

Meeting:	Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Date:	11 th June 2009
Subject:	Safeguarding Adults Annual Report 2008/9
Responsible Officer:	Paul Najsarek, Corporate Director of Adults and Housing
Portfolio Holder:	Cllr. Barry MacLeod-Cullinane, Portfolio Holder for Adults and Housing
Exempt:	No
Enclosures:	Harrow Safeguarding Adults Board Annual Report 2008/9

Section 1 – Summary and Recommendations

This report provides Scrutiny Committee Members with an overview of the Local Safeguarding Adults Board Annual Report for 2008/9. The annual report summarises safeguarding activity undertaken throughout the year by the Council and its key partners, sets out statistical information which analyses the referrals received and outlines priorities for the current year.

Recommendations:

Scrutiny Committee is requested to note the work that has taken place in 2008/9 and the action plan for 2009/10.

Reason: (for recommendation)

Preventing and appropriately dealing with the abuse of vulnerable adults is a key priority for the Council. Presentation of the Annual Report at this Committee allows for scrutiny of this critical statutory function.

Section 2 – Report

2.1 Introduction

This is the second Annual Report of the Local Safeguarding Adults Board (LSAB) and a copy is attached at Appendix 1 for information.

2.2 National Context

Although this report deals with abuse of vulnerable adults rather than children, there is no doubt that the tragic case of “Baby P” has raised the public’s level of awareness in relation to safeguarding issues.

This annual report should also be seen in the context of a number of national developments:

- Review of the “**No Secrets**” (Department of Health) guidance first issued in 2000 which requires local authorities to take a lead in developing and implementing multi-agency policies and procedures. Changes to the “No Secrets” guidance are expected shortly and will be implemented in Harrow under the governance of the LSAB
- The **Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006** was introduced to respond to the Bichard Inquiry and creates a new body – the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA) which will register all those eligible to work with vulnerable adults or children and manage a vetting and barring system
- The **Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DOLS)** under the Mental Capacity Act 2005 ensures protection for those vulnerable people who cannot make decisions for themselves
- **Personalisation** or self directed support is to be welcomed as it provides more choice and control for vulnerable people to organise their own personal care, however there are anxieties that some will be exposed to a greater risk of abuse, particularly financial abuse

2.3 Local Context

In January 2008 an independent CSCI (Commission for Social Care Inspection) inspection of safeguarding adults’ in the borough reported that Harrow’s arrangements were “adequate rising to good”.

The annual report and its associated work plan aim to build on this positive outcome and further develop local systems and processes both internally and externally to the Council.

2.4 Key Messages

The CSCI inspection report commended Harrow for a number of areas of good practice, but also noted some areas for development. These became the basis of the LSAB’s 2008 action plan.

Considerable progress has been made in the following areas:

- Significantly strengthening the work of the LSAB

- Further embedding the strong local procedures
- Spreading and raising the awareness of safeguarding adults
- Strengthening evaluation and learning
- Extending significantly the number of care workers trained in safeguarding issues across all sectors

Statistics

There was a 48% overall increase in referrals from 187 in 2007/8 to 356 in 2008/9. The rise is to be welcomed as it is not the view of officers that there is an increase in actual abuse taking place in Harrow, rather that the rise is linked to the increased volume of publicity carried out by the Department and its partners.

In line with the national picture, a greater proportion of victims were female and a greater proportion of alleged perpetrators were men. In addition, the largest proportion of alleged perpetrators were family members.

65% of referrals were from white/UK other communities and 35% were from BME communities, highlighting the need to continue with targeted awareness campaigns amongst harder to reach groups.

The highest number of referrals were about physical abuse.

There was a small increase in the number of older people referrals, but a significant rise in those about people with a learning disability. Recent analysis shows that some of the statistics have been skewed by CSCI requiring registered care homes to report trips and falls as safeguarding referrals. These incidents will now be carefully monitored by the Contracts and Brokerage Team.

2.5 Action Plan for 2009/10

There are 11 actions for 2009/10 (arising from the inspections and analysis of the statistics) the majority of which build on progress already made in 2008/9. These are shown below with the details covered in the Action Plan attached at Appendix 2.

- i. further develop the LSAB governance arrangements
- ii. further improve the care of vulnerable adults receiving community care services to minimise risk of abuse
- iii. through training and development to empower staff, carers and service users to identify, report and respond to allegations
- iv. to raise awareness amongst staff, users, carers and the general public through publicity and communications
- v. improve practice by learning from experience
- vi. use quality assurance systems to ensure consistent application of the Policy and to support continuous professional development
- vii. explore opportunities for involving users and carers in further improving safeguarding adults' practice standards
- viii. further improve multi-agency working and information sharing
- ix. further develop systems for collecting and collating statistical data
- x. further work on the interface between self directed support (personalisation) and safeguarding
- xi. continue to address the under reporting from Harrow's Black and other Ethnic minority communities

Section 3 Financial Implications

The Council has already invested an additional £150k (in 2009/10) to strengthen local safeguarding adults arrangements and respond to the increasing number of referrals.

Resources will be kept under review in light of required changes in procedures and workload.

Section 4 Risk Management Implications

Risk included on Directorate risk register? Yes

Separate risk register in place? No

Potential risks:

- failure to address CSCI (now Care Quality Commission) inspection requirements may affect the Adult Social care performance rating for 2009
- failure to ensure local safeguarding arrangements are robust could lead to a serious untoward incident e.g. death of a vulnerable person

Section 5 Statutory Officer Clearance

Not required.

Section 6 Contact Details and Background Papers

Contact: Paul Najsarek, Corporate Director Adults and Housing
(0208 424 1361)

7. Background Papers:

Harrow Local Safeguarding Adults Annual Report 2008/9 and Action Plan