

REPORT

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Services

To: Supporting People in Kent Commissioning Body

16 December 2009

Subject: Safeguarding vulnerable adults and children

Classification: Unrestricted

For Information

Summary: The report sets out the on-going links and areas of joint working between Kent Adult Social Services and Supporting People in relation to Safeguarding vulnerable adults and children.

1.0 Introduction

1.1 The Managing Director of Adult Social Services has a statutory responsibility for safeguarding vulnerable adults within Kent. Similarly the Managing Director of Children Families and Education (CFE) has a comparable role in relation to safeguarding vulnerable children. The Supporting People Programme has always referred issues relating to safeguarding vulnerable adults to Kent Adult Social Services (KASS). The transfer will not affect continued closed working with KASS and CFE in relation to the safeguarding of vulnerable adults and children. The Districts and Boroughs have responsibilities in relation to health and safety within services that are delivered within their respective areas. Again the Supporting People programme has been working with the appropriate departments on a case by case basis. The Health and Safety Executive may also become involved in specific issues within districts and boroughs as appropriate.

2.0 Context

2.1 The Supporting People Programme has undertaken an evaluation of its processes and procedures in relation to Safeguarding recently. This was inspired by the move from the Kent Adult Social Services Directorate, but also lessons learnt from six years of managing contracts within the Programme.

3.0 Safeguarding between KASS and Supporting People

3.1 Vulnerable adults including those for whom KASS has no statutory responsibilities are susceptible to mistreatment and a range of abuse. Safeguarding vulnerable adults and children covers a broad range of activities from awareness raising and prevention through to adult /child protection interventions and access to justice.

3.2 The work of the Supporting People Programme forms a specific part of the Kent and Medway Adult Protection Procedures and will remain so despite the change in directorate. The procedures form an integral part of the contractual arrangements with providers who are tested in their ability to meet them through the Quality Assessment Framework.

3.3 The Supporting People Programme will continue to respond to all adult protection alerts and will continue to work with Adult Protection Co-ordinators within KASS to ensure that all alerts are thoroughly investigated and that all vulnerable adults within the Supporting People Programme are protected.

3.4 The Supporting People Programme will continue to be represented on the countywide Safeguarding Board by Angela Slaven, Director of Youth and Community Support Services, Communities Directorate and will continue to bring to the attention of providers any change in legislation applicable to them. The Programme will continue to liaise with the safeguarding unit to ensure that the Kent and Medway Adult Protection Procedures are inclusive of the client groups with whom the Supporting People Programme works. The Programme will work with the Safeguarding Adults Policy and Standards Manager to influence the definition of a vulnerable adult and ensure that any review of the procedure encompasses all vulnerable adults irrespective of whether they meet the criteria for statutory services.

3.5 Representatives from the Supporting People team will continue to attend the KASS Directorate Contract Managers monthly meeting at which safeguarding issues in the Supporting People Programme contracted services will be raised to ensure that managers within the KASS Directorate are aware of concerns in services that may be jointly funded.

3.6 The Supporting People Programme will continue to report to the Commissioning Body on statistics relating to the number and nature of adult protection alerts.

4.0 Lessons Learnt

4.1 The Supporting People Programme, Communities Directorate, and Kent Adult Social Services Directorate have reviewed how processes and procedures have been operating. It has been agreed that Adult Social Services will make absolutely sure that the safeguarding procedures and processes clearly reference in the need to protect vulnerable adults whether or not they are a statutory responsibility of the Directorate. There also needs to be clarity about the implications of the Kent Police investigating an incident, and the implications for a safeguarding investigation. Supporting People will ensure that they communicate with Safeguarding coordinators in relation not only to incidents and good practice but ensuring that providers link in and learn from their expertise, and consequently implement it.

4.2 The Supporting People Programme is re-examining the content of the Steady State Contract with Kent Legal Services to ensure that it is fit for purpose to deal with safeguarding issues.

4.3. The Supporting People Programme will also be contacting all providers who are not local authorities or registered with the Tenant Services Authority. The Programme will be ensuring that any changes in senior staff or non-executive members are notified to the Programme. Information is being sought on current personnel. This is because a consensus has developed that when senior managers or non-executive members leave this can sometimes have an adverse impact on the provider.

4.4 The County Council also needs to develop an awareness of funding that is being allocated within the Council, and by our partners in districts and boroughs, and within the Primary Care Trusts. Health and safety concerns need to be shared by districts and boroughs, health, and the County Council.

4.5 The Programme is also working with Safer and Stronger Communities Group, the Multi-Agency Public Protection Agreement, and the Joint Policy and Planning Board (Housing) to put in place a protocol to safeguard vulnerable adults and children who are placed in bed and breakfast accommodation. The possibility of an officer being employed to monitor the protocol is being examined. The protocol may also be adjusted in order to preclude bed and breakfast placements in Thanet District Council, except for people who are indigenous to the Thanet area.

5.0 Financial Impact Assessment

5.1 The financial impact of maintaining on-going links and partnership working between KASS, CFE, districts and boroughs and Supporting People should not have any material impact on budgets.

6.0 Conclusion

6.1 It is important that there are on-going links between KASS, CFE, districts and boroughs and Supporting People in relation to safeguarding, and health and safety are secured and enhanced. The actions being taken above are directly intended to offer as much of a safeguard as possible to vulnerable people. It is recognised however that no matter what processes and procedures are put in place the possibility of an incident taking place is ever present.

7.0 Recommendations

The Commissioning Body is asked to:

- (i) Note the contents of the report.

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Background Information: None