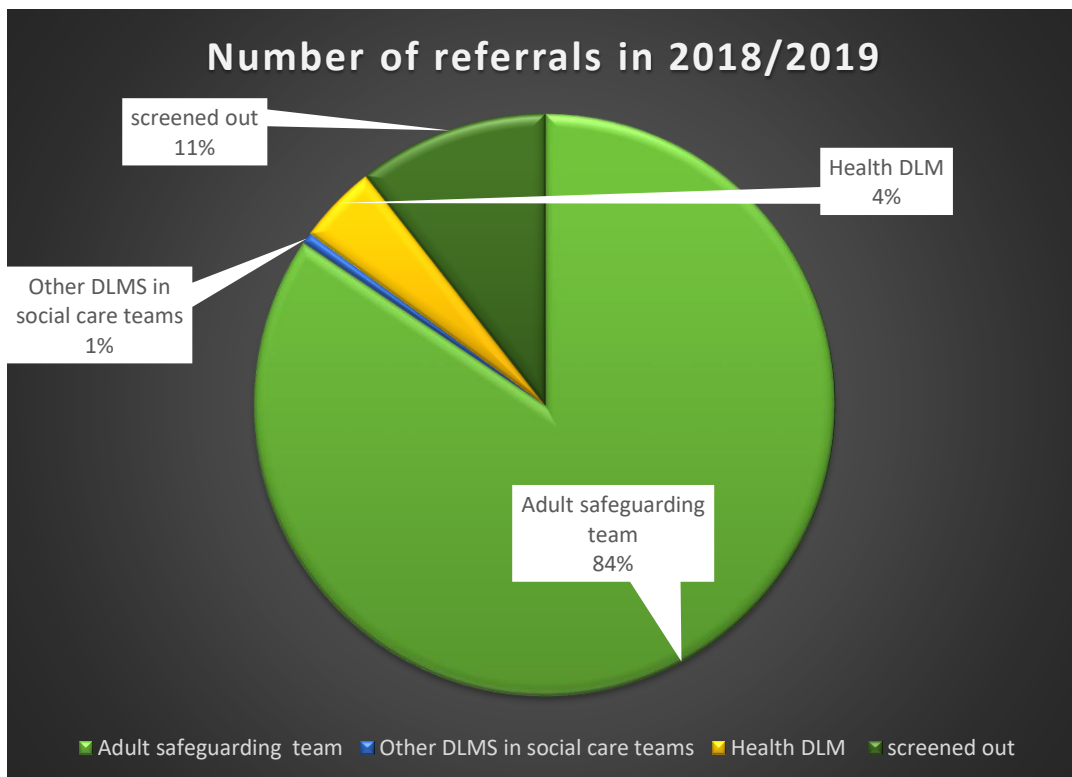
From June-September 19 the Adult Safeguarding Team have had funding for an agency screening officer whose role was to manage concerns, telephone calls from professionals, and to redirect professionals to appropriate routes. Initially we have seen a drop in the number of Referrals to the Safeguarding process. Decision taking has been Quality Assured and the pilot will continue to be assessed to consider any national or regional issue or trends.



3.7 Management of Contacts

All 1659 contacts have been screened, this includes reading and electronic checking records available, as well as sharing information with the relevant team; if 15 minutes is allocated for this task, this amounts to 24,840 minutes /414 hrs per year spent on screening only. This is equivalent to approx. 8 (7.96) hrs/week. Currently this task is completed by the Coordinators, all of whom are working 30 hrs/week, thus over 25% of their time is spent on screening alone. This excludes making any enquiries on newly received referrals. The Act requires that enquiries are completed within 7 days to determine if a case needs to progress via the adult safeguarding process.

In 2018/2019, out of the 712 referrals received, 84 had been screened out; the remainder of 628 have progressed via the adult safeguarding process; 35 (5%) have been coordinated by a Health DLM, **only 5 cases** managed within social care and outside the safeguarding team.



Assuming no increase in referrals and considering the number of cases managed by the adult safeguarding team in 2018/2019 which progressed via the adult safeguarding process (628 in total), if there were 2 Coordinators this means that each would manage 314 cases per year; considering their working time of 1,356hrs/year, this would mean an allocation of 4,31 hrs/case.

If there were 3 Coordinators, they would manage 209 cases per year, this would mean an allocation of 6.48 hrs/case. This includes making enquiries, pre-meeting gathering and analysing of information, liaison with relevant professionals, updating records, chairing strategy meetings and travelling time. This information does not consider Screening the contacts to ascertain whether this is a valid Safeguarding contact or whether it needs to be signposted elsewhere which does not require a qualified Social Worker.

3.8 Safeguarding Business Support

The impact of the increased numbers of Contacts on the Business administration was reviewed as part of the wider AS review which raised a number of issues;

- Processes and documentation were no longer compliant with the Social Service and Wellbeing Act;
- There were limited levels in consistency in the update of Flo, with limited preparation for the introduction of WCCIS;
- There were quality assurance concerns in relation to the taking the Minutes of meetings, and the business administration processes which support the Safeguarding process;
- There was significant disparity in the performance of and understanding of legislation and process of the Child Protection Business Support Officers and the Business Support Assistants within Adult Safeguarding;
- There was limited flexibility and contingency with the Business Support available.

