

Report to:	SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
Relevant Officer:	Karen Smith, Director of Adult Services.
Date of Meeting	22 nd January 2015

SAFEGUARDING ADULTS AT RISK, FINDINGS AND SERVICE RESPONSES

1.0 Purpose of the report:

1.1 The Committee to consider the Safeguarding Alerts and Referrals Analysis Report for Quarters One and Two 2014/15. The Committee is also informed of service developments in Adult Safeguarding and planning underway in relation to the Safeguarding aspects of The Care Act 2014 and improvements both underway and planned, ahead of the Local Authority Peer Review of Blackpool Council Safeguarding Adults activity scheduled to take place in January 2015.

2.0 Recommendation(s):

For the report to be examined by the Committee and then made available to the Safeguarding Adults Board and constituent member agencies. It is also recommended that the reports are made available to members of the public and any other interested party.

3.0 Reasons for recommendation(s):

3.1 The Committee is encouraged to review the Report for quarters one and two to gain insight in to the patterns and trends found in relation to the reports of abuse of adults at risk and the findings upon these following the response co-ordinated by Adult Social Care. This six month period pattern and trend analysis can be directly compared with the previous year end report for 2013/2014 prepared by the Designated Safeguarding Manager (Adults) which was presented to the Committee in October 2014.

Dissemination of these reports and findings will promote a wider understanding of this local and national issue and will provide further evidence to partner agencies to assist them in safeguarding adults at risk through strategic campaigns and resource allocation.

3.2a The recommendation is not contrary to a plan or strategy adopted or approved by the Council. The recommendation is consistent with the Adult Social Care Charter of Blackpool Council and the Council's Plan.

- 3.2b The recommendation is in accordance with the Council's approved budget for Adult Social Care and the Safeguarding Adults Team.
- 3.3 This is the Report of the Assistant Chief Executive for Adults, The Head of Safeguarding and the Designated Safeguarding Manager (Adults). There are no alternative submissions to consider.
- 4.0 **Council Priority:**
- 4.1 Safeguard and protect the most vulnerable.
- 5.0 **Background Information:**
- 5.1 This Report provides information on Safeguarding Adults alerts and referrals and a summary of the outcomes and findings of safeguarding alerts that were referred for further investigation. This Report concerns the periods Quarter 1 and Quarter 2 2014/15 and provides commentary on alert and referral numbers and the prevalent issues reflected in safeguarding alerts and referrals.
- 5.2 The distinction between a Safeguarding Alert and Safeguarding Referral has previously been explained to Committee members and is not further explained in this report.
- 5.3 Similarly the outcome options for the Social Worker/decision maker at the Threshold point of the alerting process has also been explained to Committee members previously. The Committee is informed that the decision making authority at the process threshold point has now been devolved more widely amongst front line Social Work practitioners from a position of where previously these decisions were taken solely by more senior staff. To support this devolved practice a post alert practice Decision Support Tool or('thinking framework') has been introduced into practice. This Guidance/Framework has been updated in January 2015 to reflect the Statutory Guidance to the Care Act 2014 (Safeguarding) published in October 2014.
- 6.0 **Summary of Key Issues Quarter 1 and Quarter 2 Adult Safeguarding:**
- 6.1 For the six month period covered in Quarters 1 and 2 there have been 307 Safeguarding Alerts recorded by Adult Social Care. Compared with the total figure of 771 for 2013/14 the alert figures at the six month point are indicating a total of 20% less than the total for the previous year. However analysis of a number of previous years' referrals tends to show an increase in alerts for the third and fourth quarters. Of the 307 alerts 49 were deemed Not Safeguarding, 110 were deemed as Incidents Only and 148 were progressed or 'referred' for further investigation within the

Safeguarding Adults Procedural framework. Following the process threshold decision split between alert and referral the ratios for abuse by type and location remain constant with the exception that proportionately more Physical and Financial abuse Alerts are referred further. There are 25% of alerts concerning Financial Abuse and 25% concerning Psychological Abuse. Following the process threshold decision, the figure referred for investigation rises to 31% for both. In comparison the 50% of all alerts that concern Neglect are mirrored by the 50% of all referrals concerning Neglect. The analysis below is of the 148 cases that were referred for further investigation.

