

Future Arrangements for Safeguarding Adults in Derby

SUMMARY

- 1.1 The 'No Secrets' guidance was published by the Department of Health in 2000. It outlines the local authorities' lead responsibility to safeguard vulnerable adults, to determine policy and practice, co-ordinate activity between agencies, facilitate joint training and monitor and review progress. It recommends that a multi-agency board or committee be established to achieve this.
- 1.2 The 'No Secrets' guidance led to the establishment of the Derby and Derbyshire joint Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Board. The Board is led by Derbyshire County Council on behalf of both authorities.
- 1.3 In the years since 2000 adults safeguarding work has increased. Both the numbers of referrals and the range of responsibilities have led to adult safeguarding work now being afforded a higher priority within adult social care services locally and nationally.
- 1.4 The 'No Secrets' guidance is currently being reviewed following a national consultation process. The interim review report highlights the need for all of the functions of local committees to continue, but be strengthened through making the establishment of multi agency boards a statutory requirement. This, in part, is intended to increase the involvement of local partners and strengthen joint working. The 'No Secrets' review also emphasises the need for boards to ensure quality assurance processes are in place across agencies, and ensure effective safeguarding risk management in relation to the personalisation of adult social care.
- 1.5 Also in the intervening years, the quality of safeguarding practice and joint area working in relation to safeguarding adults has become prominent in the Care Quality Commission inspection of adult social care services. The inspection process now consists of an in depth review of all aspects of safeguarding work, the outcome of which has a direct impact on the overall judgement within the CAA process.
- 1.6 As a result of all of the above factors consideration has been given to establishing a distinct adults safeguarding board for Derby. This proposal will be considered by Cabinet on 15 December 2009.
- 1.7 An Adults Safeguarding Team is being established. This brings together current staff working in the field of Safeguarding together with some new posts that are currently being recruited to.

RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 That the Adults Services and Health Commission note developments in local Safeguarding Activity and practice and the recommendation to Cabinet to establish a Derby City Safeguarding Board.

REASON FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 Since 'No Secrets' was first published in 2000 the priority afforded to safeguarding vulnerable adults has grown. There have been a number of well publicised national cases demonstrating the need for joint agency recognition of, and response to, safeguarding issues. Furthermore recent cases have emphasised the need for more public awareness, more prevention work and strong local leadership to ensure agencies work together to protect vulnerable adults. The recent example of the Fiona Pilkington case in Leicestershire is an example. Whilst involvement from partner agencies is positive we consider it would be strengthened by a distinct Derby focus.
- 3.2 Up until 2007 Safeguarding Adults activity was very low in the city. In May 2007, having acknowledged this as an area requiring improvement, a Safeguarding Adults Co-ordinator was appointed. Since then there has been considerable progress in developing more robust safeguarding arrangements. This includes :
- Increased managerial oversight of casework to ensure sustainable outcomes for vulnerable adults who have been abused
 - Raising Public and Professional awareness of Safeguarding issues. This includes provision of a newsletter, public information poster and guidance for Councillors, new staff and partner organisations.
 - Clarifying referral pathways across the City Council area
 - Increasing the involvement of partners in Safeguarding investigations
 - Improving Safeguarding through commissioning arrangements
 - Working collaboratively with partners to increase Safeguarding training.
 - On-going implementation of the Mental Capacity Act
 - Implementation of the Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards from April 2009

The local safeguarding arrangements are a central focus within the current Care Quality Commission inspection process. There are extensive requirements in terms of prevention, public awareness, recognition, and quality of response to individual situations; both for adult social care as the lead agency and partner agencies.

Despite progress as outlined above there is a need to continue to work to improve practice and audit our performance, both as a local authority and as a partnership.

- 3.3 In 2007 – 08 Adult Social Care recorded 80 Adult Safeguarding investigations. In 2008 – 09 activity significantly increased to 266 cases. Since April 09 the trend has continued to rise with 208 investigations up to 31 October 2009. The increase is likely to be related to better public awareness. However, the setting up of a new team and the appointment of a Safeguarding Service Manager will allow further opportunity to consider the issue of 'thresholds' for referral in to Safeguarding. This is currently an issue rising from Care Quality Commission inspection.

In addition to the increase in more traditional adult safeguarding work as noted above there are also new requirements in relation to the Mental Capacity Act, and Deprivation of Liberty Assessments. In addition new requirements are emerging such as the need to undertake serious case reviews and ensure learning informs local joint agency practice.

The nature and level of the adult safeguarding workload is therefore very different today as compared to 2000, and requires stronger local leadership.

