



April 2013

A progress report on Safeguarding at Northampton Borough Council 2012/13

Author: Silvina Katz, Corporate Policy and Consultation Manager

Responsible Director: Lesley Wearing, Director of Housing

NBC Safeguarding Progress Report 2012/13

Summary

This report will be used to inform Management Board on the progress made by Northampton Borough Council in relation to the safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults agenda.

Background and Scope

The LSCB requires partner agencies to undertake an organisational self-audit to ensure that they are compliant with section 11 of the Children Act. A Section 11 Audit was submitted to LSCBN on behalf of Northampton Borough Council in March 2013.

A light-touch assessment was also carried out from a desk-top analysis of the Council's Service Plans for 2012/13 and 2013/14, the referrals recorded in our central safeguarding depository and the action plan for 2012/13.

The above reviews were used to identify gaps and areas in need of improvement in relation to the safeguarding agenda and these have been included in the annual action plan for 2013/14.

Findings

LSCBN Section 11 Audit

An organisational self-assessment to ensure compliance with section 11 of the Children Act was carried out using an LSCBN self-assessment tool, made up of 8 sections. The Council has reported that **effective measures are in place** in each section which focuses on a standard and outlines the requirements to be achieved.

Review Safeguarding Action Plan

Actions in the Safeguarding Action Plan for 2012/13 have been completed. Where ongoing commitment is necessary this is reflected in Action Plan for 2013/14.

Policy and Best Practice

The Council's revised policy and procedure for Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults were introduced in 2011.

A Guide for Contractors was produced and adapted for use by specific services e.g. Landlord Services, Building Control, Planning, etc.

Designated Safeguarding Officers

Nominated individuals, selected from relevant directorates in the Authority, meet to oversee policy implementation and topical issues on an ad-hoc basis, as appropriate. Training was delivered by NCC in 2011 on Integrated Working Procedures to better understand and improve referral process. An introduction to e-learning is available on the Learning Zone.

CRB posts

Systems introduced in 2011 are in place to deal with applications and renewals online. Reviews are carried out annually and when new roles are created within the establishment. In **2012/13** the number of **CRB posts** we have is **82**. In 2011 the number of posts requiring CRB clearance was 136 (this included Northampton Leisure Trust which is no longer part of the establishment).

Referrals

Safeguarding information, easy-to follow guides to referral forms and links signposting to sources of help were published on the intranet. A depository was created for storage of referrals and is in use.

During 2011/1, seven referrals were recorded.
During **2012/13**, **nine referrals** were recorded in our system.

Note that other referrals may have been submitted without reference to Safeguarding Designated Officers and/or the records officer.

Serious Case Reviews

A single request for a detailed statement was received but this did not proceed further.

Training

In 2011 Designated Safeguarding Officers received training from NCC on Integrated Working Procedures.

The induction programme, essential for all new-starters, includes an introductory module on Safeguarding.

An introduction to safeguarding e-learning package was produced on rolled out to all staff in 2011. In 2012/13, **18 people completed the course**

A programme of learning events for both adult's and children safeguarding was available to all staff during 2012-13. In addition, training for Councillors was delivered in May 2012 as part of the Councillor Induction and Development Programme 2012.

Lead safeguarding officers attended a jointly funded safeguarding training in the Spring 2012 around the Prevention of Violent Extremism agenda.

Safeguarding Action Plan 2013/14

- Realign Designated Safeguarding Officers across directorates following LGSS arrangements and organisational review.
- Continue to follow Safe Recruitment practices for all appointments.
- Ensure that staff receive appropriate training and refresher e.g. at induction and as identified following training needs analysis and skills audits.
- Actively promote existing e-learning and training on offer from relevant partner organisations.
- Use local depository to store referrals to aid tracking in the event of serious case reviews and evaluate.
- Follow LSCB and SOVA recommendations and review learning following serious case reviews.
- Ensure a communication plan is in place to promote and embed safe and best practice across the organisation.
- Monitor contract and commissioning work to ensure compliance with safeguarding policy.
- Ensure contractors and others working with and on behalf of the Council are aware of the Council's Safeguarding Policy to follow safe working practices in accordance to existing legislation.
- Ensure safeguarding clause for ongoing disclosure is included in contracts where contractors come into significant contact with children and vulnerable adults, as appropriate.
- Use service planning process to review Safeguarding objectives and actions.
- Ensure views of children and vulnerable adults are taken into account in planning the development of services that directly affect them.

Recommendations and outcome:

Management Board noted report and agreed the action plan for 2013/14.