- 6.2 The pattern of distribution of Referrals by type continues to mirror findings from last year. At this point it is helpful to bear in mind that there may be more types of abuse cited than there are investigation 'cases'. This is because for each investigation there is often more than one type of abuse cited in respect of one individual. An example would be in a care home where one person may be alleged to have experienced, neglect, physical and psychological abuse during the same episode. As the primary category of abuse reported, Neglect, Mistreatment and Acts of Omission (categorised as one 'type') is the highest number with 75 (50%) referrals for this across the 148 cases that were further investigated. Second to this are the 47 (31%) referrals that cite Psychological and Financial abuse as the primary category. A further 30 (20%) referrals of Physical abuse have been further investigated during this six month period. There have also been 13 (9%) referrals where Institutional abuse was the main recorded category to the end of Quarter 2. This is significantly less when compared with the overall figure of 78 referrals in this category for the whole of last year. In fact if we extrapolated these 13 cases to the full year there would only be a total of 26 (or a third) of the overall figure reported last year. The principle reason this figure has reduced so significantly is due to a change in reporting requirements. Previously every individual resident of a care home who was known to the Council was recorded where an issue had been raised about any one single person in that care home. These have been previously referred to as multiple cases. It is only the sole individual who is now counted each time. Nevertheless Institutional Abuse in some care homes in Blackpool is still the subject of a significant number of Safeguarding Adults investigations. Future reporting of this issue will use the term 'Organisational Abuse' in place of 'Institutional Abuse'. This change of term has been introduced with the Care Act 2014 Statutory Guidance (Safeguarding).
- 6.3 There have been 24 Safeguarding Alerts citing Sexual Abuse and of these 10 (6.7%) have been referred for further investigation. This is equivalent to the total for last year which was also 10, so we may anticipate a 100% increase in this figure by the year end given the current rate. There is no specific explanation why there has been such an increase. Further analysis of the year end data may provide some insight to this increase.
- 6.4 Of the 148 referrals for further investigation 53% concerned women and 43%

concerned men with 'not known' recorded for the remaining 6 cases. To date this represents a levelling out of the gender distribution. Last year the distribution was 65% women and 35% men. The historical data also highlights that women are usually significantly more likely than men to be involved in an adult protection enquiry or investigation. Further analysis for Quarter 3 and year end will reveal whether we are seeing a change in trend in the gender distribution of safeguarding alerts and investigations.

- 6.5 The age range distribution for the 148 people for whom there was a safeguarding investigation or enquiry was 36 (25.5%) aged 18-64 and 101 (68.5%) for those aged over 65. There was one investigation where age was not recorded. This finding is consistent with the overall finding in previous years that it is predominantly older people aged over 65 who are involved in an adult protection enquiry or investigation. However at the six month point the data shows that there are proportionately more people aged 18-65 involved in an adult protection investigation than we would usually expect. Last year the figure for people aged over 65 involved in enquiries was closer to 85%.
- 6.6 The overall evidence available strongly suggests that the known patterns and trends for Safeguarding alerts and referrals continue to reflect those found during the past two years.
- 6.7 Data at the six month point shows that 132 (57%) of the 229 citations of abuse within the 148 investigations carried out concerned Care Homes and Care Homes with Nursing. Of these 58 (25%) concerned Neglect, Mistreatment and acts of Omission. A further 20 (8.7%) concerned physical abuse in Care Homes and as we have already seen above 12 (5%) concerned Institutional abuse in care homes. There were also 24 (10.5%) citations of psychological/emotional abuse in care homes.
- 6.8 At the six month point there have been 70 (30.5%) citations of abuse concerning a person's own home and of these 11 (4.8%) concerned Neglect/Acts of Omission. Most significant is the 31 (13.5%) cases of Financial and Material abuse. Six of the ten Sexual Abuse referrals investigated concerned care homes with the remaining 4 concerning people in their own homes or other community setting.
- 6.9 Information available from the Business Intelligence Team shows that of the 148 Safeguarding Investigations triggered 91 were completed by the end of Quarter 2. It is usually the case that an additional number of referrals discontinue at some point in the process and formal conclusions are not reached. This occurs most often at the Strategy Meeting phase when further clarification is reached on the original concerns or allegation and no further enquiry is then required. In addition a number of safeguarding investigations are discontinued at the request of the person at risk. The choice of the individual must be recognised and where there are no issues of impaired mental capacity or where other people will not be placed at risk Adult

Social Care will presume to follow the wishes of the individual.

