

SCRUTINY BOARD (ADULTS,HEALTH & ACTIVE LIFESTYLES)

TUESDAY, 14TH JANUARY, 2025

PRESENT: Councillor A Scopes in the Chair

Councillors C Anderson, D Blackburn,
E Bromley, L Buckley, M France-Mir,
J Gibson, C Hart-Brooke, W Kidger,
K Ritchie, A Rontree and E Taylor

Co-opted Member present – Jonathan Phillips

65 Appeals Against Refusal of Inspection of Documents

There were no appeals.

66 Exempt Information - Possible Exclusion of the Press and Public

There were no exempt items.

67 Late Items

There were no late items.

68 Declaration of Interests

In relation to Agenda Item 10 'Scrutiny of the Budget – Initial Budget Proposals', Councillor Ritchie highlighted that he is a patron of PHAB Leeds, which is a charity organisation potentially impacted by the proposed review of non-statutory grants.

69 Apologies for Absence and Notification of Substitutes

All Board Members were in attendance.

Apologies were received from Victoria Eaton, Director of Public Health.

70 Minutes - 12th November 2024

RESOLVED - That the minutes of the meeting held on 12th November 2024, be approved as an accurate record.

71 Leeds Safeguarding Adults Board - Progress Report

The Head of Democratic Services submitted a report which presented a progress report produced on behalf of the Independent Chair of the Leeds Safeguarding Adults Board (LSAB). The report reflected upon the LSAB

Annual Report 2023/2024 and LSAB Strategic Plan for 2024/25. Safeguarding performance data had also been provided by the Adults and Health Directorate as additional information for the Board's consideration.

The following were in attendance:

- Councillor Fiona Venner, Executive Member for Equality, Health and Wellbeing
- Councillor Salma Arif, Executive Member for Adult Social Care, Active Lifestyles and Culture
- Caroline Baria, Director of Adults and Health
- Shona McFarlane, Deputy Director Social Work and Social Care Service
- Rob Wood, Head of Intelligence & Performance
- Richard Jones, Independent Chair of the Leeds Safeguarding Adults Board

The Chair welcomed the attendance of the Independent Chair of the LSAB and invited him to briefly introduce the LSAB report. The LSAB Chair began by explaining the role of the LSAB and how it works strategically to coordinate the work of its members and other agencies and ensuring the effectiveness of what each of its members does. The LSAB vision is for Leeds to be a safe place for everyone and linked to this, particular focus is around developing citizen-led approaches to safeguarding and improving awareness across all communities and partner agencies. The LSAB Chair also referenced the ambition to embed a citywide culture of support and understanding of self-neglect across the city that will lead to improved outcomes of people at risk. Linked to this, it was highlighted that a Self-neglect Conference had been planned for 21st January 2025 and will involve 150 practitioners.

Safeguarding Adults Boards also have specific duties which relate to producing Annual Reports, Strategic Plans and the undertaking of Safeguarding Adults Reviews, which aim to identify learning that can be used to improve outcomes for others. The LSAB Chair referenced the learning and training arising from the most recent review published on the LSAB website, which concerned a young woman with learning disabilities (Ms I).

The LSAB Chair concluded by acknowledging the huge amount of work that is being undertaken in Leeds and relayed his thanks to all frontline staff across the statutory agencies and Third Sector organisations for their ongoing commitment and valuable contribution to the safeguarding agenda.

The following areas were also discussed during the Board's consideration of the report:

- *Numbers of safeguarding concerns being raised* – It was reported that there were 13,213 safeguarding concerns raised with the local authority over the last 12 months, which is a small decrease of 313 from 2022/23. It was also highlighted that such figures align with the national picture. The LSAB Chair advised that it would be difficult to gauge what an ideal figure would look like given the importance placed on supporting individuals to

come forward with any initial concerns they may have. It was therefore noted that a significant reduction in numbers could also be worrying in terms of signalling a reluctance from individuals to raise such concerns.

