

Oxfordshire Safeguarding Self-assessment 2022 - Oxford City Council

2.1

How do you ensure that safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and adults with care and support needs is central to all service development?

In the second box **Evidence**, you should **describe an example of how/when you've done/reviewed/checked this IN THE LAST YEAR**

Response

Safeguarding is recognised in the following Oxford City Council strategies: ? The Council strategy Council Strategy 20-24 priorities include Support Thriving Communities Under this priority we state the following outcome - 'Vulnerable people will continue to be safeguarded against harm' ? Housing and Homelessness Strategy The 2018-2021 strategy has been extended until late 2022. The strategy outlines the priorities the council has on increasing the supply of affordable homes, combating homelessness and rough sleeping, and improving housing standards. All contributing towards improving and enhancing the health and wellbeing of the residents of Oxford, and help build sustainable and prosperous communities. A revised action plan was published in 2019 in order to update and renew activity. A new strategy is currently out for consultation. ? The Children and Young People's Strategy – which is shortly due to be replaced by the Thriving Communities Strategy The strategy includes partnerships with our leisure provider Fusion to increase positive active engagement for young people. One example of this is free swimming for under 17s. Our Council Strategy 2020-24's Thriving Communities Corporate Priority, contains a clear statement about our safeguarding responsibilities through its stated outcome that 'vulnerable people will continue to be safeguarded against harm'. The strategy includes partnerships with our leisure provider Fusion to increase positive active engagement for young people. One example of this is free swimming for under 17s. The Annual Business Plan sets out how the Council will achieve this outcome. In 2021-22 the Council will: • Implement recommendations of the Adult Safeguarding Board review into Rough Sleeper deaths. Recommendations have been taken forward and make up a core parts of the new countywide rough sleeping strategy, with improved partnership working across the sector in Oxfordshire, and a new alliance approach to commissioning. • Continue to implement our safeguarding policy requirements as detailed in our annual Safeguarding Action Plan. This plan is presented to scrutiny committee and full council annually. In 2022-2023, the Council will: • With the County Council, which is now investing in youth service provision in Oxford, review our Youth Ambition programme and seek closer partnership Working to achieve a more efficient and effective joint approach to support children and young people. • Work with partners to implement the countywide homelessness prevention Strategy to reduce homelessness and rough sleeping in Oxford, through new Commissioned services to deliver a housing-led approach, and support people Through more flexible and responsive services. Work with our partners to deliver the Oxford Safer Communities Partnership's • Violence against Women and Girls, and Hate Crime plans. • Work with other agencies to develop local responses to the findings of the Modern Slavery research. The Safeguarding Action Plan identifies areas within the council for further improvement from both internal and external learning, board priorities, data from our safeguarding reporting system, and the expectations and the results of this assessment process. There is a specific section on Neglect that details what the Council are doing to contribute to this priority, actions and impact it has. This is

presented to the Neglect Strategy Group who challenge and monitor individual agency progress. The plans have clear actions and deadlines for completion. It's monitored quarterly through the strategic Safeguarding group and daily by the Safeguarding Coordinator, as it directs the work programme for this role. The Council's safer recruitment policy ensures that all staff working with children, young people and vulnerable adults have had the necessary checks including an enhanced DBS before the commencement of their role. The induction process includes in house safeguarding training, highlighting the safeguarding pathway, the support of safeguarding champions and the role of the Designated Safeguarding Officers. All concerns are logged using MyConcern and supported throughout, until closed or escalated. In Youth Ambition sessions, staff begin with greetings and icebreakers to ensure they have 'checked in' with all attendees. This gives an opportunity to discuss any issues or notice any different behaviours.

Rating



Evidence

Users of Oxford City Council's leisure facilities, run by Fusion Lifestyle, are consulted on key programme changes, with user representatives attending both site user meetings and partnership meetings. These are attended by users, Councillors and representatives from groups such as older users.

The revised and updated Safeguarding Policy was agreed at Cabinet in 2021 and is due for review in 2023. The revised and updated Safeguarding Action Plan was taken to scrutiny committee and cabinet in June 2022. Prior to being approved by cabinet, the Policy and Action Plan was circulated to and agreed by the Strategic Safeguarding group, which includes Oxford City Council's four Designated Safeguarding Leads.

The Neglect action plan has been reviewed every quarter at the Neglect Strategy Group. A joint District meeting was held in August and October to review our district wide plan and share good practice with each other.

Safeguarding remains central to Youth Ambition's service development. Staff are up-to-date with their safeguarding training and are able to raise concerns, including using our internal My Concern portal to raise any issues. Safeguarding is discussed in all team meetings to ensure that the subject is part of everyday work with young people. We also have a youth work manual at each youth session which includes Oxford City Council's safeguarding policy so that staff can refer to as necessary.

The Youth Ambition Team continues to support and work with young people with care and support needs through their programme. Some of the young people who access these are referred from Social services, schools and TVP. All of the staff are aware of the vulnerability of these young people, hence the need to be safeguard vigilant in relation to the welfare of the individual as well as liaising with the referring agency if they have any welfare concerns.

The new Housing and Homelessness Strategy is going to Cabinet in October 2022 to request that it is published for consultation, with the finalised strategy due to be published in early 2023. A comprehensive review has been undertaken of the service as part of this work, and has identified a number of priorities, one of which is to create sustainable communities that are safe and healthy. People with care and support needs are likely to be in priority need for housing, and also more likely to struggle to sustain their housing, so it is common for

frontline housing staff to engage with such individuals. These staff are trained to deliver services with consideration to requirements under the Care Act, including making capacity assessments, and/or making safeguarding referrals when appropriate.

The City Council hosts the Oxfordshire multidisciplinary health and housing team, which includes a social worker, as well as health professionals who provide additional support and advocacy in respect of vulnerable individuals.

The Council has agreed to integrate the new strapline for working with children in Oxfordshire as part of their new Thriving Communities strategy:

“Working together to help children, young people and families thrive”

The Council have agreed to contribute to the delivery of the Children’s Trust Board priority in relation to the EHP through their Community Hub model.

We are working to align Oxfordshire wide strategy and work programmes for the best possible outcomes locally.

2.2

How do you ensure that children and adults with care and support needs are actively involved in the design and development of services?

