



Buckinghamshire Safeguarding Adult Board
Annual Report 2020/21



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Introduction



When I wrote my foreword to last year's annual plan Covid-19 was just starting to impact all communities across the world. I think very few people would have expected that our personal and working lives would still be affected by the pandemic over 12 months later. I am pleased to say that, throughout the crisis, Buckinghamshire

recognised the continuing priority of safeguarding and appears to have responded well. I witnessed changes to working practices to ensure that services were delivered and saw a renewed energy to share information and resources, where possible.

In addition to the normal meetings, partners also held regular 'System Safeguarding Calls' throughout the year. These were well attended and ensured that partners shared the latest challenges and found local solutions. This was particularly important for settings such as care homes.

Learning from case reviews is a key priority for all organisations and the Board has an important role to play in facilitating and scrutinising this. Over the last year one case review has been published and two have been commissioned. The Board has a robust tracker to monitor how the recommendations from reviews are being implemented and embedded. There are some clear themes emerging from reviews and so a thematic review of SARs has been commissioned and its findings will form the basis of a learning event next year. Self-neglect and supporting vulnerable adults who appear to not want to engage with services continue to be key priorities.

It is important that there are effective links between the BSAB and other local boards and partnerships. A revised joint protocol for Buckinghamshire partnerships, changes to community safety made because of moving to a single council and the setting up of a domestic abuse board will all help this. We share many common themes, such as serious violence, domestic abuse and exploitation, and tracking progress and performance in the appropriate forum is critical.

Whilst it was good to see visible and available leadership during Covid-19, it is also true that some key work has been delayed over the last year. This annual report sets out the priority actions for the next year and in my role as independent chair of the Board I will provide leadership and support to help to a achieve them, but will also ensure that there is effective scrutiny and challenge when needed.

Sir Francis J S Habgood, QPM

Independent Chair for Buckinghamshire Safeguarding Adults' Board



About Buckinghamshire Safeguarding Adults Board

The Buckinghamshire Safeguarding Adults Board (BSAB) is a statutory, multi-organisation partnership coordinated by the local authority, which oversees and leads adult safeguarding across the Buckinghamshire Council area. The main objective of the BSAB is to gain assurance that local safeguarding arrangements, and partner organisations, work effectively, individually and together to support and safeguard adults in Buckinghamshire who are at risk of abuse and neglect.

The Board has an Independent Chair who provides leadership, vision and support and who is responsible for ensuring that all organisations contribute effectively to the work of the Board. The Chair provides accountability for the work undertaken by the Safeguarding Adult Board by way of reports to relevant strategic committees and boards.

The Board is supported by four subgroups which carry out the day to day work in order to help deliver the Board's objectives and Strategic Plan.

Safeguarding Adult Boards have three core duties:

- 1.** Develop and publish a Strategic Plan setting out their objectives and how their member and partner agencies will contribute.
- 2.** Publish an Annual Report detailing how effective their work has been.
- 3.** Commission Safeguarding Adults Reviews (SARs) for any cases which meet the criteria for these.

The Safeguarding Adults Board Strategic Plan 2020/2023 set out our vision and priority areas :

1

Key priority one

'Talk to me, hear my voice'. Engage with our communities to understand their needs and listen to what they say so that it informs our decision making and planning.

2

Key priority two

Understand the nature of neglect (including self-neglect) and abuse and put structures in place to reduce cases.

3

Key priority three

Ensure that professionals working with adults with care and support needs have the required knowledge and training for their roles.

4

Key priority four

Make safeguarding personal and ensure that the work of the Board is informed by service users and carers.

5

Key priority five

Work as a multi agency partnership.

The Business Plan also contains defined outcomes which enable us to have a collective agreement about 'what good looks like'. The outcomes listed within each priority will ensure that we achieve our aims, and thereby our vision to provide a voice to those individuals in need of support, and demonstrate the difference we will make to our local communities. These priorities are:

The Safeguarding Adults Board has worked over the last year with our partners across the multi-agency arena to drive activity to ensure that we have met or worked towards the key priorities. The joint Safeguarding Adults Board and Safeguarding Children Partnership, including the shared business unit, began to scope joint strategic work, including joint learning and development initiatives and joint review work, which will commence in the last quarter of 2021.

