



Report of the Chief Officer Social Care Commissioning

Adult Social Care Scrutiny Board

Date: 11th February 2009

Subject: Adult Inspection Progress Report Against Key Recommendations

Electoral Wards Affected:

Ward Members consulted
(referred to in report)

Specific Implications For:

Equality and Diversity

Community Cohesion

Narrowing the Gap

Executive Summary

This report includes a summary of progress to date against specific recommendations following the Inspection of social care services and the resulting action plan. This follows from the request made by this Board in December 2008 and refined in the subsequent proposals working group.. In accordance with those recommendations this report specifically addresses progress in relation to recommendations 3, 7, 8 & 25.

The report shows that there has been progress in strengthening arrangements to ensure that vulnerable adults are effectively safeguarded across Leeds. Key posts established at the end of November last year are now in the process of being recruited to, these will provide added capacity and impetus to further improve outcomes for vulnerable adults once in place. Multi agency and adult social care procedures are being amended to incorporate descriptions of the tasks to be undertaken within these new roles.

Multi-agency partnership arrangements have also been strengthened to ensure that all key agencies are involved at an appropriate level of seniority and the responsibilities of these made explicit and agreed by the Safeguarding Partnership. Work is also being undertaken to further assure practice at the frontline.

In addition a number of sub-groups have been convened by the Safeguarding Adult Partnership Board with delegated responsibility for the development and oversight of a number of important areas of work including Procedure development, Training and Performance Management. Two further groups are being convened, one to inform decision making within the partnership (Serious Case Review Group) and one to actively involve the wider stakeholder constituency.

These revised arrangements will provide the basis for producing the annual report of the work of the Board, reporting to elected members and the relevant governance structures of partners our performance in relation to all aspects safeguarding activity.

1.0 Purpose Of This Report

1.1) In December 2008 Scrutiny Board agreed that an update of progress against specific actions in the Adult Inspection Action Plan would be provided on a monthly basis to this Board. This is the first report against specific recommendations agreed by the Proposals working group.

2.0 Background Information

2.1) The Adult Inspection Action Plan was agreed by the Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI) and by Executive Board in December 2008.

2.2) This is the first report to Scrutiny Board against specific recommendations. It includes an update on progress against the following recommendations relating to Safeguarding arrangements in Leeds:

Recommendation 3: The Council and its Partners should agree and implement improved procedures ensuring that these:

- Set out specific and monitorable expectations on staff from all agencies.
- Implement a system of compliance monitoring processes that ensure consistent practice.

Recommendation 7: The Adult Safeguarding Board should agree an adult safeguarding serious case review process and mechanisms for sharing performance issues and learning with partner agencies.

Recommendation 8: The Leadership Board should strengthen its leadership role and reporting practice issues to elected members.

Recommendation 25: The Council and its partners should strengthen governance arrangements so that elected members and relevant officers in partner organizations have a clear understanding of the performance of adult safeguarding.

3. Main Issues

3.1) Recommendation 3.

3.1.1) Significantly revised multi-agency procedures were produced by the Safeguarding Adults Partnership in July 2008, since that time, these revised procedures have been through a series of amendments and alterations to ensure that they fully capture the requirements highlighted by the inspection and the introduction of more recent national policy initiatives.

3.1.2) These are now available in their current form to inform front line practitioners pending their full implementation which is scheduled for April this year. Final amendments to both the multi agency and adult social care policies and procedures are currently being made to incorporate descriptions of the roles to be played by the new specialist posts which are currently under recruitment. Because of the fundamental nature of the revision to the

procedures and in line with national best practice, each of the statutory partners is now engaged in the process of formal ratification, this will be complete by the end of March.2009.

3.1.3) For all other non-statutory partners such as independent and voluntary sector organisations, the Board has indicated that it would be desirable for individual organisations to undertake a similar ratification process, in view of the very large number of potential organisations involved a longer time has been allowed for the completion of that process.

3.1.4) However, we are aware that the procedures will need to be kept under regular and detailed review, this will be undertaken by the sub-group established within the new board structure with the intention that amendments recommended by the sub-group in response to national and local policy shifts, can then be ratified by the Board itself and communicated back to both statutory organisations and associates..

3.1.5) The procedures include clarity regarding the relevant actions to be undertaken based upon an assessment of an individuals circumstances and the necessity for involvement of key agencies at various points in the safeguarding process. The procedures include clearer guidance for staff with particular responsibilities in relation to Safeguarding work. This includes the work of Safeguarding Adult Enquiry Coordinators (SEAC) who are responsible for investigating safeguarding concerns and ensuring that issues are addressed by an effective action plan.

3.1.6) Attached to the procedures are standardised templates to record key information in relation to safeguarding activity. This is complemented by developments in the electronic information system, ESCR, to capture information which ensures that key information which will measure standards of practice is captured.

3.1.7) A multi-agency approach to quality assuring compliance to the procedures and consistent practice is being developed by the Performance, Audit and Quality Assurance group. A new post of Senior Quality Assurance Officer is in the process of being recruited to with interviews being held in mid January. This post will be responsible for working across agencies in developing a comprehensive quality assurance system and reporting schedule for organisations. In the interim, an ongoing file audit review is being undertaken solely within Adult Social Care by an independent expert¹, the methodology employed will provide the basis for a comprehensive quality assurance system based upon independent file auditing and casework follow-up, this will be employed by the Senior Quality Assurance Officer as they take up their post in March or April. Our expert advisor has been asked to produce a final summary report based on the assessment of the file audit at the conclusion of her work in April.