In the second box **Evidence**, you should **describe an example of how/when you’ve done/reviewed/checked this IN THE LAST YEAR**

Response

In relation to homelessness services, a Lived Experience Advisory Forum has been established to help provide insight into services. This is a panel of people who have experienced homelessness and/or spent time in homelessness services. This group are consulted in relation to commissioning work, with their views forming part of the tender requirements. A range of homelessness services in Oxfordshire were recommissioned on a countywide basis, and an alliance of six providers was chosen to run this new service. The alliance is led by the Alliance Leadership Team which comprises leads from the six providers, two commissioners (including the city council), and two members of LEAF. This ensures that the voice of vulnerable individuals is at the heart of the design and development of services. The Children and Young People’s Strategy was designed in partnership with children and young people through a number of focus groups which looked at the structure, language and content of the strategy. In order for the document to be fit for purpose, some more technical terms were left in, however children and young people helped to develop posters and a one page document to highlight key areas. Link to strategy:

https://www.oxford.gov.uk/youthambition/downloads/file/25/children_and_young_peoples_strategy Principle 1 focuses on Preventative Led Provision and considers how every child and young person can reach their full potential. It links directly to our sport and culture work to give young people opportunities to succeed using a range of different platforms within sports and arts. Our Leisure Partnership offers concessions such as free swimming for under 17’s and affordable rates for accessibility. Holiday Activities are funded for 8 – 19 year olds and organisations are selected for funding in partnership with young people to ensure the activities meet their needs. Youth Ambition run activities for young people aged 11-19 or up to 25 for young people with additional physical or mental support needs. Our current strategy is coming to end this year. We are developing a new one which will incorporate other strategies within our Community Services area and we

have conducted specific consultation sessions and focus group with young people to inform service development. Young people are involved in: - Thriving communities strategy - EDI strategy - Needs analysis - Grants programme - Shaping sessions All policy and service development takes into account safeguarding and equalities issues through Oxford City Council's Equality Impact Assessment which needs to be completed every time a new policy is created or a policy is reviewed. Our Equality Impact Assessment process requires staff designing and developing services to involve residents with protected characteristics to be consulted and involved where appropriate, this process is service-led and not currently centrally co-ordinated. Oxford City Council run awareness-raising campaigns for staff around issues affecting children and adults with care and support needs; for example, mental health issues and anxiety.

Rating



Evidence

The community champion's programme, funded by the DLUHC, which is overseen and managed by Oxford City Council, work with different, seldom heard groups and, recently, those who have lower uptake of vaccine. These also come from ethnic minorities or have been disproportionately underrepresented in the past.

The final governance document for the Alliance will show how LEAF is involved, although this is not yet ready.

Vulnerable individuals have been involved in the development of the City Council's new Housing Strategy. We consulted on the review and evidence base that has informed the strategy, involving both LEAF and the Tenants Ambassadors. Further consultation will be undertaken on the draft strategy from November.

We have utilised the connections and outputs of the work of VOXY through our membership on the Children's Trust Board.

2.3

How are children and adults with care and support needs from black and minority ethnic backgrounds and other diversity strands appropriately consulted in the development of services?

In the second box **Evidence**, you should **describe an example of how/when you've done/reviewed/checked this IN THE LAST YEAR**

Response

The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion strategy was developed after consultation with LGBTQ+ focus groups. The premise of the equalities strategy and action plan is to encourage trust and belonging in the community, develop relationships, and engage at grass roots. Therefore engaging with communities before the strategy and action plan is developed has been crucial to developing this work and ensuring it is in line with the principles of the strategy. The Controlling Migration Fund programme at OCC has delivered a number of projects supporting and aiding the integration of refugees, asylum seekers and vulnerable migrants in Oxford City. Projects were designed and created following consultation with local organisations and charities that support refugees, asylum seekers and vulnerable migrants. The Schools Advocacy Project awarded through the second round of funding, is aiming to support migrant families navigate the UK school system. This

project was designed following feedback from local refugees who were struggling with understanding the UK school culture and ways of working. It was launched in September 2021 for 12 months but has now been extended to August 2024. Each project, whether delivered internally or commissioned to an external organisation, has ensured there are feedback mechanisms for clients to share their thoughts on how a particular project can be improved. Some of the projects have a timeline of three years. At the end of each year a comprehensive report is written, using feedback from participants. Following recommendations in each report, some projects, dependent on scope, have been adapted to improve the services. Oxford City Council are working with Asylum Welcome in delivering their service supporting residents' access the EU Settlement Scheme. Through mass and targeted communications, we're aiming to reach out to more vulnerable individuals in Oxford, who may have complex cases. Through the work of our Youth Ambition team and grants support for groups working with children and young people, we have a diverse resource of young people that we consult with. 60% of these young people are from BAME backgrounds and when we are developing services we consult them accordingly. These are vulnerable young people and young adults who we focus our work on as part of what we've identified as our priority groups: • Young people not in education, training or work • Young people involved in social services • Young people with disabilities • Young people in and leaving care • Young carers • Young people in contact with the juvenile justice system • Young people who are LGBTQ+ • Refugees and asylum seekers • Young travellers • Young parents Oxford City Council run awareness-raising campaigns for staff to ensure awareness and understanding of the issues experienced by staff and customers from different diversity strands. These include: •Materials on our intranet and articles in our weekly all-staff newsletter "Connected Council" •Briefings and challenge sessions in our 'Leadership Conversations' – a fortnightly meeting for all managers led by the Chief Executive •Briefings and challenge sessions for all staff.

Rating



Evidence

The development of the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion strategy and subsequent recruitment of the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Lead.

The School Advocacy programme has been successfully extended until August 2024

A new project Refugee Employment Service went to tender in autumn 2022 which hopes to help refugees in to employment. Part of the tender requirements asked the provider to ensure Lived experience is at the heart of the programme's delivery.

The Youth Ambition team and grants support, for groups working with children and young people, have a diverse resource of young people who are consulted with throughout the year.

The community champion's programme, funded by the DLUHC, which is overseen and managed by Oxford City Council, planned to run from January to July 2022 but this was successfully extended until March 2023.

Community champions work with different, seldom heard groups and those who have lower uptake of vaccine. These also come from ethnic minorities or have been disproportionately underrepresented in the past.

LEAF (gatehouse), Refugee Resource, Asylum Welcome, Transition Lighthouse, AFIUK and Turning Point recruit community champions as volunteers who are trained and supported to go out in to communities to better understand an health or barriers to accessing services which

would have an impact on their health inequalities.

This network has been successfully utilised to engage on the Thriving Communities Strategy development.

2.4

How do you know that there is a responsive process in place to act on identified unmet need, determine where gaps are met elsewhere and address any remaining gaps in service provision?

In the second box **Evidence**, you should **describe an example of how/when you've done/reviewed/checked this IN THE LAST YEAR**

Response

Each new/revised policy is subject to an Equality Impact Assessment which is reported to City Council Cabinet for approval. This highlights unmet needs and ensures policies are amended accordingly. The housing crisis in Oxford means that not all need can be met. There is a chronic shortage of housing which has an impact on everyone seeking accommodation. The Housing Needs service has undertaken a thorough review of its service in the last 18 months and is now implementing the results of this work. The service is refocussing its work to concentrate mainly in two areas. The first is to undertake more prevention work, so people do not need to access statutory homeless services. The second is to undertake a rapid rehousing approach to anyone experiencing homelessness. The service structure has been redesigned with this in mind. Each year, the Council runs Severe Weather Emergency Provision (SWEP) to meet the needs of rough sleepers during the winter months. This protocol is enhanced year on year to adapt and change to the needs. This has been challenging due to Covid but additional arrangements have been made to deliver SWEP over the winter months. This is also achieved through partnership work. The Refugee, Asylum Seeker and Vulnerable Migrant Coordination group is a space for voluntary and charity organisations, and community groups, to raise issues or that people are facing and gaps in service provision. The Refugee Resettlement Officer has regular meetings with commissioned services to gauge how particular projects are going and if adaptations are needed. The development of the Locality teams and the Service Integration Project approach to create a single view of a customer across difference service areas is helping us to better support residents and identifying unmet needs, hence working with relevant agencies, including internal teams to support vulnerable residents holistically. The support available for vulnerable adults and children within communities, includes community based solutions. We continue to use local data insights, information from health and education to inform how we triage complex cases and offer direct support to meet people's needs. Examples include supporting families who have debts such a rent arrears and developing support plans to support people with finances. We have many examples of cases of this way of working. Youth Ambition annual needs analysis, which asks young people what they believe to be the biggest issues affecting them and also asks how they would like to learn about them or discuss them. Young people are included in the process fully and have the opportunity to design sessions themselves and deliver them to their peers, addressing topic that they see as relevant. We in the process of finishing this year's analysis and we have had over 300 YP from across the city complete the survey. Also we have extended the needs analysis to partners, so we can ensure get a diverse range of responses from groups with protected characteristics, including but not limited to travellers, LGBTQ+ and those with

disabilities and additional needs.