As a result of the implementation of the single business unit, and also the unprecedented changes as a result of the pandemic, it was agreed in April 2021 to review and update the business plan. While the aims and priorities must remain the subject of scrutiny for the Board, we must also seek to be able to describe the landscape for all of us, including impact on staffing, demand and resources, and changing practice development needs.

Therefore, we have and will continue to work to an aligned business plan and this will be updated to reflect the significant changes to the environment for partners and residents. Our role as critical friend remains important but we must strengthen and bring to the fore our role in disseminating learning, best practice and innovative ideas for an online context. Through the work of the subgroups we have maintained focus on quality assurance, improving the relevance and quality of data and analysis shared with the Board, expanded the resources and policy updates available through our website and begun the work of measuring how our policy and procedures impact on practice.

Our Vision

To work together to enable vulnerable adults in Buckinghamshire to live a life free from fear, harm and abuse. To ensure our approach is focused around 'talk to me, hear my voice' and is central to everything we do.



SAFEGUARDING

Making safeguarding personal and the responsibility of everyone.



COMMUNICATING

Ensuring there is effective communication with adult services in Buckinghamshire.



ENABLING

Enabling vulnerable adults to have choices and control over how they want to live.



LEARNING

Learning from our experiences and improving how we work.

Our Partners

The Care Act 2014 is statutory guidance that provides adult safeguarding with a legal framework, setting out the responsibilities of local authorities and their partners.

From a statutory perspective the three legally required bodies are:

