

Appendix 1

Development of a North Wales Safeguarding Adults Board

1. Background

1.1 Conwy CBC, Denbighshire CC, Flintshire CC, and Wrexham CBC each has an Adult Protection Committee (APC) which operates within the Local Authority boundary. Gwynedd & Anglesey have a joint Safeguarding Adults Board.

1.2 The Social Services and Wellbeing Bill (Wales) Act 2014

1.2.1 Section 134 of the Social Services and Wellbeing Act (Wales) 2014 requires that Safeguarding Children Boards (SCBs) and Safeguarding Adults Boards (SABs) be set up. This will put the safeguarding of adults on to a statutory footing similar to that for safeguarding children.

1.2.2 According to the Act, the objectives of a Safeguarding Adults Board are:

- (a) to protect adults within its area who have needs for care and support (whether or not a local authority is meeting any of those needs): and
- (c) are experiencing, or are at risk of, abuse or neglect,
- (d) to prevent those adults within its area mentioned in paragraph (a)(i) from becoming at risk of abuse or neglect.

1.2.3 A Safeguarding Board must seek to achieve its objectives by co-ordinating and ensuring the effectiveness of what is done by each person or body represented on the Board.

1.2.4 Regulations will follow the act, and will set out those areas in Wales for which there are to be Safeguarding Boards ("Safeguarding Board areas"). Statements released by the Deputy Minister for Children and Social Services from 2011 onwards have indicated a preference for the safeguarding board areas to follow the public service footprint set by the Health Boards and Police Authorities.

2 North Wales activity ahead of the legislation

2.1 Safeguarding Adults

2.1.1 A Regional Safeguarding Adults seminar took place on 25th January 2013. A list of those who attended is shown at paragraph 5. Following the seminar, an options paper was developed and a preferred option identified. The preferred option followed the structure being developed for the Safeguarding Children's Boards, and proposed a two-tier structure with a regional board and three sub regional boards. The sub regional boards were to be created by the six local authorities forming joint boards on the Gwynedd & Anglesey, Conwy & Denbighshire and Flintshire & Wrexham pattern. The paper also proposed that elements such as training, performance and audit, policy, and serious case reviews should be undertaken regionally, again as was being developed for the Safeguarding Children Boards. A 'Common script' report was then circulated to partners for reporting purposes. The options paper and common script report was further discussed at the Social Services and Health Programme Board 2nd May 2013.

2.1.2 Gwynedd and Anglesey Adult Protection Committees have since come together to form a Joint Adult Safeguarding Board.

2.1.3 A Regional Safeguarding Adults Training Group has been established for several years, but had not met for over 18 months. However, a reinvigorated group met at the beginning of May 2014, agreed new terms of reference, and agreed to meet every two months until the workplan and training programme is well established.

2.2 Safeguarding Children

2.2.1 The North Wales Local Safeguarding Children Boards (LSCBs) have also been moving towards regionalisation, but their different starting point has put them ahead of the adult's boards in several respects. Children's Board's have been statutory since 2006, and three joint boards were already in place in 2011 when the Deputy Minister asked local authorities to take action in advance of the legislation.

2.2.2 During 2012, the three North Wales LSCBs developed and agreed recommendations to pilot a two tier regional/ sub regional structure, and a shadow Regional Safeguarding Children Board (RSCB) was established. In January 2013, the shadow board was replaced by a fully constituted Board, which then established four regional sub groups. This structure took into account the need to:

- reflect local needs, culture and language;
- maintain governance arrangements with elected members within Local Authorities;
- support the Statutory Directors of Social Services in their duties and responsibilities.

2.2.3 This two tier structure kept the statutory functions of the LSCB at the sub regional level. The sub regional boards (the LSCBs) continued to report via the Directors of Social Services to the Elected Members in each Local Authority area. The Regional Board's function was to reduce duplication, share best practice and provide strategic direction, and including directing the four regional sub groups to carry out some of the functions of the boards.

2.2.4 Whilst there have been successes with the two tier model, there have also been significant drawbacks. The lessons learnt from the operation of the two-tier model for the safeguarding children boards can now be applied to the development of the model for safeguarding adult's boards.

3 Lessons learnt from the Safeguarding Children regional arrangements

3.1 The experience of the children's boards has been that the sub-regional joint boards between two authorities work well. Reverting back to a Local Authority footprint has never been seriously considered at any point during the development of the revised regional and local arrangements for the children's boards.