Rating



Evidence

The Refugee Resettlement Officer meets with Asylum Welcome regarding refugee resettlement twice per week. Other projects such as the schools advocacy project meet at least monthly.

Taking a countywide approach to homelessness means that Housing Services are working much more closely with their counterparts in the rest of Oxfordshire, but also with Social, Care, Health and Criminal Justice services. The Countywide Homelessness Steering Group has representation from all these services and drives the countywide homelessness strategy. This enables gaps across the system to be identified and addressed, where possible.

Research was undertaken for the employment pathway to identify needs for refugees who are unable to get in to employment. This was used to form the tender for the employment pathway. A workshop will be held at the start of November 2022 and the tender will close in December 2022. By the end of this year we will make a decision as to which provider we go with and will work together collaboratively to create, design and develop and single entry employment pathway.

2.5

How do you make practitioners aware of the multi-agency procedures and tools for identifying, assessing and recording safeguarding concerns (e.g. the CE screening tool, Multi-Agency Chronology, Neglect Toolkit and Self-Neglect Tool) and how do you know they are being used appropriately?

In the second box **Evidence**, you should **describe an example of how/when you've done/reviewed/checked this IN THE LAST YEAR**

Response

Details of multi-agency toolkits and links to these are shared across the organisation via internal communications such as intranet articles and newsletters. These are available to all staff. The staff questionnaire, open for two weeks in October 2022, asked: 'Which of the following tools have you used during any safeguarding work you have been involved in?' The results showed:

Option	Total	Percent
Internal Safeguarding Policy & Procedure	165	39.01%
Safeguarding Boards' Policy & Procedure	33	7.80%
Consultation with your Safeguarding Lead	102	24.11%
Consultation with the Safeguarding Team (Adult's)/No names consultation service (Children's)	52	12.29%
Self-neglect Policy	20	4.73%
Hoarding Policy	17	4.02%
Domestic Abuse Pathway	32	7.57%
Neglect Toolkit (Children's)	8	1.89%
CE Screening Tool (Children's)	4	0.95%
Early Help Assessment (Children's)	16	3.78%
Multi Agency chronology (Children's)	10	2.36%
Safeguarding Thresholds Matrix (Children's)	15	3.55%
Safeguarding Thresholds Matrix (Adult's)	26	6.15%
None of the above (please specify what other tools you have used to help you in Safeguarding)	172	40.66%
Not Answered	56	13.24%

The following question asked: 'If you don't/haven't used any of the tools above, why not? What barriers were there to using them?' The results showed:

Option	Total	Percent
Didn't know they		

existed 36 8.51% Didn't know where to find them 34 8.04% Didn't know how to complete them 12 2.84% Didn't find them helpful in the past 3 0.71% Haven't had cause to need them 218 51.54% N/A – I have used tools 100 23.64% Not Answered 73 17.26% We share the OSCB & OSAB newsletters and information bulletins to staff through our champions' network. We encourage staff from all services areas to attend learning events and conferences. Safeguarding is part of our standard management meeting agenda and any current concerns, issues or risks are discussed and planned for. We provide a quarterly briefing to members offering a snapshot of current performance data. Our internal Safeguarding intranet page provides direct links to the boards and additional resources.

Rating



Evidence

The newsletters are written and released quarterly by the Safeguarding Coordinator.

The staff questionnaire was released in October 2022 and was open for two weeks.

All teams have access to the toolkits on the safeguarding intranet pages which have been reviewed and updated to make it easier to find the right help more easily.

Use of toolkits are discussed in team meetings, all staff undertake safeguarding training and have access to toolkits.

2.6

How do you know that processes for sharing information, with other practitioners and safeguarding partners are clear and established in organisational practice?

In the second box **Evidence**, you should **describe an example of how/when you've done/reviewed/checked this IN THE LAST YEAR**

Response

The Safeguarding Policy, which was agreed at Cabinet in June 2021, has a dedicated section and clearly makes reference to information sharing. The policy is easily accessible on the organisation's internal intranet pages as well as the external internet pages. MyConcern, the internal safeguarding concern recording system has strict access permissions and only Designated Safeguarding Officers are able to view all concerns. Permissions are granted and closely monitored by the Safeguarding Coordinator. Information shared regarding safeguarding concerns is recorded in the chronology within the case and contact details for agencies are recorded. The Policy and Partnership Team Manager represents on HIB and HWB and acts as a District Liaison to support information sharing across the city and districts. Through regular meetings with other safeguarding officers across the system board information is shared and discussed Oxford City Council has also signed up to the multi-agency sharing protocol.

Rating



Evidence

The Safeguarding Policy was reviewed at the beginning of 2021 and this was approved by cabinet in June 2021 after going to scrutiny. The next review is scheduled for early 2023.

All staff across Oxford City Council were asked to complete mandatory Data Protection training in June 2022.

We are participating in a PAQA review on escalations to help understand the challenges and how effective our pathway is for unblocking challenges across organisations.

We have participated in an external review of MAPPA process which has included looking at how effective and appropriate information sharing has been across agencies.

We have participated in the workshop sessions led by County to review the partnership protocols in relation to safeguarding and community safety.

2.7

How do you know that staff receive adequate reflective supervision and support?

In the second box **Evidence**, you should **describe an example of how/when you've done/reviewed/checked this IN THE LAST YEAR**

Response

Upon raising a new safeguarding concern on MyConcern, a Designated Safeguarding Officer will triage the concern. An agreed process is in place whereby steps are taken to triage the concern and included, is the offer of support to the individual who raised the concern.

Colleagues are encouraged to contact their line manager, our Mental Health First Aid Team and/or our employee assistance programme 'Health Assured'. Contact details are easily accessible on the intranet pages and also promoted in the quarterly newsletter which is sent to all staff. Safeguarding Champions meet quarterly and discuss how best to support colleagues. Line managers are encouraged to discuss safeguarding at 121 and team meetings to ensure all staff understand responsibilities and feel supported. The 2022 staff questionnaire asked: Do you have the opportunity to reflect on cases with a colleague/manager in a way that supports you in making safeguarding decisions? Option Total Percent Yes 269 63.59% No 131 30.97% Not Answered 23 5.44%

Feedback from the survey showed staff who have not raised safeguarding concerns have not had the need to seek the opportunity to reflect on cases and subsequently answered 'no'. In future, the survey will include a third option to ensure results accurately represent staff opportunity to reflect on cases. We also asked: 'Is there anything else you would like to see Oxford City Council doing in relation to safeguarding?' The responses will influence training and communications over the next year. We also asked: 'Have you ever contacted a Mental Health First Aider or our employee assistance programme, Health Assured, for support for yourself, in relations to a safeguarding concern?' The results showed: Option Total Percent

Mental Health First aider 21 4.96% Health Assured 20 4.73% None 380 89.83% Not Answered 10 2.36%

Rating



Evidence

193 MyConcern cases have been raised since January 2022 and each triaged by a Designated Safeguarding Officer who signposts the reportee for support.

