

## Meeting of Executive Members for Housing and Adult Social Services and Advisory Panel

29<sup>th</sup> October 2007

Report of the Director of Housing and Adult Social Services

### North Yorkshire and York Safeguarding Adults Partnership Board (former Adult Protection Committee) Annual Report

#### Purpose of Report

- 1 To inform the Executive Members of the work of the Safeguarding Adults Board (which has superseded the Adult Protection Committee) for City of York and North Yorkshire as set out in its annual report.

#### Background

- 2 The Adult Protection Committee was set up in 2003 to respond to the requirements of Department of Health guidance on developing and implementing multi-agency policy and procedures for the protection of vulnerable adults against abuse. The title given for this initiative was "No Secrets". The initiative arose from growing awareness of the need to have clear and immediate action across social services, the NHS and the Police to tackle incidents of abuse against adults and older people to match those required for the protection of children. However, Adult protection arrangements differ from those to protect children and there is still no statutory requirement to have a committee.
- 3 From the outset it was agreed that City of York and North Yorkshire County Council would collaborate to set up the same policies and procedures so that there could be seamless working with the NHS and the Police across local authority boundaries. Thus the committee covered the whole of both local authority areas and has one co-ordinator to support its work. In addition, in each PCT area there is a Local Group which is responsible for the more detailed implementation, monitoring and development and for maintaining and improving local networks to tackle abuse.
- 4 In October 2005 the Association of Directors of Adult Social Services published a National Framework of Good Practice in **Safeguarding Adults**. This set out standards for adult protection (specifically seen from a local authority point of view) that ought to be in place and the partnership arrangements needed to achieve that. The term "Safeguarding Adults" mirrors the term now used to describe what used to be referred to as child protection (Safeguarding Children) and signals a change in the focus to improving prevention and strengthening strategic

partnerships (e.g. covering wider crime and disorder issues) as well as ensuring excellent adult protection procedures and training for staff.

- 5 At its January meeting the Adult Protection Committee agreed to reconstitute itself as the Safeguarding Adults Partnership Board and that an Executive Group be established (comprising senior representatives from the two local authorities, North Yorkshire Police and North Yorkshire and York Primary Care Trust) that would be responsible for leadership and strategic development.
- 6 Adult protection procedures apply to any vulnerable person over the age of 18 who may be unable to look after him or herself and/or be unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation. It therefore includes people who:
  - are elderly;
  - are physically or mentally frail;
  - suffer from a mental illness including dementia;
  - have a physical or sensory disability;
  - have learning disabilities;
  - have a severe physical illness
- 7 “Abuse” is defined in the widest sense of the word so that it includes:
  - **physical abuse**, including hitting, slapping, pushing, kicking, misuse of medication, restraint or inappropriate sanctions;
  - **sexual abuse**, including rape and sexual assault or sexual acts to which the vulnerable person has not consented, or could not consent, or was pressurised into consenting;
  - **psychological abuse**, including emotional abuse, threats of harm or abandonment, deprivation of contact, humiliation, blaming, controlling, intimidation, coercion, harassment, verbal abuse, isolation or withdrawal from services or supportive networks;
  - **financial or material abuse**, including theft, fraud, exploitation, pressure in connection with wills, property or inheritance or financial transactions, or the misuse or misappropriation of property, possessions or benefits;
  - **neglect and acts of omission**, including ignoring medical or physical care needs, failure to provide access to appropriate health, social care or educational services, the withholding of the necessities of life, such as medication, adequate nutrition and heating; and
  - **discriminatory abuse**, including racist, sexist, that based on a person’s disability and other forms of harassment, slurs or similar treatment.

