

REPORT TO: Safer Policy & Performance Board
DATE: 20 September 2011
REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director, Communities
SUBJECT: Safeguarding Adults
WARDS: All

1.0 **PURPOSE OF REPORT**

1.1 To update the Board on key issues and progression of the agenda for Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults.

2.0 **RECOMMENDATION: That the Board notes the contents of the report.**

3.0 **SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

3.1 Halton's Learning Disabilities Partnership Board held a Business Planning Event where 'Keeping Safe' was a key theme. The resulting Business Plan includes priorities and actions drawn up during the event around safeguarding vulnerable adults and hate crime/hate incidents, including the following, some of which are already being progressed:

- Help people to understand the danger signs
- Support for people and staff to understand how to keep safe
- Talk to more people who may have been a victim of abuse or hate crime.

The following priorities drawn up during the event around personalisation also have the potential to impact on the way in which we support people to stay safe from abuse and exploitation:

- Train personal assistants
- Check that support plans are making a difference to people's lives
- Look at how we can check how good support plans are
- Check that people are being supported to become more independent.

3.2 The interface between the Quality & Performance sub-group and the Policies & Procedures sub-group (of the Safeguarding Adults Board) has been reviewed to ensure clearly defined remits and communication arrangements and efficiency of operation, where their functions interface and could overlap. Each of the sub-groups' terms of reference and work plans will be revised accordingly.

- 3.3 An E-Learning course is being developed to provide training on Dignity in Care. Such training has the potential to prevent abuse where it relates to issues of dignity.
- 3.3 The local Hate Crime Strategy and Action Plan have been reviewed to ensure content relating to safeguarding vulnerable adults.
- 3.4 A combined Action Plan has been developed and is being progressed to combine learning from three different issues:
1. The 'Care and Compassion' Ombudsman's Report into the hospital care and treatment of a number of older people
 2. The 'Six Lives' Ombudsman's report into the care and treatment across health and social care received by six adults with learning disabilities
 3. The development of an Adult Safeguarding pathway within NHS Trusts with which Halton interfaces, taking into account issues of concern that have occurred locally that provide learning opportunities, and national Department of Health guidance.
- 3.5 Halton's Safeguarding Adults Serious Case Review (SCR) Procedure was scheduled for review, following the SCR conducted locally in 2010. In collaboration with neighbouring local authorities and Cheshire Constabulary, it was agreed that a 'Pan Cheshire' approach would be sought and this has resulted in a draft document being produced for consultation: 'Pan Cheshire Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Inter-agency Serious Case Review Procedure'. This takes into account the Pan Cheshire Safeguarding Children SCR Procedure.
- 3.6 Safer Workforce has been added as a standing item to the agenda for the provider forum (of service providers who contract with Halton Borough Council to provide care and support services), which meets regularly. Safeguarding Adults is already a standing item.
- 3.7 A new cross-directorate panel procedure is being developed for dealing with positive CRB disclosures i.e. those that show cautions or convictions or other information relevant to recruitment decisions. The aim of the cross-directorate approach is to provide a consistent, high standard process in all instances that might involve applications to work as paid or unpaid employees who could have contact with vulnerable adults or children, as many such positions occur in directorates other than Communities and Children and Enterprise.
- 3.8 The Local Government Ombudsman recently published a report about a complaint against the London Borough of Camden, where a child was transported to school the Council's contractors and the driver [who had received criminal convictions abroad for offences against children] sexually abused the child in question. The report was shared by the Safer Workforce sub-group of Halton's Safeguarding Adults Board and

Safeguarding Children's Board, with other relevant departments [e.g. Licensing, Transport Coordination, Commissioning], who have been asked to feed back any actions arising, to the sub-group.

