

Report to: Partnerships Scrutiny Committee

Date of Meeting: 14th March 2013

Lead Member/Officer: Lead Member for Social Care, Adult and Children's Services/ Head of Adult and Business Services

Report Author: Protection of Vulnerable Adults Coordinator

Title: Capacity of Adult Safeguarding Services

1. What is the report about?

To provide an update on the capacity of the Adult Safeguarding Service to deal with a potential increase in referrals.

2. What is the reason for making this report?

To reassure Members that there is sufficient capacity with Adult Services to cope with the continued increase in Protection of Vulnerable Adult referrals.

3. What are the recommendations?

That Members consider the report, comment on its contents and acknowledge the important nature of a corporate approach to the Protection of Vulnerable Adults and the responsibility of the Council to view this as a key priority area.

4. Report details

- 4.1 Since the appointment of a full time POVA co-ordinator in September 2006 there have been significant changes to the POVA workload in general. There has been a significant increase in the number of referrals, an increasing awareness of abuse and the investigation and pursuit of alleged cases of abuse has become increasingly time-consuming and demanding.
- 4.2 As a consequence of these factors a POVA assistant post was established in June 2010, and whilst this was a welcomed addition to the service and certainly had a positive effect on the management of the POVA workload in general it became clear that this current model of working was unsustainable.
- 4.3 A task and finish group was established in May 2012 to consider options and recommend a model for the future management of adult safeguarding within Denbighshire. The group considered models of working from across Wales and parts of England, recommendations from CSSIW Inspection of Adult Protection in Denbighshire March 2010, and the recommendations from the POVA audit May 2012.

4.4 Adult Protection Activity 01/01/2012 – 01/01/2013

The attached appendices show some of the key data for protection of vulnerable adult work within Denbighshire during this period.

Appendix 1 shows the breakdown between gender and age of those referred during a twelve month period. The highest group affected by abuse were females aged over 65 which is inline with the All Wales data from 2010-2011, which also identifies that older women are the most common victims of alleged abuse. Denbighshire data from two similar time periods: January 2011/2012 and January 2012/2013, supports these findings but also shows that an increase of 4 % within this gender and age group during 2012/2013.

Appendix 2 indicates the outcome of POVA referrals during 2012 – 2013 which shows that 8% of referrals were disproved i.e. no evidence of abuse, 9% were inconclusive, 6% where abuse was proved, 6% where evidence showed abuse was likely to have taken place on balance of probability. Of these referrals 56% required no formal investigation under the POVA procedures. There are a number of reasons for this for example the vulnerable adults' choice not to take matters any further or no evidence to substantiate that the threshold had been met to proceed under POVA. However, in all cases safeguarding measures were discussed and explored with the vulnerable adult and appropriate strategies implemented to reduce further potential risks.

Appendix 3 shows where the alleged abuse has occurred. In Wales the majority of abuse occurs in the vulnerable adult's own home. During the period of 2012 -2013 in Denbighshire there is a slight increase of 4% from the previous period of alleged abuse occurring in people's own homes. There is also a decrease from 21% last year to 13% in 2012 – 2013 in alleged abuse happening in residential homes but a rise of 8% within nursing home settings.

Appendix 4 shows alleged perpetrators of abuse during 2012 – 2013. Paid carers account for 31% of alleged perpetrators – this includes 11% of residential care staff, 15% nursing care staff and 5% of domiciliary care staff. By far the largest categories were friends/acquaintances (22%) and relatives (wife, husband, daughter, and son) (26%)

4.5 Training

Denbighshire continues to provide adult protection training to in house staff and all external agencies. Corporate training combining Adult and Child Protection Awareness aimed at those who may have contact with vulnerable children or adults periodically is also on offer.

4.6 Performance Indicators

Every year local authorities provide Welsh Government with statistics for Adult Protection, which are used to produce performance indicators (PIs). For 2011 – 2012 the indicator which demonstrates the risk to adults at risk has been removed or

reduced was achieved in 87.35 % of cases. For the first three quarters of 2012 – 2013 a removal or reduction of risk has been achieved in 100% of cases. This is also an important PI for Denbighshire, as it is one of the overall PI targets selected to show how good Denbighshire is as a whole.

4.7 Developments

- Nationally, the draft Social Services and Wellbeing (Wales) Bill is currently being consulted on in the National Assembly. Within it there is proposed greater statutory responsibility on all agencies in working towards the protection of vulnerable adults in Wales and placing it on a more comparable footing to child protection.
- Locally, a task and finish group has concluded with recommendations which have been approved by the senior management team and the introduction of a new model for the management of adult safeguarding within Denbighshire. See appendix 5 flow chart & appendix 6 POVA team
- Currently the Designated Lead Manager (DLM) role is undertaken by the POVA co-ordinator and assistant. Within the new model the POVA co-ordinator will allocate POVA referrals to the relevant team manager who will then take on the DLM role and follow through the usual process of strategy discussion through to strategy meeting(s) and case conference. Throughout this process the POVA co-ordinator will have access to the progress of the case via Paris and will also be available to provide any support/guidance to individual DLMs
- The final decision in relation to the closure of a POVA case will lie with the POVA Co-ordinator - this is to ensure due process has been followed and risk assessments completed as well as ensuring all relevant information is inputted onto PARIS. The POVA Co-ordinator will retain the DLM role for cases of alleged abuse within hospital settings and for individuals within residential and nursing homes that have been placed by other authorities.
- Significant work has been carried out to ensure that accurate records are kept on Paris in relation to POVA work, which will enable relevant reports to be created to inform ongoing developments.

5. **How does the decision contribute to the Corporate Priorities?**

The POVA service directly contributes to the priority that vulnerable people are protected and are able to live as independently as possible

6. **What will it cost and how will it affect other services?**

The service is already featured within existing budgets.

7. **What are the main conclusions of the Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) undertaken on the decision?**

See Appendix 7 attached

8. What consultations have been carried out?

The Task & Finish Group included staff who are directly involved in the POVA process.

9. Chief Finance Officer Statement

There are no financial implications arising directly from this report.

10. What risks are there and is there anything we can do to reduce them?

The new model shares out the DLM role thus providing greater capacity to manage the ongoing POVA workload. One of the biggest challenges will be to ensure a consistent approach throughout the POVA process, and to this end the POVA Co-ordinator will have a pivotal role in monitoring progress and ensuring an overview of the whole safeguarding process.

11. Power to make the Decision

Arrangements for managing the protection of vulnerable adults are set out in *In Safe Hands (2000)*, a guidance document from Welsh Government. This places duties on Local Authorities and relevant partners to investigate and monitor adult protection issues.

Article 6.3.4(b) of the Council's Constitution stipulates scrutiny's role with respect to the performance of Council Services.

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