

Committee: Safeguarding Sub-Committee	Dated: 16/04/2024
Subject: Adult Principal Social Worker Annual Report 2023	Public
Which outcomes in the City Corporation's Corporate Plan does this proposal aim to impact directly?	1, 2, 3,
Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?	N/A
If so, how much?	N/A
What is the source of Funding?	
Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain's Department?	N/A
Report of: Judith Finlay, Executive Director of Community and Children's Services	For Information
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Summary

This report outlines the role and statutory responsibilities of Adult Principal Social Worker (PSW) and highlights the role's impact on the workforce, practice, partnership working and positive outcomes for The City of London community. The PSW role is vital in preparing Adult Social Care for Care Quality Commission (CQC) Assurance Assessment and supporting service transformation to achieve personalisation and improved outcomes for residents in the context of the Care Act 2014, the Mental Health Act 1983, and the Mental Capacity Act 2005. Section 5 of the attached PSW report (see Appendix 1) refers to safeguarding practice.

Recommendation

Members are asked to:

- Note the report.

Main Report

Background

1. Adult PSW is a statutory requirement and is referenced in the regulations of the Care Act 2014, which states that the local authority should: *"Have in place a designated principal social worker in adult care and support. Local authorities should make arrangements to have a qualified and registered social work professional practice lead in place"* Care Act Sec1.27"

2. As a member of the Adult Senior Management Team, the PSW contributes to the strategic leadership of the service. The PSW also develops and implements standards to ensure a cohesive and high performing social work workforce that embraces cultural change and continued service delivery and practice improvements.
3. The standalone, full-time role of PSW in Adult Social Care (ASC) has been in place since January 2023; previously it was a shared role fulfilled by the Head of Service. Having a dedicated PSW was recognised by ASC Peer Challenge (LGA, June 2023) as “a strength to drive practice improvement.”
4. The City of London Adult PSW role is to:
 - influence organisation at strategic level
 - ensure that senior managers are aware of the experience of front-line staff
 - provide operational and motivational leadership of all staff
 - promote Social Work Values
 - support social work performance of social workers, occupational therapists, strengths-based practitioners, and assistant social workers
 - lead on improving practice standards and on ensuring that performance improvements and agreed objectives and targets are met
 - establish and maintain systems for practice governance and service quality monitoring
 - develop and sustain partnership arrangements
 - ensure there are key connections between practice and strategy
 - promote and take part in research
 - support a strengths-based practice and Making Safeguarding Personal culture
 - support the Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion strategy within the workforce and within practice
 - influence the development and maintenance of an organisational culture where principles of social justice, social inclusion and equality are applied to strategic decision making.

Current Position

5. The City of London Adult PSW submitted their Annual Report to the Director of ASC in December 2023, outlining their main activities and their impact on the service, workforce and the people supported by ASC.

Impact of the PSW role

6. Over the last year, PSW have provided a stronger voice for social work practice. They have demonstrated visible leadership and engagement with practitioners,

ensuring the best working conditions and support to staff, as required under Standards for Employers of Social Workers in England 2020.

7. PSW set clear quality practice standards and put the voice of people who use social work services at heart of all social work interventions. This has a positive impact on more diverse engagement with the City of London community on practice and strategy.
8. PSW provides the link between national bodies and the organisation on best practice, case law and development of the social work improvement agenda by their membership in national networks and groups, and by renewing the Teaching Partnership with Goldsmith and South Bank Universities.
9. Through strategic and operational implementation of strengths-based practice and anti-racist practice standards, the PSW ensures the best balance between practice-led and process-supported ways of working with people and communities. This enabled ASC to meet the CQC's Single Assessment Assurance Framework expectations, as per their statement: "I have care and support that enables me to live as I want to, seeing me as a unique person with skills, strengths, and goals."

Highlights from the PSW Annual Report 2023

10. Main achievements:

- implementation and evaluation of strengths-based approach in practice
- development of new Supervision Protocol to provide a framework of core principles and minimum standards for supervision available to staff within ASC
- enrichment of learning and development activities by producing a comprehensive Training Needs Analysis, renewal of the South-East London Teaching Partnership, and creating more career pathways
- development of quality assurance model based on our social work values system, professional standards and capabilities, service improvement plan and transformation agenda.

11. PSW is active member of the City & Hackney Safeguarding Adults Board (City sub-committee and Quality Assurance sub-committee) and promotes good safeguarding practice through internal measures and commissioned independent audits and learning.

12. The Mental Capacity Assessment and safeguarding audits identified areas of good practice, as well as development areas for our social workers, which are now included in the practice development plan 2024.

13. The introduction of the Adult Social Care Quality Assurance Framework provides structure and governance on how the City of London will ensure that the work we do is of the highest quality, leading to better outcomes. It is designed to be

flexible in approach, reactive to emerging needs and provide the methodology for continual review of practices.

- City of London ASC is committed to providing and commissioning high-quality ASC services.
- Quality assurance and continuous improvement is not an additional activity, but an integral part of everyday practice within the ASC service.
- Our quality audits focus on various areas of practice, which align with ASC functions and our statutory obligations.
- Practice Audit Protocol was designed in April 2023 to help our workforce on a journey of continuous self-assessment and improvement. This includes practice audits, direct practice observations, feedback from the adults and carers we support, learning from complaints and compliments, and learning from Safeguarding Adults Reviews.
- The purpose of the ASC practice audit is to support with:
 - promoting evidence-based practice
 - implementing strengths-based practice
 - ensuring outcome-based assessment and care planning processes
 - continuous practice improvement
 - measuring success and performance
 - creating a culture committed to learning and continuous workforce improvement
 - ensuring that our workforce takes responsibility for the quality of their work.

14. During 2023, seven audits were completed covering all aspects of practice. These were followed by Development Action Plans, reviews of the impact of our practice on the wellbeing and safety of the people we support, and celebration of good practice.

15. Quality assurance activities proved that the ASC workforce knows their community well and develops positive relationships with the people they support. Our strengths have been identified as our commitment to strengths-based practice, and our co-ordinated and multi-agency approach to the assessment and support of residents.

16. The key areas for practice development in 2024 are: some elements of safeguarding practice; identification and recording of protected characteristics and diverse needs; and providing strong evidence of the impact of the strengths-based approach application.

17. The Annual Report sets priorities for 2024 that are aligned with the Chief Social Worker's national agenda and The City of London specific requirements and development plans.

Corporate & Strategic Implications

18. There are no strategic implications directly related to this report.

- Financial implications – N/A
- Resource implications – N/A
- Legal implications – N/A
- Risk implications – N/A
- Equalities implications – N/A
- Climate implications – N/A
- Security implications – N/A

Conclusion

19. The PSW role is well established and embedded to influence strategy and service delivery priorities in the City of London. The PSW takes a lead within the department for promoting and identifying social work learning and development, working closely with Corporate Learning & Development and the People's Directorate Workforce Development Lead, to ensure that workforce development priorities are delivered.

20. There is good oversight in place to monitor and influence organisational culture – its impacts, drivers, and influences. Moving forward, the PSW will continue to promote a relationship-based approach to leadership and advocacy, using feedback from people who use social work services and co-producing good practice with adults, carers, and social workers. The PSW takes a place-based approach to integration, and to support this we will form critical links between our vision, values and culture and ensure that these links are embedded in governance and service delivery arrangements.

Appendices

- Appendix 1 – Annual Report 2023, For the work of the Adults Principal Social Worker (PSW) Wioletta Lewandowska

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