

## **APPENDIX 1**

### **The Implementation of Safeguarding Adults in Harrow**

#### **Briefing and Overview Report**

##### **Summary statement:**

The purpose of this report is to update the Overview and Scrutiny Committee members and other relevant Stakeholders as appropriate on the progress and implementation of the Safeguarding Adults agenda in Harrow.

This report will focus on the background and framework to Safeguarding Adults, the implementation of No Secrets 2000, and a progress report on Safeguarding Adults in Harrow, together with the main strengths and weaknesses of our approaches and strategic direction.

##### **What is Safeguarding Adults?**

Safeguarding Adults is essentially the new terminology for P.O.V.A. (Protection of Vulnerable Adults)

The term "Safeguarding" is increasingly being adopted within adult services nationally in an effort to more closely align (at least in its terminology) to that of children's services.

The Government is determined that Vulnerable Adults should be afforded the greatest possible protection from abuse, exploitation or harm. To help support this aim, a number of key policy documents, national guidance and legislation initiatives have been developed (outlined below) while some other initiatives include:-

- Raising standards of care through National Service Frameworks.
- Regulating providers of care in a more thorough and consistent way than hitherto.
- The introduction of national minimum standards for regulated care services.
- The registration of Social Workers.
- The Local Authorities responsibility to implement "No Secrets" and its guidance.
- Future plans to register the Social Care workforce.
- Introduction of the POVA Scheme and POVA List - essentially a workforce ban on those deemed unsuitable to work with vulnerable adults. POVA checks are requested as part of Disclosures from the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB).

##### **Who are Vulnerable Adults?**

A vulnerable adult is a person aged 18 or over,"who is or may be in need of community care services by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness and who is or maybe unable to take care of his or herself or unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation" (Law Commission Report, 1997 and the definition adopted within No Secrets).

## **What is Abuse?**

“Abuse is a violation of an individual’s human and civil rights by any other person or persons”. (*No Secrets – Guidance on Developing Multi-Agency Policies and Procedures to Protect Vulnerable Adults from Abuse*).

The above definitions are the ones we in Harrow have also adopted when dealing with incidents or allegations under our Safeguarding Adults Procedures.

## **Some of the main Background, Supporting Frameworks, Guidance and Legislation**

### **1998 - White Paper – “Modernising Social Services”.**

Published at the end of 1998, this paper signalled the intention of the government to provide better safeguards and protection of individuals needing care and support. This was taken up through the Care Standards Act 2000.

### **2000 - The Care Standards Act.**

The regulatory framework for Social Care and Independent Care Services.

Provision for the POVA scheme was made under section 7 of this act.

### **2000 - “No Secrets 2000”**

No Secrets is the main central policy document issued by the Government on which safeguarding adults work is based.

No Secrets represented a growing commitment from the Government (and under increasing pressure from campaign/lobbying groups) to tackle the abuse of vulnerable adults at a national level and aims to improve the arrangements for dealing with incidents of adult abuse.

No Secrets was the product of a multi-agency steering group led by the Department of Health, with the full co-operation of the Home Office, the Association of Chief Police Officers, the Association of Directors of Social Services, the voluntary sector and academic bodies.

The aim of 'No Secrets' is to ensure that key local agencies, particularly but not solely health, social services and the police, are able to work together to protect vulnerable adults from abuse, by developing and implementing local multi-agency policies and procedures.

It sets out requirements for Social Services Departments to provide a strategic lead on the development and implementation of No Secrets.

Multi agency management committees are required to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of these arrangements and are expected to report annually on progress to the agency’s executive management body.

**2004 - POVA Scheme and POVA list.**  
A workforce ban on those deemed unsuitable to work with vulnerable adults.

**2005 - Green Paper :- Independence, Well-Being and Choice – Our Vision for the Future of Social Care for Adults in England.**  
This green paper set out the vision for adult social care in England over the next 10-15 years together with how it might be realised.

**2006 - Harrow’s Multi-Agency Safeguarding Adults Policy and Procedure** was launched at a Multi-Agency Conference in April 2006.

It sets out and affirms the commitment of Harrow Council and its Statutory Partners to work together in partnership to protect the most vulnerable members of our community.

In doing so, we aim to ensure person centred, quality, consistent and appropriate responses when abuse is alleged or suspected.

**2006 - Our health, our care, our say** - White Paper, published in 2006, sets out a vision to provide people with good quality Health and social Care services in the communities where they live.

This White Paper places a strong focus on the importance of choice, control, empowerment, dignity, respect and of course freedom from abuse, harm or exploitation.

**2006 - Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Bill**, received Royal Assent on the 8<sup>th</sup> November 2006 and was published on 1 March 2006.

As the full introduction and implementation of this Bill (and its supporting infrastructure) is a hugely challenging logistical exercise, it will therefore have a phased introduction from Autumn 2009.

The Bill was introduced to respond to Key Recommendation 19 from the Bichard Inquiry into the murders of two ten year old girls, Holly Marie Wells and Jessica Aimee Chapman in Soham in 2002 and the associated failings that led to Ian Huntley obtaining a job as a care taker in a school.

Recommendation 19 of the Bichard Inquiry called for a registration scheme, preventing those who are deemed to be unsuitable from gaining access to children or vulnerable adults through their work.