- *Safeguarding enquiries* – Members were advised that when a safeguarding concern is received, the local authority will need to decide whether to undertake a safeguarding enquiry. This decision will be made based upon the legal criteria set out within Section 42 of the Care Act 2014. Although the number of safeguarding concerns raised with the local authority had decreased slightly during 2023/24, the number of concerns that were ‘converted’ into a safeguarding enquiry had increased to 4110, which is 849 more than in the previous year.
- *New LSAB logo* – The LSAB Chair explained that the new LSAB logo had been developed following feedback from citizens who felt that the previous logo failed to depict the purpose of the LSAB. The final logo design was also inspired by ideas from citizens as part of a competition in 2023.
- *Safeguarding and faith communities* – Members acknowledged plans to develop bespoke, on-line adult and children safeguarding guidance for faith communities. The LSAB Chair explained that while the plan is to produce guidance tailored towards six main religious faiths, the core content of the guidance for each faith will be very similar. The LSAB Chair agreed to provide further details surrounding the timeframe for concluding this piece of work, including dates of forthcoming consultation events that are being held with members of each faith to coproduce final versions.
- *Mental Capacity Assessment performance measure* – In consideration of the performance measures linked to concluded Section 42 Safeguarding Enquiries in Leeds, it was noted that 93% of those assessed as lacking mental capacity had support provided to them by an advocate, family or friend. Members therefore sought further clarity surrounding the provision of support provided to the remaining 7% of that cohort.
- *Working in partnership with the Police* – Importance was placed on working closely with the Police to safeguard vulnerable adults from abuse and particularly those with a learning disability. Linked to this, Members were assured that Safeguarding Risk Managers do engage regularly with the Police. In terms of multi-agency working in general, it was also highlighted that the LSAB has commissioned the Social Care Institute for Excellence (SCIE) as an independent development partner and established a multi-sector steering group (of statutory and non-statutory organisations) to support a project of improvement and development.
- *Quality assurance processes* – Members were advised that while the LSAB has developed a range of quality assurance processes over the last couple of years, it has identified the need to receive additional data sets from its partners and for member organisations to develop their own internal quality assurance processes that complement those of the LSAB. Moving forward, the LSAB aims to introduce a new coordinated approach to multi-agency and single agency audits and also enhance its assurance processes around Safeguarding Adults Reviews. It was suggested that the Scrutiny Board may wish to monitor progress in relation to this work.
- *Nature of concerns linked to safeguarding enquiries* – With regard to the performance measures linked to safeguarding enquiries in Leeds, Members queried the 0% figure relating to modern slavery. The Board was

advised that the performance figures are reflective of the 'primary' nature of concern, with very few cases citing modern slavery as being the primary issue. However, Members were assured that tackling modern slavery remains a priority for all key partners.

The Chair thanked everyone for their contributions and acknowledged the continued hard work and commitment of the Leeds Safeguarding Adults Board.

RESOLVED - That the report, along with Members comments and information requests, be noted.

72 Performance Update - Adult Social Care, Public Health and Active Lifestyles

The joint report from the Directors of Adults and Health, Public Health and City Development provided an overview of outcomes and service performance related to the council and city priorities within the Scrutiny Board's remit.

The following were in attendance:

- Councillor Fiona Venner, Executive Member for Equality, Health and Wellbeing
- Councillor Salma Arif, Executive Member for Adult Social Care, Active Lifestyles and Culture
- Caroline Baria, Director of Adults and Health
- Shona McFarlane, Deputy Director Social Work and Social Care Service
- Rob Wood, Head of Intelligence & Performance
- Dawn Bailey, Chief Officer Public Health
- Sarah Erskine, Head of Public Health
- Jane Walne, Chief Officer Operations, Active Leeds and Culture
- Steve Baker, Head of Active Leeds

In considering the performance details presented, the Board discussed a number of matters in more detail, across Adult Social Care, Public Health and Active Lifestyles, including the following:

Public Health

- *Infant mortality rates* – It was reported that the infant mortality rate for Leeds in the most recent period (2021-2023) was 5.4 per 1,000, increasing from 5.0 per 1,000 (2020–22). Members were advised that while this was not a statistically significant change, it is a significant increase compared to 2012-2014 (3.6 per 1,000). Reference was made to the statutory Child Death Overview Panel (CDOP) process in which every child death is reviewed by a multi-agency panel and Members were assured that this Panel continues to closely monitor local infant mortality rates. It was also agreed that a more detailed paper surrounding infant mortality rates would be shared with Board Members.