The annual staff questionnaire was open for two weeks in October 2022 and responses are used to inform future action plans and awareness briefings.

Awareness briefing feedback forms give staff opportunity to feedback on safeguarding overall as well as commenting on the briefing session. The feedback form was updated and made available online for all staff, in line with the Boards' feedback forms, in July 2022.

2.8

How does your organisation measure outcomes and learn from examples of good practice, particularly in the following areas:

- Professional curiosity & over-reliance on self-reported information
- Multi-agency working: understanding professional roles and responsibilities and information sharing
- Mental capacity / mental health of children and young people
- Self-neglect / neglect of children and young people
- Child exploitation

In the second box **Evidence**, you should **describe an example of how/when you've done/reviewed/checked this IN THE LAST YEAR**

Response

Oxford City Council Officers including but not limited to, the Policy and Partnership Team Manager, Safeguarding Coordinator, Community Safety Service Manager and Rough Sleeping/Single Homelessness Manager; all attend multi-agency meetings whereby countywide data is shared and interrogated. Self-reported information is compared to that of our partners to prevent over-reliance. This is reported back to strategic groups. We use professional curiosity and by the reviewing of cases logged on our safeguarding system. This enables us to training staff in consistent safeguarding responses and ensure our safeguarding policies and procedures are adhered to. The DSL review all cases and require additional safeguarding actions if they have not been identified. The use of call-backs to those involved give us greater insight into the nature of the occurrence and the background to the incident. Those people who contact us through our vulnerable persons helpline are asked to provide us with more details on their circumstances and the underline causes of their situation. The Youth Ambition Team ensure that all staff attend regular relevant training in relation to improving the outcomes for children and adults with care and support needs. We conduct an annual needs analysis to find out from young people the main issues affecting them. We make sure that our needs analysis involves children and adults with care support needs. The information collated from the needs analysis informs what the team do to support young people based on the needs identified. The information is shared with staff and partners to inform delivery and also grant funding for targeted work with young people. The team share good practice about work with vulnerable young people through case studies,

management information about the work and regularly evaluating the impact of their work with them. Our Youth Ambition Team use the Views system to monitor positive outcomes for young people, over 6000 young people access our services per year. Mental health needs have been identified and discussed within a safe environment during sessions. Safeguarding cases are logged on our safeguarding system and the team support, and refer, young people into appropriate services. Cases of neglect or self-neglect of young people are referred to appropriate agencies. These case will most likely be identified by our Youth Ambition, ASB Investigation Team or Tenancy Sustainment Team. The cases are logged on the safeguarding system and reviewed by a DSL. Housing Needs staff are engaged with a variety of professional groups on both a national and local level to learn from best practice. Frontline housing staff receive regular training on issue of mental capacity, neglect, self-neglect and child exploitation. Following a report by Crisis into the feasibility of adopting a housing led approach to solve homelessness in Oxfordshire, we are engaged with partners across the county to ensure services are delivered in a more joined up way both geographically and across other public sector systems. This work is also informed by the SAR of homelessness deaths. Partners include all local councils, the ICS, two health trusts, probation services and Bullingdon Prison who have agreed a new countywide governance structure for homelessness. The majority of homelessness services provided in Oxfordshire have been recommissioned as a single service to be delivered by an alliance of providers from April 2022. Locality managers are currently completing 'ward profiles' which collects data from resident outreach. This gathers data on residents' insight in to locality such as community assets, community groups and what residents like about the ward they live in. Locality managers hold estate patch meetings with internal colleagues to share information and best practice, and understand professional responsibilities. External partners are also invited to meetings. The localities measure outcomes by recording how much support a family has had, for example the household support fund, and following this up by understanding any further support needs. Repeat contact is recorded to identify outcomes and understand individual needs to ensure best practice in offering support at the first point of contact. We have well established multi-agency processes with our statutory partners and key third sector organisations. To build on this we are developing a wider range of community solutions based on our experience during the pandemic. These partners extend the range of prevention options and post-incident support. Training for the Contract Centre, the front door into the organisation, and the central teams who case manage customer needs, is well established and is being rolled out across the organisation. The city council is very involved in the countywide approach to tackling child exploitation through the Community Safety Partnership and Oxfordshire Violence and Vulnerability Strategy. At a case level, Council officers attend the two weekly police JATAC meeting where current exploited young people and exploiters are discussed and action planned. The Council assist the police in enforcement activities where ASB tools and powers are an appropriate remedy and share information and intelligence on persons of interest.

Rating



Evidence

Oxford City Council's Locality teams working approach encourages multi-agency working with both internal and external colleagues. Therefore, working with other professionals to ensure everyone is playing their role to help vulnerable children and adults. We recognise

that many young people are struggling with their mental health following pandemic, so we make sure that discussions on the topic and relevant activities are delivered at youth sessions in support of them. These engagements and activities are evaluated and checked against the desired outcomes to help identify the impact and learning going forward.

As part of the review of the Housing Needs services, a reduced suite of outcomes was agreed for this year ensuring a focus on outcomes for customers rather than quantitative measures of work.

The Housing Needs service has rolled out a training programme on trauma informed approaches over the last two years, delivered by the Nelson Trust.

The Policy and Partnership Team Manager attended PAQA, OSCB Business Group, Children's Trust Board and the Neglect Strategy Group on a quarterly basis. The Safeguarding Coordinator attends PIQA and the Training Subgroup, as well as attending any meetings the P&P Manager cannot, throughout the year on a quarterly basis. All meetings were attended in 2022.

We have received presentation on the changes to the mental capacity act and what this means for us locally, this has informed the training we then deliver to our staff and the information has been cascaded

We have been involved in incident reviews (MAPPA) and looked at best practice example and learning' we will use this learning to ensure it guides best practice within and across our service areas moving forward.

We have been part of the partnership protocol review led by County

Fortnightly 'Locality Learning' sessions, led by Community Services, invites guest speakers (internal and external) to cover a topic to learn something about e.g. Victims First Specialist Service

Community Services have also recently convened meetings with colleagues from across the organisation, focussing on meaningful measurement and learning from/supporting each other to report on outcomes in a better way.

The Mental Health Concordat Partnership connects local partners and councils, sharing key updates and a platform to exchange ideas.

This enables partners to focus on areas/themes that are important and can include children and young people

At a 'Thriving Communities Forum' (internal workshop session for Community Services staff) we invited one of our youth apprentices to share his lived experience of mental health and challenges faced.

Blackbird leys ward profile was completed in summer 2022. Barton ward profile is currently in progress and St Ebbe's ward will follow.

Locality estate patch meetings are held monthly. Repeat contact data is recorded and interrogated.

2.9

How do you support your staff after a significant/serious safeguarding incident and how do you know this works?

