

02 February 2015**Agenda Item: 8****REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR For ACCESS AND PUBLIC
PROTECTION****VULNERABLE PERSON PANELS (VPPs)****Purpose of the Report**

1. To inform Members about the work of the Vulnerable Person Panels operating in each district area and which is overseen by the Community Safety Committee.
2. To provide Members with an opportunity to comment on the development work that is currently taking place in relation to these Panels.

Information and Advice

3. For some years now each district has had in place, under the umbrella of the Community Safety Partnership, multi-agency panel based arrangements for dealing with vulnerable people. These are known as Vulnerable Person Panels (VPPs) in all areas except Newark and Sherwood and Bassetlaw where the panel is known as a Local Multi Agency Problem Solving Group (LMAP). For the purposes of this report however the term VPP will be used to refer to the work taking place in all districts.
4. The VPPs consider individual cases involving people identified as vulnerable to, for example, antisocial behaviour, hate crime or domestic violence, as determined by each VPP. The purpose of these meetings is to share relevant information about a case and then to ensure that appropriate interventions and problem solving plans are in place and being delivered.
5. Since their inception the operating models in each area have been developed to address issues in relation to a number of local factors for example, membership, volume of the cases presented and the resources available to address these. Whilst each VPP should reflect local circumstances, these should not impinge on a minimum standard of service offered. Although there are many similarities between the models operating in each area there are some differences such as themes addressed, membership and local awareness. These have a direct impact on the 'buy-in' from key organisations operating in each district. This creates a situation whereby countywide services are represented in some VPPs and not others reflecting the outcome of local negotiations. It is intended that by recommending and adopting a minimum set of standards there will be more consistency across the County on key matters and a clear route to raise concerns where these minimum standards are not being met.
6. In April 2014 a VPP conference was held at which VPP members stressed the need to ensure the continued effectiveness of the VPP arrangements operating in each district, to

offer a consistent level of service across the County and to enable VPPs to react to the changing environment within which they operate. Following this conference, to further explore the issues raised, a review was undertaken led by Nottinghamshire Police and conducted by members of the County Council Community Safety Team.

7. This review, which was undertaken with the full participation of members/chairs of the VPPs, led to the development of a set of minimum standards and improved accountability together with a consistent structure and operating procedures for the panels, to address the issues raised at the conference. These minimum standards were agreed at the Safer Nottinghamshire Board (SNB) in September 2014. At this meeting it was also agreed that the vulnerable people agenda should be identified as one of the priority themes for SNB and a Champion appointed to lead this area of business in line with the Champion approach adopted with the other SNB priorities. Paul McKay, in his role as Service Director for Access and Public Protection, was identified as ideally placed to undertake this role.
8. The minimum standards cover the following areas:
 - awareness of VPPs – shared terms of reference
 - membership – formalising partner engagement in the VPP process to ensure that all districts have equal access to service providers who can support work with vulnerable people
 - themes addressed at VPPs – agreement of the core themes that can be referred to panels
 - operating model – adopting the operating model highlighted as good practice through the work of the Antisocial Behaviour Transition Group that oversaw the recent introduction of the Antisocial Behaviour Crime and Policing Act 2014
 - information sharing – ensuring the appropriate protocols are in place to aid information disclosure in the VPPs
 - case management – developing a consistent case management system approach across the County and an outline process for performance managing the VPP work
 - responses – The development of a tactical menu of responses to include local, regional and national good practice, services details within the County, contact points and relevant powers and tools available to VPPs
 - management of meetings – Monthly meetings with a consistent chair who attends the Executive Group of the relevant Community Safety Partnership
 - strategic overview – Introduction of a Champion for Vulnerable Persons to oversee the introduction of the minimum standards, promote a preventative approach and inform and update SNB on priorities and emerging issues across VPPs.
9. One of the key areas where development is required is in relation to how VPPs work with the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) and Adult Social Care. The “No Secrets” definition of a vulnerable adult will be superseded by the Care Act 2014 so the concept of “significant harm” no longer features. This could mean different thresholds for Adult Social Care, and therefore the VPPs, which should operate at a level below this threshold. Conversations have started between those involved in the Care Act Programme Team, which is funded by the Adult Social Care and Health Committee, and those involved in the VPP development work to look at the implications of the Care Act 2014.
10. Another key area of the VPP development work relates to the perceived lack of services for cases referred to the panels involving people who have possible mental health issues that do

not meet the Adult Social Care threshold. In exploring and addressing this area of concern links are being made with Public Health due to their lead role in the 'No Health without Mental Health, Nottinghamshire's Mental Health Strategy 2014/17' which has been signed off by the Health and Wellbeing Board. One of the priorities of this strategy, and the subsequent Framework for Action, is 'Identifying problems early and supporting effective interventions'.

Other Options Considered

11. Each district VPP could be left to address its own issues within the structure of their Community Safety Partnership. However by joining the development activity into one programme of work this ensures the strategic buy-in from SNB to resolving the key issues facing these important panels that are providing support to some of our more vulnerable residents who may not meet the thresholds for access to other support mechanisms or services.

Reason/s for Recommendation/s

12. It is recommended that Members note the contents of this report as the subject matter involves the delivery of support to vulnerable residents which is a key priority in our Redefining Your Council strategy.

Statutory and Policy Implications

13. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of crime and disorder, finance, human resources, human rights, the NHS Constitution (Public Health only), the public sector equality duty, safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults, service users, sustainability and the environment and ways of working and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

Crime and Disorder Implications

14. The work outlined in this report is intended to have positive implications on crime and disorder by working with local people identified to the district community safety partnerships as vulnerable to, for example, antisocial behaviour and hate crime.

RECOMMENDATION/S

- 1) It is recommended that Committee note the contents of this report particularly the Vulnerable Person Panel development work.

PAUL MCKAY

Service Director Access and Public Protection

For any enquiries about this report please contact:

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Constitutional Comments

15. As this report is for noting only, no constitutional comments are required.

Financial Comments (to follow)

16.

Background Papers and Published Documents

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

- Report to the Safer Nottinghamshire Board, 'Developing the Vulnerable Persons Panels in Nottinghamshire' prepared by Superintendent Richard Fretwell, Nottinghamshire Police.

Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected

- All.