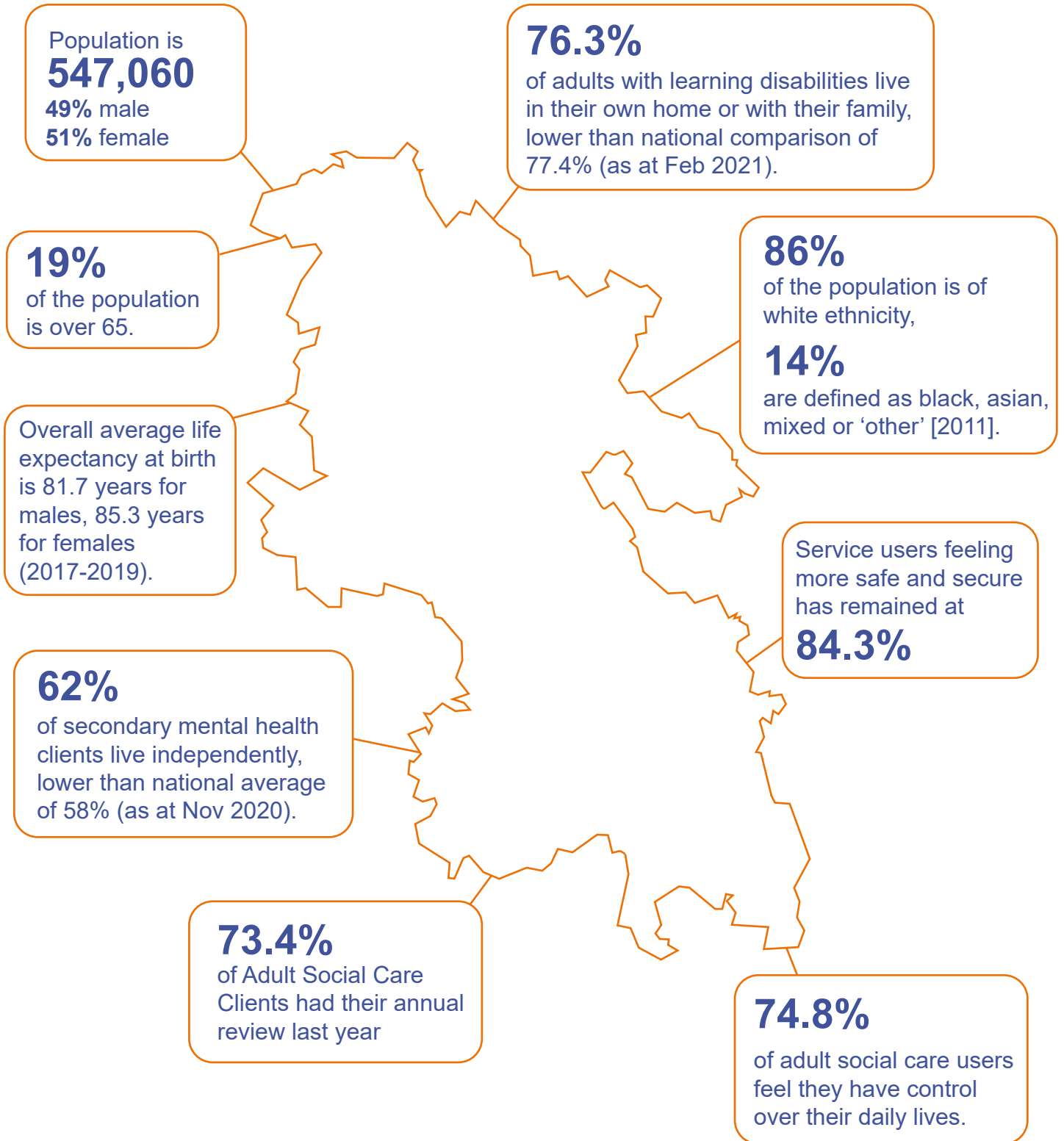


However, we work closely with a range of other partners:

- NHS England
- Hertfordshire Partnership NHS Foundation Trust
- Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust
- Buckinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust
- South Central Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust
- National Probation Service
- Epilepsy Society
- Healthwatch Bucks
- Vale of Aylesbury Housing
- Buckinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service
- Care Quality Commission
- Talkback
- Thames Valley Community Rehabilitation Company
- Buckinghamshire Mind
- Bucks New University



About Buckinghamshire





About our work

1,082

Total number of Section 42 enquiries

194

Total number of non-statutory enquiries

10,912

Total number of safeguarding concerns

54% of concluding S42 enquires in 2020/21 where individuals were asked their desired outcome. Of these:

- 62%** of outcomes were fully achieved
- 32%** of outcomes were partially achieved

Three most common forms of abuse enquiry in Buckinghamshire are:

- 40%** neglect
- 17%** self-neglect
- 12%** financial abuse

Section 42 age:

- 237** 18-74 years
- 292** 75-95+ years

Section 42 ethnicity:

- 81%** white
- 3%** asian/British asian
- 2%** Black/African/Caribbean/Black British
- 1%** Mixed Ethnic Group
- 1%** Other Ethnic Group
- 12%** not stated/refused

Section 42 gender:

- 42%** male
- 53%** female

What we achieved 2020/2021

Clearly events of 2020-2021 have changed and shaped the delivery of the BSAB business plan, however, it is positive to see progress in all of the priority areas. Regarding the structure, the joint business unit is now embedded and the joint protocol that exists between the Safeguarding Adults Board, Safeguarding Children Partnership, the Health and Wellbeing Board and the Safer Stronger Bucks Board has been under review leading to a new but slimmed down Joint Protocol, which was reviewed and published in 2020. This document sets out defined structures for joint working between these four groups, leading to more cohesive strategies to support our local communities. There is already cross-Board work underway, such as joint ownership of improvements relating to exploitation, violence and domestic abuse (with subgroups working to the Safer Buckinghamshire Board).

With regard to the actions agreed in the business plan progress

Priority 1. Talk to me, hear my voice

The BSAB has been reviewed and updated in order that it functions better as a website to signpost individuals and professionals to. The next phase will include the use of Google Analytics and the creation of more innovative materials, such as embedded animations, TED-style talks etc.

Biannual conferences centred around specific topics remain a commitment and there have been learning events conducted online. We are committed to moving back to 'in-person' events as soon as it is safe and equitable to do so.