In the second box **Evidence**, you should **describe an example of how/when you've done/reviewed/checked this IN THE LAST YEAR**

Response

Upon raising a new safeguarding concern on MyConcern, a Designated Safeguarding Officer will triage the concern. An agreed process is in place whereby steps are taken to triage the concern and included, is the offer of support to the individual who raised the concern. Colleagues are encouraged to contact their line manager, our Mental Health First aid Team and/or our employee assistance programme 'Health Assured'. Contact details are easily accessible on the intranet pages and also promoted in the quarterly newsletter which is sent to all staff. Safeguarding Champions meet quarterly and discuss how best to support colleagues. The staff questionnaire asked: 'Do you have the opportunity to reflect on cases with a colleague/manager in a way that supports you in making safeguarding decisions?' Option Total Percent Yes 269 63.59% No 131 30.97% Not Answered 23 5.44% We also asked: Have you ever contacted a Mental Health First Aider or our employee assistance programme, Health Assured, for support for yourself, in relations to a safeguarding concern? The results showed: Option Total Percent Mental Health First aider 21 4.96% Health Assured 20 4.73% None 380 89.83% Not Answered 10 2.36% Line managers are encouraged to discuss safeguarding at 121 and team meetings to ensure all staff understand responsibilities and feel supported.

Rating



Evidence

The annual staff questionnaire was open for two weeks in October 2022 and received 423 responses.

193 MyConcern cases were opened between January 2022 and October 2022, each case was triaged by a DSO and support offered to the employee who raised the concern.

Following a serious incident, a member of staff was supported by the redeployment to a different job role, a phased return and additional 121 support.

4.1

How do you ensure that safe recruitment practices are in place in line with statutory guidance, are monitored, and safer recruitment training is in place for managers involved in recruitment and selection of staff?

In the second box **Evidence**, you should **describe an example of how/when you've done/reviewed/checked this IN THE LAST YEAR**

Response

Oxford City Council safer recruitment and selection procedures are in place in line with statutory guidance and are audited. We have a 'Recruitment and Selection Policy' and 'Policy on the Employment of People with Criminal Records' which includes completing appropriate DBS Checks; both of these inform our recruitment procedures. We have information available for recruiting officers to ensure compliance with our procedures including safer recruitment. There is a Manager's Guide to Safer Recruitment which is referenced in other documents. These include the Establishment Control Form which is used in the initial stage of the recruitment process; a Help Point on devising interview questions; and Interview Questions Record which requires the officer to confirm they have complied with Safer Recruitment

Requirements.

Rating



Evidence

Oxford City Council's HR team have continued to support managers with recruitment and selection on a case by case basis. In 2022 we recruited a Recruitment Consultant who will help us focus more resources on training managers on safer recruitment and wider best practice.

4.2

How do you know that safeguarding training is effective and has an impact on practice?

In the second box **Evidence**, you should **describe an example of how/when you've done/reviewed/checked this IN THE LAST YEAR**

Response

The internal safeguarding awareness training package is regularly reviewed and updated by the Safeguarding Coordinator and trainers who met quarterly. This was most recently reviewed and updated in July 2022. Results from the 2021 staff survey, updated from the boards and delegate training evaluation forms are used to change and update the briefing where necessary and ensure continuous improvement. Feedback forms are sent to each delegate following every safeguarding awareness briefing and changes are made where necessary, based on this feedback. The Safeguarding Coordinator attends and represents Oxford City Council at the quarterly Training Subgroup meetings, attended by board members and multiple countywide agencies. Learning and updates from the meetings are shared across the organisation. The staff questionnaire asked: 'Can you give an example of how safeguarding training and/or learning from reviews has improved your safeguarding knowledge and practice?' Responses received stated: "I know how to recognise abuse and neglect, who to report/refer my concerns to internally and externally and who to ask for advice and support" "I am a new employee at OCC and I found this training very useful. We often do visits at properties so was good to understand what we may see and how to contact people if something isn't right." "It acts as a constant reminder of safeguarding issues and ensures that it is always at the fore front of my mind when undertaking my day to day duties. It encourages individuals to take responsibility and also sets out very clearly the procedure for logging concerns and reporting any issues." "The training made me aware of reporting functions within the Council that I did not know about before (MyConcern)." "The training has provided me with better insight and understanding of the many types of neglect and therefore made more aware of what I could be looking out for. It also clarified the different channels OCC provides when dealing or reporting these issues." "As a member of staff who regularly visits people's homes, I consider that the training has helped me become more aware of potential issues that I may have previously not seen."

Rating



Evidence

The staff safeguarding questionnaire was circulated in October 2022 and received 423 responses.

Feedback forms are sent to each delegate following their attendance to the safeguarding awareness briefings and were moved online in June 2022 in line with the boards'.

233 Oxford City Council staff have completed the internal training so for this year.

The new Learning and Development Manager at ODS was supported by Oxford City Council's Safeguarding Coordinator in rolling out updated, more comprehensive safeguarding training throughout 2022. In addition, training for line managers was provided for the online recording system MyConcern. This training has resulted in an increase in safeguarding concern recording rates from ODS. From January 2022 to November 2022, ODS recorded 23 concerns. For the same period last year, ODS recorded 7 concerns.

4.3

How do you align your safeguarding training with that of the Safeguarding Boards?

In the second box **Evidence**, you should **describe an example of how/when you've done/reviewed/checked this IN THE LAST YEAR**

Response

As an organisation, we have had 100% attendance at the Training Subgroup as well as PIQA and PAQA in 2022, information distributed at these meetings informs the internal safeguarding awareness training package. This package is shared with other agencies by way of quality checking the information within it. It has also dedicated sections against the board priorities. The Safeguarding Coordinator attends the OSCB and OSAB Training Subgroup to share best practice and cascade information throughout the organisation. The Safeguarding Coordinator has recently attended the OSCB Train the Trainer course and will use OSCB training materials and experience to inform internal training materials.

Rating

Evidence

The internal safeguarding awareness training package was reviewed and updated in July 2022.

We have asked specific questions about the future delivery of our training in the recent staff questionnaire which was open for responses for two weeks in October 2022 and received 423 responses.

Training subgroup meetings attended quarterly throughout 2022.

The Safeguarding Coordinator attended the OSCB Train the Trainer course in October 2022.

4.4

How does your organisation ensure that staff have the required knowledge, skills and expertise to carry out their safeguarding duties, and feel supported in their role?

In the second box **Evidence**, you should **describe an example of how/when you've done/reviewed/checked this IN THE LAST YEAR**

Response

All new staff must undertake mandatory safeguarding awareness training within first six months of joining the organisation. The refresher for this training and any additional training such as level 2 or level 3 for adults and children, dependant on job role, is required every two years where this was previously three years. This is to ensure the most up to date training is received as the training packages are frequently updated. A post audit to ensure correct level of training for each role was conducted in early 2021 by the Safeguarding Coordinator, as such some posts now require additional training. Communications are frequently sent out, alongside the quarterly newsletter to promote the safeguarding champion network with the aim of supporting colleagues in their role and making colleagues aware of the support and guidance available to them. Safeguarding is discussed at 121 meetings between line managers and colleagues and is also discussed at team meetings. The staff questionnaire asked: Do you have the opportunity to reflect on cases with a colleague/line manager?

Rating



Evidence

The Post audit was conducted in March 2021 by the Safeguarding Coordinator.

233 staff have attended the safeguarding awareness briefing in 2022.

Quarterly newsletters are sent to all staff and promoted on the internal intranet. Intranet news stories are released regularly.