- 3.9 Eight Elected Members (four of whom were newly elected in May 2011) have recently attended dedicated Safeguarding Adults Basic Awareness training.
- 3.10 Safeguarding Adults & Safeguarding Children brief presentations will be incorporated into Halton Borough Council's Corporate Induction Programme from October 2011.
- 3.11 Training courses for 2011-12 have been advertised widely to organisations and representative contacts across all sectors and dedicated advertising has been included e-newsletters issued by, for example, Halton & St Helens Voluntary & Community Action, Bridgewater Healthcare and the 5 Boroughs Partnership. Courses available include:
- E-Learning
 - Referrers course
 - Train the Trainer
 - Investigators course (for Halton Borough Council and NHS staff)
 - Charing Skills course (for Halton Borough Council managers)
- 3.12 A Service Users' Finances Policy, Procedure and Practice Guidance document has been produced for Halton Supported Housing Network. It will be shared with the Safeguarding Adults Board members and contracted providers, with a recommendation to ensure something similar is available in organisations that have responsibility for the security of service user finances.
- 3.13 A Positive Behaviour Service [relating to adults and children] has been set up which has the potential to reduce the number of safeguarding adults referrals that involve inappropriate behaviours by service users towards others. The service provides support and guidance to both prevent and respond appropriately to those challenges, and is working initially with people with learning disabilities.
- 3.14 New laws to help make it easier for children and vulnerable victims and witnesses to give evidence in court come into force in June 2011. The changes include:
- Making all under-18 year olds and witnesses in gun and knife crime cases automatically eligible for Special Measures. These include: giving evidence by live-link or from behind screens and the assistance of an intermediary to help them give their best evidence in court.
 - Giving child witnesses (under-18s) more choice about the way they give their evidence, allowing them to opt-out of giving video-

recorded evidence and instead give evidence in court.

- Giving victims of rape and serious sexual offences the opportunity to give evidence via video-recorded statements automatically - something currently limited to child witnesses. Ensuring children and vulnerable and intimidated adults can have a supporter in the room when they are giving video-link evidence. <http://www.justice.gov.uk/news/press-releases/moj/newsrelease270611b.htm>

4.0 **POLICY, LEGAL AND FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 There are no policy, legal or financial implications in noting and commenting on this report.

4.2 All agencies retain their separate statutory responsibilities in respect of safeguarding adults, whilst Halton Borough Council, through its Community Directorate, fulfils its responsibility for coordination of the arrangements. These arrangements are in accordance with 'No Secrets' (DH 2000) national policy guidance and Local Authority Circular (2000) 7/Health Service Circular 2000/007.

5.0 **IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES**

5.1 **Children & Young People in Halton**

Safeguarding Adults Board membership includes the Divisional Manager for the Children's Safeguarding Unit in the Children and Enterprise Directorate.

Halton Safeguarding Children Board membership includes adult social care representatives.

Joint protocols exist between Council services for adults and children.

The HSAB chair and sub-group chairs meet regularly and will ensure a strong interface between, for example, Safeguarding Adults, Safeguarding Children, Domestic Abuse, Hate Crime, Community Safety, Personalisation, Mental Capacity & Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards.

5.2 **Employment, Learning & Skills in Halton**

None identified.

5.3 **A Healthy Halton**

The safeguarding of adults whose circumstances make them vulnerable to abuse is fundamental to their health and well-being. People are likely to be more vulnerable when they experience ill-health.

5.4 **A Safer Halton**

The effectiveness of Safeguarding Adults arrangements is fundamental to making Halton a safe place of residence for adults whose circumstances make them vulnerable to abuse.

5.5 **Halton's Urban Renewal**

None identified.

6.0 **RISK ANALYSIS**

6.1 Failure to address a range of Safeguarding Adults issues could expose individuals to abuse and leave the Council vulnerable to complaint, criticism and potential litigation.

7.0 **EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

7.1 It is essential that the Council addresses issues of equality, in particular those regarding age, disability, gender, sexuality, race, culture and religious belief, when considering its safeguarding policies and plans. Policies and procedures relating to Safeguarding Adults are impact assessed with regard to equality.

8.0 **LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972**

8.1 None under the Meaning of the Act