

<b>HEALTH AND ADULT SOCIAL CARE SCRUTINY PANEL</b>	<b>Agenda Item No. 7</b>
<b>22 JANUARY 2009</b>	<b>Public Report</b>

## **Report of the Director of Adult Social Services and Performance**

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### **NO SECRETS REVIEW CONSULTATION**

#### **1. PURPOSE**

- 1.1 To inform the Panel of the current national review in relation to safeguarding vulnerable adults and to provide an opportunity for Panel members to contribute to Peterborough's response to the consultation.

#### **2. LINKS TO CORPORATE PLAN, SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY STRATEGY AND LOCAL AREA AGREEMENT**

- 2.1 Safeguarding vulnerable adults is at the heart of the Sustainable Community Strategy, our ambition includes working to help the people of Peterborough "be protected from abuse, discrimination and harassment". The Local Area Agreement targets relating to vulnerable people have particular links to this area.

#### **3. BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 Guidance (the "No Secrets" document) on protecting vulnerable people from abuse was published by the Department of Health and Home Office in 2000. Since that time there have been many changes including a move to the broader term "safeguarding" to reflect work to help people protect themselves as well as a much stronger focus on community safety across a range of areas.
- 3.2 A consultation document was published in mid October which reviews "No Secrets" and the entire framework for the safeguarding of vulnerable adults. The consultation includes among other areas, the case for legislative change. The consultation closes on 31 January 2009. Directors of Adult Social Services have been asked to ensure that locally, as many stakeholders as possible, contribute to the consultation document.
- 3.3 The document itself is lengthy, some 70 pages and is available from the Department of Health website. An easy read pictorial version (approximately 45 pages) is also available. To inform discussion, the introduction to the document and the consultation questions are attached to this report. A presentation of the key issues will also be made to the Panel.

#### **4. KEY ISSUES**

- 4.1 The document focuses on some key issues which the Panel may wish to contribute to:
- Leadership – the presentation will explain how the Peterborough Safeguarding Adults Partnership operates. The Panel receives six monthly reports on adult protection and may wish to consider and comment on its own role in supporting good leadership around this agenda.

- Prevention – good prevention leads to better outcomes and should be a key approach in protecting the vulnerable.
- Outcomes – there are no national performance indicators which directly link to safeguarding. The consultation asks a number of questions about how outcomes might be defined and measured. Getting feedback from those who have been abused or at risk is an important and sensitive part of this.
- Risk and choice – safeguarding work links to the management of risk and in Peterborough our partnership arrangements add some complexity to this. The introduction of Individual Budgets may increase risk and our approach needs to balance choice and personal control with risk.
- Health services – there is national concern regarding health organisations and the safeguarding agenda. Our local partnerships should strengthen our work in this area. The presentation will include details of how health organisations are currently linked in with this agenda.
- Housing and community empowerment – the consultation includes reference to policy links as well as the need for housing providers to be engaged with this agenda.
- Criminal Justice – the consultation asks questions about the police involvement in safeguarding including whether resources and focus are sufficient. There is potential for more integrated working in the future between local organisations.
- Legislation – the consultation asks whether safeguarding should be put on a more formal, legal footing asking to safeguarding children. The Panel may wish to debate and form a view in this regard. Legal powers including a duty for partners to co-operate and powers to remove vulnerable people being abused are also considered.
- Definition – the consultation asks if the definition of a vulnerable adult should be reviewed. The presentation will explain the current definition and how this is interpreted in Peterborough.

## **5. IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 The report concerns a national consultation. Implications including financial and staffing would become relevant once the outcome of the consultation is known.

## **6. CONSULTATION**

- 6.1 A range of groups are being consulted on Peterborough's response to this consultation.

## **7. EXPECTED OUTCOMES**

- 7.1 Comments from the Panel for inclusion in the Peterborough response.

## **8. NEXT STEPS**

- 8.1 The Panel receives six monthly reports on safeguarding vulnerable adults. Updates on the national consultation process will be included in these reports. The Panel may wish to consider the need for any further work in this area and/or other aspects of local safeguarding work it would like to see reflected in future reports.

## **9. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

Used to prepare this report, in accordance with the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

“Safeguarding Adults – A Consultation on the Review of the ‘No Secrets’ Guidance’, 14 October 2008, Department of Health, Home Office, Criminal Justice System

## **10. APPENDICES**

Introduction & Consultation Questions

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