

Bolsover District Council

Executive

2 February 2015

Child Protection Safeguarding Update

Report of Councillor D Kelly, Portfolio Member for Environment

Purpose of the Report

- To provide Executive with an update on activity around Child Protection for Bolsover District Council.

1 Report Details

1.1 In August 2013, Executive approved the Council's revised Child Protection Policy.

The following Safeguarding Link Officers are now:

- Paul Hackett – SAMT Lead
- Deborah Whallett – Lead Safeguarding Link Officer (Child)
- Diane Bonsor – Lead Safeguarding Link Officer (Adults)
- Allison Westray - Chapman
- Lee Hickin
- Janice Barltrop
- Melanie Osborne
- Nick Blaney

1.2 A joint Corporate Safeguarding Group meets bi monthly to ensure that activity around safeguarding is co-ordinated and that all staff and members are aware of the process.

1.3 As part of the process for publicising this policy, staff are made aware via ERIC and a new dedicated safeguarding page is now available. The new Safeguarding Adults Policy will be communicated in this way too.

1.4 Other activities to raise awareness of policies have included:

- Staff briefing cards detailing signs of abuse, how to refer and contact details for all safeguarding Link Officers were distributed via pay slips in spring 2014.
- Dedicated Safeguarding page on ERIC. This will be updated with details of the Vulnerable Adults Policy upon adoption.
- Regular bulletins on ERIC.

- Vulnerable Adults Risk Management (VARM) training has been provided by DCC and DFRS to relevant staff.
- Safeguarding awareness training is arranged to take place between January and March 2015 for all frontline staff.

1.5 Vulnerable Adult Risk Management Meeting (VARM)

The Derbyshire Safeguarding Adults Board has developed the VARM Policy to provide professionals with a framework to facilitate effective multi agency working with vulnerable adults who are deemed to have mental capacity and who are at risk of serious harm. These are vulnerable adults who do not meet DCC's Safeguarding Adults process but who do need to be considered and risk assessed via another process. It doesn't replace other existing processes such as the Mental Health Act or MARAC (Multi Agency Risk Assessment Committee for domestic abuse case at risk of homicide).

The VARM process is a multi agency approach designed to discuss, identify and document high risk cases, and formulate an action plan identifying appropriate agency responsibility for actions. The VARM panel is chaired and coordinated by an initiating Officer.

Key agencies involved include Adult Safeguarding, Derbyshire Fire and Rescue, Derbyshire Constabulary, Environmental Health Officers, Housing, Probation, Alcohol and Drug Services. Each agency is required to nominate VARM champions. It is suggested that the officers below are nominated to be VARM champions for Bolsover District Council as they are both already lead link officers for Safeguarding:

Diane Bonsor – Housing Needs Manager
Deborah Whallett – Housing Enforcement Manager

The Council has been increasingly involved in VARM cases since January 2014 and have often acted as the lead agency.

1.6 Referrals

Since January 2014 there have been 14 referrals to DCC regarding child protection issues. Adult referrals will be recorded following approval of the policy. Child Safeguarding referrals were received from:

- Parenting Officer - 4
- Contact Centre - 2
- Environmental Health - 2
- Leisure Services - 1
- Rangers - 2
- Revenues - 1
- Housing Officer – 2

1.7 **VARM Referrals**

There have been 3 VARM referrals received, all from Housing Officers. The officers were all involved in the VARM process for the 3 cases. Out of the 3 cases two were for issues relating to hoarding causing a fire risk and the other was anti social behaviour as a result of mental health problems.

2 **Finance**

2.1 All Derbyshire County Council multi agency training on safeguarding is free of charge. Though it should be noted that costs would be incurred for travel and potentially some back filling of roles for staff who were attending training.

3 **Recommendation**

3.1 That the Executive note the contents of the update report.

3.2 That the Executive approve the nomination of the VARM champions.

4 **Decision Information**

Is the decision a Key Decision? (A Key Decision is one which results in income or expenditure to the Council of £50,000 or more or which has a significant impact on two or more District wards)	No
District Wards Affected	
Links to Corporate Plan priorities or Policy Framework	

5 **Document Information**

Appendix No	Title
Background Papers (These are unpublished works which have been relied on to a material extent when preparing the report. They must be listed in the section below. If the report is going to Cabinet (NEDDC) or Executive (BDC) you must provide copies of the background papers)	
Report Author	Contact Number
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