The staff questionnaire was open for two weeks on October 2022 and received 423 responses.

4.5

How does your organisation ensure that practitioners know who their Designated Safeguarding Lead and how to access their support?

In the second box **Evidence**, you should **describe an example of how/when you've done/reviewed/checked this IN THE LAST YEAR**

Response

Intranet pages are regularly updated to reflect changes in Safeguarding support. The internal Safeguarding page is promoted in intranet news releases and quarterly newsletters which are written and released by the Safeguarding Coordinator. A previous newsletter contained a specific article detailing the structure of safeguarding in Oxford City Council with contact details via direct links to staff directory pages for the following: Accountable Officer Four DSLs Newsletters regularly included details for the Designated Safeguarding Officers and every newsletter released includes information and contact details for the 14 Safeguarding Champions and the Safeguarding Coordinator. The

safeguarding policy also includes details of Designated Safeguarding Leads.

Rating



Evidence

Newsletters give details of who DSLs, champions and support staff are as well as their contact details. The Safeguarding newsletters are released quarterly throughout the year with the most recent newsletter being released in October 2022.

Intranet articles are released regularly to include details of the safeguarding champions and safeguarding structure.

The safeguarding policy was reviewed and updated in 2021 and subsequently agreed by cabinet in June 2021. The policy is easily accessible on the intranet and external internet and is due for review in 2023.

4.6

How does your organisation ensure that DSL's have the required knowledge, skills and experience, and are supported to fulfil the role?

In the second box **Evidence**, you should **describe an example of how/when you've done/reviewed/checked this IN THE LAST YEAR**

Response

The Strategic Safeguarding Group quarterly meeting requires all DSLs to meet to share best practice and discuss the ongoing annual safeguarding action plan. One of the four DSLs, the Policy and Partnership Team Manager, attends: - PAQA - Neglect Strategy group - Business group OSCB - OSAB - OSCB - OSA Executive board Information and updates from these meetings is fed back to all DSLs and attendees of the Strategic Safeguarding Group. An essential prerequisite of the Policy and Partnership Team Manager job role, as detailed in the post job description is: 'Demonstrates an understanding of the Council's role in safeguarding children, young people and vulnerable adults.' The post audit which was carried out in February 2021 determined that all DSLs should receive the highest level of training, this did not change however the frequency of refresher training was reduced from three years to two years. ODS now has three DSLs who are supported by Oxford City Council and have received appropriate training.

Rating



Evidence

The Post audit was conducted in February 2021 and is regularly used to ascertain appropriate levels of training.

Attendance at above subgroups throughout the year and information shared through strategic group.

Throughout 2022, ODS has appointed three existing members of staff as DSL, one for each main site. This is to reduce the over-reliance on one individual. All three DSLs have completed training to a minimum of level 2 Adult and Child Safeguarding and they have been signposted to Level 3 Training, to be completed by December 2022.

The DSLs are supported effectively by Supervisors and Team Leaders across the business. Anyone in such a role is being trained to minimum level 1 (some level 2) and all have access to MyConcern to record concerns. The increased sharing of responsibility has led to increased volume of recordings made in the last six months.

4.7

How have lessons from local reviews conducted by the Safeguarding Boards been used to drive change and improvement at an organisational level?

In the second box **Evidence**, you should **describe an example of how/when you've done/reviewed/checked this IN THE LAST YEAR**

Response

The Jacob CSPR recommendation working groups involve a number of Council officers. The strand relating to Community Safety Partnership recommendations involves the Community Safety Service Manager. The working together strand involves the policy and partnership team manager who also cascades all information through to District colleagues. Attendance and engagement in the OSCB business group allows participation in the CSPR monitoring groups, it allows information and learning summaries on themes to be shared, explored and discussed and relevant information shared and disseminated to inform practice moving forward. Oxford City Council participate in the countywide framework for the review of deaths of adults experiencing homelessness or accessing homeless services. The reviews are attended by the Rough Sleeping and Single Homelessness manager who disseminates learning via the safeguarding champion's quarterly meetings and team meetings. The county council have undertaken a review of the action plan which resulted from the 2020 SAR into adult homeless deaths in Oxfordshire and thematic review, in order to report progress and develop a revised action plan based on emergent learning, which has been supported by the Rough Sleeping and Single Homelessness manager. The internal training package has been reviewed and updated to reflect national and local learning from reviews.

Rating



Evidence

Staff have attended partnership protocol reviews chaired by the Chief Fire Officer to ensure emerging risks are communicated between strategic safeguarding and community safety structures, and their constituent organisations.

Review of local tactical level structures under the Community Safety Partnership have been proposed and are in discussion with the Jacob CSPR leads.

Learning summaries have been distributed as part of internal Comms to both officers and councillors. The Jacob review webinar provided by OSCB was attended by the safeguarding portfolio holder and the Safeguarding Coordinator.

We continue to use short videos within our training delivery that have been developed from reviews.

The internal training package was updated in July 2022.

Four adult death review meetings were attended throughout 2022, concerning eight individuals.

4.8

How are you assured that all levels of staff, from frontline workers to Chief Executive/Board level leads have read, understood and acted upon the learning to improve practice (as appropriate to their role within the organisation)?

In the second box **Evidence**, you should **describe an example of how/when you've done/reviewed/checked this IN THE LAST YEAR**

Response

An internal safeguarding newsletter is distributed to all staff on a quarterly basis, the information therein includes lessons learned from local reviews. Clicks to links within the newsletter are monitored to obtain information on what colleagues found useful and looked further in to. The staff questionnaire received responses from all service areas, including senior managers and councillors. The questionnaire asked: 'Can you give an example of how safeguarding briefings/training and/or learning from reviews has improved your Safeguarding knowledge and practice?' Responses from Senior Management included: "It has enabled us to review practice within teams with specific themed focus. It has supported our action planning and helped us understand the local and national context of the work." "Updates on changing legislation / requirements, and refreshing knowledge is really useful." Responses from other service areas included: "My role does not routinely involve situations where safeguarding concerns are likely to emerge as an issue, however the briefings are useful for learning prompts for spotting concerns and the process within the council for escalating as needed." "The training has provided me with better insight and understanding of the many types of neglect and therefore made more aware of what I could be looking out for. It also clarified the different channels OCC provides when dealing or reporting these issues."

Rating



Evidence

The Safeguarding newsletters have been released quarterly throughout 2022.

The Jacob CSPR learning even in January 2022 was attended by Oxford City Council officers.

An update on the Jacob CSPR was included in the Safeguarding report which was presented to Cabinet in July 2022.

The internal safeguarding awareness briefing was reviewed and updated in July 2022. The training materials include learning and key messages from CSPRs and SARs.

The staff questionnaire was open for two weeks in October 2022 and received 423 responses.

4.9

How do you know that whistleblowing procedures are effective, clear, referenced in staff training and codes of conduct, and that staff are supported when raising concerns, or subject to allegations?

