



Report to: Development Committee

Subject: Consultations NIASP and SBNI

Date: 20 June 2013

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1	Relevant Background Information
1.1	The Council has been asked to respond to two consultations: the Northern Ireland Adult Safeguarding Partnership (NIASP) Strategic Plan and the Safeguarding Board for NI's (SBNI) Strategic Plan which covers children and young people.
1.2	The consultations documents were distributed to Officers across Council and responses have been included in the provisional draft response attached as Appendices 2 and 5.
1.3	As there is currently no vulnerable adult unit within the Council, Development (through the Children and Young People unit) coordinated the draft response to this consultation.
1.4	<u>Overview of Adult Safeguarding Partnership Strategic Plan.</u> This strategy sets out how the participating organisations will work together to continually improve services to safeguard adults at risk in Northern Ireland.
1.5	The strategy has 5 main principles and aims to be rights-based; empowering; person-centred; consent-driven; while using a partnership approach.
1.6	The strategy is divided into 7 broad themes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Leadership and Partnership Working; – Public Awareness and Prevention; – Access to Adult Safeguarding Services; – Effective Interventions; – The User Experience;

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Training and Practice Developments; and – Governance Audit and Quality Assurance.
1.7	The full strategy includes objectives, indicators and measures for each theme and is attached in Appendix 1.
1.8	We were made aware of the consultation on 29 April 2013 and comments are required to be returned by the 21 June 2013.
1.9	<p><u>SBNI Strategic Plan</u></p> <p>The strategic plan covers the period April 2013 to March 2016 and sets out how they will achieve their vision of promoting “the provision of early intervention services which would prevent harm arising to children and young people and ensure that those most at risk are protected from death or repeated harm by having in place an effective protection service which also offers therapeutic intervention.”</p>
1.10	<p>The strategy has 5 objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Reducing the prevalence and incidence of child abuse and neglect through preventative approaches; – Reducing the child mortality rate as a consequence of having a system for identifying and protecting children at risk of significant harm; – Preventing children identified as being in need of protection from experiencing repeated harm; – Addressing the effects of the harm experienced by children on their development and promoting their welfare resulting in improved psychological and social functioning and improved educational attainment; – Addressing the needs of other family members so that they are in a better position to provide for the care and future protection of the child.
1.11	<p>The Council has been invited to comment on three areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Are [the Council] satisfied with the detail of the content screening exercise and the outcomes? – Are there other equality or human rights issues that we wish to raise in the context of the plan? – Is there any additional quantitative or qualitative information that we wish to share to inform this screening exercise?
1.12	The Strategic Plan and Equality Screening are attached in Appendices 3 and 4.
1.13	The Council was made aware of the consultation on 16 April 2013 and comments are required to be returned by the 19 July 2013.

2	Key Issues
2.1	The main principles; themes and objectives in both strategies are broadly welcomed and are in line with Council’s current initiatives in these areas.
2.2	However there are some aspects of the draft proposal that could be improved

	and are detailed as follows.
2.3	<p><u>Adult Safeguarding Partnership Strategic Plan</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Introduction of alerting officers within organisations is supported and encouraged to be extended to non-partner agencies to also adopt.. – Bringing forward the timescale for the introduction of Alerting Officers. – Making use of Council support in the area of: facilitation between groups, linking into similar schemes run by Council, using Community Centres as information outlets or to host programmes and events.
2.4	<p><u>SBNI Strategic Plan</u></p> <p>Although we have only been asked to comment on the equality screening, Officers have raised issues that relate to the strategic plan itself and its implementation. Primarily there is a need for greater understanding of the Council's responsibilities in terms of response required to fulfil the proposals and how they align to the existing children and young people work streams. The issues have been included in the draft response.</p>
2.5	<p>In terms of the equality screening, the main issues that have been raised are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – The Equality screening seems to be heavily weighted with evidence of child sex exploitation. Why this is the case; relevance of evidence and why similar level of detail is not provided for all priority areas is raised within the response. – There is limited reference to child's health, obesity, a right to play or child development which links to the family. – The impact on children as carers is not considered in the equality screening or strategic plan. –

3	Resource Implications
3.1	There are no resource implications attached to this report. There may however be longer term implications if the Council decides to adopt some of the recommendations in the strategies e.g. increased data recording and the introduction of Alerting Officers or is required to comply with Safeguarding of vulnerable adults in general.

4	Equality and Good Relations Considerations
4.1	There are no Equality and Good Relations implications attached to this report. However, the strategies should produce a positive impact for disabled adults and children.

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

6	Decision Tracking
<p>Timeline: 21 June 2013 Reporting Officer: Elaine Black</p>	

7	Key to Abbreviations
<p>SBNI - Safeguarding Board for Northern Ireland. CYP – Children and Young People.</p>	

8	Documents Attached
<p>Appendix 1 “Strategic plan 2013 – 2018.” Northern Ireland Adult Safeguarding Partnership. Appendix 2 “Consultation: Draft Response Adult Safeguarding Partnership Strategic Plan.” Appendix 3 “Strategic Plan 2013-16.” Safeguarding Board for NI. 2013. Appendix 4 “Equality and Human Rights Screening Template - Safeguarding Board for Northern Ireland (SBNI) Strategic Plan 2013 – 2016.” Appendix 5 “Consultation: Draft Response SBNI Strategic Plan.”</p>	