

**REPORT TO:** Executive Board

**DATE:** 9 September 2010

**REPORTING OFFICER:** Strategic Director, Adults & Community

**SUBJECT:** Intimate Relationships and Sexual Health Needs for Adults

**WARDS:** All

**1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

1.1 To present the Board with the revised Intimate Relationships and Sexual Health Needs for Adults Policy, Procedure and Practice.

**2.0 RECOMMENDATION: That Executive Board:**

- i) **Note contents of the report**
- ii) **Agree revised policy, procedure and practice document (attached at Appendix 1)**

**3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

3.1 The original policy 'Sexual Health Policy, Strategy and Guidelines' (2003) was developed under the previous council structure of Social Care, Housing and Health Directorate. A review was required to update the policy in line with the Authority's current structure and legislation.

3.2 A review took place during 2009/10 to ensure all managers, staff and volunteers within the Adults & Community Directorate had current and concise procedures for addressing a range of sexual health issues that they may encounter with service users.

3.3 The review involved input from and consultation with a number of sources including :-

- Service Development Officers
- Adult Protection Co-ordinator
- Legal Services
- Health & Social Care Workers (inc. Divisional Managers – Adults & Older People)
- Halton Speak Out
- Halton and St Helens PCT (Commissioning Manager and Lead Nurse/Operational manager for Community Sexual Health Services)

3.4 Following this review, the main amendments to this policy included reference to :-

- Sexual Offences Act 2005
- Mental Capacity Act 2005
- General Social Care Council's Codes of Practice
- Information Sharing
- Adult Safeguarding

3.5 The revised policy and associated guidance aims to draw together the legal framework, whilst also recognising:-

- Service Users' individual uniqueness and diversity
- Their right to privacy and independence, and to make informed decisions which might include risks
- That some individuals' circumstances might make them vulnerable to abuse and may need support with minimizing or eliminating those risks
- The importance of their physical and emotional wellbeing.

#### 4.0 **POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

4.1 This policy should be used in conjunction with, and is not intended to replace, the Adult Protection in Halton Inter Agency Policy, Procedures and Guidance where there are concerns about sexual abuse.

#### 5.0 **OTHER IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 No other implications identified at this time

#### 6.0 **IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES**

##### 6.1 **Children & Young People in Halton**

None identified

##### 6.2 **Employment, Learning & Skills in Halton**

None identified

##### 6.3 **A Healthy Halton**

The purpose of this policy is to set the context/framework for a consistent approach by Halton Borough Council (HBC) Staff in addressing the personal, intimate relationships and sexual health needs of Adults engaged in services commissioned or delivered directly by Halton Borough Council.

The policy endeavors to guide professionals who need to assess and manage matters of rights, responsibilities and risks in regard to

intimate and sexual relationships.

6.4 **A Safer Halton**

None identified

6.5 **Halton's Urban Renewal**

None identified

7.0 **RISK ANALYSIS**

7.1 Having a consistent approach to addressing sexual health of service users will enhance the protection of adults who use the care services.

8.0 **EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

8.1 Vulnerable adults have the right to have the same opportunities in life as others. This Policy aims to support this by taking a proactive approach to deal with sexual health and relationships of service users.

8.2 A Comprehensive Impact Review and Assessment has been completed on this policy and in the future will be reviewed by the Adults & Community Directorate Equalities Group.