We have achieved a robust Safeguarding Adult Review process, including the use of a rapid review process and the use of a tracker to ensure a focus on timescale, quality of recommendations and responses from partners. The need to assure ourselves of changes in practice will be a focus of the revised business plan.

Work on engaging with local residents through a series of co-production events, which were to improve the understanding and experience of the impact of safeguarding, was regrettably put on hold due to Covid but will remain a commitment in the updated business plan.

Priority 2. Understanding the local picture with regard to neglect, self-neglect and abuse in Buckinghamshire.

As agreed in the business plan, a multi-agency performance paper has been introduced into the Quality and Performance Subgroup (Q&P), which is enabling helpful analysis and assurance. A new training plan was agreed at the April Board meeting that will move into implementation late 2021 and will reflect learning from the data, audits and collective learning from this subgroup.

The Policy, Procedure and Practice Subgroup undertook a review of a self-neglect toolkit and work will continue to ensure all toolkits and guidance reflect best practice locally and nationally. Work began on the website to ensure easy access to information and guidance for frontline colleagues. Once the planned training offer has been implemented we will test and respond to real time feedback.

Priority 3. Access to the right training for frontline multi-agency partners informed by learning from the Board and subgroups

The training plan has been reviewed and agreed, and at the time of writing subject experts, innovative providers and multi-agency colleagues were being identified. This will include the provision of online and web-based learning via our website. Work on engaging with communities to inform this was paused due to Covid but will take place as soon as is safe to do so.

Priority 4. Making Safeguarding Personal (MSP)

The development of partner-led tools has been driven through the Q&P Subgroup to ensure we have a shared understanding of what is important to measure, in order to seek assurance about the quality of practice. By developing shared tools and working in partnership in subgroups, including reviewing policies and procedures from a multi-agency perspectives, we can ensure that our work is accessible and relevant to a wide range of colleagues, jargon free and freely available through the website and the newsletter which was re-established. The subgroups have kept MSP at the heart of their work and this will be extended in 2021-22 to ensure that any work undertaken by subgroups clearly demonstrates how user/community voice will be incorporated.





Safeguarding adult subgroups

The Safeguarding Adults Board has four subgroups that lead on various areas of business and help the Safeguarding Adults Board deliver on a range of priorities identified in the strategic and business plan. Each subgroup has a nominated chair and representatives from across the multi-agencies.

Safeguarding Adult Review Subgroup (SAR)

The Care Act 2014 states that Safeguarding Adult Boards (SABs) must arrange a Safeguarding Adult Review (SAR) when an adult in its area dies or is seriously harmed as a result of abuse or neglect, whether known or suspected, and there is concern that partner agencies could have worked together more effectively to protect the adult. This is a statutory responsibility.

Safeguarding Adult Review reports are published on our Safeguarding Adults Board [webpage](#).

SAR activity 2020/21

During the period 2020 to 2021 the subgroup:

- Published [SAR CC](#).
- Commissioned SAR F in March 2020, which is nearing completion at the time of writing.
- Jointly commissioned SAR X with Hounslow Safeguarding Adults Board, which is still ongoing.
- Held a practice review regarding Adult RR and agreed learning from this will be disseminated to partners in the format of a '7 minute briefing' and placed on the BSAB website.
- Implemented and reviewed a rapid review process for SAR referrals into the business unit.

Key learning themes taken from SARs during this period of time:

- The need to ensure that the voice of the adult is heard and their voice and lived experience informs their care and support plans.
- Greater understanding about the impact of family involvement with services regarding the care and support needs of their loved ones.
- Understanding, awareness and early identification of self-neglect by frontline practitioners.
- How to work with vulnerable adults that are appearing not to engage with services

(and the need for services to work persistently and collaboratively to achieve the minimum legal requirement to prevent deterioration).

- The need for good quality and holistic assessment and planning with those presenting as having fluctuating capacity, according to the Mental Capacity Act 2005.

Work of the subgroup in addition to reviews

The SAR Subgroup found that those invited to be SAR panel members, or those attending the practitioner events, did not always feel confident about what was expected of them or what the purpose of the meetings were for. As a result of this, the subgroup developed guidance documents detailing the roles and responsibilities of those involved in the process that will now be sent to those participating in SARs.