- *Health inequalities* - It was reported that persistent inequalities remain between the most and least deprived parts of the city across many indicators, including child and adult rates of obesity, physical inactivity in adults, recorded diabetes prevalence and prevalence of serious mental illness. Linked to the Scrutiny Board's discussions on this matter during November 2024, it was again acknowledged that causes of health inequalities are complex and therefore action to address them must be a whole system approach, at a sufficient intensity to meet need and involve many stakeholders.
- *Children under 2 years of age taken into care* – Members discussed the numbers and common reasons relating to children aged under 2 years of age being taken into care across Leeds. There were 100 children taken into care in 2023-24, which is a slight decrease from the previous period (103). It was also noted that in the most deprived areas 65 children were taken into care, an increase on the previous period (59).
- *Emergency admissions due to falls for aged 65 and over* – It was reported that falls are the largest cause of emergency hospital admissions for older people and significantly impact on long term outcomes. Linked to the Falls Prevention Programme, Members were advised that such work would involve factoring in the impact of cold weather spells.
- *Breastfeeding maintenance at 6-8 weeks* – Members welcomed the latest figures showing that the percentage of women breastfeeding in Leeds in 2023-24 has increased to 48.6%, which is a statistically significant increase on the previous period (46.0%).

Adult Social Care

- *Empowerment of service users* – It was reported that local performance levels relating to service users feeling of control over their daily lives continues to fall for the third consecutive survey and is 70.9%. Members queried possible links with local levels of direct payments in recognition that this is also an improvement area, with continued efforts to increase the take up of direct payments through greater promotion and the simplification of the process. The Board was advised that while there does not appear to be clear link, there will be further analysis of the survey results undertaken to help identify possible reasons.

Active Lifestyles

- *Promoting sport and activity for disabled people* – A Member of the Board referenced research published by Activity Alliance, which is a national charity and a leading voice for disabled people in sport and activity. Linked to this, importance was placed on ensuring that local disabled people are also provided with opportunities to be active and feel empowered to get involved in sport and activities in the way they choose. It was therefore agreed that further information in this regard will feature as part of future updates.

RESOLVED – That the contents of the report, along with Members comments and information requests, be noted.

73 Financial Health Monitoring 2024/25 - October 2024 (Month 7)

The Head of Democratic Services submitted a report that introduced information regarding the projected 2024/25 financial health position at Month 7 (October 2024) in the context of the Scrutiny Board's wider discussions about the initial budget proposals.

The following were in attendance:

- Councillor Fiona Venner, Executive Member for Equality, Health and Wellbeing
- Councillor Salma Arif, Executive Member for Adult Social Care, Active Lifestyles and Culture
- Caroline Baria, Director of Adults and Health
- Shona McFarlane, Deputy Director Social Work and Social Care Service
- Dawn Bailey, Chief Officer Public Health
- Sarah Erskine, Head of Public Health
- Jane Walne, Chief Officer Operations, Active Leeds and Culture
- Steve Baker, Head of Active Leeds
- John Crowther, Chief Officer Resources & Strategy, Adults and Health
- Alun Ellis, Head of Finance (Adult Social Care & Public Health)

The Chief Officer Resources & Strategy gave a brief introduction and explained that at Month 7, there was an in-year budget pressure of £13.78m identified in relation to the Adults and Health Directorate. The Board was provided with an overview of key budget pressure areas where action is being taken to address these. It was noted that a significant element of the pressure relates to higher trend from 2023/24 continuing into 2024/25, further increased demand in Quarter 1 in the new financial year around Working Age Adults (18 – 65 cohort) and more specifically the Learning Disability and Mental Health cohort. Members discussed the importance of monitoring ongoing trends and the cost effectiveness of delivering services in-house where appropriate.

RESOLVED – That the contents of the report be noted.

74 Scrutiny of the Budget - Initial Budget Proposals

The Head of Democratic Services submitted a report that introduced the Executive Board's initial budget proposals for 2025/26 for consideration, review and comment on matters and proposals that fall within the Scrutiny Board's remit.

The following were in attendance:

- Councillor Fiona Venner, Executive Member for Equality, Health and Wellbeing
- Councillor Salma Arif, Executive Member for Adult Social Care, Active Lifestyles and Culture
- Caroline Baria, Director of Adults and Health
- Shona McFarlane, Deputy Director Social Work and Social Care Service
- Dawn Bailey, Chief Officer Public Health
- Sarah Erskine, Head of Public Health
- Jane Walne, Chief Officer Operations, Active Leeds and Culture
- Steve Baker, Head of Active Leeds
- John Crowther, Chief Officer Resources & Strategy, Adults and Health
- Alun Ellis, Head of Finance (Adult Social Care & Public Health)

The Chair explained that while the Board has already been initially consulted on the relevant budget proposals as part of a working group meeting held during December 2024, Members were given a further opportunity as part of this meeting to raise any further questions or make any further comments on the proposals.