3.2. The four regional Safeguarding Children Board sub groups have developed well and have delivered some key successes, for example, a very successful regional conference, the development of regional training packages training to address key issues, and cross North Wales collaborative working on child practice reviews.

3.3 However whilst regional working has been successful in many respects, particularly in the work underway in the regional function based sub groups, there have been tensions:

- There has been increased pressure on the capacity of senior representatives, as membership of regional bodies is replicated at the sub regional level;
- The regional board has been unable to move ahead as quickly as it would like on issues such as funding, business support and setting regional priorities and direction;
- sub-regional LSCBs can respond differently to communications from the regional board;
- There are concerns that the regional board and its agenda cannot adequately meet local needs in terms of cultural differences and local issues;
- Staff at operational manager / team manager level feel distanced from the Safeguarding Board, and lacking in direction;
- Feeling distanced from decisions and direction, local sub groups have continued to set their own agendas.

3.4 The North Wales two-tier pilot model was one of two regional structures chosen to be evaluated by the University of Sheffield on behalf of the Association for Directors of Social Services (ADSS) Wales Safeguarding Policy Group and Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA). The evaluation was completed in early April 2014, and will inform the writing of guidance to implement

the Social Services & Wellbeing (Wales) Act 2014. The report acknowledges the tensions inherent in the two-tier structure, but also recognises the need to reflect local culture, language and concerns.

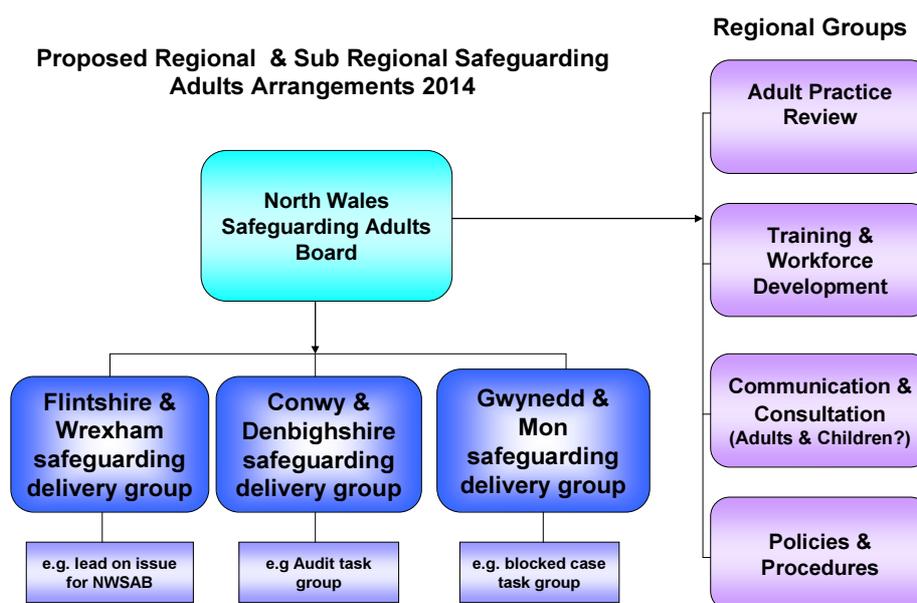
3.5 The regional SCB recognised that there was a need to resolve these tensions, whilst maintaining mechanisms to deliver regional direction and engage professionals at a local level, and have now developed a revised structure to address these issues. The regional Safeguarding Children Board agreed the revised structure at its meeting of 8th April 2014, and it was agreed in principle by the Regional Leadership Board on 25th April 2014.

3.6 The revised structure proposes maintaining the regional function-based sub groups, but shifting the balance of power and responsibility from the LSCBs to the Regional Board. The regional board will be the statutory board, and the LSCBs will re-configure as sub regional delivery groups. This structure continues to meet concerns around local needs and engagement and the responsibilities of the Directors of Social Services, whilst allowing the regional board to move ahead with setting a regional agenda.

4. Current Situation: Safeguarding Adults

4.1 Each county currently operates a Protection of Vulnerable Adults Committee and therefore expects representation at 5 committees across North Wales (Gwynedd and Mon have merged). They are currently not on a statutory footing and this reflects the lack of status and value.