The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Bill aims to significantly strengthen safeguarding by developing a central vetting process built on the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB), with a new Independent Statutory Board which will take decisions on including someone on the barred list where evidence suggests that they present a risk of harm to children or vulnerable adults.

**2008 - Review of “No Secrets 2000”** – Review and Consultation due Summer 08

## **The National Picture**

These, among other developments, set out the vision for the future services and service development and represent the strategic direction of adult health and social care in the coming years.

They put an emphasis on prevention and the promotion of health and well-being and reinforce the principles of independence, choice, control, inclusion, dignity and respect in all aspects of service provision.

They also have a distinct theme of safeguarding, prevention and protection from abuse, exploitation and harm and acknowledge that all services (statutory, private, independent and voluntary), need to work together to deliver safe quality services with users at the centre and a focus on positive outcomes for individuals.

Nationally, the work of Safeguarding Adults and the Protection of Vulnerable Adults from Abuse (POVA) has in recent years and months been receiving a higher public profile.

Recent high profile abuse and neglect scandals such as those in the Cornwall NHS Trust and the Sutton and Merton Primary Care Trust have been highlighted in the national media and have exposed major failures in the systems and processes used to safeguard vulnerable people.

These together with national campaigns by (among others) Comic Relief, Action on Elder Abuse and Help the Aged have also helped to raise the public profile of abuse and safeguarding and have succeeded in putting these issues firmly on both the media and political agendas.

Action on Elder Abuse are also actively lobbying the Government to look at the possibility of introducing Safeguarding Adults Legislation (as Scotland has) to put adult abuse on the same statutory footing as child abuse as well as lobbying for a national data monitoring system.

The Scottish Parliament recently introduced an Adult Support and Protection (Scotland) Bill which sets out statutory responses to the Protection of Vulnerable Adults, similar to those for Child protection. Campaigners and Lobbyers are asking the English Government for a similar Legislative framework

On the 14<sup>th</sup> June 2007, Kings College London, with funding from Comic Relief, published the first ever UK Prevalence Study on the Abuse and Neglect of Older People. This study will support lobbying groups in their efforts to further raise the public profile of adult abuse and put additional pressure on the Government to further address the issue and develop appropriate responses.

## **The Local Picture**

The CSCI Inspection in January 2008 focussed on Safeguarding across all service user groups and we were judged against our performance and ability to safeguard vulnerable groups and on our implementation of "No Secrets"

Safeguarding in Harrow received a rating of “adequate” in this inspection (nationally, this was the largest group for Local authorities) It must however be noted that Harrow narrowly missed out on a rating of “Good” which would have put us in the minority of highly performing Local Authorities in terms of Safeguarding arrangements.

Our future aim is to achieve a “Good” rating and in line with this, the LSAB have developed a Joint Action Plan (appendix 3) to address the areas of development identified from our 2007 Annual Report, the Total Transformation Project and the CSCI Inspection (appendix 2, Headline Points)

Equally important to all of these areas are effective Governance arrangements - This Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the accountability that the group (and you as a member) can give us, is vital to our work and development.

**Please see the Joint Action Plan for a detailed breakdown of our priorities over the coming years.**

The CSCI Inspection highlights areas for development – many of which we have already started to address.

One of the significant areas highlighted was in the strategic lead provided by the Council.

To address this issue we have agreed and begun implementing a range of measures, beginning with the Director, as Chair of the LSAB, securing senior level representation from partner organisations (across all sectors) on a re-structured LSAB.

Members of the LSAB are now of sufficient seniority to make decisions on behalf of their organisation, commit staff time and resources to take forward specific pieces of work and develop the various work streams.

To give the LSAB some “teeth” we also developed a strategy to define and access our various organisations’ Governance routes in an effort to highlight Safeguarding Adults at the highest levels.

One measure of success in this area is that we have secured Safeguarding Adults as one of Harrow’s Corporate Priorities - ‘We will make Harrow safe, sound and supportive’

The LSAB are looking at this as an opportunity to strengthen our vision and leadership in the area of Safeguarding.

A restructured LSAB with appropriate senior membership and with strong governance routes in place would provide strong leadership and direction to our work, demonstrate our commitment to partnership and multi-agency working and ensure that safeguarding is given a high priority within all our agendas.

The above represents our main strategic challenges, and while significant, they are seen as an opportunity to further develop our services to Harrow’s vulnerable adults.

In recognising our strengths and weaknesses and our aim of delivering high quality, person centered safeguarding services, we now have an opportunity to re-evaluate and re-define our approach and ensure that;

Under the strategic leadership of the Council, backed up by committed partnership working and delivered through quality health and social services, that vulnerable adults in Harrow are safeguarded from abuse.

This report, the Joint Action Plan and (in development) the 2008 Annual Report and Update on Priorities all represent the background, current position and future aspirations for our Safeguarding Adults agenda in Harrow.

Should you require further information or wish to discuss any of the issues raised in this or the other reports in more depth, please feel free to contact either myself, Howard Tomlin or Paul Najsarek.

We look forward to working with you to further develop Safeguarding Adults Services in Harrow.

Seamus Doherty

Harrow's Safeguarding Adults Co-ordinator,

Overview and Scrutiny Report 8<sup>th</sup> July 2008.