Within the Child Protection team, the Business Support Officers have clear quality standards and time frames to adhere to which have been the result of many years of a statutory framework. Their role supports the managers and officers expertise in the area of Child Protection by offering clarity about legislative requirements, processes for tracking concerns, avoiding drift, and collation and verification of information for reporting back to the Authority or the WAG.

In attempting to support the development of quality standards in the A/S Business Support Team, the current procedures and the issue of the disparity of pay and position prove to be a barrier.

3.9 Whole Authority Safeguarding Business support

As the profile of Safeguarding across the whole authority has expanded there is a need for a coherent approach to collating and analysing qualitative and quantitative data in order to report on Safeguarding activity. The SAFE audit, training data, and performance data are key elements to understanding and embedding safeguarding practice which is compliant with the Corporate Policy. The information collated from this will be instrumental in ensuring the Whole Authority Safeguarding Group has clear information in order to measure progress, outcomes, and impact. This role was facilitated across directorates by a seconded officer; however, this post was never confirmed and therefore there is a loss of a single point of contact to support officers and Senior Managers in being effective in monitoring, reporting, and developing. In considering the value of such a role, there is scope for information and data gathering across Gwent, or with multiagency partners to support the development of practice in relation to emerging issues such as Domestic Abuse, or Exploitation of vulnerable people.

3.10 Current Funding Position

The Safeguarding Unit Budget primarily relates to the payment of salary for staff members, with the previous budget for the Adult Safeguarding Team being absorbed into the Safeguarding Unit's budget. The funding comes from the Children Service's Budget.

Whilst the expansion of the Whole Authority Corporate Safeguarding agenda has increased the corporate role of the Safeguarding Unit in the development of Policy and Protocols, specialist support and consultation across the authority, leading the development and delivery of corporate safeguarding training, the administration and analysis of SAFE Audits', the support of the Whole Authority Safeguarding Group, and the reporting to the director of the progress of Safeguarding across the Authority there is no contribution from any other directorate.

3.11 Driver's For Change;

- Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) 2014 Section 7:
- Statutory Guidance: Vol 6 Handling Individual Cases to Protect Individual Adults at Risk;
- Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) 2014 Section 8 (Reporting);
- Wales Adults Protection procedures 2019
- Welsh Audit Office **While Authority Review of Children's Safeguarding – Monmouthshire County Council** _May 18

Proposal for Improvement P2 “Ensure the development of Safeguarding and Quality Assurance Unit enables it to develop its planned objectives”

Proposals for Improvement 3 “Improved the range quality and coverage of Safeguarding Performance reporting to provide adequate assurances that that systems are working effectively”

Summary of Issues

Since 2016 Adult Safeguarding has been made a Statutory duty, and the changes in guidance and Codes of Practice have lowered thresholds for what is considered an Adult at Risk, whilst passing a “Duty to Report” such concerns. Subsequently the profile of Safeguarding has been raised by the formation of the Adult Safeguarding Board, increased training across the adult care sector, and the development of the Whole

Authority approach to safeguarding in Monmouthshire. These factors have led to a dramatic rise in referrals and contacts within the Adult Safeguarding Team. The pilot of utilising a Screen Officer at the “front door” of the service to appropriately advise and redirect inappropriate referrals is seen to have had an impact in reducing the Duty to Report referrals being processed, however it is acknowledged this is over a short period of time

At the last Review in 2014 the development of a single portal for safeguarding referrals moved the Screening process back into the Safeguarding Team, however over time the role of DLM has reverted back into the Safeguarding team, which has seen only 5 cases managed by Adult Service’s Teams in the last 12 months. Despite attempting to support the virtual team of DLM’s to develop great experience and confidence, issues of team capacity are cited as the reason that teams can no longer act as DLM. Support is required to the Adult Service teams to develop confidence in the management of Adult Safeguarding Issues that are relevant to their Service Users/teams.

Within the A/S team there has been no capacity to develop quality assurance processes, to strengthen to the management of cases, undertake robust investigations, and to develop quality standards in administration processes, particularly in relation to the disparity between administrators’ roles and salary grades.

With the development of the wider safeguarding responsibilities at Regional and Whole Authority levels this leaves the service under resourced, unable to report progress to the director effectively. The subsequent impact on the Safeguarding Unit’s capacity to meet their training, quality assurance, and policy and practice development is

and presents a risk to the Authority, particularly as the Wales Adult Protection processes are due to be launched this imminently and will need significant resources to ensure Monmouthshire’s compliance and development of safe

3.11 Recommendations

1. The work of the DLM reverts back where appropriate to the operational teams with the Adult Safeguarding Team undertaking:
 - The DLM role for complex Adult Safeguarding Concerns, or where there are repeat concerns from an external provider agency;
 - A Screening Function at point of referral in line with developing Gwent threshold procedure and the support and training for agencies making referrals/Duty to Report;
 - quality assurance of process and decision taking;
 - offering expert knowledge and insight;
 - undertaking a wider number of non-criminal investigations.
 - Supporting the Whole Authority Safeguarding processes and training;
 - Representing Monmouthshire on Regional Safeguarding.