In the second box **Evidence**, you should **describe an example of how/when you've done/reviewed/checked this IN THE LAST YEAR**

Response

Oxford City Council's Monitoring Officer, has oversight and responsibility for The Whistleblowing Policy. This was last revised and agreed by Cabinet in 2021 and is available to all staff on associated intranet pages. It is available also on the intranet HR pages in the 'Raising Concerns and Resolving Issues section and in the Policy library. The Safeguarding Policy makes reference to the Whistleblowing Policy and includes links to this. A separate policy 'Safeguarding Allegations Policy' is available for all staff. The Mental Health first aid team and Health Assured, the employee assistance programme, is promoted internally for all staff. The Investigations Team has a role to play due to the nature of the allegations made in line with the policy e.g. fraud, theft, financial impropriety We incorporate an overview of the Whistleblowing Policy into Fraud Awareness Training that the Investigations Team delivers around the Council. Usually, senior officers within the Investigations Team are involved with whistleblowing concerns due the heightened confidentiality and sensitivity. Investigation Team officers liaise with key officers as well as HR, conducting investigations, recommending outcomes and feeding back to the staff member who made the allegation at the end of the process.

Rating



Evidence

Staff members are supported through various avenues. The employee assistance programme, which offers individual counselling sessions to our employees, an agreed plan with line management about contact and support needed, led by the needs of the employee. Flexible working arrangements. Additional training if required and requested or felt to be needed to assist.

The staff safeguarding questionnaire was open for two weeks in October 2022 and received 423 responses. One of the questions asked: Have you ever contacted a Mental Health First Aider or our employee assistance programme, Health Assured, for support for yourself, in relations to a safeguarding concern?

The results showed:

Option Total Percent

Mental Health First aider 21 4.96%

Health Assured 20 4.73%

None 380 89.83%

Not Answered 10 2.36%

The Council's Monitoring Officer issued an e-mail to all Service Heads and Directors on 5th September 2022 reminding them of the key points of the Whistleblowing Policy and requesting that they raise concerns with their managers. The Whistleblowing Policy continues to form part of the Fraud Awareness Training that the Investigations Team delivers to other service areas around the Council. Two Fraud Awareness training sessions have been delivered in the last 12 months.

5.1

How does your organisation demonstrate a culture of listening to children and adults with care and support needs and taking account of their wishes and feelings?

In the second box **Evidence**, you should **describe an example of how/when you've done/reviewed/checked this IN THE LAST YEAR**

Response

The refugee resettlement schemes take a person centred approach. Individual support plans for each person ensures their own involvement, taking in to account their wishes, feelings and different cultural perspectives. Services are tendered on that basis. In homelessness services we adopt a strengths based approach which takes account of an individual's assets, not just the risks they pose. When developing plans to find someone a new home, their wishes are taken into account as part of this process. Even if the next accommodation is not their final home, it's provided as a stepping stone to their forever home. Youth Ambition ensure staff have a range of skills and knowledge to support young people with care and support needs. We currently have staff roles including: - EET Youth Worker - Mental Health Youth Worker - Female Participation Lead Youth Worker - Mentoring Youth Worker Tenancy Sustainment Officers and Accommodation Sustainment Officers, who work directly with vulnerable families to maintain their tenancies, work closely with families by supporting families at multiagency meetings as well as attendance at case conferences.

Rating



Evidence

Tenancy Sustainment Officers and Accommodation Sustainment Officers have attended Tenants at Risk meetings on a monthly basis throughout 2022, these are chaired by the ASO/TSO team leader.

MARAC meetings monthly alongside a multitude of agencies, including other housing providers, IDVA, Social care, safeguarding, mental health team, probation, health services, turning point, Elmore and connections among others. This meeting promotes joint working, networking and links between the people that attend as well as a really good care and support plan for the victim and perpetrator moving forward. These are attended by TSOs.

MATAC meetings are also attended monthly- these meetings concentrate on the perpetrator of different forms of ASB, crime/DV. Again it is really good information sharing and we try to look at ways to not only protect the public from these perpetrators but also try to get them the support they need.

Multiple Social service care conferences have been attended over the last year in relation to families we work with- services attending could be social care, health services and any other support services that the family are working with- from myself in tenancy sustainment to Elmore, Connections, the mental health team among others.

Monthly meetings involving OCC benefits Department, Welfare reform, Tenancy management and rents to look at better ways of inter working between our teams so that tenants have an easier pathway of support through the council and this leads to better outcomes.

Many of these meetings have continued to happen online however are carried out face to face at the request of the family.

The refugee resettlement scheme tender was awarded in autumn 2021. Support plans are co-produced by families and support workers together. Throughout the past 12 months meetings have been facilitated in conjunction with other support services ensuring the voices of all family members are heard.

Youth Ambition make sure that young people are at the heart of our service, therefore making sure that they are involved in all aspects of our work with them by consulting, having regular check-ins with them before and at the end of the sessions, including asking how they feel taking part in our programme. This has continued throughout 2022.

The city council hosts a countywide access panel to manage access into supported accommodation for people experiencing homelessness. A critical question asked in every case is in relation to the wishes of the individual concerned in respect of what they want accommodation wise, and where they wish to live in the county. Whilst this can't always be met, it is always considered.

5.2

How do you know that safeguarding is personalised, so that children and adults experiencing or receiving safeguarding services are treated sensitively and respectfully, feel safer as a result of your intervention and that outcomes are consistent, regardless of the ethnicity, cultural identity / diversity, gender, sexuality, disability or age of the service user?

Response

In commissioning homelessness services, safeguarding, safety and health and wellbeing are important themes in the tender process. Potential providers must be able to show how they work effectively in these areas, and deliver a personalised service to people. The views of residents are further sought through case closure letters and Customer feedback card with a view to ascertain how the service was delivered and what could be improved. Our Equality and Diversity policy is based on the idea of fairness whilst recognising that that everyone is different and that we may need to deliver services differently to ensure that services are delivered efficiently and effectively. Support plans for individuals will take into account their strengths and wishes, with solutions being co-designed. However the reality of the housing situation in Oxford means that it's often difficult to deliver what individuals want and compromise is usually required. All Youth Ambition sessions which involve young people are evaluated by young people. They also have the opportunity to develop their own sessions based on their own needs. Where people lack decision making capacity, we have worked to develop processes that do not necessarily require talking or writing. An example includes the development of our partnership with the Additional needs partnership which will offer buddies to young people who have particular needs to be fully included in the programmes that run in their areas. Support plans

are developed with customers and upon completion, Tenancy Sustainment Officers send closure letters which are sensitive, respectful, personalised whilst ensuring the service user is happy with the intervention and outcomes are consistent.

Rating



Evidence

Tenancy Sustainment Officers provide closure letters to customers throughout the year.

A client feedback form received by the Tenancy Sustainment team in September 2022 stated that, as a result of Tenancy Sustainment intervention, the family have achieved:

- Increase in health and well-being
- Managing a budget
- Reduction in rent arrears/payments being met consistently
- DHP extended for another 3 months – Hayley Baxter to review once PIP appeal update received
- Review of welfare benefits
- Inspection of property and review of works needed

The concept of safeguarding is explained to families on the refugee resettlement scheme within a few months of their arrival by services commissioned but Oxford City Council.

Since resuming our Youth Ambition open access sessions last September, we've supported many young people with safeguarding issues and throughout the process we ensure that persons involved are fully engaged and consulted. Their views are central to the final outcomes, taking into consideration any equality and diversion barriers that may be at play.

As part of the process of monitoring commissioned services, safeguarding issues are considered and discussed which demonstrates the approach being taken. Reports are provided from commissioned providers in relation to any serious incidents, which often demonstrate an individualised approach to safeguarding.