3.1.8) The above work will be complemented by a strengthening of arrangements at the frontline. A number of practitioner posts have been created to increase capacity and support organisations to implement the revised procedures. Taken overall, these posts will be key in embedding best practice in the work of all key agencies across Leeds.

3.1.9) Within adult social care ten Senior Practitioner posts are currently under recruitment, they will be responsible for enhancing capacity at the front line, providing an overview to managers of the conduct and quality of individual casework. The deployment of these staff will be complimented by the introduction of a revised supervision policy, this includes a requirement for managers to regularly supervise the work of professional staff against key standards of practice in safeguarding work and risk management.

3.2) Recommendation 7.

3.2.1) A process for conducting serious case reviews is important for dealing with systemic failures to safeguard vulnerable adults. The purpose of such reviews is to assist all

¹ Dr Margaret Flynn – Sheffield University and Chair of Lancashire Safeguarding Adults Partnership

organizations understand why failings in practice have occurred, to provide learning from that and to put in place actions to prevent the same or similar occurring in the future. This is often most clearly seen in, for example, cases of institutional abuse and breakdowns in the effectiveness of interagency working on individual cases..

3.2.2) A serious case review sub-group of the Partnership Board has been convened with agreed terms of reference. This group will be responsible for overseeing the serious case review function and reporting this to the Board. It is anticipated that the group will itself review casework episodes and make recommendations to the Board with regard to actions that can be taken by the partners to improve how they work together. However, the group will also wish to make recommendations with regard to the need to undertake independent case reviews where they believe this is warranted.

3.2.3) To that end, a serious case review process has been ratified by the Board and statutory partners. Two cases have been identified which will be used as a pilot for this process and that work is underway. A report will be submitted to the Partnership board following the completion of these reviews and learning from the cases will be disseminated to partners. Following the conclusion and report of these two cases, the process will be reviewed in the light of the thresholds at which a review should be conducted independently and the procedure then finessed to be used to review all subsequent cases meeting that criteria.

3.3) Recommendation 8 and 25.

3.3.1) Work has been undertaken to strengthen the structure and membership of the Safeguarding Partnership board so that elected members can be assured that robust arrangements are in place and that there is appropriate accountability and representation of key organisations and stakeholders from across the city. A Memorandum of Understanding (attached) has been agreed which specifies the roles and responsibilities of all member organisations, including Adult Social Care in relation to Adult Safeguarding across Leeds. Mindful of the requirement to ensure good governance at each stage in the process, the memorandum of understanding is scheduled to be formally approved by the Director of Adult Social Services under her delegated decision powers as set out in the Constitution. This will then match the requirement placed on our statutory partners to undertake identical steps within their own governance structures.

3.3.2) Importantly it sets out the relationship between the Statutory responsibilities which sit with the Director of Adult Social Services and the formal accountability that has been established with the Chair of the Safeguarding Partnership Board.

3.3.3) To support and service this infrastructure a new senior appointment is in the process of being recruited. It is envisaged that the Head of Safeguarding will be in post between March and May 2009.

3.3.4) The Head of Safeguarding and Risk will ensure that the sub-groups of the Board referred to earlier, become an effective 'engine room' for undertaking the work needing to be undertaken. The Performance and Quality Assurance Subgroup will be responsible for collating monitoring information in relation to safeguarding interventions and providing regular reports to the Partnership Board. These reports will be included in future quarterly performance reporting commencing in May 2009. Such reports will be made widely available and included in future Scrutiny Board reports.

3.3.5) The Terms of Reference for the Performance and Quality Assurance subgroup have been agreed and the first task will be to undertake an audit of current monitoring and reporting within agencies from which to produce an analysis of the current shortfalls leading on to a specification of the requirements needed to establish a comprehensive and coordinated approach to assuring safeguarding practice across the city.

4. Implications For Council Policy And Governance

None

5. Legal And Resource Implications

5.1) On the 20th January 2009 a report was presented to the Audit and Governance Committee of the Council at their request. The report highlighted issues of governance raised in the Independence, Wellbeing and Choice Inspection specifically in relation to the operation of the Leeds Safeguarding Adults Partnership Board. Following discussion of the content of the report the committee determined that:

- (a) That the contents of the report, the Independence Wellbeing and Choice Inspection Report and the associated Action Plan be noted;
- (b) That further reports be submitted to the Committee regarding progress in addressing concerns expressed in the inspection report relating to the safeguarding arrangements and risk management; and
- (c) That the Committee be advised of any amendments to the 'No Secrets' guidance which have governance implications.

6 Conclusions

This report provides an update to Scrutiny Board of progress which has been made against recommendations relating to Adult Safeguarding arrangements in Leeds as outlined in the Adult Inspection Action Plan.

7. Recommendations

7.1) Members are asked to note the contents of this report in relation to the Adult Inspection Adult Plan.

7.2) Members are asked to note the involvement of the Corporate Audit and Governance Committee in the overview of risk management arrangements and emerging governance arrangements arising out of the anticipated revisions to 'No Secrets' guidance.

Background papers

None