



Belfast City Council

Report to:	Shadow Strategic Policy and Resources Committee
Subject:	Safeguarding (all ages) consultation responses
Date:	30 January 2015
Reporting Officer:	John McGrillen Director of Development, Ext 3470
Contact Officer:	Elaine Black Children & Young People Manager, Ext 3783

1	Relevant Background Information
1.1	Members may recall Council is a partner on the Belfast Trust area safeguarding panels which are set up separately for children and adults as part of the regional safeguarding structures known as SBNI and NIASP. There is a mandatory duty on Council to safeguard children and an accepted expectation to safeguard adults. It is generally promoted that safeguarding (all ages) is 'everyone's business.'
1.2	An internal review of Council safeguarding practice and ongoing needs has taken place over the past year and this has been aligned to current policy for continuous organisational improvement. Officers are currently finalising the review and will present recommendations to CMT early this year. Initial findings however would support a new Safeguarding all age policy to best fit the future organisational needs (following guidance by Volunteer Now). If agreeable this will be developed in the coming months for future Member review.
1.3	Any new approach will build on Council's positive track record (since 2002) in managing child protection and ensure the policy, principles, procedures and practice best meet the diverse needs of the organisation and its service provision safeguarding the rights and needs of children and adults specifically those at risk of harm or abuse.

2	Key Issues
2.1	<p>At this time there are two external consultations. Members are requested to consider the draft responses which are enclosed in appendices 2 & 4.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Consultation 1 is for SBNI's Child Protection and Safeguarding Learning and Development Strategy and Framework

<p>2.2</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultation 2 is DHSSPSNI adult safeguarding policy draft consultation response. <p>Consultation 1: SBNI’s Child Protection and Safeguarding Learning and Development Strategy and Framework (children)</p> <p>This consultation directs respondents to provide general feedback primarily focused on informing the equality screening process.</p> <p>The enclosed response generally welcomes the co-ordination of safeguarding children training & development within the proposed framework. It particularly welcomes the co-ordinated direction presented in the framework which includes a minimum standard based on key learning outcomes to support our safeguarding role protecting children.</p> <p>Council’s response provides key comments including recommending a training needs analysis of each partner organisation, as well as the community and voluntary sector, to ensure the framework is suitably flexible and can address the learning/development needs of all sections of the community. This should also support council officers as they deliver a diverse range of services to children and young people.</p> <p>The framework should capture all of the work of SBNI and its partners and learn from service delivery. It is key that it represents all the activities of each organisation. For council this includes the work of each Member and related safeguarding learning or support which may be required.</p> <p>Further information is also sought on structures, roles, responsibilities and anticipated resources and how this will relate to Council’s existing commitment to the ‘keeping children safe’ training programme</p>
<p>2.3</p>	<p>Consultation 2: DHSSPSNI released a consultation on safeguarding adult policy.</p> <p>This consultation document is the proposed regional adult safeguarding policy which reinforces the structures and guidance put in place in 2010. It confirms a collaborative approach providing a concise list of definitions related to adult safeguarding and presents proposals for prevention and protection of adults at risk of harm or abuse.</p> <p>Council’s response follows the prescribed approach and generally welcomes and concurs with the principles and proposed way forward in the document which suggests that local government should be an active and collaborative partner. The response however suggests that to support this effective collaboration, there needs to be a greater reflection of council business needs mainly in two areas: in the definition of adult safeguarding and in terms of the heavily outlined protection section in the document.</p> <p>The response suggests that further consideration should be given to the exclusion of self harm and neglect from the definition of adult safeguarding or that further assurance given. In recent years Council has experienced growing interaction with adults requiring protection from their own behaviour, for example, via a third party complaint about the fitness of a home or where an individual comes to our attention through substance abuse etc. Often the individual readily permits an intervention on</p>

	<p>their behalf however both cases might be considered as an example of self harm or neglect. Assurance is sought that the proposed policy provides suitable protection to support this area of work and to ensure that council receives the collaborative support from its partners. This would be reinforced as the future power of wellbeing is enacted.</p> <p>Accompanying the consultation is the Commissioner for Older People NI commentary which proposes specific adult safeguarding legislation including corporate neglect. The response welcomes the general need for zero tolerance of harm or abuse and accepts Council will comply with any legislative basis to continue to do so.</p>
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3	Resource Implications
3.1	There are no resource implications attached to this report.

4	Equality and Good Relations Considerations
4.1	There are no Equality and Good Relations implications attached to this report

5	Recommendations
5.1	Members are asked to approve the draft Belfast City Council (BCC) response to the consultations and raise any additional issues, relating to the consultation document, which they would like included.

6	Decision Tracking
	Reporting Officer: Elaine Black, Children & Young People Manager

7	Key to Abbreviations
	<p>SBNI Safeguarding Board for Northern Ireland.</p> <p>NIASP Northern Ireland Adult Safeguarding Partnership</p> <p>DHSSPS(NI) Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety</p> <p>CMT Corporate Management Team</p>

8	Documents Attached
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appendix 1: SBNI's Child Protection and Safeguarding Learning and Development Strategy and Framework (children) • Appendix 2: Consultation 1: SBNI's Child Protection and Safeguarding Learning and Development Strategy and Framework (children) response • Appendix 3: DHSSPSNI consultation on the safeguarding adult policy. • Appendix 4: Council's response to Consultation 2: DHSSPSNI consultation on safeguarding adult policy.