4.2 Diagram 1 – Proposed Structure for North Wales Safeguarding Adults Board



4.3 Whilst the adult’s function-based regional groups could learn from the regional children’s groups, the agendas for children and adults were too different to make joint working viable. However, the group did consider that there may be scope for the regional Communications and Consultation Group to cover both adults and children.

4.4 Joint two-authority delivery groups will ensure that local practitioners remain involved and that local practice is strengthened. This sub regional arrangement also reduces duplication, particularly for the pan-North Wales organisations, whilst also promoting closer working and the sharing of best practice.

4.5 The North Wales Safeguarding Adults Board will be able to agree regional objectives, set direction, standardise approaches, and reduce duplication.

4.6 The functions of the regional and sub-regional boards were also discussed, and the group proposes the following division of labour.

4.6.1 The North Wales Safeguarding Adults Board will:

- Add value and improve outcomes for vulnerable adults in need of safeguarding and protection;
- Develop and provide a regional strategic direction;
- Direct and monitor regional groups for Training & Workforce Development, Policies & Procedures, Communications & Consultation and Adult Practice Reviews;
- Develop and monitor a performance management framework;
- Provide challenge & support to regional agencies and Local Authorities;
- Agree and manage the budget;
- Provide the interface with Welsh Government and the National Safeguarding Board.

4.6.2 The sub regional Adult Safeguarding Delivery Group will:

- Implement regional strategy & the business plan
- Co-ordinate & monitor sub-regional multi-agency activity;
- Examine local performance data, e.g: Outcomes, referrals, POVAs, escalating concerns, adult protection & support orders;
- Attendance at strategy meetings;
- Training uptake & impact;
- Conduct audits & provide quality assurance;
- Consider cases of special interest/ blocked cases/ near misses;
- Provide a local interpretation of regional protocols;
- Lead on issues at the request of the regional board.

4.7. These proposals have since been taken to the existing Adult Protection Committees and Gwynedd & Anglesey's joint Safeguarding Adults Board.

4.8 Implementation Plan -North Wales Safeguarding Adults Board (NWSAB)

Work Area	Action	Expected Outcomes	When	Who	Status
Establish the NWSAB	Election of chair and vice chair.	Draft to be produced for Board and agreed by the Board		GH, JW	
	NWSAB development session	Membership, operating method, Key Priorities,	16th July 2014	GH, JW	
	Report to governance structures		July / August 2014		
	First meeting of NWSAB		23rd Sept 2014		
Develop a Strategic Plan.	Take forward key priorities and develop into a strategic plan	Strategic Plan 2015-18 and business plan 2015-16	Dec 2014		
Develop a Performance management framework	Establish a performance framework that meets the requirements of WG, CSSIW & HIW	Full understanding of safeguarding work Ability to hold partners to account Ability to identify areas of concern Improved performance			
Establish funding for the NWSAB	Statutory Partners to include funding in 2014/15 budget discussions	Agreement to funding formula Agreed contributions to be available to the NWSAB from April 2015	Jan 2015		
	Host Authority to be agreed.	Host for staff, funds, website			
	Business support needs to be identified	Agreement to business support structure	Jun 2015		

	Work Area	Action	Expected Outcomes	When	Who	Status
	Establish business support for the NWSAB	Once contributions and support needs agreed, business support to be recruited	Recruitment to business support	Sep 2015		
	Establish the regional SA function groups	Adult Practice Review Group	Terms of Reference and membership agreed	Oct 2014		
			Work plan agreed	Dec 2014		
		Training Group	Terms of Reference and membership agreed	May 2014		Completed
			Work plan agreed	Dec 2014		
		Communications & Consultation	Terms of Reference and membership agreed	Oct 2014		
			Work plan agreed	Dec 2014		
		Policies & Procedures	Terms of Reference and membership agreed	Oct 2014		
			Work plan agreed	Dec 2014		
Sub regional delivery groups	Conwy & Denbighshire	Meeting between Local Authority representatives in Conwy & Denbighshire	28th July 2014			
		First Joint Meeting of C&D Delivery Group				
	Flintshire & Wrexham	First Joint Meeting of F&W Delivery Group				
	Gwynedd & Anglesey	Re-constitute G&A ASB as a Delivery Group.		Sue Adams Gwen Carrington		