The SAR Subgroup has identified that the way learning is disseminated to wider partners and frontline practitioners is an area for improvement. As part of the work plan for the subgroup there will be the development of learning tools, e.g. '7 Minute Briefing' documents, short animated videos on subjects such as professional curiosity and self-neglect, and anonymized case studies used in the BSAB Learning and Development Plan. The development of the BSAB Learning and Development Subgroup will also support more prompt and creative sharing of learning from SARs.

By April 2021, the SAR Subgroup were in the process of commissioning a Thematic Review of SARs commissioned by the BSAB to:

- Better understand the reoccurring themes.
- Analyse the quality of our commissioned reviews.
- Enable the Board and the multi-agency partners to have a more joined-up approach to tackling core issues in the way vulnerable adults' care and support needs are met.

Learning and Development Subgroup

The purpose of this subgroup was to design and implement a multi-agency training strategy for all agencies working with adults within Buckinghamshire. This subgroup was established in 2008 and commissioned multi-agency training, which was part of the core business of the subgroup. In 2019, the Safeguarding Adults Board felt that the provision of training should be reviewed and new opportunities looked at to deliver training in a more constructive way, utilising a joint platform with the Safeguarding Children's Board. A review took place in early 2019 to move the Safeguarding Children Board into a partnership with a joint business unit to support ongoing and developing activity. At this point any training provision ceased within the Safeguarding Adults Board and a new training and development strategy was to be developed to support training requirements and needs moving forward. This training/L&D plan has been agreed by the Independent Chair and includes a positive mix of commissioned providers (ranging from subject experts to creative colleagues), in-house multi-agency trainers and a mixed model of in-person, online and web-based materials.

In order to ensure that this piece of work is owned by the multi-agency partnership and that there is oversight of the output, quality and effectiveness, a revised Learning & Development Subgroup is in the process of being established, which will be supported by the BSAB.

The purpose of the group will be to drive the multi-agency training plan, ensuring learning is taken and disseminated from Serious Case Reviews and Safeguarding Adult Reviews by way of events, conferences, workshops and 7 minute briefings, ensure that community and user voices are integral to the methods and materials, and ensure that the output is accessible.

Policy, Procedure and Practice Subgroup (PP&P)

The PP&P subgroup has experienced some change during the pandemic, including changes in chairing. However, despite the handover and the changes associated to Covid this group has remained functional and free from disruption. The group has adapted well to a non-office based delivery.

The purpose of the PP&P Subgroup is to ensure that multi-agency safeguarding policies, practices and procedures are up to date, easily accessible and well embedded across partner organisations. The group maintains a schedule for policies to be renewed that is adaptable to need, e.g. if learning from a Safeguarding Adult Review reveals a need, or if there are changes in legislation. The group has 15 members, representing 12 services, with an average attendance of 12 at each meeting. These services include the police, health, prison, Epilepsy Society and housing, with plans to invite South Central Ambulance Service and the fire service. The varied representation within this group's membership has aided the objective of multi-agency working. The multi-agency nature of the group enables joint learning together and the sharing of expertise and resources, contributing to improving the effectiveness of safeguarding adults.

The business plan identified that the Risk Assessment Multi-Agency Panel (RAMP) was not meeting the needs of service users and professionals. The subgroup ensured the removal of relevant documents and the implementation of new guidance in associated to the new High Risk and Complex Case Panel.

When various documents have been updated the business team then ensures they are promoted amongst services and embedded on the website so that they are accessible. Documents updated include the Self-neglect and Hoarding Policy, Multi-Agency Policy and Procedures (with Oxford), Multi-Agency Practice Guidance - failed access, and Multi-Agency Practice Guidance for Adults Who Have Experienced Sexual Abuse.

The subgroup benefits from the re-established subgroup chairs meeting, which supports transparency, appropriate allocation and effective communication across Board work. Activity in any subgroup can be discussed in relation to the impact one may have on the other. This allows for information to flow between groups to achieve joint partnership objectives. An example would be allegations against staff or volunteer's guidance. This is for those who work with children and was processed by the children's PP&P group. However, it was deemed appropriate to share this document with the adult's group to consider if an adult staff version would be useful.

