

minutes



Meeting **SAFEGUARDING VULNERABLE ADULTS
SELECT COMMITTEE**

Date Monday, 7th July 2008 commencing at 10.30 am

membership

Persons absent are marked with `A`

COUNCILLORS

Chris Winterton (Chair)

A Joe Lonergan MBE (Vice-Chair)

Reg Adair

A Albert Haynes

A Paul Henshaw

A Helen Holt

Pat Lally

A Sue Saddington

Jason Zadrozny

MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 2nd June 2008, having been previously circulated, were confirmed and signed by the Chair.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Albert Haynes, Paul Henshaw, Helen Holt and Joe Lonergan MBE.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST BY MEMBERS AND OFFICERS

None.

PRESENTATION FROM COMMISSION FOR SOCIAL CARE INSPECTION

It was noted that this presentation would now take place at the next meeting.

PRESENTATION FROM ELAINE YARDLEY

Elaine Yardley, Director of Adult Services at Nottingham City Council gave a presentation to the Select Committee. She explained that it had been decided to establish separate Safeguarding Boards for the City and County due to an increase in referrals and because the adult protection unit was experiencing capacity issues. Further increases in referrals were expected. There was a

need to review funding arrangements, and they wanted greater transparency. There was also a need for more specific local data. A Safeguarding conference had been held and the common view was that there was a need to move to separate arrangements. This proposal was then put forward for consultation with key stakeholders which recognised that for some partners, for example, the police and health, there were some concerns over establishing two Safeguarding Boards. She stated that they had been reassured, however, that the procedures were similar, training would be consistent and that there were good cross boundary contacts. The consultation was completed and on balance the partners were supportive of separate arrangements. The benefits were that more localised trends and analysis could be provided and then targeted action taken where necessary. The new arrangements allow for more timely reporting as there is more capacity. Both Boards are multi-agency and therefore learning is not lost between them. Although there are separate case reviews the outcomes are shared across both authorities.

Councillor Winterton felt that there was a need to scope the problem so that the amount of resources needed to address the matter can be identified. Elaine Yardly indicated that training and workforce issues had challenged the City and the County. She added that the role of the advocacy group was beginning to be addressed through joint arrangements. She referred to the personalisation agenda and indicated that people would need more scrutiny so that there were clear standards on what was acceptable and not. She emphasised that safeguarding was a corporate issue not just social services.

In response to a question from Councillor Winterton, Jon Wilson from the Adult Social Care and Health Department indicated that people had a choice and that if a county resident moved to the City, the County would continue to fund them. If an incident arose the City would pick-up the assessment. With safeguarding the responsible authority was where the person lived. He stated that the authorities worked jointly and had experience of this recently. They worked very closely together and inevitably there would be joint learning.

Councillor Winterton asked about self-funders. Elaine Yardly stated that they tried to work with relatives and self-funders; ultimately however they would make it clear through legal services that the department had done their duty. Jon Wilson explained that it would depend on the nature and degree and whether it was in the individual's best interests to take action. He added that the police would have a view in terms of the public interest. He indicated that under the Mental Health Act if the department felt that someone was abusing their power of attorney, they could go to court, and, if the court agreed, it would appoint a deputy of the court.

In response to a question from Councillor Reg Adair, Elaine Yardly explained that Commission for Social Care Inspection had to register any care agency. When the assessors went out they should be clear about what was being delivered and its quality. It concerned her when she heard of people not receiving services, which was why they relied on the eyes and ears of others. She added that there was a review at six weeks, six months and then annually which was a minimum. It was the responsibility of the care provider that they were providing what they said they were. Jon Wilson explained that the department had an electronic recording system which could tell them

when carers started and finished, but could not say what was done whilst the carer was in a persons house. The department relied on family and friends to inform them of problems. There were monitoring and evaluation of officers. He added that provider contracts had been ended because of concerns over the delivery of services. He indicated that the provision of sufficient carers in the county was an issue and there was a problem over the number of young people, particularly young men, who wanted to go into social care. The issues were that it was not high profile and that there was low pay. There were particular problems in rural areas.