- 3.4 A local Safeguarding Board will strengthen the governance arrangements and enhance the safeguarding of adults in Derby through the closer involvement of key partners. It will localise the quality and risk assurance processes, enabling practice involvement. In addition it would enable a closer oversight of joint agency training and development for professionals working within the city. A Derby board will establish mechanisms for developing, implementing and monitoring policies, strategies and services for vulnerable people. It will also contribute to improved collaboration and communication which are critical to effective Safeguarding.
- 3.5 Since May 2008 Performance Improvement, Learning and Development and Mental Capacity Act Groups have been established for Derby. Whilst technically they are sub-groups of the countywide board they have not been well integrated with its work. A local Board will give more direction to these work streams thereby improving service delivery to vulnerable people.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 4.1 Consultation has taken place with Derbyshire County Council. There is joint agreement and support for the development of the Derby Safeguarding Adults Board. This will also allow the County board to focus specifically on county issues.
- 4.2 Consultation has also taken place with Derby based partners including:
- NHS Derby City
 - Derby Royal Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust
 - Derbyshire Probation,
 - Derbyshire Mental Health Services Trust,
 - Derbyshire Constabulary
 - Derbyshire Fire and Rescue
 - East Midlands Ambulance Service
 - Disability Direct – our local user Led Organisation
 - Voluntary sector partners.

There is generally positive support for establishing a separate Board in the City. The common view amongst respondents is that the Board will support a local focus on strategic issues. This is viewed as likely to lead to more effective working arrangements. It is also considered that a local Board will be conducive to sharing best and innovative practice and motivating agencies to work together. Partners working across both City and County are keen that wherever possible the Derby City and Derbyshire Boards should share policies and approaches.

- 4.3 A Derby Safeguarding Adults Board would comprise of representatives from statutory and voluntary partner agencies, including those representing users and carers. It would be led initially by the Senior Assistant Director for Adult Social Care with an Independent Chair being appointed by April 2010. Increasingly Independent chairs bring a level of challenge and expertise, and this is likely to be recommended in the final No Secrets review report. Many other councils are now considering such appointments.
- 4.4 The three existing groups, Performance Improvement, Learning and Development and Mental Capacity would continue with the addition of a Communication Group.
- 4.5 The Board will need a budget to support its work, in particular payment for the independent chair, promotional materials and incidental costs. This has been identified within existing adult social care resources. In addition however contributions would be sought from partners.
- 4.6 The Board will need to agree full terms of reference. These will include undertaking Serious Case Reviews and developing protocols for interagency work to ensure that lessons are learnt and best practice promoted.
- 4.7 A specific logo for the Board will be designed and agreed with partners.
- 4.8 Adult Social Care is enhancing capacity to support safeguarding work and the increased activity and requirements noted. This has been achieved through efficiencies in the use of staffing across the service. The team will also have a Quality Assurance role and administrative support. It will link to nurse assessor teams in the PCT and the Best Interest Assessors for Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards. The creation of this team also ensures capacity is available within the service to support the work of the Board.

OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 5.1 Remain in the Derby and Derbyshire Safeguarding Vulnerable Adult Partnership.
- 5.2 This is likely to dilute the commitment of local partners, and places the responsibility for quality assurance too far away from the council. It will not support the stronger local leadership for this agenda, which is both necessary and already emerging.

IMPLICATIONS

Financial

- 1.1 It is intended to appoint an Independent Chair. The cost for this person would be approximately £500 per day. The Chair would be required to work for two days per month resulting in a cost of £12,000 plus oncosts per annum. In addition an amount of approximately £3000 pa will be required for promotional and prevention work. The total cost is therefore around £15000 pa. Contributions will be sought from partners. This amount will decrease depending on the level of contributions agreed. The funding for this development will be contained within existing adult social care resources.

Legal

- 2.1 Statutory guidance 'No Secrets' in 2000 states that Derby City Council should be the lead agency for co-ordinating Safeguarding Adults activity in its Council area.

Personnel

- 3.1 The Independent Chair would be employed by the City Council as a 'host' employer on behalf of the Safeguarding Board.

Equalities impact

- 4.1 The Board will help ensure that vulnerable people can be protected from abuse, neglect and exploitation.
- 4.2 The Derby Safeguarding Adults Board Safeguarding Adults Procedures have been consulted upon and agreed. The policy and procedures are subject to an Equalities Impact Assessment.

Corporate priorities

- 5.1 Promoting excellent services and Value for money.
- 5.2 Helping us all to be active, healthy and independent.