Future directives for the group include work around Prevent as referrals have decreased during the pandemic. Concerns are that this would suggest a decrease in reports not incidents, so work around advocacy and raising awareness will be incorporated into the plan and assurance in partnership with the Safer Buckinghamshire Board (SBB). Joint work will also continue to update, improve and promote policy, procedures and toolkits in relation to domestic abuse, including where colleagues are affected by domestic abuse.

As with all subgroups there has been a need to be flexible and responsive to the effects of Covid. For example, it was agreed that inviting people with subject expertise into the subgroup would provide insight into the recording of domestic abuse incidents. Other areas the group have agreed to scrutinize are Vulnerability Assessment and Risk Management (VARM), medical guidance, self-neglect, and quarantine accommodation for travelers due to Covid regulations.

Quality and Performance Subgroup (Q&P)

The core function of the Quality and Performance Subgroup is scrutinize and seek assurance to understand the impact of partnership work intended to keep vulnerable adults safe. The Quality Assurance Subgroup also ensures all agencies monitor their own performance on safeguarding and provide the Board with data and analysis to ensure we can agree what the emerging areas of potential risk are, as well as identifying best practice that can be driven forward.

The Quality and Performance Subgroup developed a Quality Assurance Framework to give assurance that the Adults Safeguarding Board and its constituent partner agencies have effective systems, structures, processes and practices in place to improve outcomes and experience in the context of safeguarding adults at risk across Buckinghamshire.

Notable achievements of the work undertaken by the subgroup over the last year include the introduction of an online safeguarding portal, enabling both professionals and members of the public to report safeguarding concerns easily and efficiently on a live system. This was on target to go live in May 2021 and is supported by a task and finish group to ensure that the system works well.

A multi-agency self-assessment was conducted to assess what safeguarding processes and systems are in place across the partnership. Each agency scrutinized themselves, highlighting what works well and areas that require improvement. This is being collated and will be reported to the Board in 2021, and will inform the revised business plan. The outcome of the report will be used to focus areas of work for the subgroup for the coming year.

Work has begun in 2021 in the subgroup to launch a county-wide safeguarding campaign. The purpose of this is to educate the public on how and when to report a concern, and to raise awareness of Adult Social Care, drawing on key messages from previous work, such as audits.

The subgroup is also planning the form and uses of a multi-agency audit tool, to provide a consistent approach to assessing and evaluating areas of safeguarding work.

Budget for BSAB for 2020-2021

Board costs	Actual Year End 2020-21
Partners contribution	-£162,551.00
Carried over	-£71, 290.00
Total	-£233.841.00
Expenditure	£170,058.00
End of year total	-£63,783.00

Next steps for 2021/22

Despite the considerable environmental challenges, the Board, driven by the business unit, remains committed to its role as critical friend and champion of best practice. Our vision remains the same but we will update our business plan to ensure that we:

- Are able to describe and understand the impact of the pandemic on our workforce, residents and priorities.
- Have a data set (performance paper) that sets out activity, themes and multi-agency risks, which is completed by all relevant partners.
- Have a quality assurance framework that demonstrates how we will effectively scrutinise key safeguarding areas, what methods we will use to do this (making greater use of research) and how this work contributes to overall improvement.
- Have a completed and costed training plan with a date for implementation.
- Develop the pace and impact of the Learning and Development Subgroup so that we can disseminate learning quickly using a range of methods to reach those who need it.
- Can demonstrate how we are sharing learning from reviews, and describes how this subgroup works with the groups focused on quality assurance and policy and practice development to measure changes to practice as a result.
- For any new piece of work in the subgroups, we can document how we have:
 - used the voice of the service user, resident or expert by experience to inform the work,
 - agreed that we will share the learning from it (how and who do we intend to reach),
 - agreed how we will measure the success of the work.

Add exploitation /transitions and marketing of the work of the joint partnership including looking at an online policy manual.