Councillor Lally asked whether there were robust arrangements to deal with cross border workings. Elaine Yardly indicated that the hospitals had robust procedures to ensure that county workers went to county patients. She added that the Nottingham University Hospitals were on the Safeguarding Board. She did not think there was a problem. She stated that the number of complaints was increasing and that as the safeguarding assessment had to be carried out by a qualified social worker; the concern in the City was that there was a need to increase the capacity to carry out assessments. John Wilson stated that it was known that there was under reporting in health. He stated that it was about ensuring that there were joint procedures and protocols in place. He indicated that the City Council would take the lead if there was a safeguarding incident at Nottingham University Hospitals. It was explained that the hospital social work team would see someone who had come into hospital but where the alleged abuse had happened at home. She indicated that the Nottinghamshire Health Care Trust had increased their safeguarding profile. Claire Bearder stated that there were robust arrangements with partners in adjoining areas of the county.

In response to a question from Councillor Zadrozny, Jon Wilson stated that the department had contact with advocacy people who could speak up for people. He added that there were timescales set in the procedures and that the issue of follow up depended on how significant the harm was.

PRESENTATION BY EDDIE MOORECROFT

Eddie Moorecroft, the Vice-Chair of the Nottinghamshire Learning Disability Partnership Board, gave a presentation to the Select Committee on issues relating to safeguarding and expectations from his perspective as a service user. He indicated that feeling safe was very important as it gave you confidence, made you feel better about yourself. You were more able to deal with any problems and it made your life better. There were lots of places where you could feel unsafe and lots of reasons why you might feel unsafe such as bullying, whether you are being bullied, or others around you are being bullied. He stated that you could feel unsafe anywhere and it was really important that people recognised this and that you knew what to do about it. People often felt safer when they had people supporting them that they knew and felt comfortable with. It was important that people were seen as individuals and got the right support for their needs. People needed to be really clear about what to do if they felt unsafe or unhappy about something. When things go wrong, service users must know how to complain and who to complain to. They also needed to know who to complain to outside the organisation that provided the service. Service users needed support and

training to understand how to complain. It was not good enough to just say 'here is a form for you to fill out'.

Service users also needed support and training to understand what was acceptable and OK and what was not acceptable and wrong. Sometimes people got so used to being treated in a certain way that they were unaware it was wrong. Services needed to encourage an atmosphere where people were comfortable about saying how they felt so it was easier for them to say when they were unhappy or had problems. Supporting people to be safe was everyone's responsibility whether you were a manager, support worker, cook or cleaner. People needed to be aware that everyone was an individual and things that might seem trivial may mean a lot to someone and it needed to be treated seriously. Support staff needed to help service users get used to the places they used and build relationships with the people they lived near. This also helped to get people in the community to support service users. There had to be training and support so people recognised what was and was not safe and how to avoid problems.

In response to a question, Jon Wilson stated that the preventative side of safeguarding could save money. He stated that if people were helped to know each other the community would look after each other. He added that there was a need for people to have confidence the department would act so that matters were picked up earlier.

VULNERABLE GROUPS ACT 2006 AND THE INDEPENDENT SAFEGUARDING AUTHORITY

Consideration was given to a report on the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 and the work of the independent safeguarding authority.

In response to a question from Councillor Chris Winterton, Jon Wilson stated that in practice if a person had not changed jobs the chances were that the CRB check was not updated. He added that it came back to a resource issue. He added that good practice would be that they are updated every three years.

Councillor Winterton commented that there should be a mechanism to avoid duplication over CRB certificates. Jon Wilson explained that the advantage is that there would soon be a national scheme so that if people moved they could be checked on the register.

In response to a question from Councillor Lally, Jon Wilson explained that the new system would be a list of people who would be able to work. If a person was not on the list, they would not be able to work.

In response to a further question from Councillor Lally, Claire Bearder stated that there was consultation on the criteria. They were keen that it was clear that what constituted significant harm.

In response to a question from Councillor Reg Adair, Jon Wilson stated that a project plan was in place to implement the safeguarding arrangements. The project manager would work with all departments. He added that there maybe a need to build something in the medium terms financial strategy to cover the

costs. Councillor Winterton thought that the cost of £64 for registration would be a discouragement for people to take up the role.

WORK PROGRAMME

It was suggested that the Select Committee invite someone from day care to speak to the next meeting.

The meeting closed at 11.50 am.

CHAIR
M_7July08