- 6.10 Exact figures of the number of such discontinued cases have not yet been captured at this point in the reporting cycle but will be documented in the Year End Analysis for 2014 to 2015.
- 6.11 Of those cases opened in Q1 and Q2 that did not exit the safeguarding process at a point prior to the formal determination of the allegations, figures currently indicate that the remainder were completed in Quarter 3. Ordinarily a referral will be completed within four weeks but due to the complexity of some investigations which involve Criminal Investigations or other external investigations the timescale can be significantly extended, hence we will see this carry over of cases in to the subsequent reporting periods.
- 6.12 Of the 91 referrals that did start and were completed in Quarters 1 and 2 there were 8 referrals where all of the citations of abuse in those cases were wholly Substantiated and a further 9 referrals where the allegations were Partly Substantiated. There were 34 referrals where all of the types of abuse cited were Not Substantiated and a further 20 that were Unsubstantiated or Inconclusive. There were 19 referrals where the outcome was to deem the matter Not Safeguarding or Safeguarding Incident only after the initial Threshold decision had been made.
- 6.13 More in depth analysis of the outcomes by type, location and relationship to the person posing the risk will be completed as usual in the Year End Analysis Report of the Designated Adult Safeguarding Manager.

7.0 Safeguarding Adults Service Developments:

- 7.1 The Listening Review Project process is now underway and work has begun on compiling a report from the first round of feedback from October, November and December 2014. This additional Report will be made available to Scrutiny Committee in April 2015. Selection of people to participate in the reviews has been more difficult than first anticipated for two reasons. Firstly the case by case approach to identifying people has revealed a high incidence of mortality of those for whom a safeguarding referral was made during the year 2013 to 2014. It is not yet fully understood why this is the case but the demographic of older age for those involved is likely to be central to this explanation. Secondly in talking with people and their families it appears that a number do not wish to engage as they are expressing current satisfaction with the services they receiving and have expressed that they do not feel the need to discuss their case further. The Safeguarding Adults Team continues to work to increase the number of those who have a valuable contribution to make.
- 7.2 The purpose of the Listening Reviews has been to gather the views from those who have been supported through the Councils Safeguarding Process and to use those

views to inform and change existing Adult Social Care practice and policy. This project is in keeping with the current LGA and Association of Directors of Adult Social Services, 'Making Safeguarding Personal' agenda.

- 7.3 As noted above Social Work practitioners supported by their managers are now empowered to take most safeguarding Threshold decisions and are asked to do less data processing than before. Decision making is supported by a practice Threshold Decision Support Tool – a 'Thinking framework' - in order to achieve consistency in actions. This tool places the person at risk at the centre of the process. In cases that are referred for investigation the electronic recording modules that support the process have been simplified and feedback has been positive from those who Lead the Safeguarding process in practice. The Threshold Decision Support Tool has been updated to reflect the new requirements placed upon the Local Authority by the Care Act 2014 Statutory Guidance.
- 7.4 In seeking an external view of how it manages its safeguarding processes in its strategic, commissioning and operational approaches the Adult Social Care Division will be engaged in a Peer Review of its Safeguarding arrangements from the 28th to the 30th of January this year. The Towards Excellence in Adult Social Care (TEASC) programme brings together partners at a local, regional and national level to improve outcomes for citizens. The review will be asked to consider direction and policy setting, work with partners and the working of strategic bodies such as the Safeguarding Adults Board, how the Council ensures effective safeguarding practice in commissioned services and its frontline Social Work practice; in particular the consistency of approach, impact and quality of decision making.
- 7.5 Feedback from the review will be included in the next report to the Scrutiny Committee in June 2015.

8.0 Witnesses/representatives:

- 8.1 Karen Smith Director of Adult Services.
Lynn Gornall Principal Social Worker and Head of Safeguarding Adults.
Peter Charlesworth Designated Adult Safeguarding Manager for Adults.

9.0 There is no exempt information included.

10.0 List of Appendices: None.

11.0 Legal considerations:

- 11.1 Statutory Guidance was published on October 17th 2014 concerning the

implementation of the Care Act 2014. This guidance has set out the required arrangements for Safeguarding Adults at Risk of harm including the creation of a Statutory Safeguarding Adults Board, the Statutory Duty for the Local Authority to make or cause Safeguarding Enquiries; to Undertake Multi-agency Safeguarding Adult Reviews where appropriate; Duty for its partners to co-operate and supply information for Safeguarding Purposes;

12.0 Human Resources considerations: None.

13.0 Equalities considerations: None.

14.0 Financial considerations: None.

15.0 Risk management considerations: None.

16.0 Ethical considerations: None.

17.0 Internal/ External Consultation undertaken: N/A.

18.0 Background papers: None.