

Report to: **Scrutiny Committee for Adult Social Care**

Date: **12 June 2008**

By: **Chairman of the tabletop scrutiny review board**

Title of report: **Tabletop scrutiny review of improvements to the Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Service**

Purpose of report: **To present the findings and recommendations of the review**

RECOMMENDATION – that the Committee note the work of the tabletop review board and request an update report back to the committee in 12 months on the development of the Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Service

1. Financial Appraisal

1.1 Development of the Safeguarding Adults Service along the lines outlined in Option 3 will involve the following changes:

- Delete the Head of Service (Safeguarding Adults) post, resulting in a cost saving of £77,000 and alignment with comparative Councils by appointing a Lead Safeguarding Adults Manager at LMG 3, at a cost of £57,000 (includes on costs). This is subject to job evaluation.
- Additional resources will be required to support the appointment of four Safeguarding Adults Co-ordinators, at Single Status Scale 13 (Senior Practitioner), at a cost of £45,000 per post (includes on costs). This is subject to job evaluation.
- Existing administrative resources will be refocused to support the Safeguarding Adults Manager and Co-ordinators at no additional cost.

1.2 Total additional resources required to support this development will be £160,000: £110,000 in 2008/09 and a further £50,000 in 2009/10.

2. Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Service

2.1 The CSCI inspection of Older People's Services in 2006 identified a lack of consistency in the response to safeguarding allegations both across the county and between client groups. This was also borne out by an increase in complaints relating to the Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Service.

2.2 A departmental review on the Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Service commenced in 2007. The objectives of the review included looking at if there was a consistent approach to investigating safeguarding adult allegations across all services, establishing whether safeguarding adults' activities were leading to greater protection of the public and considering how the service should be developed in the future to ensure that all safeguarding needs are met.

3. Tabletop scrutiny review

3.1 The tabletop scrutiny review board consisted of Councillor Martyn Forster (Chairman), Councillor Graham Gubby and Councillor Olive Woodall. The aim of the review was to:

- develop a greater understanding of the Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Service;
- consider the remit of the departmental review;
- consider the findings from the evidence gathering exercise of the departmental audit; and
- provide feedback on future improvement and development of the service.

3.2 The review board met with officers on two occasions on 28 February and 1 May 2008. The findings of the review board were then fed into the Adult Social Care Departmental Management Team meeting on 21st May, when a decision on the development of the Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Service was taken.

4. Findings and recommendations

4.1 The preventative agenda around safeguarding was considered by the review board to be a key area of work for the department. Evidence presented to the review board revealed that the actions of some people, whilst carried out with the best intentions, were often actually a form of abuse (eg restraining a person in a chair with the aim of preventing them from falling and hurting themselves is physical abuse). Educating client, carers, family members and staff about abuse would ensure that they are better able to recognise when abuse is taking place, as well as understand how changes in their own behaviour would ensure that they themselves did not become an abuser.

4.2 The Departmental audit had looked at the various safeguarding systems in place at comparator authorities to consider if they would be suitable models for East Sussex to use:

- Option 1 - service to remain the same.
- Option 2 - a dedicated safeguarding team.
- Option 3 - Safeguarding Co-ordinators within service areas.

4.3 The review board discussed the opportunities and risks put forward for each option. It agreed that option 1 would not be a suitable as, given the large number of safeguarding cases in East Sussex; the risk to clients would remain too high. Similarly concerns were raised that option 2 would separate safeguarding work from the teams who dealt with the clients and carers on a day to day basis and risked isolating safeguarding from the assessment and care management process.

4.4 Option 3 was put forward by the department as the best model for developing the safeguarding work in East Sussex. The review board supported this option, particularly as it ensured that safeguarding work was integrated within the teams within each service area. It noted that this model had been shown to work well in other authorities (eg Kent) and, through its preventative work, could help reduce the number of safeguarding incidents. Attached at appendix 1 is a draft structure chart for how option 3 would be implemented.

4.5 The review board suggested that the business case for option 3 be developed further to ensure that the importance of managing safeguarding issues was clearly highlighted. It acknowledged that there was a cost implication with option 3, but this needed to be balanced against the risk the department could face if the mishandling of a safeguarding case led to a judicial review.

4.6 The review board also made the following comments:

- Feedback to be received on how the risks highlighted within option 3 are being managed.
- Safeguarding issues need to be integrated into the new ICT systems (eg CareFirst 6, CareAssess and Controcc) and there should be officer involvement with the ICT Project board to ensure that this happens.
- Safeguarding information and training sessions for both clients and carers should be included in the community hubs being developed in the DPS older people day centres.
- The Putting People First agenda and individual budgets could increase the risk of abuse for vulnerable adults and therefore safeguarding needs to be a key area of work when developing this.

4.7 The findings from the tabletop review were fed into the Adult Social Care Departmental Management Team meeting, where a decision was made to develop the Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Service in line with option 3, subject to funding.

4.8 The review board would want to monitor the development of the Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults Service and receive feedback on how comments in 4.6 have been taken forward. It therefore recommends that an update report be brought back to the committee in 12 months.

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Chairman of the Review Board

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Local Member(s): All
Background documents: None

Appendix 1