- 8 Public awareness of adult protection issues has been rising over the past 12 months. This is partly to do with campaigning work by the charity Action on Elder Abuse, increasing treatment of abuse issues in television drama and some high profile exposés of abuse in residential homes in other parts of the country.
- 9 Because of serious abuse issues coming to light in NHS establishments for people with learning disabilities in Cornwall and London a national programme of inspection took place during 2007 with a positive report on the facilities managed by the integrated LD service in York & Selby.
- 10 Last month the Association of Directors of Adult Social Services presented government with a 7-point plan for strengthening the law to help protect adults from abuse. In particular they have warned government that moves towards giving individuals greater freedom to spend their own care budgets (which are fully supported by the ADASS) must be matched with far greater legal protections for them against the possibilities of abuse.

## **Consultation**

- 11 The report is primarily for information. Comments have been received from members of the multi-agency board in the preparation of the report

## **Options**

- 12 Members can provide comments on the annual report or simply note its contents.

## **Analysis**

### **Key Issues in the Annual Report**

- 13 Comments are invited on the whole report but the following issues are highlighted for noting:
  - There is improved data available on the number and type of abuse cases reported for investigation. The incidence of abuse is similar in pattern to 2005/6 although there has been a slight increase in reported cases in York (referrals now averaging 20 per quarter). The number of cases investigated rose from 58 in 2005/6 to 70 in 2006/7 and is expected to continue to rise. This may be due to increased awareness and better recording and the Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI) inform us that these figures remain low in relation to comparable council areas.
  - The most prevalent types of abuse for the whole period are physical and financial abuse. This is the same pattern as in previous years. Physical abuse occurs in 36% cases compared with 49% in 2005-6

and financial abuse occurs in 25% cases compared with 23% for 2005-6

- The majority of cases in each area affect older people aged 65 and over (including older people with mental health problems) (66%), and people with learning disabilities (23%). A very small proportion of cases affect people with physical disabilities (6%) and adults with mental health problems (4%).
- Training and awareness are a focal point of the work on adult protection with a multi-agency awareness event attended by 90 delegates in York in May 2007 and a specific training for CYC team leaders/care leaders attended by 55 people. However, CSCI are concerned about the impact of training especially amongst workers in the non-statutory sector and we are continuing to work with the Independent Care Group to support and encourage providers to train their staff on adult protection.

### **Corporate Priorities**

14 The report relates to the corporate priority “ Improve the health and lifestyles of the people who live in York, in particular among groups whose levels of healthy are the poorest

### **15 Implications**

#### **Financial**

The overall financial position stabilised in 2005/6 and at this stage it is being presumed that all agencies will continue at least to support the Safeguarding Board (and the joint co-ordinator post) at its current level in future years.

**Human Resources** – no implications arising from this report

**Equalities** – no implications arising from this report

**Legal** – the ADASS has been consulting members on whether to lobby the government to strengthen and extend the legislation for adult protection e.g. to create a statutory duty to act and investigate cases, to share information and to work in partnership.

**Crime and Disorder** – the Executive of the Safeguarding Board have identified strengthening links with local Crime and Disorder Partnerships as a priority with the Police being seen as the natural lead in this area.

**Information technology** – no implications arising from this report

**Property** – no implications arising from this report

**Other** – not applicable

## Risk Management

- 16 The partnership with other agencies is not one that involves joint assets or significant expenditure and therefore the risks attached are relatively low.

## Recommendation

- 17 That the Executive Members and Advisory Panel comment on the work of the Safeguarding Adults Board and the issues highlighted in this report.

*Reason:* - In order to improve the council's response to vulnerable people affected by abuse.

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**Chief Officer Responsible for the report:**

**Bill Hodson**

*Director*

**Report Approved**



**Date** 5<sup>th</sup> October 2007

**Bill Hodson**

*Director*

**Report Approved**



**Date** 5<sup>th</sup> October 2007

**Specialist Implications Officer(s)**

N/A

**Wards Affected:** *List wards or tick box to indicate all*

**All**

**For further information please contact the author of the report**

**Background Papers:**

**Annexes**

1. North Yorkshire and York Safeguarding Adults Partnership Board  
Annual Report 2006/7