Increase of staff required :

1x 37 hour AS Coordinator Band J

1x 37 hour Screening Officer Band F

2. In response to:
 - support and training will be needed in teams to facilitate a gradual and appropriate return of the DLM role;
 - the Regional Safeguarding Boards' consideration to develop a Threshold Tool;
 - to support initiatives in Adult Services to address capacity issues;

Increase of staff required:

1x 30 hour A/S co-ordinator (12 month contract) £45.144

3. The development of A/S Business Support Assistants in Adult Safeguarding to become BSO to mirror BSO function in Children's Safeguarding;
 - To develop a safeguarding administration function which allows understanding of both adult and children safeguarding to expand the administrative capacity to meet changing demands on the service;
 - to meet the quality standards and processes required to manage the diaries of professionals,
 - to develop knowledge and understanding of legislative and statutory guidance to support the DLM role, and Chairs of statutory meetings;
 - minute meetings effectively and accurately and work within statutory guidance and to work within a Quality assurance programme to provide

4. The development of a Safeguarding Business Manager – This role will set quality standards for the administration processes across the Safeguarding Unit (Adults and Children), and support the Unit by developing a quality assurance framework, work tracker's, and supervision of Business Support Staff. They will be key in developing a pool of Safeguarding Business Support Officer's which will be deployed across the work of Adults and Children developing knowledge and create contingency to meet the changing flow of demand.

This role will be an experienced officer who will work across the Whole Authority to collate information, support the SAFE audit, facilitate the Whole Authority Safeguarding Group in the production of reports and core data to ensure the Director and the Whole Authority Safeguarding Group has clear information in order to measure progress, outcomes and impact.

Funding for 14.8 hours of this post to come from Child Protection Secretary budget

Total Funding increase

1x 37 hour AS Co-ordinator Band J	£55,928
1x 37 hour Screening Officer Band F	£35,828
Increase 2 BSA posts to BSO	£7,239
Increase in BSO hours to cover 37 hours grade G business manager post	£9,155

Annual TOTAL **£108,150**

1x 30 hour A/S co-ordinator
(12 month contract) £45,144

TOTAL **£153,294**

Should the role of DLM not revert to the teams, consideration should be given to making the 4th A/S post permanent in order to have capacity to consider how best to facilitate a compliant service.

- That the increased Corporate responsibility for Safeguarding across the Whole Authority is supported by funding from a Corporate Budget not met entirely from the Children's Services Budget.

Options Appraisal:

	Description	Costs	Benefits	Disbenefits/risks	Recommend
Option 1	Do Nothing	Cost neutral	none	Retains a system which cannot meet its full Statutory responsibilities and current model cannot address the expanded need within the Safeguarding Unit and Adult Safeguarding. Does not fully comply with recommendations of WAO	no

Option 2	do not return the role of DLM to Adult Services Teams	Potential Increased costs	None - unless increased workload is managed by the employment of a further 2 permanent AS Co-ordinator posts -designated Snr Practitioner grade	The Safeguarding Process is not managed by the most appropriate team/practitioner. The understanding and embedding of Safeguarding practice, and process across adult services is hindered	no
Option 3	Accept proposals re: Screening Officer/ 3 rd ASC and Temp Officer but reject Administration parity	Reduce projected spend	The Adult Safeguarding Process will be managed more effectively	There will be disparity in the roles and pay grade of children and adults administrators which will create barriers and resistance to developing the current role to offer the same function of the Children Safeguarding BSO's Less capacity and fluidity to be able to manage the changing demands on the service	no
Option 4	Reject to development of Business Support Manager	Reduce projected spend	none	1). The Safeguarding Unit will not be able to fully meet the administrative challenges in embedding new Safeguarding procedures 2).The Administrative function and supervision is currently undertaken by the AS Manager- this will free that time to contribute to, implement, and embed new statutory guidance; 3). The SU will not be able to appropriately support the Director and Whole Authority Safeguarding Group in the development and tracking of timescales, reporting mechanisms and collation of authority wide data for Council and Welsh Assembly Government	no
Option 5	No change for finance stream for Safeguarding	Safeguarding function still met from Children Services Budget	none	Children Services Budget is already overspent. It has continued to absorb the increasing statutory, corporate and WAG obligations and demands This is the opportunity to reshape the Safeguarding Unit function to meet demand and	no

				make it fit for purpose, which cannot be met from the Children Service Budgets alone	
Option 6	Accept Proposals	Increased cost but from more equitable funding source	<p>The service provided by AS will contribute to, be compliant to statutory legislation and guidance.</p> <p>The quality of all roles, processes, and investigations will be strengthened, work will appropriately sit where it should, and there can be better Quality Assurance and Scrutiny of all aspects of the Safeguarding process;</p> <p>The Whole Authority Safeguarding Group and Director will have appropriate support systems to the reporting on Monmouthshire's progress in Safeguarding to Council and WAG</p>	none	yes

Diane Corrister
Safeguarding Service Manager
Oct 2019

