

Mrs Jane Davies  
Senior Manager Safeguarding and Commissioning  
Social Services  
Flintshire County Council  
County Hall  
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Flintshire  
CH7 6NB

Ein cyf / Our ref:

Dyddiad / Date: 05/03/2019

Dear Jane,

### **Re: CIW Safeguarding Focussed Activity**

This letter summarises the findings of our Safeguarding Focussed Activity in Flintshire on February 12 & 13, 2019. The inspectors were Glenda Lloyd Evans (Senior Manager) and Sian Roberts (Inspection Manager).

#### **Overview**

Adult Safeguarding was the main focussed of this activity. This was agreed following queries raised by Regulatory Inspectors. The Flintshire Safeguarding Unit has been a single unified team since 2016 and oversees all aspects of work related to the core responsibilities which are

- Child Protection
- Adult Safeguarding
- Adults at Risk
- Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards
- Looked after Children

The Adult Safeguarding Team and the Adult at Risk Team has undergone a substantial restructure of both staff and processes in the previous 18 months.

#### **Findings**

- We saw evidence of timely and proportionate response to adult safeguarding report and good liaison with partner agencies during the enquiry stage to clarify matters and decide on the action required to protect the adult in question from abuse and neglect. Multi agency discussions were consistently recorded in case notes as was evidence of management oversight.
- Evidence of good working relationships between the Safeguarding Team and other Adult Service Teams. Everyone talked positively and consistently about the support and guidance they received from colleagues in the Safeguarding Team. Their independence was valued

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We welcome receiving correspondence in Welsh. Any correspondence received in Welsh will be answered in Welsh and corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay in responding.

by Senior Managers. We saw evidence of regular case file audits to identify areas for development and to ensure a consistent approach.

- Further evidence of good working relationship between the Safeguarding Team and other agencies involved in child cases/protection as well as evidence in the Child Protection Family Review of the main principles of the SSWBA [Wales] 2014 actively implemented in practice.
- The case files reviewed did not provide evidence that Adult at Risk are consistently consulted and involved during the enquiry stage. Neither did we see consistent evidence of the team assessing whether the person is an Adult at Risk requiring safeguarding. We wonder whether the decision to change the title of the Vulnerable Adult Social Worker to Adult at Risk Social Worker has had an impact. There is a need to ensure that all Practitioners are aware of the definition of Adult at Risk as in section 126[1] SSWBA [Wales] 2014
- The Safeguarding Team focussed their recent improvements at the front end of the safeguarding process. The Single Point of Access Team [SPOA} has also undergone substantial re structure and Managers told us how Safeguarding works closely with SPOA to ensure a co-ordinated response to all safeguarding referrals.
- The Safeguarding Team are aware that further work is needed to ensure their safeguarding processes are robust. The cases we reviewed following queries from Regulatory Inspectors were discussed with Senior Managers. The Managers were advised to review the cases. Our findings showed a need to ensure:
  1. all relevant information is shared at strategy meetings
  2. there is always an agreed plan at the end of a strategy meeting
  3. if the decision is made to close the safeguarding referral, partner agencies need to be made aware of the ongoing involvement of other teams, and this should be recorded in safeguarding minutes
  4. ensure care and support plans are reviewed and in addition to element required under Part 4 of SSWBA, the care plan should include the protection or risk management arrangement required to support the individual to achieve their personal outcomes
  5. case conferences are conveyed for individual cases
- All Managers within the Safeguarding Team work collaboratively to ensure adults and children are safeguarded holistically.
- Flintshire Corporate Safeguarding Board includes representation from all Portfolios and ensures that all services integrate safeguarding awareness into the way they work. We were told this included incorporating safeguarding training within contracts for Transport providers.

### **Early Help Hub**

- The Flintshire Public Service Board commissioned the establishment of a multiagency Early Help Hub. The Hub was designed to enable the delivery of more timely and appropriate early intervention and support for children and families.
- Workers from different agencies are co-located and it was evident from the discussions that the information sharing and communication across agencies has improved outcomes for children and families. Information sharing can identify potential safeguarding concerns and when this happens they are actioned in line with relevant procedures.
- The diverse representation of different agencies is beneficial as well as the recognition of the need for better links with the Adult Mental Health Service. It was positive to hear from the

Head of Children's Service of the ongoing discussions with Community Mental Health Team Managers.

**Areas for improvements**

- The LA need to ensure that proper and consistent regard is given to the wishes and feelings of the Adult at Risk and that they are empowered to make their own informed decisions. This is an area already identified by Flintshire Safeguarding Team in their Case File Audits.

**Methodology**

- Review of 6 Adult Safeguarding report and sec 126 enquiries
- Review the Strategy and Case Conference minutes of the adult cases where queries had been raised by regulatory inspectors
- Interview with frontline workers and managers working in Safeguarding Team and Children's Services
- Brief introduction to the Early Help Hub Team
- Attend 2 Adult Initial Strategy Meetings and a Child Protection Family Review.

We have not identified any significant areas for development and CIW will reflect the findings of this focussed activity in our annual Local Authority Performance Review letter.

I wish to extend our thanks to all those who helped with the arrangements for this work and the staff who spoke with us.

Yours sincerely

Glenda Lloyd Evans  
Senior Manager – CIW Local Authority Inspection Team