The Refugee and Migrant Officers works very closely with families to address any concerns that family members have. Meetings are held with Asylum Welcome on a weekly basis at which safeguarding concerns are raised.

5.3

How do you know that outcomes are defined by the individuals concerned or, where people lack decision-making capacity, by their representatives or advocates and advocacy is used appropriately for children and adults with care and support needs who are (or may have been) experiencing abuse?

Response

The School Advocacy project which began in September 2021 creates infrastructure to support and advocate the individual and family, in the event of a safeguarding concern. This will help mitigate lack of interpreting services across the City enabling safeguarding concerns to be identified. Support plans for individuals will take into account their strengths and wishes, with solutions being co-designed. However the reality of the housing situation in Oxford means that it's often difficult to deliver what individuals want and compromise is usually required. All Youth Ambition sessions which involve young people are evaluated by young people. They also have the opportunity to develop their own sessions based on their own needs. Where people lack decision making capacity, we have worked to develop processes that do not necessarily require talking or writing. An example includes the development of our partnership with the Additional needs partnership which will offer buddies to young people who have particular needs to be fully included in the programmes that run in their areas. All staff that come into contact with children and vulnerable adult has safeguarding training ranging from awareness training to specialist training; there is representation on the OSCB Central Children Safeguarding Board. The group is made up of a number of professionals from various agencies such as housing, health, education, social services, police etc. the aim of Board is to inform and share local safeguarding issues and practice to reduce risk of abuse by sharing information and informing the work of the Safeguarding Board. Staff are able to discuss views raised by residents with OCC named Safeguarding Officers who in turn have the opportunity to raise views at the named safeguarding officers meeting which is chaired by Policy and Partnership Manager who has direct link to Safeguarding Boards. Furthermore OCC carry out annual safeguarding questionnaire to all staff giving staff the opportunity to voice their views and that of residents. Tenants at Risk, a multiagency meeting for adults has the key element of the process of successfully working with children and adults. Additionally OCC are members of the Housing Safeguarding Network and MCA whereby safeguarding concerns are discussed. Locality managers continue to work with clients until they no longer require their support. Feedback is requested from clients during and at the end of a case. This information can be used to assess services and if they are the outcomes the individual wanted to achieve.

Rating



Evidence

Housing needs team work collaboratively with other agencies such as Elmore, Connections Support to ensure care plans are put in place to facilitate decision making. Embedded mental health workers advocate on behalf of our customers.

Tenants at Risk meetings have been attended by TSOs throughout 2022.

The School Advocacy project has proven so successful since launching in September 2021, this has been extended to August 2024. 54 cases are currently being supported by this project.

We continue to pay Asylum Welcome to provide an advocacy service. This will be funded until late 2023.

Youth Ambition continue to support a number of young people and adults through our youth Employment, Education and Training Hub. Our EET youth worker explores options that are available to clients in relation to what they need. Where we feel a client struggles with decision making capacity, we will work them and the person who referred them to the hub and in some cases involve parents' insight to help make

an informed decision for the client.

Annual staff questionnaire was live for two weeks in October 2022 and received 423 responses.

A case managed by the locality hubs prior to their restructure in July 2022, involved a family member advocating on behalf of a vulnerable adult. The individual and his advocate were involved and consulted throughout their contact with Oxford City Council and updated as their support and action plan progressed.

5.4

How do you know that the safeguarding process is proportionate, puts individuals in control and where this is not possible (for instance where there is concern that an individual or organisation could harm others) this is fully discussed and the person's views considered as much as possible?

Response

The Syrian VPRS officer holds regular family reviews where each family member can highlight any concerns directly to the officer to follow up on their concerns and look at ways of addressing those issues. The Schools Advocacy project puts individuals in control and each plan is discussed ensuring the person's views are considered. Training and development: all cases are treated on an individual basis and those involved are confidentially informed of the full process from the beginning. All staff that come into contact with children and vulnerable adults have safeguarding training ranging from awareness training to specialist training; there is representation on the OSCB Central Children Safeguarding Board. The group is made up of a number of professionals from various agencies housing, health, education, social services, police etc. the aim of Board is to inform and share local safeguarding issues and practice to reduce risk of abuse by sharing information and informing the work of the Safeguarding Board. Staff are able to discuss views raised by residents with OCC named safeguarding officers who in turn have the opportunity to raise views at the named safeguarding officers meeting which is chaired by Policy and Partnership Manager who has direct link to Safeguarding Boards.

Rating



Evidence

Within the last 12 months, a customer in our temporary accommodation had a mental health crisis. As a result he was referred to embedded mental health worker, he also had the opportunity to attend the multi-agency meetings with a family member and alongside professionals, ensuring he was in control, his views were considered and his voice was heard.

The Schools Advocacy project has been extended until December 2023.

We commission St Mungo's who support rough sleepers. Their staff have undertaken training to ensure they are psychologically informed enabling them to give person or agency control. This also gives the vulnerable person involved the opportunity to make decisions.

The Syrian VPRS officer has held regular family reviews throughout 2022. This can be via telephone calls, emails, virtual meetings or face

to face meetings, as requested by the family.

5.5

How do you know that your organisation's complaints processes are effective and that children and adults with care and support needs are empowered to challenge services when expected standards/responsibilities are not met?

Response

We have a clear complaints procedure. This is readily available on the Oxford City Council website:

https://www.oxford.gov.uk/info/20097/report_it_online/512/make_a_comment_compliment_or_complaint/3 Our complaints procedure is made available on OCC websites and Our Equality and Diversity policy is based on the idea of fairness whilst recognising that that everyone is different and that we may need to deliver services differently to ensure that services are delivered efficiently and effectively. Any complaints received are fully investigated and responded to within the 10 working days service level set by the Council. Complaints are logged to a spreadsheet and the root causes reviewed on a monthly basis to identify if improvements can be made to our working practices. Fusion Lifestyle, Oxford City Council's leisure facility provider, are contractually required to submit to council, in a timely manner, a monthly Client Performance Pack to the council. Tabs include; • Accident & Incidents • Participation • Memberships • Customer Satisfaction • Finance

Rating



Actions

Action	Lead	Due
Work is being undertaken to support children and adults with care and support needs to feel empowered to challenge services	Policy and Partnership Team Manager	01-10-2023

Evidence

From April 2022 to October 2022, 111 stage on complaints were received.

From April 2022 to October 2022, 5 stage 2 complaints were received.

From 1 April 2021 to 31 July 2022, 12 stage 3 complaints were received.

These are all managed by Oxford City Council's Complaints and Performance Officer.

We support customers in challenging or making complaints to commissioned services.

In April 2022 the Law and Governance team who managed the complaints procedure proposed:

Heads of Service regularly monitor complaints data for their service areas.

CMT will receive an annual report on complaints including any lessons learned, actions taken to address complaints, and the outcomes of any ombudsman investigations.

The Council will aim to publish a public annual report on complaints.

Team managers and heads of service will be prioritised for training on effective complaints handling.

We are currently awaiting approval of these recommendations.

In September 2022, the Complaints and Performance Officer role moved to the Policy and Partnership Team which is managed by a DSL.

This provides an opportunity going forward to ensure children and adults with care and support needs are empowered to challenge services when expected standards/responsibilities are not met.