The Chair also highlighted common general areas that have been identified by the Scrutiny Chairs following initial budget discussions across the five Scrutiny Boards. These include:

- Seeking further assurance around the deliverability of the budget savings given the scale of the challenge.
- The financial sustainability of the Council's reserves.
- To emphasise the added value delivered by third sector partnerships and the importance of the budget setting process recognising the consequential impact on services and citizens of diminishing grant funding.
- Seeking assurance about the level of compensation anticipated to be provided by Government in response to increased Employers National Insurance Contributions for the Council.
- Seeking assurance about Trade Union engagement in relation to planned staff reductions, including via voluntary mechanisms.
- Seeking assurance about the council's technical capacity to support business transformation, which underpins many proposals within the budget, given the planned reductions in overtime and a structural review of IDS.

The following areas were also raised during the Board's discussion:

- *Business As Usual savings proposals* – While it was noted that such proposals do not require formal public consultation, Members felt it would be helpful for future budget reports to the Scrutiny Board to include more detailed information surrounding such proposals.
- *Review of non-statutory grants* - Members expressed concern surrounding the potential impact of the proposed funding reduction to Third Sector organisations, including the Neighbourhood Networks, given their valuable role in providing preventative support services. Members were assured

that the proposal does not involve a flat 10% reduction and that such savings would be found in close dialogue with the impacted organisations and will also be delivered in a controlled and measured way. Importance had also been placed on the directorate working closely with the Integrated Care Board (ICB), as well as across other council directorates, when considering any changes to Third Sector funding so that, where possible, mitigated actions can also be collectively identified.

- *Fees and charges* - With regard to proposals involving new charges and increased fees, Members were assured that discretion will still be deployed in terms of assessing an individual's ability to pay for relevant services.
- *A proactive approach to prevention* - The Scrutiny Board supported the proposal to implement a prevention programme aimed at delivering efficiencies in adults social care. Links were also made to existing Public Health commitments towards the prevention of ill health, including the Aging Well programme.
- *Rationalising in-house Day Opportunities buildings* - Linked to this proposal, Members were assured that a person-centred approach will be adopted for impacted individuals, including efforts to explore alternative solutions/venues that are accessible within their local community.
- *Person-centred communication* - Members stressed the importance of adopting a person-centred approach in communicating the impact of saving proposals in order to help alleviate the risk of individuals choosing not to access support services unnecessarily.

The Chair concluded by explaining that the Board's deliberations on the relevant budget saving proposals will inform a composite report from Scrutiny that will be submitted to the Executive Board for consideration during its meeting on 12th February 2025.

RESOLVED – That the contents of the report be noted and the Board's deliberations on the relevant budget savings proposals inform a composite report from Scrutiny that will be submitted to the Executive Board for consideration during its meeting on 12th February 2025.

75 Work Schedule

The Head of Democratic Services submitted a report that presented the Board's latest work schedule for the forthcoming municipal year.

As part of this agenda item, the Chair had invited the Director of Adults and Health to provide a further update to Board Members on the Care Quality Commission (CQC) Local Authority Assessment process. This update was provided in the form of a PowerPoint presentation and included the following key points:

- The Care Quality Commission (CQC) have been given the duty, through the Health and Care Act 2022, to inspect councils' performance of their Care Act 2014 duties.
- The council received notification of assessment in December 2024.

- The council has completed the information return stage of the assessment process and is now awaiting notification of the onsite visit.
- The onsite visit is anticipated in the next 6 months and there will be a notice period of 6-8 weeks of the visit.
- There is a CQC Preparation Steering group, chaired by the Director of Adults and Health, set up to oversee the preparation work.
- Regular progress updates will be given to partners (e.g. PLT, Strategic Provider Forum) and internally e.g. DLT, Cabinet and Scrutiny.
- In readiness for the onsite assessment, the council is also working with ADASS and Partners in Care and Health (PCH) to plan and deliver a package of preparatory support for staff, Members, partners and other stakeholders.

The Chair thanked the Director for the update and requested that the Scrutiny Board continues to be kept informed of progress.

RESOLVED –

- (a) That the Scrutiny Board is kept informed of progress relating to the council's pending CQC assessment.
- (b) That the Scrutiny Board's work schedule for the 2024/25 municipal year be noted.

76 Date and Time of Next Meeting

RESOLVED – To note the next meeting of the Adults, Health and Active Lifestyles Scrutiny Board is scheduled for Tuesday, 11th February 2025 at 1:30pm (pre-meeting for all Board Members at 1.00 pm)